



STUDY

Hollow Victories and Little Pockets of Hope

The Challenges Facing Organisations Working with People
on the Move in South Africa

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Imprint

Publisher

Brot für die Welt
Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie
und Entwicklung e. V.
Caroline-Michaelis-Straße 1
10115 Berlin, Germany
Phone +49 30 65211 0
info@brot-fuer-die-welt.de
www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de

Authors Iriann Freemantle,
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Responsible according to German

Press Law Klaus Seitz

Photos Africa Media Online/laif (p. 16,
29), eyevineeyevine/laif (p. 26), FAB/
NL/CVI (p. 38, 40), Iriann Freemantle
(title), Luca Sola/contrasto/laif
(p. 13, 20), Felipe Trueba/REPORT
DIGITAL-REA/laif (p. 6, 23)

Layout János Theil

Print Druckerei J. Humburg GmbH,
Berlin

Art. No. 129 103 110

Donations

Brot für die Welt
Bank für Kirche und Diakonie
IBAN: DE10 1006 1006 0500 5005 00
BIC: GENODED1KDB

May 2020

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Preface

Migration to Europe constitutes only a small part of the overall movement of people from the African continent. Most people in Africa migrate within their own countries or sub-regions and within the continent, mostly unrecognized by the international public. For such inner-African migration, South Africa is one of the main destination countries.

Several local Bread for the World (Brot für die Welt) partner organisations have been working for many years with refugees, migrants and host communities in South Africa. As such, they are familiar with many of the daily struggles and challenges faced by migrants, and help to address them by assistance with legal advice, access to social services, counselling, social activities, working on trauma, or dealing with xenophobia. A number of other South African Bread for the World partner organisations that do not specifically work with migrants reported that people on the move were becoming increasingly central to their own work. This brought with it a number of new challenges, which at times could be overwhelming. It is from this feedback that the idea arose to bring together the different organisations to share and learn from one another and to strengthen cooperation on the issue of migration in South Africa. This was done at an intersectional workshop in mid-2019, which incorporated our partner organisations from South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as well as Bread for the World desk officers and a representative of Diakonie Deutschland, one of the main actors in providing social services in Germany. Lively discussions showed the relevance of the topic and highlighted the local social and political dynamics that shape and constrain the work of actors in the field of migration in South Africa.

Presenting this study, Bread for the World wishes to enable a deeper understanding of the topic of migration in the South African context, and to allow the readers to explore partners' approaches and challenges in their working environments, as well as to contribute to sharing of best practices and knowledge. Putting the findings into a bigger picture, some of the tendencies in South Africa follow the unfortunate international trend of an increasingly negative image of migration overall, a criminalisation of people on the move and an environment that more and more restricts access to rights and services for migrants. For example, while finalizing the editing of this study in the midst of the COVID 19 crisis, the news spark that the South African minister for small businesses declared all SPAZA shops (small local shops) to be closed which are not South African owned, staffed and managed in order to "protect the quality of the food". This not only

fuels xenophobia and exclusion based on nationality, but also impacts negatively on entire communities who rely on Spaza shops at a time when most people are suffering.

Furthermore, even though the contexts are still very specific and different, this study identifies some general parallels in the dynamics of migration in South Africa and Germany. Regarding the historical context, both countries have experienced state-anchored racist regimes during Apartheid and Nazism respectively. They have undergone fundamental state system overthrows in the late 1980ies and early 1990ies, and more recently, witness a rise in right-wing tendencies, populism and increasing hostility towards foreigners. Both countries play important roles in their respective regions (Southern African Development Community and European Union), and have established state welfare systems (grants for children and elderly, unemployment funds etc.). Therefore, the study also includes a comparative chapter reflecting on the situation in Germany to show key parallels and differences. Hence, it does not claim to provide a complete and in-depth picture of the situation.

As partner organisations and further interviewed actors in South Africa already navigate under difficult political and societal circumstances, the decision was taken to anonymize statements and quotes made by the interviewees, in order to protect their structures and work achievements. However, all original sources are known to the authors and have been cited with written consent of the respective civil society organisations. An overview of the participating organisations is provided on page 7. The study was conducted by two researchers from African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, who explicitly conducted their research together with Bread for the World partner organisations and further relevant actors based on well-founded ethical principles according to Wits University procedures.

The purpose of this study is twofold: Firstly, to provide South African organisations and partners with insights and potential strategies by their peers to work with people on the move. Secondly, it provides entry points and insights into potential South-North learning for various civil society and state actors working in Europe and specifically in Germany to tackle the integration of people on the move in this context.

UTE BARTELS
Head of the Southern Africa Desk
Bread for the World

Executive Summary

Based on a series of interviews with South African non-governmental organisations working with migrant populations – some of which are partners of Bread for the World – this report explores the contexts and experiences that the organisations face in their daily work.

The report also discusses how organisations make sense of and respond to the challenges they encounter. In a global political climate that is increasingly hostile towards people on the move, organisations who promote the rights of migrants or provide services do so under difficult and challenging conditions. Offering a lifeline to many migrants, such organisations often occupy a vital space that would otherwise be virtually vacuous. In addition to psychological counselling, legal representation or language classes for migrants, they also offer safe and welcoming spaces to talk, be listened to, seen, and to rest. In many cases, such organisations play a critical role in making the lives of people on the move in precarious circumstances a little easier. In many cases, the organisations play a critical role in the lives of people on the move in precarious circumstances.

From the accounts of all participating organisations emerges a dense description of the multiple layers of mutually reinforcing risks, vulnerabilities, forms of discrimination and violence associated with being a migrant in South Africa. Following an overview about the dynamics of migration and responses to it in South Africa, the report discusses the empirical findings in five key themes. Chapter 3 addresses the role of the state in the exclusion of migrants, documenting not only that the lack of documents is the root of many, intersecting challenges and risks for migrants but also exposing the central role of the South African state in producing and fostering them. Chapter 4 explores the issue of trauma and the importance of ‘being there’, documenting the importance of building trust and providing consistency for people on the move in difficult, unpredictable and sometimes



Three Zimbabweans seek advice in the office of the Ministry of Refugees Centre in Johannesburg which was not part of this study though.

unbearable circumstances. Chapter 5 discusses how organisations try to foster the inclusion of migrants into South African society by promoting migrants' skills and awareness raising about migrant rights. Chapter 6 addresses the complex intersections of inequality, divisions and vulnerability within and amongst migrant and South African populations, as well as the organisations' attempts to navigate this tricky terrain. Chapter 7 explores how organisations felt about the impact of their work, collaborated with others and designed strategies. In the eighth chapter, the report provides a critical discussion of potential alternative strategies that organisations could employ to address current impasses, reflecting both on the gains made by organisations working with migrants in South Africa as well as the continuing battles to provide support, protection and hope to some of the most vulnerable groups of people in South Africa.

Illuminating these organisations' complex challenges in assisting their clients, this report shows that organisations have an often significant impact on the individual lives of migrants who try to find ways of surviving and making a home in South Africa. At the same time, the report also shows how the same organisations battle to change the systemic structures of exclusion and discrimination through a lack of resources, time and constantly evolving and increasing challenges. The study finds that the fight against the injustices committed against migrants is a mix of fleeting yet often hollow victories and the motivation inherent to creating and sustaining '*little pockets of hope*'. Collectively, these pockets spur organisations on in their work and underline both the reasons for how and why they keep on going as well as their visions for a better South Africa.

Finally, while the report focuses on documenting the experiences of organisations in the particular context of South Africa, the findings of this report relate directly to global challenges facing all those working with and on behalf of migrants: xenophobia, tightening immigration and asylum regimes, criminalisation of mobility, the militarisation of borders and growing securitisation. To illustrate and highlight the global dimension of these challenges for audiences beyond South Africa, the study thus includes references to similarities with Germany in Chapter 9 – a country that seems very different at first, but also experiences significant immigration as well as political and popular mobilisation against foreigners.

The study is important mainly for three reasons: Firstly, it highlights the fact that South Africa is the main

destination for inner-African migration, an aspect mostly not known or recognized by the wider international public. It is therefore relevant to demonstrate the manifold challenges that local civil society organisations encounter while working with people on the move in a context of increasingly restrictive regulations and a lack of implementation of the progressive and all-accommodating South African constitution, which results for example in difficult access to social services. Secondly, the study allows to explore increasingly right-wing tendencies and violent outbreaks towards people on the move in South Africa, an aspect shockingly similar to today's trends in Germany and Europe. Recipients in Germany will get insights to the situation in another major immigration country from a Southern perspective rarely visible in current media reporting in the North. Thirdly, the study shall encourage networking and exchange among local stakeholders and perspectives. It further highlights the call to focus on the realization of basic rights of all individuals and the need for solidarity among civil society. It can therefore serve as a basis for further lobby and advocacy activities both in South Africa as well as in Germany without focussing only the Northern but providing a much needed South-North if not to say "globalized" perspective.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Different Places, Global Challenges

While this report was written in 2019, an angry mob went on a rampage in Johannesburg's inner city, known as the Central Business District, looting and destroying for-eign-owned businesses and forcing non-nationals to hide in fear of their lives.

These incidents are not exceptional as South Africa has a long-standing history of xenophobic violence. Tensions between host populations and those they variably construct as 'outsiders' continuously simmer just beneath the surface of everyday life. In addition, the South

Mobile populations/people on the move

It is necessary to explain two important terms which will be used frequently throughout the study. The term "people on the move" and the term "xenophobia"

Wherever possible, the study refers to the term "mobile populations" or "people on the move" rather than 'migrants'. Rather than 'flattening' the realities of those who move, "people on the move" accommodates

the idea that migration is an on-going and multi-dimensional process. As Fassin et al argue, the strict distinction of categories such as 'asylum seeker', 'refugee' or 'irregular migrant' 'are constructions that reflect the work of institutions rather than an easily established empirical difference' (Fassin, Wilhelm-Solomon and Segatti 2017: 163) and are associated with 'particular politics, claims and rights' (Pallister-Wilkins 2017).

Xenophobia

The term "Xenophobia" has a contested and ambiguous meaning. Its frequent intersection with racism, nationalism and other forms of discrimination and prejudice makes it hard to delineate the specific parameters of xenophobia as a concept, attitude or practice (Misago, Freemantle and Landau 2015: 108). However, xenophobia does not always overlap with citizenship or nationality and a useful way to conceptually distinguish the terms is based on the different rationales for the unequal treatment of others and the collectivities towards which this treatment is directed. Where racism for example, (which can be but is not always xenophobic) is based on relationships of power and ascribes an innate superiority and inferiority to physical characteristics or ancestry, xenophobia (which is not necessarily racist) uses putative markers of 'foreignness', cultural incompatibility or religion as a basis for exclusion (Adam/ Moodley 2013). Therefore, the emphasis here is on the perception of 'outsiders' as not belonging and as "polluters of cultural identity". Xenophobia can manifest in a broad spectrum of attitudes as well as behaviours at various levels of government and society (Crush/Peberdy 2018). To account for this, this report thus adopts a holistic definition of xenophobia as "attitudes, prejudices and behavior that reject, exclude and often vilify persons based on their perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity" (ILO, IOM, OHCHR 2001: 2).

The importance of using the term 'xenophobia' in the South Africa context lies not only in its conceptual difference to other, connected terms but more crucially, in the continued efforts by state and non-state actors to deny xenophobia exists. The casting of xenophobia as acts of criminality blamed on opportunistic individuals not only deflects blame from the state, but also strips away the significance of the targeting of 'outsiders' specifically (Bornman 2019a). For example, to claim that the looting of foreign-owned shops is simply criminal behaviour that just happened to be directed at foreigners is to be in denial about the underlying drivers of the violence and what the phenomenon is that needs to be politically addressed (Landau 2019b, Gordon 2019). While xenophobia and criminality are not mutually exclusive (as all xenophobia attacks contain elements of criminality) the key issues, and emphasis in this report are based on acknowledging the fundamental political and international legal obligations that South Africa holds towards protecting the lives and rights of citizens from other countries.

African government's rhetoric, policy approaches and practices at all levels reflect strong anti-foreign sentiment. Everyday xenophobic rhetoric and actions are also deeply entrenched within administrative structures and systems as described in the following chapters (Goodey 2009; Dlamini-Zuma 2011; SABC News 2019; Walker/Vearey/Nencel 2017).

In the current social and political climate that turns increasingly hostile towards people on the move, the organisations who promote the rights of migrants or offer services do so under more and more difficult and challenging conditions. This report explores the contexts, experiences and insights that South African organisations working with people on the move face in their everyday work. The report also discusses how organisations make sense of and respond to the challenges they encounter. Thus, the findings are based on extensive literature research on the one hand, and concrete experiences and reflections shared by civil society organisations during qualitative interviews on the other hand.

Illuminating these organisations' complex challenges in assisting their clients, it becomes evident that organisations have an often significant impact on the individual lives of migrants who try to find ways of surviving and making a home in South Africa. At the same time, some organisations battle to change the systemic structures of exclusion and discrimination through a lack of resources, time and constantly evolving and increasing challenges. The results of the study show that the fight against the injustices committed against migrants is a mix of fleeting yet often hollow victories and the motivation inherent to creating and sustaining "little pockets of hope" (Johannesburg based organisation). From the accounts of all participating organisations emerges a dense description of the multiple layers of mutually reinforcing risks, vulnerabilities, forms of discrimination and violence associated with being a migrant in South Africa. Offering a lifeline to many migrants, such organisations often occupy a vital space that would otherwise be virtually vacuous. In addition to psychological counselling, legal representation or language classes for migrants, they also offer safe and welcoming spaces to talk, be listened to, seen, and to rest. In many cases, such organisations play a critical role in making the lives of people on the move in precarious circumstances a little easier.

Following this introduction, the study's structure proceeds as follows: to situate the report's findings, chapter 2 provides a brief introduction to the dynamics of

In total, 13 small, medium and large civil society organisations based in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Stellenbosch have taken part in the study. The majority are partner organisations of Bread for the World. Others have been included to cover a comprehensive view and expertise on the thematic. Their working areas and expertise cover a variety of thematic fields, however all have in common to have long standing working expertise with people on the move and/or host communities in South Africa.

