

# Building Victim Empowerment Capacity for Peace and Stability across South Africa

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## Abstract

*This paper describes the interphase between assistance programmes for victims of crime, and their relevance for intrapsychic and interpersonal conflict-prevention and peace-building. Focusing on crime in South Africa, it shows how crime inflicts intrapsychic injuries that stunt human and social capital development, as well as social relationships and practices required for transformation and African Renaissance. The paper introduces the Government of South Africa's Victim Empowerment Programme as an effort to improve governmental service delivery to crime victims, and for enhancing overall crime prevention. Findings of a 2009 Victim Empowerment Needs Assessment highlight institutional capacity development strategies for the effective deployment of victim empowerment initiatives that are relevant for intrapsychic and interpersonal peacebuilding in South Africa.*

**Keywords:** victim empowerment, South Africa's Victim Empowerment Programme, crime prevention, capacity development.

## Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate how South Africa – a country confronting high rates of violent crime – aims to create systems for the empowerment of victims of crime, with the long-term goal of creating 'a more caring society'.<sup>1</sup> The paper first discusses how the impacts of crime stress the psychosocial fabric of society, thereby obstructing human and social functioning. It furthermore illustrates how attending to the needs of victims of crime enhances crime victims' chances for re-asserting emotional self-control – as a prerequisite for

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Social Development [DSD] (2009), "Foreword", in *Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2009* (Pretoria: Internal Communication and Acumen Publishing Solutions), p.3.

intrapyschic and interpersonal peace, as well as human and social capital development. Next, the paper analyses South Africa's crime challenge and root causes of crime and violence in South Africa, as well as the financial, economic, social and transformational damages the country suffers as a consequence of violent crime. Finally, challenges to institutionalize victim empowerment capacity within government departments and civil society organizations will be discussed; and the capacity development inputs necessary for contributing to intrapsychic and prosocial enablement will be outlined.

For peace scholars, this assessment offers insights into a government's attempts to build victim capabilities as a prerequisite for dealing with crime-provoked conflict and trauma across a nation. The interphase between socio-emotional well-being and peace, prevention of inter-personal conflict, and development will be discussed.

## The Impact of Crime

Crime is both a symptom and a cause of violence, conflict and instability. It drives business away, lowers the quality of life, destroys public trust, and undermines the 'rule of law'. Where 'rule of law' is fragile, citizens and institutions struggle to deliver security, protection, social welfare, economic growth, and legitimate political institutions. As criminal influence has a tendency to sponsor further acts of violence – and to even affect political events – it almost always sparks further conflict, as the downward cycle feeds upon itself.<sup>2</sup>

At a deeper – individual and intrapsychic – level, crime creates anxiety and insecurity. Sexual violence, burglaries, car thefts, and workplace violence *traumatize* victims of crime. They no longer view the world as a safe place. Their experience of victimization activates a negative self-image. Victims become socio-emotionally paralysed when confronted with the reality of human malevolence and their own vulnerability<sup>3</sup>, which – in return – heightens the risk of repeat-assault or -attacks of perpetrators.<sup>4</sup> Perpetrators who get away with crime may become emboldened by their 'success' and be inclined to 're-offend' as new opportunities arise.<sup>5</sup> Bystanders may grow indifferent to continuous violence and destruction.<sup>6</sup> Victims of abuse may join subsequent generations of perpetrators of violence.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], *Crime and Instability: Case Studies of Transnational Threats* (Vienna: UNODC, 2010), p.55. See also The World Bank, *Conflict, Security, and Development. World Bank Report 2011* (Washington: The World Bank), p.8.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Dunn, "Matching Service Delivery to Need", in *Handbook of Victims and Victimology*, ed. by Sandra Walklate (Portland: Willan Publishing, 2007), p.258.

<sup>4</sup> Marie van der Hoven and Alice Maree, "Victimisation Risk Factors, Repeat Victimisation and Victim Profiling", in *Victimology in South Africa*, ed. by Linda Davis and Rika Snyman (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), p.65.

<sup>5</sup> Ervin Staub, "Steps Along a Continuum of Destruction: Perpetrators and Bystanders", in *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults and Groups Help and Harm Others*, ed. by Ervin Staub (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.326-327.

Overall, the consequences of mental distress are severe. Coleman writes:

“Long-term exposures to human atrocities and human suffering, the loss of loved ones, rape, bodily disfigurement, and chronic health problems can destroy people's spirit and impair their capacity to lead a healthy life. At its core, trauma is a loss of trust in a safe and predictable world. In response, individuals suffer from a variety of symptoms, including recurrent nightmares, suicidal thoughts, demoralization, helplessness, hopelessness, anxiety, depression, somatic illnesses, sleeplessness and feelings of isolation and meaninglessness.”<sup>8</sup>

Emotional stress affects social, care-taking and work relationships, by jeopardizing the victims' ability to re-establish themselves in social structures and hierarchies. Children, spouses, relatives, and working colleagues will be the first to suffer the consequences of victims' struggles to cope, to self-manage, or to perform predictably and pro-socially. Beyond dysfunctional interpersonal relationships and the impairment of family networks, however, trauma also affects communities' efforts to self-organize, or businesses and social movements to make optimal use of their human resource base.

Child abuse affects brain development, and is thought to fuel psychiatric disorders, which will continue to show up in adolescence and adulthood:

“[W]e know now that childhood abuse is linked with excess neuronal irritability, EEG abnormalities, and symptoms suggestive of temporal lobe epilepsy. It is associated with diminished development of the left cortex and left hippocampus, reduced size of the corpus callosum, and attenuated activity in the cerebellar vermis. We see a close fit between the effects of early stress on the brain's transmitters – our discoveries about the negative effects of early maltreatment on brain development – and the array of psychiatric symptoms that we actually observe in abused patients.”<sup>9</sup>

Physical, sexual and psychological trauma in children not only spawns inward by manifesting itself through anger, shame, despair, depression, anxiety or suicidal ideation; it also spawns outward by leading to aggression, impulsiveness, delinquency, hyperactivity, and substance abuse.<sup>10</sup> Hence the risk that children and adolescents with histories of abuse or victimization remain psychosocially marginalized, angry, and aggressive; and eventually feel attracted to certain social groups or gangs who – while responding to emotional needs

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<sup>6</sup> Ervin Staub, “Transforming the Bystanders: Altruism, Caring and Social Responsibility”, in *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults and Groups Help and Harm Others*, ed. by Ervin Staub (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.491.

<sup>7</sup> Marthi du Plessis and Barbara Holtmann, “Victimization Reduction and Prevention”, in *Victimology in South Africa*, ed. by Linda Davis and Rika Snyman (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), p.162. See also World Bank, *Conflict, Security, and Development*, p.8.

<sup>8</sup> Peter T. Coleman, “Intractable Conflict”, in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*, ed. by Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman and Eric C. Marcus (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), p.540.

