

CASE STUDY: Turning linguistic diversity into a tool of social cohesion – community conversations to promote social cohesion in Albert Park, Durban

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Introduction

The fragility of a South Africa built around the dream of a rainbow nation came under a violent scrutiny during the month of May 2008, following the dramatic wave of violence perpetrated against African nationals in various informal settlements and townships across the country. This unprecedented violence exposed the chasm between the ideals enshrined in the constitutions of a post 1994 South Africa, underscored by the tolerance and respect for human rights, and the actual realities on the ground. It echoed the divisions of racial conflict that characterised society prior to the 1994 democracy and stood in stark contrast to the vision of a new dispensation where “South Africa belongs to all who live in it”. In this, the May 2008 violence drew disturbing parallels with the past, of a society infatuated with difference and ingrained with a culture of using violence qualifying an embodiment of such difference.

Against this background, and in line with the philosophy of its founder towards encouraging dialogue and building transformative leadership, the Nelson Mandela Foundation, in 2009, launched a pilot programme to promote social cohesion. Within the overall aim of the programme, the NMF initiated a series of community conversations in Albert Park, Durban, aimed at promoting cohesion between migrants and locals through dialogue. The programme was initiated against the backdrop of the concerns and frustrations which led to the widespread xenophobic violence of 2008. Our approach towards using conversations as the primary vehicle was premised on a wide range of experiences, including ours here in South Africa, where dialogue has been shown to be a powerful intervention for attaining greater societal capacities towards cooperation and peaceful resolution of conflicts. While a range of tools and methodologies are available for conducting dialogue depending on demands imposed by a situation, the conversations adopted a methodological framework previously used by the UNDP, the Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE) methodology. The CCE methodological framework recognizes the tacit capacity inherent among communities and aims, in light of this, at bringing about transformative change at community and institutional level, through cyclical action steps, each utilizing specific tools.

NMF convened three such conversations in the Albert Park in partnership with civil society organisations working with local communities and migrants in this area. These including faith based organisations (KZN Christian Council), organisations working with refugees and migrants (the KZN Refugee Council, the Union of Refugee Women and the Refugee Social Services), and organisations aimed at improving the conditions of the poorest of the poor (such as Abahlahli BaseMjondolo). These operational partnerships developed aimed at securing support for the objectives of the programme at local level, where efforts of these organisations were concentrated.

This report attempts to provide an overview of the experiences and learning acquired during the implementation of the pilot. The analysis herein is based upon transcripts of many hours from the community conversation, one on one interviews with respondents comprised of migrants and locals and discussions emerging from bilateral meetings with key stakeholders (governmental, political and community structures). The report is broadly divided into five sections - the first section provides a summary of the context in respect of the site; the second, outlines the dialogue process, including the preparatory work, the dialogue event and follow up actions subsequent to the community conversations; the third section is focussed on the perspectives that emerged during the community conversation, and includes some of the outcomes reached following these conversations; the final section provides some of the lessons acquired in respect of the process and substantive issues raised during the dialogues.

Throughout the report we make extensive use of substantive quotes made by participants during the conversation to allow the reader to get a first hand sense of the conversations and the way the issues were discussed. Quotations have been selected for their representatively and not because they are the most dramatic versions on the issue at hand. These quotations also include extractions from conversations held at other pilot sites, such as in the Cato Manor area, to draw upon contrasts or to reinforce perspectives that emerged during the conversations at Albert Park. While this case study points to underlying concerns faced by communities during the pilot, as well as the valuable outcomes arising from the dialogues, we recognise that sustainable results demand the maintenance of a long term programme. We have thus outlined below the potential dangers in the face of urgent pressures for a “quick fix”, and the importance of long-term approach which takes into

account the full spectrum of people to be engaged on the deeper issues underlying the challenges in this area.

Context

The inner city area of Albert Park is situated south-east of the Durban CBD and gains its name from the adjoining large public park. Today, this cosmopolitan area continues to be the centre of multiple challenges and opportunities associated with urban populations. Using Albert Park as a case study provides valuable insight to the complexities of harmonizing distinct socio-cultural and economic impacts of urban growth and in-migration to produce integrated and demographically assorted spaces.

Durban's West End Park as Albert Park was initially known, began to be developed in 1865, and for many years was superior to many suburbs of Durban, having a pavilion, a cycle track, and a cricket oval. It was also the headquarters of the early Durban Department of Parks and Gardens. Until the late 1970s Albert Park was considered a prestigious white residential area aimed at white civil servants working at the harbour, railways and post office. However during the last decade of the apartheid years, a number of factors watered down the apartheid's preoccupation with colour and racial separation, ultimately allowing more non-white migrants into the area. For example, during the 1980s, while the Group Areas Act was still in force, the emerging professional non-white communities slowly began trickling into the area, drawn by its convenient location to the CBD and the relative affordable rentals. With the dawn of democracy, as with many urban areas in South Africa, fears of transformation following the 1994 democratic elections led to an exodus of many whites to the suburbs, and within a short period the demographic composition of the area had altered from white to black.

Bantu education did not prepare its black citizens with skills and an entrepreneurial spirit to build their own cities. Now there are foreigners and they are doing as they please and that has brought about conflict. Bantu education has not prepared us to really do it for ourselves, that has really killed us, maybe that is one question to tend to, the question of education.

While most (though not exclusively) of the pre-1994 migration was mainly internally, in the post 1994 period, inflow migration now included migrants from Africa and Asia. This is explainable as it was not until 1993 that South Africa finally recognised the principle of

asylum and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, accepting local integration and the responsibilities for the provision of social welfare to refugees and asylum seekers. At the same time, when one reviews some of the major conflicts that broke out in Africa post 1990, it comes as no surprise that South Africa soon became a destination for refugees fleeing human rights abuse, collapsed states, conflict and war. The collapse of the cold war and the end of a bipolar system of international relations that had been responsible for the internal stability around the world saw the eruption of internal conflict across Africa. Many refugees and migrants that fled as a consequence of these changes saw South Africa as the only viable destination.

Many migrants entering the country were drawn to Durban by a number of pull factors. For example, the access to business facilities, market of consumers and transport infrastructure. These advantages were apparent to both skilled migrant labour force and unskilled African migrants, who preferred to live closer to the CBD than in geographically marginalised and underserved peripheral areas that apartheid had created. It was also within the CBD that many organisations provided services to refugees. The result at the end of these phases of migration has been a multi-cultural identity with what was an exclusive white area in the 1970s gradually evolved in stages to an area where about every race and nationality is present.

Since 1985 to 1990, Durban was a good place, clean, secure and the shopping centre that we had at the time. It was a good area and today when I look to Durban today it's something else and this recommendation. St George, you remember this area that it was the top class, there were many whites throughout all this area, I know them very well but today they are something else. I am so glad looking at this road and remembering how clean it was. But when you turn to the right even the township I am telling you is better than this place here. We have people 24 hours standing on the road and selling drugs. If you are driving a car, especially if it is a GP number of number plates from somewhere they call you like...to call you to sell drugs. And the police arrive there in front of my building where there is a KFC. I have been living here since the 90's until today, it was a good area but today it is a something else. Something that municipality can do something about it. I remember in South Africa when no one was allowed to fix your vehicle to do anything on the passenger but now you go to the Picket street and Fisher street it is a workshop everywhere but the

police are there 24hours and I don't know what they are doing. So what I would like to be done is to bring back the things we used to know, is that the officials of the municipality take care of that and change the area and make it clean..... When you look at Picket street that area it's a shame when you look at that area it used to be one of the top, that used to be our main shopping centre in Durban.

Like many South African cities areas previously sparsely populated by white populations, the surge of internal and external migrants into Albert Park post 1994 coincided with urban decay. Migration inflows occurred alongside capital flight to the suburbs, leaving a tide of building decay, general squalor and crime. This deterioration was accompanied by nefarious activities of unscrupulous landlords who sought to capitalise on the huge demand for inner city residential accommodation. These landlords, often referred to as "slumlords", converted old buildings and warehouses with insufficient service amenities to family rental units, and in many cases rented these to undocumented migrants who, due to their status, were reluctant to take legal action. Overcrowding has become rife and in many cases, lights and water bills and property rates not paid by landlords have resulted in services to several buildings being cut off, leaving them unpleasant, unhealthy and dangerous for human habitation. This environment has been conducive to the growth of illegal taverns and drug dealers flourished lowering the outlook of the area even further. The Albert Park area now has 52 taverns in one square kilometre and is increasingly being infested with vagrants and drug dealers. Alongside this has been marked growth of informal trade with the number of street traders selling along pavements and the shop front rising dramatically, post 1994. With the rising crime rates being experienced across South African cities, it was easy to give way to simplistic perceptions associating street traders with criminal activity.

When you look at Albert Park there is a drug lord, a land lord and how do you call someone that keeps women and trades them all the time? Pimp, thank you. 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. They also go as far as using the poor, now if we look at the shelters we obviously think that they're using the shelters because we think its accommodating the poor but is it serving the purpose of social interest. Is it looking after the person on the street? Or is it a process of generating income, I am saying that our government needs look at all of these cases. The state of homelessness is a big one and that is the one that we will

have to overcome and that is the main reason you find even these acts of xenophobia happens within this area because there is not a lot of houseslesness. Only because people are scavenging for the basic essentials, people need a shelter, people need a meal, people need basic services but what happened through the process there is exploitation if you look at the shacks...you find shack landlords they actually charge people monies. So something needs to be done

Throughout these different stages of the evolution of the area, the Park, a central feature of the area, remains a special place in the heart of the community, all be it for different reasons. While from early times it stood as a unique fixture for basic recreational environment, today it provides a space where many of Albert Park's poor turn to, and as a last resort, for rest, given the severe accommodation shortages. For this reason, it serves as a centre of fierce debate by some who allege that it has become the habitation of criminals who prey on the residents of the area. On the other hand, a number of local initiatives see the Park as a gateway through which social cohesion can be advanced among different sections of the community. For example, a turnaround spearheaded by the city's Inner eThekweni Regeneration and Urban Management Team, sees the Park as critical part of a residential facelift involving the introduction of palm trees, street lighting, attractive new pavements in the area.

QUOTATION: Then we go across to MacArthur Street; the first thing we saw was a pub tavern, where people drink all day. This is a negative thing. And also there was a residential courts area which was next to the pub area and it keeps noisy and people are drunk and opposite there was an empty bottles that was outside and also people urine outside there..... There was no toilet, you just go outside. It is very bad. And another thing that we see in the residential area there is a loud music there and there was a restaurant, like a bar with noise late in night. Kids cannot study and live in such a place. This was a negative thing for...so we marked them as a negative thing. And also there was an empty space that we saw there, that was just open and a blood stain which was still fresh which means someone was stabbed there. Stabbed just a few minutes before we got there. We also saw an old building which was not renovated; it is an old building that was just there. So there are much more things that need to be done of all the buildings there, they were just old buildings but they are being used for many other purposes, bad purposes.

The above factors continue to dominate the image of the area and have limited the amount of investment Albert Park is able to draw from large corporate community based in the Durban city centre. The fact that much of this has happened amidst the rise of other phenomena, including internal and external migration, has had the unfortunate effect of creating new discriminations against certain sections of the community, in particular migrants coming from other countries. The growing incidents of crime have been used to perpetuate stereotypes and apportion blame on various sections of the migrant communities. Drug peddling and other forms of substance abuse are laid at the feet of migrants from certain countries. The problems of acute housing shortages are also seen through the eyes of “influx of migrant” take over all available accommodation and worse, contributed to the dilapidation of buildings. Locals have also accused migrants from other countries as the source of urban decay. Even the inability to maintain the Park as zone of scenic beauty has been ascribed to unkempt African immigrants who have turned it into a residence. Instead of exploring the underlying causes of many of these concerns, migrants have become a convenient group upon which to lay cumulative blame, echoing attitudes of the past seen in the period immediately after 1994, where many whites blamed the deteriorating standards in urban centres on the hordes of blacks moving in. The effect has been a bundling together of all concerns facing the city with immigration giving rise to sharp levels of xenophobia across the entire spectrum of society, sometimes receiving support from local authorities. Clear evidence of this can be seen in a statement attributed to local newsletters where the need to curb crime in Albert Park is linked the influx of foreigners.