Their spectrum ranges from human rights and youth empowerment (Africa Unite, Black Sash), cultural, social and economic integration of refugees and migrants (Scalabrini Centre), equality and social justice enforcement (Section 27, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation – IJR), via legal advice organisations (Legal Resources Centre – LRC, Lawyers for Human Rights – LHR), land rights organisations (Women on Farms), community resilience (Outreach Foundation, ALPS Resilience) to organisations providing psychosocial care and assisting people living with traumata (Sophiatown Community Psychological Services – SCPS, Institute for Healing of Memories – IHoM) and monitoring of xenophobic threats and violence across South Africa (Xenowatch). The collaboration with these organisations for the purpose of this study followed strict ethical guidelines and, given the sensitivity of the topic, quotations were anonymized throughout the study.

For detailed methodological approach, please refer to the authors of this study Iriann Freemantle and Rebecca Walker via info@migration.org.za.

migration and social as well as political responses to it in South Africa. Chapter 3 discusses the central role of the South African state in the exclusion of migrants. It also outlines the difficulties that organisations face in holding the state to account for this. Chapter 4 addresses the issue of trauma and how organisations help migrants to cope and heal in trying circumstances. Chapter 5 documents how organisations try to foster inclusion by promoting migrants' skills and awareness raising about migrant rights. Chapter 6 discusses the complex intersections of inequality, divisions and vulnerability within and amongst migrant and South African populations, as well

as the organisations' attempts to navigate this. Chapter 7 explores how organisations working with migrants assess the 'impact' and contribution of their work. In the eighth chapter, potential alternative strategies that organisations could employ to address current impasses are discussed, reflecting both on the gains made by organisations working with migrants in South Africa as well as the continuing battles to provide support, protection and hope to some of the most vulnerable groups of people in South Africa. In the conclusion, closing remarks as well as a number of key recommendations show ways in which South Africa's engagement with migrants and with organisations working with migrant populations could be reformed. The final chapter outlines a comparative perspective on the situation in Germany.

Germany, allowing for comparative insights and conclusions that may be of value to both countries.

In the interest of the report's overall objective of enabling a South-North knowledge exchange of insights, experiences and strategies, common trends have been highlighted rather than profoundly detailing the degrees and forms of manifestation in each country.

Xenophobia as a global challenge

While the report focuses on documenting the experiences of organisations in the particular context of South Africa, the findings relate directly to global challenges facing all those working with and on behalf of migrants: xenophobia, tightening immigration and asylum regimes, criminalisation of mobility, the militarisation of borders and growing securitisation.

"I feel it's a general crisis in the world. I feel like what is happening in America and in Europe, it's the same what's happening here: a deliberate conservative shift to the right, racism, gender-based violence, the oppression of women...a regress." (one of the interviewees based in Johannesburg states).

At first glance, South Africa and Germany seem like very different places. In many ways, they face very different social, political and economic challenges. The countries also have vastly different capacities to provide welfare and security for the populations within their borders. Yet, regardless of these differences, migration is a highly contested issue in everyday life, politics and governance in both countries. Critically, the trajectories South Africa and Germany both reflect global trends of increasingly restrictive immigration regimes, rising anti-migrant populism, the criminalisation of movement, incremental curtailments on the rights of asylum-seekers and the militarisation and externalisation of borders. Often finding expression in approaches to immigration, both countries experience considerable attacks on democratic institutions and human rights. Therefore, this study ends with a chapter that sheds light on the immigration situation in

Chapter 2

Migration Dynamics and Responses in South Africa

As the main migrant destination within the region, South Africa has long hosted considerable foreign populations (Segatti 2011). From the middle of the 19th century onwards, the country had a formalised, contract-based labour migration system (Muanomoha 2008; Crush/Dodson 2015; Oucho/Crush 2001; Crush/Peberdy/Williams 2006). Under this scheme, at least officially, migration was tightly controlled and intended to be temporary in nature. This changed with the slow but gradual erosion of influx control leading up to the eventual end of the repressive Apartheid regime in 1994. Migration increased in volume, and also diversified in terms of origins, immigration status and migrant trajectories. It also included significant numbers of people seeking protection and asylum (Crush/Dodson 2015; Hovhannisyanyan et al. 2018; Segatti 2011, Landau/Segatti 2011). Today, migrants from all over the world come to South Africa. However, as the country's national census of 2011 shows, the vast majority still originate from the African continent, in particular the Southern African region (Statistics South Africa 2011). In 2016, according to initial statistical reports from Statistics South Africa's 2016 Community Survey, main countries of origin were Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi, Eswatini and Namibia, together with the United Kingdom, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and India (Meny-Gibert/Chiumia 2016).

In relation to the overall South African population, the proportion of foreign nationals has grown over the past three decades. From 1995 to 2017, the percentage of foreigners rose from 2.4 per cent to 7.1 per cent (see table 1). In 2017, the most reliable data available places South Africa's non-national population at around four million (UNDP 2017b) out of a total population of approximately 56 million.

But international migration only constitutes a relatively small proportion of population mobility into and within South Africa. Domestic mobility, unevenly distributed across South Africa's nine national provinces, remains numerically much more significant than cross-border movements. Gauteng, the country's most

densely populated province with a gross domestic product (GDP) higher than any other country in Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank 2018), hosts more than three times as many internal migrants than foreign migrants (Statistics South Africa 2011). Following global trends, migrants in South Africa tend to settle in urban areas with better access to work, opportunities and basic services (Vearey et al. 2010).

Discourses of migration as 'threat' and burden

In South Africa, immigration is a highly contested issue in everyday life as well as formal and informal politics. Fears centre predominantly on mobility as a threat to security (in terms of different types of crime), a burden on state resources (in particular, on the public healthcare and education system) and competition for housing and employment. Debates on the link between mobility and terrorism, as well as on foreigners as a cultural threat are practically absent in South Africa. Despite the relatively moderate share within South Africa's population, popular perceptions that the country is 'overrun' by foreign nationals – either through a lack of border control or overly lenient policies – are pervasive (Polzer 2010: 2-3; Crush 2008; Crush/Dodson 2015; Cross et al. 2009). Dominant discourses associate mobility with threats to security, stability and prosperity of the 'host' population. In a context of persistent extreme inequality (UNDP 2019: 4; UNDP 2017a), high unemployment rate (Webster 2019; GroundUp 2019; Stats SA 2019a), widespread poverty (Stats SA 2019b; Seery/Okanda/Lawson 2019), rampant levels of violent crime (Sicetsha 2018), struggling and overburdened public services (Zulu 2019; Gordon 2018; Hovhannisyanyan 2018) as well as the largest HIV epidemic worldwide (Child 2019; Avert 2019), non-nationals are blamed for many of the country's most serious problems.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2017
South Africa	1 163 883	1 003 807	1 001 825	1 210 936	2 096 886	3 816 696	4 036 696
per cent of population	3,1	2,4	2,2	2,5	4,1	6,9	7,1

Table 1: International migrant stock at mid-year in South Africa (both sexes)
Source: UNDP International Migration Stock 2017

In both direct and indirect ways, South African media plays an important role in reinforcing negative stereotypes of migrants by selective or uncritical reporting, including the reproduction of unsubstantiated data on the volume of migrants in the country (Media Monitoring Africa 2015). Perpetuating Apartheid's concepts of territorialised rights that confined black South Africans to 'traditional homelands', both foreign and domestic migrants from other parts of the country are regularly constructed as an 'illegitimate' burden on resources in the urban areas they move to (ACMS 2012; Freemantle 2015).

Government responses to Migration

The South African government's rhetoric, policy approaches and practices at all levels reflect an often overt anti-foreign sentiment. Everyday xenophobic rhetoric and actions are also deeply entrenched within daily administrative structures and systems (Crush/Peberdy 2018; Walker/Vearey/Nencel 2017; Gordon 2019; Mbhele 2018). In direct contradiction to the country's progressive constitution that famously states that 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it' (ANC 1955; Republic of South Africa 1996), migrant rights are routinely violated in the South African public education and healthcare system as well as in law enforcement. Specific categories of migrants including women and LGBTIQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, intersex and queer/questioning) individuals face heightened risks of intersectional violence on many levels (Gandar 2019; Walker/Vearey 2019).

Many political parties, including the ruling African National Congress (ANC), the main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA) and others increasingly use migration and call to secure borders as a playing card to garner popular support or to detract attention from the government's shortcomings in effecting positive changes in the country (Davis 2019; SABC News 2019; Landau 2018a; Fabricius 2019; Landau 2019a). South Africa's elections in May 2019 were marked by a clear shift towards even more openly anti-immigration rhetoric across the political spectrum (Davis 2019). For example, in March 2019, ahead of the upcoming elections, President Cyril Ramaphosa spoke at an ANC rally, stating that "Everyone just arrives in our townships and rural areas and sets up businesses without licenses and permits. We are going to

bring this to an end. And those who are operating illegally, wherever they come from, must now know". ANC secretary-general Ace Magashule also warned in March about foreigners perpetrating crimes: "If they are undocumented when crime happens, you can't even get these people. You can't get their fingerprints. [This is about] the safety of the country. It is not being opportunistic," (Hair-sine 2019). Leaders from other parties, such as Mmusi Maimane from the main opposition, the Democratic Alliance (DA), and Mosia Lekota of the Congress of the People (Cope) had stated that foreigners are flooding the country and undermining its security and prosperity. Also, the leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Velenkosini Hlabisa, used similar rhetoric in saying that "All foreign nationals who are within the country and have skills but are not documented must be documented and retained. Those without skills but are looking for jobs – the government must assist them to return to their original countries" (Chigumadzi 2019).

A recent development in South Africa is the construction of migrants as a direct challenge to the sovereignty of the state. In August 2019, clashes between informal foreign traders and the South African police during a raid prompted Ms. Faith Mazibuko, Gauteng community safety MEC of the Gauteng Provincial government to claim that "we condemn all criminal elements hellbent on undermining the rule of the law in this country and making this country ungovernable. We can't co-govern with criminals, especially foreign nationals who want to turn our country into a lawless Banana Republic" (Evans/Wiener 2019).

Populism and xenophobic violence

Many South Africans feel that the advent of non-racial democracy in South Africa has failed them and that their current government is distant from, and disinterested in their concerns, including their fears and concerns about immigration (Bornman 2019a). However, as yet, right-wing parties have not exploited this discontent in the same way that populist right wing movements across Europe have done. In fact, the only relevant strictly 'populist' party, the Economic Freedom Front (EFF), has a decisively 'pro-immigration' policy towards black African migrants – notably, while excluding other minority groups from different origins (Friedman 2019).

Instead, disillusioned by the democratic system and their 'representation' by political parties in general, the



During xenophobic attacks several shops in South African townships were destroyed.

populace takes their frustrations to the street in violence against foreigners or in protest action that almost inevitably escalates into violence against foreign nationals (Bornman 2019b). Anti-outsider violence is particularly pervasive amidst the poor, mobile and heterogeneous populations of South Africa's urban informal settlements which are also the hotspots for general violence.

A 2018 survey found that 'more than one in ten adults living in South Africa reported that they had not yet taken part in violent action against foreign nationals – but would be prepared to do so' (Hovhannisyan et al. 2018). The most prominent and globally mediated 'xenophobic violence' of 2008 (Hadland 2008: 4) was only one episode in a longstanding and ongoing series of attacks – in early May 2008, violent attacks against foreign nationals and South Africans considered 'outsiders' had spread rapidly from the Johannesburg township of Alexandra to other locations around the country. Since then, violence against foreigners has broken out again on a number of occasions but most notably in 2015, 2017 and 2019. During the writing of this report, xenophobic violence has been spreading once more on the streets of

Johannesburg, with looting of foreign-owned shops and non-nationals being chased out of their homes and communities (Nicholson/Simelane 2019). Taking action against foreigners is cast as restitution for failed promises and a form of protest against a tone-deaf and uncaring government. A South African, central to instigating attacks on foreign-owned businesses in Johannesburg in August 2019, explained that his sense of entitlement to 'expel' migrants from the country came from the refusal of the government to listen and to respond to his problems (Bornman 2019b).

Government responses to xenophobia

The South African government has responded after the different incidences of widespread xenophobia with a mix of denial, inaction and complicity (Mabe 2019; Molosankwe 2019; eNCA 2019; Bornman 2019c). In a statement released by the South African Government in

response to the 3rd September 2019 xenophobic attacks, in which two people lost their lives and hundreds of shops were looted and burnt, no mention of xenophobia was made (SAnews 2019). Despite ongoing xenophobic violence in South Africa, the South African government maintains that ‘South Africa is not a xenophobic country’ (South African Government 2019). The government’s response to the mass violence of 2008 remains exemplary of its approach to date. Following outbreak of the attacks, the South African government was not slow in acknowledging the severity of the situation and taking action to stop the violence. It also went to great lengths in emphasising that these attacks were *not* xenophobic, but simply ‘criminal’ in nature – a narrative that remains dominant whenever new incidents have occurred since (Bornman 2019a; Polzer/Takabvira 2010; Misago 2019). A 2011 report by the African Peer Review Mechanism Monitoring Project gave South Africa a ‘red rating, which is equivalent to “no progress has been achieved on addressing the issue; or very little progress has been achieved and the government does not seem to be on track to complete it in the near future”’, for the country’s failure to address, and indeed denial of, xenophobia (SAAIA/CPS/AGMAP 2011). Combined with its own anti-migrant stance reflected in policy and practice, the government’s failure to address xenophobia and related violence continues to reinforce the intentions of perpetrators and further criminalises the victims. On at least two occasions during the violence, immigration officials (sent by the Department of Home Affairs), raided shelters to arrest and deport undocumented victims including those who had just lost papers during the flight. These unlawful arrests and deportations criminalized ‘undocumented’ victims rather than their assailants (Misago/Monson/Landau 2010).

Asylum regimes

Despite the lack of reliable statistical data, research indicates that asylum-seekers and refugees constitute a significant share of non-nationals residing in the country (Stuart 2018; Amit/ Kriger 2014; Amit 2015b; Mthembu-Salter et al. 2014). This is partly because South Africa’s restrictions on visa options for lower-skilled migrants with primarily economic motivations to move have pushed large numbers of people into the asylum system as the only – if, extremely remote – possibility to obtain legitimate legal status in the host country (Gandar 2019;

Newland/Riester 2018; Knoll/de Weijer 2016). However, rejection rates for asylum-seeker applications are consistently well over 90 per cent (Helen Suzman Foundation 2018; Gerber 2019). In 2015, South Africa only approved 2,499 out of 62,000 applications. The rest were either rejected or the application remained pending (Department of Home Affairs 2015).

