

TACKLING ARMED VIOLENCE

**KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY ON
THE VIOLENT NATURE OF CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA**

BACKGROUND TO THIS REPORT

In February 2007 the Minister of Safety and Security contracted the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation to carry out a study on the violent nature of crime in South Africa. In terms of an agreement, entered into by the Minister on behalf of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) cluster of cabinet, CSVR was required to produce six reports:

1. Component 1: A concept paper on the violent nature of crime in South Africa (submitted: June 2007).
2. Component 2: A study of murder entitled “Streets of Pain, Streets of Sorrow: The circumstances of the occurrence of murder in six areas with high rates of murder” (submitted: June 2008).
3. Component 3: A study on sexual violence entitled: “A state of sexual tyranny: The prevalence, nature and causes of sexual violence in South Africa” (submitted: December 2008).
4. Component 4: An analysis of the socioeconomic factors that contribute to violence, entitled: “Adding injury to insult: How exclusion and inequality drive South Africa’s problem of violence” (submitted: October 2008).
5. Component 5: “Case studies on perpetrators of violent crime” (submitted: December 2008).
6. Component 6: A summary report on key findings and recommendations.

This document is the final report, Component 6 of the project. It provides what may be regarded as the “high level” findings of the study as well as the principal recommendations emerging from it. It therefore integrates some, but not all, of the material from the five other reports and readers are referred to these reports for more in-depth data and analysis on the issues which they deal with. In particular the concept paper (Component 1) provides a broad overview of available information on violent crime in South Africa, including trends in the various categories of violent crime up to the date of its publication.¹

This report was submitted to the Minister of Police, Nathi Mthethwa, in February 2009 under the title, “Creating a violence-free society: Key findings and recommendations of the study on the violent nature of crime in South Africa”.

This version of the report was produced in March 2010.

¹ See CSVR 2007: 41–51. Those who are interested in the most up-to-date crime statistics are referred to the South African Police Service Web site, specifically at: http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestats/2008/crime_stats.htm.

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This report is part of a project on violent crime that was initiated by the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) sub-committee of Cabinet in 2006. Though this report will be submitted to his successor, Nathi Mthethwa, the then Minister of Safety and Security, Charles Nqakula, was the chief representative of the JCPS in appointing CSVr to carry out the project. CSVr would like to express its appreciation to Minister Nqakula and to the members of the JCPS for providing us with this opportunity.

Themba Mathe, Secretary for Safety and Security, Mlungisi Menziwa, Director of Policy and Research at the Secretariat for Safety and Security, and Trevor Bloem, Director of Communication and Media Liaison in the Ministry of Safety and Security, played a key role in liaising with CSVr on this project and in assisting with securing research access.

Numerous other officials of the criminal justice system and people in academia and civil society organisations also gave their assistance to the overall project in one way or another.

In addition this report is informed by the insights of many people who have been part of the work of CSVr over the years as well as others who have contributed in one way or another to broader crime research in South Africa. The contribution of the members of the support staff at CSVr is also invaluable in making work of this kind possible.

This report was written by David Bruce, with detailed editing and guidance provided by by Amanda Dissel and Adele Kirsten; additional editing by Barbara Ludman; assistance with additional data analysis and production by Mark Isserow.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the sixth and final product of a study on the violent nature of crime undertaken by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation in terms of an agreement entered into with the Minister of Safety and Security. The agreement provides for CSVSR to produce six reports and that the last report should be a summary report on key findings and recommendations. This report therefore may be regarded as representing the “high level” findings of the study.

This report is essentially concerned with how we understand violent crime in South Africa. By using the best empirical evidence that is available, the report aims to provide a solid footing for understanding violent crime so as to ensure the effectiveness of efforts to address it. The bulk of the report is directed towards meeting this purpose, after which the report puts forward a set of recommendations for addressing violent crime.

1. UNDERSTANDING VIOLENT CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

1.1 Major forms of violence

The body of the report starts by clarifying the terminology and focus of the report. Within the study of the violent nature of crime, violence is understood in terms of “forms of violence”. While there are numerous forms of violence which may be identified, the study is concerned with three major ones. These are:

1. Assaults linked to arguments, anger and domestic violence.
2. Rape and sexual assault.
3. Robbery and other violent property crime.

Murder is understood within this framework as not representing a form of violence per se. Instead murder is usually related to one of the major or other forms.

While forms of violence are not synonymous with the offence categories used in official statistics, official statistics on assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm (assault GBH), rape, and aggravated robbery are used in this report as indicators of the three major forms of violence.

For the purposes of clarity the report also distinguishes between “forms of violence” and “types of violence”. Types of violence are sub-categories of the major forms and are outlined in Table 1.

1.2 Provincial distribution of major forms of violence

The report briefly discusses crime statistics on per capita rates of assault GBH, rape and aggravated robbery across the nine provinces. What is distinctive here is that while assault GBH and rape statistics appear to follow

a similar pattern (with KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo recording the lowest per capita levels in both categories), aggravated robbery follows a strikingly different pattern, with high per capita rates recorded in KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape, and most markedly in Gauteng.

1.3 Violent crime in metropolitan South Africa

This discussion of provincial rates of robbery is in some ways merely a prelude to the following section, focusing on violent crime in metropolitan South Africa (referred to as the “metros”).² The concentration of aggravated robberies in the three provinces referred to is a reflection of the concentration of aggravated robbery, and specifically of certain high profile types of aggravated robbery, in the metropolitan areas of these provinces, and areas close to them (see Table 2).