QUOTATION: “Criminals came to the reception...and asked. “Where is this man who’s tall and fat?”the security man gave them exactly the flat number!.....luckily the man came out...but they still took all the phones...and...came back down...the stairs...where people were shouting outside and crying, but when the security saw that he was going to be blamed, he run awayWhen the Police came.....They didn’t even bother to check the...place. They asked for IDs to catch foreigners and arrested me. “What can we do?”
Being a foreigner is being a criminal.

Although Albert Park was not caught up in the general wave of xenophobic violence that spread across the country in May 2008, the area has experienced a continuum of xenophobic attacks, many of which have been as vicious and orchestrated with the same

intensity as those witnessed in other parts of the country. While migrants have been forced to weather the myriad daily incidents of institutional and societal exclusion, such as harassment by police, despicable attitudes by public officials (where they are meant to access various services) and disparaging remarks and abuse in taxis and public spaces etc, regrettably Albert Park has in more recent times witnessed horrific situations where these attitudes lead to the physical violence and murder of migrants. In 2005, a group of Tanzanian men sleeping in the Park where for no apparent reason murdered other than their “foreignness”. More recently, in two separate incidents, which occurred during December 2008 and January 2009, locals allegedly instigated by the community police forum, expelled migrants from two local buildings - Jamba House and Venture Africa. The latter, which saw a Zimbabwean and Tanzanian plunge to their death, is the subject of an ongoing court case involving charges of murder and attempted murder. It is alleged that these incidents were preceded by a request to the Thekwini Municipality by the leadership of the local ward to remove all non-South Africans from the area, as they were responsible for the increase in crime and overcrowding.

You must understand that there are people who will be frustrated, they come to my office and scream because people are residing in the park. The question that you should ask yourself. Okay, if we have to say, move these people from the park, move them where?? Where do you move them? You have to go to the dust-bins and go and throw them at the down side. We don't have. So we need to say as we are saying maybe this contributes to crime. But what can we practically do?

Such action conjures images of the past and the ease in which exclusion has been used to justify everyday discriminatory practices and even violence against a section of society branded as outsiders. Despite this, perspectives that emerged from the community conversations indicate that Albert Park still maintains potential for developing multi-cultural identity. Its historical reputation of attracting music lovers from across the country with unique genres and blends of African music, a heritage that continues to be fostered by modern day events such as the annual Awesome Africa Music Festival, suggest the existence of a cross-cultural fusion. Alongside this, the turnaround strategy led by the city's Inner eThekweni Regeneration and Urban Management, promises to restore some of the area's former glory through council directives aimed at owners of “bad buildings” and practical initiatives aimed at making the streets uncomfortable for criminals. Do such broad based

initiatives signify certain aspects about this community, which can be leveraged to develop an image that can build a truly rich culturally diverse community? The journey taken through the community conversations in this area sought to explore through dialogue, ways in which present challenges could be addressed to make this a reality.

We have a lot of people staying outside here in Albert Park to me it looks like a time bomb its just a matter of time before the local guys feel threatened by the presence of those guys and then we are going to have another situation of xenophobia. It is quite good that you guys have organized a meeting like this but at the same time we should also have the leaders of eThekweni councilors and all the other guys. At least when they make recommendations they will hear it for themselves coming from the communities.

The Journey

The primary goal of the dialogue process was to create the conditions for social transformation by engaging the key stakeholders in a safe environment that facilitates a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the community. NMF convened the conversations in partnership with civil society organisations working with local communities and migrants in this area. These including faith based organisations (the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council), organisations working with refugees and migrants (the KwaZulu-Natal Refugee Council and the Refugee Social Services, and the Union of Refugee Women) and organisations aimed at improving the conditions of the poor (Abahlahli BaseMjondolo). These operational partnerships assisted in securing support for dialogues at local level, where the efforts of these organisations were concentrated.

NMF identified five organisations working with the Albert Park community, the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council, the KwaZulu-Natal Refugee Council, the Refugee Social Services, and the Union of Refugee Women and Abahlahli BaseMjondolo, as possessing the necessary social capital through which the programme could develop the necessary networks to gain access to the community. KZN Christian Council through its programmes has worked in the field of social cohesion at different levels and with different sections of the community. It enjoyed a strong sense of credibility with both members of the migrant and local sections of the Albert Park of the community.

As discussed above the CCE process envisages this transformation through a cycle of six

steps – relationship building, identification of concerns, exploration of concerns, decision prioritization, implementation and constant reflection during each phase of this cycle. Underpinning this cycle is a set of governing principles critical to the set of activities building towards the dialogue event such as inclusiveness (everyone that is part of the problem is involved), joint ownership (everyone is involved and engaged), learning (maintaining openness in a two conversation), humanity (the quality of empathy) and long term perspective (understanding there are no quick fixes). Inherent in dialogue are three vital and interrelated ingredients, all critical for the success of dialogues – psychological issues that focused on involving the appropriate people and addressing their need to be respected and heard; substantive issues primarily concerned with maintaining the key purpose, in this case the need to grow social cohesion among migrants and locals, central to the dialogue initiative; procedural issues to safeguard the dialogue process and ensure that participants perceived it as fair and worthwhile.

In discussing our experience we do not confine ourselves to the dialogue event, but equally contemplate the numerous engagements that took place outside the conversations including bilateral meetings with stakeholders, capacity development workshops, follow ups in relation to outcomes and agreements emerging from the dialogues etc. The journey around each site thus unfolded in three sets of activities – a first stage consisting of a range of preparatory activities aimed at the dialogue event; a second stage made up of the dialogue event; and a final stage, involving the range of activities that arose as consequence of the dialogues. As the dialogues were held in a series, the first and third stages were inevitably connected in a cycle where follow up activities built into the much of the issues that required preparation for the next dialogue event.

Preparation for the dialogues

The first stage of the dialogue initiative was about putting together the necessary political capacities necessary in order for a fruitful dialogue to emerge through setting up strategic operational partnerships with organizations knowledgeable of the terrain and building technical capacities in a group of credible facilitators (drawn from these organization) conversant with the history of the area and cultural values across sections of the community. Familiarity with the Community Capacity Enhancement methodology, its tools and competencies was done at the inception of the process through two workshops and through continuous capacity development that took place at provincial level. At a minimum,

the provincial capacity development workshop reiterated the fundamental principles of the CCE methodology; the importance for facilitators of modeling the principles of dialogue towards establishing safe spaces; anticipate challenges and discussion that may arise out of the context of this community; clarify roles amongst themselves and commit to the documentation; and debriefing process to capture the learning that would emerge from the dialogues.

Central to the preparatory stages was the need to take important decision around who to invite, taking into account the substantive interest such participants could bring and their potential to influence the broader community. From the onset we faced the dilemma of choosing between adopting an approach that focuses on more people or one that targets only the key people. The more people approach focuses on increasing the number of people, all of whom are affected by the issue at hand and are in one way or the other. The key people approach focuses on strategic individuals who carry leverage to influence and effect change. Our preference was the latter, bearing the constraints imposed on keeping numbers at a level that effective dialogue could occur. Assembling a group of strategic actors capable of carrying commitments made forward was also advantageous for the conversations. It was important however, to blend this approach with participation by members of the general community recognizing that often the interest of the community at large may not always correspond to that of organizations purportedly working on their behalf.

Thus, invitations to the Albert Park community conversation we sought to draw officials from key provincial and local government departments, leaders of community-based structures, migrant associations, NGOs, youth organizations and faith based groups. While on the one hand we were keen to enlist people that were open-minded potential agents of change, who could act as champions within the community, we felt it necessary to include “spoilers” who could block or sabotage the community conversation. This included organizations or individuals that had been implicated in past xenophobic incidents. This was important in two respects – first, to avoid a process of where dialogue is conducted only among the converted and two, avoid the potential that such individuals may have to undermine the legitimacy of the solutions that may come out of the community conversations. To safeguard the conversations from manipulation, such invitation were preceded by bilateral meetings with these groups to communicate the objectives of the

dialogue, while at the same time providing incentives for participation in the process.

The Dialogue Event: From constructing safe spaces to planning around a new vision

The dialogue events were convened in Albert Park between August 2009 and February 2010 and sought to guide the community, with the aid of certain tools, through the six-step CCE methodological framework cycle. In light of the tension and xenophobic violence (the much publicized incidents of 2009) in the past, the initial conversations aimed at building interest and commitment among participants by clarifying the objective of the dialogues and nurturing a relationship of trust by between them as human beings. The subsequent conversations identified concerns facing the community and elicited a deeper engagement around the underlying causes, often generating an environment of self-learning for the community while at the same time stimulating them to discover innovative solutions towards addressing these concerns. These subsequent process gave birth to agreements and action plans and were evidence of the considerable relationship building investment undertaken during group and bilateral meetings with provincial, municipal, migrant associations, faith bases and community structures. The final stage of the conversations took place on the 20th anniversary of Nelson Mandela's release. Until this point the community's plans had planned around their past and present realities. This historic moment that served to stimulate them to envision a future that at present may appear unthinkable. Guided by the CCE tool "Envisioning The Future", the community's common aspirations were translated through energetic expressions in the form of songs, skits, poems and artistic drawings.

"This is simple - the right information doesn't reach the right people to make the right decisions. Instead we are targeting those that have changed. Which one do you want to change? Do we want to change us? We are already changed."

Approximately 75- 85 people, consisting of migrants and locals, attended each conversation. Men and women were equally represented, though dominance by males reflected the underlying history influence of patriarchy in both sections of the community. There was a fair balance between participants from migrant and host communities, though the proportion of migrants was slightly higher in the initial conversations, underlying the high expectations among this section in the process and the rare opportunity to establish

mechanisms to prevent future outbreaks of xenophobia. The migrant participants consisted of a wide range of nationalities, including participants from SADC, East, West and Central Africa, as well as those from outside the continent, such as Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and China. The fact that migrants were the majority during this conversation also helped them to feel more confident to voice the concerns they faced. Among locals that participated were South Africans of Indian origin who during the history of the area appeared to have replaced some of the white population that had move out. One could perceive amidst this group a strong sense of ownership and attachment to Albert Park, a form of latent social capital that could be leveraged to address key concerns around urban decline and crime.

He [Mandela] brought unity and integration in all areas using this dialogue thing. He brought unity by getting whites and blacks who didn't meet to actually meet and talk together and now they can use the same taxi's going to town and coming back. So that was a big achievement and also a bracket and a collective term that's democracy all in all. We can also use this talking today to go the same way.

In addition to the members of the general community participants to the conversations included officials from provincial and local government; leaders of migrant based associations (formal and informal); members of community-based organisations; leaders of political formations. The initial absence of stakeholders from key government departments (provincial and local) during the first conversation, and their subsequent presence in future conversations, underlined the importance of an ongoing process of relationship building (e.g. through bilateral meetings) between conversations towards creating commitment, trust and participation in the dialogues. Across the diversity of migrant and local attendees, we observed bridges consisting of social networks within religious organisation and general civil society, indicating the existence of a trust dividend that could be used to develop unify joint responses between the two communities.

The atmosphere during the dialogues was informal but respectful with no one person dominating. The idea was not to have speeches but rather to encourage mutual learning and encourage understanding of different views. To facilitate this shared environment, the conversations during the dialogue event took place on two different fronts – in small group sessions and in plenary. The small groups preceded the plenary sessions and were constituted to further diversity (mixing migrants and locals) and offer participants an opportunity to share perspectives in a more interactive and intimate space. In some cases the groups were made up of people with experience and interest in a specific subject-matter

that the community sought to address (e.g. security). From the small groups, participants reconvened into the full group where the entire body of participants had the opportunity to hear the report back from each small group and discuss issues raised in plenary.

Relationship Building With Key Stakeholders

Perhaps the most important activity between the sequences of dialogue events lay in drawing the learning from the unfolding dialogue and translating this into appropriate responses, including the development of heavy investment with key stakeholders identified from perspectives that emerged from the conversation. Each dialogue event was followed by debriefing sessions where the team of facilitators reviewed the critical dimensions flowing out of the dialogues including the psychological, substantive and process issues. This entailed reflecting upon the conversations around, for example, the issues discussed, progress made, obstacles encountered learning that emerged and accomplishments. Given their familiarity with the terrain the sessions the team also shared developments within the context and the need to involve additional stakeholders in the process.