<sup>9</sup> Martin H. Teicher, “Wounds that Time Won't Heal: The Neurobiology of Child Abuse”, *Cerebrum: The Dana Forum on Brain Science* Vol.2 no.4 (2000): p.62.

<sup>10</sup> Teicher, “Wounds that Time Won't Heal”, p.51.

such as identity, positive belonging, protection and purpose – demand in return from their members to adopt norms of violence toward outgroups.<sup>11</sup>

For all of the above-mentioned reasons, trauma remains to be one of the root causes of “intractable conflict”<sup>12</sup> that jeopardizes social cohesion and development as long as it remains unaddressed by society. It is imperative for peace-building and social reconstruction to design interventions that prevent victimization, and protect the victims' ability to contribute to a positive, respectful, caring and cooperative relationship climate.<sup>13</sup> ‘Peace’ – i.e., “the harmonious intrapsychic, interpersonal, and intragroup cooperation among entities involved”<sup>14</sup> – requires ‘socio-emotionally intelligent’ governance inputs<sup>15</sup> that protect citizens from socially-constructed uncertainties.<sup>16</sup> Violence and conflict, on the other hand, enhance psychosocial distress, and weaken people’s ability for adaptive self-regulation, cooperation and rational problem-solving,<sup>17</sup> which may lead to renewed conflict, unproductive lives, and ultimately to a deterioration of a nation’s social capital.<sup>18</sup>

In order to ‘discontinue’ destructiveness and violence, Governments are challenged to prevent crime from taking place, to assist victims of crime, and to protect the mental well-

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<sup>11</sup> Lisa I. McCann, David K. Sakheim and Daniel J. Abrahamson, “Trauma and Victimization: A Model of Psychological Adaptation”, *The Counselling Psychologist* Vol.16 no. 4 (1988): pp.550-551; see also Ervin Staub, “Youth Violence”, in *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults and Groups Help and Harm Others*, ed. by Ervin Staub (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.219.

<sup>12</sup> Coleman, “Intractable Conflict”, p.541.

<sup>13</sup> Evelin G. Lindner, “Emotion and Conflict: Why it is Important to Understand how Emotions Affect Conflict and how Conflict Affects Emotions”, in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*, ed. by Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman and Eric C. Marcus (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), pp.288-289.

<sup>14</sup> Morton Deutsch, cited in Francisco Gomes de Matos, “Language, Peace and Conflict Resolution”, in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*, ed. by Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman and Eric C. Marcus (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), p.160.

<sup>15</sup> Anthony J. Marsella, “Toward a ‘Global-Community’ Psychology: Meeting the Needs of a Changing World”, *American Psychologist*, 53 (1998): p.1289. For a framework for ‘socio-emotionally intelligent’ governance and programming, see Friedrich W. Affolter, *Development Discourse for Socio-Emotional Wellbeing: Towards a Politic for the Social Construction of Resilient Communities* (Saarbrücken: VDM, 2009), p.86.

<sup>16</sup> Peter Marris, “The Social Construction of Uncertainty”, in *Attachment Across the Life Cycle*, ed. by Colin M. Parkes, Joan Stephenson-Hinde and Peter Marris (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp.77-90.

<sup>17</sup> Walter Mischel, Aaron L. DeSmet and Ethan Kross, “Self-Regulation in the Service of Conflict Resolution”, in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*, ed. by Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman and Eric C. Marcus (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006).

<sup>18</sup> See Florence Baingana and Rachel Thomas, *Integrating Mental Health and Psychosocial Interventions into World Bank Lending for Conflict-Affected Populations: A Toolkit* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank & Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction [CPR], 2004), p.2; see also Florence Baingana, Ian Bannon and Rachel Thomas, *Mental Health and Conflicts: Conceptual Frameworks and Approaches* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2004). See also Nancy Folbre, “Care and the Global Economy”, in *Globalization with a Human Face. Background Papers* (Vol. 1), ed. by United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] (New York: Human Development Report Office of the United Nations Development Programme, 1999). A summary of this paper forms part of the 1999 UNDP Human Development Report (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

being of citizens.<sup>19</sup> In its *Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power*, the United Nations General Assembly stresses that “victims who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights ... must be treated with compassion and respect for their dignity” (Article #1). Victims of Crime must be “entitled to access to the mechanisms of justice and to prompt redress, as provided for by national legislation, for the harm that they have suffered” (Article #4). They also must receive “the necessary material, medical, psychological and social assistance through governmental, voluntary, community-based and indigenous means” (Article #14).<sup>20</sup>

One model that amalgamates both the objective of ‘crime prevention’ as well as ‘assistance and protection of crime victims’ rights’ is the Government of South Africa’s *Victim Empowerment Programme [VEP]*. VEP practitioners take the standpoint that victims of crime have an inherent potential to cope with trauma and the impacts of victimization; and that governments must guarantee the structures and assistance necessary to enable crime victims to take responsibility for their own recovery, and for reclaiming their rights for compensation and restoration. By doing so, VEP seeks to reduce the cyclical nature of violence and crime; it prevents repeat victimization; it advocates for justice processes that centre on the victim rather than the offender; and it holds offenders morally accountable.<sup>21</sup>

## South Africa’s Challenge of Violent Crime

Crime in South Africa presents “... one of the scars that blemish the face of post-apartheid South Africa”.<sup>22</sup> Homicide, rape and indecent assault of women, men, children and the elderly, as well as violent house and business robberies have contributed to multiple psychological traumas and distress, as well as a weakened sense of individual and community security within the South African population.<sup>23</sup> Crime is estimated to have cost – in

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<sup>19</sup> World Health Organization [WHO], *World Report on Violence and Health: Summary* (Geneva: WHO, 2002).

<sup>20</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. Resolution 40/34 of 29 November 1985*. Available at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/victims.htm> (accessed on 24 June 2010)

<sup>21</sup> Rika Snyman, “Overview of and Concepts of Victimology”, in *Victimology in South Africa*, ed. by Linda Davis and Rika Snyman (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), p.12.

<sup>22</sup> Prince Mashele, “Preface”, in *Criminal (In)Justice in South Africa: A Civil Society Perspective*, ed. by Chandre Gould (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2009), p.xiv.