The focus on violent crime in the metros is partly facilitated by data from the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS), which provides detailed “city” reports on non-natural deaths, including specifically deaths from homicide, recorded at mortuaries in the four major metros (Johannesburg, Cape Town, eThekweni and Tshwane — the names “eThekweni” and “Tshwane” are used in reporting on data from the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System as they are the names used in the NIMSS reports) as well as for a number of mortuaries outside of these areas. Because the source of data for NIMSS (i.e., the profile of mortuaries used) has remained stable over recent years, NIMSS data can be used as a basis for examining some of the distinguishing characteristics of these four metropolitan areas. Other major sources of reference for this discussion include:

- The murder study (Component 2) which was conducted within the metropolitan areas of the three provinces.
- A recent in-depth examination of rape dockets opened at police stations in Gauteng in 2003.
- SAPS data for policing areas for the 2005–06 year (the last year for which data at this level was produced by the SAPS).

The report briefly notes variations revealed in the NIMSS data in the characteristics of homicides among the four metros. Most distinctive is that, unlike the other three metros where firearm homicides predominate, Cape Town is distinguished by a very high proportion of sharp force (knives or other sharp instruments) homicides. (Figure 3).

Firearm violence: The report examines whether the prevalence of firearm violence in the metros is closely related to their high levels of aggravated robbery. It uses data from the murder study to show that, in areas with high levels of firearm violence, firearm use is not restricted to robbery type (or crime type) murders but also makes a substantial contribution to argument type murders, which tend to involve people who are known to

² SAPS data for the whole of Gauteng is used along with NIMSS data on Tshwane and Johannesburg. The NIMSS Johannesburg data includes data from, for instance, the Germiston mortuary and therefore presumably covers an area that is not entirely synonymous with the formal boundaries of Johannesburg and includes some parts of the metropolitan areas of Ekurhuleni. This discussion of metropolitan areas omits data from the Nelson Mandela metro in the Eastern Cape.

each other (acquaintances) (Table 4). However, in high firearm use areas, firearms clearly predominate in the robbery type/crime type murders. Other data from the murder study (Table 5) indicates that guns are clearly more predominant in stranger murders, but that in areas of high firearm use, they nevertheless also make a substantial contribution to murders which take place between acquaintances.

While weapons are omnipresent in incidents of fatal violence, this is not so in relation to non-fatal violence. Data from the Gauteng rape study indicates that weapons were not in fact used in most incidents of rape and that levels of weapons usage differed according to the age of the victim. However in rapes by strangers (which most affected adult women) most perpetrators (63%) were armed and in 51% of cases where they were armed this was with a firearm.

Sharp-force violence: There is some evidence that, though they make less of a contribution to fatalities, knives make a more substantial contribution to violence-related injuries within metropolitan areas. They appear to be more significant than firearms in non-fatal acquaintance violence. Nevertheless the tendency for incidents of acquaintance violence to involve knives does not mean that knives are used more in acquaintance than in stranger violence. In the Gauteng rape study, though knives were outnumbered by guns in stranger violence, most rapes involving knives (59%) were perpetrated by strangers. This appears to be an indication that stranger violence is far more strongly associated with the use of weapons than is acquaintance violence.

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A culture of violence and criminality: The report raises the question of how to account for high levels of aggravated robbery, stranger firearm and knife violence in the metros. The label “organised crime”, implying groups with a reasonably high degree of stability and sophistication, may help to account for some aspects of the aggravated robbery problem. Criminal groups are probably most strongly linked with the types of aggravated robberies which impact on middle class suburban areas and on businesses in the formal business sector.

However, the greater part of the problem of violent crime in the metros and particularly in townships and inner city areas is associated with young men who tend to be invested in some kind of criminal identity and associate with other like-minded people. Those involved fall across a spectrum which ranges from criminals who operate as individual rapists or robbers to large numbers affiliated to mainly informal (but sometimes more formal) groups or gangs. Informal groups of these young men are probably the key driver of the problem of aggravated robbery as well as associated with many of the group rapes which in Gauteng, for instance, tend to be stranger crimes. These informal gangs are a training ground for participants in the more organised groups.

An examination of the criminal records of persons arrested for involvement in crimes such as murder and rape shows that perpetrators of these types of crime have been associated with a diversity of offences in the past, including a variety of violent offences. Only 5% of rape suspects with criminal records, for instance, had previous convictions for rape only; the balance had previous convictions for offences such as robbery, murder, attempted murder or assault GBH, as well as for other offences such as drinking, driving or drug related offences.

While there is an apparent tendency for persons arrested for the rapes or murders of strangers to be more likely to have criminal records for robbery, persons arrested for rapes or murders of acquaintances are not much less likely to have a criminal record of this type as well. For many perpetrators of violent crime, their involvement in violence cuts across the divide between acquaintance and stranger violence.

What is distinctive about violent crime in South Africa is not merely the criminal identity which young men are invested in, the diverse character of the groups and formations associated with it, nor the overlapping involvement of participants in multiple forms of violence. A central distinguishing feature is the prominence of weapons.

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The core of the problem of violent crime in South Africa is a culture of violence and criminality. The ability to operate and achieve credibility within this culture is strongly related to one's readiness to resort to extreme violence with a weapon. It is this culture — and the associated phenomenon of armed violence — which is the principal factor underpinning the current reign of violent crime in metropolitan South Africa.

1.4 Violent crime outside the metropolitan areas

Outside of the metropolitan areas (i.e in the rest of South Africa), areas are diverse in various ways including in relation to levels of violent crime. They include areas notorious for high levels of crimes such as murder and rape, most notably the Northern Cape, and those recording low levels of violent crime, notably Limpopo.