To this end, there was heavy investment between the cycles of dialogue in the form of bilateral meetings with key representatives from the provincial department such as the departments of home affairs and social development; officials of the eThekweni municipality (including the local ward councillor); various community bases structures such as the local ANC political structures and the community policing forums; and community leaders drawn from different refugee and migrant groups living in the area. The general aims of the meeting was to present to these groups the concern identified during the last conversation, explore any additional concerns that may not have been adequately captured and draw their support for the community efforts towards addressing these concerns.

For example, through the support of the KZN Refugee Council and the Union of Refugee Women, individual and group meetings were held at different times with the leaders of migrant and refugee associations drawn from diverse countries such as Liberia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi and DRC etc. In an environment pervaded with fear among migrants, these meetings were important for boosting the confidence of the migrant community in the process, including the importance of their input during planning processes. During the conversations we also became aware of the assistance and counselling performed to migrants by several religious organisations in the area, such as the eThekweni

Community Church (ECC), following xenophobic violence in January 2008. The aim of these meetings was to draw these organisations, in line with their religious mandates, towards supporting many proposals made by the community in terms of the need to shape attitudes, inspire values and impart inner healing to ongoing psychological experienced pain by victims of violence. It was also clear that migrant and local religious organisations represent valuable social capital that can be leveraged to build social cohesion.

QUOTATION: This exercise for the people to study their family trees was really good. There was a Mr. Mkhize who traced some of his members to the Congo. He is now a Zulu guy with Congo influence. And Mr. Ndebele said what are we doing after the xenophobia attacks, we are killing our own people and to me really My origins go far as Congo, we came around Swaziland and we crossed into Mozambique and came into Swaziland and came down to South Africa. We crossed with and during the Zulu wars and we crossed the Tugela River. So if we trace my history, my elders tell me that I am from the Congo and I agree with that. Our discussions with various government departments sought to explore the use of dialogue as a primary intervention to interact with the needs of the community, as well as how to interlink the community initiative which existing governmental programmes could support. At local level we engaged the social development unit of the municipality and international relationship and governance unit. The international relations and governance unit acts as an important liaison on migration and refugees matters, including rendering support to events such as World Refugee Day. It also played an instrumental in coordinating key government stakeholders in responding to xenophobic violence. At provincial level, discussions with the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) were crucial in view of many issues raised during the conversation which fell within its purview. Certain government department, such as the Department of Social Development (DSD), were keen to understand the CCE methodology and how they could use it to bolster their interventions among the community, such as a programme they had initiated to promote entrepreneurial skills among the youth in Durban. In this regard they wanted to explore how the current team of facilitators working with the dialogues could serve as a resource to the Department towards fulfilling such objectives.

The executive committee of the Albert Park Community Policing Forum (the committee) invited the team of facilitators to present the programme objectives and some of the concerns that had arisen in previous conversations, with particular focus around the issue of crime. As the perspectives below indicate, these meetings were critical in demystifying

perception of migrants as the source of crime in Albert Park. They also played a part in furthering trust to the point of opening up the possibility of migrant participation in the community-policing forum. The team also constantly met with leaders and members of political formations, such as the ANC and IFP, recognising their influence as opinion makers among the community, in order to clarify the objectives of the dialogues. These meetings were also about conveying the understanding of the dialogues as platforms through which the community could engage outside the constraints of political ideology, religious persuasion and class solidarity.

We have highlighted a few of the meetings that took place to demonstrate the importance of these activities between dialogues. These meetings were critical to maintaining the flow of communication on key aspects arising from the dialogues. Keeping in touch with stakeholders helped to sustain their commitment to the process and draw the support of their constituencies, in a way that outcomes or agreements from the dialogue could be supported.

Emerging Perspectives

An effective response to xenophobia must take into account the diversity of views and not to assume that dominant perspectives in the conversation are representative of the entire group. This is particularly important in a setting like Albert Park, where participants, motivated by different concerns and interests, expressed diverse perspectives on what they saw as the contributory factors and solutions to xenophobia. It was important to capture each of these, word for word, careful not to dilute individual views and experiences. As part of the CCE analytical process we grouped these emerging perspectives into three categories – burning issues i.e. those that generated a level of energy among majority of participants and presented an opportunity to motivate the community into action; non-burning issues i.e. important issues that did not seem to ignite interest in the group either due to unquestioned communal beliefs or because they may not have caught the community's attention; and misconceptions i.e. false beliefs that necessitated follow up in order to help the community to be better informed. It should also be said that in the initial phases of the conversation, these perspectives were superficial and at times reactionary, based upon various social determinants among participants (such as whether they were locals or migrants, their social standing and class, age etc). In subsequent conversations, the picture began to shift reflecting the gradual change in the community's thought process that comes

with the introspection induced by ongoing dialogue. In this section we discuss these emerging perspectives on both these fronts – those initial inclinations and views that sketch the issues on a surface level (“the fruits”), and those prescriptions that began to emerge with deeper self-diagnosis as the dialogues progressed (“the roots”).

The Fruits – What Is Visible

The tendency at the start of the dialogues was towards polite talk, in an attempt to avoid open confrontation. This “artificial calm” eventually opened up into turbulent space of accusation and counter accusation, particularly during group meetings held with one community to the exclusion of the other, where individuals felt unrestrained to air their views. In such forums issues were still couched in a language of “us” and “them”, indicative of the mistrust and polarization that had ensued as a consequence of the xenophobic incidents of December 2008 and January 2009. As a projection of this environment two narratives emerged, each associated with one section of the community.

QUOTATION: Even far beyond 1994 - it is not new; we know our brothers and sisters from other countries. The issue behind the attacks was that we were overwhelmed. And the discussion of other issues like, poverty and unemployment, that is the bottom line. In my family, my aunty lived in Mozambique and got hurt in the Frelimo war and they came back and stayed here. In other words, we have blood relationships with people from other countries, so don't take it in your mind, we are sorry about what happened but let's go forward build the country.

From the point of view of many locals, xenophobia stemmed from the overwhelming influx of migrants into Albert Park. Their comments show how several years after the demise of apartheid, the question of influx and control still sits at the forefront of their minds. The immediate resort is to interpret the immediate challenges in the area through the lens of preserved spaces, where migration is seen as both a threat and source of undesirable occurrences. The acute challenges of rapid urbanization are seen as a consequence of “invasion by foreigners” fuel common misconceptions around the failure to access resources and other social ills. This is evident when one observes the impulsive reaction to the high crime levels facing the community, where many locals blamed the “idle foreigners” that slept in the park for rampant crime in the area. Amidst what everyone agreed was a gradual

decay in the environment and underlying values of the society, it is convenient to place culpability for such ills on new entrants who do not fit the majority indigenous profile. Once these superficial sentiments have taken root of a large sections of the community, difference (whether its cultural or linguistic) alone is enough to associate one with the range of challenges facing the community such as substance abuse, urban decay, corruption of institutions and other ills prevalent in the private and public sphere.

QUOTATION: When we just came here in late nineties, really waking in the morning, some times half past five, half past four to go out. It was not an easy thing. We found there was a lot of crime. Those days...the dead bodies or see a lot of blood...There was crime in...This last time now, I think the two years or so, now you start pointing fingers on foreigners Why not start with the South African people? This type of crime has been for a long period. The issues that have been...especially murder, poverty...about prostitution. All of that, so to...one by one to ... able to help them, so can we help them?... So, what are you planning for it? The solution? Just continue blaming foreigners is not a solution

I want to comment on the issue of crime and security and other; I think it' a perception as you put it. But locals also are taking advantage of that perception, and accusing one group of people. It's unfortunate. It's the people staying in Kwamashu, they make their coup here and they go back in their area where they stay. They..., they got money and they are the one making crime in the community. Where are the people victims of violence, victims of..., and victims of robbery, small children, and babies? They've been raped by the gangsters in their own area. Those children when their father or mother is out from the township either for work or study, the children stay alone. The gangsters come, they can break house, yeah!They are coming from outside, to operate, they go back in their, like in their area and the foreigners take the blam..

These sentiments contrasted sharply with views expressed by migrants who felt that locals did not take advantage of the many opportunities available to them. They accused them of being lazy, illustrating this by drawing upon parallels between their experiences and those of locals. Many migrants describing how they had against many odds set up businesses or advanced their education, and could not see why locals, with the support of existing social infrastructure, could not surpass these achievements. Some migrants blamed this state of affairs on the South African government, which they saw as aiding the disempowerment of its own people by failing to stress the importance of hard work and entrepreneurship. As a

result of this chasm of perspectives expressed during these early stages of the dialogues, the solutions proposed corresponded to the superficial nature of the diagnosis of what the community saw as the concerns that faced them. For example in relation to crime and insecurity, some participants unabashedly suggested the removal foreigners and the establishment of vigilante associations as the appropriate response to crime. Such views served to illustrate the importance of exploring concerns together with the community to enable them to take informed decisions before responding to their challenges.

QUOTATION: My advice to those people that live around here is to form a vigilante group and whip people instead of waiting for the police to come over. What I am talking about...that is still happening in my country Liberia, if someone is robbed on the street, we on the street we move on them. If someone has robbed a person, he will never do it again. But here in South Africa if a person is robbing someone everybody stands back and watches till the person gets robbed, which is wrong. Everybody advise yourselves, our youths, the teens and even the schools you have to talk to each other here and you have to stop depending on the police.

QUOTATION: I strongly think that this should not be a recommendation because it will be taking the law into our own hands; we all remember what happened when people used the same method to root out criminal elements in St George's. But I would recommend that we engage with the leaders, individuals, even though some of them are at the heart of spreading this xenophobia.

Going to the Roots – Underneath the Surface

Strategic questioning and other CCE tools of this nature, employed during progressive dialogues, helped the community to reflect on a deeper level and understand factors that were key contributors to the symptoms they had thus far identified. It is beyond the scope of this section to analyze the causes of xenophobia in any detail. Instead what we have attempted to do is to group the emerging perspectives into four main categories, which the community saw as the main drivers behind xenophobic violence. These categories correspond and lend support to explanations that have been put forward in a wide range of research conducted on the root causes of the violence and include – political and institutional factors, socio-economic factors, social-cultural factors and psychosocial factors rooted in the history of South Africa.

Political and institutional factors

QUOTATION: The Xenophobia attacks were not as bad here as what happened in Gauteng, despite the history of violence in KZN. So going on from that, I think the people; grass roots people played a very important role in preventing the situation to being as bad as Gauteng. And talking about Cato Manor, I know in Cato Manor, people leaders, community leaders played a great role, so in future if you are going to come back I really think that you need to bring all the community structures from Cato Manor and build on here what the people have already been doing.

The pivotal role of leadership (particularly at the local level) towards building intra-community relationship remained a key feature through the conversation. During the first conversation, where local government was underrepresented, the community was categorical that a process of this nature could not succeed in their absence. As the conversations unfolded participants discussed the mismatch between the leadership envisaged by the constitutional framework and the reality they experienced on the ground. They cited concerns around credibility, at both provincial, and consequential gap of mistrust between legitimate leadership structures and the community at large. The causes of this erosion of trust have been the subject of a number of research reports, the findings of which resonate with perspectives that emerged during the conversations. For example there was a perception that government leadership is not keen to engage its citizens in solving many of the present challenges facing society. Indeed, the community felt that there was a failure by existing leaders to understand the role that democratic and public institutions are meant to play in enhancing public participation. Instead, corruption and ineptitude in these institutions perpetuated a maze of bureaucracy deliberately restricting the flow of information in order to further the interest of a few “connected” individuals. This generated a pattern of hopelessness among communities as they becoming increasingly disconcerted and disconnected with leaders and institutions that are meant to serve them.

QUOTATION:the South Africans...have been selling drugs here, away from the security... for more than ten years..... They aren't arrested, for.....selling drugs. The Police are also involved...and so are the foreigners,..... the reason they do these things is because the department is also in favour of them...these is because you can't go and do those types of

things in other countries. You know about Botswana. You can't do it there because the government doesn't allow you. So, I think, there's a shared responsibility.

