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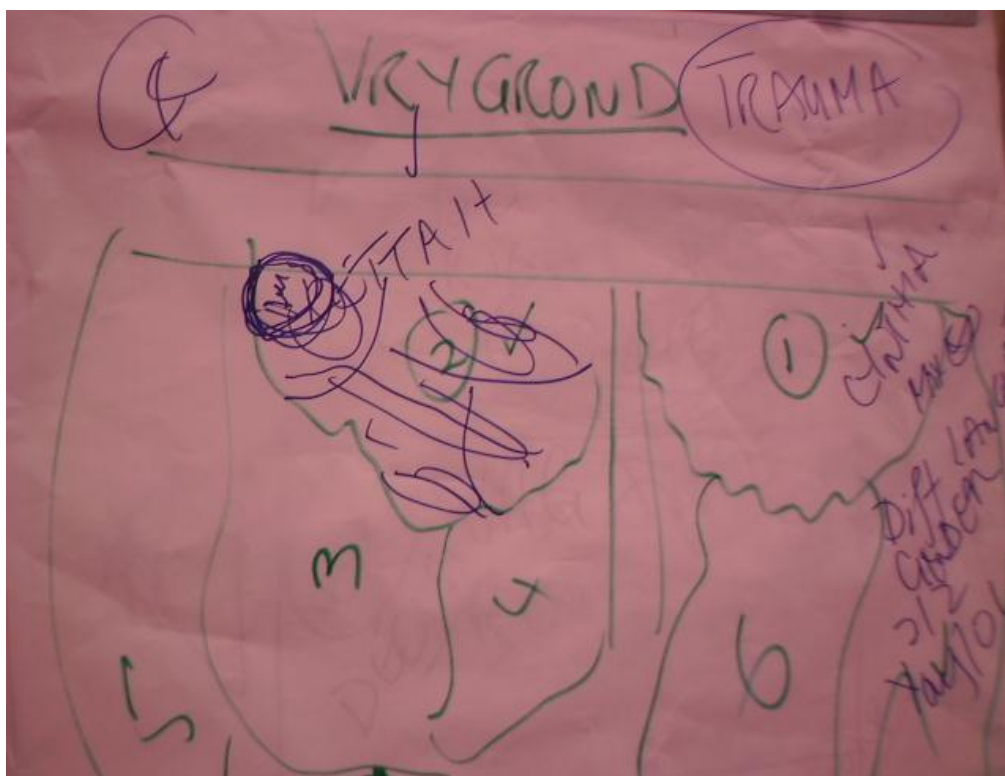
Violence and community activism in Vrygrond, South Africa

Praxis Paper

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Cover photo: flip chart from data collection training session, Cape Town 2009

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Foreword

The Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims works for the prevention of torture and organised violence (TOV). We do that by supporting initiatives that prevent TOV and by undertaking research that can guide us and others working in the field of TOV prevention.

I am pleased to introduce the present study which is interesting in several ways. First, it does not focus on outside intervention into a local community, but on a local community which seemed to have avoided xenophobic violence, contrary to what was happening elsewhere in comparable areas. Secondly, the study was undertaken with people in the community actively involved in the research process from the beginning until the finalization of the report. Finally, the study has produced important lessons learnt on the possible resilience factor of local communities: lessons learnt for the researcher, the NGO activists, the community based organisation involved and the participating community members.

In May 2008, South Africa experienced massive xenophobic violence where non-South African people were targeted and many killed. The reasons for this development seemed to be the poverty that many South African blacks and coloured experience with no employment opportunities and no hope for the future. The foreign immigrants were then targeted as they were seen to steal the opportunities for South Africans. So the latent social conflict manifested itself in a xenophobic way. Traditionally, most researchers would go to the conflict areas and study these in situ and return with their analysis. The conclusions (and possible recommendations) would generally deal with issues that lay beyond the local communities.

This study takes another point of departure. The people who got the idea to this study noticed that areas could share the same social, ethnic and racial characteristics without experiencing the same amount or sort of violence. This study goes to a community, Vrygrond, Cape Town, to see whether it is possible to identify elements that have pre-empted the xenophobic violence that many poor communities experienced in 2008 all over South Africa. If it is possible to identify such elements, the chances of preventing such violence increase. The study identifies local elements that pre-empt torture of which a central one was local leadership that did not condone violence. The study also shows the

strength of localised studies and gives us some encouragement in showing that it is possible to prevent violence even when it spreads like wildfire.

The study was a challenge for the involved community members, CHN as well as RCT, but it was also a huge learning experience for all. We hope that this publication can be a useful experience for others working in the field of community healing.

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Executive summary

This study project is a partnership between the Community Healing Network (CHN) in Vrygrond, Cape Town and the Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims in Copenhagen (RCT). The project has two basic objectives:

1) To conduct a study exploring 1) levels of crime and violence in Vrygrond, Cape Town; 2) the period of xenophobic violence in Vrygrond in May 2008, and 3) what community action was taken to prevent the violence.

2) To understand how the events around May 2008 could be prevented using a community activist model like the one employed by the Community Healing Network, which is one of the authoring organizations of this report.

In meeting the first objective, we employed a host of qualitative and quantitative methods, including a violence survey with 517 randomly selected households/- respondents and a study population of 2363 in Vrygrond, interviews with victims of the xenophobic violence and focus group discussions with community activists and community members participating in the data collection. Although it is difficult to collect data in Vrygrond because of security concerns and lack of trust, credible and interesting data was collected by members of the community and analyzed by CHN and RCT. This is s a testimony to the value of actively integrating community members in research projects as partners rather than as research subjects.

The quantitative analysis shows an image of a deeply divided, poor and violent community with few state resources, minimal trust in the state or one's neighbours, and endemic inter-group conflicts which are fed by highly derogatory stereotypes on all sides. In many ways, Vrygrond should have experienced xenophobic violence in May 2008. However, the report shows that the direct victimization of violence in Vrygrond during May 2008 was insignificant. Among 517 household respondents, no one had been direct victims of violence during that time. To explore the very real suffering that could not be captured statistically, the report developed a distinction between primary, secondary and tertiary victimization. In the survey, primary victims of the violence provide a measure of the quantitative levels of violence in the general population. Secondary victimization includes those who directly knew people that were affected. Finally, tertiary victimization included all those that felt endangered by the violence because of who they were. The report concludes that the risks of violence are associated with local dynamics around leadership, perceptions of violence as

legitimate and gender dimensions. This goes against many other explanations that focus on general structures of poverty, border control and other factors. However, only local dynamics explain why the violence in Vrygrond was relatively low.

Finally, the report explores how local dynamics and local activism played itself out in the context of the xenophobic violence. We identified a number of community structures, practices and activities that seemed to have insulated Vrygrond against the worst excesses of the violence: no community authority that legitimised violence, a multiplicity of institutional and individual actors, early warning, interventions of important female community members, activities like feeding programmes and prayer meetings that broke the isolation of non-South Africans, and a constructive relationship to the police who acted according to their prerogative to protect. Perhaps the most important conclusion from the analysis is that individuals demonstrated enormous courage when they risked standing against the xenophobic violence that had enveloped the country. Despite the fact that Vrygrond is a highly divided community, many people acted according to a basic humanity that would dispel the notion that "all South Africans are evil" (as one respondent reflected after the violence).

To address the second objective of the study project, the report compares the lessons that could be made regarding preventive community activism with the model and history of the Community Healing Network. The report finds that in many ways CHN is an appropriate model of community healing and prevention of violence. It creates a democratic opportunity for engagement across intrinsic affiliations; because it includes both specialists from NGO's and universities and community members, it serves as the "honest broker" between the state and the community in other contexts. However, CHN is faced with a number of challenges: lack of institutional permanence, lop-sided representation, constant demands for survival needs among the community members, and a historically based antagonistic relationship to the state apparatus. If the challenges are faced, there are clear advantages in developing the model and putting it into practice in Vrygrond and elsewhere.

A number of findings can be drawn from the study project in relation to state involvement, community activism and the CHN. These findings must be discussed locally to be fleshed out into relevant community activism. The following list includes the areas to where community activism can be directed and some of the dilemmas of future work:
In relation to state agencies:

1) Government agencies in Vrygrond

2) Police presence in the community

3) The schools and the divisions inside the community, notably between South Africans and non-South Africans, but also between other groups.

In relation to community activism in Vrygrond:

4) Strategic importance of Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking women

5) Derogatory stereotypes and perceptions

6) Local history

7) Social capital and multi-lingual communication

8) Documentation of community activism

9) Local safety initiatives and respect of human rights

10) Outside perceptions and advocacy

11) Income generation and trade

In relation to Community Healing Network

12) Informal vs. formal organization

13) Project focus vs. policy focus

Chapter 1: Violence in Vrygrond

Vrygrond is located near the False Bay sea board in the greater Cape Town municipal area. Established in 1942, it has been the first home of successive waves of migrants, initially from the impoverished hinterlands of Cape Town, then from former Apartheid homelands, Transkei and Ciskei in the Eastern Cape, later from intra-city migration and lastly, during the last decade, from the wars and poverty of the African continent. These waves of migration have shaped one of the most diverse communities in Cape Town. It is a place where people make a living for themselves, often despite enormous obstacles; they get by because of their inventiveness and creativity. In this way, Vrygrond is a testimony to the human capacity to survive and in some cases to live fairly well. However, it is also a place that is perceived as violent by outsiders and residents. This is one of the main reasons why the Vrygrond based Community Healing Network and the Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims in Copenhagen decided to embark on a collaborative project to understand violence in Vrygrond and to use such understanding as the stepping stone to initiate community based rehabilitation and violence prevention in Vrygrond. This research report is the first outcome from this collaborative effort. It outlines the results from the study into the extent and nature of violence in Vrygrond. It is hoped that this report can be used to increase community reflection on violence. It may also be used as a strategic tool for community groups to lobby government agencies and others for resources that are more reflective of the reality of life in Vrygrond now, as opposed to the out-dated statistics on people and violence that are currently used to guide social policy and government planning.

Objectives of the research

For decades, violence has been a stable element of much of township life in South Africa, created and perpetuated by racial and class oppression. The all too visible symbols of this are gangs, rape, drugs and the widespread use of guns and other weapons. As a result, perceptions of violence form part of the stereotypes of the townships and those who inhabit

these spaces. During the struggle against apartheid, townships were places from where radical transformation would emerge; they are now labelled as dangerous and a threat to the democratic revolution. An elaborate migrant labour system sustained the breakdown of apartheid, but since then, increasing numbers of non-South Africans have seen their formal employment disappear as the migrant system was dismantled (Jensen and Buur 2007). The increasing impoverishment of the African continent and the multiple wars have propelled many migrants still to look to South Africa for livelihood – this time in less formalized employment. In 2008, migrants across South Africa were attacked, and thousands were killed, wounded or displaced. These violent incidents became known as the 'xenophobic violence'. Explanations for the attacks include xenophobia, built up aggressions in the townships, anger against migrants, hikes in food prices and local political dynamics and leadership (Worby, Hassim and Kupe 2009; Hadland 2008; IOM 2009). In addition, locally in Vrygrond it seems that business penetration and cut-throat competition have been part and parcel in creating conflicts. However, it was not all communities that experienced the attacks, and there were tales of bravery and solidarity across nationality and ethnicity. Furthermore, levels of violence are generally very high. Therefore, research must explore the attacks and their impact, community actions and, importantly, how this violence compares to everyday forms of violence prior to or after the attacks. This study project is asking three questions:

> 1) What levels and forms of violence existed prior to and after the xenophobic violence?
> 2) How and to what extent was Vrygrond affected by the xenophobic violence?
> 3) What actions were taken by the community in Vrygrond in relation to violence?

After this introduction and a brief methodological section, each question will be addressed in three separate chapters followed by conclusions and lessons learned.

Partnership in studying violence

We believe that these difficult questions can best be answered through a strategic partnership between people, solidly grounded in the community, and people with expertise in research methods. Separately, each group would find the task difficult. People in the community have an on the ground knowledge of the violence. People with a research background have the methodological and technical skills necessary to conduct a study. In this way, the collaboration between the Community Healing Network and the Rehabilitation

and Research Centre for Torture Victims proved beneficial for the project. The study project was conceptualized through meetings, correspondence and intense consultations with the community in Vrygrond. It should be a study project as well as a pilot project of how research can promote increased community reflection. Hence, although this is mostly a study project, the hope was that the partners could generate and reflect on a preventative and rehabilitative model for community action. Both partners brought something to the table.

The Community Healing Network (CHN) was formed in 2006 to help address the legacy of structural violence, enhance the social cohesion and justice necessary for creating strong and vibrant communities to flourish. The three main pillars of CHN work focus are research, partnerships and advocacy. CHN is committed to using research:

1) To enhance social discourse around community health, wellbeing, and human security;

2) To develop best practice guidelines for community intervention;

3) To design intervention strategies that will maximize positive community outcomes;

4) To ensure that ethical conduct of that research is cognizant of the context of a history and legacy of colonialism, racism, trauma and violence and

5) To engage the community in an ethical way, so as to maximize empowerment and minimize exploitation to ensure mutual participation in joint actions and research endeavours.

Productive research happens in partnerships which collaborate on specific interventions and document best practices, while affirming and strengthening social cohesion. Advocacy stands central in this work. It is crucial to create platforms for a community to have its own voice.

The Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims (RCT) is a Danish knowledge based organization working to prevent torture and organized violence across the developing world. It also seeks methods to rehabilitate both individuals and communities in the aftermath of violence. RCT has partnered up with 14 treatment centres and human rights based civil society organizations in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe. Since 2005, RCT has strengthened its Research Department and has sought to link research

and intervention in novel and productive ways. RCT is now able to provide its partners with inputs in public health, law, project management and development priorities as well as research methods and medical rehabilitation. In return, RCT is hoping to generate knowledge together with its partners on issues of prevention and rehabilitation.

The partnership between CHN and RCT provided an opportunity to contribute to local, national and international research development. In addition to funding, RCT also brought to the project skills in public health and social sciences, research, and expertise in program and financial management with its combination of study and pilot intervention. As a consequence, the project was able to produce new and more reliable knowledge of the levels and nature of violence in Vrygrond.

Chapter 2: Methodology

In this chapter, we briefly introduce the methodologies of the study. They include:

1) A quantitative victimization survey as the main research tool, coupled with:
2) A series of qualitative life stories with victims of the xenophobic attacks identified through the survey and among community activists, and
3) Focus group interviews with community activists.

All the data collection was carried out by members of the CHN under supervision of CHN coordinators Derrick Naidoo and Sarah Motha. Training and the drafting of the research manual were undertaken by RCT senior researcher Steffen Jensen and RCT health program manager Peter Polatin, along with Mr. Naidoo. Subsequent analysis has been carried out as a joint effort between the authors of this report and the members of the CHN.

The victimization survey was chosen because it assisted us in understanding the general level and nature of violence in Vrygrond, the support structures that people use and the impact of violence on their lives. Furthermore, it helped us to identify people in Vrygrond who were affected by the xenophobic attacks in May 2008. The qualitative methods were

chosen because they provided information on the long term presence of violence in people's lives and helped us trace the movement of people to Vrygrond. The qualitative methods also helped us to understand how people conceptualize the xenophobic attacks.

Victimization survey

A victimization survey is a research tool to understand levels of violence. In the survey instrument that we employed, we also wanted to understand how people who have been victims of violence deal with it (health, justice) and how it affects their lives (damages). Finally, the survey helped us identify those who were victims of the xenophobic attacks in May 2008. A copy of the questionnaire is appended at the end of this report. This kind of survey provides better quantitative data than most other methodologies, such as police reports, because it asks the people directly about their experiences with and reactions to violence. Many people do not go to the police after an experience of violence, as we learned. Therefore, our survey reveals many more incidents and provides a better picture of both the real levels of violence and the different ways people use to deal with it. Vrygrond is in the well-off Muizenberg Policing District (City of Cape Town 2009), and police reports put violence and crime in Vrygrond at well below the city average.
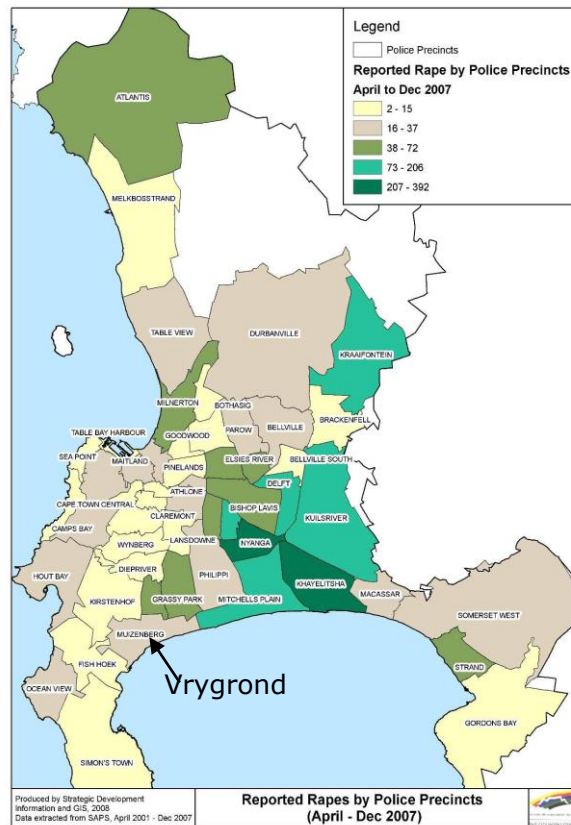
The victimization survey instrument that we employed in Vrygrond was a revised version of a similar survey used in an RCT project in Guatemala.[i] To make it relevant for Vrygrond, the instrument was translated and modified in a consultative process involving RCT staff, community members, data capturers and project coordinators. Each question was discussed and tested to make sure that it worked in the multilingual world of Vrygrond. Data collectors were organized into three teams. Each interview had to be conducted in the language spoken by the chosen survey participant. To ensure this, a lengthy process was carried out that involved all participants in the project – trainers, coordinators and data collectors.