Nevertheless NIMSS and other data point to consistent differentials between the metros and other areas. These differences include:

- Murders outside of the metros are more likely to involve knives, blunt force or other techniques, and less likely to involve firearms.
- According to police statistics, aggravated robbery, and particularly the more high profile types such the “trio” robberies (car hijacking, residential and business robbery) are less common, though the areas outside of the metros appear to have a disproportionately larger share of common (unarmed) robbery than do the metros. Areas outside of the metros account for roughly half (48%) of reported robberies (aggravated and common combined).

- Data from the 2003 National Victimisation survey indicate that assaults are as common in other urban areas as they are in the metros, but less common elsewhere, though the survey report raises questions about whether this reflects differences in cultural interpretations of the term assault between rural and urban areas.

NIMSS data has consistently indicated that women make up 13% of homicide victims in South Africa. However, although the differences are relatively small, it appears that a higher proportion of victims of homicide in rural areas are women than is the case in urban areas. The report explores differences in the profile of weapons associated with the deaths of men and women, and how these profiles differ between the metros and the areas outside of them. Overall it appears that the marginally greater percentage of female homicides outside of the metros as opposed to inside the metros could be connected to the fact that firearm violence and aggravated robbery (associated with a very high proportion of male deaths) are lower in these areas.

It is suggested that stranger violence is more strongly associated with the metros and other urban areas. Acquaintance violence is understood to be a more generalised phenomenon characteristic both of the metro/urban areas and other more rural areas.

SAPS data for instance indicates that a very large majority of offences such as assault and assault GBH (89%), murder (82%) and rape (76%) are perpetrated by persons known to the victim, though there are questions about the exact sampling methods used. There are other reputable studies which provide much higher figures for stranger involvement in these types of offences, including a late 1990s study of rape in provinces which are predominantly rural showing stranger rapes accounting for as many as 50% of these offences.

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While acknowledging ambiguities in the evidence, the report nevertheless concludes that most violent crime outside of the metros involves acquaintances, with robbery the major exception to this pattern, and that stranger violence is probably more concentrated in the metros and other urban areas.

1.5 Towards a more accurate and equitable picture of violence

Not only does the available data tend to have a metro bias, but even within the metros there are a range of factors which contribute to the visibility of some forms of violence and the invisibility of others. Middle class groups as well as groups in civil society give prominence to specific aspects of the problem of violent crime, while the media serves to reinforce rather than redress this pattern. This means that dimensions of the problem of violent crime, including high profile types of aggravated robbery, sexual violence and domestic violence as well as gun violence have been a focus of attention in public discourse and in policy.

With a view to correcting this, the report gives particular prominence to two types of violence which appear to be the major drivers of the murder rate but are largely neglected in the public discourse around crime:

- **Male-male assaults related to arguments or disputes:** In the six areas which were the focus of the murder study, these accounted for 45% of victims of murder in known circumstances.
- **Street robberies and other robberies in public space:** These account for the majority of aggravated robberies and 13% of the murders in known circumstances in the six areas.

Victims of these types of violence are generally relatively poor; other factors to do with the culture of violence and the identity of the victims feed into the fact that these types of violence are disregarded in public discourse.

The established pattern of prioritising certain types of crime in public discourse has not been entirely negative in its impact. However the report motivates that this pattern is ultimately counter-productive, both in

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terms of a concern to address the overall problem of violent crime in South Africa and in the interests of victim constituencies such as victims of violence against women or of high profile robberies. The localised cultures which are characterised by high levels of male-male violence are central in contributing to the culture of violence, which plays itself out in violence against women and stranger violence, impacting on South Africans from all walks of life.

Furthermore, street robberies are effectively a training ground for those who become involved in the more

sophisticated type of robberies which target more affluent sections of the population.

1.6 Causes of violent crime

Noting the distinction between acquaintance violence and stranger violence, the report finds that “the core of the problem of violent crime in South Africa is a culture of violence and criminality, associated with a strong emphasis on the use of weapons, in which these two forms of violence coalesce”.

Specific factors which sustain this culture are:

- Inequality, poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion and marginalisation.
- Perceptions and values relating to violence and crime.
- The vulnerability of young people, linked to inadequate child rearing and inappropriate youth socialisation.
- Weaknesses of the criminal justice system and aligned systems.

- The availability of firearms and widespread use of other weapons, the role of alcohol, attitudes of male sexual entitlement and the domestic, regional and local criminal economy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section starts with a general discussion of the framework within which the recommendations should be understood. This emphasises:

- That in line with the key focus of the report, the recommendations are best understood primarily as aiming to address violent crime in the metros and areas which surround them.
- That there is a need to align interventions with the crime profile of specific jurisdictions; inter alia this motivates for Sections 206(1) and (2) of the Constitution, which provide for provincial inputs into national policing policy, to be put into practice.
- That questions to do with the capacity and resources of the state should be taken into account when considering the need for measures to address violent crime.

The recommendations in the report are intended to be understood as operating at the following five levels:

- Focusing and strengthening the criminal justice response to violent crime.
- Adopting other safety measures.
- Addressing the culture of violence and criminality.
- Supporting positive and healthy child and youth development.
- Engaging in issues of social justice.