This loss of confidence in legitimate authority structures presents an entry for the growth of dysfunctional structures (formal and informal) driven by self-interest and willing to manipulate concerns through divisive techniques which apportion culpability for concerns on certain sections of the community. These are informal bodies that emerge in response to interests of residents and with the support of a large section of the community, and are able to exercise enormous influence often superseding that vested in legitimate governmental structures. Often because of the de facto power they exercise, the authorities either turn a blind eye or saliently cooperate with them in pursuit of their endeavors, further eroding the clear structure of authority, accountability, and their ability to promote peace in the community. This may explain the manner in which much of the violence that occurred in the area during December 2008 and January 2009 was orchestrated, where local authority representatives with the support of informal structures sought to forcefully evict those individuals whose presence was deemed a threat to the community. Thus while poverty and other socio-economic concerns facing South Africa partly explain frustrations that may be used to justify xenophobic violence, the role played by these informal entities and their employment of politics of fear involving the apparatus of power against perceived enemy, provide a deeper understanding to the fundamental causes of the xenophobic violence.

QUOTATION: I mean what refugees are really feeling in the communities you cannot feel it, they feel rejected 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, so the best important issue is if they can release people or ask those other countries to take the refugees and let them go than holding them there. They are dying, they cannot take care of them like in their home, they cannot take care of them when they are going to school, they don't care for them in transport, in hospitals and wherever. What we are living is worse than what you are witnessing in the street. Please spoke-woman or spoke-lady for us please transmit this to the.

At the centre of entrenched and pervasive xenophobic attitudes lies lived experiences of exclusion and marginalisation from society. It is common knowledge that inequality in South Africa was institutionalised and the country's resources were heavily skewed towards the white minority. Under the new South Africa the expectations of accessing the resources the majority believe they were entitled to have not been realised. A combination of social and economic realities - poor service delivery; acute levels of unemployment; severe shortages of accommodation; and widespread poverty, rapid urban decay - continue to confine many locals to the periphery and extend this legacy of institutional marginalisation. In the eyes of many locals the persistence of these realities confirm, on the one hand, their fears of abandonment by local and provincial authorities, and on the other hand, left them with a deep sense of frustration based on the absence of voice to influence decisions that impact on their lives.

QUOTATION: Now, that the Police..... know these people are foreigners they started searching them. It's just I lost my...[camera] with the pictures of the police taking cellphones from foreigners. Foreigners were shouting to the Police: "No, give me my cellphone". Up until....all the people around this Albert Park got out of their windows and see the Police taking the foreigner's phone. It was not until other Police came and this guy reported the Police officer who showed four or seven [phones] and this guy said: "No, this is not mine". As a foreigner you have no rights here. Anybody can do anything with you

While marginalisation of South Africans is embedded in these unique challenges, the exclusion of migrants can be traced to prevailing attitudes within society, including state institutions entrusted to realise their rights. From the onset migrants experience systematic exclusion rooted in the acquisition and societal recognition of their identity documents, resulting in their marginalisation in diverse areas including access to primary health care, housing, employment and business permits. The result of such marginalisation at policy and institutional level is the creation of social norms and values within the community where migrants are stigmatised and discriminated against. Despite the constitutional guarantees provided to all those that live within South Africa, the prevalence of these attitudes in society means that migrants are expected to be grateful when their rights are met. Violence and hostility towards the migrant is seen as a supplement and extension of this institutional position reflected in the immigration policy of the state.

Until you have a formal accountable participation by migrant you cannot identify these problems we need to solve. So the key then that we must ask ourselves here as the leaders of different nationalities of foreign nationals is how we connect into existing different local structures. What are these forums and why are we not involved. So, why are we not in those forums? You must understand how difficult it is from our position. So, for me personally I don't know where and how they forming this Community Policing Forum. I don't know! But I might tell you where the... I think there's a thing of ignoring the foreigners...It's easy to say: I'm not...interested in participating but show me how to participate.

Home Affairs they give you this paper its section 22, A4 page and really that document can allow you to go all over the country but when it comes to services, many people on the ground even officials, they don't recognize that document. They don't know why this document, if, even to apply for other facilities or as a job or something like that, when you show your maroon paper like this, they say why this paper, what this for? Where you got this paper? And point is just that people from government just like a campaign, our awareness campaign for the paper they give to us as refugees, if they give out this paper and put it on an A4 page the police will have to know that it is for this man and he is here in the country for about six months, when year or two years so as to not be in trouble.

During the conversations, the evidence of this uniquely unequal position was discernible in the cautious manner that migrants sought to express concerns and aspirations of their community. The response to this sense of marginalisation by the migrant community has been to disengage from a society they perceive as unwilling to accommodate them, exhibiting a level of apathy when it comes to their participation within various community structures. It also emerged during the conversation that another cause for this apparent disinterest and detachment is the limited capacity among the migrants to organise and develop representative leadership. The community is beset with the intense rivalries and strife making it difficult for them to speak with one voice and participate as a collective at community level. This situation is compounded by the existence of "brief case" associations made of individuals who purport to represent a section of the community, but whose underlying objective is that of accessing funding for personal benefits. Without legitimate and effective representation, it remains a mammoth task representing refugees and migrants often this meant that, this task was left to South African nationals, frequently

lacking practical exposure to the challenges faced by refugees, sometimes lured by similar ulterior motives of cashing in on available donor funding aimed at migrant communities.

QUOTATION

Socio-cultural factors

QUOTATION: When people are coming from work...they cannot talk freely with their cellphone...This... was a no-go area. You do not even want someone to hear speak your language. Not even with your kids, because you could not save them from the way they are looked at. You even began a target because they say those people...we know them, and we will identify them from the way they talk...That's ...[when] we know that it was getting out of hand

Tensions among migrants and locals result from pervasive ignorance across society in respect of the rights of refugees enshrined in the constitutions. The levels of inter-cultural awareness among the different sections of the community can be considerably improved. The conversations revealed how a mixture of bio-cultural affinity, use of language and accompanying distortions of information available to the public, create an environment conducive to “othering” – a process through which sections of society are defined as good contradistinction to bad outsiders. Migrants are widely subjected to mechanisms of “othering” through the application of various bio-cultural features, which are used to justify attitudes exhibited against “the other”. The extent in which physical and inalienable characteristic such as language, skin shades, religion, staple diets, dress and hairstyles etc as well as other cultural embodiments such as language continue to be used to perpetuate deeper hostile attitudes cannot be underestimated. Through this othering migrants attitudes and prejudices are developed about foreigners making it easy for them to be blamed for a wide range of ills including spreading diseases, crime etc

QUOTATION: Someone who had an accident and the ambulances arrived and they found out that he is a street kid or street man. They just left him there, they just gave him a blanket and they left. These are the things that are affecting our communities and even the police, I was searched by the police last week just because I am dark and a foreigner. I felt so bad because it was the first time and they said that I had drugs and I was at the gate of my house and it's painful and that's what it is. They suspect you for drugs and emotionally affects you especially when you just outside your home

Different statements made during the conversations and bilateral meetings with migrants attested to some form of xenophobic 'othering' based on construction of boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. From this accounts it was clear that there are several factors employed in developing this image of migrants as the undesirable 'other'. An understanding of these factors help us to move from a cursory focus on economic antecedents towards understanding of how identity and 'othering' operate in furthering xenophobic violence. A key factor in this respect is the use of language and ethnicity to determine to extent social distance between migrants and locals. Migrants recounted how often their inability to communicate in the dominant language of the province leads to the construction of barriers of exclusion and development of images that may influence behavior and attitudes. Not even South Africans from other provinces handicapped in this way are spared. At the extreme end, this social distance is enlarged through the choice of specific words and labels that position one group against another, reinforcing power dynamics inherent in the exclusion. This can create further rifts and ultimately dehumanize groups such as migrants, making it easier to justify their gross violation of human rights. Conversely, the power inherent in promoting social cohesion through the promotion of language cannot also be understated (see discussion on language under the section entitled Learning)

QUOTATION: I take a taxi from here to town and I just need to stop they say this is a kwere-kwere (Foreigner). The taxi is full with black people like me and they say leave him he does not know where he is going. And you see our African women, those foreigners wearing their traditional wear, now they are afraid to put them. Because once they put them they are identified easily and they say here are the 'foreigners', what is this, I think that they should understand that we are African and that we are human beings despite where we are coming from. They must think that those are our brothers and if you go deeper into the family tree, you find that all of us came from one place. I was talking my broken English and another guy was laughing most of the time. Now when they were talking in their language in Zulu, there were some words which I understood without knowing the Zulu.

From the statements adduced during the conversation it could also be seen how the project of nation building can present difficulties towards building an inclusive identity that is in line with the provisions of the constitutional principle of a South Africa that belongs to all who live in it. The demise of apartheid and South Africa's reinsertion into the global economy has

influenced migration patterns and raised questions around nation building, economic development and diversity management. As with many parts of the world, South Africa's post 1994 nation building project has had to confront the challenges of globalization and diminishing relevance of the nation-state in the present period. Advancements in information and communication technologies, as well as socio-political developments across the world, have triggered the phenomenon of international migration on an unprecedented scale. In this circumstances the process of nation and state-building on the basis of unity around homogeneous history, ethnicity etc. has come under increasing challenge as states have seen the growth of large sections of immigrant communities within their territories. Many migrants feared that in going about the work of nation building, the South African was repeating the errors made by many African countries which sought to enhance in-group solidarity, inadvertently strengthening out-group hostility. They recalled how attempts to build nationalism, at provincial or local level, through strong ethnic cleavages, common language and national symbols, shared history triggered violent action against those groups that did not fit within these profiles, such as groups of non citizens living within these states. Some participants highlight statements made by political and institutional heads as examples of the undesirable consequences of this approach of constructing national identity based on the exclusionist identity, where African migrants were singled out for discrimination. This discrimination is reinforced by a sense of superiority that flows out of the discourse of South African exceptionalism, which percolated down to the grassroots entrenching views that the rest of Africa is inherently inferior to South Africa. In the finality this kind of patriotic pride can translate into condescension and a disassociation from identifying with the continent, indirectly impeding social cohesion with persons coming from outside South African borders.

In the absence of public information that challenges these narratives and approaches, this exclusionary psyche has the potential of becoming entrenched within the wider society. This is where the media seems to have attracted a level of culpability for its acquiescence, and in some cases active reinforcement, of this 'othering' of migrants. The media not only shapes public opinion but has the power to cultivate perceptions around identity and mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion within society. The concern with the media in South Africa lies in the manner information communicated creates and perpetuates certain perceptions about different segments of the community. Widely exaggerated figures and statements circulated in the media in respect to the numbers of immigrants present in the country continue to

stoke the image of a country that is overridden by immigrants. Many participants discussed how inaccuracies within the media, drawn out of inferences within day to day reporting on crime, labour concerns and the reasons behind the presence of migrants in South Africa, sow misconceptions and disseminate myths that further confine migrants to the fringes of society. Research has also shown how the media rarely reported positively on the Africa continent, and thus reinforcing virulent stereotypes against people originating from these countries. Little surprise that South Africans view Africans from other countries as having nothing to contribute to the communities. Such simplistic coverage directly creates environment that is favourable for the creation of disparaging labels to be applied on immigrants from Africa. In the face of limited interactions between migrants and locals, this distorted reporting exacerbate intolerance and presented further hurdles for an inclusionary discourse that attaches humanness and belonging to migrants.