<sup>23</sup> Stacey L. Williams, David R. Williams, Dan J. Stein, Soraya Seedat, Pamela B. Jackson and Hashim Moomal, “Multiple Traumatic Events and Psychological Distress: The South Africa Health and Stress Study”, *Journal of Traumatic Stress* Vol.20 no. 5 (2007): pp.845-855. See also Lorraine Kearney and Janine Erasmus, *Crime in South Africa*. Available at: [http://www.medioclubsouthafrica.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=117%3ACrime+in+South+Africa&catid=34%3Adevelopment\\_bg&Itemid=52&showall=1](http://www.medioclubsouthafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=117%3ACrime+in+South+Africa&catid=34%3Adevelopment_bg&Itemid=52&showall=1) (accessed on 21 August 2010)

2007 alone – more than USD 22 billion, or 7.8 percent of South Africa's 2007 annual GDP.<sup>24</sup> Crime burdens South Africa's international reputation as one of the 'crime-' or 'rape capitals' of the world.<sup>25</sup>

South Africa's murder rate is exceptionally high (in 2009/2010, 34.1 reported cases per 100,000 of the population)<sup>26</sup>, with South Africans dying six times more frequently from crime-related violence than in the United States.<sup>27</sup> One woman is killed by her intimate partner every six hours. This amounts to one of the highest intimate homicide rates that have been reported anywhere in the world.<sup>28</sup>

A study published by the Medical Research Council reveals that one in four men aged 18-49 in South Africa have admitted to have raped at least once.<sup>29</sup> Data from a 2001 survey of the "Transitions to Adulthood in the Context of AIDS in South Africa Study" from KwaZulu-Natal province indicates that only 55 percent of females versus 94 percent of males aged 14-24 who have had sex, reported themselves as having been 'willing' at their first sexual encounter (versus those who were persuaded, tricked, forced, or raped). Females from poorer households were the least likely to report their first sex as 'willing'.<sup>30</sup> In 2009/2010, more than 68,000 rape and/or indecent sexual assault cases have been reported to the South African Police (i.e., 138.5 reported cases per 100,000 of the population).<sup>31</sup> The actual picture, however, is likely much worse given that gender-based crimes and sexual offenses against children as recorded by the police reflect only a small percentage of the actual incidence of sexual victimization.<sup>32</sup> A South African study of survivors of gender-based abuse

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<sup>24</sup> Eric Alda and Jose Cuesta, "A Comprehensive Estimation of the Costs of Crime in South Africa, and its Implications for Effective Policy Making", *Journal of International Development*, available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jid.1721/full> (accessed on 22 September 2010)

<sup>25</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Violence against Women in South Africa: State Response to Domestic Violence and Rape* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1995). Badar Salem, *Soccer World Cup 2010: How Safe is South Africa?* Available at: <http://south-africa.suite101.com/article.cfm/soccer-world-cup-2010-how-safe-is-south-africa> (accessed on 21 August 2010)

<sup>26</sup> South African Police Services [SAPS], *Annual Report 2009/2010* (Pretoria: SAPS, 2010), p.3.

<sup>27</sup> Linda Davis, Marthi du Plessis and Harriët Klopper, "Determining the Extent and Nature of Victimization in South Africa", in *Victimology in South Africa*, ed. by Linda Davis and Rika Snyman (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), p.16.

<sup>28</sup> Shahnaaz Mathews, Naeemah Abrahams, Lorna J. Martin, Lisa Vetten, Lize van der Merwe and Rachel Jewkes, *A National Study of Female Homicide in South Africa*, MRC Policy Brief no.5 (Tygerberg: Medical Research Council, 2004), p.4.

<sup>29</sup> Rachel Jewkes, Yandisa Sikweyiya, Robert Morrel and Kristin Dunkle, *Understanding Men's Health and Use of Violence: Interface of Rape and HIV in South Africa* (Pretoria: Medical Research Council, 2009), p.1. <http://www.mrc.ac.za/gender/interfaceofrape&hivsarpt.pdf> (accessed on 23 September 2010)

<sup>30</sup> Kelly Hallman, *Sexual Violence and Girls' Education in South Africa* (New York: Population Council, 2005), p.2. Available at: <http://paa2005.princeton.edu/download.aspx?submissionId=51448> (accessed on 23 September 2010)

<sup>31</sup> South African Police Services, *Annual Report*, p.3 (see also p. 11 for qualifying statement).

<sup>32</sup> Samantha Waterhouse, *The Impact of Changing Criminal Justice Responses to Child Victims of Sexual Abuse: Good Intentions, Questionable Outcomes* (Pinelands: Open Society Foundation for South Africa, 2008).

shows that just under a third of the women had reported sexual assault incidences to the police despite the fact that 89 percent felt that what was done to them was a crime.<sup>33</sup> Violence against women, in particular rape, constitutes one of the most underreported types of crime in southern Africa.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to murder and rape, rates remain high in (a) burglaries at residential and non-residential premises (665.7 reported cases per 100,000 of the population during 2009/2010); (b) common robberies (116.7 per 100,000); (c) robberies with aggravating circumstances (230.6 per 100,000); (d) assaults with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm (416.5 per 100,000); as well as (e) different categories of theft (1201 per 100,000).<sup>35</sup> These statistics show that South Africa has high rates of crime. It has even been argued that South Africa has higher rates of crime compared with other African countries, despite a slight decrease since the consolidation of democracy in 1994.<sup>36</sup>

In 2005, 41.4 percent (or 4.3 million) youth were estimated to have been victims of crime and violence. South African pupils are victimized at a rate of 160 learners per 1000; and approximately 10 percent of primary and secondary learners have caregivers or parents who are or have been in jail.<sup>37</sup> Children orphaned by HIV/AIDS face open discrimination and secondary victimization when sexually abused.<sup>38</sup> This places them along with women and adolescent girls among the most vulnerable groups in society.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Sandra Bollen, Lillian Artz, Lisa Vetten and Antoinette Louw, *Violence against Women in Metropolitan South Africa: A Study on Impact and Service*. Monograph no.41 (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 1999). <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No41/TypesAbuset.html> (accessed on 23 September 2010)

<sup>34</sup> Rachel Jewkes and Naeema Abrahams, "The Epidemiology of Rape and Sexual Coercion in South Africa: An Overview", *Social Science & Medicine* Vol.55 no.7 (2002): pp.1231-1244.

<sup>35</sup> South African Police Services, *Annual Report*, pp.3-4.

<sup>36</sup> Brian-Vincent Ikejiaku, "'Crime', Poverty, Political Corruption and Conflict in Apartheid and Post Apartheid South Africa: The Implications on Economic Development", *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* Vol.3 no.10 (2009): pp. 452-454. See also Martin Schönteich, "South Africa's Position in Africa's Crime Rankings", *African Security Review* Vol.9 no.4 (2000): pp.51-65.

<sup>37</sup> Lezanne Leoschut and Patrick Burton, *How Rich the Rewards: Results of the 2005 National Youth Victimization Survey* (Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2006), p.45. See also Patrick Burton, *Snapshot Results of the CJCP National Schools Violence Study*. Research Bulletin (Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2008), pp.1-4. Available at: <http://www.cjcp.org.za/admin/uploads/research%20bulletin1.pdf> (accessed on 23 September 2010)

<sup>38</sup> Yegan Pillay, "Peer Victimization of African Children Orphaned by AIDS: The Efficacy of the Memory Book", *Journal of Social Sciences* Special Issue no.8 (2005): pp.21-27. See also Lucie Cluver and Don Operario, *The Intergenerational Link between the Impacts of AIDS on Children, and Their Subsequent Vulnerability to HIV Infection*. Available at: [http://www.jlica.org/userfiles/file/Lucie%20Cluver-JLICA%20Final%20version-10\\_04\\_2008.pdf](http://www.jlica.org/userfiles/file/Lucie%20Cluver-JLICA%20Final%20version-10_04_2008.pdf) (accessed on 21 August 2010). See also Laura K. Murray, Alan Haworth, Katherine Semrau, Mini Singh, Grace M. Aldrovandi, Moses Sinkala, Donald M. Thea, and Paul A. Bolton, "Violence and Abuse among HIV-Infected Women and Their Children in Zambia: A Qualitative Study", *Journal of Nervous Mental Disorders*, Vol.194 no.8 (2006): pp.610-615.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], *Situation Analysis of Children in South Africa: April 2009* (Pretoria: The Presidency of South Africa, 2009).

