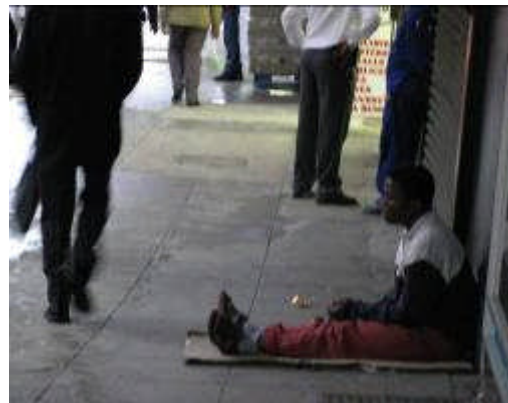


Durban's HOMELESS SURVEY



How South Africans and Africa's Refugees / Migrants struggle to survive on the streets

May 2008

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Durban's HOMELESS SURVEY : How South Africans and Africa's Refugees / Migrants struggle to survive on the streets. Survey and Case study of Durban's "pavement" people.

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Draft Preliminary Results

While analysing the data and compiling this report, South Africa is facing one of the greatest challenges, to stop the xenophobic violence. The ugliness of the horrific crime against humanity has shocked everyone. The ferocity and callousness of the perpetrators seem to be feeding on the blood and wanton destruction of helpless people; people who have come to South Africa to escape the violence and poverty in their countries. Everyone is appalled by the few photographs and footage of the xenophobic violence. We cannot see the ugliness of poverty, homelessness and unemployment in South Africa that acts as a trigger, to be exploited by some.

Those of us, who have worked with communities in the inner cities and the townships in during the dark days of apartheid, see a parallel between the perpetrators of xenophobic violence and the apparatus of the apartheid regime. The *modus operandi* was to marginalise and silence, by whatever means, the majority. The means and methodology goes against *ubuntu*, it tears into our humanity, reducing us to beasts.

Concerned and frightened persons of foreign nationalities have come to the OCR office to recount sporadic incidents¹ of violence in and around Durban. They also reported that the police patrolled the streets during the night at regular intervals; providing them some comfort.

¹ Tuesday May 20, 2008 - Friday May 23, 2008. Fear is feeding off rumors in a vicious cycle but there are also cases of intimidation.

However, the violence has not influenced the analysis of the data that follows. It is to present the demographics and reality as it is, from the interviews. A brief narrative report of one of the participants follows at the end of the discussion to provide a human perspective to data collection, statistical analysis and discussion of results. More interviews are to be conducted.

Acknowledgments

The Organisation of Civic Rights (OCR) is grateful to Mussa Mkopi Kusutya and his team and Gugulethu Pretty-Rose Gumede of the OCR for their painstaking commitment in administering the questionnaires. Working at night was indeed a challenge and a potential exposure to many risks. Gumede and Loshni Naidoo of the OCR assisted in the briefing sessions of the fieldworkers and debriefing. They also supervised and evaluated each questionnaire and followed up on aspects that required clarity. Naidoo captured the data and assisted with the analysis and typing. Gumede set up meetings with certain participants and was directly drawn into the interviews.

The participants / interviewees played a critical role, willingly giving their time to respond to the many questions that intruded into their lives. They were agreeable to participate and were co-operative, despite the many site visits by previous unknown fieldworkers. It was not surprising that a few participants called at the OCR office to verify that the organisation did really exist.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the Survey of Durban's homeless was to collect information to establish their reasons for living on the pavements, area of origin and the immediate needs. It was not intended to do a head count or estimate the number of homeless persons.

How was the survey conducted?

- ❑ In April & May 2008, the OCR conducted the survey of the homeless² who occupy Durban's pavements as their "dwelling".
- ❑ Sixteen main questions with sub-questions were administered to the homeless participants over six nights.
- ❑ The interviewers had to meet the participants at their place of "residency" during the evenings.
- ❑ The geographical location comprised of 54 streets in Durban central, Albert Park, Point, Grey Street precinct, Overport, Musgrave, Umbilo, Berea, Umgeni Road, and the Esplanade.

