community conversations

Communities embracing each other – 2009

NELSON MANDELA
FOUNDATION
Living the Legacy

|DIALOGUE|
FOR JUSTICE

Contents

Foreword
Achmat Dangor
CEO, Nelson Mandela Foundation

We … thank all those states that have given asylum and assistance to South African refugees of all shades of political beliefs and opinion," said Nelson Mandela in 1962[1]. "We … sincerely hope that each and every one of us will prove worthy of the trust and confidence the world has in us."

Thirty-two years later, he added[2]: "We salute … the people of our continent who helped us successfully to walk our last mile of the difficult road to freedom."

In June 1997, Mr Mandela said on Africa Refugee Day: "Dealing with [refugee] problems is inextricably linked to achieving peace, upholding the rule of law and entrenching a human rights culture and democracy." He linked this to "political and civil rights and improved socio-economic conditions".

Yet in 2008, South Africa saw an outbreak of anger and violence towards migrants living here. Where was the common humanity? Where was the shared peace after the struggle? After all our bitter experiences of oppression, our hard-won Bill of Rights, how could we be doing this to others?

In 2009, the Nelson Mandela Foundation convened a series of dialogues in communities where South Africans and migrants live together, to look into the reasons for the discord, areas of potential risk and ways to promote social cohesion. Through this work, the Foundation aims to encourage tolerance and mutual respect, social solidarity, and freedom from fear.

A need for sensitivity around the use of language when reporting on migrants in South Africa was highlighted in a dialogue held at the Foundation in April 2009. The Foundation convened a discussion, in collaboration with the South African Human Rights Commission, on how the use of certain language could fuel xenophobia. The conversation, involving representatives from the media, the South African Police Service, the Johannesburg Metro Police Department and the Emergency Management Services, considered whether the manner of reporting issues involving migrants contributed to negative stereotypes and tensions.

Media stereotypes about migrants and the need for government to condemn violence more strongly were also discussed at a meeting of the Social Cohesion

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Reference Group at the Nelson Mandela Foundation in July 2009.

The Social Cohesion Reference Group is made up of representatives from the Foundation, faith-based organisations and other NGOs working in media and social justice, among others. It meets in an advisory capacity on the Foundation's dialogues.

We need to understand the push and pull factors that move populations; we need to be prepared for more migration. We need to imagine our future. We need to know what it is that people are afraid of – so desperate and afraid that they sometimes resort to violence. And we simply need to get to know each other as human beings. That means listening and talking without fear. The Foundation and its many partners are providing a safe space for communities to do that, and to discover their own power and leadership. It's a complex process on an individual level as well as for communities and nations.

As one dialogue participant said: "We as refugees cannot expect to find a place of refuge here if South Africans do not heal themselves."
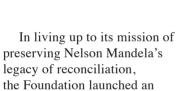

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[1] Address by Nelson Mandela on behalf of the ANC delegation to the conference of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa, January 1962
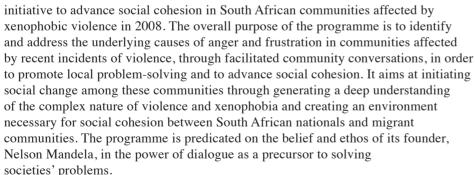
[2] Organisation of African Unity Meeting of Heads of State and Government, June 1994
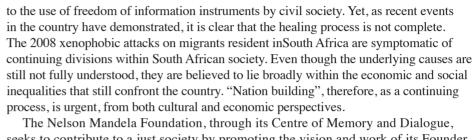
Introduction
Mothomang Diaho
Head of the Dialogue Programme, Nelson Mandela Foundation

South Africa has received praise from around the world for the way in which it overcame deeply rooted divisions and the resultant conflicts in order to achieve the peaceful 1994 political transition. Contributing to this success was a willingness to engage with the past and to use "memory" as a device for healing societal schisms.

In living up to its mission of preserving Nelson Mandela's legacy of reconciliation, the Foundation launched an initiative to advance social cohesion in South African communities affected by xenophobic violence in 2008. The overall purpose of the programme is to identify and address the underlying causes of anger and frustration in communities affected by recent incidents of violence, through facilitated community conversations, in order to promote local problem-solving and to advance social cohesion. It aims at initiating social change among these communities through generating a deep understanding of the complex nature of violence and xenophobia and creating an environment necessary for social cohesion between South African nationals and migrant communities. The programme is predicated on the belief and ethos of its founder, Nelson Mandela, in the power of dialogue as a precursor to solving societies' problems.

Memory work in South Africa has ranged from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to the creation of new museums and archives, from the investigations underpinning the land restitution process to the writing of new histories for school children, from the research supporting special pensions and the location of missing people to the use of freedom of information instruments by civil society. Yet, as recent events in the country have demonstrated, it is clear that the healing process is not complete. The 2008 xenophobic attacks on migrants resident inSouth Africa are symptomatic of continuing divisions within South African society. Even though the underlying causes are still not fully understood, they are believed to lie broadly within the economic and social inequalities that still confront the country. "Nation building", therefore, as a continuing process, is urgent, from both cultural and economic perspectives.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation, through its Centre of Memory and Dialogue, seeks to contribute to a just society by promoting the vision and work of its Founder and, using his example, to convene dialogue around critical social issues. The Centre seeks to foster dialogue – often about difficult subjects, and between stakeholders who very often have strongly divergent views – in order to address the challenges we face today and so help find sustainable solutions. Launched by Nelson Mandela in 2004, the Centre uses memory – the historic examples of how solutions were attained through dialogue – to create a safe space, intellectually and ideologically, where meaningful discourse can take place within affected communities.

The main objectives of dialogues are:
- To foster and facilitate dialogue within communities around the critical issues they face, and so bring to the surface often latent or unarticulated tensions that classically are barriers to seeking common solutions.
- To create linkages between various community stakeholders, and between communities and the relevant policy makers.
- To help build the capacity that enables communities to take ownership of this dialogue process.

For the purposes of this programme, social cohesion is defined as that which galvanises a collective or group of people around a common set of values, based on mutual respect, tolerance, freedom from fear and respect for human dignity. Social cohesion is attainable through the promotion of social solidarity and the harnessing of diverse capacities, values, skills and experiences in society for the benefit of all. The intention of this book is to share with the reader the work done by community members to understand the issues that led to the violence in their areas in 2008 and to create an environment in which they can live together peacefully. It is a document that shares how community members went about exploring the deeply hidden feelings that drive behaviour.

The following section details the Community Capacity Enhancement methodology as originally defined by the United Nations Development Programme. The NMF has subsequently adopted this methodology for its engagements with communities.

Community Capacity Enhancement

What are community conversations?

Community conversations are dialogues which form the heart of a process called Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE), developed by the United Nations Development Programme. CCE is simply a way of strengthening communities to deal with the challenges they face.

These dialogues or discussion forums are guided by trained facilitators and are open to all who wish to take part, as long as they agree to behave in a way the whole group finds acceptable. The meetings provide safe spaces where people can get to know and trust each other, express themselves without fear and get to the heart of their concerns. Here, they identify and explore their issues, values and resources. They begin to make decisions, build relationships and take action to improve their lives. They constantly review and reflect on the process they are going through. The process is also shared beyond the community through documentation, arts and the media.
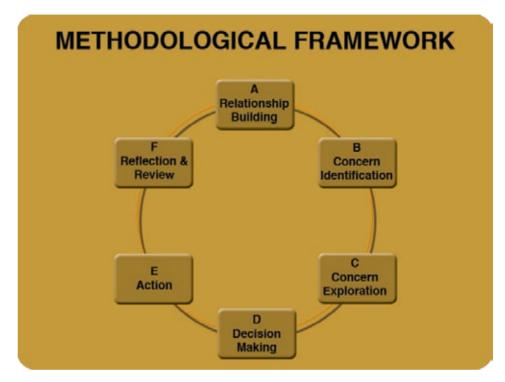
This methodology can be used to explore any kind of community issue. It is guided by facilitators because they are trained to understand how change occurs, and they can help prevent a repetition of old, unhelpful practices. Facilitators are drawn from the communities where this work is taking place, so as to build local capacity and sustain the work.

Why have community conversations?

The fears and concerns surrounding the presence of migrants and xenophobia in South Africa require deep reflection and transformation of values, attitudes and practices at individual and community levels.

Facilitators help communities to identify the underlying causes and impact of their frustration and anger towards migrants, and to find locally relevant means to address these causes.

The main objective of the Community Capacity Enhancement methodology, as it is applied in this specific context, is to generate an understanding of and response to xenophobia that integrates individual and collective concerns, values and beliefs and that addresses attitudes, behaviours and practices embedded in social systems and structures.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A Relationship Building
B Concern Identification
C Concern Exploration
D Decision Making
E Action
F Reflection & Review

Expected outcomes of CCE

- Increased knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of refugees and other categories of migrants living in South Africa.
- Increased number of joint community initiatives to promote and protect the rights and responsibilities of refugees and migrants, and to reduce xenophobia and other forms of discrimination.
- Greater involvement of local community structures, local opinion-leaders and ordinary citizens in decision-making processes affecting their lives.
- Decision-making processes affecting the lives of these groups reflect the concerns of communities through a process of active communication.
- Increased number of NGOs, faith-based and community-based organisations using community conversations to stimulate and scale up social change and to address other issues, such as governance, service delivery, unemployment, conflict prevention and peace-building.
- Increased number of community decisions brought into the public domain by artists and media professionals.

Guiding principles

The following ways of working are fundamental to the CCE methodology:
- Sensitivity to local, family, migrant and community experiences – working by invitation and commitment, not imposition
- Facilitation rather than intervention of "experts"
- Gender sensitivity and a focus on the participation and inclusion of women and girls
- Sensitivity to the unique and specific needs of refugees and migrants
- Mutual learning (facilitators, community, organisations)
- A grounding in universal human rights principles
- Participatory approaches with space for listening, inclusion, agreement and expression of concerns
- Team formation, involving both South African and migrant representatives, for implementation
- Respect for differences, diversity, universality and mutual trust
- Belief that communities have the capacity to identify the changes they need, "own" these changes and transfer change to other communities
- Willingness of facilitators to engage in a process of self-development

Tools of CCE

Facilitators are trained to use a set of CCE tools in community conversations. Some of these are described below:

Introducing participants – Introductions allow participants and facilitators to get to know and trust one another. This begins the process of building a relationship of mutual respect and an environment in which learning can take place. Pairs of participants share personal information with each other, such as names, hobbies and strengths. Each partner then presents the other to the group. Then, in small groups, people identify and record their community's main strengths and challenges. The facilitator asks them how they felt about this activity, and summarises what they have said in a way that values every contribution.

Negotiating rules – Every community is guided by values, rules and regulations, whether explicit or not. These rules are better adhered to when they are generated through dialogue and agreement by community members themselves. The participants in the workshop form a community and therefore need a set of rules to guide their interactions. Each group of participants agrees on rules and depicts them in drawings. The group also chooses a timekeeper and a "minister of justice" to remind participants to follow the rules.

Current approaches and understanding migration – This is a discussion, in groups, about what xenophobia is, what individuals and organisations have done about xenophobia and violence in their community, how they usually address these issues, why migration occurs (push and pull factors), the nature of xenophobic violence (kinds of crime, who commits these crimes, who is affected, etc), and the laws relating to migrants in South Africa (categories of migrant, international conventions, constitutional rights, etc).

Historical timeline – Societies are inspired by major events, challenges, tragedies and crises they have overcome. Reflecting on these reveals a community's creative resources, values and concerns. Facilitators encourage community members to remember their past and the strengths that have sustained them thus far. In the social cohesion community conversations, participants look specifically at conflicts on the African continent and the impact they have had on migration and on their own community.
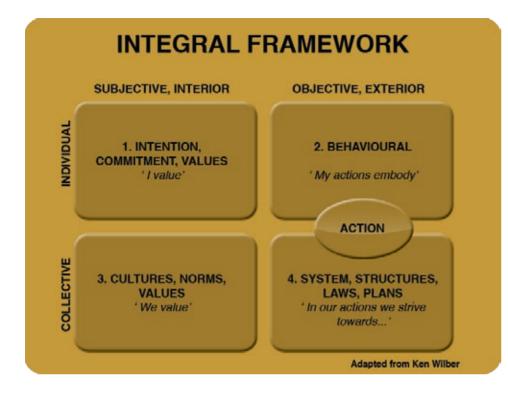
Strategic questioning – This is a way of soliciting information and perspectives that opens up several options for answers. Strategic questioning can help the community reflect on issues that affect them and deepen their understanding of concerns and options for transformation. A strategic question is one that cannot be ignored, which requires thinking before answering, and which has no simple "yes" or "no" answers. It can provoke without causing offence, and help "touch the untouchable". Facilitators use this tool to generate conversations about sensitive issues without making participants feel defensive.

Transect walk – Community members walk around their neighbourhood in small groups to rediscover familiar surroundings, noticing resources, danger points and entry points for action. They can then draw up a map, a visual representation of community strengths and concerns. Participants do the transect walk silently, in small groups, looking for "green grass" (community strengths and resources) and "dry grass" (factors that may make the community susceptible to violence and xenophobia). Mapping can also be used later to illustrate changes that have taken place.

Social capital analysis – Social capital refers to the norms and values people hold that result in, and are the result of, collective and socially negotiated ties and relationships. It's about collaboration, co-operation, trust, joint problem-solving, and willingness to engage in collective action for everyone's benefit. Social capital is related to other forms of capital, such as human (skills and qualifications), economic (wealth), cultural (modes of thinking) and symbolic (prestige and personal qualities) capital. To analyse social capital is to take stock of prevailing attitudes, behaviours and practices and their impact on relations between people living in a given community.

Working in groups, participants talk about the main values that underpin life in the community, how these are expressed in the ways people relate to each other, and how this affects relations between locals and migrants. They also discuss how social capital can be used to promote respect for all members of the community.

Integral framework – This four-quadrant framework, adapted from the work of Ken Wilber, is used to explore the relationship between intentions and values, on the one hand, and actions on the other hand, at both individual and collective levels. By placing their responses to violence and xenophobia in their respective quadrants, community members can reflect on how holistic their response has been.

INTEGRAL FRAMEWORK

	SUBJECTIVE, INTERIOR	OBJECTIVE, EXTERIOR
INDIVIDUAL	**1. INTENTION, COMMITMENT, VALUES** *'I value'*	**2. BEHAVIOURAL** *'My actions embody'*
COLLECTIVE	**3. CULTURES, NORMS, VALUES** *'We value'*	**4. SYSTEM, STRUCTURES, LAWS, PLANS** *'In our actions we strive towards...'*

ACTION

Adapted from Ken Wilber

Facilitators' wall – This is where facilitators record their own perspectives, the implications for the community, implications for facilitators, and refinement of the methodology.

The facilitators' perspectives should be registered using the exact terms used by team members. It is their opportunity to relate their own experiences and views. There can and will be differences of opinion among members of the team, which should be noted on the wall. Facilitators record their observations of the way the community interacts, group dynamics, gender relations, the degree of consensus in the community, degree of difficulty in speaking about certain subjects, and so on.

Facilitators must help the community to think through the specific implications of what they have said. This is also an opportunity to address misconceptions. Facilitators also need to think about specific things they can do to address the community's concerns – how they can follow up and support the process.

The community should also be able to comment on the methodology, the way it is being managed, and what has been accomplished.

Community wall – This is the analysis and interpretation of the community conversation. It records community perspectives, burning issues (those which spark interest), non-burning issues (issues that do not generate interest), false beliefs, misunderstandings and misconceptions.

Five friends of planning – Planning is an important part of the decision-making phase following identification and exploration of community concerns. The community identifies and agrees on possible ways of addressing their challenges, addressing resource availability (including social capital) and timing. Community decisions must be actionable within a framework of human rights principles and values.

The planning process answers the following questions: What do we want to do? How are we going to do it? Who (specific names) will be responsible for each step? When will each step take place (specific dates/times)? Where will the action take place?

Exploring concerns – In trying to understand the violence that gripped South Africa in May 2008, various research reports point to poor service delivery; poverty; ineffective migration management; perceived competition for resources, jobs, women, and houses; and high crime rates as major contributory factors in fostering violence. However, to fully uncover and address the factors that underlie these conditions, it is important for communities to examine them bit by bit, dig deeper and ensure that all factors are taken into consideration before decisions are made. Such decisions are more likely to succeed and be sustained.

In this exercise, facilitators ask participants to think about digging for a root vegetable, or the roots of a tree – how they know where to start digging, what happens if they don't dig it all out, what tools they use, and so on.

Storytelling – Stories and proverbs are the ways that traditionally people were helped to understand their own actions and their impact on others. Asking people to create a story allows them to name their experiences in their own words and in spaces where they are listened to and respected. Stories can achieve a depth of understanding faster than other means.