Process and organization of research

A victimization survey relies on random sampling to ensure representativeness. In the first instance, Vrygrond was divided into three areas that were presumed to be of equal numbers of residents. We obtained maps from a local GIS company through the City of Cape Town by which the original designation of the teams took place. However, the official maps were imprecise. Consequently, we had to expand the data collection in one area. Agencies that

base their estimates on official numbers may not realize that Vrygrond is in a perpetual state of development. Our figures are probably already off the mark only months after the data collection was finalized. To illustrate just how fast Vrygrond expands, we have included aerial photos of Vrygrond anno 2002 and 2007. Since 2007, Vrygrond has grown even more; our survey results indicate that since then, thousands of newcomers have sought sanctuary in Vrygrond.
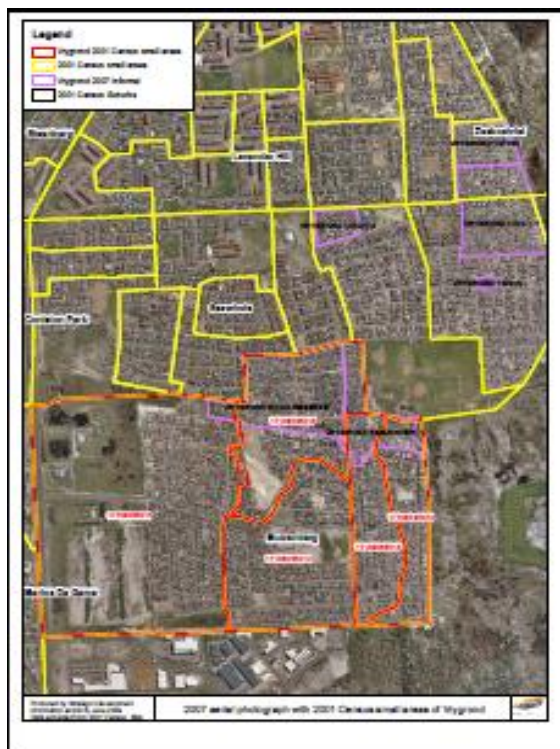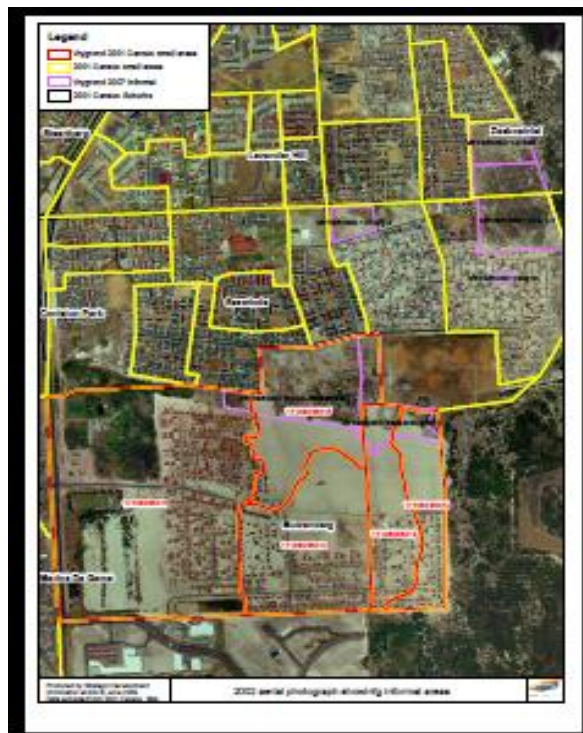
Maps courtesy of City of Cape Town

After mapping the area, each household was given a number and a list of 520 households were computer generated (using www.random.org). At the end of each week, team leaders and the CHN coordinators verified the quality of the questionnaires. Some had to be redone. Parallel to the data collection process, the data from the survey were entered into Epi Info, a data storage software that enables quantitative analysis. This data entry was also checked by an RCT epidemiologist to ensure that the data had been properly captured.

The data collectors were all recruited through the CHN by means of extensive consultations with the community, after which 28 prospective data collectors were identified. After the training, this number was brought down to 12. One important reason for the reduction was the need of the data collectors to reflect the languages spoken in Vrygrond. The initial group had too few Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers, and it was necessary to recruit more interviewers who spoke these languages. This was done after the workshop to bring the number to the required 18 data collectors. In the end, the data collectors covered most of the languages spoken in Vrygrond: Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu and siSwati, Chechawa, French, Shona, Ndebele, and English. The training was carried out in collaboration between Steffen Jensen and Derrick Naidoo and resulted in two fieldwork manuals, detailing the step by step process of the data collection. The workshop, lasting four days, comprised group dynamic exercises, explanation of the research, exercises in questionnaire taking and discussion of the research tools.

The data collection was organized in teams of 6, including one team leader responsible for liaising with the project coordinator and quality control. The teams were composed in such a way as to address the language needs in each of the areas assigned to the individual teams. The CHN coordinators conducted quality control, conflict resolution and day to day project management.

The Violence Survey, administered to a selected sample of households in Vrygrond, consisted of 73 questions, divided into the following clusters:
 A.) General information;
 B.) Trust and participation in the community;
 C.) Experiences with violence;
   1. Specific details of violent episode experienced;

2. Damages sustained;

3. Subsequent assistance, health care, and justice.

The results were initially recorded in written questionnaires which were completed by teams of surveyors after direct interviews. The data contained in these questionnaires was then entered into an Epi-Info data base by the CHN research assistant, Sarah Motha. This data base was then analyzed by RCT in Copenhagen. The preliminary results were conveyed directly back to CHN in a second workshop which was under the direction of Derrick Naidoo and Peter Polatin. During this workshop, there was opportunity, not only to present the final data, but also to discuss it and put it within an appropriate context. This was an extremely important component of the research process. A PowerPoint presentation, used in the workshop, is appended to this report.

Challenges

Although the data collection process was quite successful, a number of challenges can be identified:

- Absence of a reliable map from which to sample the population of Vrygrond

The process of producing a reliable map was cumbersome but also enlightening. However, it introduced additional stress to the project management. It took time away from the data collection process, and made the project more expensive than originally planned, because more interviews had to be conducted among the 'invisible people' of Vrygrond.

- Dangers involved in data collection including the presence of gangs

A major issue during data collection was safety of the data collectors. Despite assigning data collectors to their own areas, the dangers associated with addressing strangers were substantial, especially because a number of gangs and drug dealers operate in Vrygrond. To ensure safety, each house was assessed for who stayed there in order to make sure that at least one of the data collectors spoke the main language of the residents. Nonetheless, safety was an ever-recurring theme in debriefings. It might also have meant that some houses originally sampled were not visited because it was deemed too dangerous to data collectors.

- Lop-sidedness in initial composition of research teams

As mentioned above, language was a major complication in relation to the data collection. Multiple languages are spoken in Vrygrond, but the majority speaks either Afrikaans or isiXhosa. As we conducted the training, it became clear that a minority of data collectors spoke either of the two languages. The majority spoke non-South African languages or English only. This was a problem for several reasons: it introduced more safety risk to data collectors who were required to engage with additional respondents and a possible perception that the project 'was for non-South Africans'. Since we were actually asking questions about violence against non-South Africans, such a perception would have been fatal for the success for the project. It was decided by the project management and the RCT to recruit Afrikaans and isiXhosa speakers with a solid reputation in the community. Although they had not undergone the same training, their experience in other research projects compensated to some degree for this. Despite these challenges, all the challenges were handled in ways that did not endanger the collection of reliable data, which is a testimony to the strength of members of the Vrygrond community.

To complement the quantitative parts of the research, we carried out a number of life story interviews (Jakobsen et al 2008) with victims or people otherwise affected by the xenophobic attacks who had been identified through the survey. We also carried out focus group interviews with activists and community workers who had been part of the community reaction after the xenophobic attacks. While the qualitative data collection was not prioritised as the quantitative data, it provides important elements towards the understanding of xenophobic attacks in Vrygrond and what community action was taken to counter them. Taken together with the quantitative data, it paints a picture of the often heroic attempts to stop the violence and the almost improbable solidarity and humanity demonstrated by people under serious duress.

Chapter 3: Community, social capital and violence in Vrygrond

In this chapter, we wish to introduce Vrygrond in more detail. After a brief historical introduction, we focus on socio-economic levels and demographic trends. Then we move on to issues of trust and social capital to assess the level of what we term community. Following this brief analysis, we focus on the levels and the nature of crime and violence in Vrygrond, along with its associated risk factors. Most of the data on which this section is built emanates from the quantitative survey covering mid-2007 to mid-2009, as well as the data analysis workshop that was held in Vrygrond in late 2009. At the end of this chapter we discuss the results in relation to other sources of information so as to arrive at a description of the community of Vrygrond as a community in spite of the violence. This chapter addresses the question – "what levels and forms of violence existed prior to and after the xenophobic attacks?" We explore the actual xenophobic attacks in the next chapter.

Brief history of Vrygrond

Vrygrond, also known as Capricorn, is located in the southern part of the Cape Peninsula. It was originally a squatter camp, inhabited primarily by the thousands of mainly Afrikaans

speaking "coloureds" from the impoverished Cape Town hinterlands. Unlike other squatter camps like Windermere (see Field 1996), Vrygrond was not segregated during the apartheid regime, and coloureds and Africans co-existed relatively peacefully. Ironically, this sense of community was shattered in post-apartheid South Africa.

As part of the ambitious Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Vrygrond was chosen as a site for a new housing development scheme, the result of intense lobbying by strong community organizations in Vrygrond. However, according to testimonies from residents inside Vrygrond, the new project gave rise to numerous disputes, echoed across Cape Town in other new developments (Jensen 2004). One of the ironies of post-apartheid Cape Town is that, as resources began pouring in, conflicts erupted in multiple locations. In Vrygrond it was around the Development Trust, a partnership vehicle for the building of houses and construction of infra-structure. The City Council allocated 30 million Rands (or about 4 million Dollars) to the building of 1600 houses under RDP principles. The construction company promised to use local labour and support local structures; however, disputes arose around who should get a house or a job, who could build the houses and which organizations should be involved. Anecdotal evidence from Vrygrond suggests that these conflicts led to increased levels of violence.

From its inception, Vrygrond was dominated by Afrikaans speakers or coloureds and Xhosa speaking people mainly from the Eastern Cape However, beginning in 2000, people from elsewhere in South Africa and from the rest of the African continent settled in Vrygrond. The relationships between these groups would be inherently conflictual because each felt that they had claims to the area. This was the situation in which RCT and CHN began its study project in 2008. In the following, we will introduce the results of the survey in order to better understand the context in which the xenophobic attacks took place in May 2008.

Demography and socio-economic status

Vrygrond is in a state of constant change. Estimates of the population of Vrygrond vary and range between 30,000 and 60,000. The most recent official estimation by the police was 40,000. Our survey shows that there are between 3 and 6 inhabitants in each household with an overall average of 5. The 1620 formal structures have an average of 3 households (counting shacks, make-shift cottages and formal houses). Hence, there are 8100

households in the formal settlement. In the newly erected squatter area, Overcome Heights, there are now 3,540 families, thus (using the same family estimate of 5), it is estimated that this area contains another 17,700 people in the informal settlement. Adding these figures together, we estimate the size of the population of Vrygrond to be 42,000. This should be compared to the 2001 census population of 4252 people in Vrygrond.

This is the number on the basis of which resources are allocated, and it illustrates the massive marginalization of Vrygrond where up to 90% of the population remain structurally invisible in different ways. This is particularly important in relation to services. Most services are located in the formal sections. However, services were not meant to accommodate thrice the number of people. Hence, people rely on a range of informal, often illegal, connections for water and electricity. In the newer informal settlements, few people have access to these services, simply because of the rapid expansion of Vrygrond.

Diffusion of languages in Vrygrond
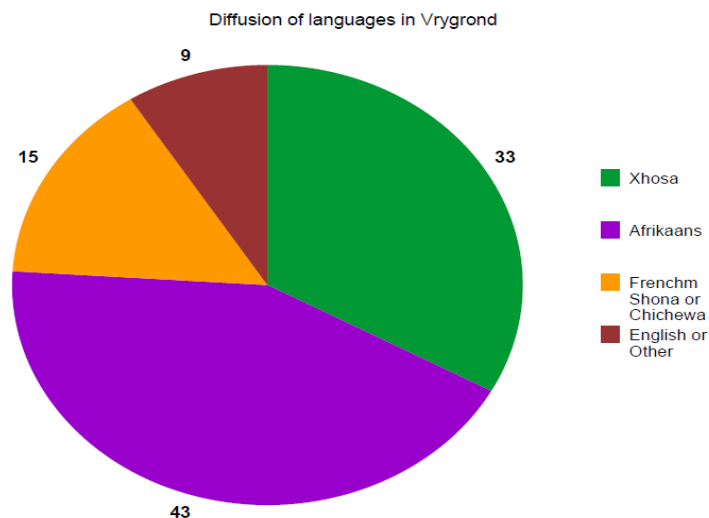
The major languages spoken are Afrikaans (43%) and Xhosa (33%). 15% spoke French, Shona or Chichewa, and 9% spoke either English or other languages (mainly Venda, isiZulu, siSwati, Pedi, Shangaan or other South or Southern African languages). We use these linguistic distinctions as proxy indicators for belonging and group. Xhosa and Afrikaans are historically the two dominant languages in Cape Town's townships, belonging respectively to the apartheid defined categories of Africans and coloureds. The Afrikaans and the Xhosa

speakers have a different sense of claim to the city space than most of the other language groups, simply because of the historical ties that have developed over the last century and a half. This is important as we shall see later. The group of French, Shona and Chichewa speakers is a proxy for non-South Africans, emanating out of DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Zimbabwe and Malawi from where many non-South Africans emanate. The last group of English and other languages is difficult to unilaterally ascribe nationality. As these ambivalent groups account for only 9% of the respondents, we will only include them in the remainder when it is necessary.

Most households had been living in Vrygrond for less than 10 years (90%).[ii] This figure speaks to the transient nature of Vrygrond and illustrates that, despite Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers feel they have more claims to the city, most people in the area have lived there only few years. The maps on page 11 also illustrate the newness of Vrygrond in its present form, being the result of international, national and local movements. Cape Town City Council also monitored the development of informal settlement, and it becomes clear that most of the expansion took place between January 2005 (where the council identified 22 and June 2006 where 1947 informal settlements were identified.[iii])

In terms of socio-economic status, the field workers reported considerable problems in gathering data on issues of money. This has been noted to be a conflictual topic (Bähre 2007). Therefore, we have chosen to focus on expenses rather than income. The majority of households (35%) had expenses of ZAR 500 per month, but the range was from 0 (18%) to ZAR1500 per month (7.5%). These figures indicate high levels of poverty. Census data for the City of Cape Town from 2001 works with income rather than expense defined as an annual income of ZAR19.200 to be household subsistence level as this amount to a monthly income of ZAR1600. This figure does not include inflation and would be higher in 2009. Even so, only the best off in Vrygrond even come near this figure in monthly spending. While we cannot assume that spending and income are the same, this is an indication of quite severe levels of poverty. The city-wide percentage for the sub-poverty line population in 2001 was 39%, which was up from the 25% estimated in 1996.[iv]

Further complicating the task of understanding poverty is the fact that in our survey alone, 80% of the economic support of the households is self-generated. This means that most

economic activity is informal and difficult to compute. Rents are but one example. According to the survey, 43% own their homes and 37% fall into other categories.[v] The official occupants of these houses hold title deeds to these properties. While not officially recorded, the rents represent a major source of income for the owners. Beyond these groups there are other squatters and tenants. Many people loathe also to discuss the issue since "informal" activities that generates income are often illegal.

Although Vrygrond is a poor place, it is politically part of the ward which also includes the well-off suburb of Muizenberg. The sub-poverty line population for Muizenberg in 2001 was below the city average, at 30%. Therefore, Vrygrond's poverty is masked and potentially unrepresented by the ward politicians, who most often come from the well-off, predominantly White suburb. We shall return to this in the section on lessons learnt.