² OCR had previously conducted three surveys of the homeless community of Durban: Mohamed, S.I. (1990), Mohamed, S.I. & Hoosen, S. (1993), Mohamed, S.I. (1997). The recommendations for the previous survey results led to meaningful engagement with the Ethekwini Municipality and the provision of secure shelter with ownership rights as in the case of the Brook Street homeless people housed in the Westrich Greenfields Project and Block AK's street settlement relocated to Mansel Road on a rental scheme with trading facilities.

Summary of the survey results

The homeless on the streets do not receive any social benefits and self-employment, as street vendors, is the main source of income. While OCR's 1997 Survey confirmed previous research results of South African women predominating the streets as "pavement dwellers" and street vendors, this Survey reveals a change in the demographics. Majority of the "pavement dwellers" are male with people from a number of African countries (51%) more than South Africans (46%). The largest number of homeless come from Tanzania (83 persons) followed by the second largest groups: Democratic Rep of Congo (20), Kenya (19) and Burundi (18).

"Pavement dwellers" who stated their area of origin as South Africa, are represented by 106 persons from across the KwaZulu Natal province, including rural areas, followed by Eastern Cape (14) and Gauteng (12). Twenty nine people said that they were from South Africa and it was therefore not possible to establish the province of origin and specific locality.

There are more males (74.3%) than females (25.6) with the majority of the homeless (78%) being single and 30 years and younger. Poverty appears to be the main reason people are forced to live on the streets with R4.00 (four rands) a day being the average income.

Number Interviewed

A total of 358 individual interviewees responded and were most co-operative, despite some expressing reservations. The reservation was due to several surveys conducted by individuals or institutions but no feedback was done. OCR interviewers explained that the results and recommendations would be discussed with them and to involve all the relevant stakeholders to provide a solution to the needs of the homeless.

The OCR undertook to provide feedback and to engage the government and other stakeholders together with representatives of the homeless community to investigate practical solutions to address the plight of the city's homeless community.

Street / Area

It is estimated that there are approximately one thousand individuals converging on pavements at night between the beachfront (east), Esplanade- Umbilo (South), Overport (West), Argyle-Umgani Road (North) and streets within these areas. Eighteen percent of those surveyed live in Albert Park, 17% in Umgani Road, 10% in Victoria Street, 7% in Mansel Road, 4 % in Baker Street, 3.6% in the Esplanade area, 3.3% in Berea Park, 2.7% in the Point area and together with fewer numbers living in other streets, a total of 54 streets provide temporary "shelter".

It must be noted that the people surveyed sometimes relocate. While two individuals were interviewed in Prince Edward Street, this street often has up to 60 individuals, most of who were forced by the police to move out of Queen Street.

Age

Fifty four percent of the participants were 30 years or younger, (83 people below 21 years, 111 between 21-30 years). Eight people were within the 61-70 years range and 4 over 70 years. Twenty three percent were between 31-40 years and 18.7 % between 41-60 years.

Gender/ Marital Status

Ninety Two participants were females (25.6%) and 266 were males (74.3%). Approximately 78% were single, 19% married, three indicated that they were widowed and seven divorced.

Educational Background of Participants

Approximately 20% had no formal schooling, 21% attended grades 8-10, 18% grades 11-12, 39% attended grades 1-7, 1 stated other but did not specify and 3 participants did not respond.

Reason for Living on the Streets

If seeking employment (70%) and those who stated poverty as the reason for living on the streets (1.3%) are combined, then about 71% of the people are living on the streets, barely surviving as they struggle to eke out a living. This is corroborated by the income levels.

One person said that he was an ex-convict and had no where to live.

About 10, 8 % of the participants (39 people) did not answer.

Employment: Items sold by self-employed individuals

Approximately 200 people (55%) are street vendors, selling a variety of items, which included baskets, drums, metals, cardboards, refreshments, pillows, cushions, fish, sea water, bottles, pots and dishes. Some sold a combination of items.

One person stated that he begged, one was an artist, electrician (1), barber (1), labourer (1), car guard (9) and security guard (2).