Aligned with these five levels are the following five key recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 1: A STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ARMED VIOLENT CRIME IN METROPOLITAN AND SURROUNDING AREAS. The heart of a strategy to address violent crime in the metros should be broad ranging, focusing on the perpetrators of armed violence. Such a strategy should make a profound difference to levels of murder, aggravated robbery, and stranger rape. Implementation of such a strategy would potentially involve:

- (a) Policing strategies for addressing armed violence: These should focus on the development of models of good practice for tackling armed violence in different types of jurisdictions. Dealing with armed violence in middle class communities would involve different strategies from those implemented in poorer communities, where armed violence includes aggravated street and other robbery, most stranger rapes, and many potentially lethal assaults.
- (b) Government investment in research aimed at identifying and publicising good practice in local level policing.
- (c) The strengthening of evidence-based crime investigation and prosecution: This includes improving support to police and prosecutors in using different types of evidence including witness, physical and confession evidence. The increased use of DNA evidence envisaged in the draft Forensic Procedures Bill should

be focused on suspects and convicted persons related to cases of armed violent crime. A critical issue here will also be a more sophisticated response to the problem of witness intimidation.

- (d) Improving crime intelligence and other strategies specifically focused on organised crime — this component of the overall strategy may be most relevant to identifying groups and individuals involved in “high profile” types of aggravated robbery.
- (e) The strengthening of measures to ensure police integrity: This includes strategies to identify corrupt police and to ensure effective investigations and disciplinary or criminal prosecution of police members implicated in corruption.
- (f) The use of stop and search tactics involving both vehicles and pedestrians, in order to locate illegal firearms.
- (g) Clarifying police powers, and exploring potential police strategies, to address the use of knives or other instruments associated with sharp-force violence.
- (h) Supporting more professional use of force by police, including:
 - » Developing a statement of policy guiding the use of lethal force.
 - » Supporting police in their ability to engage with armed suspects effectively.
 - » Supporting police in developing their understanding of the type of tactics to employ in intervening in fights and situations of acquaintance violence.
- (i) Improving child justice: An armed violence strategy is likely to lead to the apprehension of more young people involved in armed violence. In the murder study 21% of suspects in argument type murders, and 31% of suspects in crime type murders were 19 years and younger.³ It is important that the optimum use should be made of forms of diversion for those identified as engaged in crime at an early age.

RECOMMENDATION 2: CREATING SAFETY IN PUBLIC AND OTHER SPACES. Within public space, recreational facilities, schools, correctional institutions and in society more broadly there should be a stronger emphasis on establishing safe spaces which are free of violence including:

- (a) Establishing public spaces which are secure and where the carrying of guns and other weapons is prohibited and prevented. This may involve the use of private security or other guards empowered to intervene to prevent the carrying of weapons.
- (b) Discouraging violence at schools, including measures to ensure that violence and bullying are reported within the school,⁴ and working in a focused way with bullies and their victims to stop bullying.⁵
- (c) Creating weapons-free zones in drinking establishments.
- (d) Improving the standards of safety in prisons. The culture of violence and criminality is nurtured within South Africa’s prisons and pervasive violence in prison reinforces this culture.

RECOMMENDATION 3: SUPPORTING POSITIVE AND HEALTHY CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT. The core of any effort needs to be a stable and reliable primary and secondary education system. This requires a “sustained effort to improve the management and quality of South Africa’s schools, so that they function more positively as places

³ CSVR 2008a: 98.

⁴ See the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, undated: 5, regarding informal pressures in the school environment not to report violence and other bullying.

⁵ See Waller 2006: 30–31.

of positive socialisation”.⁶ The case studies of perpetrators indicates that “truancy from school needs to be seen as an early warning sign that schools need to assist parents to deal with, possibly through the employment of social workers as truant officers”.⁷ Other worthwhile developmental support measures would include:⁸

- (a) A coherent and sustained family support programme that focuses on single-parent households, particularly those headed by teenage mothers, to support good parenting practice.
- (b) A dedicated and comprehensive early childhood development programme providing support to the children coming from dysfunctional households.
- (c) Similar intervention in the large number of child-headed households.
- (d) Development of interpersonal and emotional pro-social skills, including the ability to manage conflict and aggression for primary and adolescent school children.
- (e) After-school care programmes intended to assist young people in finding creative and positive ways of using recreational time.
- (f) Victim empowerment programmes targeted at young victims of violence, including those involved in male-male violent conflict.
- (g) Programmes aimed at promoting positive and constructive lifestyles for young people in the 14–22 year age group, including those who are not in school or working.
- (h) Reduction of the use of alcohol by pregnant women and provision of nutritional support to pregnant women, infants and young children.
- (i) The involvement of social workers in interventions intended to support young children in households from which domestic violence calls are made to the police.

RECOMMENDATION 4: ADDRESSING THE CULTURE OF VIOLENCE. As in the mid-1990s when South Africans mobilised against political violence, there is potential to use forms of public education, awareness raising, and community level activism to mobilise against the culture of violence. Such initiatives could include:

- (a) Advocating against violence by political and other leaders.
- (b) Implementing national programmes of action to strengthen non-violence.
- (c) Developing public education initiatives on intervening in or preventing acquaintance violence.
- (d) Working with communities to develop programmes of action against violence.

RECOMMENDATION 5: ADDRESSING VIOLENCE IN POORER COMMUNITIES. SOUTH AFRICA STILL CONTINUES TO PRIVILEGE THE INTERESTS OF THE WELL-TO-DO OVER THOSE OF THE POOR. A central concern of this report is the way in which types of violence which cause the greatest loss of life are not addressed in public policy, reflecting the difficulties which face poorer South Africans in having their concerns heard. Not only do poor people face deep and intractable problems related to structural economic factors, but their exclusion is reinforced when their voices and experiences are not admitted into public discourse.

⁶ Pelser 2007: 5.

⁷ HSRC 2008: 106.

⁸ The recommendations here integrate specific points put forward in Pelser (2007: 5) with a set of measures outlined in CSVr (2007: 176–177). The latter points are based on Waller (2006: 24–32).