Social capital and trust

Within the communities, the most subscribed participation was with religious groups (36%), although many had no participation in community activities. The highest proportion participating in religious groups is found among those speaking French, Shona or Chichewa (43%) followed by Xhosa (40%). The proportion among the Afrikaans speaking part of the population is slightly smaller (32%). Of these organizations, it was learned at the analysis workshop that the majority are Christian, while some are African Ancestral or Islamic in orientation. It was religious groups also that had provided most of the assistance in the communities within the past year (30%). Xhosa (35%) speakers have the highest proportion getting assistance from religious groups, whereas the proportion is slightly smaller among Afrikaans (27%) and French, Shona and Chichewa (29%). It was confirmed in discussions within the workshop that the most valued community organizations are the religious ones. Political organizations (African National Congress and Democratic Alliance branches) exist within the community. They organize through projects, NGO activities and other campaigns, and may have some meeting activities; however, the perception is that politicians will make their presence openly felt only when there is a pending election, and otherwise are not perceived as active.

It was family members who provided most of the informational, emotional, and economic support (25%), followed by religious leaders (19%), friends (16%), neighbours (15%), and

"others" (9%). Government officials, charities/NGOs and politicians had provided relatively low levels of support (3%, 2%, and 1% respectively). This suggests that the formal structures of the state, as well as the surrounding society, are marginal when it comes to helping and assisting. Almost all support comes from informal and religious networks. One exception might be the Treatment Action Committee (TAC), an HIV/Aids advocacy group which has some membership in Vrygrond.

When looking at the different language groups separately in table form, the pattern looks slightly different.

	Afrikaans	Xhosa	Non-South African
Family	35	20	13
Neighbours	21	11	8
Friends	20	15	12
Religious leaders	16	21	25
Government officials	7	4	0
Politicians	1	4	0
Community leaders	2	1	1
NGO's	3	0	1
Others	8	9	9

Whereas non-South Africans must rely on religious leaders, Xhosa speakers, but especially Afrikaans speakers, are able to draw on a much more elaborate system of locally and kin-based support systems. For Afrikaans speakers the percentage of 'close' (family, friends and neighbours) associations is 76%: For Xhosa speakers it is 46% whereas for non-South Africans 33%. This is represented in graphic form below.

Sources of suppoort for French Speakers
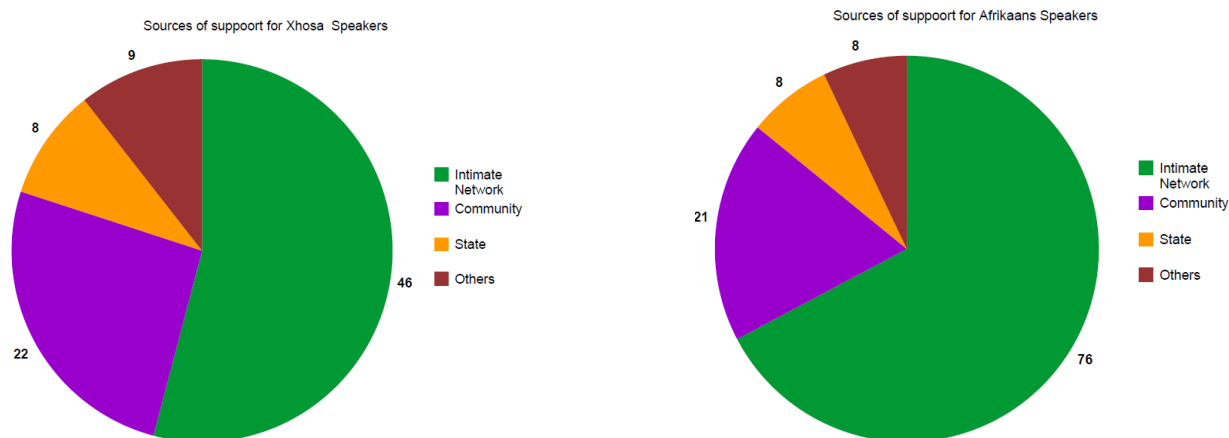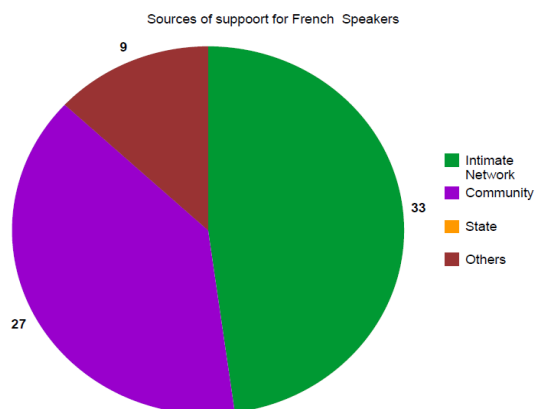
We see the same pattern with regard to the survey question of whether people join to solve a problem. Most interviewees said that they had not joined together with other community members in the past year (77%). However, there were differences. 29% of Xhosa speakers and 25% of Afrikaans speakers had joined together to solve a community problem. Among French, Shona and Chichewa the figure was only 7%. Most had not spoken with a local authority or government organization about community problems (79%). Again, when taking language into consideration the same pattern is found. Most in the English speaking population (40%) had spoken with a local authority or government organization about community problems, followed by Afrikaans (24%), Xhosa (24%), and French, Shona and Chichewa (4%).

People who have discussed a community problem with a local a or governmental organization
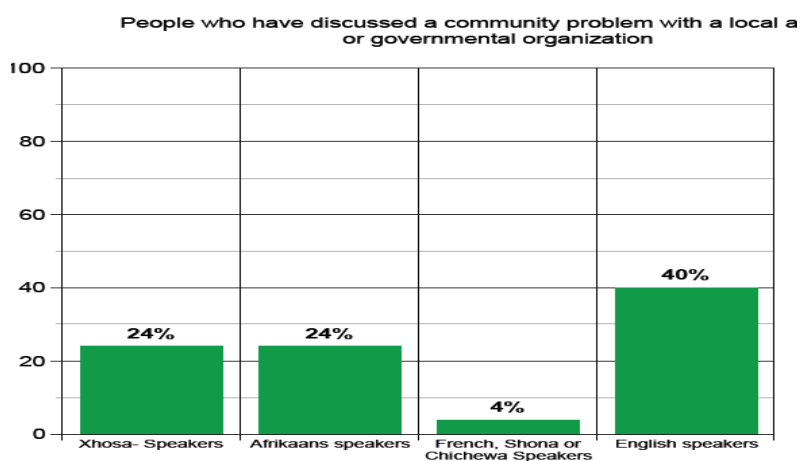
When asked whether others in the community could be trusted, most people said no (68%), and again the same pattern appears when looking at the languages separately. Most people among the Xhosa population (36%) said yes when asked if the majority of the people in the

community could be trusted, Afrikaans (33%) and last French, Shona and Chichewa speakers (18%).

Can other members of the community be trusted ?
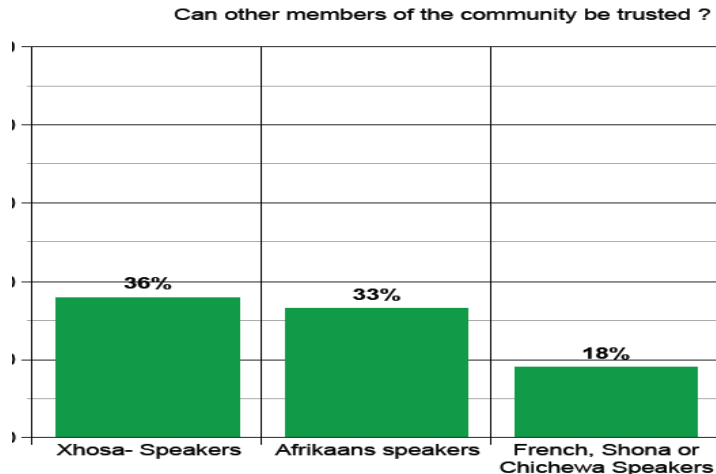
Most people did not feel that people in the community got along with each other (63%). However, when looking at language separately the pattern was the same as above. Most among the Xhosa population (41%) felt that people in the community got along with each other, followed by Afrikaans (39%) and fewest among French, Shona and Chichewa (24%).

Do People in the community get along with each other?
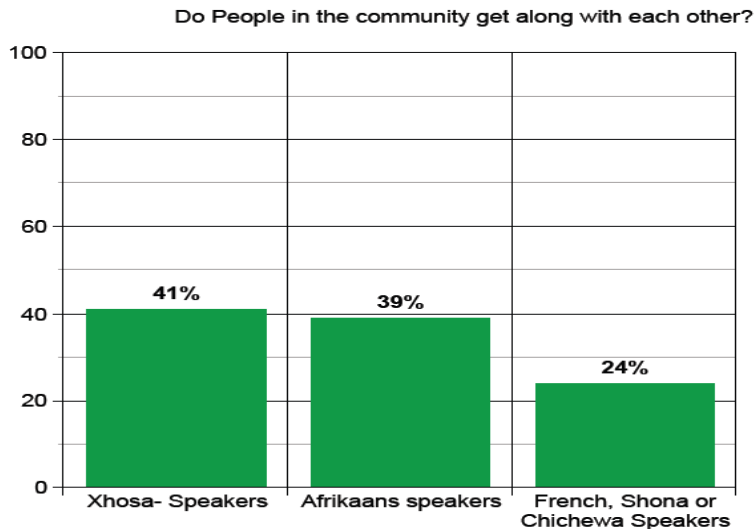
However, the majority said also that they were part of the community (82%). Most among Xhosa (88%) and Afrikaans (85%) said that they were part of the community while only 68% of French, Shona and Chichewa speakers felt that they were part of the community.

Most of the community survey interviewers at the workshop felt that this was a literal and geographic response; i.e., that the respondents were speaking about their physical proximity rather than any emotional ties. This is confirmed by the fact that most interviewees believed that most of the people in the community would "take advantage of you if they had a chance" (84%). Most among the French, Shona and Chichewa (91%) believe that most of the people in the community would take advantage of them if they had a chance, followed by Xhosa (84%) and Afrikaans (83%).

Looking at these figures it becomes quite clear that ideas of 'community' as a harmonious entity makes little sense in Vrygrond. Most do not trust other people and think that they would take advantage of them if they could. Almost no one get along with each other and few organize together around issues. This suggests that organizations and government agencies cannot assume the existence of one community as it is characterized by lack of trust and conflicts. However, there are important differences where Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers consistently have greater and 'closer' networks, trust their fellow community members more (if not very much) and join organizations to address common problems. This tells the story of an important difference between the different language groups, where the French, Shona and Chichewa speakers consistently have lower social capital.

These findings emerged out of the part of the questionnaire that focused on trust and community factors using the international scale SASCAT.[vi] This corresponds to other findings and suggests that languages do have significant effect. Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking residents consistently score higher on all accounts, i.e., they had higher social capital, although in general all of the respondents are in the lower end of the scales regardless of language.[vii] In this sense, the SASCAT confirms the image of a community that is divided and conflictual. This might also influence the risk factors associated to violence and perception of violence in a negative direction among those with low scores on the SASCAT.

Finally we explored people's ability to functioning in spite of adversity.[viii] With regard to activities and participations (coping with stress, participating in family relations, work or school, community life), 43-49% denied any difficulty, and 8-11% endorsed total ("absolute") difficulty. However, about 40% reported some difficulty with these activities.

Perceptions of Crime and Violence

As in many parts of the city, crime and violence are endemic in Vrygrond. In 2006, Cape Town was above the national average murder rate at 55 per 100.000 (City of Cape Town 2007). This puts Cape Town on the list of some of the most violent places in the world. An ISS city-wide victimization survey from 1998 documented that more than 40% felt very unsafe at night (ISS 1998). Correspondingly 64% of South Africans reported that they perceived crime and violence to be a serious issue, topping unemployment (IDASA 1998). A decade later South Africans still feel unsafe, and Gallup reports that only 31% feels safe walking home at night.[ix] All surveys also suggested that crime was worse this year than last year (Ibid). In Vrygrond, we find similar, although even clearer trends. 82% rated violence as the main problem in the community, and 75% believed that violence had remained at the same level or had increased in the past year. The most common types of criminal activities in Vrygrond are perceived to be housebreaking, robbery, and domestic violence, and the interviewees named the primary causes of violence as alcoholism, drug abuse, unemployment, and poverty.

In relation to national government's attempts to increase public security 27% rated these efforts as good or very good, 34% rated them as normal, and 38% gave the government a bad or very bad rating. There was less certainty about the municipality's effectiveness. 61% gave it a bad rating, but 32% were saying that either they had no opinion or were not sure that it was the municipality's role to prevent violence. In the survey, the government, as represented by the police, are regarded quite highly for their ability to deter violence because of the visibility of extra patrols. Additionally, police are kinder to black people than they were during Apartheid (but not necessarily to immigrants). We did not ask about political affiliation, although it is an important factor within community relations. The Democratic Alliance is often favoured by the Afrikaans speaking people or coloureds, while the ANC is traditionally the choice of the Xhosa speaking people. Political events sometimes turn violent. In December 2009, the Mayor (a member of the DA) was evicted from a squatter area in Vrygrond, where he was visiting primarily Xhosa speakers (ANC supporters) who did not have electricity. Local newspapers documented the Mayor's eviction and claimed that he (and by proxy Afrikaans speaking people) favoured 'Coloured's and was therefore a racist. This incident illustrates the tensions between Afrikaans speakers or coloureds on the

one side and the Xhosa speakers on the other. These conflicts are particularly intractable in Vrygrond because race determines access to resources and therefore tempers people's understanding and interpretation of social and political events.

Violence experience

Within the past 2 years, 50% of the households reported experiencing at least one episode of violence[x]. Even for South Africa this is a high number. In the 1998 ISS victimization survey, 50% of residents in Cape Town reported experiencing a crime within the last 5 years. That is, half the households in Vrygrond was victimized between 2007 and 2009, whereas 50% of the Cape Town population experienced a crime between 1993 and 1998. In a self-reporting survey by Gallup, 22% of South Africans reported having lost money due to theft, and 13% were mugged during 2007 (op cit). The figures from Vrygrond are at least on par with these numbers or even higher.

Among these, a large proportion occurred within the municipality of Muizenberg where Vrygrond belongs**.** There was not 100% participation in all of the questions about personal experience of violence, but 55 % of those who responded stated that the episode had occurred in their "phase" (section of Vrygrond), and 32 % stated that it was elsewhere in Vrygrond. Therefore, 87% of the violence occurred within Vrygrond. Most had been attacked at home, and the episodes were more common at night and on the weekends. In almost half of the cases (45%), the perpetrator(s) was known to the victim, although not necessarily at the level of an acquaintance. 62% of victims were attacked by 2-4 men, and 33% by a woman. According to discussions in the data analysis workshop, these figures are not necessarily mutually exclusive: the common pattern is for a woman decoy and 2 or more men, who then ambush the victim. The perpetrators were most frequently adult (66%), but sometimes adolescents (30%), and they usually wore common street clothing rather than gang-like garb. They were more often not intoxicated, felt to be common criminals rather than gang members, and from South Africa. A large number of victims reported subsequently seeing their attackers, and many lived in the same neighbourhood[xi]. These figures illustrate an important point about violence and crime in Vrygrond: It is quite intimate. It is rarely outsiders that come to an area to steal, but perpetrators known to the victim. It is also important that most of the crimes happened inside the homes of the victims. This explains the levels of fear and the low social capital scores of people in the

survey. The fact that the survey showed that most of the crimes happened inside the homes of the victims might reflect a methodological bias because we interviewed heads of households, who would be more knowledgeable about crimes in the household. However, the figures still illustrate that crime and violence in Vrygrond is intimate and often personal. Furthermore, if there is a bias toward household crime, then the figures on violence might be conservative because violence that young people experience outside the household was not reported.

Since a major interest of this survey lies in the discriminatory pattern of violence regarding South Africans versus non-South Africans[xii], results on this matter will be presented in the following. Among those 50% of the households who experienced violence at least one time during the past two years, 18.5% had either French, Shona or Chichewa as their first language, 37.5% had Afrikaans and 37.5% Xhosa as their first language. This indicates that the majority affected by violence during the past two years were South Africans. Among those affected, 3.5% had English as their first language and 3% other.

In order to further estimate and to discriminate South Africans from immigrants regarding prevalence of violence, a semi-manual calculation has been done.[xiii] The total number of people living in the households of the respondents is 2363, and it appears that the prevalence of violence among the total number of people living in the households of the respondents is 316. Hence, a total of 13% experienced violence in the past two years. Among these 125 (39.5%) had Afrikaans as their first language, 109 (34.5%) had Xhosa as first language, and 64 (20%) spoke French, Shona or Chichewa. The total Afrikaans speaking household population in the survey is 1091, hence the proportion affected by violence during the past two years is 11%. The total Xhosa speaking household population number in the survey is 761, and the proportion affected by violence is 14%. The total French, Shona and Chichewa speaking household population is 297, hence 21% has been affected by violence. This indicates that Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers are relatively less likely to be the victims of crime, whereas French, Shona and Chichewa speakers were relatively more likely to be victimized. Hence, nationality is a predictor for being affected by violence – non-South Africans are more likely victims.

