

# Ending the Age of the Marginal Majority

*An exploration of strategies to overcome youth exclusion, vulnerability and violence in southern Africa.*

FULL REPORT



*Southern Africa's population is made up mostly of young people. But are we building on our region's youthfulness for a more secure present and future? In a context of entrenched poverty, extreme inequality, and ongoing social conflicts, young people in the region disproportionately face conditions of social and economic exclusion and vulnerability that expose them to insecurity and violence, both as victims and as perpetrators. Yet, the unique needs and attributes of the region's youth who are at risk are not adequately included in our mainstream development and security agendas. What can we do to change this situation?*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome
CJCP	Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
CSVV	Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICVS	International Crime Victim Survey
HIS	International Homicide Statistics
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
NICRO	National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders
NIMSS	National Injury Mortality Surveillance System
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
One Voice	One Voice Mobilisation
REMAR	Rehabilitation of the Marginalised
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARUA	Southern African Regional Universities Association
SAYM	Southern Africa Youth Movement
SWAGAA	Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse
The Trust	The Southern Africa Trust
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNITA	Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

VOESA	Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa
WLSA	Women and Law Southern Africa
WHO	World Health Organisation
YDN	Youth Development Network

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As part of its focus on human security, the Southern Africa Trust (the Trust) has sought to understand the extent of youth violence and crime in the SADC region, as well as the underlying or contributing factors that can explain the levels of youth violence. To this end, it commissioned research on the extent and drivers of youth violence and the possible interventions that might be necessary to deal with this and related challenges, within a holistic understanding of the issue.

The research involved a review of literature pertaining to youth and violence in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), as well as a fieldwork component, which sought to assess youth violence in more detail within five selected countries – the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. The findings from both of these components were also shaped by inputs from three stakeholders – One Voice Mobilisation, the Southern Africa Youth Movement (SAYM), and the Youth Development Network (YDN) – during two stakeholder consultation meetings held at different points in the research and data analysis process.

In many respects this research is a starting point for understanding youth violence regionally. It is the first study of this type in the SADC region and the exploratory work begun in this research process should be complemented with further research that can establish regional trends more fully. What became clear in the research process was the complexity of youth violence, particularly when a holistic approach is taken to the issues that underpin its manifestation. Rather than providing quick answers about what might provide the most appropriate programming or policy interventions, the research uncovered a range of debates and issues that need to be taken into consideration in designing policy and programme initiatives in respect of youth violence. Some of these are presented in Chapter 4. This executive summary presents an overview of the key findings from the study, but should not be used in isolation for further planning. Programmatic and policy considerations need to take the full report into account.

This field of research is relatively underdeveloped within the SADC region and a number of limitations presented themselves in the course of the study. Firstly, there is a lack of statistical data that can establish hard trends with regard to the extent and nature of youth violence in the region. Secondly, much of the academic work being done on youth and violence is being conducted in South Africa, which means that the regional perspective is often skewed by the dominance of South African research. Every attempt has been made to balance this with other literature from the region where available, as well as with the fieldwork findings. This said, the study was designed as a literature survey complemented by case studies in five countries as outlined above. These case studies are able to highlight potential trends in the region, but are certainly not in themselves able to establish trends definitively. For this reason this report should be understood to be exploratory in nature, providing an enormous amount of information about youth violence in the region, but ultimately should be supplemented by further research.

### **Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for this study outlined ten key deliverables. Drawn from the objectives and expected outcomes presented in the terms of reference, the following are the key deliverables:

- a. Overview of the scale and magnitude of youth crime and violence in selected countries in Southern Africa
- b. Identification of the segment of the population that constitute youth at risk in the SADC region
- c. Development of a knowledge base on this segment of the youth population
- d. Identification of immediate causes, including the underlying drivers of youth violence
- e. Articulation of a gender-based perspective on the incidence of youth violence in the region
- f. Identification of policies and strategies, including best practice interventions to mitigate and prevent youth crime and violence
- g. Articulation of the role of stakeholders (private sector, civil society, media) in mitigation and prevention of youth crime and violence
- h. Knowledge and understanding of the capacity of youth organisations and structures at regional and national level to champion the fight against youth violence
- i. Recommendations on innovative mechanisms and interventions which are targeted at youth violence (national, regional and global level)
- j. Development of a database and information on organisations, institutions and individual experts working on youth, crime and violence (youth at risk).

One of the motivations for this research process has been to move away from the stigmatisation of young people as perpetrators of crime, as is often suggested in the literature. Rather, the study presents a more holistic analysis of young people and has considered the assets approach to youth resilience as a contribution to the discourse on youth violence. In this regard, the conceptual framework emerging from the research seeks to assess the broad developmental factors that need to be addressed to build the resilience of young people to violence and crime, as well as contextually bound factors that increase the vulnerability of young people facing particular circumstances.

This executive summary is presented according to the deliverables outlined above. Each section outlines the key findings related to that deliverable, followed by a short overview of the central issues that arise. For ease of cross-reference, the points at which these deliverables are dealt with in more detail in the report are indicated.

### **Deliverable 1: Overview of the scale and magnitude of youth violence in selected countries in Southern Africa**

Although statistical data required to establish trends is very limited in the region, the research was able to highlight the following key findings:

- a. Understanding the scale and magnitude of youth crime and violence is dependent on how youth violence is defined and understood.

- b The scale and magnitude may be underestimated because very often violence may be so normalised in society that it is not considered as violence (e.g. corporal punishment).
- c Key forms of violence that seem to be common across the countries profiled include domestic and sexual violence, violence located at schools such as bullying, and political or systemic forms of violence.
- d Other forms of violence such as cultural violence may be more subtle and might not be considered to be a problem because of the extent to which they have become normalised in societies.
- e Violence may take collective forms such as gang, political or mob violence.

Chapter 5 deals in more detail with the extent of youth violence in the region and Chapter 6 discusses the various forms of youth violence that are evident in the region.

In order to understand the forms and extent of youth violence in the region, the researchers had to establish key definitions of what might constitute youth violence. Chapter 4 outlines the approach taken in this study with regard to defining youth violence. It notes that youth violence needs to be understood in two ways in order to make sense of data and take into account broader debates:

- Firstly, a narrow definition of youth violence is required in order to analyse the statistical data that is available about youth and violence in the region. In this regard youth violence is understood to mean involvement of young people, whether as victims or perpetrators, in incidents involving the threat or use of physical force against other people in the context of interpersonal or inter-communal or other conflict or crime.
- Secondly, a broader definition takes into account the many ways in which violence is normalised: "The concept of violence is extremely diffuse extending from physical and psychological injury, particular forms of crime and uncouth behaviour on the roads and in sports, to socio-political discrimination" (Imbusch, 2003: 16).

It is important to note that the perception that domestic and sexual violence are key forms of violence may in part be driven by advocacy efforts that have raised the profile of these issues. Other forms of violence, such as male-on-male assaults, may therefore be underestimated as forms of violence in people's perceptions. This indicates a need for a statistical survey of youth violence in the region to be conducted in order to reliably establish trends that test the emerging findings cited here.

## **Deliverable 2: Identification of the segment of the population that constitute youth at risk in SADC**

Young people are disproportionately affected by violence, both as victims and as perpetrators, as the following key findings show:

- a Young men are far more likely to be victimised and to perpetrate violence than young women, although the fieldwork suggests that this is changing, with young girls increasingly becoming involved in perpetrating violence.

- b It is very often young girls who are victimised when it comes to sexual and domestic violence, particularly because of the cultural and social expectations attached to gender in the countries profiled.
- c Very often these young girls experiencing violence lack recourse because of prevailing social attitudes that consider domestic violence to be a private matter.
- d Violence may also take on various racial, ethnic or class distinctions. However, trends in this regard could not be drawn regionally, since this will differ depending on how race, ethnicity and class are defined and politicised in each country.

Beyond the clear gender differences in perpetration and victimisation, it is very difficult to establish major trends for the region when considering who the key victims and perpetrators are with regard to race, ethnicity and class. This points to the need for surveys in the region to reliably establish trends. The issue of which groups are most affected by youth violence is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5.

### **Deliverable 3: Development of a knowledge base on this segment of the youth population**

A holistic view of young people has been taken in this report, for two reasons: First, as noted above, it has not been possible to segment the youth population across the region in order to identify which segments might constitute key victims or perpetrators of violence. Secondly, it was important to avoid stigmatising any one group as victims or perpetrators of violence. The reality is that many young people in the region face circumstances of vulnerability that predispose their exposure to violence as victims or perpetrators. These circumstances need to be prioritised in order to build youth resilience and empowerment. This report therefore aims to contribute to the knowledge base on youth violence in the region and serves as a springboard for further discussion and research. It cites articles and published literature and, where soft copies of this information could be accessed, makes these available on a CD-Rom in order to provide access to current knowledge on youth at risk in the SADC region.

### **Deliverable 4: Identification of immediate causes, including the underlying drivers of youth violence**

The issue of the underlying drivers of violence is a particularly complex matter, especially when viewed through a youth development lens. In addition, there is a need to understand young people's resilience as well as their vulnerability. Some of the key findings here are:

- a In order to understand youth violence, an holistic approach is necessary.
- b Such an approach shows that identifying single causal factors of youth violence can often be misleading since a range of factors need to be taken into account to explain the complexity of youth involvement in violence.
- c From this point of view it is important to recognise that the period of youth is a transition period characterised by increased vulnerability among young people living in already difficult situations such as poverty, conflict and social contexts of extreme inequality.

- d The following issues all contribute to a situation in which young people find themselves in situations of vulnerability to violence:
  - transitions in society
  - inequality
  - poverty and unemployment
  - legacies of violence
  - conflict situations, and
  - the normalisation of violence.
- e For young people to establish their identity they need to forge close identification with particular groups. Where young people are not able to access positive social capital or empowering social networks, they often become more vulnerable to high risk behaviour. The marginalisation of young people in societies can therefore increase their vulnerability and heighten their exposure to, or involvement in, violence.
- f For certain young people issues such as early victimisation and experience of violence in the home, substance abuse and other such factors might make them particularly vulnerable to future victimisation and/or perpetration of violence.

These findings demonstrate that a range of structural factors can increase the risk of young people's involvement in victimisation and the perpetration of violence. However, this is not to say that all of these young people will become involved in violence. In fact, as discussed in Chapter 4, understanding young people's resilience in the face of this vulnerability may provide guidance to the elements of effective interventions. It also suggests that a variety of interventions may be required to ensure that young people's needs are addressed in order to afford them the best opportunities for positive growth and development, and that targeted interventions are required to deal with particular vulnerabilities such as substance abuse and early victimisation.

Further information on the key drivers of youth violence can be found in Chapter 7. The conceptual framework that emerged from the research is discussed in Chapter 8 and helps to inform good practice in the interventions required to deal with youth violence.

#### **Deliverable 5: Articulation of a gender-based perspective on the incidence of youth violence in the region**

Gender is a theme that is examined at various points throughout the report. Gender plays a role in identifying the concentration of violence among perpetrators and victims; understanding what drives youth violence; and understanding the ways in which structural issues related to gender further exacerbate the cycle of violence. The following are some of the key findings related to gender:

- a The literature tends to focus on young men as perpetrators and young women as victims. This constrains our attempts to understand the complexity of how gender manifests itself in relation to youth violence.
- b There is nevertheless clear evidence suggesting that young men are far more likely than young women to be both victimised and to perpetrate violence.

- c Emerging research and anecdotal evidence suggests that the involvement of young girls in the perpetration of violence is increasing, but this may in part be a result of an increased research focus in this area.
- d The perceived prevalence of domestic and sexual violence means that young women are at high risk of being victimised.
- e Because the period of youth is associated with identity, issues related to masculinity and femininity may have a large role to play in how violence is acted out and who is victimised. This is addressed in section 7.3.1.
- f Dominant cultural notions attached to gender identity may contribute to the normalisation of particular forms of violence, particularly domestic violence and bullying.

The gendered nature of identity is particularly important since it is during the period of youth that young people are questioning and exploring sexual identity. How young men are socialised with regard to their masculinity (and women in terms of femininity) may impact on violence in their future lives, particularly where the role models that young people are exposed to do not promote positive gender relations. Interventions should therefore include components that deal with gender identity as well as positive gender relations. The gendered perspective is a theme that permeates the whole report and as such is not dealt with in a separate section.

#### **Deliverable 6: Identification of policies and strategies including best practice interventions to mitigate and prevent youth crime and violence**

The study developed a conceptual framework to understand the key drivers of youth violence. It highlights the need to deal with structural youth development issues as well as particular vulnerabilities in order to build youth resilience. The conceptual framework was also used to understand the types of interventions – both policy and programmatic – that are currently being used in the region and to determine good practice. Below are some of the key findings:

- a From the above discussion it is clear that as a matter of good practice, any interventions aimed at dealing with youth violence in the region need to address both the general vulnerability of young people and specific factors that make certain young people particularly vulnerable.
- b At the same time, the normalisation of violence is a key consideration and needs to be addressed through advocacy and awareness building if violence is to be addressed.
- c A social development approach to policy that is developmental rather than remedial in nature emerges as the best approach. Policies dealing with young people should first and foremost prioritise their development through education, skills training, livelihoods and civic engagement.

Certain youth **policies** in the region are already doing this. Chapter 4 as well as Chapter 10 provide an overview of the current situation in the region with regard to youth policy. What is missing from the regional youth policy landscape is an orientation that addresses youth issues as integrated and mainstream concerns. Unless young people's needs are prioritised in public policy across all sectors (education, health, social development), it will be difficult to reduce the systemic factors driving youth vulnerability. A mainstream policy

approach to youth needs will help connect young people more fully with the social, economic and political lives of their communities and countries, and ultimately help to build their resilience.

At the same time, specific policies are also necessary to deal with particular vulnerable groups. Such policies might relate to sexual violence and youth in conflict with the law, amongst other issues. Here there are two key factors that emerged as good practice.

- d Policies must be able to build awareness about the issue they are addressing. In Swaziland and Mozambique, for instance, the development of policy on sexual and domestic violence has gone hand-in-hand with building awareness about the ways in which culture has legitimised violence against women and how that needs to shift.
- e Addressing the needs of particular vulnerable groups still requires an integrated and developmental approach that seeks to rehabilitate young people rather than stigmatise them. In this regard the Child Justice Act of South Africa is an example of good policy.

Beyond policy interventions, **programmes** need to speak both to the developmental needs of all young people as well as to particular vulnerabilities.

- f Almost all of the organisations interviewed in the five countries were involved in a mix of activities including awareness building, skills training, civic engagement and programmes for young people with particular needs such as substance abuse.
- g In addition, many organisations were dealing with issues pertaining to gender and gender relations. Often this was in response to domestic and sexual violence issues and raising awareness about relationships between men and women, and the empowerment of women.
- h A holistic and integrated approach to dealing with youth vulnerability can be considered good practice for the region.

Chapter 10 provides a detailed discussion of best practice approaches to both policy and programming in the five countries surveyed.

### **Deliverable 7: Articulation of the role of stakeholders (private sector, civil society, media) in mitigation and prevention of youth and violence**

The research highlights the importance of taking an integrated approach to any intervention addressing youth and violence, and involving a range of stakeholders in these processes. This is because interventions need to take account of structural youth development issues as well as particular vulnerabilities in order to build youth resilience. Detailed information about the specific roles that these stakeholders can play in an integrated approach to youth violence is discussed in Chapter 9. The main findings are as follows:

- a There is a key role for international role-players. For instance, international conventions provide impetus that can be leveraged by organisations lobbying for changes at the national or local levels.
- b International NGOs also play an important role since they are often well-resourced and capacitated, and may provide examples of good practice.

- c Regional leadership and support is needed to ensure that youth violence is seen as a priority by member states.
- d At the national level, the state needs to work with civil society organisations to (i) put effective public policy in place, and (ii) to support the work of civil society organisations providing services to young people.
- e Civil society organisations play a crucial role in building public awareness around the issue of youth violence and in advocating for policies to support their work.
- f Civil society organisations are at the forefront of the challenges when implementing programmes with young people and play a vital role as an intermediary between the state and communities.
- g Within the communities there is a range of stakeholders that must play their role in ensuring that young people are kept safe. This provides opportunities to work with schools, religious groups and families in dealing with youth violence.
- h The private sector, whilst currently not playing a major role in youth development, emerges as a potential partner in the fight against youth violence.

**Deliverable 8: Knowledge and understanding of the capacity of youth organisations and structures at regional and national level to champion the fight against youth crime and violence**

The fieldwork data identified strengths and successes of organisations and institutions working with young people in the five countries surveyed. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 11 section 11.1. Some of the key **successes** include:

- a An ability to continue advocating for changes in legislation that will serve to protect women and children with regard to violence, often in the face of a lack of political will.
- b Good skills in the arena of developing public awareness, whether it is through schools-based programmes or social marketing campaigns, which also takes into account dominant cultural perceptions that might need to be challenged.
- c The infrastructure and knowledge of organisations involved in HIV work, which often involves young people, and provides good opportunities for collaboration.
- d Connectedness with communities – many organisations are working closely with communities and provide a key point of contact for many young people, as well as experience in connecting with schools, churches and other community organisations.
- e International NGOs bring good resources, knowledge and capacity that can be leveraged.
- f The existence of youth councils or ministries, whilst not without their problems, must be seen as a strength that can be leveraged.

Key **challenges** that face organisations and institutions involved with young people, and which need to be taken into account in developing a holistic approach, are discussed in section 11.2. These include:

- g State-civil society relationships which in many countries are often less than favourable. This will need to be dealt with in order to remove obstacles to an integrated approach to designing interventions focused on youth and violence.
- h Private sector-civil society relationships are largely absent, thus constraining the ability of civil society organisations to leverage partnerships and funding.

- i Sustainable funding is a continued constraint for many organisations, particularly those working at the community level.
- j This may be further exacerbated by the fact that there is often little interest from major funders in youth issues.
- k The ability to attract and retain good staff is also a challenge, particularly since working with vulnerable young people may result in burn-out for qualified professionals and volunteers.
- l Very often organisations are working in a context in which there is a lack of awareness and inappropriate or poorly co-ordinated policy frameworks that can guide their work and get commitment from all sectors.
- m Youth structures may be perceived as being partisan, and are often ill-equipped to champion youth issues effectively.

**Deliverable 9: Recommendations on innovative mechanisms and interventions which are targeted at youth and violence (national, regional and global level)**

Three key sets of recommendations on innovative mechanisms and interventions to target youth violence were identified.

The first was for **advocacy in relation to policy development** at both regional and national levels. Some of the recommendations include:

- a Encouraging each of the SADC member states to develop a national plan to prevent violence against youth. Regional impetus such as a SADC convention to encourage this in all member states may be necessary.
- b Working towards eliminating the minority status of women, which still prevails in many countries in the region, in order to ensure that everyone is equal in the eyes of the law. In this regard the declarations on Gender (1997) and the Addendum to the Declaration on the Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (1998) could be leveraged.
- c Ensuring that legislation that deals with the violence most affecting young children and women – domestic and sexual violence – is developed, tabled and promulgated in all countries. Again the Declaration on the Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (1998) could be leveraged to provide regional impetus.
- d Given the high levels of school violence identified in some of the SADC countries, there is a need to lobby ministries of education to establish and enforce a code of conduct in schools to prevent violence against learners.
- e Where young offenders are still treated according to adult criminal codes, there is a need to ensure that policy is put into place that will ensure that young offenders are provided with rehabilitative mechanisms, rather than simply being incarcerated. In this regard the Child Justice Act in South Africa provides good practice guidelines, and the African Youth Charter contains a number of provisions that could be leveraged to promote this approach.
- f There is also a need to ensure that broader youth development issues are placed on the national agenda as matters worthy of urgent policy attention. These include youth unemployment, poor quality education, and social cohesion. The African Youth Charter should be seen as a mechanism for gaining regional commitment for such an agenda.

There is also a range of recommendations related to **advocacy aimed at challenging commonly held norms and values** that emerged from the research. Specific recommendations from the field include:

- g Youth and the issues that they face as well as the contribution that young people can make to communities needs to receive greater priority at the state level.
- h Cultural factors, which allow or sanction violence in society, such as acceptance of school bullying amongst boys, corporal punishment, and the unequal position of women in society, must be more openly addressed in public debate.
- i Youth violence should receive the same amount of attention on the public agenda as do other issues such as HIV and AIDS.
- j A public awareness campaign should be initiated to educate learners about sexual abuse and what constitutes sexual abuse (given that it often becomes normalised when such abuse is experienced from an early age). In addition, awareness needs to be built about people's responsibility for reporting instances of sexual abuse when these come to light. In this regard, there may be a need to ensure that communities are empowered on these issues so that they know how to report the issues.
- k There is a need for the widespread dissemination of information regarding children's and young people's rights as well as the laws and structures that deal with child and sexual abuse.

Thirdly, at the programmatic level, there is a range of **developmental programmes** that can address some of the underlying factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young people and their involvement in violence as victims or perpetrators. Some of the recommendations arising from the fieldwork in this regard include:

- l Gender-specific training programmes regarding domestic and sexual violence could focus on gender awareness, empowerment, human rights, children's rights and the effects of domestic and sexual abuse.
- m There is a need to promote civic engagement and youth development opportunities to foster the vibrant associational life of young people. This should be supported by creating the social, political and economic conditions that encourage this form of social capital.
- n Investment in extra-curricular activities such as sports, arts, cultural activities and service opportunities is required to enable young people to actively explore their assets as well as their own potential.
- o There should be a focus on the empowerment of young people through the development of life skills, professional skills, assertiveness and coping strategies.

Besides the above developmental interventions there is also a need to **ensure that the needs of particularly vulnerable youth are addressed** in relation to their involvement in violence, and that contextually specific and appropriate interventions are made available to them. Specific recommendations from the field in this regard include:

- p The need for more services to be available for victims.
- q There is a need to ensure that victim empowerment is centrally placed on the public agenda.

- r Mechanisms focusing on the rehabilitation of offenders should not ignore the need for victims to be empowered; they should be offered an opportunity to see justice done.
- s In dealing with young offenders, there is a need to ensure that rehabilitation mechanisms are available. In this regard:
  - o More and better juvenile detention facilities are required which focus on vocational training and counselling programmes.
  - o There should be more organisations that focus on young offenders and other vulnerable youth to ensure that restorative justice is carried out and that other vulnerable young people are afforded opportunities to avoid involvement in violence.
  - o Consider expanding the age range for rehabilitation and restorative justice programmes. Currently in many cases these programmes only cater for youth up to the age of 18. It may be necessary to extend these services to young offenders up to the age of 21.
  - o Ensure that young girls who are involved in the perpetration of violence are afforded the same services.
- t “Particularly vulnerable groups” is a term that seems to be context-specific – in some instances this might be youth soldiers, while in others it might be young people who have been victimised. There is thus a need amongst community-based organisations working in partnership with schools and other stakeholders to identify particular groups or areas that are vulnerable and target interventions accordingly.

Finally, there is a range of recommendations regarding the **development of capacity or organisations to champion the fight against youth violence**. In this regard the following recommendations arise from the field:

- u Successful youth programmes dealing with HIV and AIDS awareness issues and related youth development issues could be harnessed to implement additional programmes dealing specifically with issues of violence of a more general nature.
- v Capacitating existing civil society organisations as regards financial assistance and human resources enhancement would have a direct impact on addressing youth violence.
- w The private sector should not be ignored as a potential partner. The importance of corporate social responsibility should be emphasised and private sector investment in youth empowerment encouraged.
- x In addition, given the limited capacity of many organisations, it is necessary to guard against them becoming overburdened with new issues that might impact on their existing focus.
- y There is a clear need for networking and partnership between organisations to ensure that lessons of good practice are shared and that the strengths of various organisations can complement each other in this sector.

**Deliverable 10: Development of a database and information on organisations, institutions and individual experts working on youth, crime and violence (youth at risk)**

Through the fieldwork as well as recommendations from the stakeholders, a database of organisations working in the field of youth has been developed, which has been

submitted with the report and is now held by the Trust. This should by no means be seen as an exhaustive list and should continually be updated in order to build a useful and accessible network of organisations working in the field of youth development generally, and youth violence in particular.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

In the words of the IRIN (2007) report on youth in crisis, “across the globe, a generation of youth is rapidly reaching adulthood bearing the tragic consequences of their nations’ worst problems”.

Southern Africa is believed to be the region of the world with the highest overall levels of death by violence, as a result of both crime and conflict.<sup>1</sup> As the report will explain, in many Southern African countries there is a paucity of statistical data concerning the involvement of young people in violence. Nevertheless, the interviews conducted during the fieldwork component of the study demonstrate a perception that violence is an important factor in the lives of Southern African young people. For instance, as is demonstrated in Table 1 below, South African data over the period 2002-2007 indicate that violence was the leading cause of non-natural death for young people in the age cohorts 15-24 and 25-34.<sup>2</sup>

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
<b>15 to 24-year-olds</b>	Violence (56%)	Violence (58%)	Violence (51%)	Violence (52%)	Violence (48%)
<b>25 to 34-year-olds</b>	Violence (56%)	Violence (56%)	Violence (48%)	Violence (49%)	Violence (44%)

**Table 1: Leading non-natural cause of death for youth in South Africa (% of all non-natural deaths) (NIMSS data)**

South African data show that youth not only constitute a major proportion of victims of violence, but are also the major contributors to the perpetration of violence. Violence often emerges as a feature of the issues that young people face as they make the transition from childhood to adulthood. Understanding the trends and drivers of youth violence as they manifest in the SADC region is one of the key motivations for this study.

As will be discussed, young people in Southern Africa face other challenges such as completing secondary education and developing sustainable livelihoods. In addition, many are marginalised within their communities and have very few opportunities to participate meaningfully in society. These factors all contribute to the vulnerability among young people to a range of risks, including high-risk sexual behaviour, substance abuse, and involvement in violence and crime.

<sup>1</sup> UNODC estimates cited in Geneva Declaration, 2008:4.

<sup>2</sup> This and following sections of this report make extensive use of data from the South African National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS).<sup>2</sup> NIMSS data are categorised by 5-year age bands. Data from four age bands covering the ages 15-34 are used extensively in this report. These data are used because they correspond quite strongly with the 14-35 age parameter used to define youth in this report. Note that NIMSS data reflect in the SADC region of 40% or fewer of non-natural deaths (though homicide coverage may be up to 60%) and are biased towards metropolitan and, to a lesser extent, other urban areas. Though the profile of mortuaries in the NIMSS system has changed over the years, and changes in data may partly reflect changes in the geographic profile of mortality which is provided, Table 1 suggests that there may be a trend in South Africa involving a declining contribution by violence to youth deaths. In addition there are substantial variations within South Africa in the contribution of violence to overall levels of youth mortality. For instance, during the period 2002-2007 in Cape Town and eThekweni, violence was responsible for a much higher proportion of youth deaths than in Johannesburg and Tshwane (Cape Town 70%-57%; eThekweni 64%-54%; Johannesburg 56%-39%; and Tshwane 49%-35%).

As this report will argue, the issue of violence involving young people relates particularly to the fact that the social networks and resources available to many young people in Southern Africa do not provide them with the means to adequately and meaningfully cope with, or understand, the world they are confronting, or to realise their full potential as active citizens of their countries and the SADC region.

### **1.1. The Southern Africa Trust's interest in youth violence**

As part of its focus on human security, the Southern Africa Trust (the Trust) is interested in understanding the extent of youth violence and crime in the SADC region, as well as the underlying or contributing factors that can explain the levels of youth violence.

The Trust has a mandate to work at the SADC regional level to influence policy. This happens through influencing the SADC Heads of State as well as through a range of regional networks of civil society organisations. The Trust therefore aims to foster regional and national policy dialogue and debate, and to make recommendations for policy and programmatic interventions that will address the challenge of youth and violence.

The Trust partnered with One Voice Mobilisation to commission a study on the drivers and trends of youth and violence. One Voice Mobilisation also identified the need for the establishment of a database of knowledge and interventions to profile what organisations are doing on the ground to mitigate violence against and among youth. One Voice contributed substantially to the methodology and theoretical framework of the study as well as to the assessment of various drafts.

Two other key stakeholders in the youth sector – The Southern Africa Youth Movement (SAYM) and the Youth Development Network (YDN) – were closely involved in the study through providing access to contacts throughout the region, assessing drafts and contributing to the emerging findings through workshop discussion.

### **1.2. Interpretation of the Terms of Reference**

The research commissioned by the Trust is aimed at providing an evidence and resource base, on the basis of which debate can be facilitated amongst stakeholders, including policy makers and organisations working with youth, in the SADC region. The research covers a range of issues pertaining to youth violence. The terms of reference for the study indicate that youth violence must be understood holistically and that the research must be conducted with a gender perspective in mind.

**The objectives of the research are to:**

- Investigate the scale and magnitude of youth crime and violence in selected countries in Southern Africa and identify immediate causes, including the underlying drivers of youth violence.

- Articulate a gender-based perspective on the incidence of youth violence in the region.
- Review various interventions and strategies to prevent and mitigate crime and violence amongst youth in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and to identify best practices around the world.
- Explore the potential role of the private sector (corporations and businesses); civil society (voluntary, arts, community service, faith-based, and other organisations); the media (television, radio, newspapers, internet, mobile communications); and official institutions (health, education, safety and security, social support) in the prevention and mitigation of youth crime and violence.
- Investigate the capacity of youth organisations at regional and national levels to lead and champion the drive against youth crime and violence and to mobilise other stakeholders to become involved in the initiative.
- Propose appropriate interventions and mechanisms to respond to the main issues identified in the key objective areas of the study in relation to youth crime and violence.

**The research should result in the following outputs:**

- Identification of the segment of the population that constitutes youth at risk in SADC and building of a knowledge base on this segment of the youth population.
- Identification of policies and strategies including best practice interventions to mitigate and prevent youth crime and violence.
- Articulation of the role of stakeholders (private sector, civil society, media,) in mitigation and prevention of youth crime and violence.
- Knowledge and understanding of the capacity of youth organisations and structures at regional and national level to champion the fight against youth crime and violence.
- Recommendations on innovative mechanisms and interventions which are targeted at youth crime and violence (national, regional and global level).
- Database and information on organisations, institutions and individual experts working on youth, crime and violence (youth at risk).

The following tasks emerged from the above terms of reference and were agreed upon by the Trust during the inception meeting:

- Identifying the underlying drivers of youth violence in the Southern Africa region.
- Investigating the extent of youth violence and crime in the SADC region and in four selected countries.
- Understanding youth violence from a gender perspective.
- Identifying and assessing current policies and practices aimed at youth at risk.
- Reviewing selected interventions and strategies aimed at youth at risk, and particularly at youth violence in selected countries.
- Assessing the capacity of organisations and interventions to deal with youth violence.
- Identifying challenges, lessons and good practices with regard to interventions aimed at youth at risk.

- Making recommendations to improve interventions and mechanisms that respond to youth at risk, and particularly to youth violence and crime.
- Developing a database of material related to youth violence in the SADC region.
- Identifying organisations working on issues of youth violence in the SADC region.

At a later stage, the Trust will commission further work to examine the potential role that civic engagement can play in mitigating and dealing with youth violence.

VOSESA and the CSVR were commissioned to conduct the research and proposed a five phase methodology, as outlined in Chapter 2: Overview of research process and methodology.

It is envisaged that this research will be used to influence debate among stakeholders in the SADC region regarding the policy and programmatic interventions that can be developed to impact on youth and violence. It is also envisaged that it will provide a springboard for the continuous updating of regional information on youth and violence.

## Chapter 2: Overview of research process and methodology

The methodology as agreed with the Trust involves a five phase process for the research, which incorporated a desk review, a fieldwork phase, and two workshops designed to engage key stakeholders identified by the Trust on the issues emerging from the fieldwork. Information on each of the phases is provided below.

### 2.1. Methodology for the full study

The **first phase** involves a desktop study aimed at providing a regional picture of the forms, extent and drivers of youth violence in the SADC region. The report generated from this phase is intended to shape the fieldwork component once it has been assessed by stakeholders in a workshop constituting the **second phase**. The **third phase** involves data collection in five identified countries – Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe – aimed at identifying organisations working with youth at risk and interventions pertaining to youth and violence, and assessing the capacity of organisations to deal with this issue. The findings from the countries were presented at a second workshop in the **fourth phase**. The findings from the desk study, the country data, and the input from stakeholders at the workshops was written up into the final report in the **fifth phase**.

### 2.2. Methodology for phase 1 – desk study

The research team collected published articles and literature through various database searches and by drawing on published literature accessed through their own libraries and networks.

In addition, raw data from various surveys on violence in the SADC region was analysed, including the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS), the Afrobarometer survey, various victimisation surveys conducted by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), and data from the South African National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS) in order to comment on the forms of violence and the extent of youth violence in the SADC region.

A key challenge identified in the proposal phase was that, in addition to published literature, there may be unpublished literature developed by organizations working with young people. The research team aimed to identify such literature by working through networks of contacts such as the Southern Africa Youth Movement (SAYM) and the Youth Development Network (YDN) that were helpful in identifying relevant organisations. However, when these organisations were contacted by VOSESA, little literature was forthcoming. For this reason, the in-country researchers were also asked to identify literature produced by the organisations that they interviewed. Where documents are

available these are included on a CD-ROM that contains all resources and policies identified through the full research process.

### **2.3. Methodology for phases 2 and 4 – workshops**

A key component of the research as outlined in the terms of reference and in subsequent discussions was for the research team to ensure that young people did not simply become the subjects of the research, but were afforded the opportunity to collaborate in the research and shape the eventual outcome of the report. For this reason, VOSESA included two workshops in the research design, which served two purposes. The first was to provide an opportunity for youth stakeholders to give input into the report and to shape the final product. Secondly, the workshops served as a feedback and validation mechanism so that stakeholders could provide input and request changes. The stakeholders involved included the Trust, One Voice Mobilisation, Southern Africa Youth Movement and the Youth Development Network.

### **2.4. Methodology for phase 3 – in-country data collection**

The research methodology was designed to ensure that the report had a regional focus, with the primary research in the field providing the means to verify the trends identified through the desk review process, as well as exploring further questions raised in the workshop. Fieldwork was conducted in five countries: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. These countries were selected for two reasons:

- They represent different types of socio-economic and political contexts within the region. The DRC, for instance, represents a conflict situation and Mozambique a post-conflict situation. Zimbabwe presents the situation of a failed state that has produced high levels of political tension, while South Africa presents a situation of political reform, but one that demonstrates severe levels of economic inequality. Swaziland presents a political system governed by a monarchy with the presence of strong traditions governing social life.
- Representatives of these five countries serve in influential positions related to human security amongst the SADC Heads of State and are thus important players in influencing regional policy.

The fieldwork is intended, firstly, to deepen the understanding of the key research questions in the four selected countries and, secondly, to address the following:

- Amplify our understanding of the drivers of youth violence;
- Amplify our understanding of gender and youth violence;
- Deepen our understanding of policy approaches with regard to youth at risk;
- Identify types of approaches to dealing with youth violence;
- Identify interventions in the four countries as well as in the SADC region;
- Assess the capacity of organisations working with youth violence in the four selected countries;

- Analyse the challenges, lessons and good practice in respect of youth and violence in the four selected countries.

#### **2.4.1. Country contextual profile**

The primary research methodology required the country researchers to conduct a socio-economic and political scan of the country to provide an overview of the history of the country, the situational context of young people, policies guiding work with young people, and the relative strength of the state, civil society and private sectors in each country. This provided the background for understanding some of the similarities and differences in youth violence across the countries.

The brief for the country contextual profile of the country included:

- A brief historical overview of the country
- The demographic profile of youth
- The role and capacity of the state, particularly in regard to youth (this should include an overview of public policy instruments concerned with youth at risk)
- The role and capacity of civil society, particularly in respect of young people
- The role and capacity of the private sector and its involvement, if any, with young people
- State-civil society relations
- State-private sector relations
- Private sector-civil society relations.

The contextual analysis provided the research team with background information against which to analyse the data on relationships between the sectors, the capacity of organisations working with youth and violence, and their funding potential.

#### **2.4.2. Interviews**

Through the SAYM, One Voice Mobilisation, the Trust and YDN networks, as well as the researchers' own experience in each country, organisations working with young people to address issues of youth vulnerability and youth violence in particular were identified. In each country 3 to 4 organisations were targeted for interviews, with the exception of South Africa where six organisations were interviewed.

In each organisation, interviews were conducted with the programme manager or appointed respondent, as well as with a beneficiary of the programme where this was possible.

Interviews were conducted according to a semi-structured interview guide and covered the following areas:

- The programme's views on the extent of youth violence in the country and the drivers of youth violence;
- The programme's vision and mission;
- The programme's approach to dealing with youth vulnerability and violence, and how the programme approaches gender issues;

- How young people are viewed by the organisation/programme (assets/deficits/other);
- The capacity of the programme/organisation in human resources, funding, equipment and skills;
- Relationships with the state, other civil society organisations and the private sector;
- Key successes for the organisation;
- Key challenges for the organisation;
- Other organisations that the organisation/programme works with or knows of, working in the field of youth development and youth violence in particular;
- Views on good practice in working with youth vulnerability and youth involved in violence.

The semi-structured nature of the interview guide enabled researchers to probe issues as they saw fit, but also provided a framework to ensure that all of the questions in the schedule were covered in order to ensure that the data is comparable across countries.

Interviews were written up into interview reports (see Appendices 2 to 6) which provided the basis on which the country reports were developed.

## **2.5. Limitations**

### **2.5.1. Desk review**

The limitations of the desk study phase of the research relate directly to the nature of the published literature, the consistency of the raw data available, and accessibility to unpublished literature.

As was anticipated, accessing unpublished literature was difficult, despite the contacts provided by the YDN and the SAYM. It is therefore clear that one of the long-term outcomes of the debates that follow this research should be to develop a mechanism for information and document exchange by organisations working with young people in the SADC region.

With regard to the published literature, three key challenges limit the desktop study. The first is that much of the literature is published in and about South Africa. The Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) identified the low levels of published literature in the region and the dominance of South Africa in academic publishing as two key challenges facing higher education in the SADC region (2009). In addition, youth issues, and particularly youth violence, are not priority areas for most academics and institutions. This further limits the extent of published literature pertaining to youth in the SADC region.

Secondly, the literature that has been published on youth and violence in the SADC region tends to suggest that violence is largely prevalent among poor, black, male youth, thereby reinforcing stereotypes of youth violence. The intention in this report is to move away

from such stereotypes and to assess youth violence more holistically, as an issue that affects young women as well as young men. However, from a gender perspective the literature is particularly narrow, as is discussed by Jefthaz and Artz (2007: 40) who state that,

... despite attempts to bring to the fore concrete illustrations of the ways in which crime affects women and girls and to fill the knowledge gaps in theory and a range of other subject areas, ... the fundamental question of 'where are the women' remains.

While the limitations of the published literature have to some extent been challenged by the fieldwork, continued research needs to reshape some of the published literature in this field in order to provide a more holistic assessment of youth and violence.

Furthermore, a number of challenges were faced in analysing the raw data sourced for the desk review. In respect of information pertaining to levels of youth violence in the SADC region, the data is very uneven. South Africa has relatively good monitoring systems that have provided helpful data. In other SADC countries, however, monitoring systems are either not in place or they are relatively weak. This not only reinforces the dominance of information on South Africa, but also constrains the comparability of data across countries. For further information on this challenge see Appendix 9: Challenges pertaining to data on violence in the SADC region.

### **2.5.2. Primary research in the field**

The terms of reference call for primary research to be conducted in four countries – the DRC, Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland. At the first workshop it was suggested that a fifth country be added to the field research component. Zimbabwe faces particular social and political conditions that may be pertinent when considering how youth violence is affected. For this reason Zimbabwe was included for in-country research.

As outlined earlier, the primary research was designed to examine issues emerging from the desk review in more depth and to provide fresh insights into the drivers of youth violence and the responses to this issue, as case studies of organisations working in the field of youth violence or youth at risk in each of the countries. Interesting findings emerged from the case studies that point to potential trends with regard to youth violence and interventions in the region. However, the nature of case studies is such that generalised statements about these trends for the region as a whole cannot be made. They do, however, provide indicative trends that will need to be verified through continual and more extensive research.

The in-country researchers also faced particular challenges in the field. In Mozambique, for instance, it was difficult to fix interview dates and times with some respondents in advance since this type of arrangement does not work within the prevailing norms of Mozambican society. In addition, some interviewees refused to commit themselves until the day in question, and then changed the arrangement at very short notice. Other potential respondents did not respond to numerous attempts to contact them. One organisation involved in youth rehabilitation work declined to be interviewed on the

grounds that the last time researchers had visited, the ensuing report had caused serious problems for them with their funders.

In all of the countries visited there is no reliable and up-to-date database of organizations working with youth and youth at risk. The researchers therefore had to depend on referrals from team members and other points of entry such as government departments or researchers in the field of youth research to identify appropriate organisations. The development of a database of organisations is therefore a first step to rectifying this situation.

In the DRC, the researcher noted that state institutions responsible for youth and youth at risk do not maintain records of their policies, actions, and evaluations, making it difficult to source reliable information in this regard.

The fieldwork could have been far richer had the budget allowed for researchers to spend more time assessing a broader range of organisations, particularly since the travel and time limitations meant that researchers were limited mainly to the capitals and urban areas of the various countries.

Research in the DRC was negatively impacted by logistics challenges such as transport, access to state institutions and access to international NGOs. The culture of secrecy and controlled access to public information is still very prevalent within many state institutions and even international agencies such as UNICEF.

Given these constraints, the group of respondents interviewed is a fair one and the challenges in themselves provide insights into the situation within which any interventions are to be made. For instance, it is clear that youth organisations working in the area of violence are not many in number and are not highly visible. In addition, most of the organisations work on youth violence as only one part of a broader social development programme. These are in themselves important aspects to take into consideration.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

Given that this research is being conducted in a field in which there is relatively little prior research from the SADC region, the aims of the research are broad and in many ways all-encompassing. While every effort has been made to focus on the pertinent issues, it must be noted that gaps will remain until further research can be conducted on specific findings raised through this report, and others. Nevertheless it is hoped that this report will contribute significantly to the discourse and will stimulate thinking and further research by stakeholders in the region in the future.

## Chapter 3: Background to youth violence in the region

The focus of this study is on youth and violence in the SADC region. As defined by membership of the SADC regional co-ordinating body, the Southern African Development Community comprises the following countries: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.<sup>3</sup> While it is recognised that each of the 15 countries in the SADC region has different challenges and opportunities, and that the cultural and socio-economic factors in each country are different, it is also worth noting that the SADC region shares a great many commonalities. It is therefore important to outline the SADC regional context with regard to youth violence specifically and to examine how young people are viewed more broadly in the SADC region. This section therefore provides a background to the SADC region, assessing the SADC regional and historical context of violence, as well as how issues pertaining to young people are dealt with at the level of policy.

### 3.1. Regional context of violence

Southern Africa encompasses the SADC region from Central Africa southwards. Historically, it is a region that has been characterised by violence and conflict, both in the pursuit of independence from external colonial or imperial rulers and internally between competing political or ideological factions.

#### 3.1.1. Colonisation, Cold War and political conflict

After World War II, the imperial powers governing countries in Southern Africa were under strong international pressure to decolonise. However, the transfer of power to an African majority was greatly complicated in Southern Africa by the presence of entrenched white settlers in many of the countries. From 1945 to about 1958, white power seemed to be consolidated in Southern Africa through renewed white immigration to, mainly, southern and northern Rhodesia, Mozambique, Angola and South West Africa. Nevertheless, decolonisation began in the 1960s with the relatively peaceful achievement by 1968 of independence by those territories under direct British rule (Tanzania, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia and Malawi), although in the Belgian Congo, the process of decolonisation was overshadowed by violence which at certain points escalated into armed conflict. The struggles for independence in the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, and in the former British colony and white-minority-ruled Rhodesia, were far bloodier, and independence for these states was only achieved after violent conflict.<sup>4</sup>

The fight for independence in Southern Africa was impacted by global politics, as the superpowers on both sides of the Cold War provided military training, arms and financial

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.sadc.int/>

<sup>4</sup> Information for this paragraph was gathered from the Encyclopaedia Britannica, available at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/556618/Southern-Africa/43825/Independence-and-decolonisation-in-Southern-Africa>. See also [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo\\_Crisis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis)

support to the parties concerned, in order to safeguard their own ideological and material interests in the SADC region. Superpowers such as the United States and the then Soviet Union supported various opposing regimes and dictatorships. South Africa's apartheid government also saw it as necessary to involve itself extensively in armed conflict in the SADC region as a means of maintaining white rule in South Africa. In addition to engaging in a war with the Namibian liberation movement which eventually drew it into armed conflict in Angola, it involved itself extensively in war in Mozambique, principally through backing of the armed movement RENAMO. It also launched armed attacks into Botswana, Zimbabwe and Lesotho in order to attack members of the liberation movements who were based in those countries.

The end of the Cold War precipitated a movement towards peace in countries that had experienced conflict up to that point. Independence in Namibia and the first democratic elections in 1990 coincided with the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall, though this was also a product of the military stalemate that had been reached in Angola between the opposing forces (South Africa and Unita on the one side, and the Angolan government forces and Cuban fighters on the other). This brought to an end the protracted violent conflict between the South Africans and the Namibian liberation movement.