In this exercise, facilitators tell the beginning of a story and participants add to it as characters. Facilitators then analyse the perspectives and share their findings with participants.

Participants in the Albert Park community conversation paying close attention to the plenary discussions (August 2009).

A response to the "historical timeline" exercise, in which people reflect on significant events in their history.

Facilitator Mary Tal in a group exercise aimed at identifying concerns faced by the Khayelitsha community (May 2009).

Facilitators illustrate a point at the Khayelitsha community conversation in May 2009.

Mothomang Diaho (Head of the Dialogue Programme, left) listens to the conversation in Atteridgeville (June 2009).

Why are we talking human rights?

The community dialogue approach promotes human rights principles. The dignity of individuals and families is preserved and enhanced in an environment that promotes compassion, acceptance and accountability, where people are free from stigmatisation, coercion and violence. The principles include equity, equality, non-discrimination, human dignity, non-violence, participation, inclusion, accountability and responsibility. These principles are utilised and promoted during the NMF's facilitated dialogues – an approach detailed in this chapter.

To protect people from negative attitudes, we must assert their fundamental human rights. Human rights affirm that, as human beings, we are all entitled to equal treatment and opportunities, despite our origin, gender, economic situation, ethnicity, etc. The concept of human rights can be traced back to the world's cry for social justice as humanity awoke to the immediate horrors of the Second World War, and the struggle to be free of colonialism.

What are human rights?

Human rights reflect basic human aspirations for a dignified human existence. They are the rights that one has simply because one is human, irrespective of any rights or duties individuals may have as citizens or workers. Such rights are universal: they apply everywhere, they cannot be lost or taken away, and they all go together with equal importance. For example, civil and political rights cannot be separated from social and cultural rights. All must be upheld equally. Scholars have broken human rights up into three "generations" (of equal importance): first generation rights, which include civil and political rights such as the freedom of thought, conscience and religion, opinion, and peaceful assembly; second generation rights, which include economic, social, and cultural rights such as the right to social security, work and education; and third generation rights, namely communal and group rights such as the right to political, economic, social, and cultural self-determination, the right to economic and social development, the right to peace and the right to a healthy and sustainable environment.

Origin of human rights

The concept of human rights has a long history that can be traced to the great religions of the world – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and others – which all pointed to the existence of a law higher than any state through which all people were endowed with dignity and certain inalienable rights.

Though the human principles evident in these philosophical, religious and cultural texts ran across civilisations, it was only upon the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 that these inherent values were given universality that transcended culture and tradition and become the cornerstone of human conscience in our time. The UDHR gave authoritative expression to these principles, holding them to be true and valid for all people in all societies. These principles were later adopted as binding international treaty into two distinct and different covenants, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). These can be contrasted on the basis of their focus – the ICCPR focusing on the limitation of state power and the ICESCR asserting the obligations of the state towards individuals. Together with the UDHR, these two covenants form the International Bill of Human Rights, which seeks to transform individuals from objects of compassion into subjects of rights.

Main human rights instruments

Since the adoption of the two covenants a number of other treaties and declarations have further expounded the intention carried within the International Bill of Rights. According to the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, there are 12 major treaties that states are required to sign, ratify and incorporate in their national legislation:

1. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
2. The International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
3. The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR-OP1)
4. The Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aimed at the abolition of the death penalty (ICCPR-OP2-DP)
5. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

Preamble to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,
The General Assembly proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these and freedoms…

6. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

7. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (OP-CEDAW)

8. The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)

9. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

10. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OP-CRC-AC)

11. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography (OP-CRC-SC)

12. The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW)

In addition to these instruments, there are three key regional human rights instruments which have established human rights on a regional basis – the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (for Africa); the American Convention on Human Rights (for the Americas); and the European Convention on Human Rights (for Europe). A number of regional bodies such as the organisation of American States and the Council of Europe have further adopted separate treaties with implementation mechanisms in respect of catalogues of economic, social and cultural rights. The principles inherent in human rights form part of international customary law and authoritative jurisprudence of international adjudication authorities such as the UN ad hoc tribunals, the International Criminal Court etc.

The concept of dignity lies at the heart of human rights as observed from the UDHR and the core values of non-discrimination and equality are of particular reference to migration. Migrants regardless of their country of origin or where they live have an equal opportunity to access and enjoy the core human rights. Their rights during travel, when entering and when leaving are increasingly being seen as an integral component of the rights that states have a duty to protect. In addition to the ICRMW, states have developed additional international instruments that amplify core rights within the context of migration and forced displacement:

Ratification by South Africa of human rights treaties

At present South Africa has ratified the following treaties:

• International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
• International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
• Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
• Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (CAT)
• Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
• South Africa has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), but it has not yet entered into force.

South Africa has yet to ratify the following treaties and protocols:

• The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
• Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT)
• International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families
• International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances

Domestication by South Africa

The national laws that set out the rights and responsibilities of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants include:

• The 2002 Immigration Act (amended in 2004)
• The 1998 Refugee Act (currently being amended)
• The Social Assistance Act
• The Promotion of Administration of Justice Act
• The Promotion of Information Act
• The Equality Act (Promotion of Equality and Protection Against Discrimination Act)
• The South African Schools Act

Main challenges

While South Africa has made significant progress in promoting human rights, work remains necessary to bring the country into full compliance with treaty obligations. The granting and acknowledgement of rights is only one step towards achieving the enjoyment of those rights by individuals living in South Africa. The extent to which these rights have become a reality to those living in South Africa continues to be a major source of criticism, with many observers pointing out the discord between the society envisaged within the provisions of the Constitution and the failure of the majority of people to access this vision in three main areas:

Physical security

The African Peer Review Mechanism 2008 report was critical of the levels of crime experienced by ordinary South Africans and many observers have noted the negative impact that this disregard of their fundamental human rights continues to have on the democratic dispensation. Communities across the board continue to raise frustration with these high levels of crime and what they perceive as the ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system. Often these frustrations have, in many townships, given rise to vigilantism and acts of mob justice, further undermining the rights to physical safety of many other individuals. Addressing crime should become one of the biggest priorities of the government as the primary guarantor of the Bill of Rights.

Economic security

It is recognised that any initiative to address crime must engage with the underlying social problems. Due to the high levels of income inequality and unemployment that shape the socio-economic and power relations of South African society, the Constitutional Court is increasingly playing an important role in advocating for the enforcement of minimum legal rights to social security, housing, education and other socio-economic rights enshrined in the ICESCR to enable the poor to escape extreme deprivation. This is in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, where 189 member states of the UN reaffirmed the commitment of the international community to eradicate poverty. Yet despite these developments, South Africa has yet to ratify the ICESCR, which explicitly sets out the importance of advancing a number of such issues facing South Africans. Ratification of this treaty would demonstrate commitment to these issues and would be an important step towards addressing these concerns.

Equality and discrimination

Despite the constitutional vision for a non-racist, non-sexist and equal society, inhuman and racist conduct continues to be reported and the enforcement of the legislative framework in respect to the promotion of equality is fraught with many challenges. In many instances, South Africa falls below its international obligations in terms of treaties such as the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and UN monitoring bodies such as the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights have highlighted concern with the failure of the country to formulate concrete programmes for the eradication of xenophobia and the violence inflicted on foreign nationals and their property. Given the country's reputation as a hub of relative prosperity in the region, migration will continue to be a reality, and it is often suggested that the current approach to containing migration through stringent border control and admission has only led to a rise in the numbers of undocumented workers who are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation because of their immigration status. The signing and ratification of a treaty like the ICRMW would be useful in limiting this trend and initiate a new approach to migration that recognises the potential contributions of migrants towards addressing many of South Africa's challenges.

The impact of promoting human rights during the life of one generation is often realised by the next.

"While South African participants are more focused on the separateness enforced through apartheid, the migrant participants are more likely to raise the effects of colonial division."

Many conversation participants wanted to explore the potential for sharing business skills.

Statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

December 10, 2009 – The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, explains why this year's theme for International Human Rights Day is non-discrimination.

"The concept of non-discrimination lies at the heart of human rights."

For this reason, it has been designated the official theme of this Human Rights Day, which occurs every year on the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. And for this and many other reasons it should be an unofficial theme every day, every year, for everyone.

Twenty-six of the Universal Declaration's 30 Articles begin with the words "Everyone…" or "No one…" Everyone should enjoy all human rights. No one should be excluded. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Non-discrimination must prevail.

Today, we have a whole range of rights-based international treaties imbued throughout with the concept of non-discrimination. These include, for example, conventions on the rights of the child, rights of people with disabilities, rights of refugees and of migrant workers; conventions dedicated to the elimination of racial discrimination and discrimination against women; as well as treaties dealing with labour, health and religion. These legally binding standards are complemented by important UN declarations detailing minority rights and the rights of indigenous peoples.

These international laws and standards are supported by thousands of national and regional laws and institutions. Quite a few countries now have truly universal education, and a smaller number have universal public health systems. Taken together all of this marks an extraordinary celebration of humankind's ability and aspiration to create a world of equal opportunity and equal treatment under the law. And many millions of people have benefited as a result.

People of all sorts have something to offer. When we embrace diversity, we bring extra richness and depth to our societies.

Yet discrimination is still rampant.

Women work two-thirds of the world's working hours and produce half of the world's food, yet earn only 10% of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's property. Despite significant improvements over the past century, women and girls are still discriminated against to some degree in all societies and to a great degree in many. Every day countless numbers of women are sexually or physically abused, and the vast majority of their abusers go unpunished and future abuse is undeterred.

Minorities in all regions of the world continue to face serious threats, discrimination and racism, and are frequently excluded from fully taking part in the economic, political, social and cultural life available to the majorities in the countries or societies where they live.

Similar problems face the estimated 370-million indigenous people who make up 5% of the world's population, but 15% of its poorest people. They are often marginalised, deprived of many fundamental rights – including land and property – and lack access to basic services.

Racial and ethnic discrimination are also to be found all across the planet, and remain one of the most dangerous forms of discrimination. Left unchecked, or actively fanned,

During the transect walk (Nyanga, October 2009) participants reflect upon common scenes which they encounter daily. Through this they rediscover strengths and identify concerns within the community.

they can all too easily lead to hatred, violence, and – in the worst cases – push on up the scale to full-blown conflict, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Discrimination based on religion or belief can be equally destructive. In certain countries, members of certain groups are restricted in how they can exercise their religion or belief and deprived of their fundamental rights. In extreme cases such conditions may lead to sectarian violence, killing and conflict. Stereotyping can lead to stigmatisation and isolationism.

Refugees and migrants are widely discriminated against, including in rich countries where men, women and children who have committed no crime are often held in detention for prolonged periods. They are frequently discriminated against by landlords, employers and state-run authorities, and stereotyped and vilified by some political parties, media organisations and members of the public.

Many other groups face discrimination to a greater or lesser degree. Some of them are easily definable such as persons with disabilities, stateless people, gays and lesbians, members of particular castes and the elderly. Others may span several different groups and find themselves discriminated against on several different levels as a result.

Those who are not discriminated against often find it hard to comprehend the suffering and humiliation that discrimination imposes on their fellow individual human beings. Nor do they always understand the deeply corrosive effect it has on society at large.

Discrimination feeds mistrust, resentment, violence, crime and insecurity and makes no economic sense, since it reduces productivity. It has no beneficial aspects for society whatsoever. Yet we continue to practise it – virtually all of us – often as a casual reflex, without even realising what we are doing.

I would therefore like to encourage people everywhere – politicians, officials, businesses leaders, civil society, national human rights institutions, the media, religious leaders, teachers, students, and each and every individual – to honour Human Rights Day 2009 by embracing diversity and resolving to take concrete and lasting actions to help put an end to discrimination.

Facilitator Nzirire Bhahati (Union of Refugee Women) preparing material for action planning (Albert Park, October 2009).

NMF Dialogues

South Africa needs to build communities that can cope with change and with realities that are slow to change. It needs communities where people share values and form relationships that help them withstand poverty and inequality. Government has long been aware of this need to promote "togetherness" in our young democracy.

But people's experiences have not matched the ideal. Millions of South Africans harboured the hope and expectation that the new democracy would fundamentally change their lives from apartheid-era oppression to social and economic freedom and well-being. According to the *World Development Report* of 2006[i], South Africa's income inequality remains one of the highest in the world. Just under half of South Africa's 47-million people are living in poverty, with black Africans comprising nearly 90% of the almost 22-million poor people in South Africa. In some parts of the Eastern Cape, more than three-quarters (76%) of the population live below the poverty line. Citing the Presidency's *Development Indicators 2008* publication, the South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR) notes that though there has been a slight decrease in poverty levels, 41% of the population was living below the poverty line of R367 a month in 2007. While official levels of unemployment vary between 25% and 27%, in places such as Khayelitsha[ii] in the Western Cape, almost 48% of the adult population are said to be economically inactive. Of those employed in Motherwell[iii] in the Eastern Cape, 25% earn less than R19 200 a year.

The social attendants of these persistent levels of economic inequality are profound. Government's *Towards a Fifteen Year Review*, published in October 2008, lists migration within South Africa from underdeveloped or rural areas to areas of high economic activity as one of the major stressors on social cohesion. According to the report, while provinces with fewer resources, such as the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and the North West, have seen a decline in population since 1996, migration to other provinces is increasing steadily. Gauteng, for example, has seen a 34% increase in population, followed by the Western Cape at 31%. In most instances, migration within South Africa to the better-resourced provinces is motivated by the pull of employment and economic activity. Directly related to this trend is the mushrooming of urban informal settlements and strain on the delivery of basic services such as housing, electricity, water and sanitation. Coupled to this is the growing tendency to use violent civic action to draw government's attention to the increasing burden of poverty, deprivation and lack of service delivery. Particularly since 2006, some of the most economically depressed townships have been locked in bitter, angry and often violent protests against the slow pace of service delivery. Then, in May 2008, violence against migrants flared up on an unprecedented scale in several provinces, leaving 62 people dead, an estimated 200 000 displaced[iv] and scores of homes, properties and businesses looted or destroyed. The violence, in its appeal to anti-migrant sentiment, also exposed growing fissures within South African communities and the well-being of our democracy.

The NMF social cohesion programme

Against this backdrop, in February 2009, the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) launched its programme to promote social cohesion.

We[v] adopted a working definition of social cohesion as "that which galvanises a collective or a group of people around a common set of values, based on mutual respect, tolerance, freedom from fear, social solidarity and respect for human dignity". This definition recognises that social cohesion is built on relationships of trust and respect between individuals, communities, community-based structures and organisations, government departments and institutions of governance. These relationships require active engagement, consultation and participation. Furthermore, we take the view that the advancement of social justice is central to the process of social change and that in addressing historically unjust political, economic and social relations, we would contribute to the building of a society based on "democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights". Towards the goal of building social cohesion, the NMF programme has adopted the Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE) methodology. Using community conversations as its primary delivery vehicle, the methodology facilitates relationship building and provides an environment for people to identify, share and strengthen their communities' capacities to address the challenges they are facing. By taking ownership of the social change process that they want to achieve, communities and the structures that support them are enabled to build the required degree of trust, solidarity and social relationship.

The shortfall in housing and services puts pressure on communities.

Goals

The overall goal of the NMF's programme to promote social cohesion is to identify and address the root causes of violence and to contribute to building better relations within South African communities and between the host communities and migrant[vi] communities. Its three strategic objectives are to:

- Facilitate 30 community conversations, using the CCE methodology, in selected sites to enable South African and migrant communities to contribute to the creation of a culture of tolerance, respect for human dignity and social justice;
- Enhance the capacity of 30 facilitators to implement community conversations, using the CCE methodology, to promote constructive dialogue within and between South Africans and migrants to build socially cohesive communities; and
- Conduct research to document community-based initiatives aimed towards building tolerance, respect for human dignity and social justice and to celebrate the resilience of communities that have overcome adversity.

Sites

During its current pilot phase, the programme is being carried out in five provinces, namely Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, and the Eastern Cape. In each of the five provinces, at least three local townships have been identified for the implementation of community conversations.

The local implementation sites are:

- Western Cape: Khayelitsha, Nyanga and Philippi
- Gauteng: Atteridgeville, Diepsloot, Thembisa and Ramaphosa
- KwaZulu-Natal: Albert Park and Cato Manor
- Mpumalanga: Delmas, Leandra and Nkomazi
- Eastern Cape: Port Elizabeth (Motherwell, Walmer), Uitenhage (Kwanobuhle), and Jeffrey's Bay (Tokyo Sexwale, Ocean View)

A baseline survey was conducted in selected sites before the community conversations began. The study aimed to create a profile of socio-economic, political and cultural conditions in these communities and deepen our understanding of how these conditions affect relationships between migrants and South African communities. We reviewed the available literature and surveyed 526 participants through a mainly quantitative questionnaire. The survey results, which are available on request, will be used to monitor the programme's impact after the pilot phase of the implementation.