QUOTATION:

Socio-economic factors revolving around access to resources

The number of South Africans living in poverty is estimated to reach anywhere between 45 and 55 percent, approximately 20-28 million, and is not confined to any one race group. However, it is concentrated among blacks, particularly Africans: 61% of Africans and 38% of colored's are poor, compared with 5% of Indians and 1% of whites. Statistics show that poverty in South Africa is critically linked to the labor market, which has failed to deliver opportunities for a majority of black people to access employment opportunities. In 1999 38% of African households or 3.1 million people were estimated to be worker-less, having no employed people. (Banda Loreto, Herzenberg Collette and Paremoer Lauren Black Economic Empowerment: Addressing Socio-economic Inequality in South Africa in Epoliticcssa. Vol 2.2003)

Fifteen years after the democracy, many South Africans are yet to access their basic socio-economic rights. Discussions around xenophobia during the conversations were juxtaposed with the numerous socio-economic challenges faced by the community and the concerns about the inability of the economic environment to respond to the needs of the people. Research has shown how from as early as the 1990s e.g. within the 1999 White Paper, migrants have been painted as competing for scarce resources with millions of poor South Africans. In these representations, migrants compete unfairly and undeservedly with South Africans for resources that they are not entitled to. During the bilateral meetings held exclusively with locals, participants blamed government's management of cross-border

migration for the growing numbers of migrants, suggesting that it was this exacerbated competition over resources such as housing, trading opportunities, formal employment etc, that bred resentment for migrants among host communities. Much of the opinion pieces that transpired shortly after the May 2008 xenophobic outbreak took this angle, pegging the conflict on the competition for resources as the source for the concurrent prejudices that sprung up against migrants. It does not help that migrants are perceived to arrive in the country with skills, relatively well financed and resourced. Some participants to the conversation felt that these advantages made migrants more attractive to employers or better equipped to succeed in business. Ironically, amidst the brain drain that South Africa has faced over the last decade, it continues to attract a wealth of skilled migrants from various African countries. Unfortunately for diverse reasons such as access to permits, recognition of qualifications etc, many of these are unable to find work that correspond to their skills and end up competing for low skilled jobs with locals, where they are obviously preferred over many South Africans trying to access work at this level. This in turn results in further acrimony with locals who accuse them of being more than willing to tolerate low wages aiding a race to the bottom where labor exploitation become prevalent.

QUOTATION: Many locals who are here say the foreigners are just arriving, and they have been here for thirteen years and cannot even get an RDP house. There was one guy who was working for foreigners. What he told us “You foreigners, how can you feel if you, while you put a plate of rice on the table and call your children to eat, and in few minutes you see other people aiming to eat the same plate of rice. How are you going to feel?”

This thinking is compounded by excuses made by authorities about their limited capacity to provide to services amidst this overwhelming presence of migrants. Dubbed by researches as the 'scapegoating hypothesis' this thinking suggest that service providers are unable to keep up because of the high levels of in-migration into South Africa and the constraints that this puts on the limited available resources. This however ignores the fact that most of South Africa’s migration is internal, consisting of South Africans moving within the country, causing the same challenges in terms of access to resources on one level, with similar consequences

of stratified exclusionary tendencies being exercised against new comers into the area who are South Africans. It appears that space continues to define access to resources and services and ultimately patterns of inclusion and exclusion. Amidst this set of social relations it is most obviously the 'strangers'/'foreigners' who are seen as excluded from community rights and access to resources, and become easy scapegoats for associated socio-economic challenges. While the cumulative effect of the concurrent challenges of high unemployment, poverty and inequality act as triggers xenophobic violence in this way, these conditions cut across the migrant and local divide, and cannot be explained away through oversimplified accusations that do not address the fundamental structural problems that give rise to these material conditions. The community did not have the opportunity to explore further some of these structural issues, some of which revolve around the path adopted by current economic policy and its inability to intervene in the general equalisation of resources. Critical questions need to be answered around the failure of the current economic policy towards addressing existing inequality and the failure of current policy to adopt comprehensive migration management policies that maximize on the benefits of in-migration.

QUOTATION: There are so many black people that are unemployed and when they are in that situation and they see refugees and immigrants in general, they get angry that those foreigners are preventing them from getting jobs. On the other side refugees are not employed also when they see that black people do not like and then there is a conflict on both sides and there is isolation. They don't talk, this side is hurting that one and this side is hurting another one. So there is no talk, when they see foreigners they see they see those people taking our jobs. Here are many foreigners who are qualified, who have degrees but who are not working, what they try to do, they try to make a living with informal work, where they try and make a living by hair cutting salon. Anyone can do that, it is not even easy for them to do that, the problem is that there is no communication between them and the foreigners in order to move forward with their problem. Like that man said, that one from the premier, he said that they can have a skills audit where they can see, so that those foreigners can have a job.

Psyco-social dimension and factors rooted in the history of the country

QUOTATION: We need to really start asking ourselves why being a foreigner is a criminal. This being a foreigner is a crime itself. Being too black...the Police will always run after you. You pass in a car and check and see two, three guys. All of them are Blacks! They are criminals. Now we have been in that situation, then when go to inform...you are a foreigner yourself. I have experience in my own flat. Is it possible that that mentality is one of self-hate, not hate of foreigners. Is it possible that that mentality is coming from a history of dehumanisation?

In the course of undertaking the CCE historical timeline exercise there were moments of deep reflection among participants in respect of what years of institutionalized racism and violence had done to the society. Many participants felt that many of the present threats today's migrant/local relationships were rooted in generations of gross violations experienced during apartheid. This manifested in virtually every aspect including – the psychosocial responses of individuals and society as a result of the desecration of their human dignity; the current crisis in skills shortages and inability to take advantage of existing economic opportunities flowing out of decades of denial of skills and educational development; and the impact of years of political and economic isolation of the country and its interaction with the greater continent.

We really need to develop a healing program in this area for all the victims of violence that happened in the past. You know even in South Africa we didn't have a national programme like that period. In Kwa-Zulu Natal there was a lot of violence and then there was no time for the healing, rehabilitation, and people are still living with the baggage of the past experiences of violence and so on and so on.

Researchers have highlighted this psychosocial dimension illustrating how the violence against African migrants has been consistent with structural exclusion and racial devaluation that took place during the apartheid period. It has been suggested that these complexes and psychological feelings of shame continue to be projected to African immigrants, suggesting that xenophobia occurs at a level of visible difference where lighter skin has been associated with better socio-economic standing while darker skin is often associated with criminality and poverty. Another dimension of this psychosocial aspect, and which has been the subject of much documentation, relates to the psychological impact of the past atrocities, including political violence in 1980s, towards creating a culture of violence often reflected today in the violent service delivery protests; the brutality of crime; vigilante responses in defiance of the rule of law; the culture of impunity; and the violence that accompanies the phenomenon of

xenophobia. The isolation theory argues that apartheid isolated the country incapacitating the exposure of its people to the populations of other African countries sowing the seeds for less tolerance of difference, the fruits of which currently manifest in the xenophobic prejudices exhibited towards African nationals. Certainly one cannot dispute that apartheid did create powerful ideologies of difference and promoted stereotypes, which encourage biased perception of foreigners as criminals and carriers of disease.

QUOTATION: If black people are together the system say there is something going on there. And they hate to see us happy like this, people are standing outside doing nothing and it's a Saturday. People let us be positive about ourselves we are here to stay wherever we go and wherever we want to go, they'll always be that bracket that it is because black people are there idle, then there is a criminality happening over there.

Learnings and Outcomes

In this section we draw key lessons, including observable benefits and challenges, encountered through the entirety of the dialogue process that brought migrants and locals in the Albert Park area. These lessons relate to the process (the design and implementation of the dialogue) as it unfolded and substantive issues impacting upon the relationships. Under this section we also discuss the results of the dialogues, in terms output, describing specific tangible and intangible changes (some arising out of action plans adopted by the community). Owing to the limited duration inherent in a pilot programme of this nature, many of these outputs remain at their conceptual stage and require ongoing support to realize their full potential. An important example in this respect relates to the plans of the community to leverage the linguistic diversity in the area as a tool of social cohesion. We have chosen to focus on this venture given the centrality that it occupied in across the range of community action plans that grew out of the conversations. The venture also appears to have gained the full support of the local leadership and carries potential benefit for growing vibrant relationships across sections of community, if accompanied with long term support by diverse stakeholders, including government and civil society, working in the area.

Turning linguistic diversity from a tool of exclusion to a tool for cohesion

I followed you when you were talking about languages or language, which can unite people and it can divide people. Really, its true but according to your own mother tongue we can

see that it does have relationship with the Khoi-khoi language. The language, besides the distance where you are coming from and where you are based now, there are only small transformations or change and just because of that small change you find that we are enemies to you or foreigner just because of small language change, while we are really brothers and sisters. We must learn from Mzilikazi. Simply because Vilakazi was travelling he was incorporating a lot of tribes and that ended up in people having different accents because these people were speaking different languages. When they got there they became Ndebele's, they were no longer Zulu's like when they left here, so when those people are coming back here they are makwere-kwere.

While exploring concerns faced by the community, participants acknowledged the unique challenge posed by the low levels of inter-cultural awareness as an impediment to social cohesion. At the centre of challenges lies the use of language as barrier to promoting the creation of a society unified in its diversity. During the conversations some participants spoke about how the dominant language in the province, IsiZulu, becomes a useful tool for the purposes of exclusion of many non-Zulu speakers. They also referred to the examples, well documented in research, where language used by the media has generated specific images about African migrants generating pervasive misinformation on the presence of migrants and thereby encouraging xenophobic attitudes. There was consensus that language and the images it invokes, can construct perception of the other and initiate a process where demeaning language labels employed in every day conversations feed into a cycle that relegate minority groups to the periphery of the society.

QUOTATION: 15 September we are going to be having a social cohesion exchange a cultural festival which our leaders and organizations are invited all of us to come and eat together, for us to come and dance together and for us to come and play together and learn from each other. We will do that continually for us to put on our best cultural dress and best African attire, learning our different languages. Bring your own African dish just add on the buffet we will be doing on that day....., we want to eat yum and jolele and all those things that can show though we are different we are rich by it. lets come and work for social cohesion

In recognition of these challenges, participants mooted the idea of using language in diverse respects as a vehicle to reverse these multiple challenges and ultimately further the understanding of cultural diversity. There was consensus that promoting diverse languages

can bridge divide and promote collegial relationships between locals and migrants. Language embodies the worldview and unique culture that created it. It reflects values and concepts that are deemed to be the most important by culture. Since language is the key to the heart of culture (e.g. its greetings, its praises, its laws, literature, songs, its wisdom), the sharing and learning of diverse language can be pivotal in building intercultural dialogue. The Albert Park community felt that encouraging the learning of languages could create familiarity among cultures, and ultimately further peace building and social cohesion. Linguistic pluralism lays the foundation for inclusivity and respect among the diverse members of a society. Interactions among locals and migrants encourage them to gain a larger perspective of the world and the wealth inherent in its diverse languages and cultures.

QUOTATION: You find that if a foreigner wants to get off, he will say second stop, maybe the conductor and the conductor becomes hard because he did not say it in Zulu. So you find there is a breakdown in communication and if you have change they often rob them because they think they don't know the South African language. In the schools and universities there is segregation and find that foreigners tend to hang around themselves and they don't communicate with South Africans. Again because language has made us enemies. In the malls this always hurts me in my throat, I don't know how to put it but when you go to the malls or any offices, in the offices they have this sort of bell to get to the shop. The person at the counter always lifts their head up, if you are black they put their head down, that happens all the time and is one of the things that really affects us in our communities.

The leadership of the local ward, inspired by these discussions initiated three projects to respond to the challenges facing the community – a radio station to “tell their stories”, a multi-lingual community newspaper and a multi-lingual inner city school. Though the aim of these initiatives includes broader developmental objectives (such as the creation of jobs, improving literacy levels), they serve as a good example on how this concept of language as it emerged from the dialogue process could be carried over into the official structures and plans to promote social cohesion. This can be done in three distinct ways – enhancing environment through which languages are spoken, learned and shared in public spaces thus enhancing culture sharing and ultimately promote peace building; through approaches taken by the education system to introduce youth in understanding diversity; and by exploring different avenues that community can introduce language in the media that is

reflective of diversity in the community and promotes social cohesion.

TEXT BOX "a simple greet in your vernacular illustrates a genuine attempt by someone to understand you and where you come from".

Language as tool for sharing culture and peace building

What I have noticed from what we have done that this conflict created by the politicians who use our language difference to cause tension. The animosity amongst the politicians themselves, there is animosity amongst the Xhosa, Zulu and the Sotho. We see that the Zulu voted for Zuma and he became president of the ANC and the Xhosa vote for Cope. This is the most sticking issuethe issue of the Xhosa the Zulu's the Mpondo's, they being called amaMpondo, you are Xhosa, you are Zulu so we don't want them in this vicinity of ours

The importance of language and culture for a community's psychological well being is well established in history. Accounts from all over the world, including South Africa, indicate how dispossession annihilates a people's belief in their heritage and identity. In contradistinction, the promotion of linguistic diversity, particularly in public spaces, renders power and acceptance to people, and affirms their self-identity. More often however, what occurs is the failure by dominant linguistic groups (within geographical spaces) to see language diversity as a social resource, choosing instead to view it as a barrier to social integration. This is evident from modern examples of how some states have reacted to the pressures of linguistic diversity that arise from the pressures of international migration posed by a globalized world. In their bid to forge national cohesion, such states have ended up fostering an artificial homogeneity around the language and culture of dominant groups, indirectly undermining national unity by promoting attitudes opposed to cultural and linguistic pluralism.