In Zimbabwe, although the fight against white supremacy was in many ways resolved by 1980 when Robert Mugabe assumed power, political tension and violence has continued to play a role in political life, including the terror campaign waged against the Ndebele people in the 1980s. More recently the strengthening of opposition to the government of Robert Mugabe under an opposition political grouping, the Movement for Democratic Change, has led to a decade of violent political oppression only recently halted in 2009 by the formation of a tentative and fragile government of national unity.

Swaziland continues to be governed by the monarchy and repressive measures have been imposed by the authorities on pro-democracy activists. In Mozambique, a peace agreement was signed in October 1992, followed by democratic elections in December 1994 and therefore presents important findings about a post-conflict situation.

In South Africa, the 1980s and 1990s heralded a period of intense violence within the country. While political leaders engaged in a process of talks that eventually led to democratic elections in April 1994, violence raged in many communities, fuelled in part by the perception that the balance of power on the ground would shape the outcome of the negotiated political settlement.

After 1994, the violent conflict in Angola dragged on, finally culminating in a peace agreement in 2002. The final years of the war in Angola coincided with a shift in the locus of conflict in the SADC region from the more southerly part of the SADC region to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in the north-west. In the DRC, events became intertwined with the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 with armed Hutu opponents of the post-genocide Rwanda Patriotic Front-led government basing themselves in refugee camps which had been established in the eastern areas of the DRC. This conflict became intertwined with competition to take over as the second-generation

post-colonial political leadership with the intention of deposing Joseph-Désiré Mobutu. After Mobutu fled the DRC in 1997 and power was seized by forces under Laurent Kabila, conflict escalated into a regionalised civil war with strong ethnic overtones which, at one point, involved the forces of Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Rwanda and Uganda.

During the transition to independence and democracy in Southern Africa, violence was not only legitimised, but was often deemed noble and necessary among grassroots communities. The proliferation of small arms in the SADC region, partly as a result of the arming of protagonists in the Cold War, has also fed into the prevalence and lethality of violence in the SADC region. The growing number of young people in the SADC region also provides a ready source of recruits for various groups involved in violence, whether armies and militias associated with conflict in the DRC or the criminal gangs associated with the urban areas of South Africa and other countries in the SADC region. In Zimbabwe, roving gangs of youth militia have played a key role in intimidating opponents of the ruling party and terrorising the civilian population since the constitutional referendum of 2000. For instance, the 2005 Amnesty International report indicates that “throughout the year [2004], Zanu-PF supporters and youth militias were ... implicated in the assault, abduction and intimidation of those believed to be members or supporters of the political opposition”. In one such incident in September [2004] “police, war veterans and youth militia attempted to forcibly evict some 10 000 residents from Porta Farm, an informal settlement on the outskirts of Harare” (Amnesty International, 2005: 283). The elections in 2008 were marred by violence, and ZANU-PF has been accused of using current and past youth service participants to intimidate the general public, particularly in rural areas. The media have referred to these young men and women as “Mugabe’s militia”. Common perceptions are that the national youth service has produced a reserve of ZANU-PF loyalists who were largely responsible for the violence carried out in the period prior to the elections in 2007/8.

In many of the violent conflicts that have ravaged Southern Africa, civilians make up the vast majority of casualties (see the discussion below of war-related deaths in the DRC). Women and children make up a substantial number of these casualties,<sup>5</sup> and the use of (mainly) young boys as soldiers or militia members has been widespread. The transition from conflict to fragile peace in the SADC region has also seen the often poorly implemented disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of many soldiers and child soldiers, creating a population of ex-combatants (many of them still youth) who have been implicated in acts of violence, with different security and stability implications for the countries in which this has happened.

### **3.1.2. Economic violence**

Besides the political violence that has characterised the region, parts of SADC have also been characterised by economic violence. This was perhaps most extreme during the period of colonialism where indigenous populations were heavily exploited for the benefit

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5 For instance, a report on war-related deaths in the eastern DRC during the early stages of the war indicates that 53% of deaths from violence were males over 14 years of age, with the balance being women and children (International Rescue Committee, 2000:11). A report covering the eastern and western DRC, at a point when the death toll from violence was apparently much lower, indicates that two out of three deaths in the west were of young boys. One of the 11 deaths in the east was that of a woman. However, young children are particularly susceptible to ‘indirect conflict deaths’. The latter report indicates that the vast majority of deaths were from disease, with children under 5 accounting for 47% of these deaths. Figures on war-related mortality are discussed further in this report (International Rescue Committee, 2008:7)

of the colonising country. This is nowhere better highlighted than in Hochschild's book *King Leopold's Ghost* (1998), which outlines the violent exploitation of local populations in the pursuit by colonial powers of greater quantities of rubber, the profits from which went directly to King Leopold of Belgium.

South Africa's mining industry is also one that has been characterised by the exploitation of various groups of people over time. In 1918 the Anglo American Corporation, backed by the South African government of the time, acquired German diamond interests in South West Africa (which at the time amounted to 21% of the region's diamond production) at knock-down prices. This acquisition was crucial to the company's subsequent take over of De Beers in 1929, just after the start of the Great Depression, which gave the company complete control over the region's diamond production. Namibia never reacquired its diamond mining assets.

The growth of the mining industry, particularly the gold mining industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, was dependent on the use of cheap labour and fostered systematic discrimination against Africans who were displaced from fertile land and kept out of burgeoning cities. Much of the labour required for mining in South Africa was sourced from within South Africa's borders, through the Hut Taxes and later the Land Act (1913), which pushed Africans off their land and forced them to enter waged employment, often in the mines of Johannesburg. However, the mines required still more labour and sourced this by actively recruiting workers from neighbouring countries (particularly Mozambique and Malawi [formerly Nyasaland]) and as far afield as West Africa.<sup>6</sup> In order to maintain their hegemony over labour, the mining barons, supported by the Chamber of Mines, devised a divide-and-rule strategy that housed African workers in separate compounds, on an ethnic basis. The management of labourers from a range of Southern African countries was thus based on the creation of conflict and tension. While it cannot be said that this historical relationship has caused violence in the region (since violence is also experienced in countries with very different socio-historical legacies), there is no doubt that these historical developments played a part in producing a set of social relations between local and foreign nationals, between white and black indigenous communities, and between classes. The systematic dehumanisation of Africans by the apartheid regime in South Africa, for example, speaks to a lack of respect for human life and could be considered as one of many factors underpinning tensions.

In his article on violence in Africa, Samuel Kobia (2000) speaks of 'self-financing civil wars', which occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War, whereby internal conflicts were based not only on ideological differences, but also on a struggle for the control of mineral resources. Kobia (2000) explains that in Angola, after the Cold War, "the USA and several European countries that had supported UNITA and RENAMO decided that this was no longer tenable. So having been built into a huge military force, UNITA in particular had to turn to mining diamonds to finance the war". Similarly, in the DRC, groups claiming to

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6 According to Innes (1984:25), by 1873 approximately 30 000 Basotho had been forced, through dispossession and taxation, to seek work in South Africa, including on the mines; by 1893 about 75% of African workers on the gold mines of the Rand were Mozambicans (1984:51). Following efforts by the mining industry to control the supply of African labour by cutting wages and through the government's passing of the Pass Law of 1895, Mozambican workers withdrew their labour and the Chamber of Mines tried to recruit labour from as far afield as Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Gold Coast. In the early 1900s, persistent labour shortages were met by importing indentured labour from China (from 1904).

have a legitimate ideological struggle to fight are asserting their rights over areas rich in gold, diamonds or mineral deposits.

### **3.1.3. Displacement and disruption**

The region's tumultuous past and current conflicts in Zimbabwe have produced widespread displacement of populations in Southern Africa – both internally and across borders. Nation states in the Southern African region are intimately connected and events in one country strongly impact on those around it. Violence in one country spills into neighbouring countries, if not directly in the form of the perpetration of violence by displaced persons across borders, then by implication through the movement of traumatised individuals and political refugees who have specific needs.

A feature of the post-Cold War period has also been a major shift in South Africa's position within the region. Whereas previously it had been a political and cultural pariah, it is now a regional political and economic power. Overlapping with the issue of displacement has been widespread economic migration in the region, with South Africa, due to its relative affluence, being one of the countries attracting high numbers of economic migrants from Southern African and elsewhere in Africa. Competition between host populations and displaced populations can, in turn, result in more violence, as was seen in South Africa in May 2008 when a wave of xenophobic violence was unleashed in a number of communities across the country.<sup>7</sup>

### **3.1.4. Social cohesion**

By 2009, the SADC region had achieved relative stability, with conflict in the region having been minimised to a large extent. The fourth democratic elections in South Africa were conducted with few incidents of violence, the fragile power-sharing government of national unity in Zimbabwe is striving to put the country back on its feet (although at the time of writing this is in jeopardy), and a peace accord exists in the DRC despite continued though sporadic fighting in the east of the country. At the same time, young democracies, poverty, natural disasters (such as drought and floods), and the HIV and AIDS epidemic all contribute to negatively impact on the fragile stability in individual countries as well as the SADC region as a whole.

The people of Southern Africa have endeavoured to build socially cohesive communities despite the violence and conflict that has preceded and surrounded them. This speaks to the fact that although Southern Africa is characterised by high levels of violence, it is also characterised by an immense amount of goodwill and mutual support. Patel and Wilson (2004) mention that in Africa, "a tradition of self-help, individual and collective responsibility for the well-being of families and kinship groups predates the colonial era". Although colonialism introduced a completely different set of values, the spirit of co-operation and reciprocity persisted in indigenous communities. Following the impact of structural adjustment programmes introduced by the IMF and the World Bank in the 1970s, participation and mutual social responsibility became a feature of the social

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<sup>7</sup> Note that South Africa has also attracted a substantial number of migrants from, for instance, Eastern Europe and Asia. However, violence and hostility towards foreigners is largely directed at black African foreigners.

development approach adopted by some of the SADC governments, such as Botswana, in the 1990s. In Zimbabwe the failure of government resulted in a declining political, economic and social situation, but, ironically, this resulted in a proliferation of activities outside of the state, where civil society organisations and informal community and village level structures emerged to address the deficits in meeting the needs of the people (Patel, 2007: 10).

In South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) stands out as one attempt to support the transition to democracy through a public process of acknowledging the violence and human rights abuses of the apartheid era. While the TRC was criticised for allowing perpetrators to escape legal consequences through provisions for amnesty, or conducting a 'witch-hunt' against Afrikaners, or not making sufficient provision for victim empowerment (see later in this report), it represents a significant effort to move from notions of retributive and punitive justice to the concept of restorative justice. As will be seen later in this report, this thinking informs the South African Child Justice Act No. 75 of 2008.

These examples provide evidence of a complex set of factors that, on the one hand, situate individuals and communities within contexts of historical or contemporary violence and, on the other, demonstrate evidence of solidarity that can provide a basis from which to counter violence through public policy and programmes.

## Chapter 4: Definitions and debates

### 4.1. Definitions of key concepts

#### 4.1.1. Defining “youth”

**Youth** is a term that has a range of definitions. It is generally understood to be a life stage characterised by physical, emotional and social changes. From a Western perspective it is often understood to begin around the time of puberty and end when a young person has settled into paid employment and is beginning a family. This definition does not sit well in the developing context as many young people face protracted periods of transition into adulthood. This is one of the reasons why many African countries have expanded age ranges for the definition of youth. Although the expanded definition is in many ways driven by the extended transition and the need to focus on employment programmes, this does not necessarily make it useful for other youth development issues such as youth violence, which programmatically may require a more targeted approach.

Based on an assessment of age ranges in defining youth in SADC, for the purposes of this study youth is defined as people between the ages of 14 and 35 years (see also 4.3.2 below). However, this broad definition should not underestimate the profound differences that characterise this group of people. This age range encompasses a group of young people who are still at school, as well as a group of people in search of employment. It includes young people who are living with parents as well as those bringing up siblings or starting families of their own. It is most certainly not a homogenous group and when issues such as race, ethnicity, gender and class are accounted for, it becomes clear that there is a range of needs and capabilities that must be taken into account in defining and segmenting this group.

It should also be noted that defining the “youth” age range as 14–35 years should not detract from the fact that issues of youth violence are very often rooted in much earlier childhood experiences. Thus, although this report focuses on a particular age range for the purposes of analysing statistics, the concept of ‘youth’ must be understood far more broadly. In addition, programmatic interventions for young victims and perpetrators will be different, depending on the age cohort within which they are located. For instance, perpetrators who are older youth are likely to face the full force of the criminal justice system as adults. Those under 18 should be tried as children and face alternative justice mechanisms. It is also noted that some of the most effective interventions to mitigate youth violence are early childhood interventions. Youth therefore cannot be easily separated out from other age cohorts, and issues pertaining to children and the broader society must be taken into consideration.

#### ***How youth are viewed and understood in the SADC region***

The definition of youth varies from country to country in the SADC region (outlined in Table 2 below). For the purposes of this report, the broader definition of youth is used, that is, young people aged between 14 and 35 years of age. There is a range of challenges

presented with the use of a broader definition, particularly when looking at the fact that many interventions and programmes focused on vulnerable youth differentiate between younger youth (those still at school) and older youth (usually up to the age of 25). Very often, the top end of the range (26 to 35-year-olds) is not covered by programmatic interventions. In addition, many of the vulnerability factors that contribute to the issue of youth and violence are founded in childhood years. Nevertheless, the history of many Southern African countries, and the current challenges that youth face in these countries, mean that many are really only able to participate in activities usually considered to be defining of an adult – including moving out of home, gaining employment, and starting a family – much later in their lives.

**Table 2: Definition of youth by country**

Country	Definition of youth
Angola	15-24
Botswana	12-29
DRC	15-35
Lesotho	15-35
Madagascar	18-35
Malawi	14-25
Republic of Mauritius	16-25
Mozambique	18-35
Namibia	14-29
Seychelles	No data
South Africa	14-35
Swaziland	14-30
Tanzania	15-24
Zambia	15-25
Zimbabwe	10-30

#### **4.1.2. Defining youth violence**

The definition of **youth violence** is more complex and requires a definition for analytical purposes (a narrower definition) as well as a definition for conceptual purposes (a broader definition).

In terms of a narrow definition, which is useful for analysing statistics, youth violence can be defined as the involvement of young people, whether as victims or perpetrators, in incidents involving the threat or use of physical force against other people in the context of interpersonal or inter-communal or other conflict or crime. Violence may be inflicted with or without a weapon. When more severe, it may be associated with intimate violations of the person and/or the potential to cause serious physical pain, injury or death.

The definition above refers specifically to physical violence and the threat thereof. There are also other forms of coercive behaviour involving, for instance, other types of threats; in this regard physical violence may be seen as lying at the centre of a range of types of conduct which involve coercion of one kind or another.

The narrower definition of youth violence limits the conception of violence largely to forms of violence that are, or could be, considered as criminal. However, it is clear that there is a range of forms of violence that (a) might not be considered criminal, (b) are coercive and detrimental, but might not involve physical force, and (c) are accepted and normalised in societies. This report seeks to understand violence as holistically as possible, taking into account the ways in which violence is normalised or how violence is often rooted in other forms of coercive or detrimental behaviour that victimises people, as well as in structural and therefore acceptable processes or systems. Therefore a broader definition of youth violence is necessary. As Imbusch (2003:13) notes, "the concept of violence is extremely diffuse, extending from physical and psychological injury, particular forms of crime and uncouth behaviour on the roads and in sports, to socio-political discrimination." Such a definition allows for a range of debates about normalisation or violence and structural forms, amongst others.

### ***Violence and crime – is it the same?***

Violence is sometimes equated with the concept of crime. However, this report takes the view that while some forms of violence are criminal, there is a range of forms of violence that are not criminalised or even seen as wrong in communities because they have become so normalised and therefore widely accepted in various communities or countries. Violence is sometimes equated with crime only when people are referring to violence in the sense of physical violence; most forms of physical violence are criminalised. However, some forms of physical violence are not defined as criminal by law (such as corporal punishment in some countries) and even where they are, participants or witnesses to the violence may themselves not regard these acts of violence as criminal (for example, school initiation rituals which may involve some level of violence). Even when they do, they see no point in reporting it to the criminal justice system, either because they do not see it as serious enough, or they do not believe the justice system can help them. Furthermore, as the broad definition of violence alludes to, some systems and structures can be considered as violent. The normalisation of certain forms of violence such as some initiation rituals involving levels of violence, or corporal punishment, also means that a range of forms of violence are most certainly not criminal and should not be equated with crime. It is for this reason that the report considers violence both from the narrow and broad perspectives.

## **4.2. Matrix of youth violence**

As discussed above, youth violence is defined as the involvement of young people, whether as victims or perpetrators, in incidents of violence. The matrix in Table 3 is intended to contextualise the inclusion of both victims and perpetrators in the definition of youth violence relative to the age parameters (14-35) used in this report. As reflected in Table 3, violence involving young people as perpetrators may be targeted at children (those aged 13 and younger in this report), and/or other young people or adults (those aged 16 and older in this report). Likewise, where young people are victims of violence this may theoretically occur at the hands of children, other young people or adults. In

terms of the definition used here, ‘youth violence’ is therefore a very broad category incorporating five of the nine categories of violence reflected in the matrix.

**Table 3: Youth violence matrix**

	<b>Child victims (13 and under)</b>	<b>Youth victims (14-35)</b>	<b>Adult victims (36 and over)</b>
<b>Child perpetrators (13 and under)</b>	No youth victims or perpetrators	<b>Youth violence</b> (youth victims and child perpetrators)	No youth victims or perpetrators
<b>Youth perpetrators (14-35)</b>	<b>Youth violence</b> (youth perpetrators and child victims)	<b>Youth violence</b> (youth victims and perpetrators )	<b>Youth violence</b> (youth perpetrators and adult victims)
<b>Adult perpetrators (36 and over)</b>	No youth victims or perpetrators	<b>Youth violence</b> (youth victims and adult perpetrators)	No youth victims or perpetrators

However, the contribution of youth violence to overall levels of violence is probably far greater than is suggested by this matrix. Thus, for instance, data from a study of murder in selected police station areas in South Africa indicate that while incidents in which *both* the perpetrator and victim are in the 15-34 age category account for roughly 62% of murders in which a suspect was identified, murders in which *either* the victim and/or the perpetrator were in this age category accounted for 90% of homicide incidents.

Young people as perpetrators are therefore key contributors to the rate of victimisation of all groups (children, youth and adults). Thus, in the murder study young people were suspects in 75% of murders of children, 83% of murders of other youth, and 61% of murders of adults. Similarly, according to data from a study of rape, roughly 42% of acts of rape of children aged 0-11 years in the South African province of Gauteng in 2003 were found to be committed by young men in the 15-34 age category.<sup>8</sup>

When youth are victimised this mostly occurs at the hands of other young people. In a South African rape study, for instance, 78% of rapes of 12 to 17-year-old girls and 75% of rapes of women 18 years and older (80% of whom were 35 and under) were by young men in the 15-34 age category (Vetten *et al.*, 2008). They may also be a substantial proportion of those who are victimised by older people. In the murder study, for instance, 58% (48 out of 83) of those whose murders were allegedly committed by suspects aged 35 years and older were in the 15-34 age category.

These statistics, however, may create the false impression that it is easy to make generalisations about ‘youth violence’ in statistical terms. It should be noted, however, that the age profile of victims and perpetrators (as well as other features such as the gender profile) may differ substantially between different countries, or regions within those countries, as well as between different types of violence. For instance, a study of violence at schools indicates that children in primary school suffer higher levels of assault victimisation (though lower levels of robbery and sexual victimisation) than do children at secondary schools (Burton, 2008). Considering that most of this violence is perpetrated by fellow learners, this suggests that young children may be the group most heavily

<sup>8</sup> Analysis by author of data from Tracking Justice study (Vetten *et al.*, 2008). Roughly 21% of perpetrators were 14 years of age or younger, and roughly 37% were 35 years of age and older.

implicated in both assault victimisation and perpetration. The matrix also does not account for situations where more than one person is victimised or involved in perpetration, and where one of these multiple victims or perpetrators is a young person (as defined here) while the other is not. This may include cases where older people engage younger ones to commit violent crimes on their behalf.<sup>9</sup>

### **4.3. Issues and debates to be taken into consideration**

#### **4.3.1. Overlapping victim and perpetrator roles**

The previous discussion should not be taken to imply that in incidents of violence there is always a clearly distinguishable victim and a clearly distinguishable perpetrator. While in many incidents of violence it is reasonable to describe the two role-players in these terms, and one assumes that it is clear as to how to differentiate between the two, this is not always the case.

In particular, some incidents of violence, notably some incidents of assault involving young men, appear to be related to escalating arguments between two (or more) 'opponents'. While the two parties do not necessarily play an identical role, and one may play a more actively aggressive role than the other, it may not be a simple matter to apportion blame for the violence to one of the two. The words 'victim' and 'perpetrator', therefore, fit more easily with some incidents of violence than with others. It should also be noted that in cases of retaliatory or defensive violence, the labels 'victim' and 'perpetrator' may be applied to both parties.

Looking beyond individual incidents, it would appear that there are other ways in which the victim and perpetrator roles overlap. Violent victimisation, for instance, is 'a warning signal for future violent offending among juveniles' and violent offending similarly appears to be a risk factor for victimisation.<sup>10</sup>

The overlapping of victim and perpetrator roles is also referred to in a discussion of young combatants in the DRC:

Nevertheless, young and above all child-soldiers are ambivalent figures: although they participate actively in war and violence, they remain weak actors that can easily be manipulated by older generations and by political leaders. The ambiguity of their status can constitute an obstacle to their social reintegration: victims and perpetrators at the same time, ex-combatants hardly ever submit themselves to civil authorities while at the same time, they are often stigmatised by the population that has been the victim of their abuses (Beneduce *et al.*, 2006:7).

These points need to be borne in mind in the following discussions on youth violence, youth victimisation, and youth involvement in the perpetration of violence.

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<sup>9</sup> For instance, in a study involving focus groups with children and youth in secure care facilities and secondary schools in South Africa, participants in many of the focus groups indicated that adults engaged children as accomplices in the commission of crime (Frank, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> Shaffer and Ruback, 2002:1. In a two year US study of 11 to 17-year-olds, for instance, those who engaged in violent offending in the first year were 5.3 times more likely to be victimised than non-offenders in that year. Those who engaged in violent offending in the second year were 6 times more likely to be violently victimised than those who were non-offenders (ibid:3).

### **4.3.2. Differentiating youth violence from other violence**

Part of the difficulty in discussing youth violence is related to the problem of distinguishing a specific age parameter which distinguishes youth as a group from those younger and older. Thus, the age parameter 14 to 35 years used in this report encompasses a spectrum of young people including:

- A group that might be described as 'older children' (roughly 14-18) who like many other children are at school or at least are of high-school age.
- A very substantial group of 'young adults' (roughly 19-35) who are characteristically either studying at tertiary educational institutions, are employed or are unemployed (whether actively looking for work or not).

These two groups are quite strongly differentiated based on levels of homicide victimisation, which increases dramatically in the 20-24 year age band, as compared with the 15-19 age band (see Table 11 and Chapter 5 for further information). They may also be differentiated in vulnerability to other risks such as HIV and AIDS, with the younger cohort being less vulnerable and the older cohort being more so (Harrison, 2005).

While manifestations of violence such as assaults, sexual violence and robbery are in many ways forms of youth violence, there are forms of violence which can be distinguished by the fact that the perpetrators tend to be younger or older. Forms of violence which may to some extent tend to be associated more with 'adults' and less with 'youth' may include vigilantism and child sexual abuse. In a study of murder in South Africa, a sub-category of murders which included vigilantism had the highest percentage of suspects who were 30 years of age and older (41%). For killings in self-defence, the percentage of suspects in this age category was similar (40%).

Forms of organised violence such as 'taxi violence' may tend to involve adults as 'bosses', rather than youth. Data from a study of Gauteng rape dockets indicate that 37% of suspects in cases of rape of children 0-11 years of age were 35 years and older. By comparison, for rapes of teenagers (12-17 years) the percentage of suspects of this age was 21% and for rapes of women of 18 and older, the percentage was 25%.

Young men are characteristically the major recruits for war. Violence associated directly or indirectly with warfare, such as in the DRC, may therefore be characterised as 'youth violence'. These combatants include not only young adults but also 'child soldiers'. For instance, estimates in 2003 showed that disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes needed to be established for 30 000 child soldiers and a further 150 000 adult combatants.<sup>11</sup>

### **4.3.3. Stigmatisation and stereotypes**

Inherent to the discussion of youth violence as a phenomenon is the risk that such a discussion will reinforce stereotypes about youth and thus contribute to the

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<sup>11</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2008

stigmatisation of young people. This presents a risk that in a discussion of violence, the term 'youth' is associated with poorer young men, most of whom are black, who are part of a 'violent undisciplined criminal element' or 'destructive and anti-social' group that 'rebels against the political and social order.'<sup>12</sup> While a focus on youth violence makes it necessary to acknowledge that perpetrators of violence are often young people (and especially young men), it is important to avoid adopting stereotypes of young people. Most young people are not violent and the category of 'youth' therefore needs to be recognized as covering a wide diversity of individuals. Even amongst those who have been violent, there are many whose involvement in violence has been relatively limited, indicating that violence is not an obvious or dominant aspect of who they are.

One of the by-products of stereotyping 'youth' as perpetrators of crime and violence is the failure to recognize the degree to which young people are victims of violence. Thus images of victims of violence are often images of wealthy people, or of women and young children, notwithstanding the fact that in many countries, in Southern Africa and elsewhere, the biggest category of victims of homicide are young men. Furthermore, violence against young men and women accounts for a very substantial proportion of the incidents of violent victimization in most societies.

#### **4.3.4. Normalisation, criminalisation and the visibility of violence**

Many incidents of violence take place in circumstances where people regard them as normal or acceptable ways of dealing with conflict or, for instance, questions of discipline. In many homes, for instance, physical punishment is seen as an acceptable and necessary way of disciplining children. In many schools it is regarded as not unusual for children, particularly boys, to fight with one another, while some level of bullying may be regarded as a fairly standard part of school life. In some cases initiation rituals involving intimidation and some level of violence are actually condoned by schools.

In some communities both men and women may regard some level of physical violence by men against their intimate partners as normal and to be expected. Likewise in drinking establishments it might be accepted that men will sometimes have disagreements with each other, which they choose to resolve through physical violence. And in instances where police reaction to crime is limited or slow, acts of vigilantism may flourish within communities.

Some have also suggested that in situations where recourse to other mechanisms is impeded, violence becomes a means of being heard. An example is the riots in Khutsong in South Africa, which were violent and ultimately resulted in the community's demand for reincorporation into Gauteng province being met. While some might argue that this legitimises the violence, the absence of any punitive measures against the perpetrators may send a dangerous message about violence being a mechanism to achieve one's aims.

The acceptance of violence in communities, schools, homes and broader societies as discussed above may in fact contribute to cycles of increasingly violent behaviour within

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<sup>12</sup> Mkandawire, 2002:5-6.

societies. The issue of normalisation may itself therefore be understood as contributing to violence and is dealt with in more detail in item 7.2.5.

Much violence is therefore not understood as criminal. In order for it to become criminal it has to be defined as a crime in criminal law (what is referred to as criminalisation). For example, in most countries in Southern Africa forms of corporal punishment are not against the law, and adults who use corporal punishment against children cannot be convicted of a crime for this (unless, perhaps, corporal punishment crosses a certain threshold of severity). Thus social conventions have influenced, and will continue to influence, the development of the law, which determines whether certain types of violence are defined as criminal or not. Even where violent actions are defined by the law as crimes, they may not be regarded as such by the people who are involved (as perpetrators, victims or both) or who witness them. If they are reported to the police, such actions may be dismissed as not being sufficiently serious to justify police attention, or may be regarded by the police as a private matter.

In the real world, therefore, whether or not acts of violence come to be defined as criminal depends on a number of factors. These include not only legislation, but social conventions and attitudes, and the disposition of the police to regard such actions as violations of the law, which justify opening a criminal or civil charge, or not. Related to this is the fact that people who engage in violence are not necessarily viewed as criminal by society.

It is only therefore when types of violence are no longer normalised and are reported to and recorded by police that they become part of the official statistics and records. Even where violence is reported and recorded, specific types of violence might still in some ways remain 'invisible' from the point of view of public awareness about violence. Thus for example, in South Africa evidence exists of the extent to which violence is politicised. It is only the more powerful victim constituencies (such as the middle class in South Africa or white farm owners in Zimbabwe) whose victimisation is given publicity through the media, resulting in a perception that violence affecting middle class people is more prevalent, whereas the reality is that violence affects poorer people far more often.

Another example of 'invisible violence' involves the perception of male-on-male violence. Despite the fact that the extent of violence is significantly fuelled by assaults by men on each other, which is a major contributor to the murder rate, there is not much awareness about this. Many responses to violence are focused on other aspects of the problem of violence such as sexual violence and seem to ignore or downplay male-on-male violence. Publicity about robberies of poorer people and male-on-male violence therefore tend to be neglected in favour of the types of violence that receive greater media or advocacy attention (such as car hijackings, murders of middle class people and robberies among the elite).

#### **4.3.5. The context of violence: Active criminality, routine social interactions, and social conflict**

The context in which violence takes place is also subject to debate. In the absence of a recognised defence (for example self-defence), most incidents of violence could, in

theory, lead to charges being brought against the perpetrator by the victim or opponent or (notably in the case of murder) by the state. From a legal viewpoint it therefore makes sense to regard most violence as criminal in nature, except where violence is justified in terms of the law.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, it seems valid to distinguish between incidents of violence in the broader context in which they take place in the following way:

- **Active criminality:** Some acts of violence, including many robberies and incidents of sexual violence, are carried out by individuals involved in criminal lifestyles who actively seek out potential victims. These acts of criminality are sometimes described as predatory and tend to involve perpetrators who are strangers to the victim.
- **Interpersonal conflict and victimisation in routine social interactions:** On the other hand, many incidents of violence, including most assaults and many incidents of sexual violence, take place in social settings between people who are known to each other, including people involved in intimate relationships, people who are family members, or people who routinely associate with each other or who are acquainted with each other. Violence in these settings may routinely form part of interactions between people, although it is, in general, criminalised by the law and may under some circumstances lead to criminal charges.

Violence, therefore, tends to take place either in the context of active criminality or in the context of routine social interactions. In the former case, it is comparatively more likely to involve perpetrators who are strangers to the victim and to occur in a public place, while in the latter case, it is comparatively more likely to involve people who are known to each other and by definition takes place in a home or other location where people socialise, such as a tavern. However, this is merely a matter of degree. Some active criminals target people in their homes, while the assaults, which are the main form of violence associated with routine social interactions, can also take place in public places and involve strangers. Robberies tend to occur in the course of active criminality, while assaults tend to be linked to routine social interactions. Though it is believed that most sexual violence involves people who are known to each other, sexual violence is also strongly linked to acts of predatory criminality involving people who are strangers to the victim.

The statement that violence usually takes place in one of these contexts should not be taken to mean that this list is exhaustive. These contexts are, for instance, most relevant in settings such as those in South Africa or Malawi, where political violence is not a dominant feature of the political landscape. In Zimbabwe, for instance, in the recent period much violence was related to political repression. Though clearly a manifestation of conflict, such violence would not be synonymous with the interpersonal conflict that characterises violence in routine social interactions, and can rather be described as being related to **social conflict**.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Exceptions would be incidents where violence is perpetrated in self-defence or as part of sport.

<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, though political repression is far more prominent (justifiably) in terms, for instance, of the media attention which it receives, if one had the means to quantify incidents of violence in Zimbabwe over the last decade it would be likely to emerge that incidents related to the major forms of violence far outnumbered violence related to political repression or social conflict.

The type of warfare manifested in the DRC provides a vehicle not only for social conflict in the form of military engagement, but for violence of a kind that is often associated with active criminality as manifested in acts of predatory victimisation against the civilian population. Though such violence is less visible in coverage of the war, it no doubt also conceals much violence related to interpersonal conflict between fellow combatants, notwithstanding the assumed bonds of camaraderie between them.

In addition, it must be noted that many forms of violence that take place in routine social interactions are the forms of violence that are most likely to be normalised. Bullying, for instance, in many cases goes uncontested, even by teachers and parents. These are more subtle forms of violence that are neither criminalised nor, in many instances, seen as problematic. For example, the case of initiation at a well-known and reputable school in South Africa in 2009 received much press attention. The initiation rituals involved violence, but apart from one parent who lodged an official complaint, were seen as acceptable and as “boys just being boys” by most other parents, as well as the school principal and teachers. This suggests that violence at the level of routine social interactions may be the most difficult to deal with since it requires a change in perceptions and attitudes amongst members of the community.

#### **4.4. Private and public realms of violence**

Another key debate that emerges from the research has to do with the location of violence. Domestic violence and many cases of other assault and sexual offences, for instance, may take place between people who are known to one another. In addition, some interviewees note that beating children is not seen as violence, either by parents or by teachers. This means that young people are exposed to violence in the private sphere from a very young age. This may have implications for how they view violence and the ways in which violence becomes normalised. It may also play out at a later stage when young people are more likely to engage in public acts of violence such as bullying, political violence and involvement in gangs.

#### **4.5. Reframing the debates**

During the course of this study, a new report on youth violence was released by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) in South Africa, focusing on youth resilience to crime. An important issue raised in the publication is the suggestion that it is necessary to understand what factors build youth resilience to involvement in crime and violence.

The key to this viewpoint is to approach youth violence from an asset-based perspective. This raises the question of what can be done to enhance those factors that protect young people from involvement in, and victimisation through, violence.

What became apparent through the case studies, as well as an assessment of youth policies (presented in 10.2.1. below) is that by and large key challenges facing young people are framed around vulnerability and deficits. This needs to be complemented by

acknowledging the strengths and capacity of young people to be resilient in the face of such challenges. There is thus a need at the programmatic and policy levels to consider resilience factors and how they impact on youth violence. Chapter 8 presents a conceptual framework which considers both the vulnerability and resilience factors with regard to youth violence, and which assists in identifying the roles of key stakeholders as well as the programmatic and policy interventions.

#### 4.5.1. Youth resilience

According to the CJCP study, resilience can be understood as “those factors that diminish the potential to engage in particular behaviours. More specifically, these factors provide a buffer between the exposure to risk factors and the onset of delinquent or criminal involvement” (Burton, Leoschut and Bonora, 2009: 7).

The CJCP study identifies a range of resilience factors that should be enhanced at different levels. These are shown in the table below, extracted from Burton, Leoschut and Bonora (2009: xv).

**Table 4: Resilience factors amongst youth**

Broad area	Specific resilience factors
Individual	Intolerant attitude toward deviance, high IQ, being female, having a sense of purpose, personal belief in a positive future, ability to act independently, feeling a sense of control over one's environment, the ability to empathise with and care for others, problem-solving skills, self-efficacy, an enduring set of values and the ability to be resourceful.
Family or home factors	Warm, supportive relationships with parents or other adults, clear boundaries for behaviour, reasonable disciplinary methods for violation of family rules, parental monitoring, family members who emphasise the importance of school, family cohesion and parents who offer affection.
School factors	Commitment to schooling. Positive teacher influences.
Community factors	Strong community infrastructure, communities that create opportunities for youth to participate in activities where they have choices, decision-making power and shared responsibility.
Extra-family relationships	Interactions with peers who engage in conventional behaviour.

From the above table, “nine significant factors” (Ibid.) emerge, namely:

- Education: young people who complete their schooling are far less likely to be involved in violence
- Gender: girls are still far less likely to be involved in violence than boys
- Non-violent family environments
- Non-exposure to criminal role models
- Substance abstinence
- Interaction with non-delinquent peers
- Victimization
- Neighbourhood factors, and

- Attitudes intolerant of violence and anti-social behaviour.

As is discussed further in Chapter 8, what the resiliency approach assists with is ensuring that youth and violence is located within a developmental approach. This approach is complementary to a vulnerability approach which seeks to reduce vulnerability factors and build resiliency factors. However, a vulnerability approach is still necessary to ensure that young people who are particularly vulnerable are provided with the necessary support and services to assist them with their experience of violence.

#### **4.5.2. Youth safety**

The fieldwork data also produce an important perspective on the concept of youth safety. This concept takes us a step closer to ensuring that the issue of youth and violence is framed in a holistic manner since it requires that we are not simply thinking about how to deal with young people who are involved in violence but that, more broadly, we are ensuring that all young people are afforded the opportunity to grow up in a safe environment.

Such an approach places the responsibility for the safety of young people in the hands of various role-players. The state must bear responsibility for developing policies that encourage young people to stay in school and provide opportunities for them to learn skills. It must also ensure that the issue of safety is mainstreamed through all policies and frameworks affecting young people. Police forces must take matters of youth safety seriously and respond to situations where young people are at risk, even if that means dealing with domestic issues. School principals, educators and governing bodies must take responsibility for ensuring that schools are safe spaces and instil a culture of intolerance with respect to violence and abuse. Parents must take responsibility for positive parenting and disciplining children accordingly. Young people themselves must also take responsibility for their behaviour.

An integrated, holistic and developmental approach is therefore necessary and it is this orientation towards youth safety that underpins the discussion in Chapter 9: Roles of key stakeholders.

## Chapter 5: Extent of youth violence in the region

One of the key limitations of this study is the lack of reliable and comparable data to assess the extent of violence in the SADC region. A compounding factor is that where data is available, it often does not disaggregate the youth category. Nevertheless, using existing surveys some conclusions can be drawn about the extent of youth violence in the SADC region.

Although this section deals with youth violence in particular, this should be understood within the context of violence more broadly.

### 5.1. Violence in the SADC region

This section of the report provides an overview of current sources of information before putting forward some tentative conclusions about variations and commonalities in the SADC region regarding levels of youth violence.

Among the countries in the SADC region, only South Africa regularly reports official crime statistics.<sup>15</sup> The major sources of information on levels of victimisation in the region as a whole are therefore a number of surveys which have been conducted in Southern African countries over the last two decades, including:

- The International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS). Between 1992 and 2002, 18 surveys were carried out in 13 African countries, including three in South Africa, two in Botswana and one in each of six other Southern African countries.<sup>16</sup>
- The Afrobarometer survey, intended to measure “the social, political and economic atmosphere in Africa”. Afrobarometer surveys are conducted in more than a dozen African countries and are repeated on a regular cyclical basis.<sup>17</sup>
- The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), a South African based NGO, has conducted a number of victimisation surveys including two in South Africa, one in Malawi, and one in Tanzania (Pharoah, 2008:4; Pelsler *et al.*, 2004; and Stavrou and O’Riordan, 2004).

The reliability and comparability of this data does raise some challenges that are discussed further in Appendix 8: Challenges pertaining to data on violence in the SADC region.

The WHO data (presented in Table 5 below) indicate that the four countries with the highest homicide rates per 100 000 in 2004 were South Africa (69), Angola (36),

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<sup>15</sup> See [www.saps.org.za](http://www.saps.org.za).

<sup>16</sup> Five of the countries were not in Southern Africa. The ICVS is reported on in Naude *et al.*, 2006. Data from the surveys for Mozambique and for other countries are also reported in Del Frate *et al.*, 2003. There appear to be some small inconsistencies between the two reports as reported in the data. This report relies on figures as reported in Naude *et al.* An earlier report on the surveys, citing figures which are also slightly different, is Schonteich (2000).

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.afrobarometer.org/>The Afrobarometer survey is based on “National probability samples that represent an accurate cross-section of the voting age population. Random selection is used at every stage of sampling and the sample is stratified to ensure that all major demographic segments of the population are covered. Sample size varies from a minimum of 1 200 in each country to up to 2 400 or more.” (<http://www.afrobarometer.org/methods.html>). The Afrobarometer data cited here are from the third cycle, as cited in Mattes, 2006. Results of the 4th cycle were expected to be published in 2009.

Zimbabwe (32.9) and Tanzania (26.1). However, the estimates in the report are inconsistent with other figures.<sup>18</sup> The estimated homicide rate for South Africa (69 per 100 000) is 75% higher than the figure provided in national homicide statistics (39.5). In South Africa these homicide statistics are regarded as reasonably reliable.<sup>19</sup> Data from Interpol<sup>20</sup> for 2003 give Lesotho a higher murder rate (51) than that in South Africa (43), while in 2004 the Lesotho police statistics gave Lesotho a ranking of 37.3. According to the WHO estimates for 2004, Lesotho had the 10<sup>th</sup> highest homicide rate in the SADC region (13.3). Other Interpol figures are also inconsistent with the WHO estimates. While the Interpol figures tend to be lower than the WHO figures, the 2004 Interpol figure for the Seychelles is more than three times higher than the WHO estimate. Figures provided in the UN Crime Trend Survey are mostly different from the WHO figures. One of the rare cases of correspondence between the WHO and other figures for Southern Africa are those for Mauritius, with the WHO estimating 2.7 and the United Nations Survey providing a figure of 2.5.

**Table 5: Homicide rates per 100 000 (various sources)**

Country	Interpol -03	Interpol-04	WHO	National Statistics (2004)	UN CTS 9
Angola		5.2	36.0		
Botswana	13	14.2	21.5		
DRC					
Lesotho	51		13.3	37.3	
Madagascar			11.7		
Malawi			18.0		
Mauritius			2.7		2.5
Mozambique			20.2		
Namibia			12.8	17.4	
Seychelles		11.8	3.5		
South Africa	43		69.0	39.5	
Swaziland	13		21.1		12.7
Tanzania		7.8	26.1		
Zambia			22.9		
Zimbabwe			32.9		8.4

Data on homicides are also presented in reports on surveys conducted by the ISS in South Africa, Malawi and key urban areas of Tanzania, although the victimisation rate reported is the rate per household rather than per capita (Burton *et al.*, 2004 (30-31). The surveys suggest that in 2003 Malawians suffered homicide at the same rate as South Africans.

<sup>18</sup> The report is the WHO's Global Burden of Disease: 2004 update (2008) Geneva: World Health Organisation as cited in UNODC (2009)

<sup>19</sup> Note that the WHO figures appear to be consistent with projections based on the NIMSS system which also appear to imply that official statistics under-represent homicide figures. The discrepancy between projections based on the NIMSS figures and police data has not been explored or explained by anyone, but would be accounted for if homicide makes a much lower contribution to levels of non-natural death in rural areas in South Africa. The latter areas are underrepresented in NIMSS data.

<sup>20</sup> Interpol figures are based on statistics provided by member states. The latter are in general official crime statistics provided by police forces.

From what is known, this result appears to be implausible. The surveys indicate that levels of violent crime are overall much lower in Malawi. Levels of homicide are a reflection of levels of violent crime and so Malawi is highly unlikely to have a similar murder rate to South Africa. The WHO estimates for 2004 (Table 2) also put South Africa at a rate almost four times greater than that of Malawi.

The two South African surveys also appear to be an unreliable guide to overall South African homicide rates, even if this is at the household level: during the period 2003 to 2007, official homicide statistics (which are believed to be reasonably reliable) declined slightly, while in the 2007 ISS survey they are double the rate of the 2003 ISS South African survey.

### ***Data on non-fatal violence***

Examining data from the ICVS, Afrobarometer and ISS surveys, it is apparent that South Africa and Zambia are amongst the top four countries in recorded levels of assault. Zimbabwe and Swaziland are amongst the top four for assault in the ICVS survey, and Namibia and Botswana in the Afrobarometer survey. However, no doubt linked to the fact that the survey deals with assault as a household crime, levels of assault recorded in the Afrobarometer survey are three or more times higher than those recorded in the ICVS in both countries. Likewise the figures for assault in South Africa recorded in the ICVS (presented in Table 6 below) are roughly three times higher than those recorded in South Africa in two successive ISS surveys (presented in Table 7 below), possibly reflecting the fact that the ICVS is conducted in urban areas where assault may be higher than aggregate national levels.<sup>21</sup>

For sexual victimisation of women, the ICVS indicates that the highest rankings were recorded for Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia and South Africa.<sup>22</sup> In relation to sexual victimisation, the study indicates that this included rape, attempted rape, indecent assault and 'offensive behaviour'. For the various Southern African and other countries discussed in the report on the surveys, rape accounted for 13.5% of last victimisations, attempted rape for 23%, indecent assault for 13.8% and offensive behaviour for 43.7%. However, though Zimbabwe recorded the highest overall level for sexual victimisation, rape accounted for 0% of last victimisations while in Swaziland it accounted for 12.3%, in Zambia 6.3% and in South Africa 39.7%.

In the ICVS, Zambia, Mozambique,<sup>23</sup> South Africa and Swaziland get high rankings for vehicle hijacking, while Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe get high rankings for robbery. The ICVS figure of 7.6% for robbery in Mozambique, and the ISS figure of 7.1% in Tanzania appear to be particularly high, even if we take into account that the surveys were conducted in urban areas. South Africa has been affected by very high levels of robbery with this being heavily concentrated in the more than 90% urban

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21 A 1997 Interpol report also appears to confirm that Namibia has levels of assault which are comparable to those in South Africa. According to the report the per capita crime rate for the major violent crimes of murder, rape, and robbery and violent theft was substantially higher in South Africa than in the other eight sub-Saharan countries. South Africa also had the highest per capita serious assault rate (541 per 100 000 of the population), but this was closely followed by Namibia (497 per 100 000) (cited in Schonteich, 2000).

22 A report on the ICVS in Mozambique indicates that questions were asked only of women (Del Frate et al 2003:13) and it is assumed that this was done in all countries where the ICVS was done.