Affected by violence in the last two years
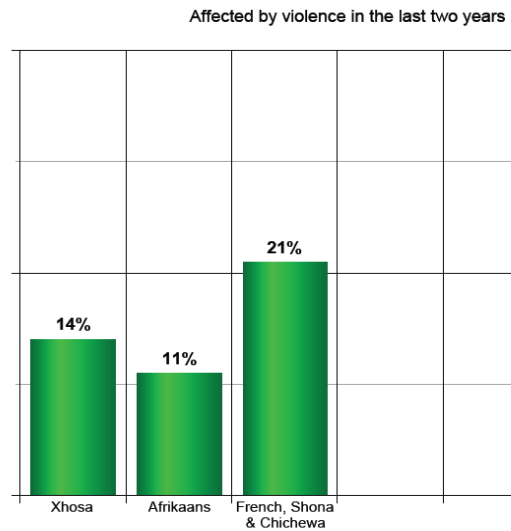
So what were the effects of the crime and violence on people's lives and livelihood? A large number of interviewees reported no physical injury from the attack (64%), but those that did reported gunshot wounds, cuts, beatings, and some rape. While some were threatened with guns and knives, most victims were physically overpowered. The lack of weapons in the application of the violence could be seen as an indication of the disorganized nature of the violence and the crime. As elsewhere in South Africa (Shaw 2002), it appears to be driven either by opportunity (someone sees an opportunity and seizes it) or by perceived insults by neighbours or acquaintances.

Other effects of the violence included material damage (21%), emotional strain (25%) and damage to family and social relationships (5%). Many victims rated the impact of the episode on their lives as significant (28%). Of those who answered these questions, about 25% had to stop working or going to school after the incident, usually for 2-3 days, and with a loss of income of ZAR400 or more. This loss of income approximates a monthly income for most households in Vrygrond. If we extrapolate the figures to calculate the overall economic consequences of crime and violence, 50% of households have experienced at least one act of violence in the past two years. This would suggest that about 21,000 – 30,000 have been attacked. The average loss per attack is more than ZAR400. Therefore, if we take the figure of ZAR500, the social cost of violence in Vrygrond is ZAR10,5 million to ZAR15 million over a two year period. However, the issue is more complicated than this as we cannot assume that community members are all innocent victims of crime. The survey shows that crime and

violence often emanates from within the community, which is why some residents will naturally benefit from some of the crimes. This is arguably also one of the reasons for the lack of trust and social capital in Vrygrond.

The experience of violence is associated with as much emotional distress as physical injury, and no source of protection or change is perceived. Assistance, if at all, was just as likely to come from another source as from the police. Almost 20% reported receiving some health services after the violence, usually in a public hospital emergency room. About half of the respondents complained, usually to the police. Follow up was not highly rated. When asked why they did not complain, there was no fixed response, but when asked if they knew of any institution that might be helpful in "repairing the losses/injuries you suffered", the common response was "no". Reports from elsewhere in South Africa (Gallup 2007[xiv]) indicate that after violent or criminal experiences, many South Africans don't believe that the police will properly address their complaints.

Community conflicts

The survey did not directly address conflicts within the community. However, the interviews and the focus groups (that is, the qualitative data) did. These conflicts often seem to fall along national and linguistic fault lines. South Africans will stereotypically say that immigrants steal their jobs and women. However, as the IOM report "Towards Tolerance, Law and Dignity" (IOM 2009) suggests, South African complaints are more sophisticated than the blind rehearsal of stereotypes. In fact, the anger that triggered the violence in 2008 was based in dissatisfaction by community members and leaders in Alexandria with the state for failing to act on their legitimate concerns about state resources, security and interventions. Similarly, in Cape Town, anger has been turned against Somali traders since 2006, arguably because the Somali traders have come to represent all the foreign traders said to take away business from South Africans.

We shall return to the violence in May 2008 in the next chapter; however, it is important to note that these conflicts have been ongoing and have caused a high degree of suspicion among non-South Africans towards their community because of a higher victimization rate of non-South Africans by government officials and South African nationals, with no or little consequence for the perpetrators. Many of these actions are said to be grounded in a sense

of South African superiority regarding the rest of Africa; Africans are said to bring crime and disease as well as causing unemployment and economic decay (Hadland 2008: 15; Jensen and Buur 2007).

However, our data also shows that non-South Africans may harbour equally virulent and derogatory stereotypes about South Africans:

> We foreigners don't have enough security here in Vrygrond. I am surrounded by different types of people like coloureds, Sothos, Xhosa, Zimbabweans, Somalians and Nigerians. I don't trust them all more, especially the coloureds and the Xhosa people – especially the youth. People of this area Vrygrond – they don't have what we call humanity and they don't have love in their lives. And again, robbery and house breaking is mostly common in this area.

It is noteworthy that he identifies exactly those with the strongest sense of claim to Vrygrond – Afrikaans (coloureds) and Xhosa speakers, not least the youth. Another man suggests that South Africans are lazy and that during the cold season they will not work. Another man suggested that "South Africans are not clever; they cannot think twice." This taps into a general stereotype emerging out of the focus group discussions that non-South Africans are better educated than their local counter-parts in Vrygrond. Particularly worrying for the focus group discussants were the young people of Vrygrond who cannot read and write but steal and prostitute themselves.

This form of stereotypes perhaps exists because of the violence, and because of the general sense of fear that is generated by the maltreatment of non-South Africans. However, as Loren Landau of the Forced Migration programme at Wits University and one of the foremost analysts of South African migration issues suggests (Landau 2008: 54), there is a rhetoric of self-exclusion and transient superiority (the superiority of those who do not stay in one place but move) among many non-South Africans. The self-exclusion and the superiority means that they choose to distance themselves from a morally corrupt South Africa. As he quotes one of his informants, "I don't think any right thinking person would want to be a South African. It's a very unhealthy environment. South Africans are very aggressive, even the way they talk. Both black and white! I don't know what the word is, it's a degenerated façade they are putting up… They are just so contaminated" (Ibid). These words resonate with our data. Together with the equally virulent stereotypes of South Africans *vis a vis* non-

South Africans – and together with the figures on social capital, they are testimonies to serious community conflicts and mistrust.

Summary:

What do these figures tell us about Vrygrond as a community? It is poor and diverse; it has grown over the past years; it has a low level of trust and social capital; and it is violent. Vrygrond has a majority of South Africans, but with approximately 19% who are immigrants. While some people support and participate in religious activities and interact with family, neighbours, and friends, there is not a great deal of trust in the community. In fact, most people believe that others will take advantage of them if given the opportunity. There appears to be a relatively high incidence of difficulty in activity and participation categories involving stress, family relations, work/education, and community life. The community is perceived to be violent. Crime and violence are perceived as primary problems, particularly manifested by high levels of housebreaking, robbery, and domestic violence, along with drug abuse and gang activity. The data furthermore shows some important differences along linguistic lines: those who speak French, Shona and Chichewa (proxy indicator for non-South Africans) are much more suspicious and less integrated into the community than are Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers.

The perception of Vrygrond as a violent and crime-ridden place is supported by the statistics on victimization. According to the survey, 50% of households have experienced at least one act of violence in the past two years with relative more non-South Africans than South Africans among the victims. The economic consequences of crime and violence are very high as are the levels of emotional distress following the violent episode, probably further confounded by the fact that few people report or see any possible source of protection or change. The xenophobia that affected so much of South Africa in mid May 2008, also hit this community. As we shall see in the next chapter, Vrygrond was affected, but our analysis also indicates that there were acts of heroism and sacrifice that defy the picture of a disintegrated community.

Chapter 4: The Xenophobic Violence in Vrygrond

In this chapter, we will answer our second research question: How and to what extent was Vrygrond affected by the xenophobic violence in May 2008? We do this in three stages. First, we will briefly discuss the xenophobic attacks as they unfolded in South Africa between May 11 and May 26, 2008. Then we will discuss the quantitative results from the survey in Vrygrond. Finally, we will use the results from life histories and focus group discussions to put the quantitative results into perspective. We distinguish between three forms of victimization in order to make sense of both the quantitative and the qualitative data: primary victimization (which include surveyed households as victims); secondary victimization (which include those who were known to residents of the surveyed households) and tertiary victimization (which include those victims who were not direct victims, and did not know any victims but still experienced the violence as a threat to life and property).

Violence and its reasons

On May 11, 2008 a resident group of primarily young men entered an Alexandria hostel near Johannesburg which housed a number of non-South African nationals. This was not the first attack of the kind. Since at least 1994, South Africa has witnessed, and become a scene, of multiple other attacks (see for example Jensen and Buur 2007; Landau 2008; IOM 2009; Worby, Hassim and Kupe 2008). However, the violence that erupted in Alexandria was different in scope.[xv] This was the first in a long sequence of attacks across the country that was later labelled 'the xenophobic violence'. From Alexandria in Johannesburg it spread to other parts of Gauteng and later to other parts of the country along the coastal towns of Durban, East London, Knysna, Cape Town, and then inward into most provinces. At the end of the violence, 62 had lost their lives (a third of who were South African nationals), and about 150.000 had been displaced into camps. The police reported 1384 arrests. 342 shops looted and 213 shops burnt down. It is impossible to calculate the economic losses incurred in the violence but it was significant. Most victims were poor and uninsured.

Probably the most damaging part of the xenophobic violence was the atmosphere of fear and mistrust it created. Compared to previous episodes of mass violence in South Africa, the casualty list was not high. However, as Worby, Hassim and Kupe (2008) suggest, the violence "Struck a nerve, arousing moral outrage on a global scale". They ask whether "The daring declaration in South Africa's pioneering Constitution – '*South Africa belongs to all who live in it'* – [has] been dismissed with contempt by the chanting of xenophobic slogans and the flourishing of machetes?" (Ibid: 2). As they point out, more was at stake in the violence than the safety of hundreds and thousands of migrants. It was also threatened what the sense of South Africa had become and its standing within the community of nations.

In the media, the violence was explained through the trope of xenophobia. However, Worby, Hassim and Kupe (2008) dismiss this as too superficial. The contributors of their volume, aptly named "Go Home or Die Here", argue that it is too easy to ascribe the events of May 2008 to "xenophobia – stigmatized as an irrational, bigoted, and personal sentiment" mainly attributed to the lower classes (ibid: 6). Instead we need to look for more structural reasons: unease, anxiety, inequality, police brutality and political opportunism. Such an approach would extend the responsibility from poor, uneducated township dwellers to the political elite, the police and the middle class.

Another report, "Violence and Xenophobia in South Africa" (Hadland 2008) identifies three broad reasons to the violence: relative deprivation of those living in townships (inequality between rich and poor); South African exceptionalism (a sense of superiority regarding the rest of the continent that is seen as harbouring disease, poverty and chaos), and increasingly exclusionary regulation of immigration stemming from growing nationalist sentiments (ibid: 14-16). In the aftermath of the violence, a number of other structural explanations were suggested which are outlined in the report "Towards Tolerance, Law and Dignity" (IOM 2009). They include inadequate border control (allowing thousands across the border); changes in political leadership; rising food commodity prices; third force activities (deliberate attempts to undermine the South African government); high unemployment rates; poor service delivery; impunity (no one has been held accountable in the state or in the population); limited knowledge of the country's immigration laws and local authorities' support and enforcement of illegal practices (ibid: 29-35). The IOM report suggests that these general explanations suffer from the fact that they cannot explain why some areas were affected and others not. Instead, the report suggests that we see these explanations as "Contributing but insufficient conditions" (ibid: 33) to explain the violence in May 2008.

Using a "forensic inquiry into the violence", the authors of the IOM report conclude that "It is in the micro-politics of township life that turn these divides [the contributing, general factors] into resources and translates them into violence" (ibid: 8). The report identifies four common factors that were present in the cases where the structural conditions turned into violence. These are: institutionalized practices that bar non-South Africans from rights; leaderships in individual communities that promote hostile practices against non-nationals; lack of a community-based reconciliation system; and absence of consequences when violence is used in settling conflicts (ibid). As we shall see below, this point of view is to a large extent supported by our data.

From Johannesburg to Cape Town

The violence spread from Gauteng and Johannesburg towards the Cape and Vrygrond. In the days up to and during the violence in Cape Town, newspapers were full of reports detailing the violence and discussing whether it would reach Cape Town. In the article, "It won't happen here, say Cape foreigners", non-South African nationals and South Africans

interviewed in the township of Khayelitsha agreed that the violence must not come to the Cape.[xvi] In another article, "Cape-based foreigners fear attacks", Somali traders reported about the threats made to their lives.[xvii]

But the violence came to Cape Town as well.

- The first attacks in Cape Town were reported on May 15 where a Somali-shop was attacked in Durbanville.
- The day after, Somali-shop owners received 'eviction notices' in the coastal town of Strand near Cape Town. In Du Noon in Cape Town, another 30 Somali-spaza shop owners received 'eviction letters'.
- Three days later, Somali-shops were looted in Masiphimelele. In Du Noon, shops were looted and non-South Africans were displaced. 12 people were injured.
- On May 23, people were displaced in and around the townships on the Cape Flats.
- On May 24, shops were looted in Kraaifontein on the Cape Flats.
- In the internet-based news agency Afrol's homepage it was stated, "Chaos and terror reigned in the streets of Cape Town last night, with hundreds of panicking foreigners scuttling about for safety, as the xenophobic attacks that have engulfed some of the main South African cities extend to the Mother city."[xviii]
- On May 25, there was still sporadic violence.
- On May 26, the violence was declared under control by the ministry of Safety and Security (IOM 2009).

What seems clear in this list is that most of the violence concerned Somali-shop keepers. In the Cape, there is a history of violence against Somali-traders. In July and August 2006, 47 Somali traders were reported killed in and around the Cape. The police argued that killings of traders happened to both foreigners and nationals, and that the motives were robbery.[xix] For many Somali shop-keepers the events became a confirmation of deep seated antagonisms against them as "a number of businesses owned mainly by Somalis were attacked and looted while their owners were forced to flee for their lives. Some of the shops were actually set alight and the storekeepers were reduced to mere spectators as they witnessed their hard earned properties burn to the ground."[xx]

The xenophobic violence in Vrygrond

In the survey carried out in Vrygrond in mid-2009, we asked 517 randomly selected household respondents which kinds of crime and violence they had experienced between 2007 and 2009, and whether they or someone they knew had had experiences with crime or violence in May 2008. The first question intended to demonstrate the general levels of violence and crime in Vrygrond AND the experiences during May 2008 within the household of the respondent, i.e. those who lived and ate together on a regular basis. The second question was aimed to document the extent to which people in the immediate surrounding ("anyone you know") had been victims of the xenophobic attacks. We find it useful for the purpose of analysis to distinguish between primary and secondary victimization. Primary victimization affects the household, and secondary victimization affects people known to the respondent, including neighbours, co-patriots elsewhere and family outside the household or other acquaintances of the respondent.

An interesting and unexpected conclusion emerges from this distinction. In May 2008, there were only two incidents of crime and violence in Vrygrond, and neither of them were related to the xenophobic violence since they were both registered as have happened before May 15 (when the violence hit Cape Town). In fact, the number of violent and criminal incidents in May 2008 seems to be quite low. This suggests that in our sample, no identifiable household had direct experiences with the xenophobic violence (primary victimization). This does not mean that there were no attacks in Vrygrond, but it does mean that the number of incidents was low enough for the violence to have eluded the survey. As we made an effort to randomize the survey and map the entire Vrygrond, we believe this figure to be relatively unbiased (see methodological section). Hence, in our classification the primary victimization was very low in Vrygrond.

In relation to the secondary victimization, the survey indicates that 66 (13%) out of the total of 517 respondents knew someone who had experienced violence during May 2008.[xxi] This provides an indication of the impact of the xenophobic attacks in Vrygrond. Because of the wording of the question, and because it is not possible to rule out that all respondents referred to the same or a few individuals, the number merely indicates that 13% of our respondents had a direct knowledge of and a relation to someone who had been victimized in the violence in May 2008.

Direct knowledge – secondary victimization – was more frequent among those having French, Shona or Chichewa as their first language (29%) than among those having their first language as Afrikaans (11%) or Xhosa (8.5%)[xxii]. If we look at the incidence of direct knowledge among different language groups, we find that there was three times the likelihood among non-South Africans as compared to South Africans. This is not surprising as it means that the non-South Africans were much more likely to directly know someone who had been attacked.[xxiii]

However, low numbers are in no way an indication that the violence was not devastating or that it did not happen in Vrygrond at all. First of all, it is important to know how many of those who left did not come back after the violence. Other sources, including focus groups, life stories carried out in the research, and news reports, are testimonies of experience of often brutal violence. For example, "On the 23rd of May (2008) I almost died", Sewika, who is an immigrant from the DRC, told IRIN, removing her headscarf to show the large scars across her scalp where her neighbours in Capricorn [Vrygrond, eds] threw acid at her".[xxiv] Two years later, she still lives in the Blue Waters camp outside Cape Town, which accommodates individuals who do not wish to reintegrate into the community from which they were forcibly expelled. Sewika hopes to be resettled in a third country. "'[Blue Waters…] is very dangerous but my country is also not safe'" (Irin 2008). As Sewika did not go back hers and others testimonies cannot be captured in the survey.