As a relatively young democracy, and faced with similar challenges, South Africa chose to endorse the principle behind linguistic pluralism, clearly articulated in the approach taken within its constitution towards sanctioning 11 languages as concurrent official languages of the state. In doing this it aligned itself with contemporary thinking that has developed out in line with international human rights regimes, aimed at recognize and giving expression to the diversity of a people. However, despite the noble inclination reflected in our constitution, it is questionable whether this commendable thinking has percolated down

into the sphere of public life to an extent that is accommodative of linguistic and cultural minorities. Often language is manipulated to exclude “the other”, and migrants during the conversation expressed their hesitation to communicate in a language other than in IsiZulu, for fear of being labeled as outsiders and attracting negative inferences. Indeed, this problem is not confined to those originating from out of South Africa; many internal migrants from other provinces talked about the rejection they suffered, at one time or the other, due to their inability to interact with host communities through the dominant language of the province. Far from embracing the multi-lingual richness available in the area, efforts are critically required to translate the vision of the constitution in this area into geographical spaces where dominant groups impose their linguistic preference on others.

QUOTATION: What I want to say about this issue, we must overcome this hurdle of language and allow ourselves to come together so we can do something...I am a pastor...We are working in his community, but they don't allow us as foreigners to be among their forums just because we cant speak Zulu well. But, if they can allow us to be together, to work together, we will do a lot. There many forums where because of language...they don't allow foreigners to be. And again, our brothers, South Africans, they don't know that we are brothers. If they call us foreigners, they..a Black foreigner. But in Africa there's no foreigner because of language. They don't know that we are brothers!

During the conversations, participants noted that when people talked about inclusion of migrants within their society, the suggestions revolved around their assimilation and adjustment into society through adoption of the host community's language and culture. While migrants did not dispute the practical benefit in learning more about their host community, they endeavored to explain the difficulties inherent in transient settlement, where migrants are forced to move more than once in a short period, each time having to learn different languages and cultures. An assimilation approach has also been criticized as a “strip-tease” method towards integrating migrants, as it proceeds on the assumption that migrants should enter “naked” without any cultural, religious or even ethnic specificity or identity – before they can be accepted. Instead, what is being more advocated in contemporary times, under the increasing influence of human rights law, is an approach of promoting integration on the basis of accepting cultural and ethnic diversity as a natural condition of societies largely molded by globalization and ensuing international migration. Recognizing the reality of this context, Albert Park participants explored how to encourage such integration by promoting the sharing of local and migrant languages – with migrants

and locals being encouraged to learn local languages such as Zulu, as well as regional languages, such as Kiswahili – thereby utilizing the power inherent in language to open the community to cosmopolitan nature of present day society.

QUOTATION: You could not talk even about...,unless you are in your room, maybe they open the window...You can be in a taxi, you cannot talk your language, you can be together but you cannot talk. It was...,but now slowly we are...openly, talking our language all over.... But, the only thing that we must do, we must work more together to build that bridge which drives us apart. This language thing.

Sharing a language goes beyond words and opens us to understanding the others way of life. As one participant noted, “language is the medium where we record our entire life – our culture, way of life, philosophy and all. When this is shared it can be likened to sharing our entire beings”. For a cosmopolitan area like Albert Park, consisting of rich linguistic diversity, the harmonious co-existence of many languages in one geographic space can be a powerful symbol of the aspiration to be united in diversity. In this regard, the idea of a multi-lingual community radio station, newspaper and school can be a strategic launch pad to realizing this potential, bridging and accessing other cultures and promoting mutual understanding. Inputs during the conversations also acknowledged the economic significance of multilingualism and linguistic diversity. Linguistic barriers are amongst the obstacles that impede businesses owners accessing other markets and many migrant business owners felt that little knowledge of indigenous kept them from fully exploiting the markets in the areas where they lived. They also felt that such knowledge would enhance the acceptance of their business among local communities. On the other hand, participants recognized the existence of valuable knowledge among certain sections of migrants, such as the Somali and Pakistani communities where successful business practices had been natured over time through cultural values passed from generation to generation. The establishment of language centers and other mechanisms that promote linguistic diversity in public forum, may create an environment through which many locals can access some of the norms underlying business values prevalent in certain sections of the migrant community. This may build their competitive advantage over time and in the long run foster harmonious relations within the community.

Can imagine if everyone from South Africa knows the culture, food, music, language of others and we can organise even competitions..... and they announce even the winners

with presents as gifts from other cultures. From every where need to promote diversity at each level They come and talk to youI didn't know you are like this; I didn't use it like this. I didn't know you can cook this food like this.....you also speak so well.

Language in schools – promoting multiculturalism in schools

How can we bring this thing of social cohesion into manifestation, how will it come to reality. We must start with the children. We have children that go to school to be educated to become the future of leaders. How will all these things come to a realization if we sit back and let them continue to hear the old stories of separation. What must we do is show them that the world is international organization so when they come around they will leave according to that internationalism. Lets give the opportunity to our young ones to live better than we and all them can become brilliant and future leaders tomorrow preaching harmony and not hate.

During the community conversations, participants discussed the need to extend responses on xenophobia to the youth. They shared examples of how xenophobic attitudes where often transmitted to the youth through comments made at home or in public spaces. At the same time it was acknowledged that schools provide an opportunity to alter this thinking and create new attitudes and ways of viewing diverse people. The schools are where opinions in young minds are formed and these young minds take in the best and worst of the attitudes infecting society at that time. This may explain why xenophobic attitudes have not only been confined to adult sections of community but have also been observed among the educational youth, including sometimes towards their migrant teachers. A school that could draw different cultural groups to interact through different linguistic aids may help young people to become aware of different cultures and form the starting point for building a community with a broader understanding of different cultures that comprise the wider world. It is in this respect that the community's idea of a multilingual and multicultural school where language teaching and learning among teachers and students is used as a tool for developing social cohesion, merits serious consideration. It was suggested that such a multi-lingual school could explore opportunities to incorporate in the curriculum, concepts and ideas intended to promote greater understanding and tolerance of other cultures.

QUOTATION

“If we can start that sense of cosmopolitan acceptance from the youngest to the oldest, then we are on the way towards creating tolerance and acceptance”

Countries that have undergone major changes in political priorities and seen major shifts in forms of government have felt the need to realign the content of their educational systems as a way of addressing repercussions associated with the learning acquired from the past. Many countries have confronted difficult historical facts by revising draft school learning programmes, their content and the approach they take. For example, South Africa, upon the dismantling of apartheid, held a national conference on education values and democracy to create consensus around the curriculum by inviting input from various stakeholders after the dismantling apartheid in 1994. Other countries, such as Germany, have also been proactive, notably addressing its culpability for World War II by encouraging through their educational systems the concept of civic responsibility that deals frankly with the past, while promoting a linguistic learning approach that is outward looking and reflects a strong continental dimension. On the other hand, some states faced with similar challenges of creating new nations, have opted for the path of narrow nationalism choosing to amplify through their learning systems, narratives based on the uncritical devotion to one's country. In the long term, the inadvertent consequence of extolling the exceptional qualities of the country, are fraught with risks of enhancing xenophobic attitude among the youth, who are exposed to a sense of group of unity based upon the omission of significant contributions made by non-dominant groups such migrants.

I remember in 1997 you were in the workshop with formerly minister of home affairs. We told him Sir we must learn from Congo the problems of denying citizens to some people because while you think you are becoming strong you are is because of the lack of citizenship they said in public and that time it was very sad that if you go to home affairs we found that big we must save our national integrity

South Africa as a relatively young democracy faces the challenge of creating a sense of nationhood that sharply contrast with the separatist tendencies of apartheid and the pariah language this regime adopted through its education system. Schools present opportunities to address not just the racist undertones of yesteryears, but much of apartheid communiqué on the African continent, a major contributor to present xenophobic attitudes exhibited towards migrants from African countries. In this regard, the approach of using schools to represent the national story of South African exceptionalism to young people in a bid to create loyal citizens around a shared collective identity may be detrimental to bringing

about cultural integration and encourage healthy attitudes towards migrant communities. If we are to tackle xenophobia for the benefit of future generations, we need to create an environment in schools where our youth learn and understand the historical and present interdependence between South and the rest of the Africa continent. One way of stimulating this could be through the introduction of meritorious rewards, such as prizes for essay competition around topics such as celebrating diversity, to encourage the youth to want to learn more about different countries, cultures and ways of life, thus addressing prejudices normally founded on ignorance. In addition to communicating new narratives of a unity based on diversity, the vision behind the multi-cultural school also foresees a learning environment that encourages exposure to different languages at this level. Encouraging multi-lingual and cultural expression at school can counter separatists tendencies among society were certain groups emphasize their dominance at the expense of more vulnerable sections of the community. We do however recognize that effecting change in these areas requires not just considerable investment, but political courage to take on dominant interest groups in order to promote disaffected minorities who may not have a political voice. In the long run however, proposals such as those made by the community in this respect, may embody seeds for fashioning a society that is more inclusive and takes into account the presence of different groups (including migrants), their aspirations and contribution.

“Schools hold incredible potential towards addressing xenophobic attitudes in future generations. During this discussions I have observed the notable omission the role of schools can play in tackling xenophobia. We need to be reminded that the schools were the very place where apartheid sought to promulgate the idea of separatism and communicate difference as a threat. We may not be able to alter mind frames of many of us and what we teach our children at home, but if we concentrate on the schools we can communicate acceptance and more positive images about the relationship of this country [South Africa] and the rest of the continent.”

It should also be pointed out that at the school level, promoting multilingualism can contribute to greater creativity and innovation. Research has shown that linguistic diversity is a major driver toward improving these areas as learning different languages supports attention, perception, memory, concentration, concept formation, critical thinking, problem solving, and the ability to work teams. One of the potential sources fuelling innovation and creativity is multilingualism and linguistic diversity. Diversity in language used by individuals

from different backgrounds has potential to unlock constricted social interactions and achieve national unity in a multi-lingual state and catapult social fusion leading to sustainable progress in a multi-lingual setting.

QUOTATION

Language and media

Research has shown that the media does not just reflect perception in the public domain but develops discourses that influence the manner in which public perceptions are created.

Media analysis around content is both expressive of existing social relationship and formulative of social patterns. All around the world stories of media groups have been culpable for the creation and maintenance of negative sentiment and social practices against different groups. In the context of South Africa, researchers have sought to understand whether the media is both a reflection of xenophobia as well as an instigator. Here again, the underlying premise revolves around the use of language employed by the media as a generator of specific images of the African migrant. Though extensive knowledge does not exist on how the broadcast media impact xenophobia in South Africa, the role of print media in generating specific representations of African foreigners in South Africa media is well documented. Media coverage is incomplete, simplistic and lacking depth in analysis. Print media portray Africa as a war-torn, poverty-stricken and hopeless continent with African migrants flooding South African cities to compete for scarce resources with locals. Media labels majority of these immigrants as illegal immigrants and little can be detected in the media about the different categories of migrants or the contributions that they make to the communities they are a part. The sum total of this is the occurrence of imbalanced reporting when there is a deliberate focus on the experiences of one group while at the same de-emphasis or minimizing the contribution of another group. While media coverage may not be characterized with direct labeling of entire groups, research has shown how the combined effect of indirect multiple messages in the media contribute to the formation of generalized stereotypes and xenophobic attitudes towards African immigrants and the countries they come from; eventually translating into the hostile attitudes that meets this group.

QUOTATION: The media should at least should do something that it clicks that these people are asylum seekers. That we did not want to stay here. ...but event in our country, have made it happen that we now have to stay here.