23 See footnote 33 above indicating that the Mozambique statistic for hijacking in fact refers exclusively to victimisation rates in Maputo and not in other Mozambican cities covered in the ICVS survey.

province of Gauteng. In 2003-2004 when official statistics indicate that levels of robbery in South Africa were at their highest, with a very high proportion of robbery being concentrated in Gauteng, the ISS survey recorded a rate of 3.9% for robbery in this South African province (Burton *et al.*, 2004:135-136).

**Table 6: Afrobarometer and ICVS survey data on violent crime for Southern African countries over a one-year period<sup>24</sup>**

Country	% respondents experiencing assault Afro-barometer	% respondents experiencing assault (ICVS)	% respondents experiencing robbery (ICVS)	% vehicle owners experiencing hijacking (ICVS)	% women experiencing sexual victimisation (ICVS)
Angola					
Botswana	14	3.7	1.8	0.7	5.0
DRC					
Lesotho	9	4.3	2.0	1.1	5.7
Madagascar	5				
Malawi	6				
Mauritius					
Mozambique	12	6.2	7.6	5.2	2.6
Namibia	27	4.4	5.0	0.2	4.8
Seychelles					
South Africa	16	6.4	5.4	5	2.8
Swaziland		7.2	3.8	4.9	6.2
Tanzania	6				
Zambia	15	6.7	2.5	6	5.4
Zimbabwe		10.2	4.2	-	2.8

Possibly the most robust data for comparing overall levels of victimisation between different Southern African countries are provided by the comparison between the various national surveys conducted in South Africa and Malawi (Table 4). Notwithstanding the doubts raised about the murder statistics arising from the surveys (see above), it nevertheless may be true that these surveys provide a reasonable indicator of comparative levels of victimisation between the two countries.

The surveys suggest that Malawians suffer assault victimisation at a rate roughly 60% of that in South Africa. This is slightly higher than the Afrobarometer survey which suggests that the Malawian rate is less than 40% of that in South Africa; robbery victimisation at a rate roughly 25% of that in South Africa; sexual assault at roughly 10% of the rate in South Africa; and vehicle hijacking at a rate which is less than 10% of that in South Africa.

This would appear to confirm then that there are very substantial differences between levels of violent crime in the Southern African region, notwithstanding the fact that levels of violence in the SADC region are believed to be high in general.

<sup>24</sup> As noted above the ICVS data reported here is mostly from surveys conducted in 2000 except for Zimbabwe (1996) and Mozambique (2002). The Afrobarometer data used in this report covers 2005-2006. In the ICVS respondents were asked about their victimisation over the last one year and the last five years and the data here is as reported for the previous one year.

**Table 7: Institute for Security Studies Victim Surveys (% of respondents victimised)**

	Assault	Robbery	Murder	Sexual Assault	Hijacking of car
Malawi (2002-2003)	1.3	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.04
South Africa 2003	2.2	2.0	0.2	1.0	0.5
South Africa 2007	1.3	2.1	0.4	0.2	0.4
Tanzania 2003 (3 cities – Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Mtwara)	3.8	7.1	0.6	1.2	0.5

The data presented above pertains specifically to crime-related violence in the SADC region. Conflict-related violence, precisely because of the nature of the states in which the conflict occurs, is less likely to be tracked.

### 5.1. Youth as victims of violence

As indicated, by comparison with the rest of the SADC region in which statistics and research on violence is relatively rare, a reasonably large amount of data are available in South Africa. Perhaps most relevant to this report has been the fact that for the last decade South Africa has had a system, the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS), which collects data on violent (and other non-natural) deaths at a number of mortuaries in South Africa. These data, which include age data, can be used to provide a profile of violent deaths in South Africa. In addition, a number of large national victimisation surveys have been conducted in South Africa including surveys focusing specifically on youth (in this case defined as 12 to 22-year-olds) and victimisation at schools. This discussion of ‘youth violence’, and how youth violence fits into the broader picture of violence, will therefore be based on data from South Africa.

Data from the South African NIMSS confirm that youth make up the bulk of victims of fatal violence and that it is predominantly young men who are the victims. Young people in the 15-34 age category consistently constituted roughly 63% of all homicide victims during the years 2004, 2005 and 2007 according to NIMSS data (presented in Table 8 below).

There are, however, apparently consistent variations in the contribution of youth victims to the overall violence death toll between the metropolitan areas and areas outside of them, and between the various major metropolitan areas. As indicated in Table 8, a trend emerges as to which the four metropolitan areas consistently record a higher percentage of violence-related deaths in the 15-34 age category than is the case outside of the metropolitan areas. It is not clear to what extent the areas outside of the metropolitan areas covered by NIMSS are other urban areas and to what extent they are rural areas. Nevertheless, this would appear to indicate that there is an overall pattern in which youth homicide victimisation is more concentrated in the four metropolitan areas (Cape Town,

eThekwini, Johannesburg, Tshwane) than outside of them.<sup>25</sup> These data may be compared to the data on robbery from the 2005 South African National Youth Victimization Study. This would appear to be consistent with a view that youth suffer a greater part of the burden of violence in major urban areas than in other areas. Among the youth (aged 12-22) surveyed in the metros, 17% reported being victims of robbery while the corresponding proportion for other 'urban' youth was 11% and for rural youth 7%.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 8: Percentage of all deaths from violence in 15-34 age category in South Africa (NIMSS data)**

	2004	2005	2007	Average %
<b>4 metropolitan areas</b>	64	67	65	65
<b>NIMSS mortuaries outside metropolitan areas</b>	60	59	58	59
<b>All mortuaries covered by NIMSS</b>	63	64	62	63

The apparent higher concentration of youth homicide victimisation in the metropolitan areas of South Africa is strongly influenced by particularly high concentrations of such victimisation in Cape Town (average 69%) and eThekwini (average 67%) (see Table 9).<sup>27</sup> Note that the NIMSS data in Table 8 and Table 9 are referring to the proportion of homicide victims who are youths, while the youth victimisation study is referring to the proportion of youth who have been victimised. The youth survey indicates that robbery victimisation of young people is much higher in the metros and this is probably true of most kinds of victimisation, not only of young people but of adults as well. The higher level of youth victimisation in the metros can be understood as part of an overall problem of much higher levels of victimisation by violence in these areas. For instance, a recent report indicates that residents of urban areas in South Africa are more at risk not only of robbery but also of assault, when compared to those living in rural areas (Pharoah, 2009). Nevertheless, the NIMSS data indicate that, notwithstanding overall higher levels of victimisation in the metros, youth are also victims of a higher proportion of homicides in these areas, associated with the fact that their peers are the primary perpetrators of homicide.

**Table 9: Percentage of all deaths from violence in 15-34 age category in major South African metropolitan areas (NIMSS data)**

	2004	2005	2007	Average %
<b>Tshwane</b>	59	59	57	58
<b>Johannesburg</b>	62	63	60	62
<b>Cape Town</b>	66	71	69	69
<b>eThekwini</b>	67	65	68	67
<b>Total for all four metropolitan areas</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>65</b>

Other data confirm the concentration of serious violence victimisation amongst South African youth. For instance, in a study of murder in six areas with high rates of murder, 59% of victims were in the 20-34 age category with a further 11% being 19 years of age

25 This may partly be a reflection of differences in the age profile of metropolitan and non-metropolitan (particularly rural) areas but probably also reflects the fact that factors contributing to youth violence are more significant in the metros.

26 Leoschut and Burton, 2006:57. The NYVS data may, however, merely point to overall levels of victimisation being much higher in the metros and do not necessarily confirm that metropolitan youth suffer a greater share of violence.

27 At the opposite pole in Tshwane the average (58%) is close to but less than that for NIMSS mortuaries outside the metropolitan areas (59%). The average in Johannesburg (62%) is close to the overall NIMSS average (63%).

and younger (most of these victims were aged 14 -19) (CSV, 2007: 38) suggesting that people in the 14-35 age category made up roughly two-thirds of murder victims in these areas. Victims in the 20-29 age category included 64% of victims of killings carried out in self-defence (the victims in these cases had been involved in carrying out crimes), and 52% of victims in 'argument'-type killings. However, in a category of murders committed in the course of another crime (80% of these were robberies), only 38% of victims were 20-29 years of age, with 59% of victims being in the 30 years and older age category. Of victims aged 19 years and younger (most of whom were more than 14 years of age) there were relatively high proportions in the self-defence type (21%) and argument type (13%) categories and a distinctively lower proportion (3%) in the category of murders during the course of another crime.

Data from a study of rape in Gauteng in 2003 indicate that 1 369 out of 2 013 victims (68%) were in the 14-35 age category with a high proportion of these victims (948 or 47%) being in the 11-year age band from 14-24, and 421 (21%) being in the 11-year 25-35 age band. The data indicate that in Gauteng in 2003, rape victimisation was most heavily concentrated amongst young women in the 15-20 age group. Ages (individual years) in the 15-20 age category each contributed roughly 5% to the total number of victims in this study so that the age band 15-20 contributed 30% to the total number of victims.<sup>28</sup> Using a fairly broad definition of sexual assault which included unwanted kissing and touching, the 2005 National Youth Victimization study (with respondents aged 12-22) would appear to confirm the high level of exposure to sexual assault amongst adolescent girls particularly in the 15-20 age group. Overall 4.2% of respondents, including 5.8% of female respondents (and by implication 1.3% of male respondents) indicated that they had been victims of sexual assault in the past year. Relative to the 4.2% of all respondents who indicated that they had been victims of such assault, young people between the ages of 18-20 (5.7%), followed by those in the 15-17 year age cohort (4.6%) were most likely to indicate an experience of sexual assault.<sup>29</sup>

The 2005 National Youth Victimization study also indicates that 16.5% of 12-22 year-old youths reported being victims of assault and 7.4% reported being victims of robbery.

The pattern illustrated in South Africa, in terms of which violence generally, and youth violence in particular, tends to be more concentrated in large urban areas than in smaller urban areas, and least concentrated in rural areas, probably holds true in many other parts of the SADC region. However, this is likely to be most apparent in countries with large cities that include large sprawling shack or informal settlements. It would probably not apply in a context of war such as the ongoing conflict in parts of the DRC. It also apparently does not apply in a country such as Malawi in which the 2003 victimisation survey indicates that levels of assault were higher in rural areas (1.4%) while urban areas reported assault at a rate of 0.9 (Pelser *et al.*, 2004: 21) and in which the rural areas appear to be the location of high levels of conflict over resources, related to hunger and

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28 Analysis by author of data from Tracking Justice study (Vetten *et al.*, 2008). See also CSV (forthcoming A: 55). The ages 13, 14, 21 and 22 each also contributed a further 4% of victims so that the age band 13-22 accounted for 45% of victims.

29 Leoschut and Burton, 2006:60. The description of sexual assault as used in the survey questionnaire was 'Sometimes people are forced to do things with their body, or have things done to their body, by others that they do not want. Has anyone ever forced you to have sex; kissed, or touched your body without your consent, tried to insert their penis or other foreign object into places you were not happy with; forced you to touch them in places you were not happy with; or forced you to behave in any other sexual way?'

food shortages manifested in high levels of crop and livestock theft (Pelser *et al.*, 2004:21).

Youth may be assumed to make up between 60% and 70% of victims of serious forms of violence such as homicide and rape. In terms of sub-categories of homicide victims they may also be assumed to make up specifically high proportions of victims of 'argument'-related homicides, correlating with the fact that they suffer from relatively high levels of assault. Linked to the fact that they make up a high proportion of perpetrators of violence (see the following section) youth are also likely to be a high proportion of victims of forms of violence, often directed against perpetrators of crime such as killings in self-defence, and acts of vigilantism.

The field research confirms that there is very little data available in the DRC, Mozambique and Swaziland on the extent of violence, and youth violence in particular. Although regional statistics on the extent of youth violence are not available, the fieldwork data suggest that interviewees perceive that youth victimisation by violence is in fact quite high in all of the four countries profiled. However, this relates particularly to certain forms of violence as discussed in Chapter 6. According to many of the interviewees, the existence of institutional or systemic violence – violence related to the extreme marginalisation of young people in society – means that extensive numbers of young people are victimised by violence in these four countries.

A number of interviewees perceive sexual and domestic violence as being prevalent, although some interviewees noted that these forms of violence go unreported to a large extent, meaning that there is no accurate sense of how many people are being affected by these forms of violence, which in any event are often normalised. For instance, an interviewee in Swaziland notes that

*There is a particular perception of women and how women should act. This plays a huge role in the incidents of sexual and gender-based violence.*

Interviewee from Lusweti, Swaziland

In Mozambique, one interviewee states that

*Attitudes towards women as subjects and expectations of them as subordinates and submissive are seen as profoundly violent and contributing to violence.*

Interviewee from WLSA, Mozambique

Similarly in Swaziland many interviewees indicated that they thought that violence against women was the key form of violence in the country. Parry-Williams (2007) also asserts that sexual abuse is on the increase. Interviewees point to the fact that the records of the Domestic Violence and Child Protection Unit of Swaziland show that of 801 reported rapes of females in 2006, 472 were girls under the age of 18. SWAGAA reported that rapes of under-18-year-olds came to two-thirds of the total rapes reported to them (172 of 269). In Zimbabwe, the perception is that domestic violence, especially wife beating, is common and at times leads to deaths. Domestic violence is also said to be common among young couples. It is sometimes related to early or forced marriages.

Along with violence against women, abuse of children was also noted as an issue by many respondents. A study by UNICEF on Violence against Children and Young Women in Swaziland found that more than half of all incidents of child sexual abuse were not reported. Similarly in Mozambique, abuse of children in the home is said to be an issue. One interviewee noted that in some homes,

*Youth are subjected to the often violent authority of their father.*

Interviewee from Associação Coalizão da Juventude Moçambicana, Mozambique

The only statistics to confirm this is the 2001 National Study of Adolescent and Youth Reproductive Health and Sexual Behaviour conducted in Mozambique, which revealed worrying levels of domestic violence. It recorded that 30% of young women and 37% of young men had been abused directly by parents, and 15% of women and 20% of youth by family members.

Domestic violence, sexual violence and the abuse of children were types of violence that were given particular prominence by respondents during the fieldwork. Although this seems to indicate that these are the major types of violence affecting countries in the region, victimisation data (see section 5.1.) demonstrate that assaults and robberies are also high. This raises a question as to why these forms of violence are not also emphasised by the respondents.

Our conclusion is that the public profile of different types of violence is likely to be influenced by the visibility of these forms of violence (see section 4.3.4.). Where domestic violence, sexual violence and violence against children have been given more attention by civil society organisations, for example, these forms of violence are assumed to be more widespread than other forms (such as assaults and robberies). However, we cannot assume that robberies and assaults beyond domestic and sexual violence are not also widespread in the region. On the basis of existing information it is therefore not possible to make a conclusive finding on which specific forms of violence are most prevalent in the region.

#### **5.1.1. Youth involvement in the perpetration of violence**

As with the victims of violence, detailed data on the age profile of perpetrators of violence are mostly from South Africa. South African data point to the concentration of perpetrators of violence in this age category. In the study of murder in six urban areas with high rates of murder, referred to above, suspects in the 15-34 age category made up 77% of identified suspects overall (see Table 10). The 15-34 year age category made up 75% of suspects (9 out of 12) for victims aged 14 and younger; they also made up 83% of suspects (232 out of 281) for victims aged 15-34, and 61% of suspects (51 out of 84) for victims aged 35 and older. These age categories made up a particularly high proportion of suspects (92%) in murders during the course of another crime, 77% of suspects in argument type murders and 73% of suspects in self-defence killings (in the latter category the suspects would often have been victims of crime).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> The latter data on sub-categories of murder is not presented in the table.

**Table 10: Study of murder in areas with high rates of murder – age of suspects by age of victims<sup>31</sup>**

Suspect ages	Victim ages			Total
	14 and younger	15-34	35 and older	
14 and younger	0.3%	0.3%	0%	0.6%
15-34	2.4%	61.5%	13.5%	77.4%
35 and older	0.5%	12.7%	8.7%	21.9%
<b>Total</b>	3.2%	74.5%	22.2%	100%

Data from a study of police dockets relating to rapes that took place in Gauteng in 2003 indicate that 70% of suspects were in the 15-34 age category. A very high concentration of suspects (23%) was in the 20-24 age category, with the 25-29 and 30-34 age bands each accounting for 17% of suspects. Relative to specific victim age categories:

- In cases involving 12 to 17-year-old victims, 78% of suspects were 15-34 years old and within this group, 30% of the suspects were 20-24 years old.
- In cases involving victims 18 and older, 74% of suspects were 15-34 years old and within this, 24% were 20-24 years old.

In cases involving victims aged 11 and younger, 41% of suspects were 15-34 years old. In five-year age bands the biggest single groups of suspects was in the 10-14 year age band (18%), the 15-19 year age band (16%) and the 40-44 year age band (13%). Youth in the 20-24, 25-29 and 30-34 age bands were linked to 7%, 10% and 9% of cases respectively.

Fieldwork data from Swaziland and Mozambique did not provide information on the extent of youth involvement in crime and violence. Similarly, in the DRC, no statistical data on crime could be obtained. However, some work has been done in the DRC on the issue of street children – a phenomenon that has become very common since the conflict and with which violence is often associated. UNICEF reported that the number of street children in Kinshasa increased from 12 700 in 2007 to 17 500 in 2008. Many of these children are involved in criminal acts related to survival, but some may become involved in another category of violence found among youth – that of “*kuluna*”, which is a type of youth gang violence, operating openly and in deliberate subversion of the existing social order. Beyond these, the information from interviewees in the DRC was that, outside of warfare and violence carried out by militia groups, violent crimes in the form of armed robbery, murder, hijacking, and armed gangs are rare. However, scenes of collective violence driven by xenophobic or ethnic sentiments have been recorded in Katanga, in the South-East of the DRC.

It seems therefore that violence committed by youth in the region is mixed – each country may have particular problems with particular forms of violence that young people may be involved in. However, there is a clear need for more statistical data to confirm the current trends in youth involvement in violence in order to design programmes more effectively.

### **5.1.2. Gender and violence**

Notwithstanding the above discussion on stigmatisation, the research demonstrates that acts of violence and particularly serious violence are overwhelmingly perpetrated by male

<sup>31</sup> CSV, 2008:98.

perpetrators. For instance in a study of murder in six urban areas with high rates of murder in South Africa, 94% of suspects were male and 6% female. However, the profile of perpetrators is strongly influenced by the fact that a high proportion of arrests are obtained in 'argument' type murders in which the proportion of female perpetrators is much higher. Thus in this study, 9% of the suspects arrested for argument-type murders were women. In most other categories there were proportionately fewer arrests (relative to the total number of cases) but also few arrests of women. Thus all of the suspects arrested were male for killings committed in the course of another crime (80% of these were robberies); for killings carried out in self-defence (the victims in these cases had been involved in carrying out crimes); and for killings related to rivalry between groups (such as taxi associations).<sup>32</sup> This suggests that if the gender of all perpetrators in all categories of murder had been known, the proportion of male perpetrators may have been even greater than 94%.

However, the focus on the severest forms of violence may overstate the degree to which violence is perpetrated by men. Thus in a docket analysis conducted in the South African township of Mamelodi covering dockets opened in early 1998, male perpetrators were responsible for 90% of incidents where men were victimised, but 80% of cases where women were victimised. Female perpetrators accounted for 10% of cases overall including 17% of cases where women were victimised and 7% of cases where men were victimised. Aligned with the murder data above, the cases involving female perpetrators may be presumed to have largely been assault cases related to arguments as these were the main form of victimisation, accounting for 58% of cases overall and 79% of cases in this study where women were victimised.<sup>33</sup>

Research on groups involved in robberies in South Africa indicates that women may also play a strong role in affirming "successful" violent criminals involved in some of the more profitable types of robbery, in effect endorsing violent crime. One interviewee, for instance, described how "streams of women hang round" the men involved in cash-in-transit heist networks. Some networks also use women as lookouts or drivers in criminal operations, or in other ways.<sup>34</sup>

### ***Gender, age and victimisation***

Data from South Africa indicates that the gender profile of victims of violence varies significantly relative to age:

- It appears that primary school children suffer higher levels of assault victimisation but lower levels of robbery and sexual assault victimisation than do high school children.<sup>35</sup> However (contrary to what might be expected) data from a survey of violence at schools in South African indicated that girls in fact experienced slightly higher levels of assault and robbery at primary schools than did boys, whilst in the

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<sup>32</sup> CSV, 2008:93. On questions to do with gender and violence perpetration see also CSV, 2007:74 and 139-143 as well as Collins, 2008: 141-148 and elsewhere.

<sup>33</sup> South African Law Reform Commissioner 2001 report as discussed in CSV, 2007:74. In 3% of cases the sex of the perpetrator was not identified.

<sup>34</sup> Irish-Qhobosheane, 2007: 59-60. Also see 83, 104, 132 and 143.

<sup>35</sup> Burton, 2008:18.

case of 'forced sexual behaviour' it was boys who experienced the highest levels of victimisation.<sup>36</sup>

- High school students (a category which includes the younger sector of those defined as 'youth' in this report) therefore experienced lower levels of assault than did primary school students but higher levels of robbery and 'forced sexual behaviour' victimisation. The gender profile of high school victims of violence is, however, the mirror image of that of primary school students, with boys experiencing higher levels of assault and robbery victimisation and girls experiencing higher levels of 'forced sexual behaviour' victimisations.<sup>37</sup>

It therefore appears that young children experience more physical violence than do older children and likewise that older children/youths experience more physical violence than do adults.<sup>38</sup> However, as illustrated below it also appears that slightly older youth (20 and older) suffer more from serious and extreme violence than do younger youths (19 and under).

As illustrated in Table 11, data from the South African NIMSS<sup>39</sup> indicates that the age profile of victims of violence during the years 2004, 2005 and 2007 was relatively consistent with little difference between the percentage of victims in each age band between each of these years. The NIMSS data also indicates that there is a dramatic increase in the contribution to the overall number of homicide victims from the 10-14 age band (0.7% overall) to the 15-19 age band (8%) but then a further substantial increase in the 20-24 age band (19%). The age category in which violent deaths are most heavily concentrated is 20 and 29 with this constituting 39% of homicide victims overall. Levels of mortality from violence remain high for those in their thirties and only decrease to the same level as those of youth in the 15-19 band for those in the 40-44 age band. Thus rates of homicide victimisation escalate quite dramatically from the 15-19 year age band (roughly 8% of all homicide victims) to the three age bands covering the 20-34 age group, who each account for between 16% and 20% of homicide victims. Furthermore, the 35-39 year age group has higher levels of homicide victimisation than the 15-19 age group.<sup>40</sup>

**Table 11: Contribution of 5 year age bands in 10-49 year age group to overall murder rate (NIMSS data)<sup>41</sup>**

	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	Other age groups	All murders
2004	50	650	1620	1650	1460	1040	750	470	885	8575

36 Ibid:21.

37 Ibid:22.

38 See for instance the comparison of the results of the adult and youth rates of victimization in Leoschut and Burton, 2006:47.

39 This and following sections of this report make extensive use of data from the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS).<sup>39</sup> NIMSS data are categorised by 5 year age bands. Data from four age bands covering the ages 15-34 are used extensively in this report. This data is used because it corresponds quite strongly with the 14-35 age parameter used to define youth in this report. Note that NIMSS data reflects in the region of 40% or less of non-natural deaths (though homicide coverage may be up to 60%) and is biased towards metropolitan, and to a lesser extent, other urban areas.

40 Note that translated into per capita figures the picture looks quite different. Focusing on the 15-44 year-olds it may thus be noted that Statistics SA 2007 population estimates for South Africa indicate that these six age groups account for respectively 4 975 000 (15-19), 4 675 000 (20-24), 4 335 000 (25-29), 3 863 000 (30-34), 2 972 000 (35-39) and 2 400 000 (40-44). Using the NIMSS figures from the 'Total' row in Table 6 this would indicate that during these three years those in the 15-19 age bracket were victimised at a rate of 44 homicides per 100 000. The rates for the other four age groups would be respectively: 115 (20-24), 127 (25-29), 118 (30-34) 109 (35-39) and 99 (40-44). From this perspective the 40-44 group is victimised at a much higher rate than 15-19 year-olds. Note that NIMSS figures do not account for all homicides and this is mapped over three years so these figures reflect relative homicide victimisation rates but not the annual homicide victimisation rate of those in each age category.

41 Note that figures for 2004 are not exact but are estimates based on a bar graph (figure 2.1) provided in the NIMSS report for that year. There is no NIMSS report for 2006. The 'other age groups' column refers to those victims 9 years and under and 50 years and over.

%	0.6	8	19	19	17	12	9	5	10	100
<b>2005</b>	57	643	1580	1626	1421	928	708	434	826	8223
%	0.7	8	19	20	17	11	9	5	10	100
<b>2007</b>	82	919	2172	2271	1671	1257	923	627	1392	11314
%	0.7	8	19	20	15	11	8	6	12	100
<b>Total</b>	189	2212	5372	5547	4552	3225	2381	1531	3103	28112
%	0.7	8	19	20	16	11	8	5	11	100

Though this appears to indicate that this group (who are mostly not youth in terms of these age parameters) has more in common with the 20-34 year olds than do the 15-19 year olds, there may be alternative explanations for this pattern.<sup>42</sup>

Fatal violence also impacts far more on men, and on young men in particular, than it does on women. As reflected in Table 12, NIMSS data indicates that women consistently make up roughly one-eighth (12%-13%) of homicide victims in South Africa. Though there is a substantial difference in the number of deaths one of the NIMSS reports appears also to indicate that female and male deaths follow a similar pattern with the highest number of deaths in the 20-24 and 25-29 age bands followed by the 30-34 band, and then the 35-39 band.<sup>43</sup>

**Table 12: Gender profile of victims of homicide in South Africa (NIMSS data).**<sup>44</sup>

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
<b>Male victims</b>	7 268	9 700		9 014		7 933	10 306
<b>Female victims</b>	1 073	1 463		1 371		1 143	1 598
<b>Total</b>	8 341	11 163		10 385		9 076	11 904
<b>% female</b>	13	13		13		13	12

The fact that fatal violence has a bigger impact on men than women does not necessarily mean that men, or young men, suffer higher levels of violence than do women, or young women. It may merely be the case that violent incidents involving two men are more likely to escalate to the point where fatalities or very serious injuries result. In relation to non-fatal violence other South African evidence is that:

Young women are clearly the primary victims of sexual violence with such violence against men being apparently a relatively rare occurrence (see further discussion of youth victimisation below).

There is some evidence that a higher proportion of common assault charges are laid by women<sup>45</sup> than by men but other evidence nevertheless appears to indicate that men suffer more from assault violence than do women. For example, the study of violence at

<sup>42</sup> Homicide victimisation in South Africa is mainly a combination of 'argument' type homicides and 'crime type' (or 'robbery type') homicides. Argument type homicides have a major impact on younger people but robbery type homicides start playing more of a role as victims get older and are more likely to have established employment, incomes and valuable possessions (in the Malawian victimisation survey the peak age for robbery victimisation was in fact the 36-45 year age group (Pelsler, *et al* 2004:37). The relatively high levels of victimisation of 35-39 year olds for instance may therefore be a reflection of the fact that they fall between these two groups. Thus they probably suffer less from argument type homicides than those younger than them but the effect of this is off-set by the fact that they suffer more from robbery type homicides.

<sup>43</sup> NIMSS, 2004, figure 6.1.

<sup>44</sup> This data is not provided in the 2002 and 2004 reports.

<sup>45</sup> See SAPS, 2003:33 and CSV, 2007 paragraph 7.1.9 (page 71 and following). If this is true it probably means that women are more lay charges in these types of cases.

schools referred to above indicates that secondary school boys (5.9%) suffered more from assaults than did girls (2.7%). The 2005 National Youth Victimization Study which focused on 12-22-year-olds found that 19.6% of male respondents reported assault victimisation in the last year as opposed to 13.4% of female respondents.<sup>46</sup> The 2007 National Crime and Victimization Survey found that for every 100 men who indicated they had been assaulted, 71 women had also been assaulted.<sup>47</sup>

The 2007 National Crime and Victimization Survey also found that for every 100 men who indicated they had been robbed, 45 women had also been robbed.<sup>48</sup> Men are more likely to be the victims of fatal robberies, and data from a study of violence at schools suggests that secondary school boys are also more likely to be victims of robbery than girls. This suggests that there may be a pattern in which young men are more likely to be victims of robbery than young women.

Data from the ICVS survey conducted in Mozambique in 2002 indicates that men have a slightly higher risk of robbery victimisation (female victimisation is approximately 70-80% of the male victimisation rate) and a fractionally higher risk of assault victimisation (female victimisation is approximately 95% of the male victimisation rate). The fact that the burden of sexual victimisation falls heavily on women explains why questions about such victimisation were exclusively asked of women but also why women were the only respondents in this survey who indicated that they had experienced such victimisation.<sup>49</sup>

### **5.1.3. Conflict-related violence in the DRC**

The war in the DRC may be seen as having started in August 1998 and ended in 2002 with foreign countries withdrawing their troops and a peace agreement signed. However, since 2002 there have been intermittent incidents of armed conflict in the West of the country while armed conflict and related violence has continued in the Eastern provinces of Ituri, South-Kivu and North-Kivu.

For instance, a press article in May 2009 refers to a statement by a representative of the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) raising concerns over a 'dramatic' resurgence in rapes and attacks in South-Kivu province, with civilians burnt alive in their homes. In a briefing note OCHA noted that civilians were 'increasingly the victims of lootings, extortion, killings and rapes' committed by the Congolese army, and armed groups such as the Rwandan Hutu rebel FDLR and Mai-Mai militia, indicating that some 1 128 homes were burned down in three villages during attacks. The OCHA representative indicated that in one attack by the FDLR on the village of Busurungi on the border with North-Kivu, 'seventy-seven people were killed with machetes, knives and burnt alive' (*The Guardian*, 22 May 2009).

A particularly prominent feature of violence during, and in the aftermath of, conflict in the DRC has been widespread rape. For instance, the 2008 Amnesty International Report indicates that in 2007, "high levels of rape and other forms of sexual violence continued

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46 Leoschut and Burton, 2006:53.

47 Pharoah, 2009:12.

48 Pharoah, 2009:10.

49 Del Frate et al, 2003: 13. Note that this is from a table where specific values are not given.

across the country, particularly in the east. Soldiers and police as well as Congolese and foreign armed group members, were among the main perpetrators. An increasing number of rapes by civilians was also reported. Many rapes, notably those committed by armed groups, involved genital mutilation or other extreme brutality. The FDLR armed group and an FDLR splinter group, Rasta, abducted women and girls as sex slaves. Few perpetrators of sexual violence were brought to justice” (Amnesty International, 2008:112).

The May 2009 press article referred to above indicates that widespread rape continues in the Eastern DRC. During the first three months of the year, 463 rape cases were recorded in parts of South-Kivu, equivalent to more than half of the total cases registered there in 2008. The report refers to a Human Rights Watch statement indicating that soldiers were responsible for 143 rapes in North-Kivu province since January, over half the 250 rapes it had documented. “Some women were taken as sex slaves by soldiers” and “We are seeing an extremely grave trend with rapes used as a weapon of war,” an OCHA representative observed (*The Guardian*, 22 May 2009).

In an attempt to monitor the impact of the war, the International Rescue Committee has conducted a number of studies aimed at estimating levels of mortality resulting from the war.<sup>50</sup> These indicate that between 1998 and 2008 between 3.5 and 7.8 million people died as a result of the war. This estimate of the “the cumulative figure for how many have died since the war began has a wide margin of error given the difficulty of the terrain in Congo and the lack of precision in basic demographic information, like the pre-war mortality rate or even Congo’s current population” (Polgreen, 2008).

However, the vast majority of these deaths have been ‘indirect victims’, including ‘women, children and the infirm’ who died of ‘largely preventable illnesses and communicable diseases’, the proliferation of which was a product of the social disorganisation resulting from the war.<sup>51</sup> The five main causes of death in the East and West over 2006 and 2007 were fever/malaria, diarrhoea, respiratory infections, tuberculosis and neonatal conditions. Particularly hard-hit were young children, who are especially susceptible to diseases like malaria, measles, dysentery and typhoid which can kill when medicine is not available. Children under the age of five are estimated to have accounted for nearly half the deaths in this period.

Based on what the IRC indicates are conservative estimates, it would appear that during the early years of the war ‘direct violence’ deaths contributed roughly 11.1% to “excess mortality rates” (those over and above the normal mortality rates in the country) of 77 000 deaths per month in the Eastern DRC. This would indicate that at this point in the war, over 900 000 people were dying on an annual basis with over 100 000 of these deaths being ‘direct violence’ deaths.

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50 This section is based on reports of the International Rescue Committee, an NGO (see <http://www.theirc.org/>), which has conducted 5 surveys in the DRC since the beginning of the war in 1998. Data from the surveys used here is from Coghlan *et al* 2006 and International Rescue Committee, 2000 and 2008 as well as Polgreen, 2008.

51 See also Geneva Declaration (2008). The report estimates that on a global level ‘direct conflict deaths’ make up 7% of deaths and ‘indirect conflict’ deaths 27% (the balance are ‘non-conflict deaths’ related to crime and interpersonal violence) a ratio of roughly 1:4. However, the report also states that studies show that in war ‘between three and 15 times as many people die indirectly for every person who dies violently’ and it seems clear that the nature of conditions in the DRC are such that the ratio of indirect-conflict to ‘direct-conflict’ deaths is at the higher end of this spectrum.

In the latter part of the conflict, direct violence appears to have contributed a smaller and smaller amount to the overall death toll. The second survey also conducted in the Eastern DRC found that the percentage of direct violence deaths had dropped to 9.4%. The subsequent third and fourth surveys which were conducted in Eastern and Western DRC found that direct violence deaths contributed between 1.5% and 1.6% of the 'excess mortality rate'. Though deaths from violence were lower in the West which was not directly affected by armed conflict, many indirect deaths were also occurring in these areas due to the fact that many displaced persons had fled to western areas, while efforts to assist persons displaced as a result of the war were focused in the East. The latest IRC report for a survey over the period January 2006 to April 2007 estimated that 'excess mortality rates' for the entire DRC were 45 000 per month, with the proportion dying directly from violence estimated at 0.6%. This amounts to 540 000 deaths per year but with a dramatically lower death toll from 'direct violence' of approximately 3 240 per annum.

#### **5.1.4. Conclusions on levels of violence in Southern African countries**

The literature suggests that two countries, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa, would appear to be the Southern African countries most severely affected by violence over the last decade. The two countries also encapsulate something of the developmental extremes represented by the region: South Africa has a relatively well-developed economy, infrastructure and sophisticated governmental system despite its apartheid legacy and continuing problems of mass poverty; the DRC has been ravaged by the legacy of decades of corrupt and ineffectual government, more recently followed by a war and a series of subsequent conflicts, which have had as their epicentre the eastern regions of the DRC. In line with this contrast, South Africa offers a relative surfeit of information on violent crime from domestic sources, while in the DRC the main information documenting levels of violence is from an external group, the International Rescue Committee, which has conducted studies in the DRC as part of humanitarian interventions.

This information indicates that the way in which violence impacts on these countries is profoundly different. In South Africa, people who have died directly from violence have included between 26 000 and 18 000 deaths per year in the period 1998 to 2008. Murders certainly have a profound impact on family members and dependents of the victim. However, these murders, and other violence, are not associated with a large number of 'indirect violence deaths'. In the DRC, however, estimates of deaths resulting from warfare over the last decade are far in excess of those in South Africa resulting from violent crime. However, the vast majority of these are believed to be 'indirect conflict deaths'. During the early years of the war, direct violence is believed to have killed more than 100 000 people per year, but current figures indicate that conflict may be contributing to a death toll that is substantially lower than the average annual death toll from violence in South Africa.<sup>52</sup>

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52 Note that the population for the DRC is variously estimated at between 56 million and 67 million (see, for instance, International Rescue Committee, 2008:8). That for South Africa is currently estimated at roughly 47 million. A lower number of deaths in the DRC therefore clearly translates into a lower rate of deaths from violence.

While South Africa is no worse affected by violence than the DRC, direct acts of violence appear to currently contribute to a much higher death toll in South Africa than they do in the DRC. At the height of the war, direct violence deaths in the DRC were probably far higher than at any point in the recent history of South Africa, but South Africa's high rate of violent deaths continues to be sustained, unlike that in the DRC. As with the rest of the SADC region, this death toll is not associated with military-style warfare, but with violent interpersonal conflict and crime, most often manifested in acts of assault, sexual violence (specifically rape) and robbery.

The fact of war in the DRC has also ironically resulted in data on the relationship between violence and mortality being collected far more consistently in that country than in most other countries in the SADC region.

The fact that the problem of violence seems to be most severe in South Africa and the DRC cannot be taken to mean that other countries in the region are not also affected by violence. However, outside South Africa and the DRC, there is far greater room for uncertainty about overall violence levels. Looking at data collected over the last decade (and sometimes longer), there is information to suggest that some countries have at some point experienced levels of violence comparable to that in South Africa in relation to specific crime types. For instance, if WHO estimates for homicide figures in South Africa are wrong, but those for Angola, and Zimbabwe were more accurate, then in 2004 at least Angola and Zimbabwe may have had similar levels of homicide to South Africa. The ICVS in 2000 and Afrobarometer in 2005-2006 suggested that Zambia had similar levels of assault to those in South Africa. A 1997 Interpol report and the Afrobarometer survey almost 10 years later also appeared to indicate that Namibia suffered similar, and even higher, rates of assault than South Africa (Interpol data cited in report by Schonteich, 2000). On the other hand, indicators of homicide levels suggest that in Namibia this is much lower. The ICVS in 2000 recorded higher levels of robbery in urban areas in Mozambique and vehicle hijacking in Maputo, than they did in South Africa. Likewise in 2003, the ISS survey in 2003 recorded levels of robbery in Tanzanian cities comparable to those in Maputo.

However, if the WHO data overestimates violent deaths in South Africa, they may also do so in other countries. There are no consistent data from anywhere in the region, which indicate that any one of the countries in the region has consistently maintained similar levels of violence to those in South Africa. At least one historical examination of the causes of violence in South Africa suggests that, related to its apartheid history as well as precursors to this associated with the growth of the mining industry, cities in South Africa may clearly be differentiated from those elsewhere in Africa as regards levels of violence (Kynoch, 2006).

There are also certain countries that appear to be distinct in experiencing much lower levels of violence than other countries in the region. The island-countries, like Seychelles and Mauritius, which are not only geographically, but probably also most socially distinct from the SADC region, appear to suffer the least from violence. According to the WHO, homicide estimates in Mauritius (2.7 per 100 000) and the Seychelles (3.5 per 100 000) are far lower than any other countries in the SADC region with Madagascar the third

lowest (11.7 per 100 000) though its homicide figures are estimated by the WHO to be similar to Namibia (12.8 per 100 000). Madagascar also reported the lowest rates of assault of the nine countries surveyed by Afrobarometer.

With regard to sample sizes and methodological rigour, it appears that the ISS surveys in South Africa and Malawi may offer the firmest basis for comparison. If these figures are accurate then they indicate that, notwithstanding generalisations about Southern Africa being a violent region, there are some parts of Southern Africa that are far less affected by violence than others. To some degree these differences between countries may also mirror the differences between regions within specific countries. For instance, statistics for the 2007-2008 year for South Africa indicate that Limpopo suffered homicide at a rate (12.9 per 100 000) less than one-quarter that of the rate in the Western Cape. As a general rule it would seem that the violence is more concentrated in urban areas. Associated with this it may be true that countries which are less urbanised suffer less from violent crime

However, generalisations about levels of violence based on statistical estimates say nothing about the nature of violent crime. It may reasonably be assumed that robbery in South Africa and Malawi does not merely differ in its incidence, but differs on other characteristics. These include the types of groups involved, the association with weapon use (particularly firearms) and consequently with fatalities, the typical type of target and earnings from robbery, and other aspects including the type of social context from which robbers typically come.

## Chapter 6: Forms of youth violence

On the basis of the preceding analysis and the available literature, it seems reasonable to identify violence in most countries in the SADC region (with the possible exception of the DRC), as falling mainly within the following categories of violence (CSV, 2007:66-67):

- **Assaults linked to arguments, anger and domestic violence.** In South African crime statistics, these incidents are reflected as offences such as murder, assault, grievous bodily harm (GBH), common assault and others.
- **Rape and sexual assault.** In crime statistics these incidents are reflected in offences such as murder, rape, indecent assault and others.<sup>53</sup>
- **Robbery and other violent property crime.** These are linked to offences such as murder, aggravated robbery (primarily involving robberies of civilians in public spaces but also including vehicle hijacking, residential robbery, etc.), common robbery and others.

The above categories have much in common with the offence categories ('assault', 'rape' and 'robbery'), used in criminal law in many countries. This report uses these categories not because they are used in criminal law, but because they are regarded as descriptive categories that are helpful in understanding how violence manifests itself in a variety of forms.

As has been discussed previously, violence is often normalised or accepted within societies and therefore sometimes not defined as violence or at least not considered a cause for concern by the people it affects. Many forms of violence emerged as particular issues in the countries profiled in the fieldwork phase of the research. Therefore many acts of violence including incidents of domestic violence or violence related to bullying are in fact defined in law as criminal acts. Evidence of the normalisation and acceptance of violence stems from the fact that it is rare for people engaged in, or affected by, these forms of violence to view them as criminal.

Although there are other forms of violence which do have a presence in the region, such as vigilantism or mob violence, and structural or systemic forms of violence, the vast majority of violent incidents can be related to one or more of the above three categories listed at the start of the chapter.

Although it is helpful to distinguish analytically between these types of violence, in practice these 'categories' are not mutually exclusive. Many of the overt forms of violence may have their roots in the covert forms, which might lead to a greater acceptance of violence and contribute to its normalisation. Thus, some incidents may combine elements of two or more of these categories – such as incidents that incorporate both sexual violence and robbery, or incidents of domestic violence (assault) that turn into rape.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Child sexual abuse is understood in terms of this project as part of the overall problem of sexual violence. Some other violence against children might be understood as being related to the other 'major forms of violence.

<sup>54</sup> Concept paper

Forms of violence that are seen as 'normal' or 'acceptable' may also lead to a cycle of victimisation or involvement in other forms of violence.

There is no single universally accepted way of categorising violence. Forms of violence that might be seen as separate from the three identified above could include, for instance, various forms of violence associated with official and unofficial efforts to uphold the law, such as vigilantism, official brutality and torture, or violence associated with resistance to law enforcement (resisting arrest, police killings). News media often also give attention to forms of premeditated killing such as the killing of wives by husbands or vice versa, and considerable profile is often given to serial killers, although in practice they comprise a relatively small component of the overall level of violent killings. In South Africa, and most likely in other countries in the SADC region, there have been many incidents of violence directed specifically against foreigners. These might be seen as a form of violence ('xenophobic violence') or part of a broader form of violence motivated by prejudice ('hate crime') or, if carried out in large groups, could be viewed as a manifestation of collective violence. However, xenophobic violence or forms of collective violence (such as protest violence) are not as widespread as any of the three categories of violence cited at the start of this chapter.

These three major categories of violence may thus be carried out by individuals, gangs, individuals involved in gangs, or as part of mass acts of violence (collective violence). More detail is provided about gangs as vehicles of violence and collective violence in Section 6.3.

### **6.1. The degree of violence**

In differentiating acts of violence from each other it is also useful to distinguish in terms of the severity of the violence involved. Thus, for instance, a robbery may involve snatching a bag from someone and running away, or it may involve confronting a victim with a weapon, and possibly killing them, perhaps because they resisted the robbery or did not co-operate with the robber.<sup>55</sup> Incidents of violence can therefore be distinguished from each other, not only in terms of the circumstances in which they occur, but also in terms of what might be seen as the severity or 'degree' of violence. Factors that contribute to identifying an incident of violence as being more serious in this way could include:

- Whether someone is killed in the incident;
- Whether someone is intimately violated (raped) and/or physically injured, including the nature of the injury. Injuries tend to be much more severe where weapons are used, particularly firearms;
- Whether or not the violence is part of a pattern of victimisation, for instance domestic violence, which is sometimes characterised by repeated acts of violence that often follow a distinct pattern; the same is true of other violence that occurs within the context of an ongoing relationship;<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Refer to murder report re motivation for killing in robberies.

- The number of perpetrators involved in the act of violence – this would apply particularly in incidents of rape by groups of men;
- Where victims are tortured, such as where someone is subjected to extreme pain over a prolonged period. Some robberies in South Africa in the recent period have been characterised by torture – in some incidents this is apparently where the perpetrators suspect that the victim is withholding information about where money, firearms or other effects are located on the property;
- Where the victims are children, disabled or elderly people, or otherwise ‘vulnerable’ in one way or another. For instance, some victims suffer much more from trauma (post-traumatic stress) or other negative psychological consequences as a result of violence than others. This is not only related to the nature of the violent incident itself, but also reflects attributes of the victim (one of which might be that the person is already traumatised as a result of previous incidents of victimisation).

In a conflict-dominated context such as that of the DRC, the question of the ‘degree of violence’ in individual incidents of violence cannot be viewed as separate from other issues to do with the overall scale of victimisation, including the fact that violence is not only associated with many ‘direct conflict deaths’, but also with very many ‘indirect conflict deaths’.