Understanding and engaging with the problem of violence as it impacts on poorer people would be an important step towards addressing this.

2.1 Other recommendations are:

1. Data collection and reporting: The National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS):
 - » Support should be given to NIMSS to facilitate improved reporting on non-metropolitan areas.
 - » In addition to the reports on the four metropolitan areas, NIMSS should provide reports on demarcated geographic areas outside of the metropolitan areas.
2. Crime statistics: The SAPS should resume the practice of using the former policing areas as a unit for the reporting of aggregate crime statistics as these smaller areas of jurisdiction are more meaningful than are the provinces for purposes of examining violent crime, or other crime, trends.
3. Understanding violence: State, academic and civil society organisations should seek to strengthen understanding in South Africa about the assessment, profiling, and types of interventions which may be of most benefit in preventing armed violence and other violent crime.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is essentially concerned with how we understand violent crime in South Africa. As the report emphasises, our understanding of violent crime — what we mean when we refer to violent crime — is a subject of contestation between different interest groups and victim constituencies. One consequence of this is that the way violent crime is understood has a lot to do with the power and influence of specific groups and victim constituencies and is not simply dependent on any supposedly neutral assessment of violent crime priorities.

This report is in many ways an attempt to contribute to correcting these imbalances by using the best empirical evidence that is available to describe the nature of violent crime in South Africa. The concluding parts of this report — dealing with the causes of violent crime and providing a set of recommendations for addressing violent crime — flow from this discussion, which occupies the major part of this report.

2. UNDERSTANDING VIOLENT CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 Major forms of violence

In the concept paper on violent crime (Component 1) CSVSR identified various “forms of violence”.⁹ Incidents of violence that are part of a form take place in similar circumstances, the perpetrators have similar motives and/or the criminal activity involved is broadly similar in nature. Using the terminology forms of violence in the study means that our descriptions of violent crime are not dependent on the offence categories used by the South African Police Service in crime statistics.

To take one example, some robberies culminate in acts of murder. In terms of the criminal law such an act will be identified and prosecuted according to the most serious offence committed, as an incident of murder, though there may also be additional charges of robbery. However, when we group acts of violence in forms, we would categorise this as an incident of violence related to a robbery. Classifying incidents of violence in terms of the form of violence, therefore, merely means that the classification gives priority to the circumstances, motive, or type of criminal activity, rather than the statutory or common law criminal offence by which the act may be prosecuted and punished.

While the study is concerned with all aspects of violent crime, it focuses on what are referred to as the “major forms of violence” occurring in South Africa. These are:

1. **Assaults linked to arguments, anger and domestic violence:** In crime statistics these incidents are reflected as offences such as murder, assault grievous bodily harm (GBH), common assault, and others.

⁹ See CSVSR 2007: 56–67.

- 2. Rape and sexual assault:** In crime statistics these incidents are reflected in offences such as murder, rape, indecent assault and others.¹⁰
- 3. Robbery and other violent property crime:** These are linked to offences such as murder, aggravated robbery (primarily involving robberies of civilians in public space but also including vehicle hijacking, residential robbery, etc), common robbery and others.

It is difficult to quantify violence and therefore difficult to quantify how much of each of these forms of violence does take place. But on the basis of crime statistics and other available information on violence in South Africa it seems reasonable to conclude that these major forms of violence collectively account for more than two-thirds of all violent crime. While there are other forms which are of concern,¹¹ these three forms of violence may reasonably be said to represent the core of the problem of violence in South Africa. The major task involves addressing these forms of violence, and the findings and recommendations of the study seek primarily to contribute towards this objective.

2.1.1 Indicators of the major forms of violence

Though the forms of violence are not synonymous with SAPS offence categories, SAPS statistics on offences are

Three forms of violence may reasonably be said to represent the core of the problem of violence in South Africa

used here as the main indicators of the levels of these major forms of violence.

- **Assault linked to arguments, anger and domestic violence:** Assault GBH statistics are used here as an indicator of the levels of these assaults.
- **Rape and other sexual assault:** Rape statistics are used here as an indicator of the levels of sexual assaults.
- **Robbery and other violent property crime:** Aggravated robbery statistics are used here as an indicator of the levels of this form of violence.

In each of these forms, there are many incidents which take place each year but are not recorded in these offence statistics. Some are recorded in other offence categories (common assault, indecent assault, common robbery) while many are not reported, and some of those reported may not be recorded by the police.¹²

¹⁰ 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 related to the other “major forms of violence”, though corporal punishment of children by parents, for instance, might better be regarded as a separate form of violence.

¹¹ Examples might include: Conflict between groups over territory, markets, power (for example, taxi or gang violence); xenophobic violence; vigilantism and excessive use of force by law enforcement personnel; resistance to law enforcement intervention; and others.

¹² The form of “robbery and other violent property crime” is slightly broader than that of common robbery and aggravated robbery as reflected in crime statistics (see CSV 2007: 48). However all incidents of aggravated or common robbery recorded in crime statistics would form part of the “robbery form” and robberies account for the vast majority of crimes in this form.

While this applies less to the latter two categories, it should also be noted that some incidents recorded in the assault GBH offence statistics would not fit within the “assault linked to arguments” category applied in this study. For instance some serious assaults linked to xenophobic violence, vigilantism or incidents of police brutality would, if recorded in the crime statistics, be recorded as incidents of assault GBH. But in terms of the framework of this study they would be regarded as other forms of violence. Nevertheless the vast majority of incidents recorded in assault GBH statistics could be regarded as part of this form of violence.