Community Capacity Enhancement

The Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE) methodology was originally developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and has since been adopted by the Nelson Mandela Foundation. The methodology is based on a six-step implementation cycle, each with its specific objective and set of tools[vii] or small group exercises, to initiate and support a process of social change.

For the past few years, the NMF has applied the CCE methodology to identify communities' concerns with regard to HIV/AIDS. The methodology can also be used to explore and address any other kind of community issue. For this programme the CCE methodology has been used to address violence and xenophobia. The main means for achieving this is through community conversations – open community discussions guided by facilitators trained in the CCE methodology. Community conversations provide safe spaces where people can get to know each other, build relationships, express themselves without fear and get to the heart of their concerns. Here, they identify and explore their issues, values and resources. They begin to make decisions, and take action to find solutions to the challenges they face. They constantly review

Bishop Tshabala (Mpumalanga Council of Churches) facilitating a plenary discussion (Nkomazi, November 2009).

and reflect on the process they are going through. The process is also shared beyond the community through documentation, arts and the media.

Central to the success of the CCE methodology is the building and maintenance of solid, meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with a wide range of actors. This includes relevant national and provincial departments; local government structures, local councillors and ward committees; community and faith-based organisations; informal and formal opinion-leaders; community structures; non-government organisations; and other representative formations in the identified communities.

An integrated programme strategy to address violence and xenophobia

To our knowledge, the CCE methodology has not previously been used to explore and address violence and xenophobia in South Africa. This presents us with both challenges and opportunities.

Arising from the programme goal and objectives, the following key programme components were identified:

- Building relationships and operational partnerships with non-profit organisations, faith- and community-based structures and other relevant formations in the targeted local sites to ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme.
- Strengthening the capacity of facilitators "seconded" to the programme to implement community conversations in the selected sites.
- Implementing community conversations based on the CCE methodology to stimulate dialogue within South African communities and between host and migrant communities with a view to advancing social cohesion.
- Conducting research, including a baseline study to deepen our understanding of the phenomena of violence and xenophobia in South Africa and to support evidence-based programme implementation.
- Putting in place systems and processes to enable timely monitoring, reflection and review of the various programme elements.

At the outset, we understood that we would have to design and implement a programme that optimises every implementation component and at the same time weave these into each other so that the one, as it were, fed off and reinforced the other.

There were several considerations that informed this line of reasoning. The complex, multidimensional, structural nature of violence in South Africa and the unique manifestations of xenophobic violence require an intervention that takes account of the totality of the phenomenon and at the same time critically examines the interrelationships between and within the various overt expressions of violence. Within this context resides a host of actors – formal and informal – that potentially play a facilitative or preventative role in the life-cycle of violence. Whether they were spoilers or partners in building cohesive communities, we would have to cultivate and nurture their relationship to start the long process of building a common purpose towards social cohesion. We also understood that as both active participants and facilitators of the social change process, the learning process would be intense and would necessarily have to be captured, reflected on and reworked to remain responsive to the shifting dynamics of violence and community building. The programme elements, referred to above, resonate with the five key pillars or steps that support the implementation of the community conversations. These are:

- Social mobilisation and relationship building with key stakeholders
- Implementation of community conversations to promote social cohesion
- Quality control of the training and continuous capacity development of facilitators to implement community conversations
- Building sustainability through the co-ordination of counselling and related services

With regard to the implementation of the community conversations, we understood that progression from one "pillar" or "step" to the next is not a linear process. Rather, the foundational pillars of the community conversations are in a cyclical relationship to each other and are interrelated to all other programme components. The community conversations presented us with the vessel through which all other programme components are leveraged and around which they converge to provide an integrated, holistic implementation strategy.

Principles that guide our work

Core human rights principles guide all aspects of programme implementation. These include equity, equality, non-discrimination, human dignity, non-violence, participation, inclusion, accountability and responsibility. Other principles are:

- Solid and sustainable partnerships with all key stakeholders.
- Enhancing individual, organisational and community capacity, based on the belief that the inherent and indigenous knowledge of all individuals, organisations and communities contributes to the identification of problems, the resolution of challenges and mobilisation towards positive action and social cohesion.
- Facilitation rather than intervention of "experts".
- Gender sensitivity and a focus on the participation and inclusion of women and girls.
- Respect for differences, diversity, universality and mutual trust.
- Belief that communities have the capacity to identify the changes they need, "own" these changes and transfer change to other communities.
- Willingness of facilitators to engage in a process of self-development.

Partnerships

Given the size of the task at hand and the importance of securing local buy-in for the programme, the NMF entered into formal operational partnerships with non-profit and community-based organisations working in the fields of violence, migration and social cohesion in the five target provinces. Operational partners were requested to "second" facilitators to the programme to be trained in the CCE methodology and to assist with the implementation of the community conversations in their respective provinces. A total of 32 facilitators – South Africans and migrants – are currently part of the implementation team. They represent community and faith-based organisations, non-profit organisations and national structures working with disadvantaged and migrant communities.

Capacity development of facilitators

Facilitators attended two seven-day capacity development workshops, one in January and a follow-up workshop in May 2009. The purpose was to consolidate their knowledge of the CCE methodology, to deepen their understanding of violence and

Participants in the Nkomazi conversation listen attentively to a member of the community reporting back on the root cause tree exercise (August 2009).

xenophobia in South Africa, and to equip them to lead community conversations in their respective areas. The first challenge was to adapt the original CCE Handbook to meet the objectives of the programme. The tools were moulded to be more responsive to the socio-legal context and the unique manifestations of violence in South Africa. Through critical questioning, small group exercises, role plays and other interactive exercises, facilitators interrogated common perceptions, attitudes and belief systems that affect relations between different ethnic groups, people from different class or ideological positions or between different nationalities.

An additional goal was to start a process of self-reflection and self-knowledge so that facilitators could identify and confront their own prejudices. By doing so, facilitators are better able to support the personal transformation and growth of others. To create an appreciation of the immediacy of violent conflict, displacement and migration, two primary approaches were used. Firstly, the trainers used visual tools, namely DVDs, photographs and graphic imagery of actual conflicts in countries such as Sierra Leone and the recent xenophobic attacks that rocked South Africa, to evoke a shared response to the horrors of violence. Secondly, by focusing on the historical and structural nature of violence in South Africa, facilitators gained a better understanding of the origins and roots of inequality, disadvantage and marginalisation, the unequal power relations these engender, and present-day expressions of anger, frustration and disempowerment.

The capacity development workshops and the rich experiences and inputs of the facilitators helped us to understand better what worked, what did not work and how to mould the tools to get maximum participation during the actual community conversations.

Why community conversations?

The main objective of the community conversations is to generate an understanding of and response to violence and xenophobia that integrates individual and collective concerns, values and beliefs. When we understand what people believe and feel, we can understand why and how they cause humiliation, harm and often violence to others.

The community conversations acknowledge both South African and migrant

communities' frustration, anger and despair. They provide a platform where diverse perspectives can be shared and debated, and common solutions can be found.

International migration is increasing, not only in scale and speed, but also in terms of the number of countries and the range of people involved. As a result, the notion of the socially or ethnically homogeneous nation-state with a single culture has become increasingly outdated. The community conversations recognise that the presence of refugees and migrants may pose both challenges and opportunities for South African communities. However, instead of focusing on the differences, the community conversations provide an opportunity for migrant and host communities alike to embrace their diversity and to negotiate a set of relations that usher in new forms of social interaction and exchange. To encourage discussion from diverse perspectives, invitations to community conversations are typically extended to a wide range of local structures, including local government, community and faith-based structures, trade associations, local opinion leaders, religious leaders, community media, provincial government departments, beneficiaries of organisational partners and non-government organisations working with South African and migrant communities.

The following section highlights the innovative ways in which we have applied tools in the CCE methodology to stimulate discussion among host and migrant communities, to bring their perspectives and concerns to the surface, and to cultivate relationships that are crucial to the task of building social cohesion. We do not claim any definitive insights into the drivers of violence and xenophobia or the actions required to start the process of building cohesive communities. Our engagement with communities is still at an early stage. However, we are humbled by the learning and profound personal transformation that we, as implementers of the programme, have undergone. There is no doubt that we will continue to learn and as we do so we will be better equipped to accompany communities on their journey of social change.

A representative of the Commission for Gender Equality emphasises the need for stakeholders to support the conversations (November 2009).

Themes emerging from the conversations
Perspectives on violence and xenophobia

"Violence is a great equaliser in the sense that it is the residual of power."[xi]

We embarked on the implementation of community conversations with some trepidation. The CCE methodology holds that communities are best able to identify and deal with the issues that are of concern to them. Our task was to create a safe, trusting environment and to provide them with the tools to raise their concerns; to facilitate dialogue; and to accompany them on the journey towards finding the necessary solutions. We approached the community conversations with little other than the tools in the CCE methodology. There were no predetermined "items on the agenda". This was to be a process where communities would determine, for themselves, the "issues for further discussion and action".

To date community conversations have been implemented in Atteridgeville (Gauteng); Khayelitsha and Nyanga (Western Cape); Cato Manor and Albert Park (KwaZulu Natal); Delmas and Nkomazi (Mpumalanga); and Jeffrey's Bay, Walmer, New Brighton and Kuyga (Eastern Cape). As part of a carefully thought-through social mobilisation strategy, we maintain a database for each of the five target provinces, containing contact details of key individuals, community and faith-based structures, relevant government departments, local councillors and ward committees. Prior to each community conversation, electronic and text-messaging invitations are sent to individuals and organisations listed on the databases. Our aim is to secure the participation of 70 to 80 people at each conversation to enable serious, substantive dialogue and allow diverse views and opinions to be heard.

Approaching the community conversations, we start from the premise that the history of violence in South Africa is deeply embedded in its social, political, economic and cultural structures. To uncover the multiple and complex layers of the root causes of violence and the abiding effects, we focused on a few tools in the CCE kit. The tools most commonly used during these initial engagements with the target communities included the Historical Timeline[viii]; the Transect Walk and Mapping Exercise[ix]; and the Integral Framework[x]. These tools were deemed appropriate to start the process of relationship building and to enable people to understand how they had come to be disempowered, marginalised and frustrated.

This section provides an overview of perspectives emerging from the community conversations held to date. Wherever possible, we have grouped views and issues under thematic headings. In doing so, we aim to provide more structure to the lessons we are learning, and hope to enrich the current discourse and practice aimed at addressing violence and xenophobia in South Africa.

William Bird from Media Monitoring Africa discusses the role of the media in social transformation at the Social Cohesion Reference Group meeting in July 2009. Dr Sanda Kimbimbi looks on.

A timeline of violence[xii]
Nyanga

Until recently Nyanga had "pride of place" as the most dangerous township in South Africa. Made up of nine sections, Nyanga is also one of oldest, largest and poorest townships in Cape Town. It came to world attention in 1993, when it became the subject of inquiry of the Goldstone Commission into the prevention of public violence.[xiii]

Nyanga, like most other black townships in the country, is the twin creation of the migrant labour system and the Group Areas Act. In the late 1940s and early 1950s black people were dispossessed of their land and forcibly evicted from now-middle-class areas such as Sea Point, Hout Bay, Retreat and Simon's Town. Under the growing weight of the migrant labour system, Nyanga became a township of single-cell hostels, where "when you must sneak your wife into your house, you learn not to give expression to your emotion".[xiv] By the mid-1970s migration from the newly independent homelands of Transkei and Ciskei to Cape Town took place at an accelerated rate. The apartheid government and its local proxy, the Bantu Affairs Administration Board (BAAB), however, were ill-prepared. As the influx of people increased, informal, corrugated-iron dwellings sprang up all over, particularly in a part of Nyanga commonly referred to as Crossroads.

In terms of the influx control laws, however, migrants from the homelands had been declared "illegal immigrants" in the urban centres of Cape Town. With the help of the *izimbondo* or agents of the BAAB, the "new arrivals" were regularly prosecuted for being in Cape Town "illegally", frequently resulting in forced deportations back to the homelands.

Many of the attempts at forced removal erupted in violence. In 1977, facing the threat of yet another round of forced removals and deportations to the Transkei, the women organised and formed the Crossroads Women's Movement. Under the rallying call "*Asihambi*" – we are not moving – the women mobilised international attention, turning Crossroads into a symbol of resistance against forced removals. At the height of the community's defiance, local leaders emerged to form the United Crossroads Committee. In 1979, the United Crossroads Committee entered into an "agreement" with Piet Koornhof, then Minister of Co-operation and Development. In terms of the "agreement", the community, under the leadership of the "headmen", was to assist with a head-counting exercise to limit further influx into the area, in return for temporary rights to remain in Cape Town and the promise of formal housing in an area that was to become known as New Crossroads.

In 1983, violence erupted once again. A group, commonly known as the Witdoeke, reportedly supported by the South African police and the army and closely associated with one of the most feared headmen, Johnson Ngxobongwana, went on a bloody rampage that lasted several months. According to some there was growing resentment among the older Crossroads residents about the rising influence of a mostly younger group aligned to the United Democratic Front (UDF). By February 1985, Crossroads was home to 11 shack leaders. The most powerful, Ngxobongwana, controlled up to 100 000 people. The local leaders soon realised that they were sitting on a gold mine. As the lists for housing grew longer and people started paying to have their names included on the lists, satellite "squatter camps" and local leaders mushroomed. The headmen seized the opportunities for extending political and economic control over the squatter camps by selling rights to occupy land at Crossroads and collecting dues from people living within their areas. They exploited traditional belief systems, cultural differences, socio-economic differences, social status divides and the general scramble for housing to further their own greed and desire for political control. Boundary disputes and leadership struggles abounded. A major outbreak of violence occurred in 1986 when the leaders of the satellite camps and their followers were driven out and large areas of KTC (Kakaza Trading Centre), an adjoining informal settlement, were destroyed. The Goldstone Commission reported that nearly 65% of KTC shacks were razed, leaving an estimated 60 000 people homeless. After the 1986 violent expulsion of people from the

Participants observe common occurrences during a transect walk in Nyanga, October 2009.

satellite camps, new houses were built in an area known as Phase 1. In 1989 violence broke out once between Ngxobongwana and his Witdoeke, on the one hand, and shack leaders from other satellite camps, on the other, amid claims that houses were being allocated to people not residing in the area. The conflict continued well into 1993. As the violence spread, it grew in complexity and dimension and from 1991 to 1994 rival taxi associations were firmly embroiled in what was to become one of the longest, bloodiest and most ruthless taxi wars in Cape Town.

What, we wondered as we ventured into our first community conversation in Nyanga on October 1, 2009, were the enduring effects of this history on the state of relationships now?

Towards an understanding of violence

Nathan[xv] identifies four structural ingredients for violence to thrive: authoritarian rule; the exclusion of sectors of society on the basis of ethnicity, religion or other forms of identity; socio-economic deprivation and inequity; and weak states in the sense of lacking the institutional capacity to manage political and social conflict. He asserts that "the risk of violence rises when these conditions are present simultaneously, intertwined and mutually reinforcing, and exacerbated by other structural problems".

The manifestation of these conditions in apartheid's structures and systems has been extensively documented and does not fall within the purview of this booklet. Rather, through the perspectives emerging from the community conversations, we wish to explore the lingering threats this history poses today and how it affects relations among South Africans and between South African and migrant communities.

The views gathered to date suggest that a complex, multilayered, interrelated set of conditions is contributing to increasing social instability in the townships and, specifically, aiding the spread of violence against migrants. These conditions include:

- Tensions and mistrust within South African communities, based on historical ethnic, cultural, language and social class divisions.
- Persistent systematic forms of social exclusion and marginalisation from social, economic and political processes and decision-making. Institutional and other forms of exclusion are not that different for migrants and impoverished South Africans.
- Growing social and economic inequality that overlaps with communities' lived experiences of social, economic and political exclusion and marginalisation.
- The emergence of formal and informal leadership structures, often motivated by economic gain and self-interest, that appears to be filling a perceived vacuum in terms of addressing violence and crime, providing "safety and protection" and ridding communities of "undesirable elements".
- A general lack of awareness of South Africa's national and international obligations regarding the protection of refugees and other migrants, coupled with deep-seated attitudes and a willingness to act on xenophobic perceptions.

Ken Mutuma, implementing partner, explains the action planning exercise to the Albert Park community (October 2009).

Bea Abrahams, implementing partner, presents some of the key perspectives that have emerged out of the first series of community dialogues at the Social Cohesion Reference Group in July 2009.

A melting pot or is the pot melting?