The use of weapons also influences the degree of violence. Further information on this is contained in Appendix 9: Firearm and sharp force violence – weapons used in fatal incidents involving youth victims

Ultimately, therefore, there are potentially many dimensions that distinguish incidents or patterns of violence from each other in terms of the degree of harm they cause. At the same time, the research in the five countries shows that there are forms of violence that may not cause great physical harm, but nevertheless constitute violence. These can often be seen to be the roots of more extreme forms of violence that occur later in young people’s lives and may have considerable impact in emotional or social harm, including the erosion of self confidence and social cohesion. According to an interviewee in South Africa,

*Bullying can be more subtle. Gossip and emotional abuse may in fact create more damage to the victim than physical violence and often girls are involved in the more subtle forms of bullying.*

Interviewee from Childline, South Africa

## **6.2. Perceptions of what constitutes violence**

What has emerged from both the fieldwork and the stakeholder consultation held during this study is that the physical acts that cause injury or pain and are defined as violence in this report are not necessarily seen as constituting violence. Even where they are understood as being violent they may not be considered to be socially undesirable. In different societies some forms of violence are seen as more acceptable than others and

this creates a “grey area” when it comes to defining what constitutes violence. As discussed in the stakeholder workshop held in August 2009, there are cultural norms and practices such as those that pertain to young men and involve stick-fighting, which may be perceived in some contexts as an act of violence, but which in fact serve a positive purpose in the community. At the same time, acts such as corporal punishment, or what in Swaziland is sometimes viewed as discipline of the wife, could be said to be a cultural norm or practice, but is now coming to be accepted as an act of violence. Within the region there is a range of perceptions of what constitutes violence and what does not.

The demarcation of what is an act of violence may therefore not always be very clear. For some people, defining domestic violence or corporal punishment as violence, for instance, means making a statement about what constitutes acceptable conduct. But these boundaries are not accepted by all – even those who act normatively or according to what is commonly accepted as right and wrong (see Section 4.3.4 for more detail).

### 6.3. Gangs and other collective acts of violence

Acts of violence may involve individuals or groups as perpetrators. For instance, data on assault in South Africa from the 2003 National Victims of Crime Survey revealed that 53% of assault victims said the assault involved only one assailant, 25% two, and 22% more than two attackers (Burton *et al.*, 2004: 130). Amongst the 13 SADC and other African countries surveyed by the ICVS, an average of 42% of assaults was committed by one perpetrator, 26% by two, and 27% by three or more.<sup>57</sup>

Similarly, in a study of rape in Gauteng based on police dockets for the year 2003, 17% of rapes were perpetrated by two or more perpetrators, including 20% of rapes of adult women; 16% of rapes of 12 to 17-year-old girls; and 8% of rapes of children aged 11 and younger. Altogether 11% of rapes were committed by groups of two perpetrators with 6% involving more than two perpetrators (Vetten *et al.*, 2008: 33). Amongst the 13 SADC and other African countries surveyed by the ICVS, an average of 74% of sexual offences was committed by one perpetrator, 14% by two, and 9% by three or more. Groups of three or more perpetrators were especially common in Zimbabwe (24%). Countries reporting high proportions of individual perpetrators included Lesotho (81%), Swaziland (77%), Tanzania (75%) and Namibia (71%) (Naude *et al.*, 2006: 107). The data on Swaziland is confirmed by the fieldwork data in which interviewees noted that although gangs do exist in Swaziland, most cases of assault and rape reported involved only one perpetrator, although this seems to be changing.

*Incidences of collective violence have been reported especially in relation to what women are wearing, those males will gang up. But it is not glaring.*

Interviewee from SWAGAA, Swaziland

Violence, including youth violence, is therefore not by any means synonymous with groups or gangs of perpetrators. Nevertheless it seems that young people who are

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<sup>57</sup> Naude *et al* 2006:107. Note that percentages in the table in question do not add up to 100% presumably reflecting missing data on these questions. Also note the discussion earlier in this report indicating that the ICVS was focused on specific urban areas in each country.

associated with violence relatively frequently also seem to be associated with groups of one kind or another, though these fall across a wide spectrum in terms of size as well as the degree of formality or informality. Put another way, “gang membership significantly increases the probability of a young person committing an offence” (ICCP, 2009: 75) including acts of violence. Violence by gang members is however, not necessarily targeted at members of other (rival) gangs or part of predatory criminal acts, but may also be internal, perhaps related to tensions between gang members.

The fieldwork data confirms that gangs are in existence in all of the countries profiled. However, in Swaziland, they are quite limited and the violence associated with these gangs is predominantly targeted at other gangs. The interviewees in Swaziland suggest that gang membership is more common among the ‘coloured’ population of Swaziland.

*Gang membership is linked to territory. For example, there is the Mbabane gang and the Manzini gang. Fights often ensue when one gang is in the territory of another but these fights rarely end in death or homicide.*

In-country researcher, Swaziland

The fieldwork data also suggest that collective acts of violence seem to be more prevalent in the DRC, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe than in Swaziland. Youth gangs are particularly prevalent in South Africa and are associated with a range of violent and criminal activities including sexual violence, drug merchandising and assault. Some interviewees also pointed to the involvement of groups of young people (predominantly young men) in organised crime such as cash in transit heists.

*Young people, particularly young men are targeted by “King Pins” (leaders in organised crime units) to carry out acts of violence for them.*

Interviewee from Project Literacy, South Africa

In Zimbabwe gang violence is often politicised. During the pre- and post-election period for instance, sexual violence was often committed by gangs and youth militias:

*Collective violence is very common in Zimbabwe, especially the youth militia used during pre- and post-elections. The perpetrators operated in groups of four or even 20 as they hunted down the opposition supporters. The operation in groups was meant for protection, but was also a way of instilling fear in the enemy before the attack. The gangs are never polite and are usually drunk.*

Interviewee, Bulawayo Integrated Youth Alternative Survival Project, Zimbabwe

Two of the organisations interviewed in South Africa also noted the increasing involvement of girls in gangs, not simply as girlfriends or sexual partners on the periphery, but increasingly being involved in acts of violence. As one interviewee noted:

*We are now coming across girls-only gangs. They are especially violent and it’s not an isolated phenomenon.*

Interviewee from USIKO, South Africa

According to USIKO, these gangs seem to emerge out of a need for protection amongst girls.

The Zimbabwe research also revealed that while female youths were also involved as perpetrators of violence against the opposition, the majority were male.

In the South African province of Gauteng there is evidence that rapes perpetrated by strangers (which may be seen as linked to active criminality) are far more strongly linked to group rapes than those involving known perpetrators (which may be seen as linked to routine social interactions). The study of rapes committed in 2003 indicates that 20% of reported rapes of women aged 18 and older involved more than one perpetrator. In 78% of these multiple-perpetrator rapes the perpetrators were strangers or relative strangers, while this relationship category accounted for 48% of rapes of women 18 years and older overall (CSV 2008c: 40). However, elsewhere in South Africa, such as in the villages of the Eastern Cape, group rape is not distinctively associated with stranger rape, but often with a type of group rape, known locally as 'streamlining'. This is sometimes associated with the intention on the part of one of the perpetrators to terminate his relationship with the woman as well as punish her for some purported infraction.<sup>58</sup>

In South Africa criminal gangs, with names such as the Americans, the Hard Livings, the Mongrels and the Sexy Boys,<sup>59</sup> are particularly prominent in the 'coloured' areas of the urban Western Cape. These gangs have a specific identity linked to their name, and are often associated with the drug trade, evidencing a strong emphasis on drug use as well as other crime and violence.<sup>60</sup> The association between South Africa's 'coloured' population and criminal gangs is also manifested in other South African provinces such as Gauteng province, where gangs have also been prominent in 'coloured' areas such as Westbury. However, this should not be taken to mean that gangs are not associated with other sections of the South African population. Gangs have also been a prominent feature of African townships dating back to the 'tsots' gangs of the 1940s and even the 1930s. But while these groups may to a greater or lesser degree have been fairly stable, it would seem that in the vast majority of cases there was a less overt emphasis on the identity of the gang, possibly related to the fact that, while they were often involved in criminal activity, they were not so strongly concerned with controlling particular areas of territory. More recently, the South African media has focused on groups of white, middle class boys that have been implicated in acts of racial violence.

As mentioned briefly in Chapter 5, in the DRC gang-related activity may be criminal in nature, but there are also gangs involved in what is called "*kuluna*" – a type of gang violence which operates openly and in deliberate subversion of the existing social order. Further acts of collective violence are related to the conflict situation. The numerous groupings associated with violence in the DRC include not only the official military forces of the Congolese government, but also other small ethnic or 'private' armies and militias. The pool of recruits from which these formations draw is primarily constituted by young men. Such groups now include a large number of 'Mai-Mai' militias which 'include armed

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<sup>58</sup> Jewkes *et al* 2006: 2951-2952. See also CSV, 2008c:42.

<sup>59</sup> Standing, 2006:103.

<sup>60</sup> See for instance Standing, 2006

forces led by warlords, traditional tribal elders, village heads, and politically motivated resistance fighters' which may be associated with one or other of the domestic and foreign government and guerrilla groups which have been involved in the conflict.<sup>61</sup> The war in the DRC has therefore contributed to a wide proliferation of semi-formal groups involved in violence. Violent youth gangs have also been prominent in cities in the DRC. By the early 1960s they had already become an established feature although they 'were judged to be a product of the political violence that occurred immediately before and after independence when young men were recruited into the militant youth wings of political parties'.<sup>62</sup> To some extent youth gangs may therefore be a product of political mobilisation, although established gangs have also been exploited by politicians as a means of intimidating political opponents, for instance in the conflict in the DRC province of Katanga.<sup>63</sup> These issues are discussed in further detail in Section 6.4 below.

The Zimbabwe research revealed that collective violence was increasing in the illegal mining areas. A sizeable number of youths in Matebeleland, Manicaland and Midlands are involved in illegal mining of gold and diamonds. In Matebeleland the illegal miners are known as "*Amakorokoza*" meaning illegal dealer. The *Amakorokoza* are often embroiled in group conflicts over mining areas.

Gangs are also increasingly visible in Mozambique where much of the violence related to gangs is sexual violence, sometimes associated with vengeance for community disputes. The interviewee from WLSA in Mozambique noted that in these instances, rape is seen as a classic form of gender violence with its roots in war-time conflict situations, where rape is a tactic of war. For her, these links are very clear,

*Also, rape is used as a way of one group taking revenge on another. This behaviour is a product of a history of war, where women and children are violated as part of the tactics of war.*

Interviewee from WLSA, Mozambique

A further form of collective violence that is perceived to be prevalent in Mozambique is that of public lynchings.

*Lynchings in Mozambique first caught public attention in 2006 when a private TV channel screened images of three young men, accused of theft, being beaten and then burnt alive with car tyres by a mob. These sorts of incidents occurred with regularity in 2007 and 2008 in the suburban areas of Maputo.*

In country researcher, Mozambique

One estimate puts the number of deaths related to these public lynchings in this period at over 50 (<http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com>). Explanations have included extreme poverty, non-existence or ineffectiveness of policing and lack of public lighting, scape-goating in the face of social stress, catharsis and reinforcement of group identity in the face of the 'other' or simple irrationality. Granjo (*O linchamento como reivindicacao e*

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61 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mai-Mai>

62 La Fontaine (1970) as quoted in Kynoch

63 International Crisis Group, 2006.

*afirmação de poder*, unpublished) sees these acts of lynching as also being symbolic performative acts designed to take back power by a part of the population, largely the youth, who see themselves as disempowered and abandoned by the state. However, it should be noted that in South Africa acts of mob justice may involve a youth element, but equally often include older members of the community. These incidents are therefore not necessarily best understood as perpetrated solely by youths.

The fieldwork data also pointed to an emerging form of violence related to the use of cell phones and the internet and may be perpetrated by more affluent young people (referred to as cyber-violence). Because of the nature of the equipment required it might be more prevalent among middle class youth, and it has its roots in what is known as “happy slapping” in the United Kingdom – acts of violence that are carried out ‘recreationally’ (i.e. for no particular reason) by groups of young people and filmed in order to be uploaded online. These acts are collective in the sense that they involve some people committing the act of violence while others film it using cell phones. These acts have particular repercussions for the victims as their humiliation is relived on the internet. Although fairly isolated in the region at present, cyber-violence is something to be aware of since the telecommunications media on which it is dependent may be particularly attractive to young people.

### **6.3.1. Gangs and gender**

Insofar as violent crime is found to occur in groups, the literature shows that both young men and young women are involved, albeit in different ways. Women who are involved are often exploited ‘psychologically, economically, physically and sexually’ by male gang members, though there are examples of women who ‘adopt similar career paths to their male counterparts in the gang’ (Fredette, 2008: 78). In some communities women stand outside the gang system, but co-operate nonetheless with gangs and rely on the system of order and control which they may provide in the community.<sup>64</sup> Interviewees in South Africa note, however, that there is a strong need for more research on girls involved in gangs since, anecdotally, they experience increasing levels of active criminality and violence by girls. There is no information at this point as to why this might be the case, although USIKO did make the following suggestion:

*It may have to do with young girls needing protection at school.*

Interviewee from USIKO, South Africa

### **6.3.2. Conclusions on gangs and other forms of collective violence**

Violence, including youth violence, is not by any means synonymous with groups or gangs of perpetrators. Insofar as violent crime is linked to groups, these may involve men and increasingly, as the fieldwork data suggests, young women. Nevertheless, the data suggest that young people who are associated with violence are frequently associated with groups of one kind or another, though these fall across a wide spectrum of size as well as the degree of formality or informality.

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<sup>64</sup> Jensen, 2008. See for instance page 155 and following.

As a general rule, it would appear that violence associated with active criminality is more likely to be carried out in groups than violence in routine social interactions. The fieldwork also suggests that collective acts of violence may be related to the reassertion of dominant norms within communities. Robbery in particular, far more so than either assault or sexual violence, tends to be perpetrated by groups of young men. In South Africa, for instance, the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey found that 86% of street robberies were committed by groups of two or more perpetrators although (surprisingly) the proportion of home robberies committed by groups like this (45%) was much smaller.<sup>65</sup> Amongst the 13 SADC and other African countries surveyed by the ICVS, an average of 23% of robberies was committed by one perpetrator, 31% by two, and 34% by three or more. Groups of three or more perpetrators were especially common in Zimbabwe (49%), South Africa (47% in 2000) and Mozambique (44%). In Mozambique only 9%, in South Africa in 2000 only 10%, and in Zambia only 14% of robberies were perpetrated by a single perpetrator (Naude *et al.*, 2006: 103).

The fact that many acts of active violent criminality involve more than one perpetrator, however, should not automatically be understood to imply the involvement of gangs in violence. For one thing, most cases of this kind involve two perpetrators. One article on home (residential) robbery in Gauteng refers to a small-scale study indicating that at least 75% of perpetrators consisted of groups of two people.<sup>66</sup> Of the 20% of rapes in Gauteng which involved more than one perpetrator, 12% (i.e. 60% of multi-perpetrator rapes) involved two perpetrators. A small group of this kind would not normally be described as a gang.<sup>67</sup>

Insofar as violent crime is linked to larger groups of perpetrators, these may also be relatively loose groups of associates such as many informal gangs of street robbers or groups involved in more sophisticated crimes such as robberies at banks, shopping malls or robberies of cash-in-transit vehicles. Even the more sophisticated robberies such as cash-in-transit heists in South Africa may involve a group of perpetrators who come together for the purpose of committing the robbery but do not necessarily associate with each other on a regular ongoing basis (Irish-Quobosheane, 2007).

Determining the degree to which groups involved in perpetrating violence should be described as gangs is therefore not a straightforward task. One definition of gangs for instance is 'a street gang (or a problematic youth group corresponding to a street gang elsewhere) is any stable street-oriented youth group whose own identity includes involvement in anti-social activity'.<sup>68</sup> Identity here appears to refer to the way in which members of the group understand its activities. Not all gangs necessarily control territory or markets or need to project themselves to others in the communities from which they come, as an identifiable group with an identifiable name, though this is characteristic of gangs in some areas.

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65 Burton, *et al.*, 2004: 136.

66 Newham: 2008:10. The study indicates that the numbers extended up to six. Note also the point on the same page that robberies were only defined as residential robberies if they involve at least two perpetrators.

67 This is reflected in legislation relating to gangs and organised crime. For instance the Prevention of Organised Crime, 121 of 1998 defines a criminal gang, *inter alia*, as a 'formal or informal ongoing organisation, association or group of three or more persons' (Section 1).

68 Eurogang project quoted in International Centre for Crime Prevention, 2008a:76.

On some levels, the connection between groups or gangs and violent crime has a fairly obvious logic to it, in that these groups provide the strength associated with greater numbers and thus enable the criminals more easily to carry out crimes which require frightening, intimidating or overpowering their victims. At the same time, such an argument might suggest that young people affiliate to such groups primarily with a view to committing crime. While this may be true to some degree, participation in such groups may be related to other motives, including a need for a feeling of belonging or search for identity and safety, status or social power in neighbourhoods or communities characterised by high levels of violence. In the words of one report, “Gangs provide a sense of belonging when few social institutions – family, community, school – provide this” (Barker and Ricardo, 2005: 32). Though the desire to commit crime may contribute to the motivation to form or join a gang, these intentions may also emerge from dynamics within the gang, including the need to overcome boredom. Whatever the motivation for engaging in it, those who ultimately carry out acts of violence or crime may be encouraged by others in the group, or may in fact be those in the group who most strongly feel the need to win the respect of their peers.

Youth formations of one kind or another may therefore feed off, be instruments of, or contribute to, political conflict. Political repression in Zimbabwe also involved the mobilisation of roving gangs of youth militia who were responsible for acts of repression and general intimidation and violence against opponents of the ruling party, and the civilian population in general. Though young men are often coerced into joining these groups, many join voluntarily and their motivations may have much in common with the motivations of those who join criminal youth gangs. Analysts note that a key motivation is often economic, but that involvement in militias or military formations also offers individuals the opportunity to ‘redefine their identity’ (Beneduce *et al.*, 2006: 6) (see also Barker and Ricardo) and regain a sense of ‘manhood’ while ‘the leaders of insurgency movements sometimes come to be emulated by young men and boys who lack male role models and guidance (Barker and Ricardo. 2005: 25).

#### **6.4. Warfare: is warfare a special form of violence?**

Within the Southern African region, there is the question of whether violence within the DRC may be understood as primarily fitting within the major forms of violence or whether it takes a distinct form. The recent history of the DRC, in which warfare has played a prominent role, may suggest that there is a straightforward answer to this question and that we should merely add ‘warfare-related violence’ to our list of major forms of violence, particularly considering the high death toll in the DRC and the presumably large (though actually unknown) number of ‘direct conflict’ deaths. However, there are some difficulties with this answer. While it is clearly true that a certain (again unknown) proportion of deaths and injuries from violence in the DRC have been related to incidents where groups of armed combatants have confronted each other militarily, it appears that a great many of the incidents of violence that take place within the context of conflict within the DRC are not principally about the contest over territory and strategic positions associated with military conflict. Thus, the situation in the DRC includes large numbers of ‘unlawful killings’, acts of ‘torture and other ill-treatment’ and sexual violence, all of which are linked to government security forces (soldiers and police) as well as Congolese

and foreign armed groups. The victims include many civilians and combatants, and male and female child-soldiers among them.<sup>69</sup>

While it seems that all armed groups associated with the conflict have been linked to excesses, some of the particularly prominent role players in these atrocities have been a number of smaller armed groups or militias that emerged during the course of the war. Thus, the 2008 Amnesty International report indicates that between 21 July and 3 August 2007, 'Mayi-Mayi fighters were allegedly responsible for the mass rape of around 120 women and girls in Lieke Lesole, Opala territory, Orientale province' (Amnesty International, 2008: 112).

The prevalence of incidents of violence such as these appears to be related to the fact that many of the groups who have been involved in the war are armed movements that 'lack a clear ideology and often revolve around a cult of one individual or a handful of leaders'. The leaders earn the loyalty of their followers by distributing weapons and income in the form of 'war booty', providing 'a supply of sexual partners' and conferring on their followers a feeling of power and sense of status that derives from participating in violence and terrorising civilians and weaker groups (Barker and Ricardo, 2005: 26).

Many leaders and combatants do not have a strong investment in the war achieving a specific outcome; they are invested more in warfare as a lifestyle that provides them with opportunities that would otherwise not be available. In many incidents of direct conflict between military forces, the death toll may thus be quite low. Different armed groups may exchange fire with each other at a distance and then disengage. It may only be when one group is able to easily overwhelm another, or where they encounter victims who are defenceless, that death, injury and other violations may be likely to ensue.

It therefore seems that within a context of social chaos and military style conflict such as that in the DRC, any attempt at such a neat characterisation of forms of violence falls away. Rather, participants in the conflict appear to be involved in multiple forms of violence – sometimes in discrete incidents, but sometimes in rampages of looting, torture, murder and rape. For instance, the 2004 Amnesty International Report refers to the case of 27 soldiers who were put on trial as a result of international pressure:

... for their part in large-scale killings, torture, including rapes, and other abuses by MCD and RCD-National forces in and around Mabasa, in Oriental province, in late 2002. The victims were mainly from the Nande ethnic group, who were targeted for their presumed support of a rival armed group.<sup>70</sup>

As implied by this data, acts of sexual violence which take place within the context of war are frequently in themselves acts of war in that they are intended to punish, humiliate and intimidate communities who are identified as the enemy. The example of the DRC reinforces the point made earlier that the 'forms' of violence are not mutually exclusive. The type of warfare that has persisted in the DRC to a greater or lesser degree over the last decade appears to indicate not only that the scale and degree of victimisation is much

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<sup>69</sup> See, for instance, Amnesty International 2004:42-43 and 2008:111-112.

<sup>70</sup> Amnesty International, 2004: 42. The report goes on to note that 'However, by the end of the year, many of the soldiers had reportedly been released.'

greater, but that various forms of violence, which sometimes may appear to be distinct from each other, become increasingly intertwined.

## 6.5. Locations of violence

### 6.5.1. School violence and bullying

Schools, like homes, are spaces that should be safe for young people. However, in many parts of the region young people actually experience violence at school. This is a particular problem in South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique. Violence at schools to some extent reflects patterns of violence in society more broadly with forms of assault (sometimes referred to as bullying) and sexual violence being a major problem. Data on violence in schools also shows that children in schools often have valuables stolen from them and this may be accompanied by violence, which turns these acts of theft into acts of violence. This implies that the major forms of violence which affect broader society, are also the major forms of violence at schools (CJCP, 2007)

Violence which takes place at schools is often referred to as bullying. “Bullying can be conceptualised as an ongoing social type of repetitive dominance and subordination. It is not a one-shot incident, but an expectable, locally institutionalised pattern. Such ongoing relationships include mocking and jeering someone as the habitual butt of jokes; exclusion from sociability; stealing (including taking toys from young children, later taking their clothes, food, or money); and beating. Bullying is typically found in schools and prisons.”<sup>71</sup>

A survey of violence in South African schools found that over 7.5% of primary school learners and 4.3% of high school learners reported some form of assault within the previous 12 months.<sup>72</sup> However, it should be noted that in the case of primary school children it was mostly forms of corporal punishment that accounted for the assaults against them. Though classmates were the perpetrators of over 80% and sometimes 90% of thefts, threats, acts of robbery and sexual assault, they were responsible for less than half (48%) of assaults against primary school children; educators were found to be responsible for 51% of such incidents. In the case of high school children, 83% of assaults were committed by classmates and 15% by educators.<sup>73</sup> The survey also asked primary school children about ‘teasing or verbal bullying’. More than one in ten respondents (12%) reported that they had been teased, taunted or made to feel ashamed at school.<sup>74</sup>

Bullying is therefore a multi-dimensional phenomenon that can be seen as partly overlapping with the ‘assaults’ form of violence. However, since bullying is often located in schools and may in many cases be sanctioned by parents and teachers (as discussed above) there is a great risk that early experiences of bullying – either as victim or

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71 Collins, 2008:158.

72 Burton, 2008:16. Note however that the report notes that assaults ‘were wide-ranging in form’ and refers to several different types of scenarios in which assaults take place of which one, involving ‘targeted victimisation by another individual learner from the school’, could be seen as having the most in common with the way in which bullying is defined in the discussion above (ibid).

73 Ibid:39.

74 Ibid:19.

perpetrator – may contribute to later, more excessive involvement in violence. Bullying may thus lay the groundwork for later involvement in violence.

Bullying is sometimes understood as a distinct form of violence and is often used to refer to violence involving students at schools or other violence, outside of schools, where both perpetrator and victim are children. Characteristically this violence involves a ‘bully’ who seeks out vulnerable and weaker children, and repeatedly assaults or otherwise engages in coercive behaviour against them. As is shown below, however, bullying may be carried out by people who are not children, in contexts such as prisons. In addition, it may not be as overt as the literature suggests. Interviews with organisations in South Africa demonstrate that bullying can be emotional, particularly for girls. Nevertheless, emotional forms of bullying may in fact leave long-lasting scars.

Though it is often associated with children, it should not be assumed that bullying exclusively involves children. It may take place in other environments such as prisons as well as workplaces or entertainment establishments, and in these contexts would involve young people or adults. Some domestic violence also has many features in common with bullying, although it tends to be regarded as a separate type of violence. As regards the major forms of violence referred to here, bullying may generally be understood to involve types of assault, though bullying may also involve taking things from people (and therefore has some elements in common with robbery or theft). Acts of sexual violence, even at schools, are not generally referred to as acts of bullying.

Bullying may in some cases be related to initiation rituals at schools such as those presented in the media in South Africa in 2009. What is of grave concern in these instances is that initiation rituals are often socially sanctioned forms of bullying and violence. As one interviewee in South Africa noted,

*There is an attitude of “just take it and give it out” which is quite prevalent, particularly amongst boys.*

Interviewee from Childline, South Africa

Much of the violence that has been documented is sexual violence and abuse. Information collected during the fieldwork phase shows that in Mozambique, for example, sexual abuse or harassment of girls and adolescents at school by teachers or fellow pupils is prevalent. The 2001 National Study of Reproductive Health, cited by FDC (2008), reports 3.5% of female respondents aged between 15 and 24 having suffered sexual abuse at some point in their lives, 65% of these whilst under the age of 18, many at school. In other parts of the region, many young people face corporal punishment (as discussed above) and experience violence in this way:

*Many young girls in particular drop out of school because of the sexual abuse that they experience there.*

Interviewee from Action Aid, Mozambique

Similarly, interviewees in Swaziland pointed to recent studies that have assessed school violence. A study conducted by the Ministry of Education (2006) found that 1 632 abuse

cases of children were reported to the police by November 2006. Of these, 65% were cases of sexual abuse of children.

A recent study conducted by SHAPE/Lusweti (2008) examined sexual abuse in private schools and found that there was a prevalence of learner sexual abuse not only by teachers, but also by head teachers and other learners. Learners who were abused by teachers were vulnerable to further abuse because of the unequal power relations between teacher and learner. The study also revealed a tendency by head teachers not to expose the perpetrators employed in their schools so as to protect the image of the school. The study revealed an absence of sexuality education in private schools. It showed that inspection of private schools was complicated by the fact that private schools did not register with the Ministry of Education, which made it difficult to monitor their conduct.

School violence was identified in the interviews conducted in South Africa as a key form of violence affecting young people. It is an issue that has consistently been covered in the media and, according to the Director of CJCP, is receiving increasing attention from the Department of Education.

*I know that in the last victimisation survey the head of the Department of Education was not happy about the fact that it didn't include schools as sites as she realises that school safety is an issue.*

Interviewee from CJCP, South Africa

Most of the interviewees mentioned school violence as a major challenge for young people. They note that the violence is not only perpetrated by fellow learners, although this may be the case, particularly with regard to gang-related violence (according to USIKO there are many gangs operating in schools in the winelands area of the Cape). As mentioned earlier, school bullying and initiation rituals involving violence have also come into the public eye through media coverage such as that in Johannesburg, South Africa, early in 2009. However, teachers are also complicit in violence against learners. This is often related to corporal punishment, which despite being illegal, is still carried out with alarming regularity in South African schools. Teachers have also been implicated in abuse and rape of their learners.

*The campaign to stop student-teacher relationships has been successful since it has opened up debate about the issue nationwide and affected legislation. Teachers who have relationships with students are not just suspended for some time or moved to another school, they are now actually barred from ever working as teachers again. Since the campaign began 113 teachers have been reported.*

Interviewee from Lusweti, Swaziland

### **6.5.2. Violence in the home – domestic violence**

Fieldwork data suggests that domestic violence is perceived to be widespread. While domestic violence may be considered an adult form of violence since it usually occurs between spouses or life partners, it in fact has profound effects for young people since they are often the witnesses and targets of this violence. Domestic violence may also

characterise personal relationships between young adults (see Wood and Jewkes, 2001). The home is supposed to be a safe space for young people, but if domestic violence is so prevalent, this implies that many young people are being subjected to violence on a regular basis and are learning violent behaviour from their parents.

One of the practices that may be seen to feed into domestic violence is that of forced or early marriage, noted in the interviews in Mozambique and Swaziland. In Mozambique, for instance, more than 50% of girls marry before the age of 18. A 2005 Save the Children Fund study found that 23% of girls marry under the age of 15 and by the age of 18, 56% of girls are married.<sup>75</sup> Similarly in Swaziland, a traditional practice known as *kwendzisa* is practiced in many areas. *Kwendzisa* is a type of forced marriage. The father of a girl chooses a husband for her to marry. Sometimes the father arranges this to settle a debt or to use the bride price to pay off a debt. Most girls married this way are young and their opinion is not sought. Their husbands are often older and already married. In both Mozambique and Swaziland, interviewees noted that girls in such marriages are vulnerable to emotional, sexual and physical abuse and studies on the subject indicate a strong correlation between early marriage and subsequent domestic violence.

*Early marriage is a violation of potential, and often a starting point of violence. There is a strong correlation in studies on domestic violence between early marriage and violence.*

Interviewee from UNICEF, Mozambique

A key issue pertaining to domestic violence, which emerged in Mozambique and Swaziland, was the fact that often domestic violence is not regarded by ordinary people as being problematic as it is entrenched in notions of men's rights to 'discipline' their wives and children. As one interviewee stated:

*Only now is domestic violence seen as a crime. Even police are reluctant to deal with it as such. The violence is justified as having been deserved – she deserved to be beaten because she came home late, or because she cooked the food badly.*

The Associação Coalizão da Juventude Moçambicana, Mozambique

From the above, and for many other reasons, it is difficult to measure the extent of domestic violence in the region. Firstly, there is generally a lack of data on violence in the region. In addition, domestic violence is particularly likely to go unreported because of the intimate personal context in which it takes place and because it is normalised; any police statistics will tend to underestimate the extent of domestic violence. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, domestic violence is violence that is condoned through silence in many communities. It is seen as a private issue and one that does not warrant outside attention. The legal systems in many countries reflect this attitude. In Swaziland, for instance, the Domestic Violence Bill was only drafted in 2006 and is yet to be signed into legislation. Similarly in Mozambique, a Domestic Violence Bill is only now being considered, after considerable lobbying efforts on the part of NGOs concerned with gender. Currently therefore in many parts of the region domestic violence is not yet seen as criminal, thus contributing to the legitimisation of overall violence in the region.

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<sup>75</sup> Relatório do Estudo sobre o Abuso Sexual das Raparigas nas Escolas Mocambicanas

## 6.6. Sexual violence

The fieldwork data reveals that sexual violence is prevalent in the countries surveyed. It was mentioned in all four case studies as a significant form of violence and, in Swaziland, for instance, is believed by some people to constitute the most prevalent form of violence. As has been mentioned, for many young girls this experience occurs at school or in the home, that is, places that should be safe, and is often committed by someone known to the girl.

The Mozambique research involved an interview with Action Aid, which has a programme focusing on the sexual abuse of young girls. From the perspective of Action Aid and WLSA in Mozambique, sexual violence points to major cultural issues which have to be dealt with relating to the position of women in society.

*The incidence of sexual violence points to major cultural issues which have to be dealt with relating to the position of women in society. The idea of men as leaders and women as submissive subordinates has to be confronted. The religious dimension to this also needs to be confronted.*

Interviewee from Action Aid, Mozambique

*Attitudes towards women as subjects and the expectations of them as subordinates are profoundly violent and contribute to these forms of violence.*

Interviewee from WLSA, Mozambique

Interviews in Zimbabwe reflect similar attitudes about sexual violence.

*Violence against girls through forced marriages as a way of repaying “ngozi” has always been normalised. Although this is contravening the Child Welfare Act, certain religious groups have continued with the practice.*

Interviewee, Bulawayo Integrated Youth Alternative Survival Project, Zimbabwe

*Although marital rape is a crime, very few women report such cases for different reasons. One of the main reasons is that women are socialised to believe that once one is married, then she has to show respect to the husband through submission. Although the Domestic Violence Act was meant to protect women there are other factors like religion that still demean women to such an extent that violence within marriage is normalised.*

Interviewee, Trust Your Goals Trust, Zimbabwe

Another type of sexual violence that has been mentioned in many of the case studies is rape committed by groups of perpetrators. This may be related to the type of initiation activities of a particular gangs, but in conflict or post-conflict situations group perpetration of rape may also be used as a tactic of war (or as an act that has its roots in tactics of war) where rape is seen as a form of community vengeance.

As is the case with domestic violence, there are structural challenges to dealing effectively with the problem of sexual violence. Attitudes such as “she deserved to be raped” still seem to be prevalent in the countries surveyed. This was reflected on most profoundly by an interviewee from the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) who told the story of a young girl who had been sexually violated by a group of men who saw it as their duty to discipline her for wearing a mini-skirt. However, there seems to be reluctance, lack of will, or lack of acknowledgement of sexual violence as a crime, which perpetuates the cycle of violence that many young women face:

*There is not one single case that you can quote [of a successful conviction] and so they fall through the cracks.*

Interviewee from SWAGAA, Swaziland

In most instances of sexual violence, the victim is more often than not a female. However, in a survey of men aged 18-49 years, 9.3% of them indicated that they had at some point been “persuaded or forced to have sex with a man” (Jewkes *et al.*, 2007). In a survey of men aged 18-49 years, 9.3% of them indicated that they had at some point been ‘persuaded or forced to have sex with a man’ (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, and Dunkle, 2009) According to the Director of Childline in South Africa, these cases often go unreported since there may be feelings of emasculation that go along with the victimisation. According to her, dominant notions of masculinity such as “boys must be tough” and “boys don’t cry” may contribute to the fact that the victimisation of young boys is not discussed. Thus sexual violence committed against boys is also likely to go unreported, but the consequences are significant, since these young boys may act out the unresolved trauma related to their experience of sexual violence in violent ways later in life.

## **6.7. Other types of violence**

### **6.7.1. Trafficking**

Another phenomenon related to violence that emerged from the fieldwork is that of child trafficking. This was an issue picked up in both the Mozambique and Swaziland case studies, which indicated that children, particularly young girls, are being trafficked into South Africa to be used as domestic workers, in criminal activities and in the sex industry. Driven by desperation, many families may be deceived into letting their children go to South Africa to earn money. These young people then enter a life of exploitative labour. The International Labour Organisation confirms these findings and notes that many countries in the region have become points from which young people are deceived or coerced into a life of exploitation, with the destinations often being the urban areas of South Africa. Young people in these situations may be particularly vulnerable to violence.

### **6.7.2. Systemic violence**

Beyond the various forms of violence that have been discussed above, there is also a worrying feature of violence that emerges in the region as mentioned by many of the interviewees during the fieldwork component.

Systemic violence refers to violence that is perpetrated through political, economic or cultural systems. Systemic violence relates to institutional violence, political violence and cultural or social forms of violence (see 6.7.3 – 6.7.5 for further information). Systemic violence is of particular concern for two reasons. Firstly, a number of forms of systemic violence seem to be prevalent in the region, suggesting that systemic forms of violence affect many people in the region. This was a point raised across all the case studies and is likely to come up in many other countries within the region. Secondly, systemic violence more than any other form of violence contributes to the legitimisation, acceptance and normalisation of violence within societies. It thus emerges as a core focus for policy makers if the region is to begin to deal with violence, and particularly youth violence.

### 6.7.3. Institutional violence

Of particular concern is institutional violence – violence that is condoned within particular institutions and is thus seen as acceptable. One form of institutional violence concerns the **treatment of offenders within correctional facilities**. South Africa is perhaps the most advanced in terms of promulgating legislation on youth involvement in crime through the Child Justice Act No. 75 of 2008. However, even in South Africa many young people, particularly those above the age of 18 years, still spend many years in the prison system, which can be degrading and/or violent. The violence perpetrated within prisons may be committed by other offenders, but in many instances is perpetrated by the warders. This issue was raised in the Mozambican case study as well, where many young people, even below the age of 18, face time in prisons in which violence is the norm. A 2002 study by Luis Brito on the prison population of Maputo<sup>76</sup> found that 21% of all prisoners fell into the 16-19 year age category, and a 2003 Save the Children Norway study<sup>77</sup> reported that 67% of respondents claimed to have been physically abused, some seriously, by the police or prison authorities during their encounter with the justice system. Similarly, in the DRC, according to the director of the minors section at the Kinshasa central prison, while they do their best to deal with young offenders they face a range of challenges.

*Some of the young people are being locked up with adult offenders and we have to go and find them in the prisons. There are also times when our offenders go without food because we don't have the resources.*

Interviewee from minors section, Kinshasa Central Prison, DRC

Given that very few countries in the region have specific policies related to child justice and how to deal with young offenders outside of the prison system, it is likely that youth in conflict with the law will experience time in prison, which in all likelihood will be characterised by an experience of victimisation and exposure to violence. There is a clear link between individuals experiencing or being victimised by violence, and the perpetration of violence at a later stage. This means that not only is violence legitimised in the prison system; it also contributes to the likelihood that young people will act out more violently once they have served their prison term. This is most likely to affect young men.

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<sup>76</sup> 'Os condenados de Maputo' PNUD

<sup>77</sup> Relatório de Pesquisa sobre 'Criança em conflito com a lei'

The question must also be raised as to the violent nature of placing young people in a prison system, particularly when they are not separated from older offenders. There is a strong body of evidence that points to the need for diversion programmes for youth in conflict with the law. Such literature has underpinned the introduction of the Child Justice Act in South Africa. In the face of this evidence, and the knowledge that young offenders are likely to face adverse consequences in prison, the use of the prison system to deal with young offenders could be seen as an act of violence in itself.

Another form of institutional violence is **corporal punishment**, which, despite being outlawed in some SADC countries, still seems prevalent in many schools in the region. In some countries, corporal punishment may still be the norm for discipline in schools. In others it may be related to a lack of training for educators on corrective discipline. In the case of Swaziland, for instance, interviewees noted that child beating is not only seen as normal, but even sanctioned biblically. A study conducted by Save the Children in Swaziland found that pupils viewed corporal and humiliating punishment as being good (60%) whilst teachers felt it was good and is intended to develop a child's own sense of self-discipline (94.2%). According to this study, the majority of teachers surveyed felt that it is appropriate to practise corporal punishment; they did not believe that it resulted in negative long term effects for the children. The evidence that young people continue to be assaulted at schools, which should be places of safety, is of major concern.

Besides these overt forms of violence, **institutional violence can also manifest more covertly**. Denial of access to education, for instance, could be seen as an act of violence because it denies a young person a basic human right. As some of the interviewees in Mozambique suggest, the ways in which youth are dealt with by the state, through the schooling system, the police, the criminal justice system, and the prisons, need to be carefully examined.

It also emerges that in some cases there is substantial violence directed at youth by the state itself. For example, in Mozambique lack of access to education is a problem related to both poverty and the need for young people to work rather than attend school. However, in some countries such as the DRC, according to the director of CJCP,

*Their government has deliberately cut back on education spending and so has knowingly denied many young people the education they need. This could be considered to be a form of violence against those young people.*

Interviewee from CJCP, South Africa

In the same way that Bantu Education in South Africa could be said to have been a form of institutional violence, denying young people access to education could be similarly viewed.

#### **6.7.4. Political violence**

Political violence is another form of systemic violence and is often condoned by political parties, or at least not explicitly rejected by them. Political violence may relate to outright

war as is the case in the DRC; deliberate acts of violence against members of opposition political parties as in the case of Zimbabwe; more subtle forms of violence such as disrupting opposition political gatherings (witnessed in many countries including Mozambique and South Africa); or denying people access to resources unless they are members of particular parties. One of the interviewees in South Africa for instance, noted that she was concerned about how political youth leaders used violent language or threatened to incite violence when they disagree with a particular political stance of an individual.

*Messages from youth political leaders who are role models about wanting to kill in order to get their way are very disconcerting and send a message about how we deal with conflict.*

Interviewee from Childline, South Africa

In her view, this points to a blatant disregard for difference and lack of respect for individuals and she was concerned about the message it sends to other young people about how difference and conflict is dealt with. All acts of political violence are rooted in a disregard for freedom of association, a lack of respect for different opinions, and an inability to deal with difference or debate in any other way but through violence. This is a major concern because it threatens democratic freedom and raises concerns about the ability to deal with difference in the region generally.

In the political realm, violence can very often be legitimised. This has become the case in Zimbabwe where the acts of violence committed by youth militia are no longer reported to the police.

#### **6.7.5. Cultural and social violence**

Other forms of systemic violence relate to cultural and social norms. Incidents of violence related to witchcraft were mentioned in data collected in both Mozambique and the DRC and is also discussed in an article by Burke (2000) in Botswana.

Of even greater concern, however, are forms of social violence such as vigilantism and mob lynchings, as well as covert forms of violence such as rejection in communities.

Covert forms of violence have generally not been given much attention and are only now beginning to enter the research agenda, albeit at the margins. Attention was first paid to this issue in relation to the reintegration of child soldiers into communities in the DRC. What became clear is that very often, communities did not want to accept child soldiers back because of the stigma they carried, leading to a rejection of the child in the community. Similar issues may be faced with the reintegration of youth in conflict with the law in various countries. While greater research focus is required on this issue to understand it more fully, these instances of rejection can be seen as covert forms of violence against young people.

As mentioned above, collective acts of violence such as mob justice and lynchings are prevalent in the region. This may take the form of vigilantism where there is frustration

with the policing and justice systems. Acts of vigilantism have been reported in various countries in the region and were evident in the Mozambique case profile where this was related to mob justice against suspected criminals. In Swaziland vigilantism emerged in relation to the protection of 'Swazi culture' which results in the lynching of young girls who are wearing mini skirts, for example. However, mob violence also extends to other issues such as xenophobia or ethnic attacks. Incidents such as these are sporadically reported in different countries within the region and on the continent. As noted earlier, Mozambique faced a wave of mob lynchings related to ethnic or other group identity in 2006-2008 that was not dissimilar to the acts of xenophobic violence in South Africa in 2008. According to the interviewees in the DRC, collective acts of ethnic violence are also not uncommon, particularly in the conflict areas of the North and the East, while Zimbabwe also has a history of ethnic violence. Although there may be socio-economic or political factors underpinning such acts of violence, the inherent intolerance for difference that underpins such acts is of equal concern, particularly since the region is very diverse.

## **6.8. Conclusions**

Clearly youth violence takes different forms in different countries within the region. Three key categories of violence – assaults, rape and sexual assault, and property crime – provide a helpful way of understanding violence in the region because many forms of violence such as bullying or domestic violence can be placed in one of these categories. It is therefore also helpful to look at how these acts of violence are perpetrated – whether by individuals, between people who are known to one another, or by groups such as gangs or mobs. This is helpful to further differentiate forms of violence. In addition, it is useful to consider the location of violence. One striking finding is that in many cases, violence happens in spaces that are supposed to be safe for young people – the school and the home.

Beyond these forms of violence the fieldwork demonstrates how violence can become legitimised and normalised within societies. Political violence and other systemic forms of violence seem to play a role in all of the countries in which fieldwork took place. This suggests that there is a level of violence that permeates the social fabric of many communities in the region.

## **Chapter 7: Factors contributing to youth violence in the region**

Given the complex nature and the various forms of youth violence, as well as the fact that perpetrators of violence face varying circumstances, and that the number of causal studies is limited, it is not possible to state with any certainty what the main causes or drivers of youth violence are. For this reason, this section focuses on the literature that identifies factors that may contribute to youth violence. It begins by looking at broad structural factors that seem to play a role in communities or societies where there are higher levels of violence. It moves on to discuss how the structural issues may impact on individuals or groups of perpetrators. It then looks at other potential contributing factors at the level of the family and school.

### **7.1. The political context of violence in the region**

A theme that runs throughout this report is that of the normalisation or legitimisation of violence. The broader definition of violence (Chapter 4) alludes to the fact that violence can become embedded in the social fabric of society and lead to the acceptance of violence as a normal or legitimate way of life.

This seems to be something that plays a role in many of the countries in which fieldwork was conducted and probably has its roots at least in part in the legacies of economic and political violence discussed in Section 3.1 above. The struggle for independence was often characterised by violence seen as a legitimate mechanism for political gain. Similarly, the violent uprooting of people from land to make way for economic interests was seen as legitimate by the ruling classes from an economic point of view. Many of these attitudes seem to have been carried into the social and political arena of the region today. Thus for instance, farm invasions and political violence (see Appendix 6 for further information) were seen as legitimate means of politicking by the ruling party in Zimbabwe. Social protests in South Africa have often turned violent when people feel they are not being heard.