South Africa’s asylum system is highly dysfunctional, overburdened and plagued by widespread bribery, corruption and abuse at Refugee Reception Offices (RROs) (Gandar 2019; Amit 2015a; Amit 2011; Carciotto/Gastrow/Johnson 2015). Lodging new applications has been made more difficult by the closure of a number RROs previously available for this: the Johannesburg, Port Elisabeth and Cape Town offices were closed down and, despite court judgements demanding that they be re-opened, only the Cape Town office has since reopened. However, it is not taking any new applications and therefore remains unavailable to many new asylum seekers. Generally, applicants often wait for years – sometimes more than ten – for a resolution on their application while having to renew their existing permits regularly in expensive and cumbersome ways. For example, those who attempt to renew their visas at an office other than the office where they placed the initial application (which is often the case due to the closure of RROs), they are only given a one month extension until physical file is transferred. During these lengthy and often futile processes of attempting to obtain or prolong a regular migration status, many migrants remain in a state of constant legal and economic vulnerability. Unable to open bank accounts or enter formal employment they are subject to various kinds of restrictions, personal risk and exploitation prevalent in the informal sector. Criminalised as ‘undocumented migrants’, they face official and popular discrimination and xenophobic violence (Walker/Vearey 2019).

The main permits that migrants can apply for are listed in table below.

Migrant integration and social cohesion policies

South Africa has no official migrant integration policy. Although the country (still) has a non-encampment policy – which means that asylum-seekers and refugees are allowed to self-settle amongst South African communities

Type of Permit	Status	Provisions
Refugee and Asylum Permits		
Section 23: Asylum Transit permit	Temporary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 14 days legal stay (Under Amendment Act will reduce to 7 days) – Can apply for a Section 23 permit
Section 22: Asylum seeker Permit	Valid for one, three or six months – then must be renewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Proof of application for refugee status – Right to work and study – Right to healthcare – Protected from deportation to country of origin
Section 24: Refugee Permit	Valid for four years (though this is not consistent) – then must be renewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Can apply for refugee ID document and refugee travel document – valid for period that Section 24 permit is valid – Same rights as SA citizen
Special Permits		
Zimbabwean Special Dispensation Visa (ZSP)	Valid for three years – then must apply for regular work, study or other visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Right to work and study – Right to healthcare – Cannot apply for PR – Not renewable
Angolan Special Permit (ASP)	Issued to Angolan Former Refugees, valid for four years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Right to work and study – Cannot apply for PR – Not renewable
Temporary Residence Permits (TRP) Business permits, work permits, Corporate permits, Study permits, Exchange permits, Retired persons' permits, Relatives permits and medical Treatment permits		
Work visa and Special Permits General work permit 1. Critical skills visa 2. Intra-company transfer visa 3. Corporate visa	Valid for five years – then must be renewed Valid for five years – then must be renewed For duration of work For duration of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Can work limited amount of time on a study visa and retired person visa
Permanent Residency Permit (PRP)		
Permanent Residency Permit (PRP) (13 categories including workers, business owners, dependants and relatives, retirees and refugees)	Permanent stay in SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Can apply for SA ID book – Same rights as SA citizens

Table 2: Overview of some of the permits in South Africa

rather than residing in separate areas or camps as in the case of other South African Development Community (SADC) and African countries – there are no policies guiding or resources supporting – their integration into South African society. This also applies where government speaks about the 're-integration' of migrants after being displaced by xenophobic violence (HSRC 2008). This simply means that those who are displaced move back into the communities they were chased away from.

Overall, the term integration is rarely used, instead opting for the concepts of social cohesion and nation-building. Considering the country's persistent social and economic fault lines as a critical obstacle to development and transformation, social cohesion has become an increasingly prominent item on both local and national government agendas since the early 2010s (Freemantle 2015). The main strategic focus of South Africa's current social cohesion initiatives rests on two primary objectives: firstly, to



Despite South Africa's official non-encampment policy, the majority of people on the move have to live in deplorable circumstances.

reduce poverty and economic inequality between black and white citizens, and secondly to foster national unity and a shared sense of identity and belonging amongst all citizens regardless of background. While acknowledging the country's cultural diversity, there is a clear emphasis on fostering a unified national identity that has priority over other forms of membership (such as those based on language groups or ethnicity). National unity is to be achieved through universal alignment with collective 'national values' (Adam/Moodley 2013). Without exception, social cohesion strategies equate national community with a domestic South African citizenry. This focus on citizens excludes non-nationals from the social cohesion project, effectively positioning non-nationals *outside* of South African society and its collective future (Freemantle 2015; Freemantle/Misago 2014).

The inability to obtain documentation, as will be discussed in detail in the report's empirical findings, pushes migrants further into the margins of society. For example, unable to enter formal employment, many find

themselves looking for jobs within the informal sector. Although such work offers opportunities for those without documentation or formal qualifications, it is also high precarious and poses heightened risks of exploitation, abuse and unsafety (Walker/Vearey/Nencel 2017). As a Cape Town based organisation highlighted, pushing migrants into exploitative informal labour also makes migrants more vulnerable to xenophobia. Speaking about farm workers, the organisation explained: "There is a lot of discrimination which is still significant especially towards Sothos [an ethnic group of Southern Africa, native to Lesotho and South Africa, who speaks Sesotho] and Zimbabweans. So if anything – for example, if the scissor – goes missing, they blame these the Sothos and the Zimbabweans. If anything happens on the farm, they blame these two groups. But these two groups still want to work for them and will work for less money as well."

South Africa's approach to migration in a regional context

On paper, South Africa still has robust constitutional and legislative frameworks to protect human rights, including the rights of migrants. The country's constitution is heralded as one of the most progressive in the world. Built to signal a clear departure from the institutionalised racism and oppression under Apartheid, the constitution enshrined a commitment to human rights, international cooperation, equal opportunity and democracy (Walker/Vearey 2019). Yet, despite this explicit break from its repressive past, South Africa's migration policies, legal frameworks and practices of implementation are becoming increasingly restrictive, security-focused, and even unconstitutional (Segatti 2011; Amit 2015a; Elphick/Amit 2012; CormSA 2009).

Recent amendments to South Africa's Refugee Act, signed into law in December 2017, will restrict the rights of asylum seekers in significant ways that include removing the automatic right to work and study (Republic of South Africa 2017). Although officially none of the amendments have been finalised (meaning they have not yet been enacted or triggered), several of the staff members who participated in the study who work in the legal advice space spoke about practices of 'unlawful implementation' that already take place. The Department of Home Affairs' (DHA) White Paper on Immigration (2017) seeks to amend the Immigration Act and reverse the long-standing 'non-encampment' policy for recognized refugees that allows them to self-settle in the country (LHR 2012). Instead, there are discussions about establishing 'Asylum Seeker Processing Centres' which will 'profile' and 'accommodate' asylum seekers while their status is determined and will involve multiple stakeholders. There is also a push towards establishing a 'Border Management Authority' (BMA).

In this way, South Africa reflects global trends of increasingly restrictive immigration regimes, the criminalisation of movement, incremental curtailments on the rights of asylum-seekers and the militarisation of borders (De Haas, Natter/Vezzoli 2018; Landau 2018b; Kihato 2018; Ashutosh/Mountz 2011; De Vries/Guild 2019; Dünnwald 2015). South Africa's trend towards restricting immigration and migrant rights is closely linked to parallel processes at regional and (inter)continental levels (Banai/Kreide 2017; Diez/Squire 2008; Walker/Vearey 2019). South

Africa's measures not only violate its liberal constitution but also clash with the goal of regional and continental free movement central to both the SADC and the African Union (AU) (African Union 2015: 19). However, with anti-foreign rhetoric that often resembles that of right-wing political leaders across Europe, South Africa's attitude resembles Europe's current containment approach to African migration (Goodey 2009; Dlamini-Zuma 2011; Molosankwe 2019) in particular, Europe's heavy emphasis on preventing and intercepting movement, rather than facilitating it as well as the coding of the fight against irregular migration as serving migrants' own needs for protection. Although this is less prevalent in South Africa, some South African leaders have also framed the exclusion of migrants as the only way to protect them from xenophobic violence (Walker/Vearey 2019). Issues such as human trafficking are similarly instrumentalised in South Africa to justify greater restrictions on movement in the name of protecting the most vulnerable, namely women and children (Walker/Galvin 2018). In this, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) plays a central role in South Africa, which is also closely associated with Europe's efforts of 'externalisation' of borders and 'migration management' across Africa (Klavert 2011: 13; Firamonti/Nshimbi 2016: 23-24; Boulton 2009; Knoll/de Weijer 2016; European Commission 2015).

Chapter 3

Migrant Exclusion by the South African State

The South African state emerges as both actively and passively hostile towards foreign nationals as described by the interviewed staff members. Their responses document three, intersecting arenas in which the state's anti-migrant position and exclusion play out, either directly excluding or creating the conditions of excludability: Firstly, through the criminalisation of migrants in rhetoric and practice, actively promoting widely held popular stereotypes linking migration to crime and other social ills (Goodey 2009). Secondly, through the refusal to acknowledge or provide protection from exploitation and xenophobic violence and the framing of the strategic targeting of foreigners as ordinary crime (Molosankwe 2019; Polzer/Takabvirva 2010; Mabe 2019; Bornman 2019a; Fassin/Wilhelm-Solomon/Segatti 2017; Gordon 2019). Thirdly, and the main preoccupation for many interviewed organisations, through the denial or devaluation of the documentation necessary to live and work in the country with dignity (Fassin/Wilhelm-Solomon/Segatti 2017). The accounts of the interview partners highlighted not only how the lack of documents is at the root of many, intersecting challenges shaping migrants' vulnerability, but also exposed the central role of the South African state in fostering it. This is a finding consistent with existing research of academics, civil society organisations and Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in South Africa (Molkenbur/Cooper 2019; Pampalone 2018; Makandwa/Vearey 2017).

While recent South African discussion papers and policy documents have proposed severe curtailments to the rights of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in South Africa as discussed in chapter 2, these mostly remain dormant and have not been fully passed into law, or 'triggered' by the completion of accompanying regulations. Thus, as it stands, the current law, based on the South African constitution and various related legislation, grants foreign nationals extensive rights regardless of their legal status in the country. These rights include access to basic primary healthcare, emergency care and antiretroviral medication (ARVs) as well as a right to primary and secondary education and the right to work.

However, several organisations reported that unlawful implementation is a common practice and has de facto already largely divested migrants of these rights. However, this can also include undocumented South African children as many children do not have birth certificates and other forms of identification and therefore are also denied a place in school (Maistry 2019; Gandar 2019).

For example, as one Johannesburg based organisation reports, that there was an internal circular by the government calling for tightening access to free primary health care for undocumented persons. As a result of protests by civil society organisations against this, the government denied its existence. However, according to the organisation members, the content of the letter is still reflected in the actions and exercise of power of the executing employees, who feel more entitled to refuse benefits or make access to them more difficult for undocumented persons, thus exploiting the existing power gap. Interviewees confirm that legal action against such behaviour is not easy because these cases are hard to prove and put the victims in a difficult position, as they fear the negative consequences of an official statement. At the same time, official authorities refer to the current (positive) legal situation and deny such cases.

In the given example, the planned changes in the law have thus implicitly leaked into visible instructions and legitimise xenophobic behaviour at the implementing base. Rights are often denied on this basis.

While the methods of curtailing access to devaluing documentation vary and constantly evolve and adapt, in principle, they all work in the same way: they create arbitrary administrative obstacles for the renewal or application of permits. In addition, they void the worth of existing permits as a 'valid form of identification' required for enrolling children in schools, obtaining health services, a driver's licence or car registration. As a proxy for all-encompassing exclusion, denying or devaluing migrants documentation curtails migrant rights in unlawful, "roundabout ways" (Cape Town based organisation) that effectively shut migrants 'out'. As a result, "higher and higher levels of undocumented people" (Cape Town based organisation) not only "get stuck" (Johannesburg based organisation) in permanent precarity but also, through no fault of their own, cross into the realm of criminality as overstayers or otherwise 'irregular' migrants. As one organisation from Johannesburg noted, "if you don't have documentation, you can't go anywhere."

These processes begin with obstacles to the issuing of a Section 22 permit, the first type of temporary permit a foreign national receives upon arrival in South Africa (see table 2). An organisation based in Cape Town explains: "without a section 22 permit you don't have that piece of paper that protects you from deportation but also you don't have that piece of paper that has the words that are allowed to work and study, and so if there is any way to deny

someone that paper through a bureaucratic or pseudo-bureaucratic process then that is again a way to stop someone from being able to work and study.” Another method of unlawful implementation is the practice of issuing ‘slips’ for appointments to apply for asylum that can sometimes be almost a year away: “you don’t have any kind of document except for a little slip of paper that looks like it comes from an ATM and if you leave it in the sun the ink fades away, and I guarantee you, you don’t even have to leave it in the sun, by August 2020, the ink will be gone. And it doesn’t protect you and it specifically states on the slip that this is not a legal document and it doesn’t give you the right to work or study” (Cape Town based organisation).

Amongst many other cases related by organisations, the following situation described by one of the legal organisations in Cape Town exemplifies the hurdles placed on accessing documentation particularly well:

“A classic example that we picked up at the law clinic [was] where home affairs refused to extend permits if you applied at a different office. So if you applied in Musina [a border town in the Limpopo Province], they wouldn’t extend it here so you’d have to travel back which is like 1000 km, and every three to six months, so we would pick up on that trend, so eventually when we lodged a case, we had over 4000 applicants who were affected by that, so that went all the way to the supreme court of appeals...so after [this]...they started another practice, which again, we’re attacking the lawfulness of that, now home affairs is saying, we can’t extend it until you’ve cleared your administrative fines, whereas it was their conduct that prevented asylum seekers from renewing their permit [and hence incurring fines for that], but they said you need to go to the criminal court and clear an admission of guilt fine, and depending on how many years your permit was expired for this could range from 1500 to almost 6000 Rand and so they couldn’t renew their permits until they paid that fine. So they said this was a perfectly lawful practice, that they could not renew the permits until the fine was cleared, so again we challenged the lawfulness of that practice. It is still before the court.”