As said previously, we used a range of small group exercises to stimulate community conversations. The historical timeline exercise, in particular, enabled participants to reflect on the impact of South Africa's history on present-day social, economic, attitudinal and behavioural challenges.

Many spoke about the ongoing mistrust and lack of social interaction between different language, ethnic or racial groups, directly attributing this to South Africa's history of separateness under apartheid. Jeffrey's Bay participants, for example, point out that community dynamics in Jeffrey's Bay are a microcosm of a wider South African dynamic. By 1992, Tokyo Sexwale township reportedly comprised 24 households, one small school and a local church. Between then and now, Tokyo Sexwale and the adjacent settlement of Ocean View have become a burgeoning mix of low-cost ("RDP") houses, taverns and sprawling informal dwellings, housing in excess of 50 000 people. The promise of better economic prospects attracted people from all corners of the country, making Jeffrey's Bay a true assortment of all ethnic, cultural and language groups.

"This used to be the meeting place where people gathered – the Xhosa tribes of the Eastern Cape, Ciskei and Transkei ... The Xhosas, the Zulus, Swatis, Sothos and the Vendas and now the coloured people."
– Jeffrey's Bay community conversation

However, the dream of economic well-being has not materialised and the vast majority of township residents are locked in a never-ending cycle of poverty. An estimated 70% to 80% are dependent on seasonal work, at best for about four months of the year. They say, especially in times of scarcity, people tend to "click" together, retreating into their own ethnic or language group. Even within groups that share a common ethnic or language background, there is a tendency to split off further along clan lines. For example, the Hlubis gang up against the Pondos or vice versa, making the question "where do you come from?" the deciding query.

The lack of cohesion among South Africans was highlighted in several other communities. Below are excerpts of participants' contributions in community conversations in the different provinces.

"We in South Africa, firstly, are bothered by the TBVC states (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei). In South Africa we as a people didn't even accept each other as South Africans when we came to the cities. Someone who came from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town, Gauteng or KwaZulu-Natal, we never embraced each other and even we had conflict. That alone has played an instrumental role inside us because it remained and what mattered was who you were and where you came from."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"I am a foreigner from Limpopo. Since I came here I can still feel some of the challenges that my brothers and sisters from other parts of the continent are experiencing. I have been asked several times where I come from even when there is no requirement for me to do so."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"I have been listening to what has been said and I am torn apart because it feels that they are speaking to me. As I stand here I am being harassed. Discrimination and segregation is not only happening amongst the foreign nationals, it is also taking place amongst ourselves, caused by the background you come from or the level of education you have. These are the things as communities that you need to begin … to embrace one another, we need to pull one another in one direction."
– Nkomazi community conversation

In meetings with various community-based structures, religious and community leaders, we are also told of the multiple layers of social stratification that are at play in almost all communities: those in formal dwellings versus informal settlements; the so called "shack-dwellers" versus the "backyarders"; or urban residents versus the more recent migrants from rural or underdeveloped areas in South Africa. There seems to be great sensitivity or an unwillingness to talk about such dynamics in a forum such as the community conversation, more so in the presence of migrants. In one of the Khayelitsha conversations, a participant commented on the perceived tensions within communities of the same language and cultural background. His views were not taken kindly, as seen in the response below:

"But I want to put a question to our brothers, that when they speak they must be very careful on how they engage themselves in some issues that involve South Africans. When they talk about the Eastern Cape and other stuff we mustn't go there. I am very worried because we are not healing the wound but making it worse because the way we listen we are not all the same. We must not use words that will make another violence thing. The Eastern Cape thing and the Western Cape thing is going to take us back because once you talk like that in our community it's like you are siding with the foreign regime so I don't want us to go there even here… If we go into the outside world talking like this then we are creating another violence."
– Khayelitsha community conversation.

Responding to the same comment, another participant said:

"I think that there is no difference that much because even Xhosa, Sothos and Zulus they have got their own different way of things and cultural. Meaning the way that they see the Somalis is more common, but it differs to who, as an individual, how do you see that person. That is my feeling on that. But the way is still the same if you are a South African you are a South African. If you see someone as a foreigner then that person is a foreigner."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

From another angle

Many migrant participants present in community conversations spoke passionately about the destructive effects of colonialism, sometimes with reference to their countries of origin but frequently also about the impact on the African continent. Generally, it seems that while South African participants are more focused on the separateness enforced through apartheid, the migrant participants are more likely to raise the effects of colonial division and the lack of cohesion among Africans.

"I think those Africans we forget something. You know our Africa … When the British and all those countries that came to take those slaves, we started to realise that it is slavery. That was the first law. The second law was to divide and rule, not just divide the South Africans, but to divide the Africans … all of them and then all the big countries. You steal my jewellery, you steal my diamonds, you steal my oil. Even now these days the fighting is about the minerals. But we don't talk, all those talk shows we don't talk about those things. These

days we have a financial crisis, the whole world where we started, Europe. But today we fail to fight the problem we come to encounter. If we want to achieve these things, even our president, our African president. You are making Nepad, African Union. Go to a single country and ask them if they know the African Union, nothing. If the leaders lead themselves and leave the people behind, you must get these things. If you leave the children at home at risk, you get home you will find that the children are burnt."
– Cato Manor community conversation

There appears to be a contest within the soul of the community on how to respond to the ills of apartheid and the domino effect that it created of excluding groups of people. The community appeared to be asking itself, "Given the impact of national borders, how should we handle the realities of migration? Or are we trapped into a logic that is confined to seeking solutions based on the limitation imposed by our colonial boundaries?" This was exemplified in the difficulty faced by some participants who, on the one hand, blamed colonialism for imposing borders but on the other, believed that those crossing into South Africa should not be welcomed. As one participant explained:

"Don't just cross over into another country and expect to be embraced just like that … People coming into South Africa … are being given the same status as an indigenous person. You are coming into a community of hungry people and there is no love when there is an empty stomach."
– Khayelitsha community leader

The Khayelitsha community held its first conversation in May 2009.

Marginalisation and exclusion

Since 1994 a host of laws have been enacted to address historical forms of social exclusion and marginalisation. Wide-ranging pieces of legislation such as the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act and successive pieces of employment equity laws, for example, have been put in place to identify and address contemporary manifestations of exclusion, not only in the workplace, but also in the social and economic spheres.

South Africa also has in place a social welfare grant system that provides small financial grants to various categories of people seen to be at greatest risk. However, despite a relatively responsive, rights-based policy and legal framework, massive sections of the population remain on the margins, outside the mainstream social, economic and political trajectories for the rest of the country.

"When you are poverty stricken you try to survive. So, people get frustrated, they do a lot of things like crime and such. And also, how do these fuel the moral degeneration, like one group has already stated some people leave their children alone, under no guidance the moral degeneration can take place where … and … lack of role model … I think you get where you get suppressed by the situation in the environment."
– Nyanga community conversation

"We have seen that there is a lack of social dialogue within the community of Khayelitsha; no fundamental human rights that are observed by the people; lack of spirit of unity and ubuntu. Also, we look at the lack of service delivery and the lack of education. We felt that all these issues are the ones that begin to perpetrate and make sure that the violence is spreading in our community, in any form of violence. It is either xenophobia, domestic violence, those underlying factors begin to perpetrate the violence in our community."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"You know most people are illiterate. Most people don't know how to do something. We have leaders that are not visionary. If we have leaders who do not have skills, it will be difficult to change our society,

it will be difficult to develop our country. So, the first step we need to … our leaders and capacitate them with workshops like these so that they will have the know-how."
– Nyanga community conversation

"Up to now we are fighting for an African continent as a whole. We are trying to have one country and one people. But the country, culture and language we have been divided and segregated … People face discrimination each and every day because of their culture, their race and colour of skin and people are charging you because of that."
– Delmas community conversation

Research shows the intimate interrelationships and overlaps between race, social exclusion and inequality, with the poorest, most severely marginalised among black South Africans. In all community conversations, across the five target provinces, participants identified poverty and unemployment as the most pronounced barriers to social cohesion. They spoke at length of the magnitude of poverty, seeing this as the primary source of a host of social attendants such as crime, alcohol abuse and drugs.

"I am going to be talking about lawlessness. First let me start what is causing lawlessness, firstly we know that South Africa we are coming from apartheid and these legacies are still prevailing in our society. Black consciousness was never really developed, it was just an idea, it was never internalised by the people that it was meant to, you know like black people. That is why you find black on black violence and all those things and also there is an issue of poverty, the majority of people living in South Africa are poor and they are black. That is the reality and also looking at the side of the people that are making the law there is a lack of information from the implementers of the law. There is a lack of commitment and they are being paid low wages and there is a huge gap between policy makers and those that are implementing the policies. Also there is ignorance and also the education that we received from school is not really empowering they teach you to go and work for McDonald's or whatever. So you are not really being empowered."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

However, in addition to the overt symptoms, many also spoke of their emotional and psychological alienation and the perception that they are kept in poverty to serve the interests of others.

"We said lack of education among the community and lack of love within human beings. When there is a lack of love within yourself you are going to be greedy and try to go rob some people's money and phones and the right of being a South African or a human being."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"I think we must not be confused that the activities of the poor are always, there is always a sense of judgmental views about the poor gathering. That is an issue all over, in the townships, in the city all over … If you look at Durban the picture that we saw of Durban, there is a drug lord, a land lord and how do you see someone that keeps women and trades them all the time? So this is that has built in Durban, people have taken buildings like this where they rope in young people and they send them out to trade and they use them and every single day you have to come in and bring them an income. And I am saying that this is what Durban has gone to. We have to look at whose interest it is because these businesses bring in business to the city that it's being overlooked. Or is it about poor people, there are also poor people that are manipulated in the process?"
– Albert Park community conversation

However, it is perhaps in the pain of mothers and grandmothers that the burden of poverty was most profound.

"I have question and pleading. I have a cry in my heart because of poverty and unemployment of my nine children; they stand in the streets looking for work. When these young men come home I must give them food, they are mine yet I have nothing. I thank God for this time to speak my heart out. Thanks for coming people. This thing is hurting my heart and life. With (the) grant I feed many. This one thousand rand, I must buy a fridge, and pay with what? Food and everything I need, how come?… We are starving as a parent although we have a social grant."
– Walmer community conversation

"Our daughters give birth and vanish, leaving us with kids whom we don't even have their birth certificates, even up to five to eight years, and Home Affairs and Social Development can't help us. We are tossed to and fro by Home Affairs, Social Development and told to get affidavits and we never get help. We struggle to feed those kids because we have no grants."
– Walmer community conversation

What about the strangers among us?

Discussing the underlying reasons for the 2008 attacks against migrants and specifically the scale of exclusion they experience, the Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP) notes that "what separates non-nationals [from nationals] is the degree to which exclusion is both bureaucratically and socially institutionalized" [xvi]. The report also notes the long-term institutional attitudes and practices that have excluded migrants from accessing the full range of social protection and rights envisaged by the Constitution and the Refugee Act.

In many ways the views gathered through this process of community conversations corroborate the findings contained in the FMSP report and other similar studies. The community dialogues also reveal how marginalisation not only affects migrants' ability to participate in the community but has the potential in the long run, if not checked, to pave the way for further violence and societal instability.

To situate this discussion, we would like to digress a while and provide some information about migrants: the different categories of migrants; their rights and responsibilities; and their numbers.

Mr Sandile of the Nyanga Development Forum makes a contribution during the mapping group exercise (Nyanga, October 2009).

Who is a migrant?

There are different categories of migrants, governed by different national and international policies and laws. Some of the main categories of migrants[xvii] include:

- Refugee: a person who "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (UN 1951 Convention) According to the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugees, 1969, a refugee is "every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his or her country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his or her country of origin or nationality".
- Asylum seeker: a person who has lodged a formal claim for asylum with the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and is waiting for the claim to be processed and a decision on her/his refugee status to be made.
- Economic migrant: a person who has come to South Africa mainly for economic reasons. Many economic migrants have legal documents to be in the country, with work permits or corporate permits, or as traders or shoppers.
- Undocumented migrant: a person who is in South Africa without legal documentation. Some people (see above) are undocumented because they have not yet been able to lodge an application for asylum with the DHA, due to administrative delays at DHA. They are not illegally in the country, since they have a right to apply for asylum. Undocumented migrants are often mistakenly presumed to be illegal migrants.
- Internal migrant: by far the largest number of migrants in South Africa are domestic migrants, who move within the country, often from rural to urban areas. Although as citizens they have legal documents, they face many of the same difficulties in accessing public services and employment as foreign migrants. They also pose similar challenges for municipalities and government departments planning public service provision.

What about protection?

The Aliens Control Act of 1991 is an example of the dysfunctional thinking of the apartheid regime on migration which found its way into the post-democracy era. This saw black migrants as a threat which needed to be contained. It perpetuated South Africa's ambivalent and often hostile attitude to illegal immigrants, especially those from war-ravaged African states. The Immigration Act of 2002 which replaced it almost eight years into democracy, though progressive, has been criticised for the powers it gives police to reduce the number of immigrants through repressive measures. The rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are protected by a range of international, regional and national policies and laws.

Some of the main international and regional laws that the South African government has signed to guarantee the promotion and protection of the rights of refugees and migrants include:

- The United Nations 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol
- OAU 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa
- SADC Protocol on the Facilitating of Movement of Persons
- United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

In 1998, government promulgated the Refugee Act. It clearly sets out the rights and responsibilities of asylum seekers and refugees, including the protection they can reasonably expect from government. At a national level, the Constitution of South Africa provides the overarching legal framework for the protection, promotion and realisation of the rights of the various categories of migrants. Under the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2 of the Constitution), all people in South Africa, including both documented and undocumented non-citizens, have rights to:

- Dignity
- Respect
- Equality before the law
- Administrative justice
- Basic education
- Basic health care
- Employment and the protection of their labour rights

Let's talk numbers

We choose to start this discussion by reflecting on the numbers of migrants living in South Africa because of the common perception that South Africa is being "overrun" by "illegal immigrants". More than 12 years ago, then Minister of Home Affairs

Mangosuthu Buthelezi claimed that "if South Africans are going to compete for scarce resources with the millions of 'aliens' that are pouring into South Africa, then we can bid goodbye to our Reconstruction and Development Programme". At about the same time and talking about crime and violence in South Africa, former Defence Minister Joe Modise worried that "we have one million illegal immigrants in our country who commit crimes and who are mistaken by some people for South African citizens"[xviii]. Statements such as these have contributed significantly to the view that "foreigners" take away "that which belongs to South Africans" and confirm the fears of the uninformed that the country is in the midst of an unstoppable flood of migrants – a widely held view many years later.

Participants' comments are:

"In Site C we have one million people and out of this one million people that is registered and the government is aware of, there is also another five hundred thousand or six hundred thousand people who are around illegally. When the government is bringing services the services will be specified for the one million people not also accommodating the extra five hundred thousand people. In that case you may find what we call a conflict then."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"Whether they will get safety, they must come to South Africa, and we will protect them. But those who have to come here for economic asylum, we have to make sure that the leadership is being provided ... so to ensure that we are trying to minimise this high flocking of these people to South Africa."
– Nyanga community leader

According to the 2007 Community Survey, a national representative survey conducted by Statistics SA, the total number of foreign-born residents is just over 1.2-million or 2.79% of the total population[xix]. Of these, according to the 2009 World Refugee Survey, 256 000 are refugees and asylum seekers, including about 116 000 Zimbabweans, 33 000 from the Democratic Republic of Congo, 27 000 Somalis, 11 000 Ethiopians, and about 15 000 from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India. Recent figures released by the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) show that 207 206 new asylum applications were made during 2008, bringing the total number of asylum applications outstanding at the end of 2008 to 227 215.

Owing to the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe, there is little doubt that in addition to the 116 000 who were granted refugee status, many more Zimbabweans are in South Africa at present. It is frequently reported that South Africa is home to about 2-million to 3-million Zimbabweans. Some even claim between 6-million and 8-million. However, given the fact that Zimbabwe's total population is approximately

12-million to 13-million, the numbers bandied about appear to be highly inflated. The ongoing confusion about numbers has become a matter of convenience. It not only feeds into the fears that the country is being swamped by migrants coming into the country, but it also becomes a convenient excuse for blaming "the millions" for all kinds of social and development challenges communities are experiencing. It obscures the reality that migration within South Africa's borders – from underresourced to economically active regions – is growing at a phenomenal rate and that this, in all likelihood, places a greater strain on the limited resources in urban townships.

The "migrant numbers bogey" also hides government's inefficiencies in planning for what has become a global phenomenon, namely internal and cross-border migration. By government's own admission "the lack of a migration strategy and policy has also meant insufficient state influence on attitudes towards immigrants – many of whom move to the same stressed areas as internal migrants"[xx].

So what now?