2.1.2 Forms of violence and types of violence

In this report, “types of violence” are identified as sub-categories of the major “forms of violence”. The main types of violence related to the major forms of violence are differentiated in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Forms and related types of violence

FORMS	MAIN TYPES
Assaults linked to arguments, anger and domestic violence	Intimate partner assaults (domestic violence) Male-male violence
Rape and sexual assault	Acquaintance rape Stranger rape Child sexual abuse
Robbery and other violent property crime	Robbery in public space (street robbery) Residential robbery Business robbery Car hijacking Truck hijacking Cash-in-transit heists Bank robbery

As reflected in Table 1, the way in which the major forms of violence are differentiated into types varies. In relation to rape and sexual assault, this differentiation is made partly on the basis of the relationship between victim and perpetrator, though in the case of child victims it is also in relation to the age differential between the victim and the perpetrator.¹³ With assaults it is made partly on the basis of relationship as well as the gender of the parties. In relation to robberies it is in relation to the location or target of the robbery.

Again it may be noted that the types of violence listed in Table 1 are merely intended to represent the main types within each form and do not provide a comprehensive list. For instance among assaults there are also female-male assaults and female-female assaults which do not occur in intimate partner situations, while in terms of rape one might refer to prison rape as a significant type. However, these types have not been included here because they are believed to constitute a small minority of incidents within each form.

¹³ CSVR 2008c: 60–62.

2.2 Provincial distribution of major forms of violence

It is clear that there are major variations in South Africa in terms of the geographic distribution of the three major forms of violence. Figure 1 below illustrates this using SAPS statistics on assault GBH, rape and aggravated robbery. During the 2007–08 year, it is apparent that:

- Three of the provinces, KwaZulu-Natal (98%), Western Cape (122%) and especially Gauteng (212%), have levels of aggravated robbery which are close to or higher than the national rate per 100 000. None of the other provinces have rates of aggravated robbery which are more than 68% of the national rate.
- Seven of the nine provinces have levels of assault GBH which are higher than the overall national level, with the exceptions being KwaZulu-Natal (70%) and Limpopo (58%).
- The pattern in relation to rape is very similar to that for assault GBH. The same seven provinces have the highest rates per 100 000 of rape. Six of them have rates which are greater than the national rate. The rate in Mpumalanga is 99% of the national rate. KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo are once again the exceptions, recording much lower rates than the other provinces.

.....

In respect of aggravated robbery, rates for KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng are consistently higher than other provinces, with rates for Gauteng being substantially higher than those in all other provinces

.....

Figure 2 shows that the pattern for rape statistics illustrated in Figure 1 is the same for the three preceding years as well. While there are some variations between the different years within each province, the same pattern is apparent, with figures in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo being lower than those for other provinces.

The same point applies for assault GBH or aggravated robbery, though corresponding figures have not been

provided. For assault GBH the rates for KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo are consistently lower than for other provinces. In respect of aggravated robbery, rates for KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng are consistently higher than other provinces, with rates for Gauteng being substantially higher than those in all other provinces. An examination of SAPS statistics illustrates that, with very few exceptions, this has been the prevailing picture in South Africa for most of the last decade. According to SAPS statistics, assault GBH and rape rates are lowest in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, while aggravated robbery rates are highest in KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape and Gauteng.

FIGURE 1: Provincial rates of assault GBH, rape and aggravated robbery as percentage of national rate, April 2007 to March 2008¹⁴ (SAPS statistics)

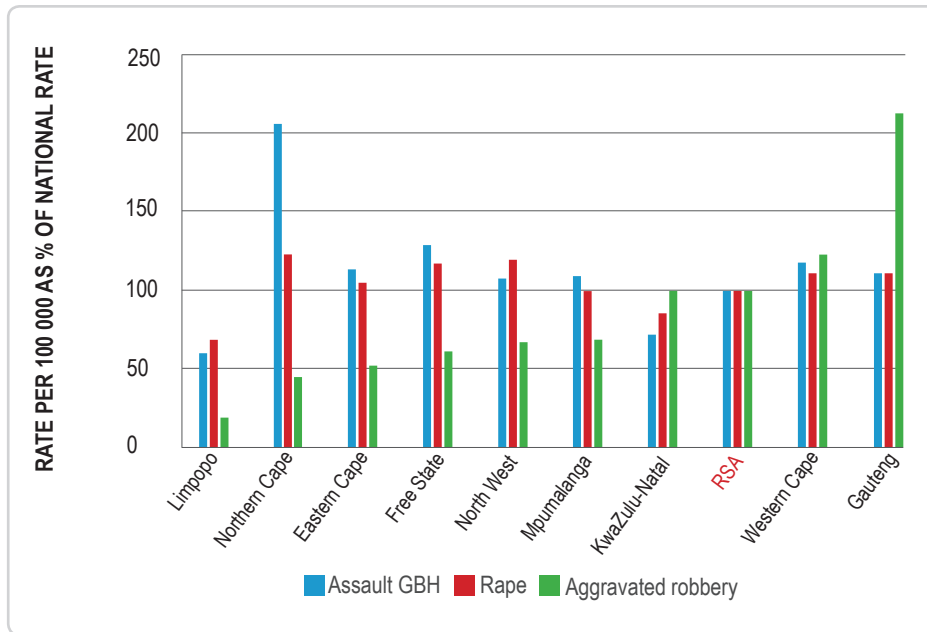
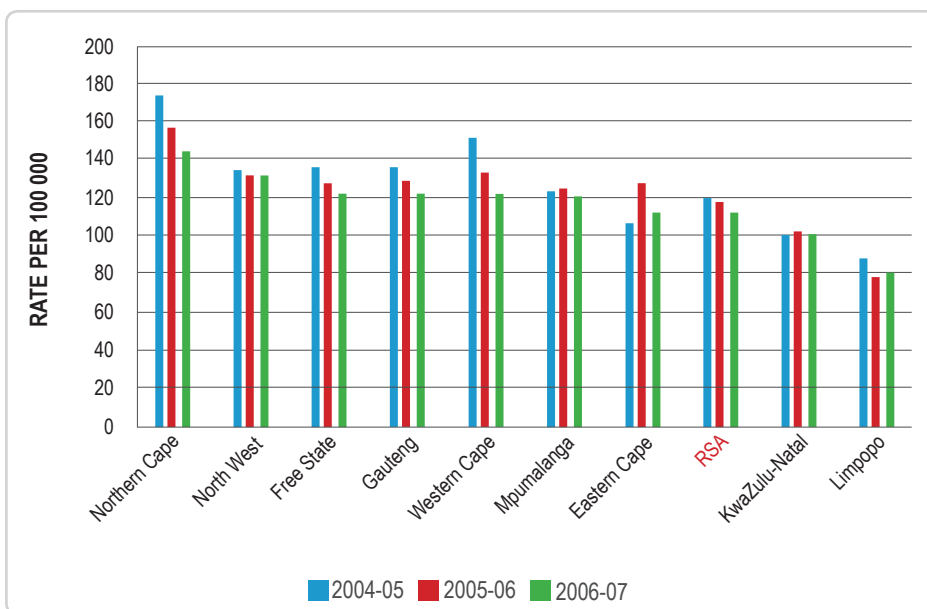