As pointed out, the portrayal of whole groups in a negative light within the media is not an isolated phenomenon to South Africa. In many parts of the world popular media often have directly or indirectly depicted entire groups as lazy, gamblers, crooked, barbaric, crass, unimaginative, dour, unsophisticated, disorganized, arrogant, miserly, savage, mean, degenerate, and drunken. At times, these images are entrenched through the use of persuasive techniques, which create such misapprehension, fear, bias, and prejudice towards entire groups. Other times, they are spread through the use of personification of individuals by making them synonymous with all people from that country. Generalization of this nature has produced enduring damaging views in society towards entire communities living amongst them. Perhaps of greater consequence has been the self-perpetuating effect of such deleterious stereotypes upon future generations, when the biases contained mainstream hard print media are translated as facts in adventure books, comic books, cartoons, films and photographs, illustrations, drawings etc. what becomes accepted in mainstream media is translated into facts in other mediums of communication.

QUOTATION: The media has also got a big role to play because what has been happening of late is that if a foreigner is involved in crime they highlight very much on those issues. So when the South Africans are reading those issues, they say those are criminals, they are selling drugs, so also the media need to look at the good things the foreigners are doing. The teachers, the doctors, the artisans, I am working in Spring Foot Park, with about 50 black South Africans and we are leaving well. We are sharing skills and I have been pushing for the black South African guys to start learning the machines. Right now we have three guys that are in college. I think if we make sure that we keep the skills that we have got that has been brought here by these foreigners, really this place will be a better place for everybody. But the media does not want to write about this. They just want us to be enemies.

The Albert Park community recognized the causal link between the language used in the media and the creation of strong favorable and unwarranted impressions of migrants. Ultimately the way migrants were covered in the media and the impact on the community attitudes was a point of a concern that prompted the community to moot the idea of a community newspaper and radio station as a means to constructing alternative messages. Instead of focusing on a barrage of negative incidents, which the community felt had become common parlance in newspaper, they believed there was considerable scope to

adopt a more promising language in the media that was reflective of many benefits derived through interaction between migrants and locals. The need articulated here goes beyond a demand for a media, which at all costs is filled with positive images (which borders propaganda and undermines the fundamental principles of freedom of expression based upon truth with independence). What the community seems to be exploring is creation of public information spaces consisting of factual reporting that tells the whole truth and not bits of truths, and a balanced view of the right to freedom of expression, understanding (in view of the media's immense influence) that this consist not only in the right to publish but equally the right not to publish. In striving for this balance, the media needs to consider the context when talking about xenophobia. It should take into account the depth of xenophobia in South Africa and its manifestation - an environment, which is characterized by sensitive and fragile community relations, where suspicions can rapture into violence. Such a context requires that the media adopt language that opposes legitimization of prejudice, condemns utterances contrary to social cohesion and takes a stance against xenophobic violence.

QUOTATION: I am going to speak in Zulu but I am from Zimbabwe...the Zulu I speak, I learned here because there was a mother when I came here in Kwa-Zulu Natal and she took me in like her own child. I want you to understand this. I was at Helmsdale, when I came she did not say that I am a foreigner, she said that is my child and that is how she introduced to society and that is why people come to me. The terminology we use is very important. I don't know where these words came from, foreigner, kwere-kwere, it is discriminating. And the things newspapers write about us, I don't know really how we can do away with them because where it starts. Because of this, when he points at me, already I have a different impression from a normal human being, so I think we must have a shift from how we use the words on other people.

A significant aspect in the proposal to establish a community newspaper and radio station was around the inclusive approach of bringing together migrants and locals as the joint drivers of these ventures. The local ward leadership invited migrants to actively participate in the establishment and implementation of these projects with locals, providing a glimpse of how such initiatives could form the basis of strengthening the participation of migrants in public forums and institutions. More specifically, in terms of media and language it uses, it underlies the importance of reflecting the multicultural dynamics of society within the

media editorial and structure, and the potential that this has towards enabling the media to be aware of sensitivities around intercultural relations. Introducing perspectives of people in the minority background into the media can improve the quality of reporting avoid negative stereotyping and language inciting hatred. In the long run it can improve dialogue between ethnic, religious and cultural groups and the media itself, developing constructive relationship among minority groups (such as migrants) and dominant groups. In addition to promoting beneficial dialogue between different cultural groups, direct community participation in the media may also improve the sharing of best practice, addressing persistent criticisms of many media houses for insufficient coverage of many examples of beneficial intra-community interactions. Such efforts would also enable the media to present a more balanced coverage in its reporting on issues facing the community, to act as a social change agent in minimizing stereotypes, to promote peace building and to favor a culture of tolerance.

QUOTATION

Additional benefits and learning arising from the community conversations

Changing entrenched opinions and setting the stage for sustainability

For example if the Community Policing Forums and there are no foreign national leaders, and we are not involved, then we are saying these are the structures for finding the solution...Is this not a problem? The people saying its foreigners, why don't they then involve us. We are also saying ... It is time we ourselves, to say: "You, what will you do? What will you do? Have you done it?" Change and ask "what I am going to do?"

One impact of the community conversation was the acceptance to include migrants within the committee structure of the local community-policing forum. To understand the extent of this dramatic shift one must recall the events of January 2009, where some members of the CPF in a bid to drive crime out of the area, are alleged to have been involved in the pushing migrants out of the fifth floor of the Venture African building. At the start of this pilot, the attitudes behind this act of brutality were still prevalent, clearly evident during bilateral meetings with members of the CPF committee who felt that the growing levels of crime in the area was due to the increasing numbers of foreign nationals sleeping in the Park. These meetings presented an opportunity to communicate the interest among migrants, as expressed during the community conversations, to be a part of the local crime prevention strategies – a point many committee members appeared surprised to learn. The meetings

were also vital towards securing the direct participation of the committee in the community conversations and deliberations on how to address crime. As a result of these ongoing processes, the members of the committee were exposed to the valuable contribution that migrants involvement could make if represented in the community policing forums.

I work with the YMCA and as a person I am staying here in town, at night we can't walk there is a lot of people staying outside and sleep outside in the Park. We are scared to walk outside. It's useless to ask our communities to fight crime when the crime committed, the police are involved with the person selling the drugs. It is someone from the police station that called the peoples who is selling the drugs. And this 'Today we are coming to do the search there' is just a cover up because they work with them to give them time to run away and they take everything out.

QUOTATION: Involve us in this policing forum and we can work together to solve crime. People from DRC they know each other here. When you're talking about people from Somalia, hey are connected in the entire province or in the entire country. They know who's doing what. The people from Congo, they know each other. "This person is from Congo. What is he doing?" "He's going to school" or "They do car guard" .Its easy for us to follow up who is not walking right.

Following a conversation, attended by the CPF members and the local councillor, on 22 October 2009, representatives from the CPF and KZN Refugee Council were tasked to formally implement a resolution taken during the community conversation to include representatives from the migrant community in the community-policing forum. In addition to the prevention of crime, the implementation of this resolution – with its intention of enhancing the participation of migrants in community policing forums - may also be a vital factor for mobilising communities against xenophobic acts based on prejudice against entire groups. The willingness of the CPF representatives to work with migrants also shows the emergence of positive attitudes, which can be leveraged to restore peace and stability in the area, and provide an example to other parts of the province and indeed, the country.

QUOTATION: I am representing the SAPS, I work most especially with this area with the... what is called a community safety forum..... But the onus I will put it back on the so called,

there was a so called Congolese association and a Pakistani association and we called them in that they must give us dates when they are having their meetings they must put us on board on the community safety forum. But up to this stage I don't see anything, nothing until now. Given the range of outcomes that had arisen during the conversation and the ongoing implementation demands around these initiatives, the community constantly sought to explore means of in which the community could take ownership of these as part of their goal towards achieving sustainability of these initiatives. The collective resolve in this respect could be seen in the speed in which the community agreed to establish an ad hoc committee, composed of migrants and locals, that would work together to translate the community's vision for social cohesion into reality. With the support of the operational partners and other key stakeholders, the ad hoc committee was tasked with organizing members of the community to implement some of the action plans prioritized. Presently the committee is made up 14 members with an equal representation of locals and migrants (reflecting a broad spectrum of nationalities in recognition of the diversity of this constituency). Within the committee are also a range of representatives from the ward, community-policing forum, migrant associations and NGOs working on behalf of migrants and the disadvantaged populations. (Annexed to this report is a list of the members of the committee)

Developing a resource base to support the community in further dialogue

A key outcome of the dialogue process has been the development of pool of resource persons with transformative and technical capacity in the CCE methodology, capable of supporting the community towards developing strategies centered on dialogue in response to social concerns. These resource persons, embodied in the team of facilitators, have undertaken several initiatives disseminating and demonstrating the benefits of an approach that places communities at the centre of a comprehensive strategy based on dialogue (see annexure). Within the framework of their organizations, facilitators working closely with community representatives nominated during conversations have continued to initiate specific actions in line with resolutions and decisions adopted during the dialogue process. In one example, the community supported by the KZN Christian Council and KZN Council of Refugees embarked on a process of auditing the skills in the area with the aim of building up a database capturing skills currently available in Albert Park. In addition to providing for the livelihood of many talented people in the area, it was hoped that this process would in the long run foster social cohesion via a platform through which skills are shared among migrants with locals.

QUOTATION: On 28 of August this month three leaders, the five selected leaders will go for training in lobbying and advocacy and governance. You go in on the week of the 24 and the 28 and agree with those that will be trained to come for a further week in lobbying, advocacy and governance it will be at Kimosis retreat centre more skills to help this community to know how to lobby, how to do advocacy work and how governance works. When you understand those systems you are better equipped to engage others to come to this place and be part of the community conversations.

In another example, the operational partners, in response to the need to build capacity within the community to raise rights awareness and promote leadership accountability, organised training workshops on advocacy strategies. A team made of migrants and locals, and reflecting a balanced gender mix, was drawn from the community to form a nucleus through which learning acquired through such workshops could be disseminated across the community. In addition it was hoped that this group would also engage with various stakeholders, including government, over concerns that undermine intra-community cohesion. Pursuant to this intention, the team (with the support of the KZN Council of Refugees and the KZN Christian of Council) made representation to the provincial legislature on refugee rights. Parliamentarians were afforded the opportunity to hear directly from refugees about the numerous challenges they face in the area. In the long run, such a group could play a useful role in disseminating positive outcomes from the conversations across the greater community of Albert Park.

A third example in relation to the need to build informal spaces through which migrants and locals could interact in a meaningful manner and further dialogue around diversity, consisted in efforts by the KZN Christian Council and the KZN Council of Refugees in supporting the community towards organizing three social cultural events. The last such event was held on 10th July 2010 consisted of a festival of music, culture and succulent food from a range of nationalities. Social interaction at this level is different from the experience in formal dialogue. The general relaxed nature of the environment, stimulated by music, food and drink, allows people to move out of their “fortresses” and create meaningful relationships.

“During one of the services our church generator had packed up. Because it was a Sunday there were no shops open where we could rush to have it repaired. Then a friend of mine told

me that in the Park you get all kinds of “engineers” who will sort it out. We rushed to the Park and before long we were back in church with a working generator. We say there are idle people in the Park but the truth is that there are a lot skills amongst us but we just need know how to connect each other.”

“I don’t see many social activities where South Africans and people from other countries meet and interact. What would happen if we started to organize social events like cuisines and cultural dances and music from different places and we just get together and enjoy [the wealth of] our diversity.”

PICTURE: Participants being treated to Congolese Sikorone music and local hip hop music from Mpopomeni Young Boys during a cultural exchange event.

The Multifaceted Power Of Dialogue

In many respects the pilot conducted in the Albert Park affirmed the power of dialogue and its transformative effects on relationships. The process allowed participants, who had previously no forum to engage with their counterparts, to articulate their own voice in an environment that respected their views. Notwithstanding the accuracy of these views, the honest expression of these uncertainties in a safe forum was the starting point towards exploring the complexities of the concerns facing the community, and ultimately challenging the stereotypes, mistrust and polarization that had developed.

Facilitators who were part of this journey also spoke about the transformation that took place at an individual level. Drawn from both the migrant and local community, the dialogue process allowed them to reflect on their own biases as they journeyed with the community, exploring the deeper motivations that shaped their outlook on issues. At the end of the two-year pilot one could observe a marked difference among members of this team, based upon a unique internal growth acquired through practical implementation of dialogues – not transferable through nominal training or workshops. These facilitators have become ambassadors of dialogue in their organizations and among the greater community (working with migrants and locals) and remain a powerful resource for developing the understanding of dialogue (what it is and how it is effectively grown) and its potential for addressing social concerns. Some of the initiatives the team has undertaken over the past two years have raised awareness of community dialogues as a valuable complement for existing interventions utilized by government, institutions and civil society organizations working in

the areas of peace building, development of human rights and strengthening democratic governance. Often the routine consultation procedures adopted in these areas do not adequately draw the involvement of the actors concerned and dialogue processes can enhance the levels of participation necessary to address complex and deeply rooted societal problems.