Although it is difficult to assess the emotional effects of different types of crime on victims with diverse personalities and coping capabilities, it is recognized that resulting emotions such as fear, nervousness, anxiety, depression, confusion and paranoia commonly evidence themselves through nightmares, sleep disruption, and difficulties in functioning at work and socially. Rape is thought to have most serious and long-lasting effects, followed by aggravated assaults, molestation and burglary. Secondary victimization also leaves emotional scars.<sup>40</sup>

In order to assist victims of crime in confronting experiences of violence and abuse, victims must be enabled to engage with their painful experiences. They furthermore are in need of acknowledgement of their suffering and pain. They require demonstrations of empathy, and must experience loving connections. Such 'corrective experiences' may then enable victims to better cope with their painful memories, perhaps detach from negative self-image and self-accusations, reengage with social support networks, and possibly devote themselves to helping others ("altruism born of suffering").<sup>41</sup>

Whereas women and children have been rightfully identified as one of the major vulnerable 'victims-of-crime' groups, it is tragically overlooked that African males are at even greater risk of experiencing crime than females.<sup>42</sup> There is also continued societal denial of the fact that men can be sexually assaulted.<sup>43</sup> Without increasing the focus on young, socio-economically deprived male victims of crime, crime victims will remain vulnerable, vengeful and full of mistrust; they also are at risk of turning violent themselves, contributing to tomorrow's generation of offenders, abusers and perpetrators.<sup>44</sup>

### *Political, Economic, and Mental Causes and Consequences of Violent Crime*

It has been argued that the high levels of crime in South Africa stem from South Africa's particular colonial and apartheid history, and its quick transition to democratic government.<sup>45</sup> It also might be the by-product of South Africa's large income gap per

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<sup>40</sup> Dunn, "Matching Service Delivery to Need", p.259.

<sup>41</sup> Ervin Staub, "Conclusion: Creating Caring Societies", in *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults and Groups Help and Harm Others*, ed. by Ervin Staub (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.540.

<sup>42</sup> Zuzelle Pretorius and Barbara Louw, "Victim Empowerment and Support in South Africa", in *Victimology in South Africa*, ed. by Linda Davis and Rika Snyman (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), p.74. See also World Bank, *Conflict, Security, and Development*, p.8.

<sup>43</sup> Divya Singh (2005). "Women and Men as Vulnerable Victims", in *Victimology in South Africa*, ed. by Linda Davis and Rika Snyman (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), pp.192-193.

<sup>44</sup> See footnote no. 7.

<sup>45</sup> Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation [CSVr], *The Violent Nature of Crime in South Africa: A Concept Paper for the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster*. <http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=87382> (accessed on 23 September 2010).

capita.<sup>46</sup> The United Nations Development Programme's [UNDP] 2005 Human Development Report has ranked South Africa as having the world's third greatest income inequality.<sup>47</sup> Women are particularly vulnerable to income inequality and direct poverty. The unemployment rate among women is higher than among men.<sup>48</sup>

Urbanization, changes in traditional law and modernization have challenged traditional male authority and patriarchy. Violence against women in particular is inherently linked to gender roles, gender stereotypes, notions of masculinity and patriarchal values.<sup>49</sup> Research also shows a strong positive correlation between sexual and domestic violence, and HIV infection<sup>50</sup>; as well as trauma and HIV/AIDS risk behaviour.<sup>51</sup>

Crime seriously undermines efforts of South African *intelligentsia* to bring about social renewal, or *African Renaissance*. Former President Thabo Mbeki has called upon all Africans to seal the legacies of slavery, colonialism and apartheid by bringing about democracy, nonracism, nonsexism, peace and stability, and a better life to the African continent.<sup>52</sup> These goals embody Africa's 'new struggle', but rely on the upholdment of the African ethos of *ubuntu* (or 'humanness'), which implies:

"... a basic respect for human nature as a whole. It is a social ethic, a unifying vision enshrined in the Zulu maxim 'umuntu ngumuntu ngabanye' ('one is a person through others'). The individual commonly says: 'I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am.'"<sup>53</sup>

"[Ubuntu's] ... value has been viewed as [humanity's] basis for a morality of co-operation, compassion, communalism, concern for the interests of the collective respect, respect for the dignity of personhood, with emphasis on virtues of that dignity in social relationships and practices."<sup>54</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Gabriel Demombynes and Berk Özler, "Crime and Local Inequality in South Africa", in: *Poverty and Policy in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, ed. by Haaron Bhorat and S. M. Ravi Kanbur (Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 2008), pp.288-320.

<sup>47</sup> United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], *Human Development Report 2005. International Cooperation at a Crossroads: Aid, Trade and Security in an Unequal World* (New York: UNDP, 2005), p.272.

<sup>48</sup> Government of South Africa, *Labor Force Survey* (Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2005).

<sup>49</sup> Lisa Vetten, "Race, Gender and Power in the Face of Social Change: Deconstructing Violence Against Women in South Africa", in *Reclaiming Women's Spaces: New Perspectives on Violence Against Women and Sheltering in South Africa*, ed. by Yoon J. Park, Joanne Fedler and Zubeda Dangor (Johannesburg: NISAA, 2000), pp.47-80.

<sup>50</sup> Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrel and Dunkle, *Understanding Men's Health*, p.4.

<sup>51</sup> American Psychological Association, *Trauma and HIV/AIDS: A Summary of Research Results* (Washington, D.C.: Office of International Affairs, 2007).

<sup>52</sup> Thabo Mbeki, "Prologue", in *African Renaissance: The New Struggle*, ed. by Malegapuru W. Makgoba (Cape Town: Mafube /Tafelberg, 2002), p.xviii.

<sup>53</sup> Lesiba Teffo, "Moral Renewal and African Experiences", in *African Renaissance: The New Struggle*, ed. by Malegapuru W. Makgoba (Cape Town: Mafube /Tafelberg, 2002), p.153.

<sup>54</sup> Yvonne Mokgoro, cited in Nyameko B. Pityana, "The Renewal of African Moral Values", in *African Renaissance: The New Struggle*, ed. by Malegapuru W. Makgoba (Cape Town: Mafube /Tafelberg, 2002), p.144.