FIGURE 2: Provincial rates of rape per 100 000 population, over three years (April 2004 to March 2007) (SAPS crime statistics)



¹⁴ Figure 1 uses SAPS statistics for the period April 2007 to March 2008 covering the rate per 100 000 of each crime in each province. Note that rape figures are actually for the nine-month period to end December. For purposes of comparing the variations between provinces the assault GBH figures (nationally 439 per 100 000), rape figures (nationally 76 per 100 000) and aggravated robbery figures (nationally 247 per 100 000) have been converted into percentages of the national figure. The national rate per 100 000 for each offence category is therefore 100%.

2.3 Violent crime in metropolitan South Africa

As reflected in the murder report (Component 2), aggravated robberies are not merely concentrated in these three provinces (Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal) but are particularly concentrated in and around the major metropolitan areas (henceforward metros) within these provinces.¹⁵ Table 2 provides SAPS 2005–06 statistics for aggravated robbery¹⁶ for the heavily urbanised province of Gauteng, the province affected by the highest overall aggravated robbery rates,¹⁷ in combination with statistics for two policing areas which together make up greater Cape Town, and the four policing areas in KwaZulu-Natal which include eThekweni (Durban) and the two policing areas to the immediate north and west of it.¹⁸ Though these areas only account for 37% of recorded incidents of assault GBH and 41% of rape, they account for 70% of aggravated robberies. What is particularly noticeable is that the high rates of aggravated robbery in these areas are partly driven by particularly high rates of car hijacking (84%), residential robbery (79%) and business robbery (83%).

TABLE 2: Percentage of key violent offences in metropolitan and surrounding areas in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape (SAPS statistics, 2005–06)

	MURDER	RAPE	ASSAULT GBH	AGGRAVATED ROBBERY	CAR HIJACKING	RESIDENTIAL ROBBERY	BUSINESS ROBBERY
Gauteng (seven policing areas)	3 434	11 562	48 205	49 784	6 890	5 909	3 068
Durban North	971	2 103	5 788	9 424	979	642	153
Durban South	1 047	1 935	5 843	6 538	1 317	554	136
Umfolozi (KwaZulu-Natal)	770	1 423	5 074	3 660	467	206	52
Midlands (KwaZulu-Natal)	841	1 566	4 569	2 292	142	254	139
West Metropole (Cape Town)	861	1 601	6 228	7 230	593	299	57
East Metropole (Cape Town)	995	2 191	8 086	4 846	358	127	42
Sub-total	8 919	22 381	83 793	83 774	10 746	7 991	3 647
National	18 528	54 926	226 942	119 726	12 825	10 173	4 387
% of national in Gauteng and six other police areas	48	41	37	70	84	79	83

Put simply, this means that robbery and other violent property crime, as a form of violence, is heavily concentrated in the metropolitan and surrounding areas. This is especially so in relation to “trio robberies”. These three types of robbery — car hijacking, residential and business robbery — to some degree involve more sophisticated types of criminal groups who target more affluent wealthy and middle-class South Africans for their cars and other valuables.¹⁹

¹⁵ CSVr 2008a: 111.

¹⁶ Note that the table refers to the former “area” level (previously “districts”) of jurisdiction which has now been disbanded by the SAPS. Subsequent to 2005–06, SAPS crime statistics do not refer to this area level and statistics are now only provided at the station, provincial and national level.

¹⁷ See also the concept paper (CSVr 2007: 82).

¹⁸ These areas are selected because of having high aggravated robbery-to-assault-GBH ratios (See CSVr 2008a: 111).

¹⁹ As illustrated in Table 7, these areas also have very high levels of bank robbery.