Interviewed staff members provided many examples how the lack of documentation affected migrants, ranging from the constant risk of arrest and deportation, the absence of livelihood opportunities beyond precarious, exploitative and informal work and a lack of access to those basic services they are constitutionally entitled to. One organisation in Johannesburg explained,

“The documentation issue impacts on everything. There is a huge problem in accessing documentation. It’s even

difficult to get an asylum seeker permit, and if you do, you have it for 15 years. It does not get processed in the 6 months that the law says it should. So this means you have the right to work but it’s very difficult for you to find a job...apart from the trauma and xenophobia...they are forced to live in this precariousness, also a material precariousness, because in reality they can’t work, they can’t work besides piece jobs, so you are forced into misery, into poverty, even if potentially you could do something, while I think a South African has many more chances to find something stable if they want to.”

Describing how schools either exclude foreign children from obtaining an education altogether or prematurely curtail it on the basis of the lacking documentation, an organisation noted that even where some schools take undocumented children up to a certain grade, they would then refuse to admit students to high school: “they are saying you must go back to your country for the papers. And then people are not going because they...don’t have money to go back. So, they start working on the farms.” Other organisations explained that schools often withhold matric results until students provide documentation which they are often entirely unable to do.

One of the psycho-social organisations based in Johannesburg outlined the extensive challenges migrants face in accessing healthcare due to lacking documents: “as a South African pregnant woman you get into hospital and as a foreigner you don’t. Sometimes you do, depends on the day, but it is much more difficult. Anything other than emergency care, that is usually fine, but anything other than that can be an extra burden on top.” Although this organisation typically manages to succeed in obtaining care for their individual clients, they highlighted that discrimination or outright refusal to provide treatment remains pervasive at all levels of the healthcare system. Another legal organisation from Johannesburg noted that in assisting migrants, they had to rely on the very few clinics and hospitals they know would not refuse to treat migrants.

A Cape Town based organisation also spoke of the traffic department discriminating against non-nationals by insisting they must go through a “completely parallel process” in order to renew their licences – impacting truck drivers and cab drivers, who rely on driving to make a living: “denying someone access to owning a car or access to a drivers licence is a very, very effective way of denying them access to work.” One of the legal organisations based in Johannesburg explained one of the reasons behind this exclusion in terms of funding for schools: “from what I understand part of the problem is at the beginning of the year



People on the move and supporting civil society repeatedly complain about the aggressive behavior of the country's security forces towards them.

schools get funding based on the number of students that they have and they only get funding for South African students and people who have ideas and that is from what I understand part of the problem...because if they let the kids in they won't get funding they don't count so the burden is on the school." This is another indirect way of denying access to education.

Another organisation based in Cape Town working with women identified other ways in which government implements policies unlawfully. Recounting a meeting with the Department of Labour they described, *"the department of labour said there is actually a ratio in terms of how people get employed on farms...we didn't know there is a certain percentage who can and can't be employed. So they said on every farm 40 per cent must be migrant or foreign workers and 60 per cent local."* They went on to say that this ratio was previously unheard of and not to be found in the legislation.

The staff members described how the actions or inactions aimed at denying migrants access to documentation are often deliberately located outside of the existing law, rendering civil society's instruments to challenge

the state and hold it accountable difficult, elusive and cumbersome. According to the interviewed persons, unlawful implementation is a long-standing strategy of the DHA to immunise itself against formal legal challenges: as a legal organisation based in Cape Town explained, the department has *"learned that if they do it formally that there will be litigation...so they do it in this way so you can't litigate."* They went further to say, *"moving centres to the borders and processing them there, not allowing freedom of movement, withdrawing rights to work and self-reliance...that's the next major battle...we never had camps, so that would really be a fundamental reversal of human rights and it will definitely not withstand constitutional interrogation. We know that, so we don't understand why they don't know that. But that is it: they take their chances. It's just a mind game that they play."*

Given the universal and established presence of these practices, organisations surmised this may be informed by *"a specific plan to deter people from coming or to force them to go back."* (Cape Town based organisation). One stated, *"I think that speaks to some of the policy direction as well, because you can look at policy and you can kind of pull out*

things that look positive in that policy, the white paper speaks about regional visas, but, you know now, that is a drop of something that you want to cling to and say “this is great, this is really lovely” but then there is so much in it that is really not and I think that all the worrying trends in those policy documents are things that are unlawfully coming into force through roundabout ways” (Cape Town based organisation).

Legal advocacy: winning battles but losing the war

While strategic relationships with government were identified by almost all organisations as central to success, most organisations lamented the loss of relationships as different ministers have been replaced and previous connections and channels of communication have either broken down or never existed in the first place. This was particularly the case in reference to Home Affairs: *“we try to engage Home Affairs as much as possible, but...there is just such a breakdown in the relationship”* (legal organisation based in Johannesburg). Although one of the organisations based in Cape Town claimed that there were *“great personal relationship between [their] staff members and home affairs members”* – referring to DHA staff on the ground – they also noted, *“[H]ome affairs does have a problem in that they don’t like their client base when it comes to refugees and migrants and that kind of rolls into their relationship with us, but...we are in opposition so you’d expect that kind of relationship.”* Another legal organisation from Cape Town however, felt they had never had a good relationship with the DHA but that in the present moment it was particularly bad: *“currently government feels like civil society is attacking them and it’s a very antagonistic relationship between home affairs and civil society, home affairs will always go into defence when the [organisation name] comes and says this should be the position, and with the [organisation name] specifically, there is no room for engagement.”*

While a few staff members have been able to maintain good relationships with individual officials at the Department of Home Affairs, legal organisations such as the Legal Resources Centre (LRC), Scalabrini and Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) described the relationship with Department of Home Affairs (DHA) as predominantly ‘broken’ and dysfunctional. The absence of any engagement with the DHA meant that these organisations now almost exclusively interact with the department through

litigation. As one of the organisations in Cape Town explained, *“legal advocacy...is perhaps a euphemism for taking home affairs to court [laughs]. We have to start numbering our cases, [name of organisation] v. Home Affairs 1, 2, 3.”* Similarly, an organisation in Johannesburg described, *“in the education system they [the government] are not really subject to reason. There is a lot of litigation against the department of Education. For a long time they just did not listen.”*

While organisations find ways of coping with this challenge, they often felt disillusioned or negative about being able to really make a sustained impact in changing the current climate of hostility towards migrants. The realm of legal advocacy perhaps provides the clearest example of this. Staff members of the interviewed legal organisations described the series of actions they have had to take against DHA as *“a long game”* (legal organisation based in Cape Town) through which they make small gains but cannot ever ‘win the war’. Stating that they have *“a 100 percent success rate”* when they challenge the DHA legally, the organisations confirmed that individual legal battles are always won and yet, this doesn’t really constitute a real victory for three reasons.

First, organisations explained that once the DHA loses a case at a lower level court, it typically appeals the decision, often escalating the case all the way up to the constitutional court. This is very expensive and laborious for those advocating on behalf of migrants.

Secondly, even when a court order is in place, organisations related many examples of the state simply disobeying the order: *“the problem is enforcing it...the problem is that even...with an order from the constitutional court, the highest court in our land, it is still difficult to actually get home affairs to comply”* (legal organisation based in Cape Town). An organisation from Johannesburg described another example of this at the level of an DHA office in relation to the case of a woman from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that they had tried to assist in accessing documents: *“they [DHA] chased her and said this is not the day. Then when she went back on that day and took a letter from the lawyers – then when she got there, they asked ‘why did you go to the lawyers instead of coming here’? There was a moment where she was dragged by security out of the gate and told her not to come back. She was ill treated by bringing the letter.”* This means that *“even when law itself is on the[ir] side”* (organisation from Cape Town) migrants are not protected.

Finally, the DHA continues to create new obstacles for migrants, producing what one of the organisations

based in Cape Town described as *“this long championship game with the department of home affairs, we’re getting there, we’re cornering their queen, but then they somehow cut us off.”* Despite legal victories, change often cannot be effected fast enough to make a difference to the lives of migrants- especially because the DHA keep changing its approach: *“I feel like we are swimming against the stream, as the political climate regarding migrants is changing in South Africa but the work that we are doing, and especially the court judgements that we have achieved have affected change within the practice of the department of home affairs, but it’s slow, very, very slow, and sometimes not fast enough to benefit all our clients, I think it is making a difference, but we’re constantly finding ourselves having to do with new issues that we didn’t think we’d have to deal with”* (legal organisation from Cape Town).

Given the extent and accumulating nature of the challenges, coupled with shrinking space to engage and diminishing funding, most organisations felt that their abilities to defend migrant rights were limited to ‘damage control’, helping to improve individual lives. However, organisations across the board felt there was little energy, capacity and hope to challenge overall structures of injustice. One organisation from Johannesburg explained that *“in relation to migrants I don’t think we are getting anywhere...with this kind of thing we just can’t get a systemic solution.”* another organisation based in Cape Town also felt that the future looked bleak in light of South Africa’s increasingly restrictive immigration amendments that look set to become law: *“I think right now we do not have a camp, and isn’t that the most – wouldn’t that be the most difficult situation? Yes, while the fact that licences are impossible to get or that appointment slip, we can fight it right now! But in two years’ time, will we be able to fight it? Or will we be fighting the actual regulation? And from there it just goes worse and worse and worse.”* Overall, amongst interviewed staff, there was a strong sense of feeling utterly powerless vis-à-vis the state: a legal organisation working from Johannesburg explained how civil society were *“all grappling with how to hold the state to account...the state has... excluded engagement with civil society and even that has become a procedure. So we make submissions...and we never even get the consideration of a response...they don’t even fight us...they ignore us totally and there are no consequences.”* The person added: *“the word civil society means nothing. Just a bunch of do-gooders. Because we have no power...we write pages of reports, have to count every initiative we do as advocacy, but in the broader scheme of things it doesn’t make*

any difference: we still have an asylum system in crisis.” Another organisation from Johannesburg said *“there are a lot of people [who] say that the tools we used to use don’t necessarily work anymore. Like litigation, where there is a case where the court has found something but it’s just not being implemented either because government is incapable or intransigent or just does not have enough money.”*

Almost entirely unable to assist migrants in overcoming the gatekeeping hurdle of accessing documentation, organisations reflected on the limitations in terms of what they could actually do for migrants. A number of organisations talked at length about their struggles in assisting migrants with documentation as well as the key challenges migrants themselves face in the areas of access to healthcare and education specifically. In trying to assist, many organisations have been involved in lengthy and frustrating engagements with Home Affairs to try and find a way forward for their clients and communities that they work with. This has largely been fruitless, and many organisations are very clear that this is where they get stuck: *“every single refugee or asylum seeker that you will ever talk to the first thing they will talk about is documentation, without a doubt that is the first thing that comes up. And then we have to say that is not what we are here to address... it is a rabbit hole and we are not equipped to do it”* (organisation based in Cape Town). Another organisation from Cape Town echoes this: *“the first thing they ask us: ‘How you are going to help us with our papers?’ But we are not Home Affairs. We can’t help you with your papers.”*

Chapter 4

Addressing Trauma

Consistent with research on the wellbeing and mental health of populations on the move (Gordon 2018; Jinnah 2017; Carswell/Blackburn/Barker 2009; Fegert et al. 2018), many organisations described trauma as a common and central experience to the lives of the migrants they work with. Many staff members of organisations spoke about what Becker calls “extreme traumatising”, (Becker 2004) a concept describing the many layers of violence and loss that individuals can experience, even to a degree of ‘destruction of the individual, in his [or her] sense of belonging to society and of his social activities’ (Becker 2004: 5). While many organisations described trauma as an individual and collective process, located within specific political contexts, this was especially so for those working with a psycho-social approach.

Staff of organisations spoke about trauma in two ways. On the one hand, in relation to migrant’s experiences in their home lands or on route to South Africa. On the other hand, several organisations noted that existing trauma is often exacerbated and/or added to by the everyday challenges migrants face in South Africa: “people...whose trauma is somewhere in the Congo but keeps on being reactivated here”

(psycho-social organisation based in Johannesburg). This organisation summed up the ongoing trauma of their clients by stating that, “some organizations can close a file...I don’t have any closed files. Only when people die.” An organisation based in Cape Town used the term “multiple woundedness”, arguing that “often we separate mental health out from political, social and economic. And the trouble is that one is a manifestation of the other in many ways.” Another organisation from Cape Town explained their experiences with traumatised migrant workers in the following way:

“In their countries there is already trauma – it might be violence, it might be work, or food insecurity. Then they come to South Africa and on their way have to do with trauma. You don’t know if you will come out alive across the river, there are crocodiles...you have to pay to cross borders. Then you come to South Africa and it opens up a whole new field of new trauma. So everyday their lives its trauma upon trauma upon trauma. Then you have to go work for a farmer who will pay you peanuts. Money you can’t send it home because you have to live in a house where you have to pay 700 South African Rand [one rand equals 0,05 €] for one room, not even a house, it’s a shack, a backyard shack.”



Many people on the move undergo traumatic experiences finding their way to South Africa.

Critically, staff of organisations highlighted the direct role of the South African state and the asylum process in increasing and exacerbating trauma for migrants once in the country. Organisations expressed immense frustration with the convoluted and often unlawful processes which complicated, and often blocked, their attempts to assist even extremely vulnerable clients with documentation. A psycho-social organisation from Johannesburg described the frustrating process of trying to sensitise the DHA to the lived realities of their asylum-seeking clients:

“We went to meetings and hearings with the refugee appeals board, they kept on saying they are independent from Home Affairs and therefore hinting that they were more objective and open to suggestions. So myself and my colleague went to speak to them trying to introduce concepts of trauma and everything, then when we went for three hearings with highly traumatized clients, hoping – well, we sort of had an agreement that they would speed up the process, just to not keep these women in this precarious situation that they are, we thought they kind of understood. It’s been two years now.”