The political and social arena thus plays a formative role in defining what is legitimate and what is not, and in many instances violence is seen as legitimate. This means that interventions are necessary at the state level and at community level to begin to change attitudes towards violence.

In addition, situations of political and social failure also provide the grounds for increased vulnerability of young people. A key point arising from the fieldwork in the DRC, for instance, is that warfare has resulted in a situation in which state institutions have by and large failed to deliver services adequately. This has had detrimental consequences for young people in particular, many of whom are unable to access education and livelihood opportunities. In addition, it has had a devastating impact on families, leaving many young children without homes and having to survive on the streets. These are all seen to be factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young people to violence.

## **7.2. Understanding youth violence holistically**

With the extent of youth violence apparent in the SADC region, it is clear that one cannot simply explain youth violence as a matter of immorality or individual behaviour. One must understand the broader context within which youth violence is playing itself out.

The period of 'youth' is undoubtedly a challenging time, during which young people struggle with issues of identity, often testing boundaries and engaging in relatively high-risk behaviour. It is also a time where peer groups are being renegotiated and social networks established. It is characterised as a time where young people seek to establish themselves as contributing and active citizens of their societies. This is challenging enough in a stable context, and becomes even more challenging in a transitional context such as many Southern African states.

In addition to the struggle to establish identity, many youth in the SADC region also face challenges of poverty, limited employment or livelihood opportunities, and lack of access to basic services. This is often in the political context of failing states. Some will also have to take on adult responsibilities as heads of households, as parents work as migrant labourers in urban areas or other countries, or die due to disease. Many will themselves migrate to seek employment.

In developed countries, the definition of youth is often fairly narrow and is usually considered as being up to age 24, when most young people will have completed their studies and moved into employment. The situation facing youth in Southern Africa is quite different. As the IRIN (2007) report points out, for a range of reasons including high school drop-out rates, lack of access to further and higher education, and high rates of unemployment in the SADC region, many young people face great difficulties in making the transition from school to gainful employment. As such, the definition of youth is a far broader one encompassing people up to the age of 35 years.

Various theorists have linked this period of transition to vulnerability to high risk behaviours including high risk sexual behaviour (see Rehle *et al.*, 2008; Harrison, 2005), substance abuse (see Borsari *et al.*, 2007), and susceptibility to violence and crime (see Uggen, 2000; Warr, 1998; Sampson and Laub, 1993). While poverty and unemployment seem to form a background for increased levels of a range of high risk behaviours, this is not to say that all poor young people will engage in high risk behaviour, or that those who do not face such circumstances will not engage in high risk behaviour. Part of the task of working in the field of youth development is being able to identify which protective factors can mitigate high risk behaviour. Before moving into understanding these, the structural factors that appear to contribute to increased levels of youth violence must be understood.

## **7.3. Structural factors**

There is a range of structural level factors that contribute to or form a background against which increased levels of violence, and youth violence in particular, play out. These

include high levels of inequality, the 'youth bulge', the normalisation of violence, legacies of violence and issues to do with policing and justice mechanisms.

### **7.3.1. Transition**

There is some evidence (Du Venage, 2000) to suggest that the process of political transition is itself a precipitating factor for an escalation in levels of violence. As change occurs, old forms of social control are reshaped. As this happens there is new space for growth in criminal activity. In addition, if transformation is slow, the legitimacy of new institutions may be undermined. According to Du Venage, the link between transition and escalating levels of violence has been documented in Namibia, the former Soviet Union and in parts of Eastern Europe after the Cold War.

### **7.3.2. Inequality**

Research conducted by Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) demonstrates that levels of violence are higher in societies with higher levels of inequality as measured by the Gini Coefficient. As they state, "international homicide rates from the United Nations Surveys on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems are related to income inequality" (2009: 135) when countries are compared. Similarly within the United States, states with higher inequality levels also experienced higher levels of crime and violence. Although the research focused predominantly on developed nations, the trend seems to hold in the developing world. South Africa and Brazil are commonly seen to be two countries with the highest levels of inequality. Both also have very high levels of violence, and particularly youth violence.<sup>78</sup>

The relationship between inequality and levels of violence is confirmed by Ward (2007: 25) who states that "both poverty and the perceived gap between rich and poor seem to play a role in rates of aggression."

Little is known about why such a correlation exists. Functionalist theorists such as Merton (in Goode, 1990) have surmised that it has to do with the fact that societies set out culturally defined legitimate goals which are said to be shared within a society. Merton's strain theory states that while the goals may be shared, the legitimate means to reach those goals are unevenly distributed. Those who are unable to achieve these goals experience stress, and may resort to illegitimate means of achieving them.

This theory may hold some weight, particularly when the opportunity-cost of crime is taken into consideration. Marselli and Vannini (in Luiz, 2000: 2), for instance, state that "a rational agent will engage in some illegal activity as long as the marginal return from crime exceeds the marginal return from legal occupation by more than the expected value of the penalty." The head of the Assets Forfeiture Unit in South Africa recently commented that unfortunately crime, and particularly organised crime (usually associated with violence), still pays and pays well. This is in a context in which legitimate

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78 While research from the World Bank indicates that a 2% increase in growth rates will result in a reduction in poverty ranging from one to seven per cent, depending on the country, data suggest that South Africa experienced a rise in income inequality over the period 1995 to 2005. If inequality had stayed constant since 1995, then economic growth would have resulted in a 29% reduction in household poverty. The nature of our economic growth pattern, however, which accrued returns disproportionately to those at the top end, meant that income inequality did in fact rise. The data show specifically that income inequality increases accounted for a 24% increase in the incidence of poverty. (Bhorat, H unpublished, 2009)

occupation often comes with very low salaries. Thus there might be some value in such a theory.

However, the difficulty with such a theory, besides its assertion that there are socially accepted goals, is that it implies that all or most people who are poor will (a) experience strain, and (b) will resort to illegitimate means of achieving goals. This is clearly not the case and most people who live in situations of poverty are not criminals, nor are they violent. In addition, there are an increasing number of cases of violence amongst young people who are growing up in middle class or affluent communities. Strain theory seems to have no applicability to this phenomenon. How then do we understand why, in a context of inequality, some people may resort to violence? There are some suggestions as to how inequality plays out at the individual level, including family relationships, access to social capital and attainment of status.

Although this was not a major issue that was discussed in the interviews conducted it was mentioned by a few interviewees in the DRC, Mozambique and South Africa. In South Africa, interviewees from one of the organisations – Project Literacy – pointed to the fact that in communities young people are faced with role models of what they refer to as “King Pins.” These role models are men involved in criminal activities, often organised crime, and who are therefore able to dress well and drive expensive cars. In addition, they are often well connected with the police, meaning that they often do not face consequences for their life of crime. This occurs in contexts of relative poverty.

*In these situations, the benefits of crime look much better than the consequences of crime, especially when these King Pins offer them money upfront for getting involved in crimes.*

Interviewee from Project Literacy, South Africa

Some interviewees in Mozambique also referred to consumerism and inequality as a potential driving factor.

*A picture was painted by some respondents of a youth whose personalities were vulnerable to the combination of social dislocation and new materialistic and individualistic values imported especially since the 90s with the ending of the war and the transition to a capitalist economy.*

In-country researcher, Mozambique

Another argument put forward in relation to inequality is that of “relational distance” (CSV, no date) in which people may find it difficult to see themselves as part of the common citizenry and where people see those who are poorer or richer than themselves as ‘other’, a view feeding into an ability to justify acts of violence, particularly where these are perpetrated against someone from another class or race, as in the case of the racial murders associated with middle class young white men.

A further argument is that inequality contributes to the cheapening of human life as people use their own material interests as a justification for treating others with disrespect (CSV, no date). Such is the case where employees are exposed to dangerous

situations, while the rewards for such work are reaped by the employer. These attitudes towards others may contribute to the perpetration of violence.

It must be noted, however, that inequality has implications for how crime and violence are defined within societies. From a Marxist point of view, those who are in positions of power have the ability to define, both officially and at the level of norms and values, what constitutes violence or crime. Apartheid South Africa is a case in point where state violence was defined as legitimate while acts of resistance were defined as terror attacks. While the apartheid situation may be a particular case, the fact remains that certain acts of violence are often seen as acceptable within societies, not only in the case of conflict, but also in day-to-day activities. For instance, many workers are subjected to unsafe working conditions. When a worker dies as a result of these conditions, the loss of life is not considered to be murder but is accidental, even where better working conditions may have prevented the death. Thus part of the explanation of higher levels of violence in countries with higher levels of inequality may relate to the way violence is defined within societies.

### **7.3.3. Poverty and unemployment**

Almost all of the interviewees pointed to the socio-economic factors of poverty and unemployment as contributory factors to youth violence. From the perspectives of the interviewees, these factors contributed to youth violence for a range of reasons. In the DRC for instance, a high level of youth unemployment (upwards of 80%) and chronic poverty create an environment that increases youth vulnerability to violence. According to the director of the minors section of a prison in Kinshasa, these conditions create an environment in which young people may have to turn to criminal activity for survival.

In South Africa, interviewees from USIKO and NICRO linked the issue of poverty to the fact that parents are often not available to supervise children as they are required to work, often away from home.

*Often parents have to work long hours or have to work two jobs and they are not there to supervise their children and they don't know what the children are doing.*

Interviewee from USIKO, South Africa

The director of Childline and the interviewees from Project Literacy noted that many young people living in poor areas did not have extra-curricular activities available to them after school or had dropped out of school, and that situations of poverty were related to a sense of hopelessness and related risk behaviour.

*Our young people have so much potential. They are talented and creative. But they don't have places they can go to where they can explore their passion, their talents and their skills.*

Interviewee from Childline, South Africa

*Risk behaviour is often related to a sense of hopelessness. Young people might think, no matter how hard I try I'm not going to get anywhere anyway.*

Interviewee from Childline, South Africa

Interviewees in Mozambique noted that in the greater Maputo area there is now a new generation of youth living in the poorer suburban and peri-urban areas who have had the benefit of some peace time education, have certain skills, new aspirations for a better life, and an awareness of the growing inequality of the society in which they live, and of their marginality and distance from the 'good life' as lived by the elite. They live with a heightened sense of relative deprivation within a culture that is authoritarian and patriarchal, and can easily turn to violence as a means of resolving frustrations and conflicts in their lives.

In Swaziland poverty, combined with unemployment, escalating food and fuel prices, and a lack of job opportunities, are seen by some interviewees as fuelling youth discontent, which may in turn result in youth involvement in violence and crime.

These comments should be balanced with the desk review findings which note the importance of caution when drawing a correlation between socio-economic conditions and violence, since not all young people who are poor are involved in violence. As the director of CJCP notes,

*If poverty was linked with violence we would have a much bigger problem than we currently do.*

Patrick Burton, Director of CJCP, South Africa

That said, most interviewees pointed to the need to deal with socioeconomic factors as part of a strategy for dealing with violence. However, these high-level social factors do create a situation in which the vulnerability of young people is enhanced.

One point of intervention that emerges is thus to ensure that young people are able to access education opportunities and are supported to develop livelihoods for themselves.

#### **7.3.4. The 'youth bulge'**

Another structural factor that can be seen as contributing to higher levels of youth violence is the number of young people. It has been established in this report that rates of violence perpetration and victimisation are higher amongst young people than for any other age group.

It follows therefore that in societies where there are more young people, the rates of violence and youth violence in particular will be higher (Pharoah and Weiss, 2005). Schonteich (1999) also makes this point, explaining that because young people are more likely than older members of a population to commit crime, a disproportionate number of young people in the population could lead to increased levels of crime, and in particular violent acts or aggression. A further argument put forward (in Pharoah and Weiss, 2005) is that youth bulges tend to place strain on systems such as the labour market, health systems and education institutions and thus contribute to the general instability of the country.

Two other arguments are put forward with regard to the youth bulge issue, and in particular related to the increasing numbers of orphans in countries where HIV and AIDS is predominant. The first is that young people who grow up without parents and who must rely on the ineffective support of the state are more likely to be prone to violence (Guest in Pharoah and Weiss, 2005). The second is that the increasing number of orphans provides ready recruits for those wishing to commit acts of violence.

All of these arguments have two key weaknesses. The first is that they do not allow for the agency of young people, suggesting that those who are most vulnerable will be ready to take up arms, whereas in fact many young people from child-headed households may come through the situation well. The second is that they again suggest that most young people in situations of poverty will resort to violence. This does not explain the levels of violence amongst affluent youth who are brought up in relatively stable households.

### **7.3.5. Normalisation of violence**

A further structural issue is that of the normalisation of violence. As previously discussed, in many communities and homes certain acts of violence have become accepted or normalised. For example, corporal punishment was until the early 1990s legal in South Africa and elsewhere, as was forced sex or rape within a marriage.

At the societal level, the normalisation of violence may take place through the use of state violence as a means of controlling its citizens and be seen as a legitimate way of dealing with conflict. This is certainly the case in conflict situations where soldiers, whether child soldiers or not, are recruited based on the notion that taking up arms is necessary to defend a particular ideology. This is well documented by the child soldiers of Uganda and the DRC who have written of their experiences (see, for instance, Jal, 2007 and Beah, 2005).

At a community level, the normalisation of violence occurs in various ways. The acceptance of school bullying is one such example where children may be told to toughen up as bullying is to be expected. The same can be said when parents, teachers and peers encourage their children to accept and go through harmful school initiation processes as discussed in Section 6.5. It also occurs through a discourse of silence or an attitude of “it’s a private affair” with regard to domestic and sexual violence, as previously explained. A study by Hindin (2003) notes that a high proportion of women interviewed believed that it was justifiable for husbands to beat their wives. Because violence is viewed as an acceptable way to exercise control and settle disputes between partners, many women consider violence in the home as acceptable.

Similarly in some communities, particularly where gang-related violence is linked with control of territory and the drug trade, gangsterism may be seen as part of everyday life and members of gangs may even be held in some esteem and become role models for younger community members. The director of CJCP speaks to this issue as an emerging area of research. He points to the fact that in some cases families can be seen to be complicit in crime and violence, since they have certain expectations that are fulfilled and

although they are aware that these expectations are not being met through legitimate means, they do not ask questions.

The normalisation of violence often affects women more than men. Norms are related to power dynamics and in patriarchal societies, norms are therefore often shaped more predominantly by men. Thus the attitude of non-intervention in private or family affairs has particular consequences for women who face domestic violence. Similarly, there is an attitude amongst some that women “ask to be raped.” This was a key attitude identified by interviewees in Swaziland, who noted that this made it very difficult for them to lobby for laws that protected women more. These attitudes discourage many women from reporting instances of rape, particularly when their rapist is known to them, thus compounding their victimisation.

In short, the issue of the normalisation of violence suggests that violence is learned through daily social interactions (Lilley, 1995). For Sutherland (in Goode, 1990: 47), a person becomes violent because of “an excess of definitions, attitudes and values favourable to” violence.

The issue of normalisation of violence was discussed at some length in the interviews and yielded interesting points about how violence is normalised and legitimised in the countries profiled. This suggests that the normalisation of violence is emerging as a key issue to be addressed in the region.

Trends in this regard are reflected in growing social acceptance of different acts of violence. Acts such as corporal punishment, domestic abuse or violence and in some cases rape (such as within marriage) are seen as legitimate forms of violence in a range of contexts. As has been mentioned above, this was seen as a point of particular concern in Mozambique and Swaziland. In Swaziland for instance, what is referred to as ‘spousal discipline’ is still acceptable.

*Many Swazis consider moderate wife beating a form of spousal discipline condoned by their culture. Similarly, child beating is seen as not only normal, but even biblically sanctioned.*

In-country researcher, Swaziland

A similar attitude exists in Mozambique according to interviewees who noted that sometimes domestic violence is blamed on the wife who needed to be taught a lesson.

*Domestic violence is only now seen as a crime. The police are even reluctant to deal with it as such. The violence is justified as having been deserved - she deserved to be beaten because she came home late, or because she cooked the food badly.*

Interviewee, Associação Coalizão da Juventude Moçambicana, Mozambique

According to interviewees in Swaziland, cultural attitudes related to gender are an obstacle to lobbying efforts.

The Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) is the leading organisation dealing with the issue of gender and violence in Swaziland. When SWAAGA was established in Manzini, the media and public opinion questioned the existence of abuse against women and children in Swaziland. There was much resistance from Swazi men to the idea of curbing violence against women and children. Some men equated the concept of gender equality with female superiority, and said that Swazi women would become undisciplined, unfaithful and disloyal. Since its establishment incidents of abuse against women and children that resulted in counselling, the relocation of victims in safe havens and arrests have risen about 50% annually. The rise in numbers has been attributed not to increasing incidents but to better reporting. According to interviewees, Swaziland remains a highly patriarchal society. Women in Swaziland have limited power and are not adequately protected by the legal system. When their husbands die, women are vulnerable and can be dispossessed of their land, or have their livestock and other assets taken away from them. In addition, there is the continued practice of cultural norms such as *ukungena* where a widow becomes the wife of her husband's brother.

Related to this is the fact that many NGOs working on women's rights and the establishment of legislation that will protect women from sexual and domestic violence have faced difficulties in getting adequate legislation passed. According to interviewees in Swaziland the domestic violence and sexual violence bill is still in draft form and advocacy organisations continue to face challenges in getting it promulgated. In Mozambique, the Law Against Domestic Violence has only recently been promulgated after a long struggle on the part of advocacy organisations.

Where violence is seen as the norm it is often justified, not only by the perpetrator, but by the victim as well as the community members. USIKO, an organisation dealing with vulnerable youth in the winelands area of South Africa's Western Cape province, note that one of the most difficult tasks they face is to shift young people's thinking in order to get them to understand that violence is not acceptable and has consequences.

*So many of the young people we see have grown up with violence and they don't see it as wrong. Part of our work is to show them what a 'normal' relationship is like.*

Interviewee from USIKO, South Africa

Many of the young people USIKO deals with have been brought up with violence from such a young age that they do not really regard violence as being problematic. Similarly, the case of Swaziland demonstrates how violence can be normalised in more traditional contexts as has been mentioned above.

Beyond the social acceptance of violence, violence is also normalised through state legitimisation. Various examples of state use of violence emerged in the research. For instance, in Mozambique, the Portuguese colonial government used violence to deal with transgressions of state decree by the local population. Later, *Frelimo* also used violence to deal with criminal behaviour. The war situation added to the use of violence by both the state and the opposition. According to interviewees, in the post-conflict era, violence is still used as a means of political opposition. In this way, violence becomes legitimised by the state.

The discussion on systemic violence in Chapter Six adds to the understanding of how violence becomes normalised within societies. There is thus a very clear need to highlight the issue of the normalisation of violence at a strategic and policy level in order to raise awareness and stimulate discussion on how best to challenge the situation.

There are two key challenges in considering the normalisation of violence as a structural factor in youth violence. Firstly, while it might explain higher levels of violence in particular communities, it does not explain why not all people living in such communities resort to violence. Secondly, the idea of the normalisation of violence can be disempowering as it suggests that violence is cyclical – that a situation of violence cultivates a culture of violence which breeds higher levels and more excessive violence. If this is indeed the situation, it raises questions about how such a cycle is to be broken.

### **7.3.6. Legacies of violence**

Related to the issue of the normalisation of violence is that of legacies of violence. Much of southern Africa has been exposed to conflict in some form over the past century. The impact of this, and particularly the impact of more recent and ongoing conflict, is that it creates a legacy of violence where adults may have been trained to be violent in the course of conflict and take this learning into the home.

In South Africa for instance, many young people, both black and white and both men and women, were recruited to serve or fight against apartheid. These young people were trained in acts of violence, and in many instances actively killed others in the course of duty. Such acts must have a profound psychological impact on young minds and would have an impact on families and communities. Many of these young people are now parents of children, and some may pass on this legacy of violence to their children through domestic violence, or simply acceptance of violence as a solution to conflict. It is nonetheless clear that not all people involved in the perpetration of violence during conflict, will become violent in the home or encourage violence amongst children.

The legacy of violence also has implications for accessibility to weapons, particularly firearms. The proliferation of firearms in contexts that have been characterised by conflict has implications for the degree of violence that may be perpetrated (CSV, 2009).

### **7.3.7. Conflict**

The contrast between violence associated with various types of military and quasi-military formations in the DRC and that associated with criminality and interpersonal conflict elsewhere in the SADC region, but most notably also in South Africa, also highlights a key issue of how social conflict and political transition impact on the status of youth.<sup>79</sup> As has been detailed in analyses of the history of political violence in South Africa, a context of social conflict such as that which existed in South Africa in the 1980s is characteristically associated with the mobilisation and militarisation of young people, and particularly young men. Particularly where armed conflict is prosecuted by irregular forces, such as the case in the township insurrection in South Africa in the 1980s and early 1990s, this

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<sup>79</sup> The analysis here draws strongly on the argument put forward in Simpson, 2001.

may see marginalised and criminalised elements in communities playing a key role in conflict alongside more politically minded youth.<sup>80</sup> In this process, youth are glorified and lionised as folk heroes by political leaders.

However, this picture changes dramatically in the post-conflict period. Youth often come to be seen as synonymous with the criminal elements within their ranks. Where previously they were glorified and mobilised, now political leaders seek to resist any efforts to mobilise them for the purposes of socio-economic development. In some ways justifiably, they come to be seen as representing a social problem, though characteristically few resources are dedicated to assisting them, and whatever resources are made available are inevitably inadequate in the context of developing countries where there are many competing priorities. Thus, despite the hardships entailed, it may sometimes seem that young people have more to gain from war than from peace. With the gradual consolidation of peace in the DRC much effort has been put into developing large scale Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) programmes. Referring to the experience in Liberia, one report, for instance, indicates that:

*Programmes that assist ex-combatants and youth affected by the violence often face tremendous challenges ... [Programme] reviews and evaluations have highlighted the lack of jobs and educational opportunities outside their programmes. Other programmes have created dependency, while others are too short-term, raising expectations and then leaving young men frustrated when programmes end.*

Barker and Ricardo, 2005:29

Conflict also produces a range of consequences which contribute to the vulnerability of young people to becoming involved in violence. Interviewees in the DRC noted that at a structural level, the disintegration of state institutions, high levels of unemployment (over 80%), the total collapse of the education system and chronic poverty constitute the macro-social environment that increases youth vulnerability and predisposes them to violence. At the community level, the destabilisation of the family, disappearance of community organisations and prevalence of individualism greatly contribute to youth vulnerability. Interviews with the director of the section of minors in the central prison of Kinshasa, with the co-ordinator of a centre for street children and with the director responsible for the demobilisation of child soldiers all pointed to these as the two primary drivers of youth violence.

### **7.3.8. Policing and justice**

The policing and justice systems also play a role in how violence is viewed within societies, as well as in contributing to or mitigating violence. Although both systems are intended to mitigate violence, very often they may in fact do the opposite.

Steinberg (2009) profiles how the policing system in South Africa is inadequate and police personnel are not only badly equipped to deal with the high levels of violence, but are often themselves implicated in crime and violence. The result is that communities tend to have little respect for the police, leading to a situation in which vigilantism is seen as

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80 Marks, 2001 tries to dissect questions to do with the relationship between 'tsotsi' elements and political youth formations in South Africa during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

acceptable, or where those perpetrating violence feel that they can do so without suffering any consequences. In Zimbabwe where the police have become partisan, communities may see no point in reporting crimes, particularly if they involve ZANU-PF aligned youth militia.

The history of policing in South Africa in particular may also have implications for levels of violence. The role of the police force under apartheid was to protect white enclaves. There was no criminal policing in township areas, leading to a situation in which informal mechanisms of justice had to be relied upon (CSV, 2009). The lack of policing may still play out in many countries in southern Africa. Where police do not respond to criminality, or respond inadequately, this may result in acts of vigilantism, another form of violence.

Interviewees in South Africa pointed to corruption in the police force as a key driving factor of violence generally.

*These “King Pins” are connected with the police and so they get away with it. Corruption in the police force is a problem.*

Interviewee from Project Literacy, South Africa

As has been mentioned, criminals, particularly those involved in organised crime, very often have corrupt relationships with police officials, meaning that they do not fear consequences for their actions. This is a message that is passed on to young people who see that involvement in crime and violence need not have negative consequences.

The justice system also has implications for levels of violence. In most cases the criminal justice system still relies on imprisonment as a form of punishment. In this sense, most countries in SADC still have retributive forms of sentencing. While this may work for some offenders, for many offenders, and particularly for younger offenders, retributive justice may in fact contribute to the cycle of violence as imprisonment places them in an often brutal system where violence is necessary to survive. In addition, those committing petty crime may learn violence from more experienced offenders with whom they may be imprisoned. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 below.

From this point of view, alternative forms of sentencing, including restitutive or restorative justice mechanisms, need to be pursued, particularly in the case of young offenders.

### **7.3.9. Marginalisation of youth**

Related to systemic violence is the issue of marginalisation of young people from the mainstream economy and society. This is evident through the lack of opportunities for young people to access employment in many parts of the region, lack of access to quality education that will prepare young people for life, and lack of activities focused on developing young people to their full potential. For example, the Swaziland case study notes that while there has been significant focus on children, very little research has been concerned directly with youth. In addition, there are very few programmes aimed at young people. The issue of HIV is slowly changing this, but these programmes can be quite narrow in focus.

Similarly in Mozambique, youth issues are only now beginning to come on to the agenda at a policy level and there are now some programmes which focus on youth. Many of the respondents in Mozambique pointed to the structural violence of the system and its effects on youth: the poor schooling system, the high drop-out rate, the general neglect of youth by society, high levels of poverty, and lack of employment opportunities.

In the DRC, youth programmes are focused largely on child soldiers. This means that there are very few opportunities for young people to develop positive social networks, gain life skills and explore their talents and skills, leaving them with little to do outside of school. A key success in the DRC has been the very recent (August 2009) adoption of a youth policy. The policy notes the marginalisation of young people in society as a key challenge and points to fifteen ways in which this manifests in Congolese society:

- Insufficient number of institutions of popular education such as youth centres, culture centres, youth leisure facilities;
- Lack of efficiency of Congolese associational movement to mobilise the youth,
- Difficult insertion in professional life and insufficient job opportunities for the youth and widespread unemployment;
- Insufficient health facilities specific for adolescents and youth,
- Insufficient participation of youth in the resolution of their problems and in the life of the nation;
- Insufficient number of experts in the area of youth education;
- Weak access to quality formal and non-formal education;
- Lack of budgetary allocation to youth movements and organisations;
- High prevalence of risk pregnancies, provoked abortions in dangerous conditions, of HIV infection and violence, including sexual violence among youth;
- Weak institutional, technical, and operational capacity of youth organisations;
- Illegal consumption of drugs, often accompanied by violence among rival gangs, anti-social behaviours and the phenomenon “*kuluna*”;
- Absence of intergenerational dialogue, especially between parents and their children;
- Lack of funding for youth initiatives;
- High prevalence of anti-values (vices) among youth;
- Passivity and disengagement with regard to decisions that affect their lives.

In South Africa, the marginalisation of youth was also mentioned as a key factor contributing to youth violence. As has been mentioned above, the director of Childline pointed to the fact that there are very few opportunities for young people to explore their potential talents and skills. There are few opportunities for extra-curricular activities unless one is in a well-resourced school and there are very few youth organisations that cater for this need. The interviewees from Project Literacy and NICRO confirmed this view and pointed to the need for activities for young people, not simply as a mechanism to “keep them off the streets” but as a key developmental intervention. The Director of CJCP alluded to this as a key factor when he stated that there was a need for a more developmental approach to youth safety as discussed above and a need to ensure that all young people had access to safe spaces within and outside of school.

The South African Youth policy speaks to how there is a need in South African society to mainstream youth issues to ensure that young people have better chances to access quality education, livelihood opportunities, and healthcare facilities that cater to their needs, in order to protect against the vulnerability of young people.

It seems therefore that the marginalisation of young people in various countries in the region is a key challenge that must be addressed to ensure that young people are less vulnerable to involvement in, and victimisation by, violence.

#### **7.4. How do structural level factors affect the individual?**

As has been mentioned, in discussing the structural level factors above, the question is posed as to how these factors affect individual perpetrators. It is clear for instance that not all people living under conditions of inequality, or without parents, will turn to violence. What therefore are the more individual level factors that might also explain involvement in violence, and by implication, what are the protective factors involved?

##### **7.4.1. Establishing identity**

As has been mentioned, adolescence and young adulthood are periods of intensive identity work where young people are moving away from the confines of their parents' and immediate communities' expectations and norms, and trying to establish an independent identity. Identity is profoundly social – we identify ourselves in relation to others. As such, peer groups, communities and other social networks, as well as the “communication, normative and negotiation processes that take place in networks” (Friedman *et al.*, 2007: 161) are central to identity work which may be defined as the struggle “to acquire the means to represent oneself to self and others” (Epstein and Johnson cited in Bottrell, 2007:599), or as an ongoing “process for understanding self and for self-representation ... which is understood as essentially social and occurring within available discourses” (Bottrell, 2007: 599). While identity work is ongoing, it is more pronounced amongst young people who are in transition from school to a productive working life, as it is in this process that young people are exposed to changing social contexts, discourses and networks that produce a re-examination and renegotiation of self and self-representation.

The challenge that so many young people in the SADC region face is that they are not supported positively in this process. As mentioned above, many leave school early for a range of reasons, meaning that they leave a realm of support within which they may be able to explore their agency and identity. Upon leaving school, there are very few formal opportunities for them to engage meaningfully in society and gauge their relative strengths and weaknesses. This is due to the fact that, by and large, youth are a marginalised group in the SADC region, through lack of access to services and education, and marginalised civically. Often, young people are not viewed as community members who can make a positive contribution. Politically, they are also marginalised, with few spaces for their voices to be heard, unless there is a need for military numbers, as in the case of the DRC and Zimbabwe.

Bottrell (2007) suggests that youth may become involved in high-risk behaviours because they are driven by a need to define themselves and establish their autonomy. Since they are often defined in negative or marginalised terms (their unchosen identity), their involvement in high-risk activities is driven by the sense of belonging to an alternative 'centre' that helps them to define themselves (their chosen, achieved identity) as something other than the terms in which the dominant discourse tends to identify them (their unchosen, ascribed identity). This is confirmed by Korth (2008) who suggests that involvement in crime for many young people in South Africa is a claim to status and the ability to provide for their families. Beneduce *et al.* (2006: 6) also state that "in this context of uncertainty, many youngsters try to redefine their identity. Violence often offers them an alternative model of identification as well as an opportunity to affirm their own subjectivity or self-assertion." Involvement in high-risk behaviour is therefore a route to belonging and exploration of autonomy. In the SADC region, there are few other opportunities to achieve this.

### ***Violence, power and status***

Violence is most often a demonstration of intimidation over another. As such there is an inherent link between violence and domination or power. This can be seen at the state level where the state, particularly when the state is not seen as legitimate, must maintain power through the use of coercion or violence.

However, violence and power also plays itself out at the individual or group level with respect to gaining status. "Indeed, there is research that indicates that crime, and often violent crime, is a primary means for many young South Africans to connect and bond with society, to acquire "respect", "status", sexual partners and to demonstrate "achievement" amongst their peers and in their communities" (Pelser, 2008: 3).

Thus 'status insecurity' (Bruce, 2007) or the need to assert power over 'the other' can be seen as a factor driving violence in the SADC region and has particular consequences from a gender perspective. Research conducted amongst young people in the Eastern Cape shows that the need to obtain acceptance from male peers is also a factor motivating the premium which is placed on having female sexual partners, and underpins the perceived need to control them through violence, amongst young men in these areas (Wood and Jewkes, 2001). Domination of female sexual partners, often violently, is therefore a way of demonstrating masculinity.

It can also be seen as a factor contributing to violence related to interpersonal conflict between young men. Much violence, including a high proportion of incidents of fatal violence, involves argument-related violence between men.<sup>81</sup> This is frequently precipitated by minor slights or perceived insults.<sup>82</sup> In a male sub-culture in which it is seen as necessary to defend one's honour through violence, such violence may be seen as a way of retaining credibility amongst peers. As Wilkinson and Pickett (2009: 140) note, "violence is most often a response to disrespect, humiliation and loss of face, and is usually a male response to these triggers." Of course, this is not to suggest that all young

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<sup>81</sup> See, for instance, CSVR 2007(a) as well as the discussion of the gendered nature of violence perpetration above.

<sup>82</sup> See, for instance, CSVR 2007a pages 60 to 64.

people will respond to humiliation with violence. Many have other mechanisms that reaffirm their self-worth. However, in a context where a young person does not feel valued in society or in the home, and where he or she finds affirmation amongst peers who accept violence as a statement of power and status, they may be more likely to engage in violent behaviour.

The issue of violence, power and status may also explain some aspects of racial violence. Although no studies have yet been conducted with regard to young middle class white men being involved in violence, the recent incidents of racial violence may also be explained by looking at the issue of power and status. For the white perpetrators, beating up and killing the homeless black victim may have been a show of masculinity to their friends, but more importantly could be explained as a show of domination over someone more vulnerable than themselves. Jansen (2008) has also pointed to the sense of exclusion that some white males feel in South African society today, which may explain to some extent demonstrations of racial violence that have been noted at the University of the Free State and elsewhere.

### ***Identity – masculinity and femininity***

Particularly prominent in South Africa are factors legitimating male dominance over women, and sexual entitlement and negative concepts of masculinity – ideas about male rights to authority over women, and to make decisions on behalf of women, appear to have been characteristic of virtually all human societies but have been intellectually and morally refuted and politically overturned in much of the world over the last century. While elements of equal treatment of women, such as the entitlement to vote provided to women alongside men (amongst those who were enfranchised) predate the transition to democracy, many patriarchal elements continued to be endorsed on an official level virtually until the formal transition to democracy in 1994. For instance, South African law did not recognise the right of a woman to refuse to have sex with her husband until 1993. But while women and men are now regarded as equals in the eyes of the law in South Africa, patriarchal ideas continue to be attractive to some men because of the perceived privilege which they confer on them, and are often legitimised by individuals or groups through traditional culture that provides them with authority. These ideas feed into violence in a number of ways. Some men, for instance, continue to rely on ideas about male sexual entitlement to sexual access to women, in order to legitimate sexually coercive behaviour. Ideas about male rights to authority over their wives or other female partners are also used to legitimise violence and coercion against women within marriages or other relationships. In a context where women are being drawn into the labour market, their presence is experienced by some men as undermining their ability to conform to norms that are based on gender stereotypes, in terms of which men are expected to be 'providers'. Gender stereotypes that identify maleness with physical strength and violence also provide archetypes for men to invest in violent 'masculinised identities', with the latter serving as a type of psychological defence against feelings of insecurity or inadequacy.

When discussing violence, status and power, young girls are missing in the literature as perpetrators. They are most often analysed as the victims of violence, and certainly this is predominantly the reality that young women face. They become the conduits by which

young men demonstrate their masculinity and are victims of domestic violence and rape. Nevertheless, some young girls are also involved in gang-related violence and bullying and little has been done to understand their involvement as perpetrators (Jeffthas and Artz, 2007), particularly whether issues of power and status may have an influence.

With the above discussion in mind, it is clear that not all young people will be involved in violence or other forms of high risk behaviour for that matter. Some will access positive alternative centres and positive social networks, within which they are able to understand their value and potential, and shape their identity positively.

Nevertheless, the context within which violent acts may take place for young people should be considered – low level acts of violence may constitute forms that are part of the process of a young person exploring identity. Mistakes may be made. This is another reason why restitutive justice rather than retributive justice mechanisms are likely to be more beneficial in dealing with youth violence once it has occurred. In addition, it seems that working at the level of peers and providing young people with positive opportunities to be involved in society and develop their identities may provide a way forward in respect of mitigating strategies.

The period of youth is therefore characterised by an intensive period of identity work, that is, assessment of self, establishing boundaries and identifying with particular groups. This is also related to defining oneself as a man or a woman and challenging or accepting dominant notions of what that might entail. In some ways, this process may play out in violence – a point that was discussed by some of the interviewees in the fieldwork component.

In relation to the development of masculine and feminine identities, two key points were mentioned by some of the interviewees during the fieldwork phase.

*a. Control and competition – gender and the social function of violence*

While violence perpetration is overwhelmingly male, violence victimisation affects both men and women. Assault violence by young men against young women may be understood as intended to serve the purpose of control. Thus a chapter on violence by young men against their female partners in the Eastern Cape in South Africa indicates that,

‘Violence usually occurred in situations where the girlfriend was perceived to be stepping out of line by behaving in ways which threatened men’s sense of authority in the relationship and undermined their public presentation of themselves as ‘men in control’. That ‘successful’ masculinity was partially defined in terms of young men’s capacity for controlling their girlfriend(s) was particularly prominent in the narratives. Underlying this construction were explicit notions of hierarchy, ‘ownership’ of women, and ‘place’ within sexual relationships, reflecting a patriarchal discourse institutionalised in traditional practises such as bride wealth (*lobola*)’<sup>83</sup>

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83 Wood and Jewkes, 2001:323-4.

The issue of control may also be seen as underlying much other violence. For instance, in most robberies the threat or use of violence is essentially intended to control the behaviour or the victim, irrespective of whether they are male or female. In the case of robberies, victim and perpetrator roles are clearly differentiated even where both participants are male. But as indicated above, it is particularly in incidents of male-male assaults that the roles of victim and perpetrator are sometimes difficult to differentiate. In these incidents male-male violence may therefore be understood as part of competition between men over their relative status in the social world which they occupy.

Thus although control is an underlying thread that runs through much violence in the context of interpersonal conflict, there are differences in terms of the symbolic meaning which violence has which may be related to the gender of the parties.

*b. Lack of positive male role models*

The first issue raised in many of the interviews for the South African case study, but which did not emerge in any of the other case studies, is that young boys lack positive male role models who deal with conflict in a positive way and who have healthy relationships with their wives. Although this was not mentioned in the other case studies, the prevalence of authoritarian, patriarchal messages may contribute to the incidence and scale of violence, particularly violence against women. Some of these messages and contributing factors that result in the normalisation of violence have been discussed previously, particularly in Chapter Four and Chapter Six.

The prevalence of negative (particularly male) role models was mentioned on numerous occasions in the interviews conducted in South Africa. As has been mentioned, 'King Pins' or young men involved in organised crime are in some ways revered for their ability to provide for themselves and their families, and for their corrupt relationships with the police. These people are in some ways role models for young boys, according to the interviewees from Project Literacy. USIKO also mentioned that many of the young men they deal with do not have positive family role models and experience violence perpetrated against their mothers.

*Many of the young men on our programmes don't have a father at home and where they do, they are often negative role models.*

Interviewee from USIKO, South Africa

USIKO also notes that dominant notions of masculinity in many communities are framed around strength and dominance over women, even if that is expressed through violence. The beneficiary from USIKO noted that one of the most profound experiences he had through the USIKO programme was being paired with a male mentor.

*I don't have a father at home so this mentor really taught me what it means to be a man.*

Beneficiary of USIKO, South Africa

The relationship between masculinity, socialisation, the role of positive role models and violence thus emerges as a key area for further exploration and possible intervention.

*c. Female complicity through expectations*

An interesting point, again raised only in the South Africa case study, but which warrants further research, is that of female complicity in crime prompted by their expectations of their male partners. Dominant notions of what constitutes masculinity and femininity shape young women's ideas of what males should provide. In situations where young men face unemployment, they may see crime as the only way in which they can provide adequately for their female partners. Some women therefore condone criminality through their expectations of the role that they expect their male partners to play in providing for them.

Other dominant notions of femininity and masculinity contribute to the perpetuation of violence against women as discussed above in the sections on domestic and sexual violence.

There is thus a range of issues pertaining to identity, particularly masculine and feminine identity, that need to be interrogated and challenged in order to develop a clearer understanding of how positive notions of masculinity and femininity can be fostered.

#### **7.4.2. Social capital and social cohesion**

A further challenge that young people face on leaving school is access to social networks, which have the potential to provide people with opportunities for education and employment as social capital theory claims.

In contexts of poverty and low levels of employment, most young people in the SADC region face the challenge of having access to social networks that do little to provide them with future opportunities. In addition, many of the social networks they are exposed to are in fact those that support criminal activity and violence. As Korth (2008) points out, many of these groups or gangs are held in relatively high esteem within communities, largely for their ability to provide for families, even if it is through illegal means.

Thus, for many young people, access to opportunities may be presented through social networks that engage in illicit and perhaps violent activities. The same could be said in a war context. As Pauw (2007) points out, many child soldiers are not in fact coerced into militarisation. Rather, it is presented to them as an opportunity to make something of themselves and to contribute meaningfully to their countries.

The other aspect of social capital is social cohesion. Higher levels of social cohesion may mitigate against high levels of risk behaviour. Functionalist theorists certainly suggest that higher levels of crime and violence indicate low levels of cohesion (Curra, 1994; Clinard and Meier, 1999). Social disorganisation, or lower levels of social cohesion changes "the existing social structure, weakening social control and changing social values and norms, and therefore ultimately resulting in a society that is less risk-averse regarding crime and

violence (Brown, 1999: 13). In many parts of Southern Africa, youth are faced with low levels of community cohesion. Reasons for this are diverse. Migration of parents to urban centres or other countries in search of employment is something that has characterised the SADC region for centuries, leading to the vulnerability of the family unit. More recently, HIV and AIDS has meant that more and more young people have to take on head-of-household responsibilities. Political violence and conflict has also broken down many communities. Other factors may include substance abuse and domestic violence within communities. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) also note that societies with higher levels of inequality face lower levels of social cohesion. Thus, many young people face situations in which there is a lack of social cohesion that can act as a protective factor to them.

Again, not all young people faced with such a situation will turn to violence. Rather the lower levels of social cohesion provide increased vulnerability to involvement in high risk behaviours, including violence. There are also individual level factors that may act as protective factors. These will be discussed further.

#### **7.4.3. Conflict**

The history of the SADC region as presented above in Section 3.1 and in the country case profiles in Appendix 2: DRC Country profile and Interview report 6 is one that has been characterised by divisions in society. Racial divisions have their roots in colonialism and in apartheid in South Africa. Colonialism and various labour practices (particularly on the mines of South Africa) encouraged ethnic divide – something that still plays out in the politics of many countries in the SADC region. Rather than seeing itself as a unified region, there are strong national identities that result in attitudes of xenophobia. This was nowhere more evident than in the xenophobic violence that erupted in South Africa in May 2008. In addition, struggles for independence and political fighting have often led to divisions in communities and wider societies. High rates of inequality in many of the SADC countries also increase class divisions. Finally, despite gains in political representation of women, patriarchal notions of women still pervade much of the SADC region, leading to divisions along the lines of gender.

Young people thus live in contexts of conflict and division rather than of peace and unity. Very often, they are recruited to fight or speak on behalf of one side of a divide. Youth militia were mobilised in Zimbabwe, child soldiers are recruited in the DRC, and gangs in South Africa may frame their activities around class or race revenge, or, as in the case of the 'Jackrollers', around disciplining women who are seen to think 'too highly' of themselves.

Divisions and conflict within societies must therefore also be taken into account when trying to understand youth violence in the SADC region.

As has been discussed in Section 5.2.2 above, a key aspect of conflict, which emerged from the fieldwork in the DRC, is that conflict situations lead to a general disintegration of many government institutions and services, including schools, and a degrading of social capital and cohesion which may further contribute to a vulnerability to violence.

Young people are faced with situations in which they struggle to establish their identities and in which support systems for them to do so are undermined. This context must be understood as an underlying vulnerability factor when trying to understand youth violence in the SADC region.

## **7.5. Individual level factors**

Sections 7.1 and 7.3 above provide a range of vulnerability factors that correlate with higher levels of youth violence and other risk behaviours and may explain the higher levels of youth violence perpetration and victimisation experienced in many Southern African countries. However, it is clear that these factors do not produce violence in an individual perpetrator, and there are individual level factors that may also contribute to, or protect against, involvement in violence.

### **7.5.1. Families**

One of the primary socialising agents when it comes to involvement in violence or young people choosing not to become involved in violence is the family unit. As Ward (2007) states, “the family is one of the most, if not the most, powerful socialising environments for children – an effect that continues throughout adolescence.” Ward notes a range of risk factors that are located at the level of the family including:

- family conflict and violence
- criminality on the part of caregivers
- antisocial siblings
- large family size
- low maternal education
- low maternal age
- poor family management practices
- harsh and/or inconsistent disciplinary practices
- poor monitoring and supervision of children
- permissive parenting
- low levels of family bonding.

Understanding how families contribute to, or protect against, youth violence requires a return to learning theory. In essence, where a young person learns violence within the home, particularly at a young age, they are far more likely to enter into cycles of violence themselves. It is also in the home that dominant notions of masculinity and femininity are perpetuated, reinforcing the gendered nature of violence.

This point was raised in the fieldwork conducted in South Africa. Project Literacy, Childline, USIKO and CJCP noted that parents must play a key role in supporting children and that negative family environments play a major role in making young people vulnerable. CJCP’s latest study points to the potentially positive role that strong families can play in building the resilience of young people. However, as USIKO and Project Literacy note, in many families there is often a lack of parental supervision as many parents are required to work long hours or be away from home and children are left

without adequate adult input. In addition, in some cases children learn patterns of violence through cycles of domestic and other forms of abuse. The interviewee from Childline also noted, as discussed above, that parents often condone certain forms of violence such as the sometimes violent initiation rituals that children may face at school. In this instance she refers to the initiation rituals at schools discussed above.