About a quarter (25%) of the people surveyed worked for someone, of these 4% held temporary employment.

167 participants did not respond.

Income

Participants earned between R2.00 a day to R250.00 (1 person). Average income was R4.00 (four rands) a day. Majority (55) earned R20.00 a day, 41 had an income of R30.00, thirty earned R10.00, twenty four earned R50.00, eight earned R40.00, seven had a daily income of R25.00 and five earned R15.00. For 39 people, income varied from R2.00 to R250.00.

149 participants did not respond.

Crime

Asked about crime, 187 (52%) said that they were affected by crime, 46% was not affected and 6 participants did not respond. It would appear that police harassment was considered a crime by 23 participants. They felt that the police committed a crime by confiscating their personal belongings and destroying their legal refugee documents. There were nine stabbings, six violent incidents, two rape victims, two reported xenophobia as the reason they were victims of crime and 56 said they were victims of muggings.

Fifty one percent said that they had families to support, approximately 47% did not have to support families and 1% did not have families.

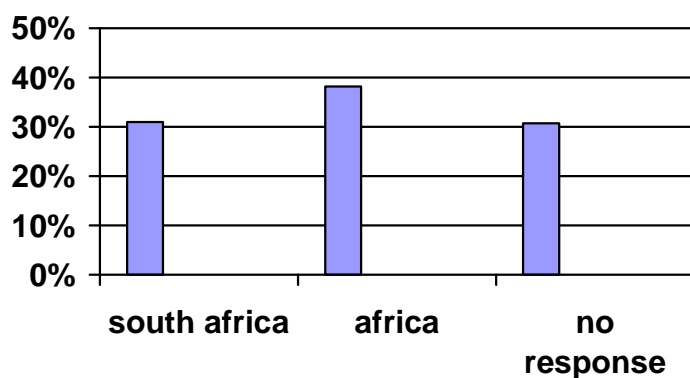
Children

Of the 179 participants who responded, they had a total of 110 children, approximately 7% of whom lived with them. Eighty five percent stated that their children did not live with them and 7.5% responded that the question of children did not apply to them.

Equal number of participants (179) did not respond.

Family's place of residency: children not living on the streets with participants

Children's area of residency



Children's area of residency				No Response
SOUTH AFRICA		AFRICA / OTHER		
Eastern Cape	2	Ghana	1	
Free State	2	Kenya	11	
Gauteng	2	Democratic Rep of Congo	13	
KZN	69	Malawi	3	
Western Cape	4	Mozambique	16	
South Africa	32	Somalia	5	
		Swaziland	1	
		Tanzania	62	
		Zambia	3	
		Zanzibar	2	
		Lusaka	1	
		Uganda	2	
		Angola	4	
		Burundi	13	
	111 31%		137 38.2%	110 30.7%

Approximately 46% are South Africans, 106 are from various towns and rural areas of KwaZulu Natal; 14 from Eastern Cape, 12 from Gauteng, 4 from Western Cape and 2 from the Free State; Twenty nine people indicated South Africa as their area of residency.

About 51% come from 14 African countries, Tanzanians were the largest group (83), followed by Congolese (20), Kenyans (19), Burundis (18) and Mozambiquans (16).

Ten people return to their original place of residency weekly, 73 people do so less than a year. 160 return home after 11 months, (1 to more than 13 years): 17% between 1-3 years, 8% between 4-7 years, 5% between 8-13 years and 14% return home after 13 years.

However, the response to the time spent on the streets contradicts the 14% (52 persons) who stated that they return home after 13 years. It may be that they have spent considerable period on the streets, not necessarily in Durban. Perhaps, the many years on the streets seem exceptionally long.

Majority indicated that they were on the streets for up to a year. One stated for more than 30 years, 66 between 1-2 years, 46 between 3-4 years, 25 between 5-6 years, 44 between 7-10 years, 15 between 11-14 years, 9 between 15-18 years, 22 between 19-30 years.