Importantly, some organisations highlighted that a lack of rights not only means an inability to access services but to be excluded from what Willen calls ‘the moral community of people whose lives, bodies, illnesses, and injuries are deemed worthy of attention, investment, or concern’ (Willen 2012: 808). South Africa’s overall shift towards increasingly severe restrictions on migrant rights fundamentally excludes non-nationals from belonging to, or participating in South African society. This highlights the impact that lacking documentation has not only on practical matters of access to services and safety, but also on migrants’ emotional well-being and sense of identity. As a legal organisation in Johannesburg explained poignantly, *“if there is one word I could use to speak of people that walk in here – it is ‘stripped of dignity’. Stripped of any sense of being a human being...treated badly simply because they do not have documents.”*

Spaces for connections: sharing stories and bringing people together

A number of organisations described the importance of creating spaces for people to come together in sharing stories and experiences, breaking down stereotypes and creating awareness of common hardships amongst

people who would ordinarily not interact much. One of the Cape Town based organisations noted, *“some people are transformed by this they go back home totally changed in how they see other people. Just because I have been stuck with other people [in a workshop] and in that process changed... because sometimes we see things from a distance: “they are like this, they are like that and we never really get to interact.”* In describing the development of their organisation, another organisation in Cape Town also highlighted the importance of finding points of connection: *“[A]ll the people who are xenophobic say things based on hearsay, we hear they are like this, we hear they are like that, so we developed other programmes that are based on common interest, like, let’s find the common interest. Because if I’m smoking and you’re smoking, we’re going to the corner there to smoke, the first day it’s nothing, tomorrow it’s hey, what is your name? And the next day and so on. So based on our common interest, we can build on that.”* Another one also described their process of bringing South Africans and foreign nationals together for dialogue as initially *“the biggest struggle”* but in the end, the most effective in fostering integration. They noted about a recent workshop in Katlehong outside Johannesburg that *“people there had just had their first dialogue and part of this was just a brief session on why refugees come to South Africa, most people don’t know this of course, and people started to say “my attitude has really changed towards foreign nationals”, it happens so fast, in some communities it is really fast, the change.”*

Listening and ‘being there’

The emphasis on the importance of listening and ‘being there’ for migrant groups by some of the organisations is particularly vital. Different to providing services or creating spaces for sharing, ‘being there’ refers to building trust, to being reliable and to providing consistency – which, for communities and individuals in precarious and unpredictable situations is extremely important. The words of one of the psycho-social organisations working in Johannesburg document this well: *“maybe we don’t change the structure but if we were not here, it would be much worse because they wouldn’t have anything. So at least, something is there”*. They went on: *“But for that to work it must be continuous and consistent. So, my ‘favourite’ client at the moment, is unbelievably difficult, and sulking, and behaving very badly – outside, not here – and is now too scared to come back. But when she comes back, I’m there...We’re not going*

away. *And I think that consistency is like a lifeline*". Similarly, an organisation based in Cape Town noted: *"We count our space as a safe space. People can come and be safe here, talk freely, in a peaceful environment."* An organisation from Johannesburg also captured the significance of 'being there' when one staff member recounted an afternoon in the aftermath of the 2008 xenophobic violence, where migrants, wrongfully arrested and then released again from the Lindela repatriation centre (South Africa's central detention centre) were sitting next to the centre on the street: *"And I will never forget that moment. I went out every day to Randfontein [an area in Gauteng where Lindela is located]. And at some point I just sat with them and said 'I don't know what to do anymore.' The ones that had a bit of money drifted back into the city, and the other just sat there. I was sitting with this Eritrean guy and I said 'I don't know what to do,' because by then the NGOs had disappeared, there was nothing anymore, there was no water, there was no food... and they said 'but you did something' and I said 'I didn't' but they said 'you didn't leave us alone.'"*

Some organisations also emphasised the importance of listening and 'being there' for staff members themselves. In fact, a number of organisations spoke about the impacts of working in such a challenging environment, where staff members are regularly confronted with difficult stories of trauma, hostilities, suffering and fears. The psycho-social forum in Johannesburg serves as a space where those working on psycho-social issues come together and shared challenges and stories, asked advice and received support.

A number of organisations felt that strengthening agency in individuals is important to enable people to tackle collective problems at a larger scale, as an organisation from Cape Town explained that *"the healthier you become, the more able you are to participate in journeys of justice, as opposed to being victims... you also want people to not just have resilience but to resist as well."* However, most organisations felt they were unable to change things structurally and rather focused on the small gains made in individual cases. While a few organisations maintained a positive outlook, many were despondent and disillusioned. Some were somehow able to be both. While describing in careful detail the battles they faced in their work, one of the organisations in Johannesburg also located hope in doing what they believe is right: *"You have to do it because it's right, because how can you not do it? And it does change individual lives, it does. And we're trying to change things structurally, as a collective, but the system is*

like fighting an elephant with an ant. But for me, personally, that is not the issue. Well, it is an issue, but I mean, how can we not do anything. Didn't they say in the Holocaust, don't say you can't change or save the life of a Jewish family because you can't fight Hitler?" Similarly, an organisation from Cape Town was also able to find positives in the current situation and in terms of how they had fought the system thus far: *"For me it is that we have to hold ground. I feel like we have a lot of successes...I really believe that refugees and asylum seekers can heal within a space like this."*

Chapter 5

Fostering Inclusion

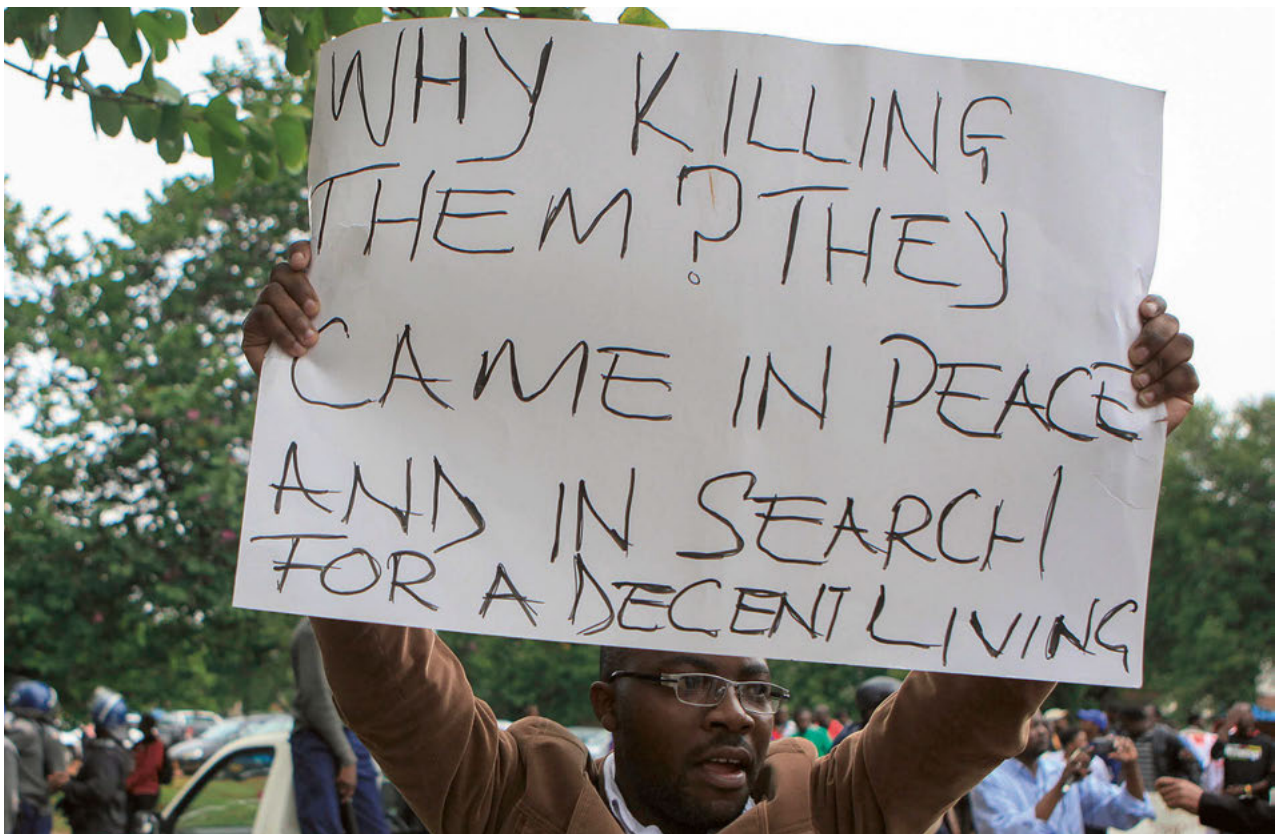
Promoting skills and integration

Beyond creating spaces to listen and share, a number of organisations also realized that many migrants needed more concrete assistance. Therefore, skills training is a common and popular area of intervention in terms of helping not only with migrants' socio-economic integration in South Africa and also to foster good relationships with host communities. A Cape Town based organisation for example noted, "[our] employment access programme is probably one of our biggest nets," attracting mostly foreigners but also locals. In the context of "building resilient refugee communities", another one described how they supported the Somali Association of South Africa in providing a number of classes including English, computer, self-reliance workshops and women and youth workshops to "have the skills to better integrate into South African society." An organisation from Johannesburg also described how they realised that providing spaces to bring communities

together and share stories was not enough: "we need to give them a take home". As a result, the foundation started to offer "business skills": "Many want to earn money, so let's talk about making money, how to spend money."

Raising awareness and changing perceptions

A number of organisations described their efforts in trying to raise awareness and change perceptions of migration and migrants in South Africa. One of the organisations interviewed in Cape Town for example noted, "we are trying to change the winds around the conversation around migration so this fear-based understanding of migration which is quite a knee-jerk response to what my problems are... we are trying to...change the discourse around migration from quite a negative, fear based one to one where it is perceived as



Despite xenophobic tendencies amongst the public, many South Africans and fellow migrants are advocating for the rights and protection of people on the move.

more of an opportunity.” They illustrated a new project they were part of that involved a public poll to find out public opinion on migration, with the intention of designing messages that could effect change as “*instead of waiting for something to happen and then you have to educate people and say well actually that’s not the case, this is the case, so instead of that, part of advocacy communications is to try and put the message out there first to that the event doesn’t happen*”. Noting that they had so far failed to change the overall discourse about migration the same organisation explained, “*I think we’ve been really timid, we’re very aware that the migrant is a scape goat and, in our communications strategy, we haven’t really talked to the public, we’re scared actually, we won’t talk to the public about migrants*”. This for them was the impetus to work on the poll and to gather an information base that could inform their work. This perspective is also backed by other legal organisations who noted, “*some advocacy would need to be done with South African citizens, because there is a very bad perception of what a migrant is, you have the good foreigner and the bad foreigner and so the xenophobia in South Africa is really fuelled by the citizens because they perceive foreign nationals as stealing their resources*” (legal organisation based in Cape Town). However, they were also cautious in placing the responsibility solely with civil society and made the point: “*civil society plays a critical role in this but it also has to come from our political leaders and our institutions to support this, and that will be difficult, because changing perceptions is one of the most difficult things in the world, and I would not even know if our political institutions would want to do such a thing because we even have people in parliament making such xenophobic statements that just cause society to be more xenophobic, so it’s a difficult thing.*”

Some organisations spoke about the importance of tailoring and targeting their interventions. One organisation from Cape Town for example provides “tool kits” specifically for journalists reporting on migration issues. Other organisations highlighted the need to ensure ‘real’ participation and inclusivity in workshops: “*where are the people from so-called grassroots communities? People who do not have formal education, what about their voice? ...We’re busy sitting there trying to talk on behalf of the people but who is representing those people?*” (organisation based in Cape Town). Databases such as Xenowatch which document incidents of violence are premised on the need to identify areas where interventions are needed the most: “*it gives you a map of the intensity, where is it taking place, who are the people who are being affected...this information can help NGOs and civil society to better come up with solutions...*

we analyse trends and suggest interventions based on evidence that civil society or government can adopt to intervene...there are clear high incident areas that are consistent.”

Chapter 6

Inequality, Divisions and Vulnerability

Poor South Africans and efforts to 'mainstream'

In contexts of socio-economic insecurity, where interventions specifically targeting migrants can cause or exacerbate tensions, interventions and frameworks specifically targeted at migrants often end up doing more harm than good (Kihato et al. 2017; Landau et al. 2017). Many organisations thus stressed the importance of understanding and addressing migrants' vulnerability within an understanding of the political, social and economic dynamics of South Africa. Staff of the interviewed organisations highlighted the struggles of the majority of poor, black South Africans in finding work, with being able to pay rent and with the poor quality of care in the public health system. One of the organisations in Cape Town pointed out the consistent racial and economic divides between black and white South Africans, shaped by the lasting legacy and damage of the apartheid era (Beetar 2018), leading to precarity, frustrations and anger amongst the South African population: *"The injustices need to be corrected. Because sometimes people say you must heal, you must heal, you must heal. But there is no movement in terms of reversing or transforming those injustices and then people are pushed to healing, heal heal heal, you know, rainbow nation, we won...you know, after 1994 people were hopeful. And now the new generation, our generation is like "hang on, it has been 25 years now of so-called democracy"*.