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) recently initiated a strategy to improve the functioning of the Refugee Reception Offices (RROs) and to speed up the status determination of asylum applications in line with the provisions of the Refugees Act. In keeping with this, the department has opened an additional RRO in Limpopo and established the Tshwane Interim RRO in Pretoria, bringing the total number of RROs in the country to seven. In April 2009, government also announced the introduction

All conversations spoke of the need to restore the values of ubuntu (humanity, empathy and caring).

of a new migration plan for Zimbabweans, including a moratorium on deportations, a 90-day free visa for Zimbabweans entering South Africa, and a 12-month special dispensation permit for undocumented Zimbabweans already in the country. Despite these positive developments, there are ongoing concerns about the DHA's capacity to meet the protection needs of migrants. According to the CoRMSA 2009 report:"The Refugees Act and accompanying regulations lay out the asylum process, including several procedural guarantees. Unfortunately, RROs frequently fail to adhere to these procedures and deny the rights of potential asylum seekers and refugees.

"The failure to fully and adequately implement the provisions of the Refugees Act leaves many asylum seekers without documentation and vulnerable to arrest, detention and deportation, despite having valid asylum claims. These failures stem from a combination of factors: lack of capacity; inadequate training; non-adherence to the rule of law; and a tendency to ignore the protective goals of the asylum system in favour of an approach aimed at keeping 'illegitimate' non-nationals out." It is regrettable when communities, in the course of seeking the attention of government, have to turn on other marginalised groups such as migrants. While locals think that such migrants enjoy favourable treatment, the practical situation is somewhat different.

During community conversations migrants were able to discuss with locals the many concerns that leave them in an extremely vulnerable position despite the apparently favourable constitutional and legal frameworks. Migrants spoke of their experiences of discrimination and their inability to meet their socio-economic needs such as seeking employment, accommodation, health care, education and social security. Often they complained that those tasked to implement the constitutional and other legal provisions affording them protection, such as the Department of Home Affairs and the South African Police Service, seemed oblivious of their mandate.

The endless difficulties migrants experience in trying to access basic social and other legal protective services are extensively documented by CoRMSA, Lawyers for Human Rights and a range of other civil society organisations. Over the years there have been numerous reports of migrants having their documents torn up by the police. We also encountered reports of public institutions such as banks not recognising the documentation of migrants and therefore failing to provide a service to them. In a recent meeting with stakeholders in Port Elizabeth, we encountered a 16-year-old Somalian youth who came to South Africa with his mother when he was just four months old. He is currently in Grade 11. Earlier this year, in accordance with regular school requirements, he was required to produce an identity document to register for his final Senior Certificate examinations. After 16 years in the country, neither he nor his mother had the required identity documents, putting in jeopardy his chances of registering and writing his final Grade 12 examinations.

In some respects it seems as though migrants are caught in a double bind. On the one hand, in order to access the documents they are legally entitled to, they have to contend with long queues – in which they sometimes have to wait up to four days before they are served – and the growing practice of corruption among some officials.

In different conversations, many of the migrants seeking asylum continue to lament their inability to access documentation to legitimise their stay in South Africa. Without such documentation they are unable to find work or suitable accommodation and often suffer from police harassment. The consequence of such treatment is the continual

undermining of this segment of the community, leading to their further exclusion and loss of voice. In this way migrants have slowly become the embodiment of the exclusion experienced by black South Africans during apartheid, the main difference being that the present-day delineation is one based on geographical and cultural origin and not race.

Everyday scenes often reveal "green" and "dry" areas – opportunities and threats to social cohesion.

"There are people that do not have IDs because they are afraid that they will not get the necessary documents if the official sees that they do not have money. They want you to pay them money. The government needs to provide a memorandum of understanding on a local and provincial level and not just give them to us. It needs to be a transparent process."
– Nkomazi community conversation

On the other hand, there is a perception among South Africans that migrants have corrupted government departments. While there is every likelihood that some migrants resort to illegal means to obtain the necessary documents and regularise their stay in the country, it seems unfair to attribute problems of corruption solely to all migrants.

"According to our normal understanding is that if you are in South Africa illegally you are supposed to be repatriated but you will find that some officials if you give them hundred rand they will let you go because they will know that you have got a right to be in South Africa."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"When we were outside the country we were guerrillas and we were fighting for the freedom of this country, which is South Africa. Over there we didn't sell anything. We were always out of sight in hiding ... We never hassled our brothers and sisters outside the country but now they are in South Africa and we have a problem, especially we, the soldiers. Number one, these people use money to get IDs. They are changing Home Affairs, you find that my sister is married to somebody that is not known and that affects us because we never did that in their country. Today they are coming with rubbish. It's rubbish really because it affects us. The state of Home Affairs is now changed. It's no more what the Home Affairs used to be. You find that my brother is married to a wife that he never met before and that is a problem. You find that you have personal problems because they have bribed somebody. What I am saying is that we do not want fellow Africans in our country. No!"
– Nkomazi community conversation

In the community conversations, migrants also spoke about their daily struggles in the open employment sector. As one commented:

"Because when you are a foreigner you can't really access a job; most of the time they will say bring your ID which you can't. Everywhere you go, bring your ID, and we have a lot of problems that cause us today to have this kind of choice."
– Atteridgeville community conversation

It is evident that to promote and protect the full continuum of migrants' rights as set out in the Constitution, the Refugees Act and related amendments, and other laws, the commitment of many other government departments and statutory bodies is needed. As CoRMSA points out, "effective policy reform cannot be achieved by the DHA alone, but must involve the Presidency, local government, the South African Human Rights Commission, the Departments of Justice and Social Development, provincial and local government bodies, and the Ministry of Police". The need for inter-governmental cooperation and collaboration is clearly recognised by migrants:

"I would suggest that in my observation xenophobia is much higher than what we have seen on the street, than what we have been observing. So my suggestion is that we involve politicians in the programmes. I mean what refugees are really feeling in the communities you cannot feel it, they feel rejected by the natives, they don't want them, they don't want to feed them. And people think that they can avoid this issue, we need to involve Home Affairs, the Minister of Home Affairs in the problem and we should make some kind of petitions because I feel that the government is holding on the issue while lives are at stake, lives are at stake."
– Albert Park community conversation

A facilitator (Sibusiso, Leandra Advice Office, Mpumalanga) guides the community during the historical timeline exercise (Yeoville, May 2009).

Is this xenophobia or not?

Since the May 2008 attacks against migrants, there has been extensive high-level, medium-level and community debate about whether what we witnessed was xenophobia or not. At times it has been equated with criminal activity, brushed off as hooliganism, likened to racism, castigated as isolated incidents, or simply dismissed. To provide a perspective, we thought it might be helpful to share our understanding of the phenomenon. Most frequently xenophobia is defined as the "intense dislike or fear of strangers or people from other countries".

Though racism and xenophobia are distinct phenomena, they often overlap. While racism generally implies distinction based on difference in physical characteristics, such as skin colour, hair type, facial features, etc, xenophobia denotes behaviour specifically based on the perception that the other is foreign to or originates from outside the community or nation.

The World Conference Against Racism, Discrimination and Other Intolerances defined racism as an ideological construct that assigns a certain race and/or ethnic group to a position of power over others on the basis of physical and cultural attributes, as well as economic wealth, involving hierarchical relations where the "superior" race exercises domination and control over others. Xenophobia, on the other hand, describes attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity. Sadly, while xenophobia is present in many countries, it manifests in unique and horrific ways in South Africa. The South African Human Rights Commission asserts that in the South African context, a definition of xenophobia cannot be separated from violence and physical abuse. To fully comprehend the specific manifestations of xenophobia in South Africa, the term must be reframed to incorporate practice.

It is not merely an attitude: it is a violent activity that results in bodily harm and damage, specifically targeted at black African and Asian foreigners. We subscribe to this understanding. The May 2008 attacks were not isolated, unrelated incidents that just happened.

They were the culmination of violence against migrants, occurring since about 1994, that has been extensively documented by, among others, the Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP); CoRMSA; the Forced Migration Studies Programme and a range of non-profit and community organisations. The 2006 SAMP Xenophobia Survey showed that South Africa exhibited levels of intolerance and hostility to outsiders unlike virtually anything seen in other parts of the world. Some of the findings of that survey were that:

- The proportion of those wanting a total ban on immigration increased from 25% in 1999 to 35% in 2006. And 84% felt that South Africa was allowing "too many" migrants into the country.
- Nearly 50% supported or strongly supported the deportation of migrants, including those living legally in South Africa. Only 18% strongly opposed such a policy.
- Nearly three-quarters (74%) supported a policy of deporting anyone who was not contributing economically to South Africa.
- Some 61% supported the deportation of migrants who tested positive for HIV or had AIDS; only 9% strongly opposed this.
- If migrants are allowed in, South Africans want them to come alone, as they were forced to in the apartheid period. Less than 20% thought it should be easier for families of migrants to come with them to South Africa.
- Nearly three-quarters (72%) thought that migrants should carry personal identification with them at all times (the same as in 1999). Only 4% strongly opposed the suggestion.
- The proportion of South Africans wanting their borders to be electrified increased from 66% in 1999 to 76% in 2006. Only 2% were strongly opposed to such a policy.
- South Africans did not want it to be easier for migrants to trade informally with South Africa (59% opposed), to start small businesses in South Africa (61% opposed) or to obtain South African citizenship (68% opposed).

Let the people speak

Despite the scale of atrocities witnessed in 2008 and the international attention that this attracted, government's October 2008 strategic review[xxi] made only fleeting references to the attacks. The public pronouncements by senior politicians that the attacks were most likely the work of a "third force" or mere criminals seem to have permeated to the community level as well. Comments by participants in the community conversations bear this out:

"It wasn't xenophobia as such because there was no serious physical harm to the Congolese. But it was criminal actions because you will find that during that period you would find people breaking into the

Somalian shops and taking groceries. So in the fashion you cannot say that it's xenophobia as such but it's coupled with criminal actions."
– *Jeffrey's Bay community conversation*

"It was not xenophobic because the media wants to sell their papers. They always want to take the opportunities that are there ... the way I understand it, I am saying and I still say it from my personal view and I am still saying that it was not a xenophobic attack it was just another thing ... the food of the Somalians. Because the next day the shops were opened and people were there to buy the food of the Somalians, people were taking food and they were never attacked or assaulted or 'go back where you belong'. People were saying that they were hungry and there was also a strike that was around that did take eight months of the fishermen and their families were hungry."
– *Jeffrey's Bay community conversation*

Representatives of the migrant communities, on the other hand, feel very strongly that in order to root out the problem it must be identified, named and addressed.

"Once these people came here they shot our children here in South Africa and not theirs. They don't care because they have left their families behind. It is difficult to carry these people, I am sorry to say. They marry girls at the age of ten years at primary level. How do you think that you can accommodate these people? It's a problem to the bone."
– *Nkomazi community conversation*

"I just want to say the solution to every problem begins with identifying the problem. Don't make something that is one thing something else. If it's xenophobia call it xenophobia, if it's hatred call it hatred, find the definitions and work on that, otherwise all conversations are worthless."
– *Jeffrey's Bay community conversation*

"Xenophobia – we must call it xenophobia. If we have HIV we must call it HIV so that I can be healed you see. To heal yourself is to accept your problem, we cannot call xenophobia an incident of crime because the people who took part were innocent people. Some of the people we cannot judge because they are not criminal. If you want

someone's shop, you take food or do whatever you want to do and you are an innocent person, what can we call you? What we are trying to solve is a problem of hatred. The best way to describe xenophobia is hatred. Because what we are dealing with here is hatred, how can we change people to accept us? How can you accept us and you call me a Kwerekwere?"
– *Jeffrey's Bay community conversation*

Community conversation participants walk through Atteridgeville, noting areas of potential stress and strength for community relationships (September 2009).

Lead and we shall follow

In its 2009 report "Towards Tolerance, Law, and Dignity: Addressing Violence against Foreign Nationals in South Africa", the Forced Migration Studies Programme notes the "culture of violence" where violence is endorsed and accepted as a socially legitimate means of solving problems and achieving both "justice" and material goals. It also refers to Hamber's assertion that "the structural violence effected by the state through repression and legislated inequalities in the distribution of resources and opportunities during the apartheid era has created a climate in which all forms of social existence – including housing, education, jobs, wages, and service delivery – are politicised."

Along similar lines, government comments in its 2008 *Towards a Fifteen Year Review* that "the worrying increase in violence in pursuit of socio-economic objectives in the past two years or so, the kind of lawlessness seen in the violent action against people from other countries and South Africans in early 2008 and dynamics in the party-political terrain, have all played a role in undermining the legitimacy of state institutions."

In many ways the community perspectives gathered during this pilot phase corroborate these findings and point to a close connection between a perceived state of lawlessness and impunity, on the one hand, and the emergence of community leaders of questionable intention and action, on the other. Before we expand on this, we would like to take a brief moment to reflect on communities' experiences of crime and their understanding of how this fuels the spread of violence.

Pay R210 bail and come out

In 2007, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation submitted a concept paper for the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster. It questioned the inherent class and racial dimensions of crime, how it was reported and how this informed a national response to crime. It made the point that too often "crime concerns of poorer people are not given proper recognition on the public agenda". It is as though the poor and crime necessarily coexist and therefore little attention is given to how this threatens their basic right to safety and security.

It is beyond the scope of this booklet to explore the full scale and dimensions of crime in the communities where this programme is being implemented. We want to acknowledge though that in trying to address the root causes of violence in the targeted local communities, the growing impact of crime on the lives of the poor cannot be ignored or trivialised.

In all community conversations, participants spoke of the extraordinarily high levels of crime, the apparent inability to stem the tide of criminality and the common perception that "crime pays". Below are some of the comments from the various community conversations:

"When people are not employed, obviously they will resort to crime, and crime is violence. People who are not employed, they will resort to whatever atrocity they can come across."
– Atteridgeville community conversation

"We said it is still that culture of silence when crime is committed. After all, Mr Mandla committed a crime yesterday. Nothing was done to him. So if I also commit a crime, what will happen? Or if anyone committed a crime and had a bail of R200, I will also commit the same crime and pay R210 bail and come out and I will continue to do it. And in as much as government is doing a lot to get rid of illegal firearms in our homes, there is still a lot of illegal firearms that people are not willing to let go. They use it as their source of strength and power and they cannot get rid of it."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"So, until we, who think we want our society to be perfect, try as much as possible to get rid of those illegal firearms we are hoarding in our homes; if we do not succeed in doing that, violence will always be in our communities. We also see that it is all in because that people find themselves in little gangs and to commit a crime it is like they hail you for having committed a crime. And they will say, 'Hey! You did it! That was nice. I saw, you just shot him, he died. This is the type of person we want in our group.' And if we do not stop that gangsterism and stop hailing people who commit crimes, we will not go any further."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

Any justice is good justice

There appears to be wide-spread scepticism about the ability or willingness of the police to act against criminals or to protect communities against violence. In almost all conversations, participants spoke of the general lack of trust between themselves and the police.

In one community conversation, during the Transect Walk and Mapping Exercise, one group identified the local police station as a "dry grass area" – an area that contributes to the spread of violence in the community. When others questioned this, the group fiercely defended their view, saying that it is common knowledge that all kinds of contraband, such as liquor, drugs and firearms, are readily obtainable at the local police station. The rest of the community conceded that this was in fact so. Comments from other sites were:

"And why is there violence in our community? It is because there is little police visibility. We move around, we hardly see police. And because people feel it is only the police's responsibility to enforce the law, so when the police is not there then I am free to do anything that I want."
– Nyanga community conversation

"Most of us … we have experienced bad things from the police, so that's why there are CPF [Community Policing Forums] out there. That's why we ourselves are trying to … You come, you will go to a police and tell them that people are fighting or there are guns or whatever, then they come, they don't come or they come two or three hours later after the incident and people are dying and all these things. That's why the CPF is doing a much better job than police themselves."
– Atteridgeville community conversation

From the communities' perspective, the lack of protection from the police directly contributes to the tendency within communities to take matters in their own hands. In some communities the Community Policing Forums seem to playing a vital and very positive role by being in touch with community concerns and serving as an important liaison between the community and other law enforcement agencies. In others, there are unconfirmed reports that members of the community policing structures are themselves involved in violent or criminal activities.

It is apparent though that a "culture of community justice" is on the ascendency. Here again, we have been given only glimpses into this phenomenon. The FMSP Report "Towards Tolerance, Law, and Dignity" deals extensively with the growing reliance on "mob justice" mechanisms and the rise of vigilantism in South Africa. Participants often speak about it in the community conversations but always stop short of actually identifying those who may be spearheading such "movements". In one of our relationship-building meetings we were told of an incident in which a group of women caught a young man accused of robbing other women. They beat him up and then dragged him to the nearby railway tracks. Amid the cheers of community members, they waited until the next train passed.