Sadly, experiences of crime and abuse teach victims of crime that the world does not function in accordance with *ubuntu* principles, but rather in opposite terms. Without access to support networks capable of satisfying fundamental psychological needs – such security, positive connection, positive identity, effectiveness and control, independence and autonomy, etc. – it is almost impossible to raise *ubuntu-minded* caring, non-violent, optimally-functioning citizens.<sup>55</sup> Without the constructive satisfaction of such needs, South Africans may exhaust their psychosocial resource base necessary to carry forward the spirit of *ubuntu*. And without the resuscitation of *ubuntu* consciousness, South Africans may falter in their 'new struggle' of bringing about 'transformation' and 'African Renaissance'.<sup>56</sup>

### *South Africa's Victim Empowerment Programme*

Recognizing that crime is a complex social problem, the Government of South Africa launched – in 1996 – a National Crime Prevention Strategy which calls on Government and civil society to address the root causes of crime. Aware that victimization lies at the heart of much retributive crime, provision was made for a *Victim Empowerment Programme* that advocates for the establishment of a victim-centered and restorative criminal justice system.<sup>57</sup>

Full implementation of the VEP only started in 1999 (and initially with insufficient budgetary or staff support), under the patronage of South Africa's Department of Social Development [DSD]. In 2004, the South African Cabinet approved the *Victims Charter*, which affirms crime victims' rights to be treated with fairness, and with respect for dignity and privacy; to offer and receive information; to be protected; to be assisted; as well as with the right to restitution.<sup>58</sup> At the same time, the National Department of Social Development published the *Minimum Standards for Service Delivery in Victim Empowerment*<sup>59</sup>, which details bottom-line goals for service delivery standards relating to prevention, early intervention, statutory processes, continuum of care, as well as shelters and safe houses servicing victims of crime.

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<sup>55</sup> Ervin Staub "Basic Human Needs and Their Role in Altruism and Aggression", in *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults and Groups Help and Harm Others*, ed. by Ervin Staub (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.52-67. Elsewhere (in Affolter, *Development Discourse for Socio-Emotional Wellbeing*, p. 73), Staub defines 'optimally functioning citizens' as "people who have their basic needs fulfilled to a reasonable extent, and who have developed the capacity to fulfill needs in constructive rather than destructive ways, and who have experienced a continuous evolution of effectiveness and identity and connection as a result of the continued fulfillment of these needs."

<sup>56</sup> Teffo, "Moral Renewal", p.168.

<sup>57</sup> Interdepartmental Crime Strategy, cited in Zuzelle Pretorius and Barbara Louw, "Victim Empowerment and Support in South Africa", p.80.

<sup>58</sup> Department of Justice and Constitutional Development [DoJ & CD]: Gender Directorate, *National Implementation Plan: Service Charter for Victims of Crime* (Pretoria: DoJ & CD, 2007).

<sup>59</sup> Department of Social Development [DSD], *Minimum Standards for Service Delivery in Victim Empowerment (Victims of Crime and Violence)* (Pretoria: DSD, 2004).

Although the DSD has managed to sponsor or introduce 119 VE initiatives across South Africa – 15 national, and 104 provincial, of which 45 percent did benefit rural, and 55 percent urban populations<sup>60</sup> – various challenges remain. Firstly, victim rights and empowerment policies are not legally binding or enforceable. Secondly, there is not enough appreciation among government staff as to why or how exactly victim empowerment contributes to conflict prevention, mental health, economic productivity, or social capital development. Thirdly, inter-departmental collaboration among government departments with VE mandates remains weak. Fourthly, the potential of government-civil society partnerships for jointly addressing crime victims' needs has not been fully exploited; grants systems fail to facilitate victim assistance projects in an effective, efficient or timely manner. Fifthly, CSOs' dependence on insufficiently-trained volunteers (some of which themselves may be sufferers of trauma) makes it difficult to guarantee ongoing and satisfactory assistance to victims of crime. The challenge therefore consists in implementing volunteer recruitment, training and management policies which will capitalize from compassionate activism without compromising victim empowerment service quality.<sup>61</sup>

In 2007, the European Union entrusted the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] Regional Office of South Africa to implement a *Victim Empowerment Project* in support of DSD's *Victim Empowerment Programme* – with the mandate to assess capacity development needs of government departments overseeing or facilitating assistance to victims of crime. The remainder of this paper draws from the findings of this assessment.<sup>62</sup> First, the research methodology, instruments, as well as limitations and delimitations of the assessment will be outlined. Next, findings will be summarized that have relevance for the prevention of violent crime, and for peace-building in South Africa.

## Research Methods

In order to assess government capacity development needs, participatory workshops with government staff from both national and provincial levels, as well as one-on-one interviews with experts and representatives of key government departments, universities and civil society were conducted. Furthermore, a needs assessment questionnaire was disseminated, and a review of purposefully-selected government reports and documents on victim empowerment capacity development needs took place. Both international as well as

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<sup>60</sup> Pretorius and Louw, "Victim Empowerment and Support in South Africa", p.81.

<sup>61</sup> Cheryl Frank, *Quality Services Guaranteed? A Review of Victim Policy in South Africa*. ISS Monograph no.137 (Tshwane, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2007). See also Juan Nel and Johan Kruger, *From Policy to Practice: Exploring Victim Empowerment Initiatives in South Africa* (Pretoria: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research [CSIR], 1999).

<sup>62</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] Regional Office of South Africa, *Departmental Victim Empowerment Capacity Development Needs Assessment Report: Prepared in Response to Required Outputs 3.1. and 4.1. of the XAM/T15 Victim Empowerment Project*. Unpublished Document (December 2009).

national male and female researchers from government and civil society participated in the assessment. This triangular use of multiple data sources, data collection methods, and data collector 'types'<sup>63</sup> made it possible to cross-check and compare and successively approximate<sup>64</sup> needs assessment data collected from government departments, non-government experts and service providers.

The triangulation facilitated multifaceted needs assessment information. The data obtained from questionnaires returned by DSD staff is 'representative' because the 86 questionnaires were filled by DSD staff members holding VEP leadership positions at the national, nine provincial and more than 60 district levels. The number of questionnaires returned from non-DSD respondents, however, was low in number and often contained the opinions of junior staff members rather than key decision-makers with long-term working histories within their departments. Notwithstanding, the findings that emerged from the multi-methods approach did concur with data obtained through questionnaires. It is therefore safe to conclude that the capacity development recommendations presented here accurately describe capacity development needs of various government stakeholders across South Africa.

## Findings

Focus group interviews, participatory workshops, interviews and questionnaire results indicated a strong need to first build and consolidate management structures with the ability to provide victim empowerment leadership, coordination and quality assurance, prior to providing capacity development inputs. Although broad-based capacity development inputs are necessary, they are likely to be unsustainable if structural deficiencies are not addressed first.