For a legal organisation based in Johannesburg, *"inequality has gotten worse, so that's the bigger picture. It's not as though South Africans have benefited from democracy, especially poor black South Africans."* Organisations were very aware that this context adds an additional layer of vulnerability for migrants since South Africans consider them as illegitimately burdening already compromised state resources. As one of the Cape Town organisations, who mostly work with non-migrant communities explained, *"It's a complex issue because SA has not dealt with its own poverty and inequality and it normally pits these two groups [South Africans and foreigners] against one another."*

All organisations were acutely aware that the overall context of poverty, unemployment and a lack of access to basic services made their work with and on behalf of migrant populations highly contested terrain: *"we're working in a space where.... a large percentage of the population lives below the poverty line so they are scrambling for resources"* (legal organisation in Cape Town). Most organisations

spoke about realising that they could not only exclusively work for and on behalf of foreign nationals. One organisation based in Cape Town explained *"the 2008 xenophobic attacks were a major wake up call for us. Before that, we had run the workshops for refugees completely separate to South Africans. So that was when we made a decision that we would from then on never work only with refugees. Made a principled mistake with that whole issue of the 'othering'. We couldn't do that anymore and made a conscious decision to change it."* Within limitations, this also applied for organisations specifically working for foreign nationals, as another organisation from Cape Town explained: *"we don't deny South Africans our service. But...our specialty is working with the specific challenges that migrants are facing, non-national migrants. So that is why we would do first level work with South Africans but then we would refer to a network of organisations"*. Organisations noted that the ability to cater to the needs of South Africans, at least to a degree, also helps in building relationships with government. One organisation based in Cape Town mentioned that *"there was big fire in the city back in 2007, we were like 'Wow, what do we do? They're South Africans', there was a hostel that burnt down, and all the people there were two migrants and the rest were all South Africans and the city phoned us and they were like 'What do we do? Disaster' and we were like 'Ja, come', so people came and we were able to provide clothes and do just basic welfare."*

Despite the overall socio-economically marginalisation of the population's migrants reside amongst, several organisations pointed out that there are still differences between citizens and non-citizens: citizen rights are, at least officially, not disputed. Staff members felt that South Africans have a higher confidence and ability to claim their rights where necessary. As an employee at one of the psycho-social organisations in Johannesburg explained, *"I have to be very careful about this because the difference is tiny, but it's an issue of rights...we also get reports from South Africans being treated badly at the hospital but not at that scope. I'm thinking about a [South African] colleague, who was not well, and we sent her to the hospital, I mean, she got seen."* An organisation from Cape Town working with women reported that migrants are *"expected to work from Monday to Sunday"* whereas *"local women would never work for seven days."* They also highlighted the extent to which migrants are denied protection from exploitation: *"we are not paid the same as local workers, when there's protective clothing we don't get protective clothing, we are expected to work for longer hours, for less money... so where do I feel protected?"*

To address the challenge, whether it is in interactions with the state or with communities, some organisations explained how important it is to integrate their work for migrants within areas of broader concern to South Africans as well. This echoes studies that show that approaches that capitalise on the fact that migrants share many identities with citizens (they are also children, students, parents, workers, entrepreneurs, renters, or landlords) can address the needs of entire populations, building solidarities and overcome potential resentments between hosts and migrants (Kihato et al. 2017; Misago/Freemantle/Landau 2015: 212). Many organisations suggested using the shared experience of past and present exclusion from full socio-economic rights as something to build on in creating common interests. An organisation from Cape Town highlighted that “pre 1994 we...created refugees of our own citizens,” stressing this as a commonality to build on. Similarly, a legal organisation from Johannesburg suggested that “the word dignity means a lot to

South Africans. We need to find a way to universalize it, make it international. Show that it is not just South Africans who lost dignity, we understand what happened to us when it was taken away due to the colour of our skin. How do we expand that and build solidarity?” While these mainstreaming attempts were often only in their infancy, much more of a future approach organisations considered promising than current practice, some organisations already implemented strategies to ‘mainstream’. Another organisation based in Cape Town explained its success in bringing together South Africans and foreigners on the basis of exactly such cross-cutting solidarity:

“In 2001, when there was a killing in New Crossroads [part of a township in Cape Town], they called me, and I talked to the Skollies [South African slang for gangster, petty criminal or hoodlum] there. They said, ‘they are taking our jobs, we must kill them’. And I said, ‘is it possible that we can meet again?’ And they said ‘no problem! ‘So, we can have a formal meeting?’ ‘Ja!’ So, I thought, that’s good. So, then



South Africans and people on the move alike continue to suffer under widespread inequality like for example access to housing and services.

we managed to get another meeting started. We met, I brought KFC, we start talking. They say, we don't know where these people are coming from, they take our jobs, they take our women, we are living in poverty, they are living good, if something is happening here, they are not interested in what is happening in our street here, I also asked the women, they said, no we are free to love who we want, I asked the migrants, they said these guys are always standing in the corner there when we walk past having nothing to do, so I changed a little bit the question and said let's ask differently, there were 49 people there, I asked 'among all of you here, who has visited table mountain'? And it went quiet. They were all looking at each other, why, Table Mountain? No never. And I said look, everyone from Europe goes to see Table Mountain, but you are all here killing each other. You are all poor, that is what you share! And one guy stood up and said: Yes, you are right! We are Africa Unite! And that is where the name came from. So, then they decided to meet in a school every Sunday after church".

Beyond the shared experience of poverty, organisations highlighted two examples where the interests of foreign and nationals overlap. The first is the right to work, as a legal organisation based in Johannesburg explained: "taking away right to work of asylum seekers, I think there is potential in conceptualising a campaign around the right to work, or the right to decent work." Secondly, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the topic of access to documentation. A legal organisation based in Cape Town explained that "a lot of South African kids don't have birth certificates, and that has ripple effects on their access to education, they are de facto stateless, so there is definitely synergy on the issue of documentation... it's not really spoken about much, there is not a lot of attention but they do contribute to the stateless community in South Africa, there is a large number of the rural areas." Another theme of common interest is that where foreigners are attacked, there is always collateral damage: During the violence of August and September 2019, 10 of the 12 killed were South African citizens (Diemen 2019). Similarly, a third of those killed in the 2008 attacks were not South African citizens but people 'who had married foreigners, refused to participate in the violent orgy, or had the misfortune of belonging to groups that were evidently not South African enough to claim their patch of urban space' (Landau 2011: 1).

Yet, a few staff members also explained that despite their attempts to include South Africans, they struggled to do so: "I get asked that question a lot: what are we doing for South Africans? If we can be honest here, the skills [we offer], in fact everything we do is for South Africans but they are not

taking care...employment is challenge to everyone. But with South Africans they are so selective, "we don't want to do this or that." Whereas another national will say: "I will do whatever I can learn" (organisation based in Johannesburg).

There is no such thing as 'the migrant community'

Organisations regularly pointed out the many differences and divisions of gender, ethnicity, religion and nationality amongst foreign nationals in the country. Manifesting socially, professionally, economically and spatially, this heterogeneity poses a range of logistical and conceptual challenges for the work of the organisations. It also highlights the limitations of treating 'the migrant community' in the singular.

Although multiple factors shape the nature and formation of groups, many organisations considered contexts of scarcity and insecurity as critical to the socio-spatial boundaries they observed emerging along the lines of nationality: "It's all about who gets biggest piece of cake, who can survive, whose kids in good school, can I afford school fees this month. Many organisations are trying to unify migrant communities but it becomes very political" (organisation from Johannesburg). Another organisation in Johannesburg also saw the formation of groups as a form of protection: "the Nigerian community are very protective of their space...also for their safety, "if we are together we are covered"... in most cases we don't have Nigerian clients, they are just on their own, even if they are poor...the Nigerians will look after one another. A Nigerian does not want to see another Nigerian suffer. So one day we asked xx to please come join us for our migrant group – he said "never" as he needs to make money... and like the Somalians, they will take a brother to work in their shop, they will [not] take somebody from somewhere else." In contrast, organisations spoke about Zimbabweans as more integrated: "Zimbabwean communities are spread all over...what we've picked up is that they don't want to be seen as foreigners in South Africa. They can speak Zulu, Ndebele. Actually South African. They have their ways to fit in."

Organisations also explained that South Africans, sometimes even organisations themselves, interpret the high level of cohesion amongst migrants of particular nationalities as problematic or even hostile and suspicious. In addition, stereotypes about particular migrant groups are pervasive in South Africa in general (Segatti/Adeagbo/

Ogunyemi 2012; Gould et al. 2010; Princewill 2015), and likely to shape the interaction of staff members with the clients they work with and assist. In the case of Nigerians, several organisations spoke about this group as having a reputation of drug dealing. In two instances, organisations supported this claim, arguing that “*Nigerians are killing this country*” (organisation based in Cape Town, similarly an organisation from Johannesburg). This should be problematised and discussed with Bread for the World partner organisations. Several of the organisations also considered Somalis as both the most integrated and organised as well as “*complicated to work with*” group (organisation based in Cape Town). Another organisation from Cape Town spoke about their difficulty in getting Somali migrants to participate in workshops and dialogues: “*their life is around business, so how do I convince someone to close their business and come to a workshop or a dialogue... for 3 hours or 4 hours? I understand, but I also understand that if you have good intentions you can negotiate, you can ask someone: ‘can you stay with my shop?’...But we appreciate those individuals who do come and we hope that through them we can build some bridges to others. And sometimes it is small beginnings, you know how to change one Somali you know he can be an advocate and bring others and mobilize others.*”

Gendered differences and difficulties

Across civil society and academia there has been increased recognition of the heightened vulnerabilities faced by migrant women in South Africa, particularly those responsible for dependants, due to the extremely high levels of sexual and gender based violence in the country (Walker/Vearey 2019; Gandar 2019). This has led to a number of interventions designed to target and support women and children. However, the intersecting nature of multiple vulnerabilities and needs including for access to material and reproductive health, financial support, employment, child care, access to schooling and psycho-social support makes this very difficult.

Many organisations identified gender as an important boundary within migrant groups. They also highlighted the need to understand power dynamics and the different meanings and experiences of gender relations within different spaces and types of interventions. Two

organisations based in Cape Town described the challenges engaging with Somali women and to get them to participate in dialogues or to attend much-needed English classes. In comparison, this organisation described the Somali men they worked with as often “standoffish” or “arrogant”: “*There is an arrogance there is a rudeness whether that is intended or not...whereas the women are not like that. So, in particular when women gain these kinds of skills, I think they are better placed to integrate but their lives don’t necessarily allow for that*”. Another organisation described the obstacles of trying to work with women as well as men: “*Early on our experiences was that we saw the young men who came to us for our services. Young men first and spouses later – spouses were at home with the children... later we started working more consciously with women – they needed to be part of the workshop.*”

A number of organisations spoke about the challenges of working with migrant women, in particular being able to access women independently from men. An organisation based in Cape Town, for example, spoke about the challenges of working with Somali women: “*To get women to attend a community meeting. That means high levels of discomfort ... if you find Somali men and women in the same space, they will relegate themselves separately.*” Similarly, another organisation from Cape Town talked about the challenges they faced when trying to access female Zimbabwean farm workers and ask them to participate in meetings. They described how leadership positions amongst migrants are always occupied by men: “*it’s a man, always a man. That is our challenge. We do have a challenge when it is men. Because when we invite migrant or foreign women to attend our events or workshops they will be there. They have to ask the men first or the men also want to come and see – what are we doing. We have to speak to them first before we go to women.*”

Many organisations also recognised the importance of gaining the women’s perspective in spaces described as “*a very-male dominated space.*” Organisations also noted that there were distinct differences in “*how men and women treat any kind of social problem*”. This was particularly mentioned in relation to seeking mental health support: “*the men are like we don’t talk about mental health. You go to the mosque and we pray that’s what they say. But the women will tell you a different story. The women speak to one another. I think we must not underestimate the women in that space either I mean the women hold that space I sometimes think they just let the men think that they are in charge*” (Cape Town based organisation). One of the psycho-social

organisations based in Johannesburg spoke about the fact that almost all of their clients older than 18 years were female: *“once you get into the child bearing and child rearing age, it’s almost exclusively women.”* They also noted that the few men seeking their services were single fathers who would come less for counselling and more for financial support and help with documentation and access to schools for their children.

The politics and reproduction of divisions

The interviewees responses pose important challenges to distinctions between ‘types’ of migrants – such as immigrant and refugee. While some staff members used these categories with little interrogation, most agreed with Fassin et al.’s argument that ‘these categories are constructions that reflect the work of institutions rather than an easily established empirical difference’ (Fassin/Wilhelm-Solomon/Segatti 2017: 163). Speaking about the case of a migrant woman who didn’t ‘fit’ the existing categories and faced significant challenges of obtaining help in a dire situation, one of the psycho-social organisations in Johannesburg explained: *“isn’t that the problem, that all this language, it’s completely obsolete...because obviously, the boundaries, it’s like economic migrants, forced migrants, it doesn’t reflect the reality...but it’s stuck in the law... it’s political, we have written about this in the academic field for years and years but nobody really does anything to change it.”* Similarly, a Cape Town based organisation with a similar focus explained: *“who is a refugee and who is a migrant, we could have a whole conference over this, and who decides...in a sense this simply reflects the reality that when life is tough, human beings move away.”*

In discussing migrant categories, a number of organisations considered the UNHCR as a highly visible yet deeply problematic actor. Organisations highlighted the discrepancies between the UNHCR’s limited focus on, and rigid adherence to refugees and asylum-seekers as their ‘People of Concern’ and the complex lived realities of their clients. An organisation based in Cape Town described how they tried to obtain UNHCR’s support for migrants in townships: *“that is when my relationship with UNHCR kind of went sour. They don’t understand, they are a not open minded about the situation of xenophobia and the context where refugees are living. You can’t direct your*

services and pass people and only give to one person.” This critique is also reflected in the following analysis of the UNHCR’s ambiguous status and role in reproducing divisive categories: *‘there is, perhaps, a subtle and dangerous irony in...building mechanisms or campaigns aimed at specific groups...if foreign nationals or other minorities are seen as having international allies... this may unwittingly build resentment among the disadvantaged majority who feel forgotten and angry’* (Misago/Freemantle/Landau 2015: 212).

While conceding that the UNHCR is perhaps the only organisation that is still *“able to sit around the table”* (organisation based in Cape Town) with Home Affairs, organisations also felt that this privileged access came at a high cost. According to a legal organisation from Cape Town *“the UNHCR takes on a very diplomatic role and so they are very conservative.”* In relation to funding, they added that the UNHCR is also *“conservative with what their partners can do.”* A legal organisation based in Johannesburg expressed their frustration about funding they receive from UNHCR for work that misses the root of the challenges migrants face, i.e. the role of the South African government in excluding foreign nationals: *“we write pages of reports, have to count every initiate we do as advocacy etc. – but in the broader scheme of things it doesn’t make any difference – we still have asylum system in crisis – so that’s not the indicator. That’s not going to change... all the work we do is around social cohesion – that’s not the bloody problem.”*

Although aware of UNHCR’s constraints, many organisations considered the UNHCR unable to strike a ‘balance’ between their protection mandate and maintaining a good relationship with the South African government. This was mentioned particularly in the context of not speaking out against the state’s exclusionary actions and state-sanctioned xenophobia. When asked whether they would prefer to see the UNHCR being bolder in what they say and do, a legal organisation based in Cape Town responded, *“[A]bsolutely. I mean, an example would be the 2008 xenophobic attacks, where they did not do enough, they did not come out against the South African government, that the country said this is not xenophobia, and the fact that the country at that time went on national television and said this was not xenophobia, so definitely, I think that the quiet diplomacy does not work, it will never work.”*

The meaning(lessness) of migrant categories for protection

Although empirically unsupported, rigid categories and associated rights play an important role in rationing rights and dividing up populations. The categorisation of migrants into different types – ‘legal’ and thus ‘deserving’ migrants and ‘illegal’ and thus ‘undeserving’ migrants – allows the South African state to rhetorically uphold its commitment to constitutional values while at the same time excluding the vast majority of migrants from rights and services unconstitutionally. As a legal organisation from Johannesburg noted in relation to the health care sector explained, *“migrants are an easy target. To try and just get rid of some of the burden on the health system, especially in Gauteng I think there is such a narrative of who are all these people coming here and should not get treatment etc. So, there is definitely an element of xenophobia.”*

Overwhelmingly, one’s identity as a poor, black non-national trying to access South African services almost universally means the denial of rights, regardless of documentation. Although the government frequently reiterates that “South Africa does not have a problem regarding refugees. The real challenge is undocumented migrants” (Motsoaledi 2019). It de facto places not only those without any documentation whatsoever as well as the asylum-seekers holding a section 23 permit (an asylum seeker permit) under similar suspicions of abuse and deceit (Landau/Amit 2014). ‘Illegal’ migration is conflated with criminality justifying a range of often coercive measures, including detention and deportation. During the August clashes between foreign traders and police in Johannesburg, the government’s main rhetoric targeted ‘illegal migrants’ (Coetzee 2019; Times LIVE 2019a; 2019b; 2019c; IOL 2019b; Sowetan LIVE/Sunday World 2019). Yet, the distinction between documented and undocumented matters little when it comes to the risk of arrest, hostility and expulsion. A psycho-social organisation in Johannesburg described how during the 2008 xenophobic violence, displaced migrants from one of the camps were urged to leave South Africa voluntarily *“and those who refused, whether they were documented or not... were sent to Lindela.”* Similarly, many of those arrested during the raids in the Johannesburg Central Business District (CBD) in August 2019 had valid documentation and even included South African citizens (Postman 2019; The Star 2019; IOL 2019a). A legal organisation based in

Cape Town drew attention to the practices of holding migrants in temporary detention in the same holding cells at regular prisons and together with the general population. This was also the case in terms of access to healthcare and other services as discussed under theme one. Organisations emphasised their frustrations of dealing with a state and with service providers who on the one hand made clear distinctions between those who do or do not deserve assistance, and on the other hand arbitrarily denied healthcare access, places in schools and other means of support to any one categorised as ‘foreigner’ despite their status and despite provisions in law.