In our own interviews, we can trace incidents from May 2008 also. It seems to be most typical that the perpetrators are young men, either Afrikaans speaking (coloureds), with a reputation for being involved in gangs, or Xhosa-speaking youth who might also belong to gangs. Most of the violence appears to have been motivated less by ideology and more by opportunity. The most frequent crime was robbery, committed against non-South African nationals by young South African men. The narrative of one man from Malawi is instructive, in terms of what happened before, during, and after May 2008.

> When we came here in 2007, I was shocked to see what was happening here in Vrygrond to us foreigners. We were robbed that time – phones and they could even break into our houses and take whatever is there and go and sell it. These people are bad because they don't think of their friends. What worries us most is that the police

do not act if you call them – or maybe they are too late. Drugs, robberies and breaking houses are common here. In this community there are so many shebeens [informal bars] where even young children drink.

In May 2008, I was working in Cape Town and my boss told me about what was happening in Johannesburg. That night people started chasing us to go back to Malawi and [the people here…] were stealing from us. They were saying we are taking their jobs and their wives – we have to go back where we came from. By that time I was staying here in Vrygrond and it was very hard for me to come home after work. People were beaten – especially foreigners. That morning there were now the police all over the Vrygrond trying to give us security of our lives because people here were just beating us and taking our things. Helicopters were everywhere flying in the sky. Police tried their best to restore peace and we started again working after some weeks. Some people went back to Malawi and they returned after some months or a year and we are with them here in Vrygrond, Capricorn.

The narrative is revealing in several ways. First, the narrator situates the violence in the context of similar, everyday violence. The form of violence that he experienced during May 2008 was therefore not much different from the violence he faced in his everyday life. It was opportunity based – young thugs preying on defenceless people. It was made possible by the impunity that makes violence against non-South Africans relatively safe and unreported. Nonetheless, the insecurity was much greater in May 2008, and his compatriots left South Africa only to return after considerable time. He, himself, lost two weeks of work.

Also important is the difference between how the state acted during the violence as opposed to at other times. The man asserts that during everyday forms of violence, he could expect no protection from the police. As literature illustrates (e.g. Madsen 2004; Dissel, Jensen and Roberts 2009; Human Rights Watch 2008[xxv]), the South African police have had a very bad track-record when it came to protecting non-South Africans. In fact, they themselves have victimized immigrants with violent acts and extortion. However, during the May 2008 violence, the police did a better job of protecting non-South Africans. Hornberger (2008) writes that, as non-South Africans sought sanctuary in police stations, "the police took up the challenge. They opened their gates and let the refugees in and let them stay. […] This was a momentary inclusive act of the police. Somehow, in this moment, a practice of human rights had been invoked and enacted; some form of a just state had come to the fore" (Ibid: 134). Although the police did not manage to protect many non-South Africans, the Malawian reports that there were helicopters in the sky, trying to restore order.

In other interviews, there is a repetition of the first man's experience. One woman reports that her cell phone was stolen and she was threatened by the perpetrators that she would be killed. Another man reports that he lost property worth about ZAR2500. He says:

> A lot of gangsters came to my place. They broke into my house and they took my DVD player, amplifier and TV screen. I didn't get any physical injuries. They just came in and took my properties without hurting me. I don't know how many they were. They were so many and again it was during the night.

Again we note that he identifies the perpetrators as gangsters with the pecuniary objective of theft. He also situates the violence within the everyday violence of robbery and murder as he tells the story of how his friend was shot over a few coins before the violence in May 2008 broke out.

But there were also tales of how xenophobic attacks were prevented by the residents of Vrygrond. This is what one man from the DRC tells in a focus group interview:

> A few young people stopped and called me *makwerekwere* [derogatory term for non-South Africans]. Then they said to me: 'You are getting money – our money – taking our wives, taking everything from us, and we don't have jobs'. They demanded my phone, but then I was really touched by people of the [women of the] community. They saw us, they were watching from their houses and windows, and they came out and start to shout: 'Do you know what that man is doing, where he's going?" I was quite astonished – all the mamas – they know me? 'Do you know what he's doing?' And they were talking Afrikaans and Xhosa – in both languages. [The young men] were getting closer to me, but when those mamas came out and they forced the boys to apologise and they came to say sorry to me in English. They apologised. Unfortunately, the same young people, the same evening they did something bad now, [robbing a] Somali shop.

Again we see the same pattern: young thugs take advantage of the violence to rob and loot, legitimized by the negative stereotypes of *makwerekwere,* taking jobs and women from the nationals. But then the miracle occurs: the mamas, speaking in Afrikaans or Xhosa, the groups with the longest claim to Vrygrond and Cape Town, step up and demand that the young men – possibly their sons or neighbours – stop their criminal activities and apologize to the man. They do so and he is subsequently left alone. The narrative illustrates a number of points that the IOM report (2009) states also regarding local dynamics and leadership as

both inhibiting and enabling factors affecting the violence. These are issues we will explore in more detail in the next chapter on community actions around the violence.

Despite the positive outcome of the incident, later the same night, the same young men rob a Somali-shop. The man, saved by the mamas, could only pray that their protection would last, while others hid in their work places, in police stations, in churches and camps or inside their homes hoping for the violence to pass. These people might not have known anyone affected by the violence (secondary victimization); they might not have had any experiences with the violence (primary victimization). It is not identifiable in statistics, even those reporting 150,000 in camps. But this atmosphere of fear might have been the biggest effect of the violence – tertiary victimization as it affected the hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of non-South Africans in the country.

Risk factors – local dynamics

As we wrote above, many explanations of the violence focused on general explanations like poverty, xenophobia, border control, inequality and sense of superiority. However, as IOM (2009) argues, this cannot explain why some areas were more severely affected than others. The IOM report identifies the most important reasons for violence as the following:

- the absence of legitimate leadership groups,
- emergence of vigilante groups,
- historic use of forced removals as a tool of power,
- instigation of attacks by influential groups,
- a lack of credible conflict resolution models
- inability of local government to exercise authority in multi-party constituencies.

In this way, the report focuses on the local dynamics. This also means that the solutions and the risk factors lie, to a large extent, in local dynamics. Our material partly supports these conclusions.

In terms of what we have called primary victimization, the violence in Vrygrond was relatively low: we did not find any incidents using quantitative methods. However, if we compare Vrygrond with wide-spread explanations in the literature about risk factors, they were present. Negative stereotyping of each other by both South Africans and the various immigrant groups is the norm. There is a large number of non-South Africans in Vrygrond

and the poverty is rife. If we look at the risk factors identified by IOM (IOM 2009), some of them were present. Vrygrond is characterised by lack of local governmental control in a very multi-racial and multi-linguistic community, where a liberal white councillor attempts (or not) to represent a non-white and poor community in Vrygrond. Still, the level of violence was low in quantitative terms.

However, the IOM report still resonates more with our material. It indicates that no aggressive leadership evolved around vigilante activities. Rather the attacks seemed uncoordinated and mainly perpetrated by young men with little support from a leadership. As in the case cited above, young men attacked a non-South African but were defused by older, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking women, asserting a local form of control. Instead they attacked a Somali shop keeper elsewhere, indicating that they went where there was least resistance rather than attacking non-South Africans. In other places where local leadership supported and took part in the violence, the actions took on a local 'legitimacy'. (IOM 2009: 45-6).

This also indicates that there is an important gender dimension to the violence in Vrygrond and across South Africa. As Hadland (2008: 24) notes, South African women seem to have more realistic ideas of why non-South Africans get jobs (they are willing to work for lower pay and are less concerned with maintaining ideas of male dignity), whereas South African men tend to blame the government for their lack of jobs. This suggests that the violence must partly be explained by what some social scientists have called the crisis of masculinity, that is, the failure of some men to honour the demands of masculinity (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000). We shall return to these issues below when we move the discussion from risk factors to interventions that took place in May 2008 in Vrygrond, and what these interventions might teach us for the future.

Summary discussion

In this chapter we have explored what happened in Vrygrond during the violence in May 2008. Perhaps surprisingly, none of the respondents or members of their households in our survey had any direct experience of the violence which we term primary victimization. This means that the overall levels of violence were low. The 2008 national average of murders in a two week period (approximately the duration of the violence) stands at about 700, which

is ten times higher than the figures of reported deaths during the violence.[xxvi] However, such calculations make little sense because the xenophobic violence fundamentally shattered the sense of safety for thousands and compromised the ideals of the South African Constitution in ways that the everyday violence does not. This we refer to as tertiary violence (see below).

There were incidents of violence in May 2008 in Vrygrond. These cases were identified through media and through qualitative interviews which recount threats of death and loss of valued possessions. Most often it appears that the violence was opportunity driven, perpetrated by young men, not supported by local leaders, and not informed by an ideology other than negative stereotyping of immigrants (who are "stealing our jobs and women"). This confirmed that violence was caused by local factors rather than arising from general issues of poverty, xenophobia, lacking border control or sense of superiority. Also, the violence during May 2008 is not described by non-South Africans in much different terms than the experiences of everyday bullying and theft that non-South Africans regularly encounter. Indeed, it might even be argued that the protection from the police was greater, not less, during those short weeks of May 2008.

We introduced also the notion of secondary victimization, touching those who knew somebody who had been victimized. This figure was much higher, especially for those informants who spoke non-South African languages. Again, this indicates that we might not be able to reduce the consequences of the May 2008 violence to just primary victimization. Finally, we would argue that there is a third level of victimization that is undetectable in statistic reports because it affects undocumented, invisible non-nationals across South Africa.

Chapter 5: Community action in Vrygrond

During the weeks of the xenophobic violence, hundreds of thousands – South Africans and non-South Africans – had their lives dramatically disrupted. Some were killed, others lost possessions and many more lost the sense of safety that is necessary to function. However, parallel to the tragedy, thousands of people and countless organizations did what they could to help the people fleeing from the townships:

- Academics met and discussed the implications (Worby, Hassim and Kupe 2008),
- Research institutes went into the field to study the phenomenon (IOM 2009),
- After a while, the police tried as best they could to protect people (Hornberger 2008),
- Relief agencies went onto the ground to assist people,
- Churches opened their gates,
- Thousands of people in the townships around the country defied their neighbours to assist and protect (Hadland 2008), and
- Social movements (including CHN) organized mass meetings across nationality to signal the centrality of multi-lingual approaches

In many ways, while South Africa's dream of social inclusiveness seemed to be compromised by the events of May 2008, these same events also became a tragic confirmation (Worby,

Hassim and Kupe 2008) that social disruption could expand beyond white-African relations in South Africa to affect immigrant groups from beyond South African borders. This chapter is about these activities as they unfolded in Vrygrond, and as we can understand them from the interviews and the focus group discussions. The chapter is organized according to the interventions that seemed helpful and saved life. When relevant, we will include reports from outside Vrygrond. Finally, we will consider how this resonates with the Community Healing Network (CHN) model. This will not be an evaluation of the network; rather the report attempts to pinpoint the relevant areas of future work and the dilemmas faced by community activism.

Community activism

As was described in the last chapter, the quantifiable, xenophobic violence in Vrygrond was minimal. In no way this should suggest that we do not recognize the suffering of those directly affected by primary, secondary and tertiary victimization (those who are personally affected, knew people who were affected, or reacted within the general climate of fear). The question then remains why there were low levels of xenophobic violence in Vrygrond? Following our analysis in the previous chapter and the IOM report (2009), we need to look at what happened inside Vrygrond during those two weeks in May, 2008. Different themes have to be examined in order to understand what worked and what did not work.

1) Lack of leadership – decentralized initiatives

In our material from the survey, the interviews and the focus group discussions, we cannot clearly identify any strong centre of leadership. Most people fended for themselves, did not trust many people and did not join to address common problems. Other than some church organizations, structures of authority seemed to be decentralized and amorphous. NGO's, charitable organizations and local government structures remain unimportant in people's lives. While this might be problematic in some instances, it also meant that in May 2008, no structure emerged to coordinate and legitimize the attacks. It was up to individuals and decentralized organizations to act without any pressure of a mob mentality dictating retributive violence. On the other hand, in places like Alexandria, to dissent from the mob was dangerous and simply not an option. In Vrygrond many small and effective initiatives were possible and were carried out partly because of the absence of centralized mechanisms

of authority, as we shall see below. Already from 2006, CHN had encouraged the formation of decentralised leadership in different parts of Vrygrond.

2) Early warning

When the violence erupted in Alexandria, community workers in Vrygrond began to react. As one community worker said:

> When it started in Alexandra there up in Gauteng […] we actually came together and started to prepare ourselves for when it hit Cape Town because we knew it was going to hit Cape Town. We didn't know exactly when it was going to hit Cape Town. So we were actually empowering the women and people. Our community leaders went around informing the people about what was going to happen and all that.

Hence, the early warning that was given to people in Vrygrond made it possible to react in a constructive manner. Across Cape Town, including Vrygrond, people were participating in vigils, demonstrations and prayers. In Vrygrond, efforts were being made to organize women to prepare for the emergency and warn people to stay inside their houses or with their employers rather than returning to Vrygrond. Our material indicates that most employers reacted well to these requests. These activities enabled a preparedness which probably contributed to the low levels of violence in Vrygrond. This is also in line with much standard public health literature (Fowler and Braciszewski 2009).

3) Women

Gender seems to be crucial for the unfolding of events. As the community workers above suggested, women were being organized. Most importantly, older women (the mamas as they are referred to above), seem to have been absolutely crucial in preventing violence. Furthermore, the women who reacted against violence were those who have more claims to the space of Vrygrond, namely Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers. There are several reasons for this. First, they command a great deal of respect in the communities and they know most people. As we saw above, their integration into the community is much deeper since it is based on longer presence in Cape Town, with more family, friends and neighbours. Secondly, these women are also related by blood, kinship or neighbourhood to those committing the violence and the robberies. They are the mothers, sisters or wives of young men in the gangs that constitute the main group of perpetrators in Vrygrond. These intimate affiliations make them complex but effective characters should they choose to act as they did in the previously mentioned case to which the young men eventually apologised on the

women's orders. That these women chose to act (often to control their own kin) contributed to the relatively low violence in Vrygrond.

4) Localized activities

During the violence, many decentralized activities were carried out. Above, we have mentioned making rounds, preparing the community, warning people to stay out, and demanding apologies from the young men. Another activity was a feeding programme. One woman tells the story:

> For two weeks we were actually feeding them [the non-South Africans]. They were under lock and key in their houses. […] We were moving all around in Overcome Heights and people were supporting them from outside.

To feed people was crucial both because of the material needs that arose from the refugees' inability to go out and procure for themselves but also because it connected the very people that the violence was supposed to divide. It becomes a real manifestation of another possible horizon in which South Africans and non-South Africans care for one another rather than engage in frenzied violent activities. Another localized activity were prayer meetings. A church member explains:

> As members of a church, we grouped together and went from house to house just trying to stop and talk to the people and bring comfort. People were living in fear. At that time no one had been hurt so we went to somebody's house and pray together so that the violence does not spill over.

This highly localized initiative was of huge significance. Apart from bringing comfort, the prayer meetings also signalled to would-be perpetrators that the people inside the houses were not alone or isolated; it signalled that they were not easy victims of attacks; that someone cared about their fate. As the IOM report (IOM 2009) indicates, it was exactly the isolation of non-South Africans that made them vulnerable to attacks. In addition to being acts of immense bravery, feeding programmes and prayer meetings both achieved the aim of breaking that isolation.

A final localized activity involved the state and especially the police. A woman recounts how she and her friends went together with the police to Vrygrond:

> We ourselves were disgusted that a human can hurt somebody else in that manner. We […] were even here in Vrygrond when the police came to protect the people –

because we were at the police station when the news came through. And then we came through with the police van, and we were actively involved as a group.

Again we see that the police were active in protecting people. Of additional importance, the fact that the community members (from a women's group) came along with the police signalled that non-South Africans had the protection of both police and community.

All these localized activities arguably broke the isolation and prevented the violence from spreading into Vrygrond. The actions of and in the community, involving:
- the early warning,
- the intervention of the 'mamas' and
- the localized activities of community members and faith based groups could not prevent the violence, but contributed to the prevention of the worst excesses of violence to non-South Africans in Vrygrond

Towards lessons for community action

These activities sketch the contours of possible community action that might be formalized, or at least kept for future use if similar situations should arise again.

1) Promote democratic local dynamics with a variety of organizations that are allowed to disagree:

The lack of uniform structures of community authority or electoral structures might be considered a problem in some instances but it is arguable that the lack to some extent protected Vrygrond from a 'leadership' endorsing and supporting the violence, as it happened in Alexandria and elsewhere. There is a fine line between lack of formalized community unity and a 'community dictatorship'. There is a need for constant reflection and organizational innovation to keep democratic spaces open in which dissent is possible.