Gathering people together for a community conversation alone, if not accompanied by a corresponding investment in managing vested interest and unequal relations, is not sufficient. In some instance such gatherings, assumedly in the name of dialogue, have had the opposite effect of causing disillusionment as a result of the disappointment caused by the failure to deliver results that match the high expectations that come with dialogues. Such processes, some of which have been convened by officials or institutions under the label dialogue, have sadly turned out to be mere consultations or superficial attempts by authorities to appear to consult. To set the platform for genuine interface and achieve the social transformation envisaged through community conversations, adequate investment needs to be made in developing relationships with concerned stakeholders. We found that such investment, which may take the form of preparatory workshops or bilateral meetings, can be of strategic value towards gaining access into the community and creating safe spaces for participation; managing existing interests (e.g. among different migrant groups, trade associations etc); and managing existing power dynamics during the conversation.

In terms of access, drawing the participation and buy in from key stakeholders is key if the dialogue is to occur, and everyone who is part of the problem should be involved in and own the dialogue process from the start. In the initial stages of the dialogue a number of political affiliated structures were not represented in the dialogues because the work necessary to secure buy-in of these sections had not been done. During the conversations, participants made it clear that, without the representation of these key political personalities, the outcomes and agreements from the conversations would remain a superficial exercise. Adequate time and investment through bilateral and group meetings needed to be made to address potential skepticism and reluctance to participate, which often meant moving from one structure to the other explaining the objectives of the dialogues and the nature of the process. In addition, amidst an environment characterized by deep mistrust among sections of the community, where trust was particularly low among migrants after the wave of xenophobic attacks that had hit the country, assembling different groups was dependent on

the credibility they attached to the process. The perceptions linked to the convener of a dialogue process have the potential draw confidence in the process or cripple it from its inception, and often continue to reverberate during the process and beyond the confines of the dialogue. In this regard, we found the trust and neutrality conveyed by the name “Nelson Mandela” was critical towards bringing together parties with adversarial interest and laying the ground for the creation of a safe space that would form the basis for negotiating trade-offs so that mutual and unified interest could emerge.

Engaging stakeholders prior and in between the dialogues is crucial if dialogues are to avoid reinforcing existing power inequalities. These power dynamics are discernible on many fronts –among technical experts inclined to couch issues in inaccessible language in order to limit the involvement of the greater community; among political or local leaders held in deference by the community; in spoilers who carry influence to undermine the process and its outcomes; and sometimes between entire sections of the community where unequal relationship exists. For example, in Albert Park we observed a tension when holders of political power occupied the same space with their constituents. Similarly, the unequal relations between migrants and locals was readily discernible from the manner in which migrants engaged in the conversations, which was frequently characterized by undue deference to the host community. In both these cases there were clear dangers that ordinary people (or vulnerable sections of the community) would disengage when faced by the presence of power undermining the primary objective of dialogue of giving voice to the voiceless. There was the additional danger that local leaders would be reluctant to participate for fear of the real prospects of losing power through reformulated relationships within the dialogues. In order for dialogue not to be a superficial process aimed at the converted, it was also important to draw the support of potential spoilers who may feel threatened by the process. In each of these cases, we learnt the importance of effectively managing the prevailing power dynamics through preparatory meetings and workshops aimed at communicating the principles of openness, equality and respect for divergent views. In the long run this preparatory work can serve the multiple purposes including mitigating the potential unevenness in the participants capacities; help local leaders understand the consultation opportunities presented by the dialogue process for furthering their role as public representatives; convincing potential spoilers of the benefits to be acquired through the dialogue process and thereby mitigating against forces bent on undermining it, while identifying local champions that could bolster support for the process.

TEXT BOX: "The conversion of a notable xenophobe sends out multiple echoes of persuasion to the community than a thousand speeches by politicians and NGOs" Ariel Dorfman

Developing the capacity of the migrant community

As foreigners we know how important to be together. If there is a funeral somewhere we have to be together or people have to contribute to support themselves. Not only on good times, even others they contribute as you are told people coming out from bail. People they contribute as to get their friends out from the prison because...to say this education...through the community...they can't do anything, but they can talk to their fellows, children or friends or families, because each and every one got his own connection in the community, and that's the ...that...can use in order to...But not only in Albert Park but also in other areas. That's how we work even if we have little we pull together. But that is not enough we need representation in Because this forum is not only the representation of the people, because we need to be represented in local government, because that's where we can state all our needs

All throughout this report we have acknowledged the uniqueness of the issues facing migrant community, noting the special need to develop capacity among this group, if they are to effectively articulate their challenges. Dialogues and other initiatives aimed at assisting migrants can only be successful in as far as preliminary measures are taken to address the relative unequal position of migrants within South African context. This is a formidable task when one considers the multiple causes that contribute to the relative disempowerment of many migrants and the organizations they set up to aid their causes. The migrant community is assumed to be homogenous while in reality it consists of several stratum based on nationality, political opinion, ethnicity, and clans, many of which are characterized by deep suspicion and rivalry. Leaders of migrant based organizations have to reckon with manifold challenges of reconciling this internal rivalry and addressing a general mistrust among the community towards NGOs, who are perceived vehicles that use refugee issues to attract funding for themselves. At the same time these organizations must tackle the host of real issues facing the migrants in South Africa with the additional constraints of limited resources, which they are unable to access due to the requirements of donors that they are unable to satisfy due to the hurdles they face in respect of acquiring basic identification documentation from South Africa authorities.

The reason we the foreign nationals fail to participate and maybe have the courage to do these other things that seem as people, it is because some of us calling ourselves leaders are not authenticated leaders of these communities. We need this verification process, and the authentication, because you know when you are a leader...Because if you are representing the people, the power is not yours...to get money from well wishers for yourself. It has been identified as stumbling block to, to migrant communities...And until we can get many voices speaking as one collective voice, we are doomed to fail in South Africa. Just from that to be an appeal ...to all of us foreigners, because it is very difficult to speak in many voices...So, whether you be a refugee, an...immigrant on work permit or an illegal immigrant; we should know that we are facing same problems, and they will ask you your paper in order to identify your work permit. So, we must learn to speak with one voice

Due to such factors many donor agencies consider such organization risky enterprises and opting to channel funding on refugee issues through non-profit organizations led mainly by South Africans – an approach that refugees have criticized because of its unrepresentative nature and the fact that locals are not best placed to advocate for the interest of migrants. While we do not possess responses to these challenges, we believe that there is a serious need to explore ways to strengthen migrant organizational capacity to bolster the position of migrants in society. Dialogue is premised upon equal relations among parties, and its use in promoting social cohesion must be taken into account of the systematic exclusion that continues to leave migrants in considerable unequal position to the rest of society.

The Need for Long Term Investment

Let's try to understand the situation of South Africa as a child who needs to grow, still a child let me say 1994 to 2010. She is 16 years old and still growing and is not mature person. She is still a teenager. A teenager with a love to learn and must learn from people who surround him or her alright. We must understand this so we can be patient.

One of the most critical challenges of putting together a dialogue process is that of achieving sustainable results where the full spectrum of people concerned are involved and underlying problems are tackled in a way that produces results that address the current problems in a manner that fully addresses their potential to arise again in the future. This has often been presented as the dilemma of producing tangible results at the expense of intangible

outcomes upon which sustainability depends. In view of the plodding nature of social transformation processes, there is an understandable sense of pressure to produce concrete outcome, such as symbolic events of reconciliation, and ignore the real festering problems that hibernate beneath the surface, whose solutions demand long term investments.

The Albert Park Dialogues were no exception and one could observe this tension from the inclination of participants to recommend information campaigns as one and all solution, amidst the complexity of the challenges they faced. While right awareness and information campaigns are vital, and have exhibited a measure of success in the past (such as during the SAHRC's Roll Back Xenophobia Campaign, breaking up many of the attitudes that accompany xenophobia require long term interventions that focus on inner sphere of individuals values and communal norms – many of which cannot be shifted by mere dissemination of the rights that accrue to different members of society. If one could draw an illustration from a picture of an iceberg, such information campaigns only focus on the visible, and fail to tackle those causes that are submerged. Solutions that emerge from such response are superficial and short lived, if not accompanied by long term interventions focusing on deeper changes focusing on shifting mental modes, building trust, empathy and commitment. In the worst-case scenario they may even be counter-productive and draw resentment from the target groups whose internal disposition is at odds with the key messages promulgated by the information campaign. Thus in Albert Park where we came across participants who viewed the post 1994 dispensation as excessive granting rights to certain groups, like migrants, such a campaign, conducted in isolation, may further the impression that migrants are accorded more favorable treatment. We learnt that for interventions to be sustainable in such cases it may be more appropriate to complement such campaigns with long term programmes that centre upon the psychological state that underlie particular attitudes by involving actors such as faith based and psycho-social organizations which focus on trauma and healing, thus emphasizing the interdependence of visible and invisible changes.

Some of these leaders.....Because they want to remain in power and enjoy immunity and have money from the innocent people, they avoid places where people speak like this. So I'm glad we decided to put this forum together. It is a good solution this dialogue. There is no other way than to talk and talk, so that we can come to a common ground. We have to find how to start such dialogues all over to teach people how to live in societies because that can make us to progress.

Our journey during this pilot exposed us to the challenges dialogue programmes like this face from a donor perspective, flowing out of the limited availability of resources to invest in long-term interventions necessary for addressing the deeper structural concerns, which if left untouched, are likely to generate the same kinds of crisis. The limitations imposed by the amount and duration of funding available to the dialogue fosters natural impulses to set up quick visible structures through which the community can own the process and carry it forward, without taking into account the time and complexity necessary for these structures to become functional longer term vehicles that can continue the implementation of the dialogues without any form of external support. This point could be seen in the difficulties faced by the ad hoc committee set up in Cato Manor which ran into a range of issues all of which related, in one way or the other, to availability of resources necessary to sustain the committee. Amidst this vacuum, the community is left with few options but to seek financial support from institutions (who are frequently politically and ideological inclined), who often end up housing the dialogue initiative, and in the long run compromising fundamental principles of dialogue such as inclusivity and joint ownership.

“The problem with our society is that there are too many rights. A right to this and a right to that. Our women do not obey us any more because of these rights. We want to give rights to everyone.”

The violent manifestation of xenophobia makes it a priority to develop capacity to address this destructive expression of conflict. While community dialogues may form a basis through which communities can be assisted towards addressing underlying conditions that generate conflict (such as poverty, inequity and patterns of social exclusion), it does not replace the multiple and integrated elements called for within a peace building framework. Effectively responding to situations of violent conflict, such as the uniquely violent nature in which xenophobic attitudes manifest in South Africa, it is necessary to build additional capacity, within the community and among facilitators, in peace building. While facilitators had acquired a firm grip of CCE methodological cycle and its tools, these competencies were not always sufficient to address the potential volatile nature of the environment. In reality the paradigm we were operating had strong elements of peace building where additional capacity in conflict mediation, conflict resolution and transformation would have enhanced

the capabilities of facilitators in understanding issues related to conflict (such as identity, resources etc) and how to shift imbalances inherent in various forms of power (such as personal power, positional power, relational power etc).

Within this context of conflict and peace building, we believe there is further potential to develop the capacity of community conversation forums to serve in three important respects – as an ongoing forum through which potential conflicting parties can acquire and apply basic conflict resolution mechanisms; as part of an early warning mechanism that serves various stakeholders including government, the media and civil society, turning potential situations of conflict into opportunities for conflict transformation; and finally, as referral ground through which communal healing, regeneration and trauma management interventions can be applied as part of long term programmes to restore intra-community trust and address challenges assuming rooted in a psycho-social dimension. To realize impact in the wider community, and not just within the confinements of the community conversations, these initiatives should be accompanied by an effective communication strategy that nurtures the flow of information regarding their outcomes to the wider community in order to sustain general commitment to the process.

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