Although the above examples refer to how the state and state actors make distinctions between “legitimate” migrants (i.e. refugees) and “non-legitimate” (i.e. undocumented and economic migrants) some organisations also equated “legitimate refugees” with rights and thus deserving of help while undocumented migrants (and also economic migrants) as without rights and possibly undeserving of them. When asked if their campaign for a universal grant for 18-59 year olds in South Africa included non-South Africans one of the organisations based in Cape Town responded that it will also apply to *“legitimate refugees with rights. Not undocumented... because refugees should have all the rights.”* This response could also indicate a difference between organisations who have historically worked with populations on the move and thus engaged with the complexities of ‘categories’ and those who have more recently added migration to their remit of work.

Chapter 7

Collaboration, Strategy and Impact

Locating ‘impact’ and ‘hope’: damage control and changing individual lives

Beyond the legal realm, where winning court cases against the government provides at least one objective measure of impact (even when the verdict is subsequently ignored by government), all other organisations that were interviewed for this study found it difficult to evaluate the effects of their work. However, organisations typically have little to go on in terms of clear, measurable indicators, establishing baselines and tools for evaluation. Asked about measuring impact, an organisation from Cape Town for example replied, *“that is always a very difficult question. Because...sometimes you can say the impact is that and that and that and you can point out a lot of things but sometimes you are not the only part of that journey for that person or that community, so sometimes it becomes difficult to say: ‘we made this contribution’. Or at least ‘this piece is us.’ So maybe based on what we see we can say this is working but not in terms of an overall impact on a person’s life, I mean we are made by different things...but we do base it on our testimonies So we do get to evaluate and see that but we are making some strides in terms of the improvement of the situation.* They went on to describe the role of “testimonies” as an indicator of change as a result of attending their workshops: *“some of them will say you know, ever since I attended the (...) workshop I have really I really gained a lot of confidence, and this is now helping me with other things in my life which help me see other opportunities. Whereas before I was locked in my own pain. But now I am able to come out into the world and utilise the opportunities.”* Speaking about their communications outreach, another organisation based in Cape Town explained that in many ways, measuring impact for them is “hard to do...it is not quantifiable”. They acknowledged the limitations of this, saying that *“we are feeling the changes, [but] we don’t want to be reliant on how we feel.”*

While most interviewed staff members had more or less resigned to do damage control, a few still had ambitions to effect more substantial change. However, they were aware that this required new approaches: *“we need new tools, we need new ways of thinking...we must start with accepting that it’s a different era and we can’t use same methods and the way in which we have been working. I think we see NGOs falling apart in this period... we are still working as if we are in the 80s and 90s”* (legal organisation based in

Johannesburg). The same organisation added, *“our vehicle is not right. We don’t have a powerful vehicle that would hold the state to account. And the vehicle is like the TAC [Treatment Action Campaign] mobilising thousands of people living with HIV. It was those bodies on the street that made an impact on the judge and the legal strategies...changed entire denialism – it was the activism. Even forced the media to change its narrative...We don’t have that. No one feels threatened when [name of organisation] denounces the state... what consequence is that?”*

While many organisations considered a range of different directions for the future, one strategy was central to how many staff members envisaged to tackle the machinations of the inherently unjust system migrants currently have to navigate: mobilisation around common interests, achieved through building coalitions across sectors, communities, borders and levels of government. For a legal organisation in Johannesburg, there is a need for a “common enemy” or, as a legal organisation from Cape Town said, for *“something that unites us.”* The organisation continues *“I feel like the closest we have come to having power is not when we stand up (...) on our own but when we have solidarity. When other organisations support us or we support them... that I feel makes an impact.”* Yet, organisations also stressed that they – and other organisations they work with – currently lack the time, energy and capacity to successfully conceptualise, operationalise and pursue such strategies.

Collaborative damage control without collective strategies

This section discusses how organisations described their work and the current role of civil society in addressing the challenges that populations on the move face in South Africa. Two key insights emerge, which, although seemingly contradictory, actually reflect the ambiguous, complex and narrowing spaces that non-state actors find themselves working within. On the one hand, all organisations considered collaboration very important: *“working collaboratively is a key part of what we are doing...we never work alone”* (legal organisation based in Johannesburg). Many noted an improvement to how organisations worked together and divided up issues to tackle them simultaneously: *“my sense is that it is getting better particularly amongst the other public interest organisations like Seri*

will take on housing cases, Black Sash will take on the social development cases, we will take on the health and education cases, LHR will take on the papers” (legal organisation based in Johannesburg). Although organisations spoke about the problem of ‘referring on’ (psycho-social organisation from Johannesburg) clients or cases from one organisation to another, with the risk of not being actually being helped, generally it seemed that “we can work together and support one another” (organisation based in Johannesburg).

On the other hand, despite working together and dealing with referrals on an everyday basis, more strategic collaboration is lacking. As one of the legal organisations in Johannesburg describes: “[T]he community of people who work with migrants don’t work very well together. We’re unable to collaborate properly, we are kind of hamstrung. I don’t know why that is, I really don’t...it’s a real frustration for me that there are a lot of organisations working on migrant rights and we don’t seem to be able to get it together. And coalitions are hard, but we do work in a lot of coalitions that do seem to work.” Other organisations also mentioned that although collaboration in other areas and around other challenges in South Africa had been effective, they really struggled in trying to bring people together in mobilising for migrant rights. One legal organisation from Johannesburg attributed this to the lack of “class solidarity.” Drawing on the success of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), an organisation that successfully campaigned for the availability of ARVS in South Africa and took the government and pharmaceuticals to court, the same person said “that is what we need – we do need movement of both people affected and of people in solidarity – South Africans – which would then show some power.” Similarly, another organisation from Johannesburg also drew a parallel with TAC in commenting on how effective their work was to provide protection to those with HIV and Aids in South Africa. Highlighting a contrast with migrants and organisations working with migrants they stated, “they are not organised they don’t have organisations they can rely on and they don’t have a lot of public sympathy so it is an easy target whereas if you try that with people with HIV then you have the whole Treatment Action Campaign on your back which is you know a group of previously very vulnerable people who are now extremely well protected.”

While almost all staff members were aware of the power of alliances, they also felt that these were very difficult to realise. This was a key issue in terms of not being able to move forward and effect systemic change.

Chapter 8

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations for South African Civil Society

Often based on several decades of experience, the insights and experiences of interviewed organisations document the ongoing importance of assisting migrants with the challenges they face in South Africa. For many migrants, these organisations provide much needed support and safe spaces in otherwise extremely challenging and inhospitable surroundings: from street level to interactions with the South African state, hostility towards migrants is deeply embedded in everyday life in South Africa. However, as highlighted throughout this report, the interviewed staff members were not only very aware of but exceedingly frustrated by the limitations they face in their work. Many expressed their despair about the many and mutually reinforcing risks and vulnerabilities of migrants, which, despite continued intervention by non-state actors on different levels, increase rather than diminish.

Yet, the report also shows the indomitable courage and tenacity of organisations as they battle to support and improve the situation of migrants. The interviewed organisations demonstrate significant awareness and expertise in navigating and negotiating the dynamics and sensitivities of both migrant and non-migrant communities and migrants' intersecting risks and opportunities in South Africa. Crucially, despite the many setbacks and ongoing frustration, many organisations somehow manage to hold onto a vision and hope for change.

Staff members also highlighted the need to adopt new strategies appropriate for a context where, as it stands, there is often little else to cling to 'little pockets of hope'. Many organisations wanted and needed to be engaged in interventions that can improve the lives of their clients while *also* addressing the root causes of what makes migrants vulnerable. What is apparent is that there is an urgent need to enable organisations to strategise around themes and coalitions able to address 'injustice itself' (Ackerly 2018) rather than only dealing with its consequences. This could enable organisations to move beyond damage control towards more substantial change. A legal organisation based in Johannesburg described their success rate in ensuring that non-nationals receive the treatment they are entitled to as high but also stated that "*it fixes the individual problem but it doesn't fix the system. There is no appetite to fix the system*". Another organisation from Johannesburg poignantly states on their website that '*psychological work is also political work. Individual change needs to go hand in hand with working towards an improvement of the social and economic conditions which put the emotional well-being of the individual at risk.*'

Given their extensive experience, the interviewed staff members had insightful, well-considered ideas about how to reform and improve South Africa's approach to immigration and asylum. As such, they are exceptionally well-placed to inform new strategies, provided they have the resources, space, energy and audience to conceptualise and propose new ways forward.

However, as it was described in the first chapters, organisations also have to navigate in a legal, political and societal environment that is characterized by lack of political will and implementation, increasingly restrictive regulations and actions by the state and general deep rooted inequality in the society that results in hostile, even violent behaviour towards people on the move. These systemic aspects limit the scope of action for civil society organisations even further. As observed, political actors in South Africa also don't provide firm and clear statements against xenophobic violence or the necessary protection of basic rights of people on the move in South Africa, but instead quite the contrary and follow the international trend of further limiting free movement, seeing migration as such and established asylum provisions rather as something negative. Thus, at the moment, they can improve migrants' world within, but only hold onto a hope of improving the world beyond. Therefore, drawing on the thoughts and ideas of the interviewed staff members through the findings, this report closes by offering a number of key recommendations to civil society and NGOs for ways of changing the current impasse and moving forward.

Recommendations to South African civil society and NGOS

- 1. Develop strategies that focus much more on the political nature of migrant exclusion** from street level to interactions with government, and address much more directly the role and incentives of formal and informal political actors in exploiting, condoning, ignoring or inciting anti-foreign sentiment. Such a focus on the politics of exclusion in South Africa is crucial in successfully addressing some of the key objectives pursued by organisations: facilitating access to documentation, lobbying for or mobilising against legislation, preventing the violation of migrant rights, tackling official and popular xenophobia and related violence and promoting regional and continental goals of free movement.

2. **Find “sites of mutual interest”** (Misago/Freemantle/Landau 2015: 78): Given their expertise, organisations working with and on behalf of mobile populations in South Africa are well-placed in suggesting ways to mainstream service delivery, protect human rights and enable access to documentation for all. However, such suggestions are likely to fall on deaf ears as long as they do not explicitly consider the constraints and (dis)incentives that shape how officials, politicians and other actors currently respond migration (Landau/Segatti/Misago 2011; Landau/Blaser 2014).
3. **Evaluate the impact of current interventions based on solid, empirical research:** A critical evaluation of programming, merit and impact can reveal where funding for some of the current interventions could be redirected and spent more effectively to focus more on strategic work and alliance building. Areas that should be subjected to more scrutiny include interventions addressing knowledge gaps, information campaigns, awareness raising, ‘myth busting’, community dialogues and workshops. These often focus on attitude change through information and/or interaction across differences that, although certainly having some merit, do not target the ‘institutional and political root causes enabling and incentivizing xenophobia.’ (Misago/Freemantle/Landau 2015: 211). In the engagement with government, a plethora of policy briefs, reports and reliable evidence suggesting more practical and even less expensive approaches to migration have failed to change government responses.
4. **Focus more on and allocate resources to the development of strategic collaborations** within and – crucially – across sectors, with the aim to strengthen solidarity and achieving a louder and more powerful collective voice on the rights of all people in South Africa, including migrants.
5. **Create spaces for debriefing:** while the psycho-social forum already exists, staff in other types of organisations are also frequently exposed to their clients’ traumatic stories of violence, discrimination and abuse and a sense of helplessness due to the ongoing challenges and limited resources, time and ability to help. It is important to acknowledge the toll this takes on staff and to provide them with safe spaces to debrief, discuss their frustrations and fears and offer advice on coping mechanisms.

Chapter 9

Migration, Right Wing Populism and Migration Policy – Comparative Perspectives from Germany

The preceding report has provided an in-depth look into the situation of people on the move in South Africa, the overall South African legal framework as well as the strategies and challenges of civil society actors working with people on the move and their host communities. In this chapter, we discuss the socio-political context of migration in Germany. This is not a comprehensive analysis, but rather a cursory overview reflecting on major parallels and differences in the two countries' contexts and intending to assist readers in drawing out insights applicable to their own work. At first sight, South Africa and Germany are two countries each with a specific and unique history and local context that might not seem to have that much in common. However, when it comes to the topic of migration and the ways it is dealt with, some parallels become apparent.

Brief migration history of Germany: from contract labour to more diverse forms of movement

Germany has a significant history of (im)migration, despite the country's long standing political narrative

that it is historically not a country of immigration (Einwanderungsland) – a narrative only phased out in the beginning of the 2000s. In the mid 1950s, the German economy, depleted by the war, relied strongly on temporary labour migration. Migrant workers were initially recruited from Italy in 1955, then, over the course of the 1960s from Spain, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and finally from former Yugoslavia. Recruitment stopped in 1973 due to the oil crisis and rising domestic unemployment. Although officially conceptualised as short term 'guestworkers', at least three out of a total 14 million migrant workers remained in Germany permanently. Many were eventually joined by family members (Höhne et al. 2014: 5).