2) Enhancing community and organizational preparedness:

Clearly it is not possible to always have early warning of violence. Few people realized on the eve of May 11, 2008 what was in store for the country. However, early warning is about community preparedness, i.e., the ability to react to a crisis in a consistent and effective manner, with a previously designated plan. This includes having contacts across nationality and language groups. These networks will often emerge out of everyday concerns regarding

health (especially HIV/Aids), child care, faith based activities and survival safety nets. However, they need to be formalized in order to be activated in times of crisis.

3) Involving women

It is clear that some violence was prevented through the intervention of women with long ties in the community, i.e., Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking women. The position of these women is often ambivalent, as they might also be the mothers, sisters and wives of the perpetrating men. However, it is evident that any strategy to prevent violence in Vrygrond should actively seek the participation of these women who can access, and to some extent control, the violent male networks in the area; be it mobs, gangs or drug dealers. In fact, it was a CHN strategy, from the beginning of its involvement in Vrygrond, to develop leadership groups for women in the community, for the specific purpose of mitigating violence.

4) Documenting activities – developing a 'tool kit'

Many of the activities in which people engaged were the result of spontaneous, unscripted initiatives, which could easily be forgotten if not recorded in some way. Therefore, there is a need to record practices that might abate violence in the future. Feeding programmes and prayer meetings are good examples of replicable activities that proved most effective in preventing the violence. It is important that there will be documentation of practices that have proven effective in times of danger.

5) Continuously coordinate the activities of faith based organizations:

Faith based organizations are among the most important organizational forms that draw in non-South Africans and allow for cross-group communication. The existing churches must always work to draw in new churches and other denominations. This might happen through a minister's fraternal.

6) Nourishing relationships to the police

Ironically, the police seem to be the most trusted government agency. In the context of the xenophobic violence, they also seemed to have responded properly. However, there is a need for ongoing relationships with the police so that community members and police might act in unison against violent perpetrators and mobs.

The Community Healing Network as a model

Many of the activities described above were initiated or carried out by members of the Community Healing Network. At the time of the violence, the network was still in its infancy, and members of the network often acted in the capacity of other organizational identities like churches, crèches or kinder-gardens and women's groups. In a statement made one year after the violence, one South African member of the network told how she had been drawn into its activities. The non-South Africans that lived on her property were threatened by the mob that wanted to burn the houses. Their lives – and possibly the woman's life – had been saved by a senior member of the network who intervened: "That is when I knew that this Community Healing Network was a good thing". In this last section, we will, in a reflective manner, consider the network in relation to the violence: how is the network an appropriate body to prevent violence and what challenges does it face in attempting to achieve this goal? In doing so, we want to point to challenges towards the future.

The Community Healing Network (CHN) was formed in 2006 as a network of specialist organizations, working within the fields of violence prevention, rehabilitation, advocacy and justice.[xxvii] The aim was:

- to address the legacy of structural violence,
- to enhance social cohesion and justice as a necessary step towards, and
- to create an enabling environment within which a strong and vibrant community can flourish

In the discussions that led to the formation of the network, it was felt that, to address the legacy of the apartheid regime only through socio-economic projects or the electoral process was insufficient. In this analysis, South Africa is a multi-wounded country, as manifested by the multiple divisions and conflicts across groups (be they racial, ethnic, gender, generational or class), as well as the poverty and the violence previously mentioned in this report. The CHN founders were particularly concerned about drug abuse, crime and violence as indicators of the wounds that needed healing.

The founders hoped to create a new network that might draw upon the individual competencies of established organizations in civil society, universities and specialist centres.

The three main pillars of CHN work were defined as research, partnerships and advocacy. CHN is committed to using research:

- to increase and enhance social discourse around community health, wellbeing, and human security;
- to develop best practice guidelines for community intervention;
- to design intervention strategies that will maximize positive community outcomes;
- to ensure that ethical conduct of that research is cognizant of the context of a history and legacy of colonialism, racism, trauma and violence and finally
- to engage the community in an ethical way, ensuring maximum empowerment and minimum exploitation, and mutual participation in joint actions and research endeavours
- Research partnerships create unified voices and affirm and strengthen social cohesion through:
  - collaboration on specific interventions and
  - documentation of best practices

The founders of CHN knew that the abstract ideals had to be grounded in a community in order to take concrete form. The criteria for choosing a community or several communities were as follows:

- the area had to reflect the violent history of the country in terms of both inter-personal and structural violence;
- it had to feature a combination of informal and formal housing as proxy indicators for class, permanence and integration;
- it had to be multi-racial, that is, it had to reflect the ongoing and transitory migration patterns of the city, and
- it had to have a history of intra-institutional conflicts.

Vrygrond fulfilled all these criteria and became the first project site. It was the ambition to ground the activities in the local context through recruiting community members as community volunteers on equal footing with the specialist organizations in the network.

To mediate between communities and the network, the CHN model depended on a small staff who were both academically sound and armed with years of community experience. The co-ordinators were all at masters and doctorate levels but were prepared to work for

minimum wages (equivalent to skilled workers). This made the staffing difficult and always challenging.

As a first CHN project, it was explored what research had already been carried out in Vrygrond. Several actors, especially organizations like the Treatment Action Committee (TAC) and various political parties, had carried out research in Vrygrond, but many members of the network felt that the results had not been returned to improve the lives of community members. The research project, carried out in 2008 as a series of focus groups and a small survey, explored the kinds of research that had been carried out in Vrygrond in the previous years. The research found that although much research had been conducted, residents did not feel that the benefits of it had reached them. Only one important research initiative had been organized by members of the community. It had the express purpose of mobilizing the City of Cape Town to provide toilets and housing in the area. This latter project provided greater justification for CHN's commitment to locally-organised and collective research, as an important way of consolidating expertise within communities as well as for generating data and skills that can be mobilized for democratic action.

One of the most important findings from this research on social solidarity and survival in Vrygrond was that loosely configured, local social networks provide the greatest degree of support and assistance to people living in conditions of poverty. This suggested an organizational strategy that favoured decentralized networks of alliances and affiliations. Similarly, research that bypasses local social networks by relying heavily on the outside expert to conduct research, misses a crucial opportunity to develop local critical and research skills, to strengthen relationships between community members by encouraging reflection and dialogue between local researchers and between them and interviewees, and to generate layers of important data. In other words, research training and implementation can itself be used to develop networks of solidarity as it also generates textured data.[xxviii]

Between 2006 and 2007, the CHN was partly funded by the provincial department of social development, but by 2008, funding stopped and the network went into an organizational lull. In 2009, RCT decided to fund the study project on which this report is based. This was carried out as a collaborative project with the aims of:

- making a community profile with a particular focus on the xenophobic violence and the resultant community action and
- strengthening the network through a concrete, community grounded project to enable renewed community action, reflection and advocacy

In this way, the present study project was formulated along the lines of the Community Healing Network model. It is still too early to finally conclude on the second part of the project aim. However, reflections on the process of the research are illustrative of some of the challenges that face this kind of community-based activism and research.

The one part of the network, located in the specialist organizations and the universities of the Western Cape, remained relatively stable throughout the period, but there were great changes within the community volunteers. When the present project began, most of the original community members of the network were engaged in other activities, and it was necessary to recruit a new batch of people from the community to be part of the project. This happened through an elaborate process of selection and consultations with both the community and the older members of the network who were no longer available to carry out the actual work. At the methodology training workshop, that preceded the data collection, many more non-South Africans than Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers were represented, although the latter constitute the majority of the population in Vrygrond. This bias was tentatively solved by recruiting more Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers. If the project was perceived to be for non-South Africans only, it would increase already substantial tensions in the community between South African nationals (especially Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers) and non-South Africans. This perception would seriously endanger the legitimacy of the project and its aim to stimulate cross-national dialogue. It might also endanger the lives of the data collectors as they would have to work in areas dominated by strangers and antagonists.

Because of the hard work done by the coordinators of the study project, conflicts were resolved, and the study project and data collection could proceed (see Methods section above). Despite logistical problems, difficulties with communication among coordinators and data collectors, issues of payment for the work, time pressure and serious safety concerns[xxix] (which haunt all community based research projects) the data collection went well and relevant data was obtained. During the process, people from different language groups

interacted and learned to respect each other. Discussions about and documentation of the process were constant.

After the project had ended, many of those who had participated went off to other jobs or activities. Some moved back to their country or province of origin. Others went to study and still others managed to find work. This speaks to the transient nature of life in Vrygrond, which is characterized by the constant movement of people who are seeking new avenues for survival.

Challenges

From this brief introduction, we can identify a number of challenges that may help us to understand the role that the Community Healing Network has had, and perhaps take in building peace in Vrygrond.

1. Transient lives:

Although the specialist part of the network, including universities and organizations, has remained relatively stable, the community based membership has been ever changing. In this way, the network has had to reinvent itself every time a new project or activity is to be undertaken. New members must be oriented about the community and the network. Hence, little stability has been possible except for a few members and the coordinator. The challenges remain to create an institutional memory that enables continuous activity, so as to not "reinvent the wheel" over and over again.

2. Survival strategies:

Much of the transiency emanates from the need to survive on the margins of society and the city. People are making decisions based not only on commitment but also on survival. To the extent that survival wins out, this is not an indication of moral shortcomings or lack in commitment. Rather, the challenge is never to condemn but to try to unite the need for survival with a commitment to the goals of the CHN. Sometimes this requires a consideration of what financial support justifies commitment.

3. Community conflicts

Conflicts are central to life in places like Vrygrond and organizational or network life will express these conflicts in various ways, especially in a loose network such as CHN. In the project, as in the community, one important conflict was between those who are more integrated and have a greater claim to the city space (Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers) and the newcomers (often non-South Africans). The challenge is not to ignore this conflict or explain it away as (for example) prejudice. It must be tackled head on in order to create a space where the conversation between groups is possible, even if it is uncomfortable and challenges ideas of right and wrong, victims and perpetrators. For example, not only do South Africans harbour very negative perceptions of the refugees, but there are negative stereotypes between Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers.

4. Leadership:

A network like CHN depends on a core of members that are willing to and capable of undertaking leadership roles. However, because of the transient nature of the network and the community, people who are trained through the network as leaders will typically find greener pastures elsewhere and move out. This is inevitable, but it is a challenge that demands a constant recruitment and training of potential community leaders. CHN shares this challenge with the rest of the community based organizations in South Africa.

5. Between a network and an organization:

CHN has opted to form a network rather than engaging in organizational building. This seems to be a good decision, given the resources needed to form an organization in terms of logistics and personnel. Whereas a network can exist without a fixed institutional form, an organization cannot. Furthermore, the network model also expresses the transient life of the community. However, there is a fine line between organizational fixity and network fluidity. Because the network needs to be reinvented every time, it is fragile, and the possibility that it might not re-emerge is a constant danger. The challenge in maintaining a network is that it demands someone who can function as the leader and institutional memory to maintain continuity between projects and activities. This could be either a coordinator or a board.

Findings: CHN and the xenophobic violence

In this final section, we will compare the lessons generated by the analysis of the community action in response to the xenophobic violence with the brief analysis of the challenges which are faced by the Community Healing Network. The purpose is to assess how the CHN can prevent the form of violence that took place in South Africa in May 2008. We will assess the individual challenges that CHN faces in order to generate these lessons.

1. Promoting democratic local dynamics with a variety of organizations that are allowed to disagree:

The CHN model is based on the understanding that only through the promotion of reflective and democratic spaces is it possible to prevent violence and provide opportunities for healing. In this way, the CHN model is imminently suited to provide the necessary spaces for healing and prevention. As a network, the CHN model stresses the need to cultivate a multiplicity of voices across group affiliations without becoming the one and only voice representing the community. As argued by the IOM report (IOM 2009), it is potentially dangerous for one organization to monopolise discussions. In this regard also, the CHN provides an adequate model for democratic community life because it stresses the need for a broad variety of people to voice their concerns. There are, of course, a number of challenges for this potential to be realized, which are explored below.

2. Enhancing organizational preparedness:

One of the most important challenges is in the field of organizational preparedness. Because the CHN in Vrygrond (as opposed to the specialised university and NGO-based member agencies) is a loosely affiliated network, that needs to be reinvented on a project- to-project basis, organizational preparedness is a constant concern. The question is whether the CHN must become stronger and more formalized on the ground and how such organization building must take place. One concern is funding. The most likely source of funding is a state agency, but few funding agencies, whether inside or outside the state, are willing to support endeavours that are not based upon socio-economic projects. Nonetheless, in order to provide the space for healing and prevention, and to be the institutional memory of the community, the CHN needs to engage in funding activities, possibly for minor advocacy projects that target the schools, the police, the state or community organizations. This report might provide some of the material for such advocacy endeavours.

3.Involving women – and men

It is clear from the research that women, especially Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers, were of extreme importance in relation to preventing some of the worst excesses of the May 2008 violence. The CHN has focused on women in much of its work, in line with the lesson of including women even more in the prevention of violence.

There are two issues of stake here:

- The first one is about language and belonging. In the research project, it was difficult to involve and mobilize Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers, however, if this is not addressed, the projects and activities will often be interpreted as "pro-foreigner". This would be detrimental to the efforts of involving the 'mamas'. Therefore, the network must have balanced recruitment, or the CHN will become part of the sectarian problem that it has vowed to combat.

- The second issue relates to gender. Although it seems to be correct to focus on women as agents of change, this might further alienate men and contribute to what some scholars (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000) have called the crisis of masculinity, in which men increasingly respond violently to maintain their compromised sense of male authority (Sideris 2007; Buur 2005). One option might be to consciously involve men through their female peers and families.

CHN has the potential to address both the issue of belonging and the issue of gender through creative initiatives that challenge the assumptions about gender and belonging.

4.Documenting activities – developing a 'tool kit'

CHN will perhaps become the memory of the community, and its historian. It is locally based with a strong link to resourceful institutions in and around the city. It has the potential to collect information and reflect on what happens locally. However, some mechanisms of documentation must be established and maintained so that the local solutions that emerge to prevent violence and create healing spaces are captured and discussed. This process will maintain a locally based but transferable tool kit for dealing with violence, which might serve to inspire other organizations and networks around the world. If the issues of institutional

permanence are solved, CHN potentially occupies a good position to create such a tool kit because it organises specialist institutions along with community members.

5. Nourishing relationships to the state

State presence in Vrygrond is shrouded in conflict. It is clear from this report, that Vrygrond is under-prioritized in relation to the security and socio-economic needs that exist. The inhabitants of Vrygrond remain invisible to the state, whose statistics consistently under-estimate the needs in terms of policing and social services. This could be corrected if there were better ties with the state. However, the invisibility of Vrygrond and its inhabitants is also by preference, as it has been demonstrated by much research on migration in general (e.g. Hornberger 2008). South African residents of Vrygrond also have an interest in remaining relatively invisible because many livelihood strategies straddle the boundary between the informal and the formal, the illicit and the licit (Bähre 2007; Jensen 2008). However, in order for the community to obtain services, protection and security, the state needs to be involved, especially the police. Again, the CHN model of linking communities with specialists and the university is valuable. The specialist and university based part of the network could help forge strategic links with parts of the state apparatus, especially strategic people within the police, which might both assist and benefit from engagement with community members to generate appropriate solutions and prevent future outbreaks of violence.

In short, the above comments illustrate that the Community Healing Network and its model provides a viable and constructive element in a community-based healing and prevention model. However, there are a number of things that need to be addressed, especially issues around formalization and funding, relationship to the state and relationship to important groups within the community.

Chapter 6: Findings and lessons learnt

This research project had the following objectives with regard to the xenophobic violence of May 2008:

- To understand which levels and forms of violence existed prior to and after the xenophobic violence.
- To learn how, and to what extent, Vrygrond was affected by the violence.
- To document what actions were taken by the community in Vrygrond in relation to violence?
- To see how the violence and the community's responses fulfilled the intentions of the CHN
- To reflect on lessons learnt for future reference and use.

Summary of findings

After introducing the study project and its methodologies, the report analyzed the result of a large, randomized survey on:

- the socio-economic and demographic profile of Vrygrond;
- issues of social capital and trust;
- the perceptions and experiences with crime and violence; and
- existing community conflicts

Out of this analysis emerges the image of a deeply divided, poor and violent community with few state resources, minimal trust in the state or one's neighbours, and endemic inter-group

conflicts which are fed by highly derogatory stereotypes on all sides. In many ways, Vrygrond should have experienced xenophobic violence in May 2008.

In the next chapter we analyzed the results regarding the xenophobic attacks and found that the incidence of violence did not increase in Vrygrond during May 2008. In fact, among 517 respondents, no one had been the direct victims of violence during that time. This was not to state that the violence did not have an effect or that no one was affected. In the qualitative analysis we explored a number of narratives of violent events. We developed a distinction between primary, secondary and tertiary victimization. In our survey, primary victims of the violence provided a measure of the quantitative levels of violence in the general population. Secondary victimization included those who directly knew people that were affected. This was a much higher number, equalling 13% among the general population and 29% among non-South Africans. Finally, tertiary victimization included all of those that felt endangered by the violence because of who they were. Drawing on secondary literature and our own data, we concluded that the risk factors were associated with local dynamics around leadership, legitimacy of violence, the role of NGOs and community based organizations and gender dimensions. While not all of these local dynamics were present in Vrygrond, local dynamics in general explained why the violence in Vrygrond was relatively low.