"That is what is happening in our communities, we take the law into our hands and kill the criminal and we don't wait for the police because we don't trust the police or the law enforcers for that matter."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"When there is crime you know the community gets angry and they feel like, guys, we need to do something. What can you do, shit, vigilantism, street justice, you know. We must take this into our own hands and we must kill these bastards."
– Cato Manor community conversation

Generally, in the communities where we have had conversations, there is a pervasive sense that all levels of government or political leadership are not listening to the plight of communities. Participants say there is a growing disconnect between their lives and experiences and those of the political leaders. The starting point for some related back to the dawn of democracy, the values and rights set out in the Constitution, and communities' expectations of how their lives might change for the better. In one of the Khayelitsha conversations, for example, some participants felt strongly that mixed messages about what can and what cannot be realised within the current dispensation are causing further frustration.

"The terminology that is being used even by the politicians when they are talking to people, people don't understand it. And also we feel there are not enough awareness campaigns to make sure that people do understand the Constitution, I should make an example. If we recall last year the organisation that wanted to break away, they said that they wanted to protect the Constitution while the one that was left behind said that there is no problem with the Constitution instead we must maintain it. If those people on top have those different messages then what about the people on the grassroots level?"
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"The leaders in the community need to come to communities that are struggling to understand and develop relevant solutions. We have got councillors, government officials who don't even live in the communities anymore. The moment they are elected, the next day they

will go to stay in Camps Bay."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"...The lack of communication between leaders and people. To explain on the lack of communication, it basically means the leaders that are being elected in our communities are self-centred. What is more important to them is their families more than the community, the one that elected them to be where they are."
– Albert Park community conversation

In many instances participants also attribute the general lack of awareness about migrants, and specifically the lack of awareness about government's national and international obligations with respect to refugees and migrants, to government's poor communication with grassroots structures. There is generally very little understanding of Constitutional provisions and how these relate to migrants, different pieces of legislation relating to the protection of migrants, and government departments' mandates in providing services to migrants.

"We as South Africans don't know the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, maybe the South African government did not educate us enough with regards to the Constitution. The same goes for foreign nationals as well, they do not know the South African Constitution and the laws that guide us in South Africa. These are one of the things that bring about a lack of proper understanding."
– Khayelitsha community conversation

"What I am trying to say people is Home Affairs says that everyone in South Africa has rights. The problem I have is, what purpose does our identity documents serve if everyone who is here illegally has rights too. This means that there is no need for ID books."
– Nkomazi community conversation

"We are mindful of the fact that xenophobia happened in communities but we know very well that it is in some parts of the bigger communities. So that is why it is lawlessness because those people who did know very well that if we attack foreigners those are soft targets probably in their minds, like you said it's lack of information maybe about the Constitution. They said that if you attack foreigners you are not covered by the Constitution because if it is lack of service delivery because there were other communities – people that are

living in poor underdeveloped communities that did not do anything. So we feel that people did whatever they did because they knew very well that nothing was going to happen to them after they had done whatever they did."
– Atteridgeville community conversation

Reflecting upon everyday scenes during the transect walk (Yeoville, May 2009).

Atteridgeville: A case study for community involvement in reconciliation

The community conversation in September was the second to be held in Atteridgeville. At the first community conversation, held on June 20 to coincide with World Refugee Day, the community's attention was focused on the xenophobic attacks that took place in the area in February/March 2008 and the resultant mistrust this created between host and migrant communities. A call for a community-driven process to re-establish relations and to facilitate reconciliation between the local and migrant communities received overwhelming support. Consequently, on July 18 – the international launch of Mandela Day – a "Reconciliation Day" event took place in Atteridgeville, co-ordinated by a community-based structure.

Less than two weeks before the second community conversation, reports emerged from Atteridgeville that Somali-owned shops had been looted and in some instances completely razed to the ground. This unfortunate turn of events seemed to suggest that relations between the host and migrant communities were more fractious than previously thought and that the potential for violence remained an ongoing concern.

The facilitation team therefore arranged a series of meetings with local councillors and ward committees, local community-based organisations, youth structures and representatives of major political parties. The purpose of the meetings was multi-fold: to obtain their perspectives on the key challenges facing Atteridgeville and the opportunities that exist for building better relations with migrant communities; to obtain an understanding of their involvement with and commitment to the reconciliation process purportedly undertaken in the community; and to explore their willingness and commitment to future processes to bring about sustainable and positive social change.

Noting the recent flare-up of violence against foreign-owned shops, the meeting agreed that an initiative such as the NMF's was needed in Atteridgeville. Representatives noted that they had not been consulted on the "Reconciliation Day" activities and in most instances were not even aware of the event or what it sought to achieve. They advised that there were many "structures" in Atteridgeville, some of which sought to advance agendas that served their own interests and were not always committed to bringing about positive change that would benefit the community.

They pointed to the general lack of awareness within the community, and especially among the youth, of the rights and responsibilities that accompany the construction of a democratic society. They pointed to the high levels of community expectations, on the one hand, and the scale of marginalisation and lack of participation, on the other, and felt that the community's growing perception of being "sidelined" contributed to the climate of despair, hopelessness and the growing tendency towards violence.

They felt that concerted efforts must be made to create greater awareness of the community's responsibilities towards strengthening democracy. In some instances this might require going back to the "drawing board" to create awareness of the rights and values set out in the Constitution, the spheres of government and their respective mandates, and the community's obligations to participate in projects aimed at "deepening democracy".

Members of the community embark on a transect walk around Atteridgeville township, reconnecting with familiar surroundings (September 2009).

Representatives pointed to the increasing levels of poverty and unemployment – reportedly an alarming number of households are affected by ongoing retrenchments and the effects of the spiralling cost of living. Other concerns raised by the community included:

- The need to put in place truly participatory and representative processes to promote community-based conflict resolution and reconciliation.
- The under-representation of youth in community consultative forums and community development initiatives. They recommended the setting up of projects aimed at youth empowerment, particularly in skills development and rights awareness.
- The reported lack of understanding within the community of structures and mechanisms aimed at strengthening democracy. They felt that both government and civil society organisations must put more emphasis on demystifying the notion of democracy; consult more with communities to understand their expectations of democracy; and, where needed, realign communities' expectations with that which realistically can be achieved in areas such as housing and basic services.
- The apparent lack of participation of migrants and migrant organisations in community initiatives. They felt that some of the misperceptions of migrants, among the host communities, could be addressed if migrants were encouraged to play a more active role in the social and economic development of the community.

The engagements with the various stakeholders and the concerns raised by them provided the backdrop for the community conversation held on September 17. A total of 72 participants, including representatives of the British Embassy, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, International Organisation for Migration, the Office of the Speaker, local councillors, ward committees, members of political and youth formations and community-based organisations were in attendance. Though this was the second in the series of conversations to be held in Atteridgeville, the facilitation team felt that the levels of mistrust within the community and between various community structures and residents required an intervention that could help people to reconnect behind a common agenda.

The focus of the community conversation, therefore, should be on building relations, in line with the CCE methodology.

To this end, it was agreed to use the Transect Walk and Mapping exercises to identify community concerns, facilitate the sharing of divergent perspectives on the critical needs in the community and enable the community to recognise and begin to mobilise behind a common purpose.

For the Transect Walk exercise, participants walked through Saulsville in two separate groups in different directions. Afterwards, the general comment was that the

Members of the community walk around Atteridgeville. After the walk, participants map out areas of strength and weakness for their communities (September 2009).

exercise made residents aware of physical features and dynamics in the community that they had not previously considered.

The follow-up Mapping exercise, executed in small groups, challenged participants to identify their most pressing concerns, existing opportunities and community-based structures that could assist them in addressing the challenges they confront. Some of the main difficulties or challenges identified by the various groups were:

- High levels of poverty and unemployment: Groups noted that the majority of township residents are unemployed and that there is a growing number of people who have been retrenched in recent months, swelling the ever-increasing levels of poverty. Almost all groups mentioned the growing concern with the increasing levels of unemployment among the youth, compounded by increasing numbers dropping out of school, often with few skills. Though a few small-scale businesses such as street vendors and "spaza shops" were identified along the Transect Walk, groups noted that the majority are locked in a cycle of poverty and hand-to-mouth existence.
- High levels of crime and violence, fuelled by the availability of drugs and shebeens throughout Atteridgeville: Participants noted that it is common knowledge that institutions intended for the protection and upliftment of the

community, such as the local police station, local schools, sport facilities and public parks, have been turned into "dry grass areas" in which violence and crime can quickly take flame. Participants were particularly vocal about their lack of trust in the ability and or willingness of the police to root out crime, saying that they themselves are involved in or connive with wrongful activities at the police station and elsewhere in the township.

- The shortage of housing and the mushrooming of informal dwellings: Participants voiced their frustration at the slow pace of housing delivery despite the growing population needs. As a result settlements of informal dwellings are springing up in different parts of Atteridgeville, leading to gross overcrowding. With little or no infrastructure, such as piped water, proper sanitation, sewerage and electricity, to support the rapid spread of informal housing, most informal settlements are becoming unfit for human habitation and are rapidly turning into hotspots for the spread of violence and crime.

- The lack of participation of migrant communities in the social and economic life of the host community: There is a common perception that migrants are better skilled than their host counterparts and though they live within the same communities, experiencing similar constraints, they are better able to use their skills and social networks to build up and sustain small businesses. Some participants felt that this perception of migrants' self-sufficiency contributes to the relational distance between them and the host community. There is a perception that migrants are not willing to share their skills with host communities and that those involved in small business enterprises not only undercut prices to undermine local shop owners but also do not see the need to contribute to the economic development of the community in which they operate their businesses.

- The lack of capacity in local government to respond to the multiple and critical needs of the community: There was wide support for a view that local government lacks the financial resources and political support from provincial and national government to implement programmes that are sorely needed at community level. It was felt that government's expectation is that community upliftment programmes must be implemented on the back of a volunteer base, ignoring the real-life economic hardships of community workers and their pressures to put food on the table. One participant felt very strongly that local councillors have to bear the brunt of local residents' anger and frustration and yet local councillors, in some instances, have neither the mandate, as for example in housing delivery, nor the budgetary or political support to respond to the critical challenges they encounter on the ground.

Participants were asked to identify the existing opportunities and community-based structures in Atteridgeville that could assist them. Generally, the churches, local councillors, ward committees and Community Policing Forums were seen as the structures most likely to be able to advance their struggles against crime, violence, poverty and unemployment.

It would appear that there is a plethora of community-based structures but most of these are not registered with the Department of Social Development, limiting their ability to raise adequate funding and other needed resources to address the chronic needs of the community in a sustainable manner. A participant offered the services of her organisation to assist with the formal registration of community organisations, but it remains to be seen how many will in fact take up this offer.

Arising from this community conversation, it was agreed that further dialogues must take place to address the apparent points of tensions within the community. To fully understand and use the positive potential for rebuilding trust and relationship, the NMF facilitation team has to spend a lot more time in Atteridgeville, strengthen relations with the various formations it has met to date, and engage in further community dialogues to create the platform for community healing and reconnection.

Using the analogy of a tree, communities are asked to move beyond identifying the symptoms of concerns facing them ("branches or leaves") to exploring causes of these concerns ("the roots").

Selected facilitators' reflections

Tshikaya Zoe Nkongolo

When I came to South Africa in 1993 there were no organisations for refugees. I struggled to get assistance so I became part of the Cape Town Refugee Forum and I still am.

Now I have my own nongovernmental organisation called Africa Unite, which focuses on the integration of not only refugees but youth of South Africa as well, whether coloured, black or white. We foster relationships between them and we show them what refugees can offer.

The CCE methodology has worked very well and it has given people new skills which have allowed them to understand the root causes of violence, crime and poverty in their own communities. CCE has allowed communities to understand the root causes of last year's brutal xenophobic attacks; it has enabled them to know why they acted as they did towards foreign nationals.

I have observed that much as communities are different, they also have similar issues. There is a culture of silence towards crime; communities know who the perpetrators are but they don't speak out against them. I have also noted that poverty is a really big problem in communities and service delivery causes a lot of frustration.

In some communities people have the culture of treating themselves as victims; they don't make any effort to help themselves.

However, I have seen a lot of change in the communities where I have been working on this project. We have been going to schools and training students to know their rights and the rights of migrant workers and the response has been amazing. That said, there is still a lot to be done.

At the same time, my organisation has become more exposed through this work. I have been contacted by other organisations to collaborate with them. I am building more relationships and continuing with the work that I do.

I think it is very difficult for communities to sustain this process by themselves. The government needs to empower NGOs so that they can empower community members to carry the project forward.

The dialogue programme is a very interesting initiative which needs to be followed through carefully so that its

Zoe Nkongolo (Africa Unite) facilitating the dialogue process during the Khayelitsha conversation (July 2009).

impact is known. At the moment there is no follow-up. When we have the conversations the community becomes excited but because of the lack of follow-up the excitement dies.

Kholeka Ndzutha

Before I became part of the conversations I worked at a legal advice office. I then co-ordinated a women's events programme and we asked for funding from the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund. Then I was contacted to be part of the community conversations programme.

I am currently co-ordinating home-based care and also involved in the home givers programme whereby we visit schools and find out about kids who are orphaned. We visit their houses and find out their problems and try to assist them with school work and so on.

CCE is a great methodology; it works and encourages people to reach a common understanding of things. It gives people the ability to see things in a different way. It has enabled me to look at HIV and xenophobic attacks in a different way and reach common ground and move forward.

I have observed that South African people have a culture of entitlement. It has become a matter of: "because I am South African I am entitled to a house, job and social grant, I don't need to work for any of these things because they are mine by the virtue of me being a citizen of this country". And that isn't right.

South Africans are in a comfort zone where they cannot even realise their own natural skills, unlike migrants who don't even need a lot of education to survive.

I admire them because they use their own hands and they are able to identify natural skills and hone them. I found that this was similar in most communities that we went to.

When we chose a Somalian to represent us we were asked lots of questions about why we chose someone who is not a South African. We had to clarify and say it's because he has expertise that some people don't have.

As for the changes in myself as a result of being a facilitator, I am able to relate better with other people. I am able to deal with my own prejudice in a different way because as a human being you tend to judge a lot and forget that migrants are also human beings and they aren't all the same. I have grown and learnt to be more accommodating. I now embrace people's diversity and I respect people more.

For now we have just created platforms for people to talk; we haven't given them the tools to use. We need to have regular forums where people talk about what needs to be done. We can't go in and out of communities and expect to see change. We need to ask councillors to adopt the methodology and not only come as opening speakers and guests to the conversation.

I am still continuing with my caregiver work, using the methodology, and it's

working for me. It has made people I deal with think out of the box and it has made them understand their journey and why they act in a certain way.

Through the methodology I have an understanding of the anger bottled up by people. When I listen to people talk I can now see why they become violent. I have realised that the xenophobic attacks weren't caused by anger towards non-nationals, it was our own anger that we took out on vulnerable people who couldn't defend themselves and it was disguised as hatred of them.

Abdul Hassan

I am Abdul Hassan from Somalia; I have been residing in South Africa for 10 years now.

I am the chairperson of the Somali Association in Tshwane, and my duties involve community work, advocacy, welfare, conflict resolution, taking part in all stakeholders' meetings in Tshwane, educating the community on "dos and don'ts" in South Africa, pursuing documentation with the Department of Home Affairs, easing tensions among immigrants and foreigners where there are tensions, and so on.

The CCE methodology is a brilliant idea for this country since xenophobia and social imbalances have not been addressed by the concerned authorities. It has worked well in my community; at least now the community can differentiate between a refugee and an immigrant.

I can now walk around the township freely and peacefully as compared to before. One of the community organisations in the township called for a service delivery protest and another organisation opposed the service delivery march, and this was due to the awareness created by the dialogue. In the end the protest never took off.

As for the changes in me personally, the few grudges that I was carrying have disappeared. I am now open-minded towards criminals; I have vowed to talk to them and even change them to be good citizens. I can go to volatile areas where xenophobia is rife and engage the concerned communities.

This methodology is still new for communities, so I believe ample time should be given before it is given to the communities to sustain. This dialogue needs people to work around the clock, because it needs a lot of community mobilisation, and the presence of facilitators in the community is important.

Ntombi Mcoyi

I work at Africa Unite and I co-ordinate the programme for orphaned and vulnerable children. My organisation heard about the community conversations and nominated me to represent them.

The CCE methodology is great. It incorporates the development of both the individual and the community. It allows the community to discuss burning issues and it brings people together. It accommodates people at grassroots level and intellectual beings. I love it because it puts theory and practice together and the research element of it allows the community to interpret their own thoughts and understand their behaviour. It has a great impact and it brings about healing, understanding of behaviour and the opportunity to change behaviour.