Participants' country

<i>South Africa</i>	<i>Africa / Other</i>		No Response
Eastern Cape	14	Democratic Rep of Congo	20
Free State	2	East Africa	1
Gauteng	12	Kenya	19
KZN	106	Burundi	18
South Africa	29	Malawi	4
Western Cape	4	Swaziland	2
		Somalia	3
		Mozambique	16
		Tanzania	83
		Zambia	4
		Zanzibar	3
		Zimbabwe	2
		Angola	6
		Uganda	2
	167		183
			8

How often they return home

Week		Month		Year		No Response
Once a week	10	Once a month	43	1	31	
		2-6	30	2-3	30	
		7-11	0	4-5	25	
				6-7	4	
				8-9	4	
				10-11	12	
				12-13	2	
				> 13	52	
	10		73		160	115

The period of time that they are in this settlement:

Below 6 months	73	20%
6-12 months	18	5%
1-2 years	66	18.4%
3-4 years	46	12.8%
5-6 years	25	6.9%
7-8 years	15	4.1%
9-10 years	29	8.1%
11-12 years	13	3.6%
13-14 years	2	0.5%
15-16 years	7	1.9%
17-18 years	2	0.5%
19-20 years	10	2.7%
21-30 years	12	3.3%
> than 30 years	1	0.2%
No Response	39	10.8%
Totals		

14% said that they do have ablution facilities, 81% said that they do not and 4% did not respond.

- 70% said that they require employment
- 69% said that they need shelter
- 4% said that they are being harassed by the police and that their belongings are confiscated.
- 12 % would like to be educated
- 6 % would like assistance
- 3% did not make any comment.

INTERVIEW WITH MUSSA MKOPI KUSUTYA



Mussa who is 32 years old was born in Dodoma, Tanzania. He attended school in Dodoma where he completed grade nine. Disillusioned with the socio-economic conditions and the failure of the Chama Cha Mapunduzi (CCM) led government to bring about reforms; he joined the opposition, Civic United Front (CUF).

Mussa is married with two children whom he left behind in Tanzania. He also has a

step mother and three step siblings, who are all older than he is. The worsening political crisis and mounting police harassment compelled Mussa to leave Tanzania after he contacted a friend in Durban, South Africa. On 31 December 2007 Mussa, having travelled in a truck, eventually arrived in Durban where he stayed with a friend in Albert Park.

The following morning, while his friend had left for work, there was a knock on the door. When he opened the door, he was confronted by a Metro police officer. Mussa was petrified because he was expecting to be arrested. Shock turned to disbelief when the police officer found R50.00 on Mussa and told him that he was going to take it. He told Mussa that if he spoke to anyone about his visit, he would have him arrested and deported immediately. Another encounter with the police was when Mussa's cell phone was taken away.

Mussa's friend Muhammad interjected by recounting his experience with a Metro police officer who found R80.00 on him while searching him. However, to his amazement, the police officer returned the money and told Muhammad to take care of it. Both then agreed that there were a few police officers who conducted themselves unbecomingly, thereby tarnishing the image of the police.

There was a pause and as Pretty Gumede left the room, both attempted hurriedly to express the instances people on the pavements are searched at night by the police. Stripped naked, they are then "examined" by the police wearing gloves. Feeling dehumanised and violated, Mussa says that there is nothing they can do because they are warned that any complaint would lead to their deportation. Others had already experienced their temporary refugee permits being confiscated and then torn up. Muhammad said that this was the reason they carry photocopies of their permit on them.

Mussa is very concerned about the behaviour of certain police officers "because, it's not a question of whether you committed a crime, you get victimised because of being not of South

African origin.” Mussa said that he would be very grateful if the South African government can address their plight and provide shelter.

When asked about employment, Mussa said that he distributes leaflets for which he is supposed to receive pavement in Smith leaflets. The “wages” responds to the leaflet things, matters relating helps Mussa but they say uncomfortable with the embarrassed but are find another job. Can later, Mussa explained that he did not receive any wages because he was informed that no one had responded to the leaflet.



R30.00 a day. He stands on the Street from 8.00 handing out depends on whether anyone that advertises, among other to sexual problems. Muhammad that they are extremely contents of the leaflet. “We are forced to earn a living and can’t you help us, please.” Four days

This report is incomplete ...