### *Strengthening Organizational and Management Structures*

Administrators of departments with VEP mandates are overwhelmed with various portfolios, in none of which VEP enjoys priority status. Overburdened and undertrained, administrators are unprepared to attach major significance to VEP activities. Departments with a VEP mandate – such as the South African Police Services [SAPS], Department of Justice, National Prosecution Authorities, Health, Education, Correctional Services, Community Safety, and Social Development – execute their complementary VEP responsibilities 'in silos' with little cross-departmental coordination. This weakens the overall roll-out of government-sponsored assistance efforts. On the other hand, a lack of

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<sup>63</sup> John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), p.175.

<sup>64</sup> Robert Chambers, *Whose Reality Counts: Putting the First Last* (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1997), p.157.

appreciation of the benefits of VEP to mental health and social capital development, as well as lack of in-house capacity for VEP training prevents highly bureaucratized and understaffed departments to move beyond planning meetings into successfully-coordinated, meaningful VEP-cluster activity implementation.

Strengthening VEP systems and structures requires above all the commitment and 'buy-in' from Heads of Departments to engage in joint VEP initiatives that – simultaneously – build personal and institutional competence; and that test the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of VEP problem-solving strategies. To manage such a process makes it imperative to identify a "critical friend"<sup>65</sup> capable and trustworthy enough to facilitate the joint identification of strengths and weaknesses of organizational systems and structures – while highlighting the linkage between crime prevention, mental health, social capital development, and psychosocially-inspired frameworks of governance.

Such a cooperative assessment and planning arrangement between the departmental directorates and a 'critical-friend consultant' might eventually lead to the acknowledgement of the following key challenges: (a) a need to recruit dedicated VEP experts and support staff with long-term contracts at national, provincial, district and local levels; (b) reasonably attractive salaries (in order to slow down staff turnover); (c) VEP-conscious Terms of References (ToRs) highlighting VEP output expectations; (d) the development of staff performance evaluation routines that check for VEP output delivery; (e) the need for an integrated roadmap of VEP departmental action plans that reflect policy guidelines already in place; (f) the development of an effective inter- and intra-departmental communications and information exchange platform that raises awareness about VEP needs, goals and objectives; (g) the preparation and approval of VEP-conscious budgets that highlight interdepartmentally-endorsed VEP needs and objectives; (h) the approval of M&E and quality control instruments to monitor VEP policy implementation; (i) technical assistance is needed to incorporate VEP concepts more explicitly into departments' business and strategic plans; (j) provincial protocols for the implementation of the National Crime Prevention Strategy must be agreed upon; and (k) platforms and systems for VEP knowledge sharing must be developed.

Although VEP policies are already in place, what continues to be lacking is the institutional ability to oversee the day-to-day implementation and conversion of VEP policy into practical action – at national, provincial, district and municipal levels. Efforts to launch coordinated victim empowerment initiatives should be developed gradually in order to allow for organic learning. Crime prevention efforts carried out at the grassroots require support

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<sup>65</sup> A "critical friend" can be defined as ... a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work. (Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick, "Through the Lens of a Critical Friend", *Educational Leadership* 51 no. 2 (1993): p.50)

and nurturance through government stakeholders. This can only be achieved by upgrading the facilitation capacity of VEP stakeholders in South African government departments.

### *Towards a Victim Empowerment Legislative Act*

The cause of Victim Empowerment would gain momentum if Victim Empowerment could win legislative backing. As stated earlier, victim rights and empowerment policies are not legally binding or enforceable in South Africa. A Victim Empowerment Legislative Act would facilitate an important legal endorsement and thus give Victim Empowerment more political weight. Such an Act ought to endorse volunteer policies that detail recruitment, training and management requirements of VEP volunteers supporting shelters, victims' rights advocacy and victim empowerment campaigns.

### *Development of a VEP Monitoring and Evaluation [M&E] Framework*

In order to ensure a roll-out of activities that reflect VEP policy principles, it is necessary to design monitoring and supervision frameworks with success indicators directly related to VEP policy standards. Such frameworks do not yet exist, with the result that government departments can only report achievements in line with yearly business plan targets, rather than assessing how effectively activities match VEP policy standards. In addition, data collection methods must be identified that are implementable in the field. Staff must be trained to understand and apply VEP M&E frameworks, as well as data collection methods needed for verifying achievements (or non-achievements). And finally, existing database systems must be adjusted to better document VEP policy implementation effectiveness.

### *Strengthening the Linkage between Government and Civil Society Organizations*

South African civil society organizations work with or within thousands of communities where traumatized victims require assistance to ensure legal protection and support. CSO capacity, however, for organizational governance, project planning and implementation, M&E, finance management and project reporting requires strengthening, particularly among emerging organizations. There is furthermore a lack of financial, human-resource and administrative capacity to document and disseminate 'effective practices' that already exist thanks to compassionate and continuous 'social experimenting' in community settings.

The government must assess how it can support and benefit more effectively, efficiently and sustainably from its indigenous 'institutional capital' resources. As Ramphela asserts:

"The active demobilization of civil society post-1994 as the ANC asserted their hegemony as liberator and inheritor of the levers of power has been costly. South Africa's liberation was not simply the result of a war of liberation. Our freedom was won on the streets and on factory floors, as well as in all sectors of civil society. The yearning for freedom and energy it generated was channelled into no less than 55000

non-governmental organizations (NGOs), among other areas, at the dawn of freedom. These independent energy sources were regarded by some as a threat to the new government's desire for control. Foreign governments that had supported these NGOs understandably shifted their resources to government as part of forging bilateral political relationships, without much thought for the bottlenecks that might result. Over the years, significant donor funding has had to be returned to donors unspent while NGOs with the capacity to spend it have been left to die."<sup>66</sup>

Government staff need to be assisted to better understand the business, economic and structural realities of CSOs, as well as ways to facilitate, nurture and strengthen CSO survival and capacity development. Hence there is the need for broad-based CSO service-oriented leadership training (governance, social communication, planning, financing, and – above all – ‘listening’). There is also a need for the development of grants systems and grants management skills development. As it stands now, Civil Society Organizations – highly dependent on government funding – are either over- or underutilized. Funding is sporadic or irregular, and seldom available for contract extension or organizational expansion. This makes it difficult to retain staff, or to consolidate.

Lack of funding also hampers the quantity and quality of services provided to victims of crime. Indeed, a High Court ruling<sup>67</sup> has criticized the Free State Department of Social Development for insufficient and irregular ('take-it or leave-it') funding allocations to local service providers which prevents CSOs from meeting the needs of abused or neglected women and children (whose protection and support is the Government's statutory responsibility).

Potential synergies between CSOs and Government Departments must be exploited more effectively. For example: victims of crime are often disinclined to report to police stations because they do not expect to be respected and listened to by officials when sharing stories of pain and humiliation. Adequate training of police personnel on how to attend to victims of crime, and at the same time CSO training on how to mobilize victims of crime 'to come out' and complain to the authorities could prove to develop into fruitful local government-citizen cooperative relationships. At the same time, an increase in the number of officially-filed complaints might prompt activists and officials to speak out more against crime and abuse, thereby contributing to a more pronounced public 'awakening' about the importance of 'crime- prevention activism' as well as to better attend to the needs of victims of crime.