I have been to two communities, Khayelitsha and Yeoville. Khayelitsha stood out for me because we had more time to engage with the community and the community was interested in the methodology. There was a diverse group of people in Khayelitsha and we got lots of different perspectives. At the end of it all both South Africans and migrants saw that they needed to compromise and make the effort to be part of the community and not isolate migrants.

Personally, I now have a greater awareness of social cohesion. I understand the elements of it all and I realise that xenophobia was just the surface of the problem. Through the conversations I have found what the root causes of the xenophobic attacks were and those are poverty, service delivery and injustice.

I am now more humble and I understand how deep the wounds of South Africans are. I realise that foreign nationals and South Africans go through the same issues – I see the problem clearly now. I think we just need to approach the problem differently, and our role is to let people see it this way. I have grown and I don't see the difference between us and migrants anymore.

I think that as we train communities they will be able to carry the methodology forward. As facilitators we must let communities take the lead. I think the methodology is sustainable; it's just about how people implement it and how to take it over. If we do that we will have done our full empowerment process with the communities.

I think facilitators need to be screened carefully before they go on training. We need people who are open-minded, who understand themselves, who have an understanding of their own values, and accept other people's differences. We need maturity of self, self-understanding and acceptance. Facilitators need to be confident and not have an inferiority complex, but have a willingness to learn.

Facilitators who attended the May 2009 CCE Training of Facilitators Workshop.

Jean-Pierre Kalala

I am from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and I work for Sonke Gender Justice Network, in charge of the refugee health and rights project.

The project is all about raising awareness of HIV/AIDS, gender and human rights issues within the refugee communities, and also working with service organisations, helping them to get a better understanding of refugees' issues. I came to be involved in this CCE work as we work directly with communities, both South Africans and other nationals.

I think the CCE methodology is positively moving forward and making changes. I believe it is still very early to start seeing the impact, but from participants' feedback, I can strongly say that it is heading in the right direction; we just need to give it time.

These conversations have shown us the deep root causes of challenges that face our communities. People are at least engaging with each other honestly and openly and are prepared to carry on talking to each other as they believe this is probably the only way to solve the problem. I cannot talk about any visible changes at this stage, but believe that change is slowly coming, looking at the response despite all the challenges.

I now have a better understanding of what really happened to people in this country. I have been given a chance to listen to real stories told by real people, after all that we have learned from school and read in books. I have more respect for people here than ever and I am more careful in making any judgment of their history and past.

I strongly believe that communities can actually sustain this process themselves, which should be the ideal for all of us, but it might require lot of investment in terms

Jean-Pierre, Roderick and Mohammed re-enacting a scene of xenophobic violence during the May 2009 training.

of human capital and other resources to make this happen. It is a process, but it is also positive that we have at least started. This can be a success only if it is owned by communities themselves; it is not an expert thing.

This process requires of people courage, honesty, commitment, passion and love as it is very demanding and challenging. But it is a great experience and needs to be supported.

Alphonse Niyodusenga

I am originally from Rwanda and have been living in South Africa since 2002.

I have been working with the Institute for Healing of Memories since 2005 as a programme evaluator, researcher and co-ordinator. The institute organises workshops that prepare the ground for forgiveness and reconciliation between people of diverse backgrounds, races, cultures and religions. I've been working particularly with xenophobia awareness and organising public activities to share experiences and strengthen networks.

The CCE methodology is powerful as it helps communities to identify their problems on the ground and build on their own ability to create a more cohesive, accepting and integrated community in the long term. The methodology worked well in practice in these community conversations. There is a need to have more conversations in South African communities, as people need to be reminded to live together and celebrate our diversity.

I noted that there was poor attendance in two conversations that were held in May and July in Khayelitsha. Attendance did not represent the Khayelitsha community – it was limited to stakeholders of local organisations. There is a feeling that we are preaching to the converted. I would like to see more representatives from the Khayelitsha community. There is a need for meetings with community stakeholders in preparation for the community conversation.

The other challenge is the community structures themselves. It seems that these structures do not work together for the benefit of the whole community.

There is a lack of follow-up after conversations. There is a lot of work that needs to be done between conversations. There is a gap here. The NMF needs to discuss with these organisations what they can do to follow up after conversations. This might require financial support.

Change is a process. There is a need for follow-ups, ongoing community conversations and monitoring and evaluation in order to assess the impact of this project. On the other hand, the community appreciated the project as it creates a space to come together to develop an integrated strategy to address xenophobia in the short and long term.

For me, the process is an eye-opener in terms of being aware of different dynamics in communities and to understand deeper causes of xenophobic attacks. It is also new learning/knowledge that I can use somewhere else in Africa, including my country.

At this stage, it is very hard for the community to sustain the process itself because of challenges within communities such as structures not working together, political

influences and lack of full involvement of foreign nationals in community activities. It is a process. I think in future after holding more community conversations and the community being well prepared to take the process further itself, it is possible. But if the community feels that it is ready to take the process further, there is no problem; the space is there for them. Again I feel that different organisations in the process need to encourage the community to take ownership of the programme in many ways.

It is amazing to listen to the outcome from the community itself. This shows that communities are willing to resolve their problems on their own. Communities are willing to educate each other about foreign nationals, appreciate each other and live together. The dialogue process and CCE methodology is one way to contribute to the individual healing, community healing and national healing. Dialogue creates a safe space for reflections, acknowledgement of the past and reconciliation.

It requires people to be committed to the process and trust the process. This includes the facilitators.

Siwiwe Khaba

I'm originally from Lady Frere, a small town in the Eastern Cape. When I heard about the community conversations I was working at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in Braamfontein, Johannesburg. My colleagues selected me to be part of the NMF programme and I have facilitated conversations in Gauteng, the Western Cape and Mpumalanga.

There are similarities in these communities. If you observe carefully you will see that people know they have problems; they take the initiative and they are eager to help.

I was humbled by the fact that I am part of a process that seeks to bring about change. Seeing South Africans and migrants come together to change their situation gives me a lot of joy.

Being part of the conversations made me realise that contributing to someone's life is not just about giving them money – it could be empowering them with information and shedding some light on certain things.

One of the most important lessons I've learnt is that we all have to take responsibility for what is happening in our society.

I have realised that it doesn't take a rocket scientist to work with people. It just requires humility and an eagerness to communicate with people. It has also made me more aware of the fact that people have their own way of doing things and that we are only there to facilitate that process.

Before I became part of the conversations, I wasn't sure what the underlying causes of xenophobic attacks were, but I have observed that community members are frustrated. If you look at our history, we were previously not even allowed to visit other places within South Africa; we had to carry a dompas (pass book). And then democracy came. I would say that South Africans are frustrated by what they see as the influx of foreigners invading their space.

The CCE methodology still needs to be nurtured before it bears fruit. With support from stakeholders, it will go far and the communities will take it over.

Siwiwe Khaba (NMF intern) facilitating the dialogue process during the Nyanga conversation (October 2009).

Annociata Nzalitulande (Refugee Social Services) guiding a small group in the root conflict exercise (Albert Park, October 2009).

Communities in action

KwaZulu-Natal

"It's only us who can really understand our challenges and come up with appropriate solutions. The time for talking is over. It's now time for action."

These words, from a participant in the community conversation series, expressed the determination with which the Albert Park community in KwaZulu-Natal approached their task. Albert Park, a culturally diverse community stressed by poverty and insecurity, clearly views dialogue as the way to unearth the causes of their problems and take decisions. And they are making real progress.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation worked here with its partners the KZN Christian Council, the KZN Refugee Council, the Refugee Social Services and the Union of Refugee Women.

In a community conversation on August 15, residents mapped the community into "green grass" and "dry grass" areas, indicating the difference between life-giving and risky spaces. The green areas are churches, libraries, clinics and various other community resources. The dry-grass areas include shebeens, brothels and drug dealers, generally areas that promote illegal activity.

A common observation among participants was that the growth of dry-grass areas was having an impact on people's ability to access the green-grass areas.

"You will see that sometimes it is difficult to attend church because it is on the higher floors [of a building] and the lower floors are surrounded by criminals and drug dealers," one resident observed.

Another felt that "as long as we continue to see the growth of the dry areas, the green areas will soon come to an end. Look at what is happening to the park – these days you cannot walk there at night. We need the government to step in and restore order."

On October 22 they held another conversation aimed at exploring concerns such as these, and at planning a response.

About 75 people attended this conversation, including government officials, members of civil society and community-based organisations. Migrants and local people were well represented.

Community members were particularly pleased with the participation and commitment of government officials, who came with the full backing of their departments and worked side by side with the community during the exercises for the day. These officials were also available to respond to queries raised by the community.

The main purpose of the October 22 conversation was to begin translating dialogue into action. This was done in two stages – first, establishing the root causes of some of the concerns identified, and second, developing action plans.

The investment made in building relationships during earlier conversations paid off, as the community entered this stage of planning surrounded by an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

The concerns were grouped into five key areas – leadership and participation, crime and security, awareness of rights and culture, access to resources, and degeneration of moral/ethical values.

The community was then invited to think about the "roots" and "fruits" (causes and consequences) of these "trunk" concerns. The aim was to take all factors into account before making decisions. Participants were also introduced to some planning tools to help them reflect on resources and timing.

Groups of community members identified the following root causes of their five areas of concern:

- Degeneration of values – breakdown of the family unit and a dearth of role models; drug and alcohol abuse; materialism; the influence of the media
- Crime – unemployment and poverty; destruction of cultural values; drug and alcohol abuse
- Rights and cultural awareness – historical legacy of apartheid and colonialism; leaders motivated by self-interest; lack of transparency and accountability; illiteracy; apathy and despondency
- Access to resources – language barrier; lack of accountability; lack of documentation; low levels of literacy; financial and administrative barriers; lack of trust
- Leadership and participation – poor communication; selfishness; dictatorship; competition at the expense of co-operation; failure to recognise gender equality

It emerged that participants clearly understood the root causes, the links between them and the impact that that these were having on their community. They saw how root causes were located within the inner sphere of attitudes and cultural value systems.

However, they also recognised the importance of external influences on behaviour – such as the large number of liquor

Gugu Shelembe (KZN Christian Council) presenting the range of concerns identified by the community previously (Albert Park, October 2009).

outlets in Albert Park. They resolved to petition the Liquor Board. "We must act now while the metal is hot," said one participant.

Presenting their action plans, the community also noted the enormous social network existing within Albert Park: the presence of organisations working to promote a healthy community.

One major breakthrough that came out of this conversation was the agreement reached to include migrants in community structures addressing crime and security. "There is a lot we can contribute if we are given the opportunity to play a part. This crime affects us all and we want to help the authorities in their fight against crime," said one migrant participant.

They also discussed practical issues around documentation for migrants, and what they could do to improve awareness of rights and diversity.

The Albert Park community shows how dialogue can be used by a community to discuss ways of resolving their common challenges. It is also clear that the government and local leadership structures found the conversation useful to understand the community's diverse range of needs. The community has taken ownership of the conversations and committed to using this platform to refine its action plans.

Mpumalanga

"They need to come and cough out what really hurts them." The words of a member of the Nkomazi community aptly express what the series of conversations is for. It creates a safe space where ordinary people can open up and talk – and start to act constructively.

The Foundation and its partners (the Masisukumeni Women's Organisation, the Somali Association, the Mpumalanga Council of Churches and the Leandra Advice Office) held a community conversation in Naas, a large developing settlement in Nkomazi, Mpumalanga, on August 27, 2009. The event followed one held on June 6, 2009 in Delmas, also in Mpumalanga, and presented an opportunity to compare community responses to the pressures and benefits brought by migration.

In the Delmas conversation, people tended to make their input on the basis of their political affiliation. In Nkomazi, though people had strong political loyalties, they engaged in the dialogue more independently as individuals.

Nkomazi is an area wedged between Mozambique, Swaziland and the Kruger National Park, in the Maputo Corridor. Families and communities straddle these borders and, in addition to people of Mozambican origin who have lived there

Community members join hand in hand in singing "A friend on my right is a friend on my left" at the conclusion of the dialogue in Nkomazi during August 2009.

since the 1980s, there are more recent immigrants from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Nigeria, Somalia and Ethiopia.

Poverty and unemployment are intense and there is considerable pressure on resources and services.

About 70 people attended the August community conversation. Most of those present were South African nationals and concern was expressed over the limited representation of migrants and of government officials.

The main purpose of this first meeting was to establish trust and to begin building relationships.

The conversation facilitators encouraged people to reflect on the social and political struggles of South Africa and other African countries, and how these historical events had made an impact on present realities.

The conversation participants were able to make connections between their own local concerns and the effect of external events and migration trends. They discussed the purpose of African struggles, unity, humanity, and questions of rights and belonging.

"Watching people from the same region killing each other showed how quickly we forget," said one Mozambican participant. "We forget why [Samora] Machel was killed and what he was fighting for – the independence of all Africa."

The community also spoke about perceptions of crime, corruption and exploitation. The perceived reluctance of non-South Africans to integrate was a concern and there was a question of whether migrants should be treated as one group or distinguished from each other.

The Nkomazi community was keen to have a forum where they could articulate local challenges such as service delivery, unemployment and corruption.

Initiatives to build trust among migrants and host communities must take the locals' own challenges into account. As one participant put it, "Before we welcome others, we must welcome ourselves – our children, orphans, widowers. If we cannot accept our [South African] neighbours, how can we accept others?"

Community members saw this conversation as a way through which the worth of each individual could be restored in the eyes of the entire community. "Through this we can begin to understand the basic principle in life – you should do unto others what you want them to do to you," one participant concluded.

Western Cape

On the first Mandela Day, July 18, 2009, the community of Khayelitsha in Cape Town convened its second community conversation. Those who attended honoured the meaning of Mandela Day by discussing how they could make their community a better place for all.

Zoe Nkonjolo of Africa Unite, an organisation which works with the Nelson Mandela Foundation to facilitate these conversations, said: "The issue on the table was how the community of Khayelitsha could come together to build relationships and live with each other."

These are just some of the key points that the community raised at the first meeting:

- There needs to be an understanding of why and how there came to be foreigners in the Khayelitsha community.
- The refugees and foreigners in Khayelitsha have both positive and negative impacts

on the community, for example they bring new business and development, but they also present competition for jobs.

- There are many African and international foreigners in South Africa, but why is it that the problem is with the black, African foreigners?
- The way the media report on foreigners has led to misconceptions. It seems that each time a foreigner does something illegal, all foreigners are thought of as illegal.
- The community feels that the leaders who were in exile, upon returning to their countries, should share their experience of living in a foreign country, especially how they were welcomed and treated.

The community agreed at the dialogue that:

- Violence does not resolve conflict.
- Dialogue is the solution to conflict.
- Tolerance is key to accepting other people.
- It is important for people to learn to co-exist.
- Sharing of skills, job creation and capacity-building are needed.

The guest speaker for the day was Father Michael Lapsley, director of the Institute for Healing of Memories. He noted that Nelson Mandela was inspiring precisely because he was not perfect – he was only human but made choices that created freedom for other people.

Reverend Templeton Mbekwa from the Khayelitsha Crisis Committee, which dealt specifically with the xenophobic attacks, was also present and said, "Today's dialogue can help communities because our people need more education about our own violence as locals and how to dwell with foreigners and learn their culture and way of doing things."

Eastern Cape

A conversation was held in New Brighton, a township in the Nelson Mandela Bay area in the Eastern Cape, on May 23. The people here face poverty, high levels of unemployment and underdevelopment.

The event was opened by Advocate Jason Thysse of the National Prosecuting Authority, who appealed to South Africans to uphold the principles of respect and human dignity enshrined in the Constitution. He noted that the Bill of Rights extends fundamental human rights to everyone in South Africa, irrespective of race, class, gender or nationality. A representative of the Premier's Office spoke about government's efforts to build better relations between South African and migrant communities. He highlighted the initiatives undertaken by his office to work collaboratively with the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Justice, the Department of Safety and Security and the South African Human Rights Commission to build awareness of both South Africans' and migrants' rights and responsibilities.

In addition to the South Africans present, there was also a large contingent of Somalis, a few Ethiopians, and some Kenyans, Zimbabweans and Congolese. Discussions were robust, reflecting the diversity of participants' lived experiences and

Martha Mashaba asks participants to explain their experience after the "walking in my neighbour's shoes" exercise, (Nkomazi, Mpumalanga, August 2009).

points of view.