Another key driver of violence for most of the interviewees is the high levels of victimisation and exposure to violence that many young people are subjected to. USIKO notes that most of the young people they see come from homes that are violent, have been abused or victimised themselves, or experience violence regularly at school. In addition to this, as was also noted by NICRO and Childline, young people have very few mechanisms through which the trauma associated with these experiences can be resolved.

*Unresolved trauma is an issue. Young people don't have spaces where they can talk about how they are affected and it does build up and it has consequences. We need to make sure that there are places where young people can receive the counselling they need.*

Interviewee from Childline, South Africa

Factors undermining the family and contributing to poor socialisation also contribute to levels of violence. One of the legacies of the apartheid period and the pass laws and migrant labour system associated with it was the separation of families. These and other factors associated with the impact of modernisation can be seen to have had an undermining effect on the family, negatively impacting its ability to serve as an institution of positive socialisation. In general, families which are impoverished (in absolute or relative terms) are more likely to be affected by problems such as family instability, domestic violence, teenage pregnancies, child abuse and neglect, or alcoholism which are in turn associated with the greater likelihood that children brought up in such families will engage in violence and crime (Farrington, 2007: 613-619).

It should be noted, however, that very little research has been done to understand the role of the family in acts of violence perpetrated by white and middle class youth. Jefthaz and Artz (2007) suggest that the literature is devoid of any analysis of violence within middle class homes. They note that there has been an increase in family murders in such homes but suggest that this might be the tip of the iceberg and that more needs to be done to understand how violence in such neighbourhoods may impact on youth violence.

#### **7.5.2. School and the peer group**

After the family, the school is the second most important socialising agent in a child or youth's life. Poor achievement, school drop-out and low educational aspirations seem to be correlated with involvement in violence. In the SADC regional context this is not helped by the fact that schools are often inadequate in their facilities, teaching and in their ability to prepare young people for employment. School drop-out rates are thus high in the SADC region.

Perhaps more importantly however is that high levels of violence within schools (discussed in Section 6.5.1 above) provide breeding grounds for the perpetuation of violence for two related reasons. The first is that young people learn to be violent in a situation where schools model violent behaviour – either through the use of excessive corporal punishment or through violence committed by school-goers. In addition, where young people fear being victimised at school, turning to violence as a means of protection, or getting involved in a gang for protection may be one of few mechanisms available to them.

This was a key issue raised by many of the interviewees in the fieldwork conducted in South Africa and Mozambique. In Mozambique this was seen to be related to the fact that many young people did not have access to education, leaving them more vulnerable to involvement in crime.

CJCP noted that one of the key issues pertaining to youth violence is the lack of school safety. The inability of schools to identify and deal with violence early provides fertile ground for the perpetuation of violence. This, in conjunction with a lack of training on positive discipline in the class room, as well as the proximity of *shebeens* to schools in many areas means that schools have become sites where violence is learned and where young people are almost forced to protect themselves, often through violent means, as noted by USIKO in the case of school gangs. There is thus a need to ensure that schools are better equipped to deal with violence. The lack of school safety could also be explained in part by the lack of integration between schools and communities in many areas. This is characterised by the fact that in many schools learners come in from outside areas, and that school teachers also often travel in from other areas. There needs to be greater connections between school and community for collective efforts at school safety to work effectively.

Learning theory can also be applied more widely to the peer group and the neighbourhood suggesting that when young people are involved with peers who are violent they are at a higher risk of becoming involved in violence themselves.

### **7.5.3. Substance abuse**

Data emerging from all of the case studies in the fieldwork component is that of substance abuse, which is seen to be a key contributing factor to youth involvement in violence across all of the countries. In particular the widespread availability and use of alcohol was seen as being closely related to interpersonal violence and the break out of fights. Substance use and abuse was viewed as lowering inhibitions, thereby increasing people's propensity to engage in violence, and is also seen as being related to sexual violence.

All of the interviewees in South Africa also mentioned the role that substance use and abuse plays in youth violence. According to Project Literacy, CJCP and USIKO, drugs and alcohol are easily accessible and may even be accessible within close proximity to schools. Substance abuse plays a major role in violence in two ways. For Project Literacy and USIKO some young people become involved in the drug trade, leading them into situations of violence.

*Some of the young people in this area are used in drug merchandising as mules.*

Interviewee from USIKO, South Africa

Project Literacy also noted that drugs and alcohol lower inhibitions, making it more likely for young people to commit crime or be victimised, particularly in the case of sexual violence. There is indeed some awareness of this challenge amongst many organisations working with youth.

Interviewees in Swaziland also mentioned the role that substance abuse plays in violence and noted that alcohol abuse among young men in Swaziland is high. They referred to a study conducted by MOHSW in 2002, which showed that 34% of the sample population were abusing drugs and alcohol. The majority of abusers started between the ages of 10 and 19 years and accounted for 45% of alcohol and 58% of drug abusers. As regards drug abuse, cannabis was the most commonly abused drug. Alcohol abuse was cited as the major contributing factor to the breakout of fights. Substance abuse was also cited as a factor in gender-based violence. The majority of cases of homicide were attributed, at least in part, to drunkenness.

## **7.6. Conclusions**

It is impossible to say with any certainty what causes youth violence. However, there are very clearly a number of contributing factors at the structural, community and individual level that place young people at greater risk of becoming involved in, or victimised by, violence. This said, as has been stated, the vulnerability factors are not predictors of youth violence. A range of combinations of vulnerability or protective factors will place some young people at greater risk than others. There are also inherent individual internal factors that might act as either vulnerability or protective factors. For instance, some individuals may be psychologically predisposed to violence; while some sources (somewhat problematically) indicate that individuals may even be genetically predisposed to violence.<sup>84</sup> Equally, depression and substance abuse may predispose some young people to violence. On the other hand, a keen sense of self-belief, matters of faith and hope that are internal to an individual, but may be facilitated within a social setting, may act as protective factors.

For these reasons, the above factors should be read as factors that contribute to high levels of violence and increase the vulnerability of young people, and not as causal or predictive factors.

This study points to a range of ways in which violence is normalised, including the acceptance of school bullying, the silence around domestic violence and sexual violence, as well as systemic acts of violence such as those committed by the police. It noted that there is a tacit acceptance of violence as a way of life in many communities. This might mean that the effects of violence are seen as acceptable and are not given the attention

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84 See Health24 article Boys genetically drawn to gangs on [www.health24.com](http://www.health24.com) 18 June 2009

that is required to deal with core drivers of violence and the trauma that individuals experience as victims of violence.

## Chapter 8: Putting youth violence into perspective

The perception of young people who are involved in violence may sometimes be that of young people located at the margins of society, thereby constituting a visible and definable segment of the population. In some respects the term “juvenile delinquents” contributes to this notion of young people as a type situated at the extreme margins of society. However, from the evidence presented thus far and the preceding discussion in this report, it is clear that such stereotyping is neither accurate nor helpful. The factors that impact on youth vulnerability in the region may increase the involvement of youth in violence or may increase their victimisation by violence, but at the same time many young people who face such vulnerability do not in fact become involved in violence. Although the terms of reference for this study call for the identification of “the segment of the youth population most at risk”, the research findings demonstrate that it is in fact not possible to define which young people might be most at risk. This is because labelling vulnerable groups could reinforce stereotypes that already hamper the thorough understanding of the issue of youth and violence as well as the measures to mitigate it.

In addition, the research demonstrates that it is not possible to state with any level of certainty that particular types of societies are more vulnerable to violence than others. Some may assume, for instance, that stable societies with strong traditional social structures might demonstrate lower levels of violence than conflict or post-conflict societies that are in transition. The fieldwork demonstrates, however, that this assumption is in itself not accurate. In Swaziland, which can be regarded as a strongly traditional society and which presents considerable stability relative to the conflict taking place in the DRC, evidence emerges of high levels of violence, particularly domestic and sexual violence. This shows that it is impossible to conclude that particular countries may be at higher risk than others, particularly since there is a lack of reliable data in the region.

Further investigation of the vulnerability factors, however, can help to put youth violence further into perspective. In addition, by assessing what the resiliency or protective factors might be helps identify the roles of relevant stakeholders (discussed in Chapter 9: Roles of key stakeholders as well as the most appropriate policies interventions (discussed in Chapter 10) that have emerged from the research.

### 8.1. Marginalisation

Given the structural factors that contribute to youth violence, it becomes evident that youth violence can, at least in part, be explained by the fact that young people’s needs are not being met. This is not to say that all young people will therefore resort to violence, but simply that this increases the vulnerability of young people to violence. Thus when young people are unable to access decent education that prepares them for the world and enables them to learn pro-social and positive behaviour, and when young people are not able to access sustainable livelihood opportunities or find places where

they can develop a sense of belonging or the opportunities to develop their talents and skills, this leads to greater vulnerability amongst young people.

The problems associated with young people's needs not being met point to levels of marginalisation of young people within society. In the same way that a gendered analysis of society demonstrates that women's needs are subordinated because of patriarchy, as a system in which men and masculine traits are more highly valued and in which the needs of men are dominant, and a race analysis demonstrates how the ideology of racial supremacy has shaped social systems to the benefit of white people, an analysis of society through a youth lens demonstrates that young people's needs are subordinated because the power and needs of adults are dominant. This is not to say that there should be a complete shift in the opposite direction. Gender equity, for example, calls for the mainstreaming of women's needs as equal to the needs of men and recognition of the ways in which patriarchal societies marginalise women. In the same way, greater attention must be given to mainstreaming the needs of young people as complementary to meeting the social development needs of society more generally.

However, if we accept that young people are to some extent marginalised in mainstream society, we must also interrogate this further since not all young people experience marginalisation at all, or do not experience marginalisation to the same degree. As is outlined in the next section, Rispel, Molomo and Dumela (2008) provide a conceptual framework which helps understand marginalisation more clearly and which can then be applied to the condition of youth in the SADC region.

## **8.2. Towards a conceptual framework for strategies that mitigate violence among young people**

In laying a basis for a discussion on strategies for mitigating violence among young people, the following suggestions are made in order to construct a conceptual framework within which interventions can be placed.

### **8.2.1. Relational exclusion and resilience**

The HRSC notes that exclusion or marginalisation can firstly be understood as emanating from relational aspects of society, including the ways in which political and social systems and processes affect particular groups. From this perspective, it is clear that not all young people will experience marginalisation or exclusion to the same degree. Some may be able to take advantage of existing political and social systems. For instance, some young people in the region are afforded private education or very good public education. In these instances the social systems work to the advantage of these young people. Similarly, young people who have the opportunity to participate in civil society organisations or political parties are able to draw on the political and social processes that support their development and could work to their advantage.

Understanding marginalisation as emanating from the political and social processes of society demonstrates that many young people face some degree of marginalisation and that processes that maximise young people's ability to develop social networks, provide

them with spaces for participation, and ensure that they are afforded a good grounding through adequate education systems can contribute to reducing their vulnerability.

If one takes into account the relational aspects of exclusion then interventions aimed more broadly at youth development may contribute to reducing vulnerability to violence more generally amongst young people, since many young people face some level of marginalisation or exclusion. The resiliency perspective speaks to ways in which the vulnerability of all young people can be reduced. As was discussed in Section 4.5.1 above and represented in Table 4: Resilience factors amongst youth, Leoschutt and Burton (2009) point to factors such as community infrastructure; providing opportunities for youth to participate in activities where they have choices, decision-making power and shared responsibility; and ensuring that young people have a sense of purpose and future as key factors that could help to reduce vulnerability to risk behaviours including violence.

### **8.2.2. Adverse inclusion**

Rispel *et al.* (2008) note that exclusion can also originate from adverse forms of inclusion. In these instances groups of people may be included in the mainstream of society, but in an adverse way. An example of this would be child soldiers who are included in the military actions of core groups, but are used as the foot soldiers of these groups. They may thus gain a sense of belonging and purpose through their inclusion, but this inclusion actually serves to exclude them from mainstream society. A similar case could be made for young people's involvement in gangs.

### **8.2.3. Extreme exclusion**

The third aspect of exclusion notes that there are also extreme forms of marginalisation (Rispel *et al.*, 2008). From this perspective, some young people may face severe exclusion within their societies. These may include young people from homes characterised by domestic violence, victims of abuse and violence, young people addicted to substances, and young people who are in conflict with the law, amongst others. These young people become particularly vulnerable to victimisation and perpetration of violence and have a particular set of needs that should be addressed. Thus "particularly vulnerable groups" is a term that seems to be context-specific. In the DRC it might refer to street children and child soldiers. In the winelands area of the Cape in South Africa, organisations have identified gangs as groups that are particularly vulnerable. In other communities it may be particular schools.

This means that in addition to the broad processes aimed at reducing the vulnerability of young people generally, there is also a need for targeted interventions that speak to the individual needs of young people, such as counselling and support services, rehabilitation services or legal services.

In addition to understanding the factors that make youth vulnerable to violence, it is also useful to understand what factors make youth more resilient to violence since these may assist in putting youth and violence into perspective, and in ensuring that interventions seek to build the resilience of young people.

### **8.3. Conclusion**

The conceptual framework outlined above shows that a differentiated approach is required to address the impacts of violence on young people and, where possible, to prevent their involvement in violence. This suggests that it is difficult, and even counter-productive, to identify segments of the youth population that are most at risk. Rather, as is demonstrated in Chapter 10, the organisations interviewed in the field suggest that youth violence needs to be understood holistically.

A two-tiered approach emerges as a way of thinking about youth violence and speaks to the roles of key stakeholders as well as the most appropriate interventions. This two-tiered approach is drawn from the conceptual debates around exclusion as well as the emerging perspective of youth resilience and youth safety (discussed in Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 in more detail). The first tier is to understand that many young people are vulnerable to violence because they are faced with situations in which the social and political contexts do not work adequately towards their positive development and protection. The second tier recognises that some individuals may be more vulnerable as a result of individual circumstances. What emerges therefore is that interventions need to address the broader youth development issues, but must also cater for the needs of young people who are particularly marginalised and who may already be victimised by, or involved in, violence.

## Chapter 9: Roles of key stakeholders

The preceding discussions about youth violence in the region point to a range of challenges that must be taken into account when designing interventions, whilst highlighting a number of key role-players that should be involved if countries in the SADC region are to adequately address the issue of youth violence.

The challenges raised above include the fact that violence is in many cases normalised or legitimised at the highest levels of society (i.e. at the level of the state) as well as in some cases at the most interpersonal levels (such as in the home as discussed in Section 4.4 above). In addition, violence exists in a range of forms – from the systemic violence of exclusion, violence committed in the public domain and through to the violence of domestic and sexual abuse in the context of people’s private lives.

This means that a multi-pronged, holistic and co-ordinated strategy that involves all stakeholders is necessary to ensure that young people are kept safe in our societies and that those involved in violence, either as victims or perpetrators, can be reached with meaningful interventions. This chapter outlines the key roles that each level of stakeholder should be playing in addressing youth violence in the region. It concludes with a conceptual diagram that illustrates key leverage points for intervening in the issue of youth violence.

### 9.1. International role players

In this era of globalisation it is clear that the region and individual states are influenced by international discourses, conventions and organisations. In addition, with many countries in the region receiving aid from the international community, key priority areas may very well be shaped by the agreements attached to aid. This was reflected on by the researcher in Mozambique:

*The government remains largely dependent on foreign aid for a large proportion of its budget, and policy in many fields is still dominated by the dictates of the multilateral agencies and donor community.*

In-country researcher, Mozambique

Thus there may be a need to engage international partners in mobilising around the issues of youth and violence.

International Conventions such as the 1989 International Convention on the Rights of the Child play a key role in shaping public policy and interventions at the national or local levels. Where necessary, these conventions could be invoked in advocacy campaigns, since signatories to the international conventions are bound to act upon them.

In addition, the fieldwork demonstrates that many international NGOs are active in the region. In Mozambique, for instance, Action Aid, UNICEF and UNIFEM are all working on broad issues that have implications for youth and violence. In some instances this

involvement may come with challenges such as international good practice being enforced on a local context, or dependency on international organisations being created. However, one cannot underestimate the role that the international agencies play in:

- Providing good programmes
- Developing capacity at the local level
- Serving as an authoritative voice in the advocacy arena.

In addition, international agencies are often far better resourced than local organisations and could thus help produce a sustained focus on key issues associated with youth and violence.

## **9.2. Regional role players**

The evidence presented in this report illustrates that youth violence is not simply a problem in certain countries or a problem of certain types of states, for example, conflict states such as the DRC or South Africa, as the literature suggests. The data from Mozambique and Swaziland demonstrates that youth violence is much more widespread. As such, it may be an issue that threatens the integration and peaceful co-existence of states within the region, and which has many of its roots in the common political and social legacies that the region shares. As such leadership on the issue is important at a regional level as well as at the national level of member states.

There is thus a key role for regional bodies such as the SADC Heads of State to play. The regional body exists to support member states and is thus unlikely to be able to make particular recommendations for policy or programmes on the issue of youth violence, nor will it have the capacity to monitor the implementation of specific programmes or policies. However, it can play a key role in shaping policy level recommendations that affect young people more generally, particularly since the problem of youth violence seems, at least partly, to be rooted in issues of youth marginalisation.

SADC has already acknowledged the importance of this through its declarations on Gender (1997) and the Addendum on the Addendum to the Declaration on the Eradication of Violence against women and children in 1998, which includes:

- A recognition that violence against women and children is a violation of fundamental human rights.
- An identification of the various forms of violence against women and children in SADC.
- A concern that the various forms of violence against women and children in SADC continue to increase and a recognition that existing measures are inadequate.
- Recommendations for the adoption of the measures in the following areas, among others:
  - Enactment of legislation and legally binding SADC instruments
  - Social, economic, cultural, and political interventions
  - Service delivery
  - Education, training and awareness programmes

- Integrated approaches, and
- Budgetary allocation

This issue is a standing agenda item on Gender and Development for the Council and Summit meetings, but this study suggests that it needs renewed attention if the focus is to be broadened to include issues of youth and violence across the region.

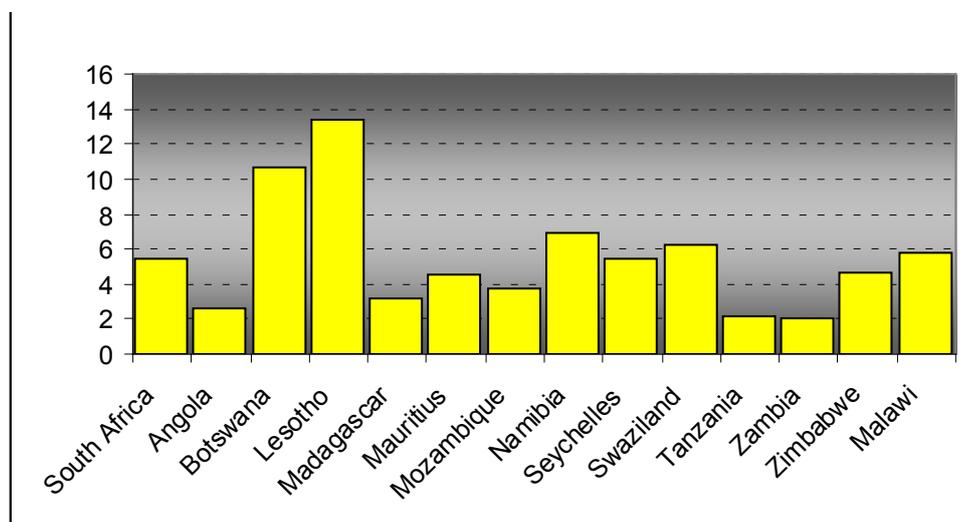
There is therefore an important role for the Heads of State to play in ensuring that SADC member states are encouraged to be proactive in respect of meeting the needs of their youth populations and in taking youth development seriously. An assessment of youth policy in the region (as presented below) demonstrates that many SADC member state governments have put in place youth policies that identify vulnerable young people within their societies and make recommendations as to how these issues should be addressed. There is a continued need, however, to ensure that youth issues are prioritised.

### 9.2.1. How youth are viewed in the region – a policy perspective

Southern Africa, like many other developing regions, has a very large youth population – sometimes referred to as a youth bulge (IRIN, 2007). This is partly due to higher birth rates in the SADC region than in developed contexts, but is also a function of the higher rates of HIV and other diseases that reduce the longevity of many populations in the SADC region. Southern Africa thus has a very young population.

Given that the population in the SADC region is so young, it is somewhat of an anomaly that it is also relatively marginalised within societies, with insufficient attention being paid to the needs of young people. In much of the SADC region, despite relatively high literacy levels for most of the countries, many young people will not complete their secondary education, leaving them vulnerable to cycles of unemployment and poverty. Public spending on education as a percentage of GDP is relatively low, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Public spending on education as a percentage of GDP



Among the SADC countries, spending on education is highest in Botswana and Lesotho, which both spend over 10% of GDP on education (10.7% and 13.4% respectively). By comparison, Tanzania spends 2.2% of GDP on education. No data were available for the DRC.

With so many young people leaving school early, they face a protracted transition period between school and finding sustainable livelihoods, leaving them vulnerable to a range of challenges that include high-risk sexual behaviour and violence (IRIN, 2007).

Health care facilities in the SADC region are often also not targeted at young people's needs. In South Africa, for instance, the NGO LoveLife had to make great efforts to partner with the National Department of Health to establish Adolescent Friendly Clinics that provide for young people's sexual health needs. This is in a situation in which the primary health challenge facing many countries in the SADC region is that of HIV, where young people are the largely the group with the highest prevalence and incidence rates, who must also cope with losing parents to the disease.

In addition, beyond the schooling system, there are very few opportunities for young people to engage meaningfully in society and in their communities. Youth clubs and organisations are limited, and in most of the SADC region the infrastructure to encourage sport and other recreational activities for young people remains limited.

One way in which to assess how young people are viewed in a particular society is to assess how policy speaks to the issues that young people face. The *African Youth Charter* (2006) provides a policy framework within which support in dealing with issues related to youth development can be leveraged. It is, however, sobering to note that while the *African Youth Charter* (2006) was signed by 31 out of 53 African Union member states, by 12 November 2009 it had been ratified by only 19.<sup>85</sup> Of these, six are SADC member states: Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This suggests that more needs to be done in SADC countries to put youth needs at the top of the policy agenda in the SADC region.

One approach may be for the SADC member states to formulate and commit themselves to a **youth action plan that speaks to regional priorities and integrates youth interests into public policy formulation**. However, a thorough study of the constraints to effective youth participation would need to provide the basis for the action plan so that clear strategies, priorities and time-frames are set, whereby governments and civil society organisations work together to address challenges that young people face throughout the SADC region. Integrating young people into national and regional development plans can ensure that they are not passive recipients of development, but are rather active and strategic contributors who can improve their prospects for personal development and building sustainable livelihoods. This requires the political will, capacity building and resource allocation that will empower youth to create the spaces for effective youth engagement, and for them to be active participants in both the process and products of development.

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<sup>85</sup> Retrieved on 12 November May 2009 from <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/list/Youth%20Charter.pdf>

Although it will be far more important for a regional approach to focus on youth development objectives more broadly, there is also scope to influence policies on how young people who are involved in violence are dealt with.

Currently the *African Youth Charter* (2006) makes the following provisions in Article 18, with regards to youth in conflict with the law (YICL):

1. Every young person accused or found guilty of having infringed the penal law shall have the right to be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.
2. State parties shall in particular:
  - a. Ensure that youth who are detained or imprisoned or in rehabilitation centres are not subjected to torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment
  - b. Ensure that accused minors shall be segregated from convicted persons and shall be subject to separate treatment appropriate to their status
  - c. Build rehabilitation facilities for accused and imprisoned youth who are still minors, and house them separately from adults
  - d. Provide induction programmes for imprisoned youth, that are based on reformation, social rehabilitation and re-integration into family life
  - e. Make provisions for the continued education and skills development of imprisoned young people as part of the restorative justice process
  - f. Ensure that accused and convicted young people are entitled to a lawyer.

Thus, at the Africa level there are already forward-thinking provisions for how to deal with YICL that draw on good practice guidelines regarding youth violence and crime. As will be discussed in Section 9.3 below, many SADC member states do not abide by these policy recommendations. As such, there seems to be a role for the SADC Heads of State to play a more central role in influencing policy for the treatment of young offenders and to take a stand on dealing with victimisation.

### **9.2.2. Other regional role players**

Although the SADC Heads of State is seen as the key body that can influence policy, and thus must be brought into the youth violence debate, there are other regional bodies that can play a significant role on advocacy for youth interests. The Southern Africa Youth Movement (SAYM), for instance, plays a role in ensuring that youth issues are prioritised at a regional and national level within SADC. One of its tasks over the past year has been to encourage SADC member states to ratify the African Youth Charter. Such organisations are essential to ensuring that the Heads of State are kept accountable regarding youth matters, and that member states remain committed to the policies and recommendations that are accepted at regional level. Advocacy by civil society organisations at this level must therefore be supported. There is also a need to ensure that organisations working with young people are afforded opportunities for networking, partnerships and mutual learning across the region. Organisations such as the Youth Development Network (YDN) can provide guidance, based on their own experience in this regard.

### 9.3. The role of the state

As has been discussed above, some evidence has emerged of the extent to which violence has become normalised in SADC states. In addition, as discussed in Section 6.7.2, there are instances in which the state itself sometimes advocates for violence, or does not speak out against violence, or actively perpetrates violence against its population, many of whom are young people.

This finding suggests that in all countries the state must evaluate its own policies and systems in order to assess whether and how these contribute to the legitimisation and normalisation of violence. The state also needs to put in place public policies that promote the positive development of young people and aim to eradicate levels of violence experienced by young people, and particularly young women.

In this regard there is a range of recommendations arising from the country profiles. While these are cited in the context of national circumstances in the four countries surveyed, they also provide lessons for other countries in the region as a whole.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, for instance, there is an urgent need to ensure that policy and budgeting processes prioritise the education of all young people. In the context of rebuilding a viable state, education of the future generation must become a clear goal, and no young person should be excluded from access to education. For the DRC therefore, there is a need to 'go back to basics' on youth development so as to address the conditions that exacerbate the vulnerability of young people, which may foster their engagement in risk behaviours, including violence. The recent passage of the national youth policy into legislation represents a significant step in this regard, but the implementation of the policy will depend on rebuilding systems that are youth-friendly, ensuring that young people are accessing education, and taking steps to commit the necessary resources to meet the needs of key marginalised groups within the youth, as identified in the youth policy.

With regard to youth in conflict with the law, there is a need to ensure that young offenders are provided with adequate opportunities for rehabilitation. The current situation reported by the director in charge of the minors section in Kinshasa, in which it is alleged that young offenders often do not have food, is of grave concern. Policy directives therefore need to be followed through into implementation.

In **Mozambique**, the interviews and research conducted for this study suggest that various state bodies have a limited awareness of youth violence as an issue in the country. In fact youth in particular do not seem to be a key priority for the Mozambique state. It seems to pay lip service to the idea of youth, despite the fact that it does have a Ministry of Youth and Sport. The feeling amongst the interviewees was that within the Ministry it is sport that is the face of youth. Given the continued dependence of the state on budget support from donors, state priorities are to some extent determined by donor priorities. HIV and AIDS is a donor priority, for example, and it is a state priority as well, but it is not treated as a youth issue by the state. Nevertheless, HIV may provide a

platform off which to raise other issues of youth vulnerability, including youth and violence.

Mozambique has a National Youth Council, but the interviewees contacted for this study view the organisation in a negative light.

*It is commonly regarded as another party-dominated body of potential careerists with no independence of thought, and as part of the repressive apparatus which rests on youth in Mozambique.*

In-country researcher, Mozambique

However, it could potentially assist in mobilisation of youth associations for action on violence.

The examples of the DRC and Mozambique point to the key roles that the state can play in relation to youth and violence:

- The profile of youth issues needs to be raised within the state sector, and the needs of youth must receive greater priority.
- The ways in which youth interests and needs are dealt with by state systems must be carefully examined, including the schooling system, the police, the criminal justice system and the prisons. In particular there needs to be recognition of how substantial violence can be directed at young people by the state itself.
- There should be a recognition that structural factors such as unemployment and poverty can be important drivers of youth violence. In this regard, social welfare systems and youth training for productive skills require more attention.
- For the victims, the state needs to make resources available to local level police stations to deal more effectively with incidents of violence and integrate psychological and trauma counselling into public health facilities.
- Youth offenders need to be treated as young people by the criminal justice system. This will necessitate policy advocacy and may require changes in the law.
- Similarly, greater political will is necessary to ensure that legislation dealing with domestic and sexual violence is passed and that there are fewer obstacles to getting such legislation passed.
- More and better juvenile detention facilities need to be created with vocational training and counselling programmes.

In **South Africa**, there has been much interest shown in young people at the national state level. This led to the creation of the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (to provide training and funding for young entrepreneurs), the National Youth Service Unit, the National Youth Commission (tasked with ensuring that youth issues are taken into consideration in public policy) and the South African Youth Movement (SAYM) (a representation of youth civil society organisations). These organisations, except for the SAYM, have now been amalgamated into the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) in the hope that their work will become more streamlined and more aligned to the issues facing young people in the country. In addition to this, the state has also just released the second generation national youth policy which will guide youth interventions until 2013. This policy is a

positive one that identifies the key groups that remain marginalised and proposes a variety of strategies to ensure that they are provided with support.

In addition, at a policy level the state has bought into the value of a developmental diversion approach to young offenders through the implementation of the Child Justice Act (CJA) No. 75 of 2008. This legislation offers many opportunities for dealing with underlying issues pertaining to youth violence, including the normalisation of violence. There is also a need to be aware of the unintended negative consequences of the current rhetoric around the “war on crime” in South Africa and particularly what that might mean for young offenders. It is also true that the South African state faces major limitations in terms of its capacity to deliver on the CJA.

In regard to these approaches to dealing with youth issues, South Africa seems to be leading the way in comparison with the other countries surveyed in this study. However, there are still many challenges facing South Africa with regard to youth violence and the role of the state, as outlined below.

One of the main gaps in the South African public policy framework is how to deal with victimisation as a consequence of violence. A major challenge noted by some of the interviewees (discussed below) is the lack of support facilities available to young people who have been exposed to violence and victimisation. There is a clear need to address this gap and to ensure that at the local level young people have access to counselling and crisis services.

In addition, there is another major challenge facing state intervention in youth affairs in South Africa, in that despite attention being given to youth issues at the national level, young people’s lives are often not affected positively at the local level. For example, young people still struggle to gain access to National Youth Service opportunities because there are few civic service organisations involved in its implementation at community level. Similarly, the policy decisions made at national level are not implemented at the local level. If issues of youth vulnerability are to be adequately addressed, this needs to become a key priority for the NYDA going forward.

In **Swaziland**, there is a range of policies aimed at youth and some aim to deal with the issue of youth violence, at least in part. These are discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Despite these efforts at the state level, however, there are still many challenges facing young people that the state can help to address.

As has been discussed in Section 6.5.2 above, sexual and domestic violence is particularly evident in Swaziland, with the result that young girls are the primary victims of violence. According to the interviewees, there is a range of state level interventions that could help address this issue, including the following:

- Eliminating the minority status of women to ensure that everyone is equal under the Constitution;
- Amending the Marriage Act to ensure that the legal age for marriage is 18 years and ensure that marriage occurs with the consent of both the bride and the groom;

- Promulgating the draft Sexual Offences Bill in order to protect men, women and children from violence at home, at school and in the community;
- Promulgating protective legislation against abuse and to amend existing legislation to take into account emerging issues relating to abuse, such as those pertaining to HIV and AIDS and early marriage;
- Ensuring widespread dissemination of information regarding children’s rights as well as implementing the laws and structures that deal with child sexual abuse;
- Providing sexual abuse support services: As the effects of sexual abuse on children are multi-dimensional, the policies recognise the necessity of a holistic approach to assisting children that have experienced this type of abuse. Some of these services would include the provision of counselling, health and other forms of psycho-social support.

In addition, much of the violence noted in Swaziland is committed at schools and there is therefore a key role for the Ministry of Education to:

- Establish and enforce a code of conduct in schools to prevent violence against learners;
- Develop regulations and protocols addressing abusive relationships as there are currently no guidelines in schools that can be used by children and teachers to make confidential complaints about abusive behaviour;
- Initiate a public awareness campaign to educate learners that sexual abuse includes knowing of sexual abuse and not reporting it. This should also be captured in all documents defining sexual abuse;
- Establishing child-friendly courts that will enable children to give evidence in a “safe” environment or to freely express themselves when giving evidence in a safe environment. There is recognition that the law and the justice delivery system are intimidating to children and young people.

The Swaziland interviewees also suggest that there is a role for the state in ensuring that young offenders are dealt with appropriately. These include:

- Developing appropriate rehabilitative programmes for juveniles;
- Providing appropriate programmes for young female offenders. Currently the Mdtshane Juvenile Industrial School caters only for men below the age of 21 years. There is no provision for girls or for youth older than 21.

In dealing with substance abuse, the state could play a role in:

- Developing policies and laws that regulate alcohol and drug abuse, particularly in relation to schools;
- Establishing substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation centres;
- Initiating awareness campaigns and providing information in schools and communities about drugs and alcohol abuse.

### **9.3.1. Youth policy in member states**

This section examines the approach taken in national youth policies in SADC countries, and the extent to which these policies provide for youth in the member states. The

national youth policies of eight SADC countries were reviewed to establish how they view young people and how they attempt to cater for their specific needs, including citizenship. The discussion that follows is based on relevant literature<sup>86</sup> and a desk analysis of youth policies from the following African countries: Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

It is important to note that, according to the Population Reference Bureau World's Youth 2006 Data Sheet, 32% of the population of Southern African countries is under the age of 24. Furthermore, the definition of 'youth' varies considerably across the SADC region, as it does elsewhere in Africa.

The wide age range used to define young people means that within each spectrum there are likely to be different needs and challenges: for a 10-year-old the greatest challenge might be to stay in school, while for a 30 or 35-year-old, employment is likely to be the key concern. Definitions of 'youth' thus have significant implications for policy formulation, resource allocation and the development of programme strategies that can meet the diverse needs and conditions of young people in Southern African countries.

#### ***What the youth policies say about young people***

African countries are generally characterised by growing youth populations. According to the Strategic Framework for Africa (2006: 25), "youth are a source of both real instability and positive transformation". They can be a source of positive transformation by being involved in activities that promote peace and non-violence (*The African Charter*, 1981).

The national youth policies of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana explicitly recognise the very diverse nature of young people. On this basis, they suggest that programmes should be put in place to cater for different youth needs, depending on young people's social and economic circumstances.

According to the Botswana National Youth Policy (1996) and the Namibian Youth Policy (1993), some groups of young people tend to be more disadvantaged than others owing to factors such as geographical location, gender, culture and disability, and may thus require more attention. The South African Youth Policy (2009-2014) mentions the following target groups as being particularly vulnerable:

- Young women
- Youth with disabilities
- Unemployed youth
- School-aged youth who are out of school
- Youth in rural areas
- Youth at risk, i.e. young people living with chronic diseases (communicable diseases such as HIV and AIDS, and non-communicable diseases such as asthma and other chronic diseases); young people heading households; youth in conflict with the law; youth abusing dependency-creating substances; and youth at risk of being subjected to various forms of abuse.

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86 The literature review includes *The African Charter* (1981), the *Strategic Framework for Africa* (2006) and the *African Youth Charter* (2006).

The nine youth policies reviewed tend to focus on the challenges faced by young people who are out of the social and economic mainstream of their countries. For example, a central feature of South Africa's newly approved National Youth Policy 2009-2013 is its focus on young people who have fallen out of the mainstream, or who have never been able to enter it, and who are thus in need of 'second-chance' opportunities. Similarly, although the Zimbabwean National Youth Policy is directed at the needs and aspirations of all young people in that country, it prioritises adolescent girls, unemployed youth, HIV-positive youth and orphans, street children/youth, young single mothers and youth with disabilities.

Almost all the youth policies reviewed cite unemployment as one of the major challenges that young people face. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), young people are unemployed at twice the rate of the overall workforce and this increases their vulnerability to risk behaviour. The national youth policies of Botswana and Tanzania assert that the incidence of poverty, poor health, substance and drug abuse, unsafe sex and involvement in criminal activities among young people is intensified in large measure by unemployment. Many of the policies mention underemployment, dropping out of school and post-school programmes, inadequate sports and recreation facilities, abuse and exploitation, and lack of opportunities as factors contributing to youth marginalisation.

The Strategic Framework for Africa (2006) recognises that gender inequality in the access, control and use of resources limits economic growth in Africa directly and indirectly, and reduces the effectiveness of poverty-reduction measures. The Strategic Framework indicates that rising violence against women and girls, and political violence and conflict, in particular, displaces the most vulnerable, usually women and children.

#### ***Implications for the 'demographic dividend'***

Most of the youth policies reviewed are silent on how youth interests are to be mainstreamed into the core business of government. While ministries of education, health and social development do in practice cater for young people as a key target group (e.g. in schools, higher education institutions, health clinics and HIV-prevention programmes), this does not necessarily translate into recognition of the primacy of youth interests in relation to mainstream policy implementation and resource allocation.

This is significant, given that large sections of African populations are young (as indicated previously, 32% of the population in the SADC region is under 24 years of age). This is the age group that comprises the bulk of the future labour force, and even with the impact of HIV and AIDS on this vulnerable group, projections for growth in the youth population are positive (Dorrington, Johnson, Bradshaw and Daniel, 2006). This has implications for the 'demographic dividend' in African countries.

The focus of the demographic dividend is on the shape of the population rather than on the size of the population (UNIFEM and UNFPA, 2006). The theory is that when the birth rate declines, family size decreases, the number of dependants is reduced and changes are effected in the age distribution of the population. When a large youthful population

(comprising the bulk of the labour force) can be absorbed into the labour market, the scale of dependence on individuals as well as on the state social welfare system is reduced. The notion of the demographic dividend thus explores the relationship between demographics and socio-economic variables (Arowolo, Oladele and Kamugoma-Dada, 2007).

The most important factor about the demographic dividend is that it frees up resources for investment in economic development and family welfare when the labour force temporarily grows more rapidly than the population dependent on it. Per capita income also grows more rapidly (Lee and Mason, 2006). For this to happen, however, countries need to put in place the appropriate social and economic policies and institutions in order to absorb the rapidly growing labour force. Lee and Mason caution that the dividend is a window of opportunity rather than a guarantee of improved standards.

### ***Emerging insights re public policy and youth needs***

Four key factors are likely to impact on the development of young people in Southern African countries and **should be seen as key focus areas for regional influence**:

- The extent to which youth development is integrated into the mainstream of social and economic public policy. In other words, all facets of public policy need to take into account the needs of the youth population and actively seek to address those circumstances that prevent young people from succeeding in a growing economy.
- An education system that works effectively for all young people, provides them with excellent foundations for further learning and work, and is aligned with the needs of the economy.
- A rate of economic growth that generates employment in both high and lower-skilled jobs, and opportunities for the integration of young people into the economic mainstream.
- Family and community systems that promote health, human growth and the engagement of young people, and recognise their holistic development needs.

These factors speak to the condition of youth and require that youth development be placed squarely at the centre of public policy. A second priority will be to reach out-of-school youth with flexible, accessible and attractive second-chance opportunities to complete their schooling, and a third is to establish a wider range of flexible learning pathways for post-school qualification.

Regrettably, these issues are not clearly evident in the youth policies reviewed, largely because these policies treat young people as citizens of a 'special type' rather than mainstreaming youth policy by integrating its objectives into the national development plan across a variety of sectors.

### **9.3.2. State level youth ministries and councils**

In all of the countries profiled, youth ministries, councils or similar bodies exist to represent youth interests. This is a positive development since these organisations are mandated to work on behalf of young people. They could therefore be seen as key

partners in advocating for greater awareness of youth and violence, and may be able to leverage state support for policy and legislation that speaks to many of the youth development and violence challenges discussed in the preceding chapters.

Each of the countries in which case studies were conducted has a ministry or council responsible for youth affairs. In the **DRC**, a youth ministry exists which has been instrumental in developing and promulgating the National Youth Policy, in which provision is made for the capacitating of the youth ministry, suggesting that currently there is a need for greater capacity in this department.

In **Mozambique** there is a Ministry of Youth and Sport. However, as has been mentioned above, the perception amongst interviewees in Mozambique is that sport by and large dominates the ministry's view of youth. In addition, the National Youth Council is the 'official' representative of young people in Mozambique. It is effectively dominated by the ruling party: its officers are in receipt of state salaries and it functions as 'the voice' of youth in all government structures. The Organisation of Mozambican Youth (OJM) is a former mass democratic organisation created by Frelimo during the time of the single party state, and it remains essentially a body which reflects the views of the ruling party, although its membership is now open to all youth irrespective of party affiliation.

In **South Africa** the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) was established in 2009 and incorporates the National Youth Commission and the Umsobomvu Youth Fund as well as the National Youth Service Unit. Its mandate is to:

- Ensure that youth issues are prioritised in state policy and planning;
- Make funds available for entrepreneurship;
- Conduct youth training;
- Run an effective national youth service programme; and
- Capacitate youth organisations.

Currently it is in the process of restructuring to incorporate all of its constituent organisations and thus has not yet had much impact. Historically, however, the state level youth representation has failed to reach young people at the local level or to address their concerns.

In 2002 the **Swaziland** government and the Commonwealth established the Swaziland National Youth Council (SNYC). When the SNYC was established it had ten staff members to co-ordinate and implement youth activities through three different programme areas:

- The Development and Projects Programme – responsible for the promotion of income generating projects, youth development and co-ordination of youth activities;
- The Youth Menu Programme – responsible for activities that aim to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS. The programme targets out-of-school youth through six areas of intervention: arts and culture; life skills; sports; games; recreation and entertainment, and health.
- The Communications Programme – responsible for management of media relations and for disseminating information through the production of

publications, radio programmes and training material at national events such as the Swaziland National Trade Fair.

The SNYC co-ordinates all youth activity in Swaziland and has a mandate to implement the National Youth Policy of 2002. While the SNYC is meant to be an independent and semi-autonomous body, 80% of its funding comes from the government. When the Ministry of Regional Development and Youth Affairs (MRDYA) was formed in 2006, the SNYC was transferred as an affiliate to the MRDYA.

The vision of the SNYC is to encourage the participation of youth in the formulation and implementation of policies that impact on youth or are directed at youth. Towards this end the SNYC has created 55 Tikhundla Youth Committees (TYC) which represent all the constituencies in the country. The youth committees are responsible for facilitating and co-ordinating youth activities in their constituency. Each committee elects members to represent them at the national level.

Apart from creating the Tikhundla Youth Committees, the SNYC also created a multi-sector forum, the Youth Development Consortium (YDC), which comprises all the NGOs and donor agencies that target youth. Of the 34 YDC members, only two organisations work exclusively with youth – School Health and Population Education (SHAPE) and Swaziland Youth United Against HIV and AIDS (SYUAHA) (Swaziland National Youth Policy draft 2009).

The Ministry of Sport, Culture and Youth Affairs was established in 2009 under which the Department of Youth Affairs now falls. The Department of Youth Affairs ensures that youth issues were addressed at the national level using the National Youth Policy to provide guidance on what model of youth development should be adopted. The Ministry of Sports, Culture and Youth has as its vision ‘to be the recognised authority in developing and promoting the use of sport, arts and culture for youth empowerment and improving the quality of life for all citizens’.<sup>87</sup> The department of Youth Affairs is meant to integrate and harmonise youth development and empowerment programmes at national and local levels. Towards this goal a Youth Enterprise Fund was created for young people who want to start a business, but cannot get finance from banks.

### **9.3.3. Conclusions and recommendations on the role of the state**

Drawing on the findings from the research in four SADC countries, it is suggested that the key roles for governments in relation to youth and violence will be to ensure that the state:

1. does not perpetuate the legitimisation and normalisation of violence by itself perpetrating acts of violence, or by refusing or delaying promulgating legislation that will assist its population to deal with victimisation;
2. puts into place and ensures the implementation of policies that work towards the development and mainstreaming of young people in the economy and society more generally;

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<sup>87</sup> <http://www.gov.sz/home.asp?pid=5620>

3. ensures that government ministries prioritise child and youth safety in schools and communities;
4. provides policy frameworks and budget allocations that promote the effective rehabilitation of young offenders;
5. supports the development of support services for victims and perpetrators of violence; and
6. works in partnership with civil society to build awareness about the issues related to youth violence, particularly those of sexual violence and abuse.

#### **9.4. The role of civil society, the church and media**

From the discussion above it is clear that regional role-players and state formations have important roles to play in putting in place the legislation and budgetary allocations to prioritise issues related to youth vulnerability. These role-players therefore have a powerful influence on the policy and discourse about youth violence. However, their influence may not necessarily translate into implementation and effects at the local level, unless civil society organisations are partners in the work that needs to be done to address issues of youth violence.

The research suggests that there are many roles where civil society can contribute to addressing youth vulnerability by virtue of their positioning at the interface between policy and practice. They are most likely to be able to influence what is happening at community and family levels since they are rooted in communities and understand community issues. However, this does depend on their level of connectedness to communities as will be discussed in Section 10.3.3. 'Insights from the field regarding current programmes' below. They are also the organisations that are often implementing programmes aimed at young offenders, or working with vulnerable youth, and can therefore provide insight into the key issues that must be addressed at all levels.

This discussion focuses on the role of civil society, including churches and other religious organisations, and the media. The information is drawn from the recommendations arising from the fieldwork component of the research.