In the last analytical chapter, we explored, firstly, how local dynamics and local activism played itself out in the context of the xenophobic violence. We identified a number of community structures, practices and activities that seemed to have protected Vrygrond against the worst excesses of the violence: a lack of a unified community authority that legitimised violence elsewhere, a multiplicity of institutional and individual actors, early warning, interventions of important female community members, activities like feeding programmes and prayer meetings that broke the isolation of non-South Africans, and a constructive relationship to the police, who acted according to their prerogative to protect. Perhaps the most important conclusion from the analysis is that individuals demonstrated enormous courage when they risked standing against the xenophobic violence that had enveloped the country. Despite the fact that Vrygrond is a highly divided community, many people acted according to a basic sense of humanity or basic convictions that would dispel the notion that "all South Africans are evil" (as one respondent reflected after the violence).

In the second half of the chapter we compared the lessons that could be made regarding preventative community activism with the model and history of the Community Healing Network. We found that in many ways, CHN is an appropriate model of community healing and prevention of violence. It creates a democratic opportunity for engagement across intrinsic affiliations. Because it includes both specialists from NGO's and universities and community members, it may serve as the "honest broker" between the state and the community in other contexts. However, CHN is faced with a number of challenges: lack of institutional permanence and memory, lop-sided representation, constant demands for survival needs among the community members, and a historically based antagonistic relationship to the state apparatus. However, if the challenges are faced, there seem to be advantages in developing the model and putting it into practice in Vrygrond.

Lessons learnt

The following list of lessons emerged out of the report. The lessons are general in nature. It is not the aim or the ambition of the authors to come up with concrete suggestions. We aim to inform discussions inside the community and the network to be fleshed out and made into concrete local activities.

In relation to government:

1. Government agencies in Vrygrond

Based on the conclusions of the report's statistical analysis of socio-economic and demographic profile in Vrygrond, it is clear that there are a larger population, a greater lack of resources, and more social and political problems than other sources of socio-economic information indicate. Vrygrond is in a perpetual transformation, but since 2006, there has been a huge influx of people

2. Police presence in the community

Currently, Vrygrond is served by a police station located in largely white, middleclass Muizenberg several kilometres away. However, the sheer number of residents in Vrygrond suggests that a more direct presence in Vrygrond is necessary. The underreporting of crime and the violence only accentuate the necessity of another kind of police presence. Finally,

our qualitative data indicates that there are a number of gangs in Vrygrond. This is yet another reason for the need to rethink policing priorities in Vrygrond.

3. The schools and the divisions inside the community, notably between South Africans and non-South Africans, but also between other groups.

There are several fault-lines of potential friction within Vrygrond. It is possible, that schools play a central role in dispelling some of the derogatory stereotypes that are prevalent on all sides by teaching about the history of Vrygrond, focusing on its development as a place of transience and constant movement where different groups have made their lives and struggle to survive. One possible idea is that the schools might establish a historical society, in which civil society groups like CHN could be involved in a partnership (see below). Furthermore, an ongoing education programme for both children and parents could make the school a centre for constructive dialogue and social cohesion.

In relation to community activism in Vrygrond:

4. Strategic importance of Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking women

The research shows the positive potential in establishing links with Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking women, who – because of their intimate relationships with the young men in gangs and other male peer groups in the community – exercise a certain measure of control toward the moderation of violence. Their number and long-time presence in the community make them a potentially strategic ally. At the same time, a balance must be maintained to avoid alienating these men, since this often leads to increased levels of violence. One option is to engage men in roles that conform to masculine ideals about protection within projects with strong human rights ideals. Although the model of street committees has often been associated with violence, it could serve also as a force for good in the community. Collaboration needs to be further developed with both men and women.

5. Derogatory stereotypes and perceptions

The research shows that derogatory stereotypes flourish among all groups. Projects like the ones undertaken by CHN illustrate that understanding can be created if people engage in common projects, such as reflection and research to highlight peoples' commonalities instead of their differences. These projects might be generated from the outside but it would

be better if they were the result of local initiative. This report also suggests possible areas of projects that might be undertaken.

6. Local history

The research shows that Vrygrond is in a perpetual state of change and the lived memory often short. This might lead to conflicts as we have seen in this report. One possible avenue to explore is make a local initiative, in partnership with the library or the education department, towards building a local history society. This might help increase the understanding that Vrygrond's residents share more than what divides them in terms of the structural challenges influencing their lives. This could be organized through the library and with the use of students from the high school to continuously collect information, such as interviews with older residents. Links to the history department at UCT's oral history project could be made.

7. Social capital and cross-lingual communication

From the survey it is clear that there is a serious lack of social capital and an absence of relations across boundaries. There are clear differences between different groups. Afrikaans speakers generally have more intimate ties, followed by Xhosa speakers, than non-South Africans. This is not surprising, but it also renders non-South African vulnerable. Forums, fairs or parties that deliberately aim to bring together people from across different groups could be initiated to complement project, school and crèche based attempts to bring people together across group boundaries.

8. Documentation of community activism

Because of the transient nature of Vrygrond, the institutional memory is short. This increases the structural invisibility of life in Vrygrond, as well as rendering it likely that the same conflicts will arise again and again. These conflicts between community workers and local institutions perpetuate the divisions in the community. Documentation enables discussion and reflection about conflicts, and can lead to greater cohesion between activists. Such documentation must be owned by organizations and could be located at the library.

9. Local safety initiatives and respect of human rights

Violence and crime are rife in Vrygrond, and there are pervasive fears about personal safety and property loss across all groups, especially among non-South Africans. Local policing initiatives have a long and tormented history in South Africa. Many of them have turned into vigilante activity and brutally enforced local sovereignty and authority (Buur 2005; Jensen 2005; IOM 2009). However, the fact remains that the police cannot tackle crime and violence alone; and it might be necessary to establish local forms of security provision in collaboration with the official police force, which are accountable to courts and work according to human rights. There are success stories around South Africa but this remains one of the most contentious issues, which needs to be approached with absolute caution.

10. Outside perceptions and advocacy

The image of Vrygrond to outsiders is bad, and the report confirms this to a large extent. However, there are stories to tell about great heroism, struggles to survive with integrity and an amazing diversity of culture. Through its outside links, the CHN could propagate contacts to the media that would facilitate the telling of more favourable stories, which could facilitate a different approach to Vrygrond from the state, plus, it could help to increase the sense of dignity inside the community.

11. Income generation and trade

Throughout the research it has been apparent that local antagonisms are fed by the perception that foreigners – especially Somali traders – are taking over commercial activity inside Vrygrond and around Cape Town. This has led to several deaths over the years. However, trade inside Vrygrond is also threatened by malls and supermarkets that take over much of the everyday trade. This is less obvious and does not lend itself as readily to scapegoating as the defenceless Somali traders. A potential field of collaboration could however be to think about co-operatives focussing on specific goods like dairy products, vegetables and similar necessities needed by the community.

In relation to Community Healing Network

12. Informal vs. formal organization

The study project illustrates that, although there are great potentials in the CHN model, there are also challenges, particularly around the vulnerability of a network that needs to reinvent itself every time a new crisis emerges, or there has been a period without funding. Further discussions must clarify the relationship to donors, particularly the state.

13. Project focus vs. policy focus

As the research indicates, the functioning of the network is best when there are specific and concrete areas of work. One avenue to pursue is to seek funding for smaller projects that can keep the network alive in the community where concerns about survival are ever present. Projects might follow some of the above lines of thought, and their purpose is to keep the wheels of the network spinning on a continuous basis. While these smaller projects run and fuel the network, larger discussions about social cohesion, integration, violence prevention and healing will have room to continue. There is a dilemma about the relationship between the project, donor requirements, deadlines, and strategic discussions. However, without projects the network would be vulnerable.

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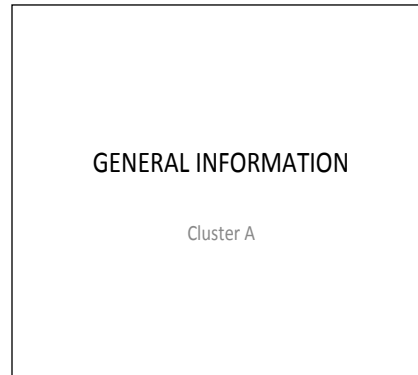
Appendix 1: PowerPoint Presentation

By Peter Polatin, RCT, in Vrygrond in October 2009. Presentation was a presentation of the first results and part of a data analysis workshop with community participation.
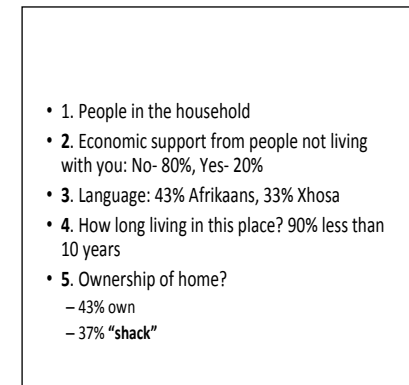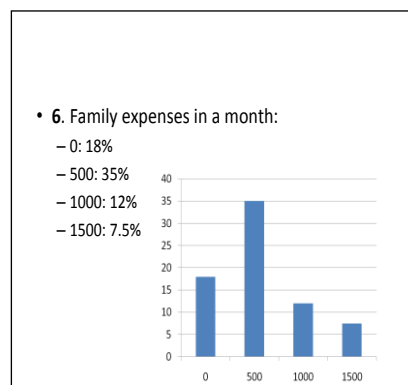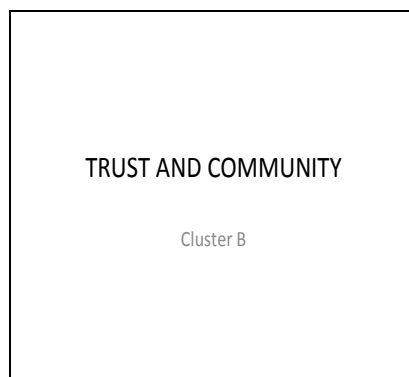
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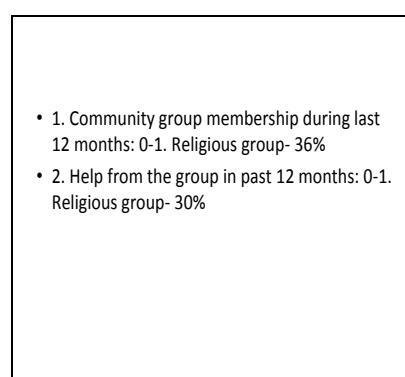

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

- **3**. Assistance with information, or emotional or financial support from group in past 12 months: 0-1
  – Family- 25%
  – Neighbor- 15%
  – Friend (not neighbor)- 16%
  – Religious leader- 19%
  – Politician- 1%
  – Government official/civil servant- 3%
  – Charity/NGO- 2%
  – Other- 9%

8.

- **4**. Join together with other community members to solve a problem (in past 12 months): no- 77%, yes- 21%
- **5**. Spoken with local authority or gov. org. about community problem: no- 79%, yes- 21%

9.

- **6.** Can most people in the community be trusted: No- 68%, Yes- 32%
- **7.** Do most people in the community get along with each other: No-63%, Yes- 37%
- **8**. Do you feel that you are part of this community: No-18%, Yes- 82%
- **9.** Do you think that most people in the community would take advantage of you if they had a chance: No- 16%, Yes- 84%

10.

I cope with stress

- No difficulty- 41%
- Little difficulty- 19%
- Some difficulty- 14%
- Much difficulty- 8%
- Absolute difficulty- 11%
- NA- 13%

11.

I participate in and maintain my family relations

- No difficulty- 49%
- Little difficulty- 17%
- Some difficulty- 15%
- Much difficulty- 5%
- Absolute difficulty- 8%
- NA- 13%

12.

I participate in work or education

- No difficulty- 48%
- Little difficulty- 16%
- Some difficulty- 15%
- Much difficulty- 5%
- Absolute difficulty- 9%
- NA- 13%

84

13.

I participate in community, social, and political life outside the family

- No difficulty- 43%
- Little difficulty- 14%
- Some difficulty- 11%
- Much difficulty- 5%
- Absolute difficulty- 8%
- NA- 13%

- none
- little
- some
- much
- absolute
- NA

14.

EXPERIENCES WITH VIOLENCE

Cluster C

15.

- **1**. Do neighbors have firearms: Yes-3%, No- 59%
- **2**. Do household members have firearms: Yes- 1%, No- 97%
- **3**. In comparison with other problems in your community, violence is:
  - Main problem- 82%
  - Secondary problem- 12%
  - Less important problem- 5%

16.

- **4**. Do you think there is more violence this year than last year: Yes- 36%, No- 18%, Same- 39%
- **5.** How do you rate the national government's efforts to increase public security:
  - Very good- 9%
  - Good- 18%
  - Normal- 34%
  - Bad- 25%
  - Very bad- 13%
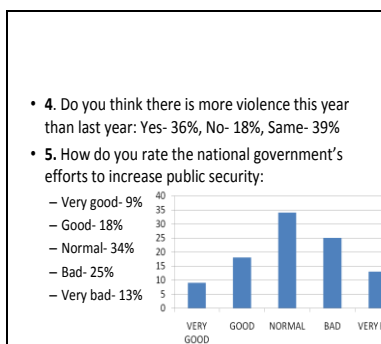
17.

7. What kind of criminal activity is most frequent in your community

- Housebreaking
- Robbery
- Domestic violence

18.

- **6**. Did the municipality take action to solve the problem of violence:
  - Very good- 6%
  - No- 61%
  - Not their role- 10%
  - NA- 22%

19.

8. What causes violence in your community

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Unemployment
- poverty

20.

Personal experience of violence

- **9.** Did anyone in your household experience violence in the past 2 years: Yes- 44%
- **10.** Were you or anyone you know affected by the events of May, 2008: Yes- 12%

21.

SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE

22.

- 1. Motivation: alcohol, drugs, racism, jealousy, poverty
- 2. Municipality where the incident occurred: mostly Muisenberg
- 3.
  – Your phase- 18% (41%)
  – Vrygrond- 11% (25%)
  – Elsewhere- 4% (9%)

23.

- 4. Location: home- 17% (37%), work place- 3% (9%), street or road- 7% (), bus stop- 2% ()
- 5. Day of the week:
  – Mon.- 2%
  – Tues.- 3.5%
  – Wed.- 3%
  – Thurs.- 2%
  – **Fri.- 10%**
  – **Sat.- 9.5%**
  – Sun.- 5%

24.

- 6. Time of day:
  – Morning- 7%
  – Afternoon- 8.5%
  – Night- 11%
  – Dawn- 3.5%

25.

- **7.** Did you see and/or recognize the attacker(s): Yes-49%, No- 51%
- 8. Did you know the attacker(s):
  – All of them- 3% (7%)
  – Some of them- 5% (11%)
  – No- 9% (20%)

26.

- 9. Who and how many attacked you:
  – 2-4 men- 61%
  – 1 woman- 33%
- 10. Age of attackers:
  – Adolescents – 5% (11%)
  – Adults- 11% (25%)
- 11. Clothing of attacker(s):
  – Gang-like- 2%
  – Common- 14%

27.

12. Were the attacker(s) intoxicated: Yes- 3.5% (8%), No- 7% (16%)

13. Affiliation of attacker(s): gang- 6%(14%), common criminal- 8% (18%)

14. Where did the attacker(s) come from: South Africa- 16% (36%)

28.

- 15. Have you seen the attacker(s) since: Yes- 7% (16%), No- 9% (20%)
- 16. Where do your attacker(s) live:
  – In your neighborhood- 8% (18%)
  – From another neighborhood- 5% (11%)

29.

Damage from the Attack

- 17. Physical injuries: Yes- 11% (25%), No- 20% (48%)

- 18. Kinds of injuries:
  – Bullet wound- 1%
  – Cuts- 4%
  – Beating- 7%
  – Rape- 1%

- 19. Injuries caused by:
  – Firearm- 1%
  – Sharp weapon- 5%
  – Strength- 8%

30.

20. Other effects of the violent episode:
- Material damage- 21%
- Emotional strain- 25%
- Damage to family and social relations- 5%
21. Impact of this damage on your life:
- very much- 12%
- quite a lot- 14%
- some- 2%
- little- 3%
- very little- 1%

31.

- 22. Did you have to stop school or work after the incident: Yes- 7%, No- 23%
- 23. How long did you stay out: 35%- 2-3 days
- 24. How much income did you lose: > 400ZR
- 25. Who do you think should repair the damage: ?

32.

Assistance

- 26. Were the police present: Yes- 3%, No- 28%
- 27. Did the police assist you: Yes- 2%, No- 2%
- 28. Was there any other security service nearby- Yes- 2%, No- 25%
- 29. If so, what kind of security: neighbor or community organization- 1%
- 30. Did you get their assistance: Yes- 1%

33.

Health care

- 31. Did you receive any health care: Yes- 8% (18%), No- 22% (50%)
- 32. From where:
  – Health centre- 1% (5%)
  – Public hospital ER- 6% (33%)
  – Private hospital ER- 1% (5%)
  – Private clinic- 1% (5%)
  – Fire fighters- <1%

34.