The participants did the historical timeline exercise, commenting on a range of events of historical significance in Africa, including: the Rwanda genocide; the collapse of the Somali state; the international ramifications of the death of Mobutu and the ensuing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and the political and economic meltdown in Zimbabwe. Groups considered the implications these had on the citizens of the respective countries and Africa in general. Some of the key issues highlighted with respect to South Africa included:

- The release of Nelson Mandela, the unbanning of political parties and the dawn of democracy
- The Group Areas Act and its ongoing impact on community and social relations
- The ongoing effects of Bantu Education on historically disadvantaged communities' access to educational, economic and skills development opportunities
- The significance of sports events such as the Rugby World Cup for fostering unity

The positive and negative repercussions of the political struggles of the 1980s were discussed: on the one hand this period was seen to have contributed to the destruction of the apartheid regime, whilst at the same time it also contributed to the "normalisation" of violence and created a mindset that encourages the resolution of differences through violent means.

Some of the main challenges facing the New Brighton and nearby Motherwell communities, identified through the mapping exercise, included:

- Lack of service delivery and the perception that government is unwilling or unable to meet the needs of the poor
- Lawlessness contributing to a culture of corruption and the perception that crimes will go unpunished
- An increase in the breakdown of the social and moral fabric of communities, leading to an increase in alcohol and drug abuse, prostitution and human trafficking
- Lack of economic opportunity leading to increased levels of unemployment and poverty
- Poor quality of leadership: people are elected to or are put in positions of leadership based on ethnic or political affiliation rather than qualifications or suitability for the posts

Participants also expressed their concern about the recent attacks against Somalis in the Jeffrey's Bay area nearby. Groups identified the following opportunities for building better relations:

- Returning to the values of ubuntu (togetherness and morality)
- Creating awareness of developments in other African countries
- Better communication of government's efforts to build social solidarity, and a more inclusive approach to these
- More effort from migrants to learn about South Africa and integrate
- Collaboration between South African and migrant business owners

Many participants noted that this was their first opportunity to share their concerns and hear the views of others. Participants felt that there was an ongoing need for community conversations between South African and migrant communities to share their challenges and find new ways to work together towards a more peaceful society. It was agreed to hold the next community conversation in Jeffrey's Bay.

This is a town which until the mid-1980s was mostly a holiday destination for wealthy people. However, when an abundance of squid was found off this coast, the fishing business boomed and the promise of work brought people from across the country and beyond. In time, the local economy was undermined by overfishing and depression in the construction industry. Most of the local people are dependent on seasonal work for only a few months of the year. The lack of local educational facilities makes it difficult for people to obtain skills that would allow them to do other kinds of work.

The community conversation in Jeffrey's Bay on August 18 was attended by 58 people, who identified the competition for scarce resources as a source of tension and conflict between different ethnic groups. Crime, substance abuse and poor skills levels were also noted as concerns. Most people feel they don't have a stake in the development of the community.

The participants talked about using sports, including soccer and the annual international surfing competition at Jeffrey's Bay, as a means to improve interaction between groups. Among other things, they also discussed strengthening the relationship between the police, the Community Policing Forum and the community to break the culture of impunity.

Lucas Ngoetshana (Head of Advocacy, KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council) facilitating plenary discussion in KwaZulu-Natal (Albert Park) while Amisi Baruti of the KwaZulu-Natal Refugee Council looks on (October 2009).

A member of the migrant community emphasises the need for more socio-cultural events to promote greater understanding (Albert Park, October 2009).

Communities looking beyond their challenges

How communities build relations

In every community conversation, irrespective of the tools we used in the small groups, we always endeavoured to have a discussion during which participants themselves could identify the strengths and resources within their community. We see this as important, to shift perspectives and to leave communities with a clear sense that the solutions to their challenges are within their reach.

While the previous sections dealt extensively with some of the key challenges, we would like to conclude this booklet by sharing some of the ways in which the communities envisage building relations. In all the conversations, there were community structures and opinion-leaders who were able to inspire others to look beyond their challenges and to embrace more inclusive actions. Some of the comments pointing to this are:

"I just wanted to say that we don't encourage xenophobia in South Africa, we must not resent one another, we should not kill one another. Let us not exploit people from outside; there is no way we would succeed. In South Africa we exploit people that are not from here, we put them to work and then when we are done with them we now chase them away without pay. That is not right because these people come from a hard place, sometimes people kill and then they leave and that too is because of us, let us stop that."
– Nkomazi community conversation

"During that period when the attacks happened, when these attacks took place ... there were people you went to the shop and rallied around and put themselves there as human shields and said no one is going to loot the shops ... There is a start and we need to build on that start, on that positivity, and focus our community without losing focus on those elements that might pollute our environment, you know, poison our environment. My view is that and we said that there is a need to get relationships."
– Jeffrey's Bay community conversation

"There wasn't that openness for across the levels we not meeting with people from other groups and talking and saying how are you coping? How has apartheid affected you and how has apartheid affected me? At that time we were not ready to handle the influx of Africans, the people from North Africa. So the hatred we perceive as hatred is actually the fear that 'you are coming into my country and you are getting preferences that we had to struggle for, that we had to fight for throughout the apartheid era'. So I think that hatred is maybe people fighting for their daily living and existence and so I think that we have to talk, yes. We have to deal with those issues but socially it is only going to happen when we start talking socially and recognising that each one of us, whether it is from Africa or from South Africa, each one of us is entitled to a part of this country or any part of this continent. And we are only going to change the continent when we work together."
– Jeffrey's Bay community conversation

"And where is the saying that goes 'The feet have no nose', where has that time gone where I respect a traveller because I don't know one day or years from now, I will go somewhere and meet him and they would treat me well. Where is that spirit, are we going to kill one another, my plea and my prayer is that I know where all this started from, it was the division of Africa, Africa is being divided and is being divided by all those that came and colonised Africa. In such a way that if I want to go to the next country, I have to pay the passport in my own country on the same continent of Africa but I have to have permit to go another country. In the same Africa, I pray one day Africa will be free, where you can move to Cape to Cairo without a passport."
– Delmas community conversation

"Our recommendation in what all has been said is that we need to strengthen the institutions of democracy because when you have democracy you are able to express yourself. We are able to gather like this and have a social dialogue like this. All this violence, problems and challenges emanate from the fact that some countries have trampled their institutions of democracy in order to make themselves prominent and as a result dictatorship and so on and so on. So if you strengthen the issue of democracy we are actually able to talk and gather like this. In other countries we cannot gather like this, it is tabooed, it is banned. Develop a healing programme for the victims of violence, you know even in South Africa we didn't have that period."
– Cato Manor community conversation

Many dialogues have pointed at the rich networks of social capital that already exist in communities, which community members can use to address some of the challenges they have identified. As a number of conversations have highlighted, where communities fail to utilise these structures, there is a danger of the void being filled by unscrupulous elements to pursue their own interests.

An example of a local structure that can act like a "bank" of social capital is the Khayelitsha Development Forum, which brings together various civic and faith-based organisations and the Community Policing Forum. The usefulness of such intermediary structures has been recognised by the provincial government of the Western Cape. The CCE methodology envisages the upscaling of decisions taken during community conversations through linkages between these initiatives and local, provincial and national government structures. The Western Cape government has prioritised 15 geographical areas where it can support intermediary structures to pursue goals like community healing and moral regeneration – including sites where the NMF programme is holding conversations (Khayelitsha, Nyanga and Philippi). Conversations in other provinces also indicate the existence of similar initiatives, though it is still unclear what linkages they have developed with provincial government.

As the community conversations develop, there is recognition of the need for building closer working relationships with such structures, as platforms that provide communities with "voice" in a way that existing institutional structures may not adequately fulfil. It is important, however, that representatives from all relevant sectors of the community are brought onto the intermediary structure. At present it is uncertain whether migrants have leaders who serve on the intermediary structures in accordance with the principle of inclusivity necessary for decision making.

There is increasing acceptance by a number of communities, such as the one in Albert Park, of the benefits of participating as a unified community that embraces the diversity of its members, irrespective of their origins. This community has already begun mapping out an action plan that includes the formation of joint committees (made up of migrants and locals) through which the entire community can profit from skills transfers, sharing of innovative practices and a united voice to amplify their concerns.

Other sites such as Delmas provide some good examples to be further explored where, possibly owing to its various interactions with migrants even during the apartheid era, the community has made more progress towards indigenisation of migrants into the community, and where their skills and resources are used as part of active structures.

In line with the old adage "united we stand, divided we fall", communities may be on the verge of realising that including all their constituents unlocks more resources.

Expanding community conversations

Less than a year into this pilot programme, facilitators have been able to apply their knowledge and skills in the CCE methodology across their organisations and constituencies. In this way more operational partners have been able to use community conversations to stimulate and scale up social change and to address other issues, such as violence, service delivery, conflict prevention and peace-building. Teams of facilitators at provincial level have become a collective resource to others, such as governmental departments and NGOs, who are eager to learn how they can use community conversations in their mandated areas.

- The KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council and the KwaZulu-Natal Refugee Council are facilitating community conversations to promote inter-cultural exchanges between South African and migrant communities in Durban.
- The Institute for Healing of Memories and the Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture, in the Western Cape, are hosting community dialogues to discuss topics ranging from violence and torture to xenophobia and slavery.
- The Institute for Healing of Memories and Africa Unite are implementing community conversations in Masiphumelelo, a community in Cape Town that until recently was racked by violent attacks against migrants.
- The Provincial Department of Social Development in the Eastern Cape recently collaborated with the Nelson Mandela Foundation and its operational partners in Port Elizabeth to host community conversations in Walmer township and in Kuyga. The Department of Social Development has also requested training on the CCE methodology for social workers to be deployed in the Nelson Mandela Municipality to enable them to facilitate community dialogues on violence and xenophobia.
- Similarly, the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) in Port Elizabeth requested the Nelson Mandela Foundation to provide training to 20 volunteers and field staff on the basics of the CCE methodology. SARCS plans to use community conversations to build relationships between hosts and migrants.

To date, we have implemented 15 of the 30 community conversations planned for the pilot phase. The remaining 15 community conversations will be implemented during 2010.

Footnotes

[i] Triegaardt J, University of Johannesburg, distributed by the South African Civil Society Information Service

[ii] Socio-economic Profiling of Urban Renewal Nodes – Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain, City of Cape Town

[iii] Motherwell Nodal Economic Development Profile, Department of Local and Provincial Government

[iv] Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, Protecting Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Immigrants in South Africa, June 2008

[v] Throughout this report, the first person, "we", is used. This is a conscious decision intended to situate us, the programme's implementing partners and authors of this document, as subjective, active participants in the process of social change. Rather than feigning any "objectivity" through the third person, we want to acknowledge the personal transformation and learning we have experienced. Our respective journeys have enabled us to shape, interpret and contribute to the ways in which the programme is unfolding.

[vi] The use of the term "migrant" follows much debate with the facilitators. Some felt the term "foreign nationals" perpetuates the notion of "foreignness" or "alienness", while others felt that the terms "non-South Africans" and "non-nationals" have negative connotations, reminiscent of old apartheid-speak. We agreed to use the broad term "migrants" denoting inclusion of all categories of international migrants, that is, refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and other categories of documented or undocumented migrants.

[vii] Some of the tools typically used in community conversations are The Historical Timeline; Socio-Cultural Dynamics and Stocktaking; The Root Cause Analysis Tree; Transect Walk and Mapping; The Integral Framework; Process Facilitation; Storytelling; Social Capital Analysis; and The Community and Facilitators' Walls.

[viii] Societies are inspired by major events, challenges, tragedies and crises they have overcome. Reflecting on these reveals a community's creative resources, values and concerns. Facilitators encourage community members to remember their past and the strengths that have sustained them thus far. In the social cohesion community conversations, participants look at significant events that occurred in their community and how these have shaped their response to violence. Depending on the national profile of the group, participants are often also asked to reflect on conflicts on the African continent and the impact they have had on migration and on their own community.

[ix] Community members walk around their neighbourhood in small groups to rediscover familiar surroundings, noticing resources, danger points and entry points for action. They can then draw up a map, a visual representation of community strengths and concerns. Participants do the transect walk silently, in small groups, looking for "green grass" (community strengths and resources) and "dry grass" (factors that may make the community susceptible to violence and xenophobia). Mapping can also be used later to illustrate changes that have taken place.

[x] This four-quadrant framework, adapted from the work of Ken Wilber, is used to explore the relationship between intentions and values, on the one hand, and actions on the other hand, at both individual and collective levels. By placing their responses to violence and xenophobia in their respective quadrants, community members can reflect on how holistic their response has been.

[xi] Van der Dennen, JMG, 2005. Theories of Political and Social Violence

[xii] The timeline was developed in consultation with representatives of faith-based organisations, a local civic organisation and the local development forums at a relationship-building meeting held in Cape Town on September 9 and 10, 2009. Additional background information was gleaned from the Goldstone Commission Report on Violence at Crossroads.

[xiii] Goldstone Commission: Report on Violence at Crossroads. The Commission Report to the Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation by the Committee Investigating Public Violence and Intimidation at Crossroads During March-June 1993

[xiv] Former activist and participant in the stakeholder meeting held in Cape Town, September 9-19, 2009.

[xv] Nathan L, Crisis Resolution and Conflict Management in Africa. Presented at the Consultation on the Nexus between Economic Management and the Restoration of Social Capital in Southern Africa, World Bank and Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town

[xvi] Misago JP, Landau L, Monson T, Towards Tolerance, Law, and Dignity: Addressing Violence against Foreign Nationals in South Africa, January 2009

[xvii] Fact Sheet: Migration Into South Africa, Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, June 2008

[xviii] Ibid

[xix] Landau L and Segatti A, Human Development Research Paper 2009/05 Human Development Impacts of Migration: South Africa Case Study

[xx] Towards a Fifteen Year Review

[xxi] Ibid

Amisi Baruti (KZN Refugee Council) and Gugu Shelembe (KZN Christian Council) present the range of concerns identified by the community previously (Albert Park, October 2009).

Dr Sanda Kimbimbi, UNHCR Country Representative, discusses the importance of promoting co-existence among migrants and locals at the NMF's Social Cohesion Reference Group meeting in July 2009.

Participants discuss the green and dry grass areas during a small group exercise (Nyanga, October 2009).

Participants who attended the Albert Park conversation expressed frustration at the state of dilapidation of residential areas and the conversion of such spaces for criminal activities.

About the Nelson Mandela Foundation

Centre of Memory and Dialogue

The Nelson Mandela Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation established in 1999 to support its Founder's ongoing engagement in worthy causes on his retirement as President of South Africa. The Foundation is registered as a trust, with its board of trustees comprising prominent South Africans selected by the Founder. The Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and Dialogue was inaugurated by Nelson Mandela on September 21, 2004, and endorsed as the core work of the Foundation in 2006. The Nelson Mandela Foundation, through its Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and Dialogue, contributes to the making of a just society by promoting the vision and work of its Founder and convening dialogue around critical social issues.

Dialogue for Justice

The Dialogue Programme of the Centre of Memory and Dialogue aims to develop and sustain dialogue around Mr Mandela's legacy. It is committed to building on the history, experience, values, vision and leadership of its Founder to provide a nonpartisan platform for public discourse on critical social issues. Achieving community participation in decision-making, even at policy levels, is prioritised.

The Dialogue Programme aims to perpetuate and re-invigorate the culture of engagement using the example set by Mr Mandela of inclusive and open dialogue for which South Africa is famous.

Drawing on the rich traditions of transformative dialogue, problem-solving and social renewal that made possible South Africa's remarkable transition, the Dialogue Programme:

- Aims to facilitate greater understanding and awareness about the problems faced by people, particularly in South Africa and Africa, and the possible solutions available to them
- Utilises comprehensive methodologies to promote dialogue between stakeholders
- Convenes result-oriented stakeholder dialogue on key social issues identified through continuous engagement with partners

Memory for Justice

Memory resources documenting the life and times of Nelson Mandela are to be found in an extraordinary range of locations, both within South Africa and internationally. The Memory Programme provides a unique facility which:

- Locates, documents and ensures the preservation of these scattered resources
- Collects and curates Mr Mandela's personal archive
- Promotes public access to these resources and fosters dialogue around them
- Ensures that all initiatives in the name of Nelson Mandela are true to his legacy

Memory is not an end in itself. Its significance lies in its use. The Memory Programme seeks to reach both global audiences and those systemically disadvantaged within South Africa by:

- Undertaking outreach programmes, including travelling exhibitions, books, a comic series, and internships
- Ensuring web-based access to information through its web portal
- Supporting digitisation initiatives designed to broaden access to resources
- Facilitating research by individuals and institutions

We believe that the vehicle for sharing memory effectively, for growing it, and for engaging it in the promotion of justice, is dialogue. We actively open our memory work – on the life and times of Nelson Mandela, the events and the people he influenced or was influenced by – to debate and discussion, and we draw on this memory work in convening dialogue on critical social issues that present a threat to justice in society.

NELSON MANDELA
FOUNDATION
Living the Legacy