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<sup>66</sup> Mamphela Ramphele, *Laying Ghosts to Rest: Dilemmas of the Transformation in South Africa* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2008), pp.299-300.

<sup>67</sup> Free State High Court, Case No. 1719/2010. *In the Matter Between National Association of Welfare Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (First Applicant), N. G. Social Services Free State (Second Applicant), Free State Care in Action (Third Applicant); and Member of the Executive Council for Social Development Free State (First Respondent), Head of the Department of Social Development Free State (Second Respondent), and National Minister of Social Development (Third Respondent)* (Bloemfontain: Free State High Court, Government of South Africa, 05 August 2010), pp.32-46.

Attempts to align agendas such as the 'Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Agenda' [BBBEE] and 'Affirmative Action' on the one hand, and the statutory obligation and responsibility to provide the best professional assistance and protection to victims of crime, has led to a serious ethical dilemma in terms of 'whose rights and needs deserve to be attended first'. BBBEE seeks to correct historic imbalances and inequalities between black, coloured and white population groups. For this reason, DSD is adamant that VEP proposals of *emerging* CSOs (managed by citizens of previously disadvantaged population groups) ought to receive special attention and preferential funding, despite the fact that they often lack managerial and technical ability for organizing and providing quality counselling support to victims of crime. At the same time, requests for funding submitted by *established* CSO's (with often predominantly-white governance board members, and therefore labelled as 'not-transformed') – although capable of providing shelter and much-needed professional therapeutic counselling to physically and sexually-abused women and children – have been rejected or at least not fully responded to because they did not match BBBEE- or 'transformation' standards. Hence, BBBEE protagonists inadvertently neglect the rights of victims (including those from previously-disadvantaged populations), although it is a statutory responsibility of the government to provide the best protection and services possible to South African victims of crime.

Mamphela Rhamphela – in recognition of the 'moral dilemma' emerging from the need for optimal social service provision, on the one hand, and the BBBEE mandate, on the other – has proposed the following:

"Certain critical professions cannot tolerate any compromises in technical requirements and should not practice this form of affirmative action – e.g. specialist medical/surgical professions, pilots, engineers, and key management areas in technical fields including financial markets. The responsible approach would be to appoint the best qualified candidate, but offer the less qualified person the opportunity to grow into greater strength through understudying the other and preparing to compete for future opportunities."<sup>68</sup>

Indeed, one of the best approaches to train up emerging organizations would be the facilitation of inter-institutional mentoring and coaching relationships between established and emerging organizations, since coaching and mentoring exceeds the effectiveness of even participatory training and workshop methodologies.<sup>69</sup> The government must draw up ToRs in such a way that they do not only stipulate Victim Empowerment service outcomes, but also 'transformational' human and institutional capacity development results. Service

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<sup>68</sup> Ramphela, *Laying Ghosts to Rest*, p.256.

<sup>69</sup> See Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers, *Student Achievement Through Staff Development* 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (New York: Longman Press, 2002), pp.77-78, who have proposed that 'theory–modeling–practice–feedback–coaching' interventions enable learners not only to 'grasp' concepts and skills, but to also apply them in new job settings, and also to transfer knowledge to third-party learners! See also Friedrich W. Affolter and Henrique F. Cabula, "Strengthening 'Reflective Practice' Within Angolan Civil Society Organizations", *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Non-Profit Organizations* Vol.21 (2010): pp.271-292.

providers would then have to be held accountable to mentoring and coaching quality standards and mutually-agreed individual and organizational learning outcomes.<sup>70</sup>

In the meanwhile, however, a widely held suspicion that 'non-transformed' CSOs only 'pretend' to train up black emerging organizations in order to access government funding, as well as a dislike of some emerging organizations to be mentored and trained by 'non-transformed' CSOs has prevented the Department of Social Development from supporting mentoring and coaching relationships between established and emerging organizations. It remains to be seen whether a current plan to train government social workers as mentors and coaches of emerging civil society organization staffs will provide a way forward. Given the overall work overload and capacity limitations, however, it is questionable that careerist government officials have the extra time, skills, motivation and resources to coach and mentor emerging civil society organizations.

### ***Building VEP Capacity throughout Government Departments***

Once organizational structures and systems are in place – and only then – multifaceted training and capacity development inputs need to be provided.

There is need for *staff awareness training* on VEP policy and service mandates across departments. Due to high staff turnover, departments stand in need of training systems that can constantly induce new staff arrivals on policies such as the Victims Charter, Minimum Standards, Shelter Strategy, Child Justice Act, Sexual Offenses Act, or the Domestic Violence Act for Shelters. In addition, there is need for advanced VEP courses for top and middle management officials so that they are better prepared to use their positions of authority for the mobilization of VEP initiatives at district and local levels. Departments must also sponsor 'refresher workshops' about the latest insights into the neurophysiological and social prerequisites for individual and community mental health and trauma support.

Technical assistance and capacity development is required to enable Human Resource Departments to better emphasize, highlight and 'foreground' VEP themes in business plans, staff ToRs, performance evaluation formats, and departmental budgets. There is also need for training, mentoring and coaching government staff how to convert VEP policy more effectively into project plans and initiatives. Government staff also require training on how to support research initiatives that document 'good practices' and whose dissemination could positively affect victim empowerment programming. Only if sectors are assisted in giving visible emphasis to VEP systems and implementation modalities will VEP agendas be taken more seriously in department clusters.

Training services must also reach municipal, district and local government levels. Communication between top-management and operational management, among departments, as well as between departments and CSOs can be improved by strengthening

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<sup>70</sup> See Affolter and Cabula, "Strengthening 'Reflective Practice'", pp.283-290.

provincial and local VEP Forums. Capacity development initiatives at both national as well as provincial/district and local government levels must include: (a) the dissemination and facilitation of awareness campaigns on VEP policies for department-, district- and especially local government staff, shelter staff, CSOs and faith-based organizations, traditional leaders as well as spiritual ministers; (b) training for community-based activists and civil society organizations on how to launch 'advocacy initiatives' to insist that crime victims' rights will be respected and protected, and service standards will be adhered to in municipal and community settings; (c) training for journalists of local radio stations and other local media outlets on how to inform and educate the public about the psychological and socio-economic consequences of crime for individuals and community life; as well as on ways to cover stories of victimization in a thoughtful and 'victim-respectful' manner; (d) training for social service providers and 'front-line personnel' (volunteers, police, nurses, teachers, etc.) to advocate for victims' rights; (e) volunteer training on how to provide 'first contact' support and containment of newly-abused victims; (f) training on how to facilitate referrals to professional service providers and counsellors; (g) training on trauma counselling (with special emphasis on child trauma support); (h) training on how to prevent secondary and/or vicarious traumatization; (i) training-of-trainers for workshoping victims (and their children) living in shelters (income generation, vocational training, life skills, parenting programs / 'positive discipline' / family preservation); (j) social communication skills training (i.e. for SAPS staff for improved explanation of protection orders, victims' rights, etc.); (k) volunteer management training (recruitment, supervision, retainment, ToT on assertiveness, life-skills, advocacy for victims' rights, etc.); (l) empowerment of male partners of victims of crime; (m) victim/offender mediation; (n) court preparation; and (o) psychology of perpetrators.