Justice

- 33. Did you complain: Yes- 15% (34%), No- 15% (34%)
- 34. Where did you turn:
  – Police- 9%
  – Neighbors- 4%
  – Community organization- 2.5%
- 35. Did the organization follow up your complaint: Yes- 10%, No- 6%
- 36. What organization did follow up:
  – Police- 6%
  – Neighbors- 3%
  – Community organization-2.5%

35.

37. Why did you not complain or denounce the incident

?

36.

38. Do you know of any institution that could be helpful in assisting you to repair the losses/injuries you suffered

. NO

Appendix 2: The survey instrument

Interview conducted by:_____

From Team:_____

On date: _____

Household number: _____

PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE

Research about incidence of common acts of violence

All questions are in normal letters, whereas the comments to you must remember or the title of the section are written with bold letters.

Introduction

Please provide us with information about your household in relation to acts of violence in your phase.

It will only take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

The purpose of the research is to understand violence in the community and how it affects people's lives. We go around to different people in the community. We have chosen your house through a selection process that is random by using a map.

First you must find out how many households are on the property. Ask who on the property eat meals together on almost all days. If a property has more household you must choose between them. Use for instance a dice to draw lots or let your team mate think of a number that matches the number of households on the property. Decide what number each household has and then ask your team mate for the number. Choose the household that corresponds to the number.

Note here how many there are, chose one randomly and make a small drawing of the plot, indicating which house you chose.

A: ABOUT GENERAL INFORMATION

Socio-economical and demographic information of the household's inhabitants

General information of the household's current members.

1. Could you please help me with information of the people who stay in this household?

# of members	1.1 Relations	1.2 Age	1.3 Gender		1.5. Source of income*	1.6 How much money does each bring
			M	F		
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

*Remember that sources of income can be employment, self-employment and social grants – child support, disability, old age and veterans grants.

2. Do you receive economical support from people who currently are not living with you?

    1. Yes

    2. No

3. What is the first language:

    1. Afrikaans speaking

    2. English speaking

    3. Xhosa speaking

    4. French speaking

    5. Shona

6. Chechewaya

7. Other

4. How many years does your family live her in this place? _____

5. Is the house where the family lives:

1. Owned

2. Rented from a landlord

3. At the back of a RDP house, paying rent

4. Shack

5. Does not know/does not respond

6. About how much does your family spend in a month? _____

CLUSTER B: ABOUT TRUST AND COMMUNITY

1. In the last 12 months have you been an active member of any of the following types of groups in your community?

_ Work related/trade union

_ Community organisation

_ Women's group

_ Political group

_ Religious group

_ Credit/funeral group

_ Sports group

_ Other: specify

2. In the last 12 months, did you receive from the group any emotional help, economic help or assistance in helping you know or do things?

_ Work related/trade union

_ Community association/co-op

_ Women's group

_ Political group

_ Religious group

_ Credit/funeral group

_ Sports group

_ Other: specify

3. In the last 12 months, did any of the following groups assist you with information or emotional or financial help?

_ Family

_ Neighbours

_ Friends who are not neighbours

_ Community leaders

_ Religious leaders

_ Politicians

_ Government officials/civil service

_ Charitable organisations/NGO

_ Other: specify

4. In the last 12 months, have you joined together with other community members to address a problem or common issue? 0 = no, 1 = yes

5. In the last 12 months, have you talked with a local authority or governmental organisation about problems in this community? 0 = no, 1 = yes

6. In general, can the majority of people in this community be trusted? 0 = no, 1 = yes

7. Do the majority of people in this community generally get along with each other? 0 = no, 1 = yes

8. Do you feel as though you are really a part of this community? 0 = no, 1 = yes

9. Do you think that the majority of people in this community would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance? 1= no, 0 = yes

The next questions are sentences that the one you interview must finish when you have given him or her the options. The questions stand in the table that you will help the person to fill in.

	With no difficulty	With little difficulty	With some difficulty	With much difficulty	With absolute difficulty	Not specified	Not applicable
I cope with stress	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I participate in and maintain my family relations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I participate in work or education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I participate in community, social, and political life outside the family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

C: EXPERIENCES WITH VIOLENCE

1. Do some of your neighbours have firearms?

    1. Yes

    2. No

    3. Does not know/doers not answer

2. Do any of your household's members have firearms?

    1. Yes

    2. No

    3. Does not know/doers not answer

3. In comparison to other problems you or your family have, do you think violence in your community as being:

     1. Main problem

     2. Secondary problem

     3. Less important problem

4. Do you think that there is more violence this year than last year?

     1. Yes

     2. No

     3. Same

     4. Does not know/doers not answer

5. How do you rate the national government's efforts to increase public security?

     1. Very good

     2. Good

     3. Normal

     4. Bad

     5. Very bad

6. Did the municipality take action to solve the problem of violence?

     1. Very good

     2. No

     3. Not their role

     4. Does not know/doers not answer

7. Which kind of criminal (violent and non-violent) activity is more frequent in your community? (more than one answer is possible)

_____

_____

8. What do you think causes violence in your community? (more than one answer is possible)

_____

_____

9. Which events of violence did members of your household suffered in the last two years?

9.1 Family member	9.2 Type of event	9.3 When	9.4 Where (*)

(*) Where: 1. Inside Vrygrond, 2. Outside Vrygrond

10. Were you or any one you know of affected by the violence in May 2008?

_____

If the person you interview had no experiences with violence or crime in the last two years, you can end the interview. Remember to thank the person.

D: SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE INCIDENT OF VIOLENCE

For the next section you choose the last incident of the person you are interviewing. It does not have to be the last incídent in the family. It must be the person you speak to that experienced the problem. Please remember to tell the person you speak to that you understand it can be difficult and they can choose not to answer. They must also take their time.

MOTIVE

1. What do you think was the motive of the incident of violence against you? (More than one answer is possible)

_____

THE ATTACK

2. In which municipality did it happen?

_____

3. Did it happen in:

      Your phase_____

      Vrygrond_____

      Elsewhere_____

4. Where were you?

      1. Home

      2. Bus

      3. Other means of transport

      4. Working place

      5. School

      6. Commerce

      7. In a party, pub, illegal pub, soda stand

      8. In the street or road

      9. Bus stop

      10. Other (please name) _____

      11. Does not know/does not answer

5. What day of the week did it happen?

      1. Sunday

      2. Monday

      3. Tuesday

      4. Wednesday

      5. Thursday

      6. Friday

      7. Saturday

      8. Does not know/does not answer

6. What time did it happen?

      1. In the morning

      2. Noon

      3. Afternoon

      4. At night

      5. At dawn

      6. Does not know

7. Did you see your attacker or attackers – also if you did not recognise them? (If the answer is No, jump to question nr. 17).

      1. Yes

      2. No

8. Did you happen to know the attacker(s)?

      1. Yes, all of them

      2. Yes, some of them

      3. No

      4. Does not know/does not answer

9. Who and how many attacked you?:

      Number of men:_____

      Number of women:_____

Does not know/does not answer

10. Most of the attackers were:

    1. Children

    2. Adolescents

    3. Adults

    4. Elders

    5. Does not know/does not answer

11. What clothes were your attacker(s) wearing?

    1. Uniform

    2. Gang-like clothes

    3. Common clothes

    4. Other: (please name): _____

    5. Does not know/does not answer

12. Were your attackers intoxicated with any kind of substance?

    1. Yes

    2. No

    3. Does not know/does not answer

13. What affiliation do you suppose your attacker has?:

    1. Gang member

    2. Police/ military

    3. Common criminals

    4. Private Security

    5. Neighbours

    6. Family

    7. Other (please name) _____

    8. Does not know/does not answer

14. Where did the attackers come from?:

    1. South Africa

2. Other country

3. Does not know/does not answer

15. After the incident of violence, have you seen the attackers in places where you use to go?:

    1. Yes

    2. No

    3. Does not know/does not answer

16. Where do your attacker(s) live?

    1. In your neighbourhood, hamlet or community

    2. From another neighbourhood, hamlet or community

    3. Does not know/does not answer

DAMAGE

17. Did you suffer from physical injuries? (If the answer is NO, jump to question nr. 20)

    1. Yes

    2. No

    3. Does not know/does not answer

18. What kind of injury(ies) did they inflict upon you?

    1. Bullet wound

    2. Cuts

    3. Wounds from beatings

    4. Wounds from rape

    5. Other (please name) _____

19. Injuries were caused by: (more than one answer is possible)

    1. Firearm

    2. Sharp pointed weapon

    3. Physical strength

    4. Other object

20. Apart from your physical injuries, how did this incident of violence affect you? (more than one answer is possible)

    1. Material damages

    2. Emotional strains

    3. Damage to family and social relations

    4. Does not know/doers not answer

21. What impact did this damage have in your life?

    1. Very much

    2. Quite a lot

    3. Some

    4. little

    5. Very little

22. Did you have to stop working or studying because of the incident of violence? (if the answer is No jump to question nr. 26)

    1. Yes

    2. No

    3. Does not know/does not answer

23. How long did you stay away from your work or studies? (in days) _____

24. How much income did you lose during this period? _____

25. Who do you think should repair the damage you suffered?

_____

_____

ASSISTANCE

26. Was the Police present or nearby during the incident of violence? (If the answer is NO, jump to question nr. 28)
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Does not know/does not answer

27. Did you get assistance from them?
   1. Yes
   2. No

28. Did you observe there was any other kind of security service nearby the incident of violence? (If the answer is NO, jump to question nr. 31)
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Does not know/doers not answer

29. What kind of security service was it?:
   1. Private security
   2. Neighbour's committee or any community organization
   3. Gangs
   4. Drug dealer
   5. Other (please name) _____

30. Did you get their assistance?
   1. Yes
   2. No

31. Hours after the event did you receive any kind of health care? (If the answer is NO, jump to question nr. 33)
   1. Yes
   2. No

3. Does not know/does not answer

32. Where did you get health assistance from?: (More than one answer is possible)

    1. Health center

    2. Public hospital (emergency)

    3. Private hospital (emergency)

    4. Private clinic (private doctor)

    5. Fire fighters

    6. Traditional medicine: Inyanga, herbalist

    7. Other (please name)_____

    8. Does not know/does not answer

JUSTICE

33. Did you complain about the incident of violence? (In case the answer is NO, jump to question nr. 37)

    1. Yes

    2. No

    3. Does not know/does not answer

34. Where did you turn to?

    1. Police

    2. Neighbours

    3. Community organisation

    4. Gangs

    5. Drug dealer

    6. Neighbourhood watch

    7. Political structures

    8. Other (please name)_____

    9. Does not know/ Does not answer

35. Did this institution/organization follow up your complaint?

1. Yes

2. No

3. Does not know/does not answer

36. Which institution/organization did follow up or solve the incident of violence?

1. Police

2. Neighbours

3. Community organisation

4. Gangs

5. Drug dealer

6. Neighbourhood watch

7. Political structures

8. Other (please name)

9. Does not know/ does not answer

37. What is the reason you did not complain or denounce the incident of violence?

_____

38. Do you know of any institution that could be helpful in assisting you to repair the losses/injuries you suffered?

_____

This is all. Thank you very much for your time.

Field worker comment on the household.

What was your impression of the household? Describe the interview and the house in your own words.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Endnotes

[i] This survey has been conducted by RCT and its Guatemalan partner ODHAG under the supervision of RCT public health expert Jens Modvig, senior researcher Henrik Rønsbo and RCT student assistant Cecilie Dinesen. A similar survey has also been carried out in Manila by RCT and Balay Rehabilitation Centre.

[ii] The figure on length of stay in Vrygrond is a result of development processes and internal migration within the city

[iii] Numbers provided by the GIS department of the City of Cape Town.

[iv] Sources accessed 3 June, 2010:

capetown.gov.za/en/stats/Documents/City_of_Cape_Town_SES_Indicators_30102006142715_.pdf;

capetown.gov.za/en/stats/Documents/Ward_2006_SES_Indicators_711200612736_359.pdf

[v] Renters or "squatters", who may be living illegally and paying rent "under the table" if at all.

[vi] We used a short version of the adapted social capital tool (SASCAT). Possible score on the scale ranges between 0 and 31. The scale can be further subdivided into a scale representing cognitive factors (Question 4-9 in cluster B in the questionnaire) and a scale representing structural factors (Question 1-3 in cluster B in the questionnaire) respectively.

[vii] A relatively low score on the SASCAT is an indication of the levels of trust and sense of community that exists within a population. The highest mean score in the joined scale was those speaking English (5,6), followed by Afrikaans and Xhosa (5,3), "other" and French, Shona and Chichewa (3,9). In the structural scale the highest mean score was among those speaking English (2,9), followed by Afrikaans (2,4), Xhosa (2,3), French, Shona and Chichewa (1,8) and "other"(1,4). Those speaking Xhosa have highest mean score (3) in the cognitive scale, followed by Afrikaans (2,8), English (2,7), "other"(2,5) and French, Shona and Chichewa (2,1).

[viii] We used the WHO classification system of functioning, the ICF. The ICF categories that inspired the questions were D240, D760, D810, D850, D855 and D999.

[ix] http://www.gallup.com/poll/103147/perceptions-safety-decline-south-africa.aspx, accessed 3 June 2010.

[x] The nature of the violence experienced, though not described in detail, seems to be of quite severe character. E.g. assaults, abuse, killings etc

[xi]This goes back to the claustrophobic nature of life in Vrygrond. Nobody trusts one another, they attack each other and they know who they are. This is a hard case for any project that wants to promote peace and community healing.

[xii] Immigrants are defined as having French, Shona, Chichewa as their first language while the rest, those having either Afrikaans, Xhosa, English or other as their first language, are presented separately.

[xiii] For the purpose of this exercise, we excluded English speakers and others because these groups are not univocally either South Africans or non-South Africans.

[xiv] http://www.gallup.com/poll/103147/perceptions-safety-decline-south-africa.aspx, accessed 3 June 2010.

[xv] According to a list of xenophobic violence, compiled by IOM (2009), there has been an intensification of attacks after 2007.

[xvi] Hweshe, Francis (2008) "It won't happen here, say Cape foreigners" in Cape Argus, May 20, 2008. Accessed June 11, 2010 on www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=vn20080520113011533C655977

[xvii] de Vries, Lavern (2008) "Cape-based foreigners fear attacks" in Cape Argus, May 19, 2008. Accessed June 11, 2010 on www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=vn20080519114004686C233301

[xviii]Afrol (2008) "Xenophobic violence threatens Cape Town tourism", accessed on June 11, 2010 on http://www.afrol.com/articles/29041.

[xix] Mangxamba, Sivuyile (2006) "Somali's turn to HRC as murder toll soars", Cape Argus August 25, 2006. Accessesed June 11, 2010 on www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=vn20060825131506666C924904

[xx] Afrol (2008) "Xenophobic violence threatens Cape Town tourism", accessed June 11, 2010 on http://www.afrol.com/articles/29041.

[xxi] This question also enabled us to identify some of the victims of the violence in May 2008 that we analyze below.

[xxii] Chi square p-value <0,000.

[xxiii] The additional odds ratio (OR) estimate indicate that the French, Shona or Chichewa speaking population had an odds ratio of 3.2 for having experienced violence during May 2008 compared with those having Afrikaans as their main language. Furthermore, the Xhosa speaking part of the population had a lowered risk compared to those speaking Afrikaans (OR=0.75)[xxiii]. Both those having English or other as their main language has a slightly elevated OR of 1.2 compared to those with Afrikaans. These estimates could have been affected by the small number of individuals in the categories.

[xxiv] IRIN (2008) "SOUTH AFRICA: Eviction looms for Blue Waters camp residents". Accessed June 11, 2010 on http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=88728

[xxv] Human Rights Watch. (2008). Neighbours in Need: Zimbabweans Seeking Refuge in South Africa. Available on: http://www.hrw.org/en/ reports/2008/06/18/neighbors-need-0.

[xxvi] SAPS (2009) 'Murder in the RSA for April to March 2003/4 to 2008/9', Crime Information Management, SAPS. Accessed June 11, 2010 on http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestats/2009/categories/murder.pdf

[xxvii] The pioneering members were Mike Abrams (Direct Action Centre for Peace and Memory), Deon Snyman (The Restitution Foundation), Erica Jacobs (Medicine Sans Frontiers), Miriam Fredericks (Trauma Foundation), Ashraf Kajee (University of Stellenbosch), Liza De Vet (Change Moves), Happy Kwetana (Centre for Study of Violence and Reconciliation) and Anzelle Du Plessis (Social Capital Dept of Social Service).

[xxviii] These lessons from the previous research project also prompted the CHN to enter into partnership with RCT on a project using similar designs for community involvement. See also Buch *et al* (2008) that, from a RCT perspective, describe a similar approach.

[xxix] In post-data collection interviews with data collectors, they all tell of stories of extreme anxieties, dogs, being chased away, encountering people using drugs and other safety concerns. Still, most data collectors compared this with the generosity of other interviewees.