##### **9.4.1. Advocacy and awareness**

One of the most important roles that civil society organisations can play is in relation to advocacy and raising awareness about youth and violence. The state has many competing priorities and, as a recent report released by Friedman and McKaiser (2009) notes, civil society organisations have the potential to influence the state by building mass support around particular issues. Swaziland and Mozambique provide good examples of how civil society organisations can develop awareness, build advocacy campaigns and influence the state to develop policy and legislation for the protection of its citizens.

The Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) was formed in 1990. It aims to educate people about physical and sexual abuse in Swaziland with the aim of eradicating it. SWAGAA's vision is to sensitise people on the issue of violence against women, men and children, especially sexual and physical violence. One of their core campaigns was to

work with the state and partners on the development of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill. Although the interviewee from SWAGAA notes that the process was “not always rosy” in terms of partnership with the state, the collaboration did eventually result in the promulgation of the Act and the organisation is now working with the state on developing a Bill to protect citizens from human trafficking.

Similarly, several civil society organisations in Mozambique including Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) are conducting research and advocacy with a focus on women’s rights. WLSA has intervened actively in the drafting, approval and publicising of the Family Law, and in the preparation of the Draft Law Against Domestic Violence. They have also been instrumental in presenting the draft legislation for tabling and discussion.

The South Africa experience with regard to the Child Justice Act is similar to these two countries. According to USIKO, it took ten long years of research and advocacy to get to the stage where the Child Justice Act was signed into legislation. USIKO was in fact established in part to advocate for the promulgation of the Child Justice Act and as an example of what the implementation of the Act would entail.

In Mozambique, much of the work being done with regard to vulnerable youth is done through **international NGOs** such as ActionAid and UNICEF. These organisations have a major role to play as they often command a level of respect from government that may not be afforded to local NGOs and can use this to persuade the state to make necessary legislative changes.

Working with the state to ensure that policy and frameworks are in place to protect young people is only one aspect of the work at the level of advocacy and awareness. In addition to this, there is **a need to build public awareness** about particular issues. One of the key challenges with regard to youth violence is the fact that in some societies, violence has become normalised. As one interview noted,

*In some cases violence is not even perceived as violence*

Interviewee from UNICEF, Mozambique

This suggests that there is a key role for civil society organisations to build public awareness in the same way that they have been key partners in building awareness about HIV over the past decade. Some of the interviewees in Swaziland note, for instance, that there is a need for civil society to build public awareness on issues of children’s rights and abuse. While policies might address abuse, it is also necessary to empower members of the public on these issues, so that they feel informed and confident enough to speak out on the issue at the local level.

Project Literacy in South Africa notes that in this regard the **media** must also play a role. In their view, the media needs to highlight the negative consequences of getting involved in crime and should not glorify criminals. There is thus potential for civil society organisations to be working hand-in-hand with the media on awareness and advocacy campaigns in the same way that they have in building awareness of HIV. Social marketing offers a powerful mechanism in this regard.

The experience of Mozambican, South African and Swazi organisations working towards appropriate legislation being promulgated in relation to violence shows that the partnership with the state in this regard may be variable. In the Swazi experience of developing a Human Trafficking Bill, SWAGAA has worked as a partner with the state and has found this to be a co-operative relationship. Childline, Project Literacy and USIKO in South Africa also largely play partnership roles with the state. Childline provides counselling and support services to young people referred to them by the South African Police Services. USIKO and NICRO deal with young offenders referred through the court system and to a large extent provide the only means for the implementation of the Child Justice Act. Project Literacy similarly worked with the Department of Correctional Services, the Umsobomvu Youth Fund and the National Youth Service Unit to deliver their Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) skills development programme.

CJCP in South Africa notes, however, that while they have played a partnership role with the state in the past, this may have to be strengthened in terms of the 'watchdog' function that it needs to play around the state's lack of willingness to talk seriously about youth safety. This was also the experience with SWAGAA, which had to be more explicit and forceful in its tactics to ensure that the Swaziland Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Bill was promulgated.

#### **9.4.2. Programmes**

Clearly one of the major roles that civil society organisations play in dealing with youth violence is that they offer interventions and programmes aimed at vulnerable young people; young people who are in conflict with the law; or who have experienced victimisation by violence. The types of programmes that organisations currently offer are outlined in Chapter 10 below. What is important to note at this point is that civil society organisations are at the coal face of youth violence. They are often located within communities or work closely with communities and are therefore able to understand the drivers and effects of violence within communities.

For instance, USIKO in South Africa started out of a community concern for a range of issues including violence, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy that young people in the winelands community of the Western Cape were facing. As such, their programmes are driven by the community and involve community members as mentors. Civil society organisations are also therefore often best-placed to shape thinking on the way forward in dealing with the issue of youth violence, since they are closest to it. It is from these organisations that lessons of good practice can be learned, as outlined in Chapter 10.

#### **9.4.3. Places of belonging, engagement and development**

One of the key challenges emerging from the fieldwork data is the fact that in all of the countries profiled, young people at school do not have access to extra-curricular activities. This means that outside of the schooling system (which as established above might in itself be an unsafe environment, or an environment that does not necessarily encourage positive learning and development) there are few opportunities for young people, as the director of Childline in South Africa observes,

*Young people need spaces to explore their creativity and their passions.*

A further key role that civil society organisations play is that they offer spaces for young people to do just that – spaces in which to forge bonds and engage in activities that enable young people to discover their talents, learn skills and perhaps contribute meaningfully to society.

One approach to youth development is youth service and according to findings of 25 studies conducted in different parts of the world (cited in Morrow-Howell and Tang 2007: 164), there are a range of effects of youth service that illustrate the positive impact that programmes run by civil society organisations can have.

### ***Outcomes for the server***

- Increase maturity and personal autonomy
- Become disciplined and reduce risk behaviour
- Promote social, ethnic and cultural interactions and awareness
- Improve understanding of self and community
- Practice and increase skills
- Explore career opportunities
- Acquire human capital and educational awards
- Increase civic knowledge and value
- Bring change in civic attitudes and participation
- Increase the likelihood of voting.

### ***Outcomes for the served***

- Improve school children's attendance and literacy
- Enhance manpower distribution and rural infrastructure development
- Develop community projects and build community capacity
- Provide better services in rural areas and a steady stream of volunteers
- Benefit local non-profit sectors
- Promote personal and professional development of the individual members
- Build inter-organisational partnerships
- Foster a sense of national integration and cultural integration
- Improve social infrastructure, future earnings and productivity
- Promote notional unity and democracy.

Espinoza (2000) adds that participation in civic life reduces youth marginalisation. He points out that expanding opportunities for participation by young people in civic life can eliminate barriers that encourage exclusion, which leads to youth marginalisation. "The concept of youth service can be an excellent contribution in this direction, in that it combines conditions to create local, public opportunities involving a variety of participants and it allows for social participation within a different framework from that of conflict" (Espinoza, 2000: 39).

Obadare identifies the socio-political context as a critical success factor for youth service and its impact in African countries. He believes that national youth service can promote patriotism “only if the state discharges its reciprocal obligation to youths in the country” (2007:47). Obadare views this as a necessary condition for young people to have a sense of citizenship, which he believes is a prerequisite for the effective impact of youth service on both servers and the served.<sup>88</sup>

This points to the fact that civil society organisations working with young people will only be able to achieve real success if the state is playing its role with regard to youth effectively, as discussed above.

As indicated earlier, youth development and engagement clearly has a role to play in fostering participation by marginalised groups and individuals. Studies have shown that participation in civic activities can foster **increased self-esteem and confidence** and promote a **greater sense of inclusion and empowerment** among youth, while at the same time **reducing their propensity to engage in risky behaviour** such as drug and alcohol abuse, delinquent behaviour, and dropping out of school (Alessi, 2004; McBride, Olate and Johnson, 2008; Perry, 2003).<sup>89</sup> A study conducted by Rivers and Moore (2008)<sup>90</sup> shows that young people in America who are involved in civic activities are more engaged in academic activity, are less likely to participate in risk behaviour, and more than likely will continue on to adulthood as contributing members of their communities. Similarly, an assessment of the self-reported impact of the LoveLife GroundBreaker programme in South Africa (VOSESA, 2007) showed that the youth service programme produced higher rates of employment, greater involvement in community service, higher levels of leadership and better education performance among the programme graduates than national averages.

According to Cowen (1994)<sup>91</sup> civic participation among adolescents can help counter anti-social behaviour and can moderate the effects of poor family-adolescent relationships for adolescents at risk for poor social and behaviour outcomes.

Civic participation in community service organisations, including religious congregations, schools-based service clubs, scouts, neighbourhood voluntary associations, and political action or advocacy groups, can help youth to think of (a) others who have greater needs than they do; (b) themselves as able to make a difference in people’s lives; and (c) their community as a place they belong and with which they can identify (Nation, Wandersman and Perkins, 2002; Perkins, Crim, Silberman and Brown, 2003; Pretty, 2002)<sup>92</sup>. Rivers and Moore (2008) also point out that connecting children with needy populations and/or providing community service opportunities is effective in increasing helping behaviour and perceptions of social responsibility.

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88 By contrast, Pitner (2007) indicates that there are four motives for people to engage in civic service programmes: egoism, altruism, collectivism and principlism. Pitner says that collectivist motives are the most relevant to understanding how service programmes can be used to ease tension between groups because they are focused directly on the common good of groups and collectives.

89 Cited in *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* Volume 2008, Issue 122

90 [http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child\\_Trends-2008\\_05\\_28\\_FS\\_WWCivic.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2008_05_28_FS_WWCivic.pdf)

91 Cited in the *Journal of Community Psychology* volume 35 Issue 6

92 Cited in the *Journal of Community Psychology* volume 35 Issue 6

#### **9.4.4. The role of faith-based organisations**

What became clear from the research conducted in the field is that in certain countries the church and other religious organisations have a central role to play in providing young people with spaces of belonging and places to explore their creativity and be engaged in their communities.

In Mozambique in particular, the Catholic Church plays a major role in running programmes for young people. Other organisations have their roots in faith-based work. REMAR, for instance, is a youth development programme dealing with a range of challenges facing young people and is rooted in a Christian missionary vision. According to Garner (1992), the church has traditionally played a very important role in Africa in delivery of education and healthcare. In Mozambique it also played an instrumental role in brokering the peace deal in 1992. For these reasons, the church may be seen to have roots in communities, is trusted by people in communities, and enjoys a wide reach that can play a major role in attracting and providing spaces for the engagement of young people.

#### **9.4.4. Conclusions and recommendations for civil society organisations**

Civil society organisations thus have a range of roles to play. They are instrumental in ensuring that adequate policy and legislation is in place to guide activities and interventions regarding youth development and youth vulnerability as well as violence, and must therefore play an advocacy role in partnership with the state or as a watchdog to the state.

In addition, there is a complementary role for civil society in building public awareness around particular issues, particularly considering the fact that violence is in some instances strongly normalised. Civil society organisations must therefore contribute to conscientising the public and can also play an important role in developing and running programmes for young people, or in offering young people spaces for civic engagement. In this regard there are possibilities for civil society organisations to work closely with the state as well as with faith-based institutions, and a need for programmes to be located closely within communities and community structures.

#### **9.5. The private sector**

The research demonstrates that currently the private sector is playing a minimal role with regard to youth violence. In some cases, such as the DRC, this is due to the fact that the private sector is in the process of rebuilding and there is therefore limited scope for partnership with civil society and the state around any social development issues. In Mozambique and Swaziland the private sector is also in a development phase and, according to the interviewees, there currently exists no culture of co-operation between civil society organisations and the private sector. In addition, where sponsorship does occur for programmes targeting young people, it is more likely to occur in the arena of sports where advertising dividends are obvious. The notable exception is in South Africa, and even in this instance involvement is limited. That said, the role of the private sector as a player in the field of youth violence should not be excluded.

In South Africa, companies are persuaded through various pieces of legislation such as the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act No. 53 of 2003 and the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act No. 5 of 2000, to ensure that they are involved in broadening the base of the economy, either through expanding ownership to previously disadvantaged groups and/or by investing in corporate social investment. They therefore are expected to play a role in social development within South Africa (Graham and Patel, 2009). This provides opportunities that the youth sector could be drawing on, particularly since 'youth' is an identified group within the BBBEE legislation. Furthermore, a study conducted for the Umsobomvu Youth Fund in 2007<sup>93</sup> indicated that private sector organisations could play a role in providing information about career options, exposure to the world of work, opportunities to develop social and leadership skills, strong connections to caring adults and access to safe places to interact with their peers.

The research in South Africa demonstrates that the private sector can play this role. As the director of CJCP notes,

*In our programme in the Northern Cape, we work with local businesses, small businesses so that we can connect young people to opportunities for apprenticeships.*

Interviewee from CJCP, South Africa

Thus the small businesses are identified as sites at which young people could volunteer or serve an apprenticeship in order to gain needed experience and skills. According to the director of CJCP this has worked well in their site areas. However, there are challenges in this regard. Research by Graham and Patel (2009) demonstrates that young people in South Africa have not benefited significantly from BBBEE deals thus far. In addition, private sector interventions are typically one-dimensional, dealing with just one of many requirements for youth development (Trialogue, 2007: 39). This suggests that holistic youth development programmes depend on partnerships between many players, both private and public. There is thus an opportunity for the private sector to be playing a stronger role.

#### **9.5.1. Conclusions and recommendations on the role of the private sector**

The private sector is often seen as a potential funder for youth development projects. However, there are clearly other opportunities for partnership, including workplace opportunities and skills training. This requires investment to ensure that private sector companies buy into the importance of youth development broadly, and of youth violence more specifically. It also requires creative thinking to clarify what the dividends for the companies will be. Nevertheless, developing partnerships with the private sector in respect of youth and violence is something that should be kept on the agenda.

### **9.6. Community level role-players**

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93 Trialogue (2007). A Review of Private Sector Support of Youth Development. Johannesburg: Umsobomvu Youth Fund

Although not identified in the terms of reference for this research, there is another group of role-players that emerged as significant in the four-country research. The factors that contribute to violence discussed in Chapter 7: 'Factors contributing to youth violence in the region' and the resilience factors discussed in Chapter 8 demonstrate that community level issues play a significant role in protecting young people. A range of leverage points and key stakeholders can be identified at the community level, and one of these is **schools**.

Schools present a significant point of engagement for building the resilience of young people. It is thus necessary to inculcate a culture of non-violence at schools and to ensure that schools become safe spaces, and for this reason, education departments must be engaged in policy debates at the national, provincial and local levels. There is huge potential for working with schools to capacitate educators and school leadership to identify violence and deal with it as is currently being done by USIKO, Childline and CJCP in South Africa (as described in Chapter 10 below).

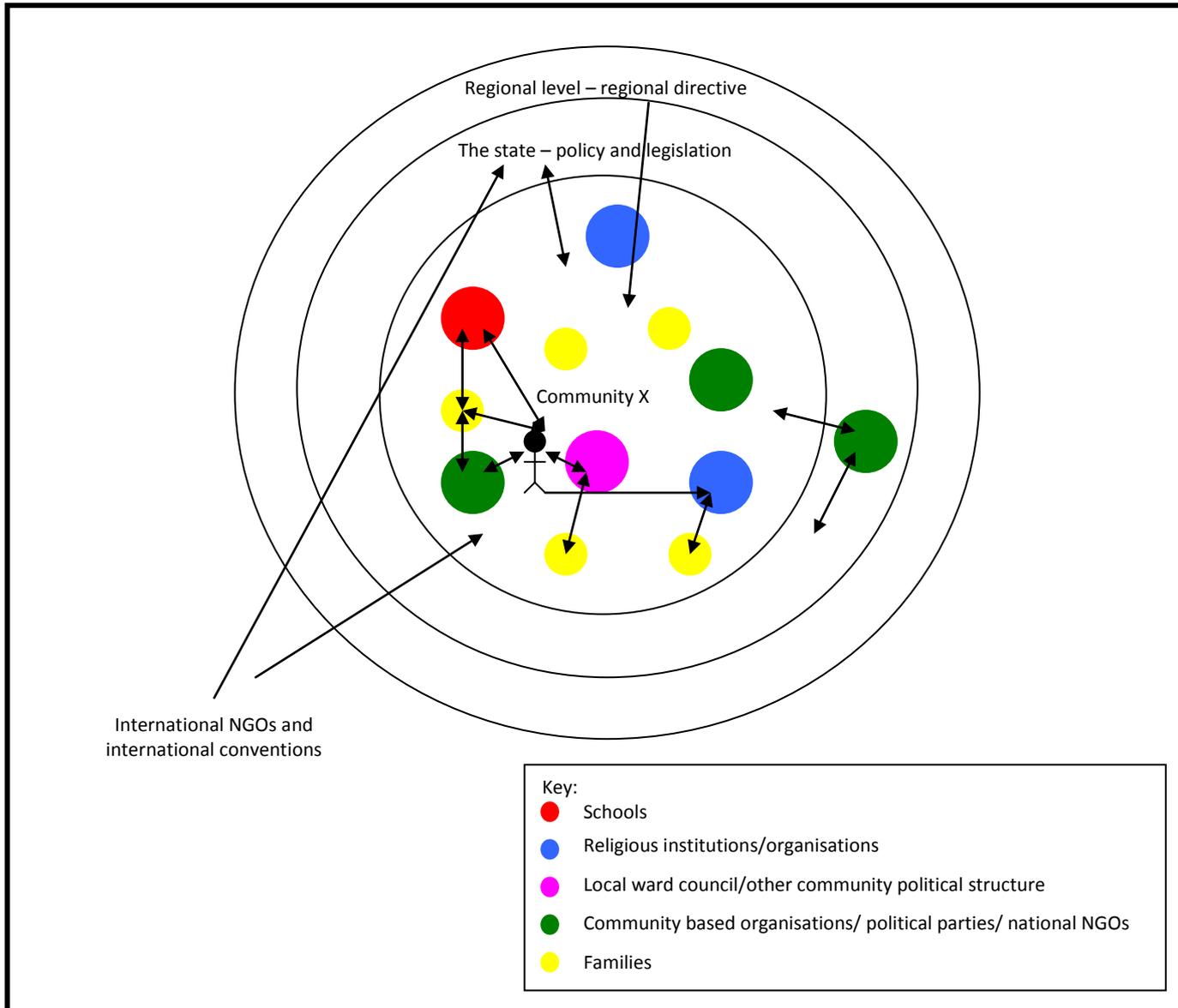
In addition, parents, families or similar support structures where these are not available, are essential to building the resilience of young people. There is thus a debate to be held about how best to foster social cohesion, and support and build families. Again, some of the organisations working in the region provide lessons as to how to go about this programmatically (as discussed in Chapter 10 below). Other key community stakeholders may include community development workers, local councillors, community policing forums and faith-based groups.

## **9.7. Conclusions and recommendations**

Youth violence is not an issue that can be solved by one or two stakeholders. Given that there are many structural and community level factors that contribute to the prevalence of violence, and given the vulnerability of so many young people, it is clear that an integrated approach is necessary to deal with youth and violence. For this reason a range of stakeholders need to be involved – from state structures right down to grassroots level. Similarly, advocacy and awareness as well as support for dealing with youth violence should be built at all levels from the region to the community and to individuals.

The conclusions and recommendations related to different stakeholders are outlined above and indicate points of leverage as depicted in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Diagram demonstrating points of leverage



The figure demonstrates that a young person living in community X is influenced by a range of factors at the international, regional, national, and community levels and that s/he is in turn able to access particular mechanisms and interventions that can either contribute to or mitigate his or her vulnerability to violence. As the arrows indicate, there are various stakeholders at different levels that need to be brought on board to ensure an integrated intervention on youth and violence.

## **Chapter 10: Approaches to dealing with youth violence**

### **– policies and programmes**

The evidence and analysis presented in this report suggest that a model may be emerging, which speaks to the fact that conditions of vulnerability among young people are located in the social and political relational aspects of society. From this perspective, youth violence needs to be understood holistically and be addressed through a developmental approach that supports youth resilience whilst at the same time addressing the specific needs of young people who are victimised or who are already involved in violence.

In addition, a case has been made above for the involvement of a range of stakeholders at various levels of society to ensure that there is an integrated effort towards dealing with issues of violence facing young people. This means that there are both policy and programmatic interventions that can be developed in order to deal with the issues of youth and violence. This chapter presents findings from the country research and desk review that highlight lessons of good practice with regard to approaches to dealing with youth violence in the region.

#### **10.1. Approaches to dealing with violence**

The dominant paradigm that emerges from the regional research with regard to addressing violence, particularly once it is criminalised, is to approach it from the viewpoint of retribution, that is, to lock up offenders without recourse to rehabilitation services. Arguments about the death penalty for murder and the castration of rapists, for instance, are located in retributive thinking. Although there has been a slow shift away from retribution towards recognition of the need for rehabilitation, in practice many offenders, both adult and minor, face retributive mechanisms of punishment. For example, the research in Mozambique reveals that young offenders are not treated any differently from other offenders, but are subject to the general provisions of the criminal code. While prison facilities for male and female youth are provided in Maputo, the conditions under which they are held give cause for concern.

The retributive approach, however, has been found to be counter-productive. According to the World Development Report (2007: 179) there is evidence that “premature or excessive punishment, including incarceration and social stigma can lead young people to continue to participate in criminal activity or violence.....[while] reintegration, treatment and restoration help young people find ways to belong, to feel both personally and socially valued ..., and less likely to reoffend”.

As a result of this and other research and advocacy campaigns, there is a gradual move towards restorative or at the very least, rehabilitative justice. Many of the programmes that were visited in the DRC, Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland recognise the need

for restorative justice and for rehabilitation mechanisms to ensure that the underlying drivers of involvement in violence are dealt with appropriately.

## **10.2. Policy interventions**

Public policy is the departure point for understanding what points of engagement exist for dealing with youth safety and youth violence, since legislation guides both government and civil society interventions, whilst shaping the understanding of the issues at a national level.

As has been demonstrated above, one of the key successes in Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland has been the tabling and/or promulgation of legislation that seeks to protect victims and rehabilitate perpetrators of violence. Clear policy formulations and legislation provide guidance and directives for interventions and, depending on their content, can either contribute to or work against effective programming and other interventions. For instance, South Africa's Child Justice Act No. 75 of 2008 (CJA) provides clear guidelines on the rehabilitation of child offenders. It is rooted in many years of research and practice, and reflects a social development approach. As such it can effectively guide interventions aimed at reducing levels of violence amongst youth, provided it is implemented effectively. By contrast, interviewees in Mozambique note that there is no legislation regarding how young offenders are to be dealt with. As a result, young offenders are inevitably treated under the same conditions as adult offenders. They have few opportunities for rehabilitation and are said to face abuse within correctional facilities. These two examples demonstrate that good public policy is the cornerstone for effective interventions with regard to youth and violence.

### **10.2.1. The current policy landscape**

Understanding the policy and legislative environment requires an assessment that is broader than the criminal justice system. It must consider how young people are viewed and provided for in youth policies, education policies and development policies, amongst others. Section 9.3.1 above deals with how young people are viewed and accommodated within a youth policy perspective.

In the fieldwork process, particular attention was paid to policies related to youth and violence. This included youth in conflict with the law as well as policies that deal with violence more generally.

#### ***Policies related to youth and violence***

Although the research found that there are few policies that speak specifically about youth and violence in the four countries assessed, there is a range of policies that deal with vulnerability factors more generally, within which aspects of violence or youth and violence are addressed. In **Swaziland** the new National Youth Policy currently before Cabinet, but not yet signed into legislation, addresses a number of vulnerability factors such as substance abuse and education access. The specific policy directives contained in

Swaziland's draft National Youth Policy, which have also informed recommendations discussed earlier, include the following:

- Drug and substance abuse
  - Enact policies and laws regulating alcohol and drug use, addressing abuse and trafficking to cover the young people;
  - Establish and strengthen the Substance Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres;
  - Develop programmes to disseminate information to schools, families and communities on the dangers of substance abuse and drug trafficking.
  
- Sexual reproductive health
  - Promulgate the draft Sexual Offences Bill in order to protect women and men from violence at home, school and in the community;
  - The Marriage Act to be amended in order to ensure that the age of marriage is 18 years so as to prevent child marriages. Ensure that marriage happens with the consent of those getting married (presently girls find themselves married off by their parents);
  - Pregnant adolescent girls to be assessed for sexual abuse and incest and appropriate legal services provided, including linkage with PMTCT and other social welfare services;
  - Minority status of women to be eliminated since everyone is equal under the constitution.
  
- Education, training and skills development
  - The overall school curriculum needs to be reviewed in order to provide marketable skills including enabling school/college graduates to create their own jobs.
  - Fees should be regulated and the minimum stipulated in the law in addition to ensuring free primary education as per the Constitution. This should be expanded to secondary schools in due course as well.
  - Education policy should include explicit provisions for addressing the needs of pregnant adolescent girls especially keeping them in school – and both boys and girls must be treated equally in relation to the pregnancy within the educational system.

Swaziland also has in place a Draft National Policy on Children, Including Orphans and Vulnerable Children, which was tabled in 2003, but is yet to be promulgated. Some of the general policy objectives articulated by the draft policy are:

- Promote the rights of children and protect them from violation of their rights and all forms of abuse and exploitation such as neglect and deprivation;
- Review child-related legislation to respond to current needs and situations and formulate new frameworks for empowering the children to protect themselves from being abused;
- Ensure the welfare and provision of psychosocial support, both emotional and spiritual, to children, including orphans and vulnerable children and their families.'

The draft policy also identifies categories of key issues affecting children and youth, and makes a number of policy statements aimed at addressing these issues. Below are the issues and policy statements relevant to youth violence adapted from a review of Policy and Legislation on teacher/student sexual relationships by members of Lusweti.

- Education
  - Provision of a secure and child friendly environment in schools;
  - Providing in-school protection and care for children including orphans and vulnerable children at schools through social workers deployed at REO offices.
  
- Child Protection
  - Reviewing and, where necessary, creating legislative and policy frameworks on protection of children including orphans and vulnerable children, and establishing and funding the necessary institutional mechanisms to enforce these policies and laws;
  - Placing special emphasis, in the context of the HIV and AIDS crisis, on protection of children against sexual abuse and exploitation as well as pornography and trafficking;
  - Developing relevant programmes and instituting appropriate interventions for rehabilitation of children;
  - Ensuring that sectoral programmes and existing services, i.e. health, education and social services, reach and serve children who are in need of protection;
  - Supporting child protection at the lowest levels through strengthening family and community protection structures and linking with the relevant authorities;
  - Improving data gathering, analysis and dissemination at national, regional and community levels to facilitate appropriate and effective planning of child protection interventions.
  
- Legal Support
  - Strengthen the Child Care Order to criminalise all forms of abuse;
  - Make legal systems child-friendly to strengthen the administration of justice (e.g., juvenile courts, juvenile prisons, child courts and child remand centres);
  - Prosecute individuals, families and organisations found to be abusing the rights of children under their care;
  - Raise community awareness of child protection systems, procedures and facilities for children including orphans and vulnerable children;
  - Ensure the provision of and access to legal aid for children, including orphans and vulnerable children;
  - Ensure provision of quality care and support services;
  - Set regulatory mechanisms to maintain standards and monitor the quality of care provided to all children including orphans and vulnerable children;

- Offer technical advice and guidance to those entrusted with care and support of all children including orphans and vulnerable children;
  - Ensure psychological support by trained personnel for all children including orphans and vulnerable children.
- Health
    - Improve and expand the availability of curative care and enhance access to “child-friendly” clinic and homecare services, including for orphans and vulnerable children (for treatment of childhood illnesses, HIV-related opportunistic infections and ARVs for children requiring them);
    - Ensure access to quality health care for children, including orphans and vulnerable children.

In the **DRC**, the new National Youth Policy recognises that there are high levels of violence and particularly sexual violence experienced by young people. In addition, the Constitution is intended to protect young people. It states that public authorities have the obligation to protect the youth from threats to their health, their education and their development (Democratic Republic of Congo, Constitution, February 2006, article 42). The Constitution also defines a child as any person below the age of 18, declares all forms of exploitation of children punishable by the law (Article 41) and prohibits the organisation of military or paramilitary formations, private militias or youth armies (Article 190).

A Child Protection Code was signed into legislation in January 2009. The aim of the code is to protect and promote child’s rights. As far as youth and violence is concerned, the code makes some specifications worth noting. The legislation defines a category of children called “child in difficult situation”. This includes a wide variety of vulnerable children such as street children, children accused of witchcraft, unschooled children, undisciplined children, children exposed to prostitution, drugs, pornography, exploitative work, sexual abuse, or similar (Article 62). These vulnerable children are entitled to special protection by public authorities (Article 63). One of the most progressive provisions in the code, but also one of the most difficult to implement, is the social grant directed at families who are unable to provide for the survival needs of their children (Article 69). In addition, the code prohibits the forced recruitment of children or their use in armed conflict (Article 50a), as well as the enlistment or use of children in the national armed forces, the police and armed groups (Article 73). Prison terms of between ten and 20 years are specified for these offences (Article 193). The code criminalises rape (Article 175) and sexual slavery (Article 189), with prison terms of 7–25 and 10–25 years respectively. A wide range of other acts of sexual violence and exploitation are criminalised by the code.

In **Mozambique**, the research suggests that legislation and policy with regard to violence generally, and youth violence in particular, is sparse. As has been discussed, civil society organisations have worked hard to ensure that the Sexual Offences Act has been tabled. However, this has been a very challenging process that continues to face obstacles and suggests a lack of political will with regard to promulgating such legislation.

In addition to this legislation, the Law against People Trafficking (No. 6/2008) is designed to counter one very specific form of violence against youth, and was the outcome of growing awareness of the seriousness of the issue, as well as an international and national campaign to create mechanisms to deal with it.

Young people are also provided for through the Ministry of Youth, which has a Youth Capacitation Fund to assist youth with projects to set themselves up as entrepreneurs. The difficulty here is that the funds are limited and, according to one respondent, are perceived by beneficiaries as a salary and not as a fund to establish an income-producing activity. This would seem to point to failure to adequately develop the programme by the Ministry.

### ***Legislation pertaining to youth in conflict with the law***

Policy with regard to youth in conflict with the law varies across the four countries in which fieldwork was conducted. Mozambique seems to represent the worst case scenario in this regard as there is no public policy in place that provides for young offenders.

The interviewees in Mozambique suggest that youth are not treated in any special manner in the justice and correctional processes and are thus subject to the general provisions of the criminal code, except that they are to be held separately from adult offenders. As noted previously, prison facilities for male and female youth are provided in Maputo, but conditions are not particularly good there.

In the DRC, according to the Code on Child Protection, a child below 14 years of age is considered non-responsible before the law and should be provided with psycho-social assistance when they are involved in a criminal act. A child of 14 to 18 years of age who is involved in a criminal act is to be considered as “a child in conflict with the law”. This category of youth is subject to a special criminal procedure and these young people are held separately from adult offenders. There is a juvenile section within the Ministry of Correctional Services but according to the director of the minors section of a prison in Kinshasa, it is severely under-capacitated in both human and financial resources, leading to a situation in which rehabilitation programmes are not available, and in some cases food and other necessary resources not being available.

In contrast with these two countries, South Africa has recently signed into legislation the Child Justice Act. The act is a vast improvement in respect of the situation facing young offenders. It defines children as being people up to the age of 18 years and requires that all young people within this age range who are in conflict with the law be put through diversion programmes, which include some or all of the following:

- Life skills training
- Skills development
- Counselling
- Parental interaction
- Community service
- Victim-perpetrator mediation.

The implementation of this legislation remains a challenge, however, as the justice and correctional systems are already overburdened and there are few civil society organisations working in this field.

### ***Recommendations and lessons of good practice***

The legislative environment in the countries profiled suggests that there is a need to promote restorative justice policies aimed at young people in conflict with the law and to ensure that a developmental approach is introduced.

In none of the countries profiled is there any evidence of a youth safety framework. Stimulating debate at the policy level and possibly framing issues around youth safety could thus be an important component of the debate about good practice. This should involve key actors such as ministries of education, ministries dealing with skills development, ministries of health, ministries of social development or welfare, ministries in which youth affairs are located, and any national youth bodies such as national youth councils.

## **10.2. Programmatic interventions**

Regarding programmatic interventions, there is a range of factors to be taken into consideration. Firstly, as noted earlier in this report, emerging insights suggest that programmes must speak to both youth resilience (youth development approaches) and youth vulnerability (targeted interventions for particularly vulnerable young people or those already involved in or victimised by violence). In addition, as noted earlier, justice for people involved in violence, including young people, has often been thought of in retributive terms. Dealing with violence after the fact usually includes incarceration and other retributive mechanisms for young people, even under the guise of placing children in homes of safety, even though retributive justice tends to reinforce attitudes of violence and may in fact increase involvement in violence, particularly amongst young people.

Dealing with violence amongst young people provides opportunities for the development of more effective interventions, both in mitigating youth violence and in dealing with the consequences of youth violence. This is because young people are at a stage in their lives where they may not yet be involved in criminal or excessive forms of violence, and are more open to alternatives.

The section below reviews the literature on programmatic interventions for youth violence which cites mitigation strategies as well as intervention strategies.

### **10.2.1. Measures for prevention or mitigation**

#### ***Early childhood interventions***

Some of the most effective interventions occur in the early childhood development phase and are oriented towards better socialisation of children in order to break potential cycles of violence. This might include measures such as a coherent and sustained family support

programme focused on issues such as reducing the use of alcohol by pregnant women as well as combating child abuse and neglect, and promoting good parenting practice overall. Home visits by public health nurses during pregnancies of unmarried, first-time teenaged mothers are one of the strategies that constitute this approach. Quality parent-child relations are powerful ways of teaching children how to control impulses and aggression, so programmes that train parents to develop such relationships can be effective in this regard.

Providing nutritional support to pregnant women, infants and young children can also be important. Malnourished children are likely to be impaired in their ability to benefit from later educational programmes.

A dedicated and comprehensive early childhood development programme can provide support to those children coming from vulnerable households (for instance, those households in which the primary breadwinner has been imprisoned) to increase their social and cognitive abilities and prepare them for school. Early enriched child-care for high risk, low-income preschoolers by qualified caretakers can also mitigate the effect of negligent/erratic parenting at home and help to prepare children with skills which will enable them to function more optimally in the school system.

Children from child-headed households should be regarded as an important target for similar types of support interventions, as well as families with young children in households from which domestic violence calls are made to the police.

### ***Supporting children in school***

Such interventions aim to combat academic failure and exclusion from school, which are related not only to low achievement, but also to low integration, both of which are in themselves risk factors for violence and crime. The centrepiece of such work must of necessity be work which is done 'to improve the management and quality of schools, so that they function optimally as places of positive socialization'.<sup>94</sup> Other measures here would include:

- Reducing bullying by getting teachers to intervene and practice resolution and referring students to therapists if the behaviour persists;
- Developing interpersonal and emotional pro-social skills among primary and adolescent school children, including the ability to manage conflict and aggression. This includes teaching conflict resolution and listening skills, encouraging self-expression and taking constructive criticism, and would be particularly important for children who show early signs of anti-social behaviour, which is another risk factor for later criminality and violence;
- Introducing after-school care programmes to assist young people in finding creative and positive ways of using recreational time;
- Introducing mechanisms to ensure that those young people who have left school early are provided with second chance opportunities.

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94 Pelsler, E, 2007:5

### **Youth development approaches**

Given the range of challenges facing young people generally and the fact that they contribute to the vulnerability of young people to youth violence, and given the issues pertaining to the normalisation of violence in societies, it is clear that a holistic approach to dealing with youth violence is necessary. Youth development approaches that focus on increasing the self-efficacy, and belief in oneself, as well as mainstreaming of young people, regardless of whether they have been involved in or victimised by youth violence, are therefore important interventions that may afford some protection against youth violence. Civic engagement is one such intervention.

Torney-Purta, Amadeo and Richardson (2007) examine the effects of civic service through the conceptual frameworks of four psychological theories: Erikson's stages of development; Bandura's social cognitive theory; socio-cultural theory; and empowerment theory and socio-political development theory.

Drawing on **Erikson's** stages of development, the authors argue, firstly, that achieving a sense of industry assists in resolving the crisis of identity at adolescence. "Confirming a sense of industry by seeing the results of one's own productive work is a rare experience for adolescents in contemporary society ... Shared productive work in the community can assist in personal development when students obtain feedback on their actions and see the positive results of their industry-motivated activities" (2007: 102).

Secondly, in Erikson's schema of developmental changes, taking responsibility for the next generation generally occurs in later adulthood. However, the authors suggest that altruistic feelings of responsibility for others can be a feature of adolescence. Consequently, they believe that the precursors of pro-social attitudes and a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the community can be laid down in early adolescence and may be furthered by community service experiences.

Finally, they point to the importance of introducing processes of reflection in the course of community service to ensure that young people experience themselves as having agency and being responsible for the well-being of society. "When participation is encouraged by respected adults, youth begin to reflect on political and moral ideologies ... It is this process of reflection, which takes place publicly with peers and adults as well as privately, that allows youth to construct identities that are integrated with ideological stances and political-moral outlooks" (Youniss and Yates, 1997: 36).

**Bandura's** social cognitive theory (2001) argues that self-efficacy forms the foundation of people's capability for exercising control over all aspects of their lives. Torney-Purta *et al.* suggest that in the context of civic service, intergenerational engagement can foster the growth of self-efficacy: "Those community or volunteer settings in which adolescents partner with adults and discuss shared reasoning and beliefs may be important to developing a sense of efficacy or agency" (2007: 105).

In this regard, they cite the important role adults can play in providing young people with opportunities to discuss and extend their perceptions of social relations and other phenomena: "adults must be available to coach or scaffold learning among adolescents or

young adults if, as volunteers, they have the opportunity not only to make sandwiches in a homeless shelter, but to observe the distribution of wealth in society and grasp the meaning of poverty, including the different ways in which people seek to maintain their self-respect” (Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2007: 106).

**Socio-cultural theory** suggests that the development of identity is shaped by definitions created by different communities, and is often conflicted. According to Torney-Purta *et al.*, “the identity of a *cool person* in the peer group may work against the development of the identity of *person concerned about social justice* in a volunteer setting ... The aim of many civic service programmes is to make ideas relating to social justice meaningful for young people as they see how experience in the community either validates or conflicts with learning from textbooks” (2007: 107-108).

**Empowerment theorists and socio-political development theory** focus on the importance of a critical awareness of the social context. This involves recognising the interests of those with power in the situation, the ability to distinguish when conflict is likely to be useful and when counter-productive, and the ability to identify resources needed to achieve given goals. These theorists are interested in significant life events that shape development (especially those with a particular programme or organisation) as well as in socio-political insight and self (empathy, spirituality). “Persons who are further along than others in socio-political development are more aware of social inequality and its sources and are more likely to be empowered or activist in their orientation. ... This set of theories from community psychology is most relevant to the concepts of efficacy and agency, to identity (especially as an activist), and to community ...” (Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2007: 109)

These psychological perspectives throw some light on the factors that may enhance the impacts of civic service programmes and have a bearing on the design of programmes that seek to work with youth involved in or affected by violence. They suggest that critical success factors are likely to be opportunities for reflection, adult coaching and the ‘scaffolding’ of youth learning, respect for youth identity formation, and an interest in fostering critical awareness among young people.

#### ***Social capital and the integration of youth***

Social capital emerges as one factor that can impact on the integration of marginalised young people into the social and economic mainstream. According to Davis Smith and Ellis Paine (2007), social capital is about relationships and building bonds of trust between people. Robert Putnam (2000) says that social capital is developed through social networks that have value because of the information they transmit and the culture of reciprocity they sustain. For example, a high level of reciprocity in a community can strengthen the bonds through which crime might be reduced, owing to a greater sense of connectedness between people. Similarly, he argues that the welfare of youth (measured in dropout rates from school or teenage pregnancy rates, for example) is likely to be related to the level of social capital at the local level.

Putnam distinguishes between bonding social capital and bridging social capital.

“Bonding capital describes social networks that link like people to like people – people of the same nationality, race, ethnicity. Bridging capital links people to people unlike themselves. Both can have positive and negative effects. Bonding social capital is not necessarily better than bridging social capital, but it is easier to build because birds of a feather flock together. Bridging social capital is much harder to achieve” (2004: 18).

However, Davis Smith and Ellis Paine (2007: 230) point out that sometimes the creation of very strong community ties can serve to exclude certain individuals, barring their access to the community. “As Johnston and Jowell remind us, ‘social capital, like financial capital, is much more available to certain people than to others’ (1999: 193).” They cite eight indicators (developed by Onyx and Bullen, 1997) that reflect different facets of social capital: participation in the local community; pro-social activity; feelings of trust and safety; neighbourhood connections; family and friends connections; tolerance of diversity; value of life; and work connections.

This alerts us to the importance of examining exclusion and marginalisation within the context of building social cohesion and social capital. According to Gillette (2003: 63), exclusion involves one or more of the following factors: “deprivation of basic needs such as shelter, education, health and employment (International Labour Organisation, 2000); discrimination; disempowerment (concerning civic participation, for example); rejection by mainstream society and lack of knowledge, skills and self-esteem on the part of the rejected; exclusion for physical reasons such as handicaps; exclusion by age (the very young and the elderly); by reason of geography (isolated rural people, urban ghettos); gender and sexuality-related exclusion; exclusion from the consumption and creation of culture and communication; ethnic and/or racial exclusion; exclusion for anti-social behaviour; and so on.”

By contrast, ‘cohesion’ is sometimes equated with ‘inclusion’, suggesting “diverse, tolerant and mutually respectful rainbow societies. It stems from the Latin *cohaerere*, meaning literally ‘stick together’. It refers thus to a kind of social mosaic, that is, a collage of stones, each with its own characteristics, a work that is greater and can be more beautiful than the mere sum of its parts” (Gillette 2003: 65).

Gillette suggests that through civic participation, excluded people can be empowered from being passive members of society to becoming actors. This transition promotes a sense of self-worth and helps to counter the sense of guilt and/or inferiority that may have led to the assumption that the exclusion was somehow of the person’s own making. He identifies three levels of change that can be induced among marginalised/excluded people: “One is their freshly-empowered role in society: ‘I’m now inside rather than outside and can influence what happens inside.’ Another is attitudinal: ‘I can give as well as take.’ And a third is more technical: ‘I’ve acquired experience and skills that enable me to continue as a more fully-fledged citizen’” (Gillette 2003: 67).

The notion of social capital, and bridging social capital in particular, raises important considerations for the integration of marginalised youth into community life. However, it needs to be problematised in conditions of inequality, which may make it difficult to develop strategies for the development of social cohesion (LiPuma and Koelble, 2009).

### ***The potential of youth service for resolving conflict***

In a number of African countries, national youth service programmes have set themselves the explicit goal of increasing awareness about cultural differences and promoting national unity. They assume that by exposing diverse groups to each other, cultural knowledge is gained, reducing prejudice and conflict, and fostering national unity. Is it realistic to expect youth service to reduce inter-group conflict?

Pitner indicates that group membership is a key factor that prompts people to treat others unfairly. "People's nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class and various other social group memberships make them vulnerable to stereotypes, prejudice and hatred from others." (2007: 208). He points out that group members develop in-group and out-group biases, ascribing favourable characteristics to their own group and negative ones to out-group members. "It is this *us-versus-them* dynamic that can make deep-rooted conflicts between groups resistant to resolution strategies."

According to Pitner, long-term civic service programmes (of six months or more) present the potential for a more enduring reduction in prejudice and conflict between groups than do ad hoc or short-term service or volunteering opportunities. Furthermore, civic service programmes set out to improve the lives and context of community beneficiaries (the environment, physical infrastructure, organisations). Pitner argues that when mutual interdependence (reciprocity) is a prerequisite for achieving this goal, a reduction in inter-group conflict seems possible. In addition, the servers in civic service programmes sometimes wear logos, branded shirts, caps and other symbols to signal their involvement in specific programmes. Pitner suggests that "such overt displays of unity can lead to the creation of a new social identity group. As tensions between the groups lessen, members of each group may begin to strongly identify with their service group" (2007: 216).

However, Pitner also cites some limitations as to what youth service can expect to achieve in regard to reducing inter-group conflict. Firstly, programmes may not address the central issues of the conflict between groups. Secondly, while service programmes may temporarily ease tensions between groups, they could also fuel the conflict. "Thus, service programmes may be nothing more than a Band-Aid for conflict and prejudice reduction." However, he suggests that having several civic service programmes operating within a particular society may help to change the conflictive ethos.

Four critical success factors emerge for youth service programme design (Pitner 2007: 217-218):

- Youth service programmes are likely to have the most potential for resolving conflict when both groups see the programme as benefiting them.
- The youth service programme must require mutual interdependence between the two groups.
- The groups must be in constant contact with each other.
- The service programme must last for an extended period of time, at least six months. This may make the reduction in inter-group prejudice more permanent.

### ***Community programmes can increase youth access to safe spaces***

General community programmes may benefit young people who are at school (through after-school activities as well as organised activities during school holidays) and can also provide opportunities for those not at school or working. These may include:

- Community centres that provide productive, safe recreational opportunities and resources such as libraries, computers, classes or workshops for skills development.
- Sports activities that help to integrate youth and promote opportunities for communities to come together in public spaces.
- Education and culture activities through arts, music and sports that offer young people opportunities for self-expression and enable them to explore their talent.
- Community gardens that provide significant opportunities for building social cohesion and engaging young people practically in issues of environmental sustainability and livelihoods.