South Africa should also benefit from the rollout of 'active bystandership' trainings at different levels of society. 'Active bystanders' are citizens who act to stop harm-doing rather than passively watching or joining in.<sup>71</sup> Bystanders' actions as well as non-actions both influence whether or not a perpetrator's intended acts of harm-doing actually materialize or must be abandoned.<sup>72</sup> 'Active Bystander' trainings could begin in schools where students could be trained in effective ways of intervening when they see peers bullying or act in hurtful ways towards others.<sup>73</sup> At the community level, workshops should be facilitated that allow families and citizens to come up with their own 'active bystandership' strategies. Public figures should use their visibility and authority to praise examples of positive bystandership within communities.

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<sup>71</sup> Quabbin Mediation Center, *Training Active Bystanders*, available at: <http://www.quabbinmediation.org/TABbro.pdf> (accessed on 29 April 2010)

<sup>72</sup> Ervin Staub, "Bystanders, Perpetrators and Heroic Helpers", in *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults and Groups Help and Harm Others*, ed. by Ervin Staub (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.309; see also Staub, "Steps Along a Continuum of Destruction: Perpetrators and Bystanders", pp.325-333.

<sup>73</sup> Ervin Staub, "Students' Experience of Bullying", *ibid.* p.237; see also Staub, "Transforming the Bystanders", pp.489-496.

In order to achieve optimal learning and critical reflection, capacity development providers such as government departments and their donors must transcend traditional workshop approaches, by facilitating a series of 'reflection-action-consultation' processes consisting of seminars, supervised practice (on-the-job application of concepts presented at seminars), 'follow-up' or 'processing workshops', as well as modeling-, coaching- and mentoring interventions. Government departments may draw on training expertise from national or provincial CSOs, thereby strengthening communication and information exchange between government and civil society.

Action research in a variety of areas could further strengthen the South African victim empowerment development discourse. The government could finance joint action research initiatives between civil society organizations and academic institutions to (a) identify Western-based intervention models that work and are applicable in South Africa including ones that need to be reconsidered; (b) identify South African cultural rituals or community processes that have the potential to facilitate healing (i.e. drumming, storytelling, dances, singing, toys, arts, etc.); (c) explore to what extent South African healing approaches popular in indigenous cultures relate to or confirm Western understandings of trauma; (d) find indigenous/traditional games that facilitate appropriate recognition of feelings; or help citizens to understand or recognize 'hurt'; (e) identify tools and approaches to deal with traumatized or dysfunctional children would be particularly useful for front-line personnel such as school teachers, police, or nurses working in hardship locations; (f) develop frameworks for holistic psychosocial community consolidation (information – support – counselling – therapy – in-patient attendance) that work best in the South African context, in order to ensure systemic psychosocial coverage of communities and neighbourhoods; and (g) identify and disseminate grassroots-tested 'active bystandership' intervention models among school children and community members.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The development needs outlined in this paper give insight into the challenges the South African Government must tackle in order to remain on track with its aim of *creating a caring society – together*. They also present a roadmap for operationalizing intrapsychic and community enablement, and peacebuilding.

Socio-emotional well-being – as a prerequisite for socio-economic development – has traditionally been overlooked by discourse communities of socio-economic development thought.<sup>74</sup> This was perhaps due to the fact that international development planners originally

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<sup>74</sup> Friedrich W. Affolter, "On the Absence of a 'Socio-Emotional Enablement' Discourse Component in International Socio-Economic Development Thought", *Scandinavian Journal for Caring Sciences* Vol.18 (2004): pp.424-436.

focused exclusively on 'economic growth'; and because even psychologists traditionally undervalued the role that feelings, enjoyment and suffering play in mental and social life.<sup>75</sup>

Today we know better. Care "... creates human and social capital – the next generation of workers with human and social skills who can be relied on, who are good citizens."<sup>76</sup> Failure to respect the socio-emotional needs of people risks the rise of future generations of psychosocially frustrated, and possibly dysfunctional, aggressive and violent citizens:

Because mammals need relatedness for their neurophysiology to coalesce correctly, most of what makes a socially functional human comes from connection – the shaping physiologic force of love. Children who get minimal care can grow up to menace a negligent society. Because the brain's intricate, interlocking neural barriers to violence do not self-assemble, a limbically damaged human is deadly. If the neglect is sufficiently profound, the result is a functionally reptilian organism armed with the cunning of the neocortical brain....

The potential for humanity lives inside every human infant, but healthy development is an effort not a given. If we do not shelter that spark, guide and nurture it, then we not only lose the life within but we unleash later destruction of ourselves."<sup>77</sup>

South Africa suffers the painful consequences of violence and abuse. Crime and trauma have spread so far that the problem can no longer be delegated to government-paid psychologists and social workers alone. South Africa needs to mobilize community responses for a problem that has reached macro-dimensions. Such a response must give more weight to victims' rights advocacy and 'active bystandership', and transcend the notion that VEP is to provide shelter and counselling *after* people have been raped or abused. To the extent that South Africa succeeds to protect and/or re-introduce *caring* and *ubuntu* into family and community life, it could become a model for other nations facing similar challenges.

This, however, requires transformational leadership, which – in the words of Mamphela Ramphele – must "... expand the boundaries of possibilities for all citizens, enabling them to contribute their talents, experience and skills to create a successful prosperous democracy"<sup>78</sup>:

"We have done well in developing creative, complex policies, but implementation has been patchy. Part of the challenge of effective implementation is that the cultural change towards teamwork, rather than viewing other citizens as competitors, has not yet happened.... Divisions that are part of our legacy also rear their ugly heads. Black/white, men/women, rich/poor are all South Africans who must learn to work together....

We must remobilize ordinary citizens to participate actively in transformation...."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> See Daniel Kahneman, Ed Diener and Norbert Schwarz, "Preface", in *Well-Being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology*, ed. by Daniel Kahneman, Ed Diener and Norbert Schwarz (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2003), p. ix. See also Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More than IQ* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), p.xi.

<sup>76</sup> UNDP, *1999 Human Development Report*, p.80.

<sup>77</sup> Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini and Richard Lannon, *A General Theory of Love* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), pp.218-219.

<sup>78</sup> Ramphele, *Laying Ghosts to Rest*, p.295.

For the field of Victim Empowerment and beyond, transformational leaders must also appreciate how the protection of South Africans' "neural core of emotional identity"<sup>80</sup> is key to intrapsychic and interpersonal peacebuilding, and ultimately sustainable socio-economic development.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid, pp.297 & 299.

<sup>80</sup> Lewis, Amini and Lannon, *A General Theory of Love*, p.150.