Today, Germany has by far the largest foreign born population as well as the largest number of new asylum seekers in Europe, and on both ranks second worldwide, after the US (BAMF 2019: 12). 2017 estimates place the proportion of migrants as part of the overall population at approximately 15 per cent (UNDP 2017a). Individuals with a 'migration background' (this includes both first generation migrants as well as second or later generations born in Germany) even accounted for over 23 per cent of the overall population in 2017 (BAMF 2019: 13). In 2015, following the escalation of the Syrian war,



Migrants queuing at the regional office for health and social affairs (LAGESO) in Berlin, Germany, 2015.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2017
Germany	5 936 181	7 464 406	8 992 631	9 402 447	9 812 263	10 220 418	12 165 083
per cent of population	7,5	9,2	11,0	11,5	12,1	12,5	14,8

Table 3: International migrant stock at mid-year in Germany (both sexes)
Source: UNDP *International Migration Stock 2017*

Syrians constituted the largest group of newcomers, with overall immigration levels peaking at 2.1 million people, a 45.9 per cent increase from 2014 (BAMF 2019: 3). Syrians were still the third largest immigrant group in 2016 (BAMF 2019: 13). The number of applications for asylum in Germany reached an all-time high 745,545 in 2016, even higher than in 2015 when it was 476,649 (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 2019). Since then, numbers have reduced significantly – only 165,938 applications for asylum were registered in Germany for 2019 (BAMF 2019:2; Statista 2020).

From 1995 to 2017 the foreign population in Germany rose from 9.2 per cent to 14.8 per cent. At around 12.1 Million, foreign migrants account for almost 15 per cent of the overall population (UNDP 2017b). In 2017, just over half (50.2 per cent) of all immigrants in Germany were nationals of other EU states (BAMF 2019: 7).

Perception of migration as a threat on the rise

Based on a sense of migration as a threat to security, sovereignty of the state and prosperity, in both Germany and South Africa there is significant discrimination, hostility and violence towards foreigners. With Germany's Nazism and South Africa's Apartheid, both countries have histories of institutionalised discrimination and violence towards specific ethnic or racial groups that continue to shape contemporary forms of socio-spatial exclusion. However, there are important differences in the specific focus and forms of expression of anti-outsider sentiments, discriminatory practices and related violence in both contexts. While notions of burden and competition for resources also feature strongly in Germany, negative attitudes towards migration are additionally linked to the

purportedly negative impacts of immigration on national values and culture.

Besides fears related to the criminal activities of foreign 'family clans', concerns about security have a particular emphasis on terrorism. There are also fears about the impacts of Muslim immigration on national values and culture in Germany as well as an active debate on the importance and current 'failure' of integration. Following the inflow of Syrian refugees in 2015, attacks on refugees rose sharply. A rise in anti-Semitism alongside anti-Muslim sentiments and a rise in crimes motivated by right-wing extremism in general can be observed. Refugee shelters and hostels in Germany have been subject to arson attacks, vandalism and threats (Gopalakrishnan 2016). In 2015, the German authorities documented 1,005 registered attacks on shelters – five times the number recorded the previous year (Schumacher 2016). Yet overall, very few arrests and prosecutions have been carried out in response to the attacks.

The socio-spatial dynamics of xenophobia and right-wing populism in Germany

Without simplifying the complex German history and situation and far from explaining the local differences of xenophobia and racism in Germany, it is important to note that xenophobia and racist violence are particularly prevalent in Germany amongst those who feel that the reunification of East and West Germany has failed them – just as with South Africa's disappointment about the post-Apartheid promise. Taking action against foreigners, in rhetoric and practice, is cast as an expression of empowerment based on a narrowly defined concept of 'the people' (Müller 2016). The Eastern parts of Germany

remain socio-economically disadvantaged in many aspects compared to the West (Below/Powell/Roberts 2013; Connolly 2015; Lang 2019; Schneider/Castillo 2015). Attacks on refugees, migrants and People of Color are significantly more pronounced in East Germany (Dörre 2016; Best 2015). In 2015, The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutz) documented violent crimes with a right-wing background per one million inhabitants in the Eastern federal states of Germany as significantly above the average of those in the West (BMW 2016: 10-11).

Discontent about ‘uncontrolled’ immigration both fuels and is further fuelled by a relatively new political party, the AfD (Alternative für Deutschland, Alternative for Germany). While many Germans supported Angela Merkel’s politics of welcome (Willkommenspolitik) in 2015 (European Union 2013; Rietig/Müller 2016), it has also created a considerable backlash amongst parts of the German population and across Europe (Bartsch et al. 2018). While previous right-wing parties have not fared well in post-war Germany, the AfD entered the German Bundestag for the first time in the 2017 federal elections (Hayes/Dudek 2019: 8;13). Their ascent mirrors similar trends in growing success for populist anti-migrant parties across many European countries (Hayes/Dudek 2019: 8). Appropriating the slogan “we are the people” from those who protested against the division of Germany before the fall of the Berlin wall, the AfD have repackaged this expression of democratic resistance into one of opposition to migration and multiculturalism (Wassermann 2019). The AfD has been particularly successful in the states of the former East Germany, and in 2019 state elections in Saxony and Brandenburg the party achieved its best results ever. Interestingly, regions with actual high levels of immigration are not typically strongholds for the parties such as the AfD (Molkenbur/Cooper 2019). Instead, these are typically located in areas with large waves of outward migration since reunification. Young people have moved westwards leaving aging populations in contexts of economic stagnation (ibid).

While opposing the AfD, mainstream parties in Germany however increasingly also adopted more xenophobic rhetoric and tougher stances on immigration in a bid to diminish the attraction of right-wing parties for disgruntled voters (Hayes/Dudek 2019), to remain in power and to ‘preserve’ liberal democracy in the country. However, for migrants, at the receiving end of competing

political pressures and interests, this has largely simply meant more restrictions and exclusion.

Violence against visible minorities in Germany

Unlike South Africa’s popular mass mobilisations against foreigners, xenophobic violence in Germany is perceived as being committed by individuals or smaller groups (although these may be variably connected to large international right-wing networks or online communities). Between 2000 and 2007 the NSU (Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund, National Socialist Underground), a far-right terrorist group consisting of three people killed nine migrants, a police officer, committed three bomb attacks and attempted to kill a further 43 people. The volume of crimes motivated by xenophobia rose by almost 20 per cent from 2017 to 2018 (Bundesministerium des Innern für Bau und Heimat 2018: 5).



Proposed housing for migrants in Germany which was set on fire by right-wing extremists to disrupt placement of migrants.

Long standing anti-Semitic sentiment and violence has risen to renewed prominence in tandem with hostility towards migrants (Schiffer/Wagner 2010; Bunzl/Senfft 2008). There has also been a rise in crimes motivated by right-wing extremism in general (Staud 2018; Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat 2018: 2). In June 2019, a far-right extremist killed Walter Lübcke, a politician known for his support for the government's decision to open the borders to refugees in 2015 (Spiegel 2019). In 2017, 20,520 incidents of right-wing crime were recorded (Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat 2018: 2).

Asylum in Germany

As in many other European countries, promises of creating legal migration channels for low-skilled migrants have not manifested, leaving the German asylum system as the main channel through which migrants can attempt to legalise their stay. In Germany, the strong constitutional defence of human rights, the separation of powers and the rule of law, created following the demise of fascism, ensures strong institutional protections for 'liberal democratic rights and freedoms' (Molkenbur/Cooper 2019). German refugee policy is founded not only on the basic duty of permitting entry, but also by a positive duty to provide the necessary conditions enabling refugees to live with dignity and as equal members of society (Funk 2016).

In Germany, refugees are granted either entitlement to asylum or refugee status, initially for three years, or 'subsidiary protection', initially for one year (Funk 2016; BAMF 2019). Those eventually deemed to come from a 'safe country' are rejected and scheduled for deportation, although there is the possibility of a deportation ban for one year if deportation or return would endanger their life (BAMF 2018). Decisions to categorise a country as 'safe' have often less to do with a de facto improvement of conditions in a country (ProAsyl 2019), than with political pressures to increase the numbers of returnees. Legal status determines whether and when one can bring one's family as well as access to benefits, whereby those granted a recognised refugee status have priority for job training and language courses. However, as with South Africa, laws, policies their implementation are continually in flux and not always congruent. Huge backlogs in processing asylum applications in 2015 meant that only half the migrants that entered the country in that year

could actually lodge their applications for refugee status (BAMF 2019). Political pressure to settle asylum cases have increased hasty decisions that are often found to be faulty later on (Pro Asyl 2017). In 2018, over 30 per cent of rejected applications successfully appealed on the basis of wrong or deficient decision making (Pro Asyl 2019).

Increasingly restrictive immigration policy in Germany

Like South Africa, Germany's migration policies and legal frameworks are becoming increasingly restrictive and security-focused. In Germany, despite long-standing immigration, the integration of migrants was only legally considered a 'governmental task' in 2005. Critically, only those with legal status are considered part of integration measures. In fact, the emphasis on what some call 'compulsory assimilation' (Adam/Moodley 2013) has decisively coercive features. For example, those who fail to attend compulsory courses may lose benefits or the option of permanent residency, stressing the notion that "acceptable" migrants are those who blend in to the extent that they do not threaten German cultural identity and culture (Funk 2016). This applies particularly with respect to Muslim immigrants, based on the claim that Islam is not only incompatible with 'European values' and a German way of life but also has subversive political dimensions that render it a threat to the sovereignty of the nation-state (Choudhury et al. 2006). High-profile terrorist attacks carried out by Muslim extremists including the USA 9/11 attacks and attacks by violent Jihadists across European cities have exacerbated calls for restricting immigration overall and for implementing more demanding efforts of integration from migrants already in, or seeking to live, in Germany.

In stark contrast to this overall trend of exclusion, the German government led by Chancellor Angela Merkel took unprecedented steps in override EU wide agreements that require refugees to apply for asylum from within the first EU country they enter ('Dublin Regulation'). For about one month in 2015, Germany opened its borders to all refugees and permitted them to apply for refugee status in the country. Recently, a rapid series of new laws, including the so-called *Geordnete-Rückkehr-Gesetz* ("Orderly Return Law") exemplifies an approach increasingly geared towards exclusion and deterrence

(Crage 2016: 344) as well as the expansion of related powers of police and immigration authorities. These laws have been criticised by organisations such as Diakonie Deutschland, ProAsyl, Amnesty International and Arbeiterwohlfahrt, at least in parts, unconstitutional (Deutsche Welle 2017).

Germany and the EU – politics of containment

As in South Africa, Germany's trend towards more restrictions not only applies at a domestic level but is closely linked to parallel processes at regional and continental level. German legislation and policies are closely intertwined with European migration politics and reflect the continental focus on containment, return and exclusion (Stierl 2019; Banai/Kreide 2017; Diez/Squire 2008; Walker/Vearey 2019). Both Germany and the European Union increasingly justify restrictions less by the burden of migration for receiving countries than by the claim that migration is harmful for people on the move and the development of migrant-sending areas alike (Knoll/de Weijer 2016: 7; Bakewell 2008; Lindley 2012; Kleist 2015; Minter 2011: 12). Preventing people from moving is therefore increasingly presented as serving their own protection and well-being.

Furthermore, whatever progress on the African continent itself, towards continental and regional integration exist (Boulton 2009: 32; Klavert 2011: 13; Firamonti/Nshimbi 2016: 23-24) this is also increasingly undermined by ongoing European attempts to control movement not only northwards but also within the African continent. With leverage over substantial amounts of development aid, as well as other types of funding and trade, the EU is emerging as a very powerful actor in shaping African mobility in very specific ways. While this process has evolved over the past decades, the 2015 'migration crisis' in Europe and the European focus on 'managing' migration in 'safe and orderly' ways, has significantly spurred on the European externalisation of its migration agenda further and further into the African continent. It is important to note that although the relationship between the EU and Africa has often been described as unequal (with the Europeans 'imposing' their agendas onto the African continent), African elites are complicit in this process (Kihato 2018; Landau 2018c). The interests of

many African governments are aligned with those of Europe when it comes to resisting freer and safer mobility within regions and, eventually, the continent, even though on the other hand recent visions like the AU Agenda 2063 have set the continental freedom of movement on the agenda. Thus, while some of the unfolding effects of European externalisation may drive official African and European positions apart, many actually constitute common ground, albeit almost certainly to the detriment of African migrants and populations.

In conclusion, as these comparisons show, both countries face different social, political and economic challenges and have different capacities to provide welfare and security for the population within their borders. Yet, in both South Africa and Germany, migration is a highly contested issue in everyday life, politics and governance. Critically, the trajectories in South Africa and Germany both reflect global trends of increasingly restrictive immigration regimes, rising anti-migrant populism, the criminalisation of movement, incremental curtailments on the rights of asylum-seekers and the militarisation and externalisation of borders. When it comes to the topic of migration and the ways it is dealt with, some parallels became apparent. Strategies, reflections and struggles of South African civil society actors can thus inspire peer organisations working on the same or similar problems in a German context. At the same time, for organisations and readers based in Southern Africa, it is of value to realize that struggles and fights around integration and access to rights for people on the move are a growing challenge in both South and North and thus require networking and solidarity across regions. Recommendations addressed towards the South African organisations may also provide entry points and insights for civil society and state actors in Germany and Europe for tackling the integration of people on the move in their specific contexts.

Crucially, in their cooperation with civil society actors both in Germany and in South Africa, donors should re-evaluate how and where funding for some of the current interventions can be spent even more effectively to focus more on strategic work and alliance building of civil society actors working with people on the move.

Acronyms

AfD	Alternative für Deutschland
ANC	African National Congress (South African political party)
ARVs	Antiretrovirals
AU	African Union
BMA	Border Management Authority
CBD	Central Business District
COPE	Congress of the People (South African political party)
CT	Cape Town
DA	Democratic Alliance
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DSD	Department of Social Development
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IHOM	Institute of the Healing of Memories
IJR	Institute of Justice and Reconciliation
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party (South African political party)
JHB	Johannesburg
LHR	Lawyers for Human Rights
LRC	Legal Resource Centre
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
NHI	National Health Insurance
NSU	Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund (National Socialist Underground)
PWG	Parliamentary Working Group
RRO	Refugee Reception Office
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPS	South African Police Service
SCPS	Sophiatown Community Psychological Services
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WoF	Women on Farms

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