#### **10.2.2. Dealing with the consequences of youth violence**

With the evidence indicating that young perpetrators of violence are also often victims of violence, it does not seem feasible to view initiatives targeted at victims and at perpetrators as being completely separate or different. At the same time there will be different points of emphasis in programmes that work with young people who are identified or suspected of having been involved in perpetrating violence as opposed to those who have not.

Victims of violence should be able to access support and counselling to work through the experience of victimisation positively. It is important that such support is provided as early after the experience of victimisation as possible to avoid young people entering into a cycle of violence or being victimised again.

Those involved in the perpetration of violence also benefit from early intervention strategies. Initiatives here might include:

- Juvenile Justice – measures such as family, group or other community ‘conferencing’, restorative justice or other diversion measures;
- Victim empowerment programmes targeted at young victims of violence including those involved in ‘male-male’ violent conflict;
- Programmes for young people responsible for serious offending, and who have been incarcerated in correctional facilities, can be an effective way of reducing offending in this “serious” group, particularly through cognitive-behavioural therapy, counselling, and interpersonal skills training. These programmes are targeted at the most violent and persistent youth offenders, who are likely to be responsible for the most serious crimes committed by youth and will most likely become chronic adult offenders.

Disarmament and reintegration of young people involved in political conflict or war must take a particular focus that helps young people access mainstream social institutions such as education. These young people may have been orphaned and will need support within

the community to be reintegrated into society. This is often difficult in cases of conflict where mainstream social institutions and communities have been undermined through war efforts.

All young people who have been victimised by, or involved in, violence should be supported to resolve the trauma they have experienced, to develop respect for the value of their own dignity and where appropriate, to be provided with opportunities to understand what drives the normalisation of violence.

### ***Dealing with youth gangs***

Interventions aimed at addressing the problem of youth gangs may be most likely to succeed if they involve a strategic approach that seeks collaboration with gang members. Some of the issues which such initiatives might focus on include:

- Reinforcement of individual skills support: education, job training, micro-credit, job creation, social/health services, mentoring, leadership training, life skills;
- Creating a role for youth participation in the prevention of violence;
- Measures aimed at the integration of gang-affiliated youth into mainstream society.

Interventions that focus on developing role models are also increasingly being used to deal with gang-related violence. Such interventions target leaders within a gang and aim to shift their attitudes and norms. These leaders are then intended to function as “peer educators” who will in turn influence the attitudes of gang members more positively. There has been some success with such interventions, but success may be limited in instances where there is intense competition and territorial conflict between gangs.

### **10.2.3. Insights from the field regarding current programmes**

Most of the organisations interviewed for this study adopt a multi-pronged approach to the programmes they run with young people. They generally include two or more of the intervention approaches mentioned above. It should be noted that very few of the organisations deal specifically with youth violence.

The types of programmes conducted by the organisations interviewed in the targeted countries are explained below. These have been categorised according to four main approaches: youth development, advocacy and awareness, targeted interventions, and integrated approaches to dealing with youth violence.

#### ***Youth development***

The research indicates that youth violence is not an issue that is necessarily prioritised in most countries within the region. Given the dominance of other issues facing young people, such as HIV and skills development, many of the organisations interviewed are in fact dealing with youth development issues more generally rather than dealing specifically with youth violence. The same applies to the organisations listed in the database compiled as part of this assignment and provided under separate cover. This is significant, since the framework discussed above notes the importance of dealing with

broader youth development issues as one strategy for countering youth violence in the region.

One of the interviewees in the DRC is the director of a programme that has as its goal the reintegration of children living on the streets with their families. Support activities focus on promoting access to schooling among the street children, apprenticeship training, psycho-social counselling, continued dialogue with parents, and child protection against social injustice and police harassment. The programme thus recognises a range of vulnerability factors that need to be addressed through skills development, access to job opportunities, as well as emotional and social support.

Similarly, the Associação Coalizão da Juventude Moçambicana, in Mozambique is a programme aimed at reducing the vulnerability of young people to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Its vision is for an “informed, interventionist and participative youth for a prosperous Mozambique free of HIV and AIDS” and its mission is “to promote sexual and reproductive health in partnership with private and public sectors [and] in partnership with adolescents and youth”. The programme places young people in schools as peer educators to raise awareness about HIV and related issues such as gender equality and substance abuse. In addition, it provides a space for young people to participate in dance and musical performances in communities to raise awareness. The programme also places young people at health clinics, as part of the scheme called SAAJ (Servico Amigo de Adolescente e Jovens) (Youth Friendly Service). It has a community-based approach and sees itself as partnering with communities (in which 11 groups of volunteers have been placed) and schools (in which 16 groups have been placed). The programme thus builds awareness amongst young people, provides them with life skills training, and provides a space in which they can explore their creativity and serve their communities. Although the programme is focused predominantly on HIV, there may be opportunities to use organisations such as these as platforms through which to promote awareness around youth and violence.

The Swaziland Theatre for Children and Young People (SWATCYP) provides a space for youth to learn about issues of HIV and AIDS, gender and human rights, as well as explore their creativity and talent in the areas of dance and theatre. They are then able to use their talents to raise awareness amongst other young people in communities. The organisation’s strategy is to raise community awareness through discussions that occur after the plays have been performed. It has also recently introduced an early childhood component which develops theatre performances for pre-schools.

A common feature of these organisations is that they provide spaces for young people to explore their talents and offer opportunities for them to serve within their communities. In this way they are able to develop young people and at the same time build their particular areas of interest. In addition, some also provide psycho-social support, life skills, and skills development and training services aimed at the positive development of young people so that they are better able to avoid risk and access opportunities in society. This investment in young people is an essential component of dealing with the challenge of youth and violence, and organisations working broadly on youth

development should be seen as key partners in any initiatives intended to impact on youth and violence.

### ***Advocacy and awareness***

The research shows that the impact of interventions focusing on youth at a local level will be shaped by the broader national landscape, which may be more or less enabling of youth-focused programmes. There is thus a need to build political will and support for such interventions, and to develop policy that supports interventions to address underlying drivers of youth vulnerability.

For these reasons the role of advocacy in highlighting the prevalence and nature of youth violence, and of youth vulnerability more generally, cannot be underestimated. Advocacy must be closely linked with the efforts of organisations working on specific programmatic interventions.

Civil society organisations involved in advocacy around certain pieces of legislation have been instrumental in changing the landscape of social development in various SADC countries. This shows that advocacy and the building of public awareness about the challenges of youth and violence must be a key strategy for organisations seeking to impact on youth violence. In this regard lessons can be learned from Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA) in Mozambique; Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA); Lusweti in Swaziland; Childline in South Africa; and international NGOs such as ActionAid, UNICEF and UNIFEM operating in Mozambique.

Lusweti in Swaziland is a case of good practice in building public awareness. Lusweti sees itself as a communication brand. Its interventions are mainly through the development of media-based materials such as radio and television programmes, pamphlets, films and advertisements developed around particular issues, which they take mainly to schools. For example, a recent campaign focussed on teacher/learner relationships. Social marketing and the use of media in this regard is a major component of building public awareness and is particularly important when dealing with issues that are so normalised that there is a need to challenge norms and value systems around them. Other issues that may benefit from social marketing programmes include domestic or child abuse and corporal punishment.

Childline in South Africa works to build awareness of such issues. However, they run schools-based programmes rather than public media campaigns. At schools they work with children to educate them about sexuality and abuse, and support teachers to identify issues that may indicate that a child is not safe. These programmes are important to develop awareness about victimisation in order to create pathways for intervention.

Since 2006, WLSA in partnership with a range of other organisations (including UNICEF and Action Aid) has been instrumental in developing a campaign to place the issue of sexual abuse of girls and young women at school on the public agenda in Mozambique. This has been successful in a context of great reluctance by the authorities to deal with issues of domestic violence: the police do not like to intervene and rather encourage families to sort out their own problems. A draft law against domestic violence was the

direct outcome of the advocacy efforts by the coalition of gender-based NGOs and has been under discussion since 2007. This has been a controversial process involving several drafts and met with considerable resistance. Parliament approved a draft of the law in September 2009, but at the time of writing it had still not been promulgated by the President (November 2009). Nevertheless, the work of these organisations demonstrates how essential public awareness and advocacy is to changing the policy landscape.

Swaziland had a similar experience in which organisations such as Lusweti and SWAGAA in partnership with the Swaziland office of WLSA and other organisations have worked to build awareness about domestic and sexual violence. They drafted and provided input on the Domestic and Sexual Offences Act, which was signed into legislation in 2009. These experiences demonstrate that collective efforts can work in partnership with the state, but may also need to challenge the state to achieve the policy shifts necessary to create an enabling environment for programmes and interventions at the local level.

### ***Targeted interventions***

A range of interventions can work to develop the resilience of young people to violence, thereby contributing to youth safety in general terms. However, there is also a need to develop targeted interventions aimed at young people who are already involved in violence or who have been victimised by violence. In this regard there are two key programmes operating in the region that provide lessons of good practice.

The Demobilisation, Disarmament and Rehabilitation (DDR) programme of the Government of DRC (UEPN DDR (Unite d'execution du programme national DDR)) focuses on the needs of young soldiers. The programme has a very specific focus and aim, being:

*To achieve the disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion of almost 150 000 ex-combatants into [the] social and economic life of the country by promoting the reallocation of government expenses in this sector to the social and economic aspects of these ex-combatants*

UEPN mission statement

Military units within which young soldiers are still active are targeted, and the organisation works to ensure they are demobilised. This may involve negotiations with particular units, backed by the relevant legislation regarding child protection, but might also require campaigns targeting other issues such as HIV, which could attract the young soldiers. The director of the programme notes that these programmes are particularly useful for engaging girl child soldiers since the military units are often reluctant to release them:

*A lot of effort has been done by agencies to run campaigns aiming at demobilizing female child soldiers or female children associated with armed groups. These campaigns have mostly failed for various reasons: fear of being stigmatized, greater control of leaders on the female children who often serve as their sex partners or with whom they have had a child, etc... However, agencies have adopted a new strategy that proves to be working better. Campaigns based on other themes such as pregnancy, HIV, etc offer platforms that attract these female children associated*

*with armed groups. It is in discussing or getting help on such other issues, that these children tell their stories and are able to take the next step in getting freed from armed groups, rehabilitated and reinserted into society.*

Director of UEPN programme, DRC

Once young people are part of the programme they are offered counselling and psychosocial support services as well as professional training to enable them to take up a trade. Efforts are also made to assist them with the process of reintegration. This may involve community dialogue or interviews. Finally, once they have completed the programme they are offered a small amount of money as start-up capital to assist them in starting a business.

The second programme is Childline, operating in South Africa. Childline offers support services to all young people who may be facing difficult situations, whether that has to do with being victimised or abused, teenage pregnancy, difficulties with sexuality, or simply low self-esteem. Childline is one of the few national organisations in the country that offers young people a platform for counselling or a space to speak. Their programmes include school awareness campaigns, aimed at developing awareness about particular issues that most communities are silent about, such as domestic and sexual violence. These in-school campaigns generate discussions about what is right and wrong, and enable young people to think differently about their situations or to view their circumstances differently. This may enable them to identify abuse in the household for the first time since it counters their perceptions of the normalisation of the abuse. The toll-free call line allows young people to make contact with a counsellor or social worker at any time of the day. Childline is thus providing a service to particularly vulnerable young people who may have no other source of support. In extreme cases, Childline also offers temporary places of safety where young people can escape from life-threatening situations. In this regard they work closely with the police.

These examples of targeted interventions are complementary to the efforts of the organisations dealing more broadly with youth development. They show that youth development alone cannot address the needs of particularly vulnerable groups and point to a level of specialisation required to engage with the needs of specific target groups. Other vulnerable groups requiring similar support might be those young people addicted to substances, gang members, victims of child trafficking, and victims of violence.

### ***Integrated approaches to dealing with youth violence***

Some of the most effective programmes dealing with youth violence take an integrated and holistic youth development approach, combining advocacy, youth development and targeted interventions to address youth vulnerability. Three organisations, all working in South Africa, warrant further attention in this regard: USIKO, the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP), and the Mpumalanga Safety Centre. These programmes deal with vulnerable youth and youth in conflict with the law and are well aware of the intersection between youth development, youth violence and vulnerability. They all recognise the need to offer programmes that are holistic in nature and are attempting as far as possible to do this. The possible exception to this is the Mpumalanga Safety Centre, which is limited in the scope of its work by the fact that it is a temporary safety shelter for

YICL before they are referred to another centre or a diversion programme. NICRO also offers counselling, life skills training and entrepreneurial training for young offenders. However, the two programmes that perhaps demonstrate good practice with regard to a holistic and developmental approach to youth violence are USIKO and CJCP.

USIKO is an organisation that was started out of the concern of local community members about rising levels of youth violence, which prompted some community members to set up a mentorship system focusing on vulnerable young boys in the area. This developed into USIKO, an organisation that targets, firstly, vulnerable youth between the ages of 14 and 18 and, secondly, youth in conflict with the law in the Stellenbosch winelands area. USIKO runs a comprehensive programme that includes:

- Wilderness therapy – the creation of a safe space for experiential learning;
- A mentorship programme, which pairs young people with role models in the community;
- Group counselling sessions;
- One-on-one counselling sessions, where necessary;
- Life skills training; and
- Victim perpetrator mediation.

The aim of USIKO is to ensure that young people have an opportunity for lifelong diversion. As a result the programme makes an effort to stay in touch with young people who have been through the programme and involves them as future mentors or volunteers.

USIKO is also actively involved in advocacy work around youth and the need for restorative justice. It was instrumental in supporting efforts to get the Child Justice Bill signed into law and models itself on the implementation of the Child Justice Act.

*USIKO grew hand-in-hand with the development and advocacy of the Child Justice Act.*  
Interviewee from USIKO, South Africa

The organisation uses a holistic approach to its programmes. On the **prevention** side it works in schools with young people who volunteer to participate in sessions. Many of these young people are vulnerable to involvement in crime and violence because of home circumstances or the prevalence of violence in their school, but may not yet have been involved in violence as perpetrators, although they are likely to have been exposed to violence, if not victimised. These young people participate in regular sessions at the school that focus on life skills training, awareness of challenges they may face, personal growth and development, and developing a sense of future. They also participate in the mentorship programme as well as the wilderness experiential learning. The programme runs for eighteen months. The first twelve months focuses on life skills and personal growth. The final six months focuses on planning for the future. Within this time the participants will attend three wilderness camps.

Alongside this initiative, USIKO runs its diversion programme with young people who are in conflict with the law and have been referred by the court system. These young people also participate in group sessions, but have additional input that deals with taking

responsibility for actions, making apologies to parents and, where appropriate, to victims through victim/perpetrator sessions. They may also need one-on-one counselling and this is provided as necessary. USIKO has also recently embarked on working with parents to assist them in creating a safer and more accepting family environment. Young people in the diversion programme are paired with mentors and participate in the wilderness camps.

Interventions for young girls and boys are usually run separately, but certain sessions and some camps are now being run together. This was done in order to allow young people to talk through certain issues related to sexuality and to learn what healthy functional relationships between men and women involve, since many of the young participants do not have such role models or any experience of such relationships.

There is an attempt to link young people with exit opportunities, whether by advising them on building their own livelihoods or trying to link them with bursaries. If a participant is particularly vulnerable, USIKO may find them small jobs around the office until they can find another opportunity, although this aspect is not a structured part of the programme and is done more on an ad hoc basis.

USIKO is currently making changes to the programme to ensure that they see the participants more often over a shorter period of time. This will ensure that the programme is more intensive and will enable it to reach a larger number of young people. It will also strengthen programme participation since participants will have meetings twice a week. Monitoring systems are being put into place to track the progress of the participants once they have exited the programme, and to enable programme staff to follow up with participants and their families.

**CJCP** is a not-for-profit organization that works on developing evidence-based crime prevention strategies. It focuses specifically on youth and children and has three core function areas, the first of which is research. The research component relies on the design of particular crime prevention interventions, the collection of baseline data, and the monitoring and evaluation of interventions. The research is intended to inform the other areas of work as well as provide evidence-based policy recommendations to government. All the research is centred on the resiliency model of youth. The aim is to create a safe environment for young people and to enhance young people's resilience.

CFCP also has a project component based in the Northern Cape. This is a youth resiliency project that includes school safety interventions, parental support, conflict mediation, and a focus on xenophobia. The programmatic intention is to approach youth from an asset perspective and to build youth resiliency to crime. It therefore focuses on schools in the area as these provide entry points into the wider community. CJCP works with school teachers, principals and governing bodies to create awareness about youth vulnerability and implement early warning systems with regard to youth that may be vulnerable to violence. It also equips schools with tools that assist them with positive discipline, how to provide support to children who are vulnerable, and how to diffuse potentially violent situations. In addition, they provide support to parents on positive discipline of teenagers. The programme provides after-school activities and entrepreneurial training linked with a

mentorship programme. It targets predominantly young people in school, but will not turn young people away, and has previously worked with young people up to the age of 24. CJCP also provides workshops on conflict mediation and the issue of xenophobia. Not all programmes will be run in every community. In each community, a community diagnostic is first run to identify the most pertinent needs and to ensure coherence and integration of programmes.

Through its programmatic work, CJCP reaches 2 000 children through holiday camps as well as 200 regular participants in after-school programmes. In the Northern Cape it also runs a 14-month-long diversion programme and has recently changed the monitoring system to track young people through the system. So as not to duplicate the efforts of others, CJCP works with organisations that are established in the communities and are already reaching young people. Although the programmes have been run predominantly in the Northern Cape, there is a demand for the CJCP programmes in the Western Cape as well.

In 2006, CJCP added its training component focused on social crime prevention. The intention of the programme is to mainstream crime prevention in policy. It is targeted at senior civil service officials and focuses on policy and planning with regard to crime prevention. It is offered through the school of Public and Development Management at Wits University. A new course targeting local government officials is currently being designed for UWC.

Regarding its broader strategy, CJCP is trying to move away from the discourse of criminality and youth violence to speak more broadly about youth safety, such as how to get youth safety prioritised across all levels and to ensure a shared responsibility (from government, schools, young people and parents) for youth safety. It argues that there is a need for a youth safety strategy to be developed at national policy level, which will take a developmental approach to safety.

### **10.3. Conclusion and recommendations**

What emerges from the interventions currently in place in the countries visited, as well as from the emerging model presented in Chapter 8 and Chapter 9 above, is that an integrated approach to youth and violence is necessary. It involves advocacy, building public awareness, building youth development models, and targeted interventions for certain groups of particularly vulnerable young people. In addition, if the underlying vulnerability factors are to be addressed, a range of stakeholders should be involved, including the state and national youth bodies, international, national and local NGOs, the media, religious groups, schools, the private sector, families and individuals. Any action also needs to be informed and supported by a regional commitment and directive to reduce the incidence of youth violence in the region.

With regard to youth development interventions, a key success factor seems to be providing young people with spaces to test their skills and passions. These may be

cultural, arts-based, theatrical, sports or service programmes that provide a platform for young people to develop and to engage with their communities.

Over and above this, however, complementary programmes that deal with specific vulnerability factors need to be carefully designed and targeted. These programmes may involve special services for young people addicted to substances, the demobilisation and disarmament of child soldiers, providing victims and perpetrators of violence with counselling services, and placing vulnerable young people in a mentorship relationship. Such interventions are very necessary but must be designed in conjunction with a broader youth development approach.

The above analysis also demonstrates that programmatic interventions aimed at vulnerable youth are often best located within local communities because this enables these interventions to partner with local schools, families and local businesses as well as religious organisations to ensure that young people are a) able to tap into opportunities at the local level, and b) that the local community becomes aware of the challenges and is able to work towards making the community a safe space for its young people.

Building public awareness and developing advocacy campaigns aimed at increasing the safety of young people is an essential component of any integrated approach. In this regard, media, schools and religious organisations as well as international NGOs are key partners. Civil society organisations can work in partnership with government to build state support, but may in some instances need to be more adversarial in order to bring new perspectives to the debate. Whatever strategy is seen as most appropriate, it is clear that there is an immense amount of work required at this level to ensure that youth and violence and the safety of young people becomes a priority in the region.

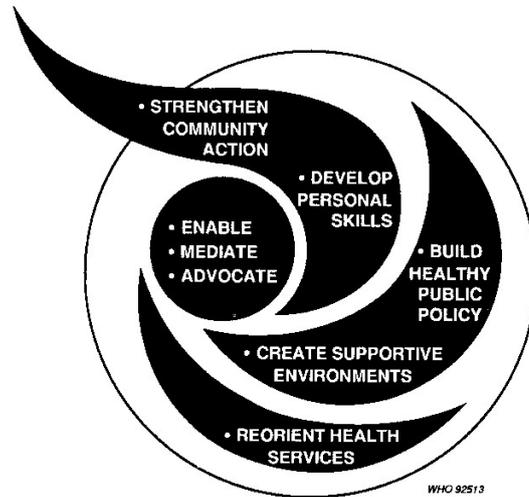
Conceptually the Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion (WHO, 1986), which seeks to enable people to increase control over their health environment, could be adapted to the youth and violence situation since the aim of any intervention would be to enable young people and communities to increase their control over promoting their safety.

The Ottawa charter has five key components that can be adapted to speak to the youth and violence situation and demonstrate how an integrated approach could work:

**Figure 3: Principles of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986) adapted for the youth and violence context**

- **Building healthy public policy** – the promotion of youth resilience and safety must combine diverse but complementary approaches to policy, including legislation, budgetary allocations, and organisational change. The promotion of youth safety requires identification of obstacles to the adoption of good public policies amongst the youth and in other sectors and the development of ways to remove them.
- **Creating supportive environments** - the protection of the natural and built environments and the conservation of natural resources must be addressed in any integrated strategy aimed at youth and violence. In particular this means ensuring that families, schools and communities are safe spaces for young people.
- **Strengthening community action** - community development draws on existing human and material resources to enhance self-help and social support, and to develop flexible systems for strengthening public participation in matters to do with youth safety. This requires full and continuous access to information and learning opportunities, as well as funding support
- **Developing personal skills** through information and education skills - enabling young people to prepare themselves for life and the challenges they may face. This would include employment or livelihood learning, skills development, life skills, education, and the development of creativity and talent as well as commitment to community. This has to be facilitated in school, home, and community settings.
- **Re-orientating services toward prevention of violence and promotion of resilience** - the role of the youth development sector and other bodies involved with violence must move increasingly in a resilience promotion direction, but must continue to provide targeted interventions. Reorientating of services requires stronger attention to research, as well as changes in professional education and training.

Figure 3: Diagrammatic representation of the Ottawa Charter's integrated approach to health promotion (sourced from <http://www.courseweb.uottawa.ca/pop8910/Outline/Models/Ottawa%20charter.jpg>)



The Ottawa Charter approach demonstrates that any interventions to do with youth and violence need to speak to all levels of society and must incorporate a range of stakeholders. However, this is largely dependent on the capacity of these organisations.

## **Chapter 11: Capacity of youth organisations and structures to champion the fight against youth crime and violence**

From the discussion above it is clear that many of the organisations interviewed have been able to make great strides with regard to their mission and vision, and that they provide lessons of good practice that can be drawn on. This chapter outlines their successes and challenges as indicators of their relative strengths and weaknesses, as well as their capacity and the obstacles they face in the fight against youth crime and violence.

### **11.1. Key successes and strengths**

One of the major successes emanating from the organisations interviewed and discussed above has been their ability to continue advocating for changes in legislation that will serve to protect women and children with regard to violence, and provide opportunities for vulnerable young people, particularly those already in conflict with the law, to seek alternatives to violence. These processes have not been without their challenges, and the lack of political will to promulgate legislation as well as the length of time it has taken to get legislation tabled has been frustrating. Nevertheless, these organisations have persisted and have in many cases had some success. This demonstrates will and dedication on the part of the organisations, and points to their excellent skills with regard to advocacy and knowledge of the terrain that characterises violence, as well as the knowledge about how it needs to be dealt with. These are all strengths that can be built on to champion the fight against youth violence.

In addition, some of the civil society organisations present key skills in the arena of developing public awareness, whether through schools-based programmes or social marketing and campaigns. These strengths have been put to good use in the HIV and AIDS sector in many countries, but as the case of Lusweti demonstrates, have also been used to deal with issues pertaining to victimisation and violence. The infrastructure and knowledge gained through these processes should therefore be drawn on if a public awareness campaign is to be developed on the challenges around youth and violence.

International NGOs clearly play an important role in the region. They bring with them political clout as well as knowledge about effective mechanisms for advocacy. In addition, they are often better resourced and capacitated than local organisations and provide opportunities for partnerships with local organisations that can build capacity and provide a reliable funding source. This is not without its risks, as this could develop into a dependency relationship if not managed within guidelines for effective partnerships.

One of the main lessons of good practice demonstrated above is that of locating programmes within communities and ensuring that at community level schools, businesses and religious groups are partners in the process of youth development. Although most of the organisations interviewed were national organisations, there is a

range of community-based organisations operating in the region that could be used to promote youth development and targeted interventions where necessary.

A further point of strength that emerged from the four countries in which fieldwork was conducted is the existence of youth councils or youth ministries. Although many of the interviewees note a range of challenges with regard to these structures, including the fact that they are very often partisan, they offer a possible point of entry for interventions and organisations to influence thinking at the state level, provided they have commitment from youth structures.

One of the major strengths and successes of many of these organisations is that they are operating under difficult circumstances, as will be explained. Despite this they are successfully running programmes and interventions in a range of development areas and thus show a level of resilience that is not often recognised. With this in mind there is clearly room to support such organisations as they continue to implement relevant and innovative programming.

## **11.2. Key challenges and obstacles**

It must be noted that the organisations interviewed are often pursuing their tasks under circumstances that are less than favourable. One of the key challenges facing many civil society organisations is state-civil society relations which are often challenging. If the recommendations about integrated interventions and involvement of all stakeholders are to be acted upon then ideally there should be positive working relationships between the state, which is responsible for developing policy and allocating budgets, and civil society organisations that often implement programmes at the local level. However, from the interview data it emerges that this is not always the case.

In the DRC, for instance, relations between the state and civil society are not mutually supportive. In general, civil society organisations provide services that should be discharged by the state, without receiving any support from it. A large section of civil society also opposes the state, which is seen as a source of human rights violations. In response the state strives to homogenise civil society so that it can support its political imperatives, and this renders relations between the state and civil society unstable.

Similarly in Mozambique, Frelimo dominated civil society until the democratic transition in 1992 and allowed it no independent expression. The one independent voice during the time of the one-party state was that of the churches, in particular the Catholic Church. It remained a powerful influence despite Frelimo's early hostility towards organised religion and the nationalisation of church property. When the international community began to rebuild Mozambique in the 1990s it aimed to build up civil society as part of the process of embedding democracy. 'Civil Society' was effectively invented through the sponsorship of emerging local NGOs created by skilled professionals who were refugees from a collapsing state sector. As a result, the relationship with the state has been ambiguous. The state seeks to control civil society activity through legislation governing registration, but many of the key local NGO personnel are well-connected to the party. There are,

however. a small number of independent media, human rights and advocacy organisations that maintain critical distance.

In South Africa, civil society has been through a process of weakening and rebuilding in the fifteen years since democracy. This is in part due to an ambivalent relationship with the state. Prior to 1994 civil society was by and large anti-state. Post-1994, the state is being run by the ANC – the lead organisation in the struggle against apartheid – and the watchdog or advocacy role of civil society has diminished through close collaboration between civil society and the state. However, the state has developed a social development policy framework which views civil society as playing a key role as a partner in service delivery. Despite an era of some antagonism towards civil society on the part of the state under the Mbeki administration, the Zuma administration seems more open to the voice of civil society, and has seen trade unions and other groups exercising greater influence over public policy. There does therefore seem to be room for greater engagement between the state and civil society on issues of youth vulnerability, and the situation for organisations in South Africa is undoubtedly more positive than in the DRC or Mozambique, with many of the South African organisations interviewed partnering with the state to deliver services to young people.

Similarly, the relationship between state and civil society organisations that address youth issues is generally good in Swaziland. The two organisations interviewed – SWAAGA and Lusweti – both reported good working relations with the state and involve government ministries in a number of their programmes. Lusweti pointed out that they work closely with the Ministry of Education which has been receptive to its campaigns to end teacher/learner relationships in schools. However, while freedom of expression and freedom of association are enshrined in the Swazi constitution, in practice these freedoms do not yet exist in Swaziland, resulting in a situation in which civil society initiatives often adhere to the official state perspective.

The South Africa and Swaziland cases indicate the extent to which a receptive state can enable organisations working on issues of youth vulnerability to operate effectively. This suggests that one of the overarching tasks that must accompany the interventions on youth and violence is the strengthening of democratic processes, particularly with regard to civil society freedoms.

Private sector-civil society relations remain a challenge. As previously mentioned, the private sector could play a key role in the fight against youth violence. However, private sector-civil society relations are mostly non-existent in the countries profiled, except for the case of South Africa. This means that concerted efforts are needed to not only inculcate a culture of corporate social responsibility, but also to ensure that youth and violence becomes a recognised issue that the private sector can support financially.

Funding and human resource challenges, as may be expected, were raised by a number of interviewees. In the DRC, for instance, the director of the minors section for the Kinshasa prison notes the lack of an allocated budget for minors in the prison system, resulting in problems with the provision of food for the offenders. USIKO in South Africa raised concerns about sustainability of funding. It receives funding from one major source and

this makes its financial situation tenuous, which impacts on its ability to offer staff members permanent employment contracts. SWAGAA in Swaziland also notes funding and human resource capacity as a challenge since its work depends on a range of skills. USIKO further notes that in addition to human resource capacity, there is the risk of burnout amongst staff members since the work they do is emotionally draining.

The funding challenges may be further exacerbated by the fact that there is little interest in funding projects related to youth. As one of the interviewees in Mozambique noted,

*It is difficult to get sponsorship or partnerships because youth are seen as a group who are unproductive and without an agenda. Very few organizations are prepared to put money into youth programmes.*

Associação Coalizão da Juventude Moçambicana, Mozambique

A further challenge is that organisations working in the area of youth and violence are working in a situation in which there is a lack of awareness and inappropriate, or few, policy frameworks to guide their work and enable them to get commitment from all sectors. The interviewee from SWAGAA notes for instance that,

*One of the challenges is that the procedure surrounding the reporting of sexual violence is not conducive. The sentences meted out to the offenders are not high and so they don't act as a deterrent. Often a woman will lay a charge and then later withdraw it, because she was too scared to proceed.*

SWAGAA, Swaziland

This pertains particularly to youth political structures, which (as discussed above) are often perceived not only as not having youth and violence on their agenda, but as being largely inadequate in meeting the needs of young people at the local level, and as being dominated by the ruling party. Thus, if the youth political structures are to become partners in the fight against youth violence, a concerted effort must be made to ensure that they view youth and violence as a worthwhile agenda.

Because of the funding challenges and the lack of awareness about youth and violence, there are many organisations working in areas related to youth development and HIV more broadly, since HIV is a more easily fundable and more widely accepted programme to run. The suggestion that these organisations could provide a platform from which to launch youth and violence programmes may be one approach. However, one must be careful not to overburden organisations, nor to distract them from their core focus areas for which they may be receiving funding and support.

### **11.3. Recommendations**

Based on the foregoing discussions, a range of recommendations related to capacity and how to move forward may be made.

There is a need to work with organisations that are already established and which have built up some level of credibility, reach, infrastructure and skill, despite the fact that they may be running programmes in a different area. However, this must not lead to a situation in which organisations that are already somewhat constrained are overburdened or distracted from their core tasks, mission and vision.

Partnerships are essential to ensure effective interventions. As discussed in Chapter 10, an integrated approach to youth and violence is necessary. Partnerships also serve a more immediate purpose and that is simply related to maximising capacity. Certain organisations in the region such as Lusweti, SWAGAA and WLSA have expertise in advocacy. Others such as USIKO and CJCP have expertise in running integrated community-based programmes. There is therefore a need to promote partnerships between organisations that will enable programmatic focused organisations to draw on the expertise of advocacy or awareness programmes as one example. This will ensure that the relative strengths of particular organisations are drawn on to develop a coherent approach, and makes networking is an essential aspect of any youth and violence intervention.

If organisations are to maximise their impact, there is a need to develop awareness around the issue of youth violence. This is essential for three reasons. Firstly, ensuring that youth violence is seen as a priority will mean that organisations are more likely to receive buy-in from the state and from the related national youth structures, which will make policy development and budgetary allocations more favourable. Secondly, it will ensure that the issue is seen as fundable by major donors and/or the private sector. Finally, it will ensure that more organisations recognise the need to be working in this area, which is more likely to facilitate networking and partnership opportunities.

## Chapter 12: Recommendations on innovative mechanisms and interventions

The research findings and the suggestions made by interviewees provide a range of recommendations about innovative mechanisms and interventions for approaching the challenges of youth and violence. These are presented in this chapter and are summarised in the concluding chapter that follows.

### 12.1. Recommendations regarding advocacy

The research findings show that advocacy is an important component of any strategy aimed at engaging with youth and violence. Advocacy must be aimed at developing and changing policy, but must also contribute to building public awareness and challenging commonly held beliefs about a range of issues – from corporal punishment to the position of women in society.

Specific recommendations arising from the in-country research for **advocacy in relation to policy-making** include (but are not limited to) the following:

- a. Develop a national plan to prevent violence against youth. This could be based on a framework to promote youth safety, which would see that all stakeholders from schools to the police services and parents are encouraged to take responsibility for the safety of children and youth in communities.
- b. Work towards eliminating the minority status of women that prevails in many countries in the region, to ensure that everyone is equal in the eyes of the law.
  - o In this regard some legislation may need to be amended. For instance, in Swaziland the Marriage Act will need to be amended to ensure that the age of marriage is 18 years and that marriage occurs with the consent of both the bride and the groom.
- c. Ensure that legislation regarding issues that most affect young children as well as women – that of domestic and sexual violence – is developed, tabled and promulgated. In Swaziland, for instance, this would mean promulgating the draft Sexual Offences Bill as a matter of urgency in order to protect men, women and children from violence at home, school and in the community. The Mozambique Law Against Domestic Violence provides some lessons on this regard.
- d. Given the high levels of school violence identified in some of the SADC countries, there is a need to lobby ministries of education to establish and enforce a code of conduct in schools to prevent violence against learners.
  - o In this regard, there will also be a need to establish regulations and protocols addressing abusive relationships between teachers and learners.
- e. Laws should be adjusted to ensure they are not intimidating to children and young people. Furthermore, mechanisms such as child and youth-friendly courts should be established to enable young people to give evidence in a “safe” environment and to express themselves freely.

- f. Where young offenders are still treated according to the adult criminal codes, policy is needed to ensure that young offenders are provided with rehabilitative mechanisms, rather than simply being incarcerated. In this regard the Child Justice Act in South Africa provides good practice guidelines.
- g. There is also a need to ensure that broader youth development issues are placed on the table as matters worthy of urgent policy attention. These include issues such as youth unemployment, poor quality education, and social cohesion. The time seems ripe for a focus on youth issues, given that most of the SADC countries seem to have youth policies and youth structures in place and that in both the DRC and South Africa new youth policies were released in 2009, while Swaziland is in the process of developing a new youth policy.

Besides advocacy activities aimed at the state with regard to policy development, there is also a need for **advocacy aimed at challenging commonly held norms and values**, and building public awareness about youth and violence, and the related vulnerability issues. Specific recommendations from the field in this regard include:

- Youth and the issues that they face, as well as the contribution that young people can make to communities, needs to receive greater priority at the state level. In other words, the profile of young people's needs and interests should be raised.
- Cultural factors, which allow or sanction violence in society, such as acceptance of school bullying amongst boys, corporal punishment, and the position of women in society, have to be more openly addressed in public debate.
- Significant effort will be required to ensure that youth violence receives the same degree of attention on the public agenda as do other issues such as HIV and AIDS.
- Public campaigns on the consequences of substance abuse should be considered. This will require that information be made available in schools and communities about drugs and alcohol abuse.
- Community campaigns that ensure that alcohol and drugs are not available anywhere near schools would be a worthwhile intervention.
- A public awareness campaign should be initiated to educate learners about sexual abuse and what constitutes sexual abuse (given that it often becomes normalised when such abuse is experienced from an early age). In addition, awareness should be raised about people's responsibility for reporting instances of sexual abuse when these come to light. In this regard, there may be a need to ensure that communities are empowered on these issues so that they know how to report the issues.
- There is a need for the widespread dissemination of information regarding children's and young people's rights as well as the laws and structures that deal with child and sexual abuse.
- There is a need to develop a public awareness campaign about the private forms of violence, particularly domestic and sexual violence, in order to break the silence surrounding these forms of violence.

## 12.2 Programmatic recommendations

At the programmatic level, there are a range of **developmental programmes** that can address some of the underlying factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young people. Some of the recommendations arising from the fieldwork in this regard include:

- a. Gender-specific training programmes regarding domestic and sexual violence. Training could focus on gender awareness, empowerment, human rights, children's rights and the effects of domestic and sexual abuse.
- b. There is a need to promote civic engagement and youth development opportunities to foster the vibrant associational life of young people. This should be supported by creating the social, political and economic conditions that encourage this form of social capital.
- c. Investment in extra-curricular activities such as sports, arts, cultural activities and service opportunities is required to enable young people to actively explore their assets as well as their own potential.
- d. There should be a focus on the empowerment of young people through the development of life skills, professional skills, assertiveness and coping strategies.

Besides the above developmental interventions there is also a need to **ensure that the needs of particularly vulnerable youth are addressed** in relation to their involvement in violence, and that contextually specific and appropriate interventions are made available to them. Specific recommendations from the field in this regard include:

- e. The need for more services to be made available for victims.
  - In Mozambique certain resources are made available at the state level such as the Gabinetes de Atendimento run by local level police stations and the public health facilities, and the SAAJ system attached to hospitals and clinics. These need to have additional resources allocated to them, including psychological counselling.
  - In other countries victim support is limited and more investment is required to ensure that young people who have been victimised are provided with access to counselling and related support services.
- f. There is a need to ensure that victim empowerment is placed on the public agenda. Mechanisms focusing on the rehabilitation of offenders should not ignore the need for victims to be empowered and offered an opportunity to see justice done.
- g. In dealing with young offenders, there is a need to ensure that rehabilitation mechanisms are available. In this regard:
  - More and better juvenile detention facilities which focus on vocational training and counselling programmes are required;
  - More organisations are needed that focus on young offenders and other vulnerable youth to ensure that restorative justice is carried out and that other vulnerable young people are afforded opportunities to avoid involvement in violence.
  - Consider expanding the age range for rehabilitation and restorative justice programmes. In many cases these programmes only cater for youth up to the age of 18 and extending these services to young offenders up to the age of 21 should be considered.
  - Ensure that young girls who are involved in the perpetration of violence are afforded the same services.

- h. “Particularly vulnerable groups” is a term that seems to be context-specific. In the DRC it might refer to street children and child soldiers. In the winelands area of the Cape in South Africa, organisations have identified gangs as groups that are particularly vulnerable. In other communities it may be particular schools. There is thus a need amongst community-based organisations working in partnership with schools and other stakeholders to identify particular groups or areas that are vulnerable and target interventions accordingly.

### **12.3 Strengthening organisational capacity around youth and violence**

There are few organisations dealing specifically with youth and violence. In addition, many organisations face challenges and constraints that limit their capacity to champion the fight against youth violence. In this regard the following recommendations arise from the field:

- a. Successful youth programmes dealing with HIV and AIDS awareness issues and related youth development issues could be harnessed to implement additional programmes dealing with issues of violence of a more general nature.
- b. However, given that this is a relatively new area in the consciousness of many people, it is clear that most service providers will not be adequately equipped to deal effectively with such issues. Therefore, capacity building would be necessary to enhance their ability to contribute to the fight against youth violence.
- c. Capacitating existing civil society organisations on both financial assistance and human resources enhancement would also have a direct impact in addressing youth violence.
- d. The private sector should not be ignored as a potential partner. The importance of corporate social responsibility should be emphasised and private sector investment in youth empowerment encouraged.
- e. In addition, given the limited capacity of many organisations, caution must be exercised so that they are not overburdened with new issues that might impact on their current focus.
- f. There is a clear need for networking and partnership opportunities between organisations to ensure that lessons of good practice are shared and that the strengths of organisations can complement each other in this sector.

## Chapter 13: Conclusion

This research is intended to make a contribution to the body of knowledge on youth and violence in the region. The research sought to address a range of questions including understanding forms of violence, understanding the prevalence or extent of youth violence, trying to ascertain which groups of young people are most at risk, and the factors that drive their vulnerability to violence. It has also sought to investigate interventions currently at work in the region, the various roles of stakeholders at all levels of society, the lessons that can be learned from current practice, and the capacity of organisations to champion the fight against youth violence.

What has emerged from the research is that youth and violence is a complex matter. Viewed from a holistic and developmental perspective, it throws up a range of challenges related to the position of young people in society more generally. What is clear, however, is that for the most part young people do not have a predisposition to involvement in violence and should not be stigmatised as such. The conceptual framework that has emerged through this research points to a range of factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young people, increasing their risk behaviour, which, if addressed, can build the resilience of youth to resist violence and can help to make communities safer places in which young people can mature. It also points to the fact that there is a need for support to particularly vulnerable young people who may have been victimised through violence or grown up with violence in the home, or those who have grown up with conflict, for example, being exposed to conflict as child soldiers or involved in gangs. A two-tiered approach thus emerges to address the broad developmental needs of young people, whilst taking care of specific impacts that flow from the experience of violence at the individual level.

This suggests the need for a holistic and integrated intervention in the region that aims to:

- Advocate for changes in public policy so that victims are protected, young people are provided with the opportunities required for their positive development, including good education and skills training, and young offenders are rehabilitated;
- Build public awareness to ensure that the environments within which young people grow up, particularly homes and schools, are safe spaces;
- Provide opportunities for young people's positive development, including opportunities to develop their skills and talents, contribute to their communities, and build their self-esteem and personal control over their environments;
- Provide targeted support services that are context-specific for young people who are in need of extra support.

Such an integrated approach will be constrained without a strong commitment from all levels of society. International players such as NGOs and global institutions (such as the United Nations) play a key role in obligating countries to address particular issues by, for

example, ensuring the protection of child rights. At the regional level there is room for the SADC Heads of State to provide leadership on the issue of youth and violence. The state must be a partner in the process since it is responsible for policy changes and budget allocations, as well as for shaping the discourse around particular issues. State level youth bodies could be key partners for influencing policy. Civil society organisations must continue to work at the level of campaigning for policy change, building public awareness, providing spaces for youth development, offering specialised services, and working with community level partners, including schools and families, to ensure that young people are safe. Community level partners will continue to be central in this fight against youth violence since they are the primary sites of engagement for young people and have the most influence over a young person's life.

Going forward, there is thus a need to engage all stakeholders from the regional and state level through to the community and individual level. All parties need to realise that they are mutually responsible for mitigating the impacts of violence on young people and building a region that is safe for its young people. In order to do this there is a continued need to develop partnerships, to network amongst organisations, to learn from practices in other countries, and to continue to develop a body of knowledge about youth and violence.

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## APPENDIX 1: List of interviews conducted

Name of organisation	Name of interviewee	Position
<b>DRC</b>		
Central Prison of Kinshasa ( Centre pénitentiaire et de rééducation de Makala)	Mr Kiba Jean	Director of the section of “mineurs”(minors) in the Prison
Central Prison of Kinshasa	Mr Roma Bantantu	Beneficiary in the section for minors in the prison
Centre Mgr Munzehirwa	Mr Musiangu Pierre	Co-ordinator
Centre Mgr Munzehirwa	Joel Kodi	Beneficiary
DDR Program (DRC)	KWEKE MUNGA JOSUE	Beneficiary
UEPN DDR (Unite d’execution du programme national DDR)	Patricia Tuluka	Co-ordinator of the program for the demobilization and reinsertion of child soldiers in the DRC
<b>Swaziland</b>		
Lusweti	Mzwethu Nkambule	National Campaign Manager
Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA)	Jabulile Tsabedze	Programme Manager
Swaziland Theatre for Children and Young people	Andrew Moyo	Programme Director
Name of organisation	Name of interviewee	Position

<b>Mozambique</b>		
ACTION AID,	Nacima Figia	National Co-ordinator, Women's & Child Rights and HIV and AIDS
Associação Coalizão da Juventude Moçambicana	Alexandre Muianga	General Co-ordinator
REMAR-Mozambique,	Luis Sure	Warden of Shelter
UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund	Mr. Shadit Murargy	National Programme Officer for Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) HIV & Aids
UNICEF	Mr. Miah Nemoto,	Child Protection Specialist
WLSA :Women and Law in Southern Africa.	Dra. Conceição Osório	Senior Researcher
<b>South Africa</b>		
Childline	Lynne Cawood	Director
Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CPCP)	Patrick Burton	Director
Project Literacy	Ishmael Kungwane, Stanley Matjeke and Humphrey Masemola	Principal training consultant, senior training consultants
USIKO	Hermien van Huyssteen and Elzette Rousseau and Raymond	Research, monitoring and evaluation officer; Deputy Director and beneficiary
Mpumalnga Safety Centre	Tom Mazibuko	Director
NICRO	Mildred Mosia	Social worker



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