Data from the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS) indicate that violence in the metropolitan areas of Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal systematically differs from violence elsewhere in South Africa.²⁰

Key points from the NIMSS data on violence are summarised in Table 3.²¹ As is apparent, the number of mortuaries included in the NIMSS system has changed from year to year impacting, among other things, on the number of fatalities recorded in the system. Two points are particularly relevant in this regard:

- **Data from the four metros:** The mortuaries collecting data in the system in Tshwane (Pretoria), Johannesburg, Cape Town and eThekweni (Durban) have remained largely consistent since 2003.²² It therefore seems reasonable to believe that data on violence from these four metros, which has been published in NIMSS reports since 2003, can be regarded as indicative of trends in these areas.
- **Data from the rest of NIMSS mortuaries:** However, outside of the metros the profile of mortuaries included in the system has fluctuated. It would nevertheless appear that, where there are consistent patterns in the differences between the four metros and the other areas, these would provide a basis for tentative conclusions about the broad differences between violence in the metros and in other parts of South Africa.

As indicated in the last row of Table 3, between 2003 and 2005, the four metros accounted for between 62% and 65% of deaths recorded at NIMSS mortuaries. For 2007 there was a fairly substantial drop in this figure, to 54%. This appears to have been associated with efforts by the NIMSS to improve its rural coverage.

.....

Cape Town is very distinctive among the metros in that sharp-force homicides were either equivalent in number (in 2003) to or outnumbered (in 2004, 2005 and 2007) firearm homicides

.....

²⁰ The NIMSS records a set of standard items of information for every deceased person whose body or remains are brought to one of the participating mortuaries.

²¹ Note that the NIMSS reports deal with all non-natural deaths at these mortuaries. As indicated in the second row of Table 3, over the years deaths through violence have accounted for between 36% and 47% of these fatalities.

²² It appears that that coverage in 2007 for both Tshwane and Johannesburg has expanded. In the case of Tshwane this is as a result of the “closure of Medunsa whose cases are now being seen at Garankuwa” which is part of the NIMSS. Johannesburg cases apparently also now also include cases from Sebokeng (personal e-mail communication from Hilton Donson, 30 January 2009). (The names, “eThekweni” and “Tshwane”, are used in reporting on data from the NIMSS as these are the names used in NIMSS reports.)

TABLE 3: Overview of NIMSS data on death by violence (homicide), 2000–07²³

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Number of mortuaries	15	32	34	36	35	21	39
% deaths from violence	45%	44%	45%	47%	39%	39%	36%
Firearms	4 372	6 104	5 572	5 387	3 953	3 487	3 929
Sharp force	2 547	3 168	3 151	3 220	2 992	3 204	4 408
Blunt force	1 135	1 414	1 246	1 461	1 310	1 048	2 381
Strangulation	86	184	153	199	157	129	231
Burn	63	55	48	67	57	NR	80
Total by weapons	8 203	10 925	10 170	10 334	8 469	7 868	11 029
% firearms	53	56	55	52	47	44	36
% sharp instruments	31	29	31	31	35	41	40
% blunt force	14	13	12	14	15	13	22
Male victims	7 268	9 700		9 014		7 933	10 306
Female victims	1 073	1 463		1 371		1 143	1 598
Total male and female	8 341	11 163		10 385		9 076	11 904
% female	13	13		13		13	12
Violent deaths in four metros				6 806	5 829	5 823	6 487
% of all violent deaths in metros				65	62	64	54

2.3.1 Variations in violent crime among the four metros

In talking about violent crime in the metropolitan areas it is also important to note variations in the characteristics of violent crime from one area to another. Perhaps the most striking is the different profile of weapons used in homicide among different cities (Figure 3). While in the three other metros firearm homicides far outnumbered sharp force homicides, Cape Town is very distinctive among the metros in that sharp-force homicides were either equivalent in number (in 2003) to or outnumbered (in 2004, 2005 and 2007) firearm homicides. Looking at the NIMSS data on the total number of firearm and sharp force homicides in the four metros over 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2007, the percentage of firearm homicides in Cape Town (44%) was far lower than that in eThekweni (62%), Tshwane (71%) and Johannesburg (75%).²⁵

Continued on page 24

²³ Source: NIMSS, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2008. Percentages do not necessarily add up to 100% due to rounding. Note that the data for “other” external causes of death from 2000, 2001 and 2003 is excluded from the table as it was not provided for the other years. The totals for gender of victims are slightly higher than those for weapons due to the omitted data referred to, but also probably due to the fact that data on gender is more consistently recorded than that on weapons. Data on the overall gender profile of homicide victims and on the profile of deaths in the metros was not provided in some years and there is no NIMSS report for the 2006 year. The report for 2002 contains contradictory figures on the number of mortuaries, with a table on the front page providing a total of 37.

²⁵ It may be noted that overall levels of firearm homicide are not that different between Johannesburg (in 2005 and 2007 in the lower and upper 700s) and Cape Town (in 2005 and 2007 in the lower 700s). If the Cape Town metro has a substantially smaller population, then this would imply that it in fact has a higher per capita firearm homicide rate than Johannesburg, though eThekweni (if assumed to have the lowest population as compared with Johannesburg and Cape Town) apparently has the highest per capita firearm homicide rate of all. However, not being sure of the exact population base which is covered by this homicide data it is perhaps necessary to proceed with caution in making further comparisons between the four metros which require assumptions about the population of the cities. One set of population figures for the metros is Johannesburg/Soweto (7 372 314), Cape Town (4 709 212), eThekweni (3 368 631), Tshwane (2 187 172) (from www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia). This indicates that Johannesburg is the largest, followed by Cape Town, eThekweni, and Tshwane. If the NIMSS areas of jurisdiction are consistent with this, then eThekweni and Cape Town would appear to have higher overall levels of homicide per capita than Johannesburg and Tshwane. There are also other apparent variations between patterns in all of the cities in relation to in which year they had their lowest number of homicides overall or firearm or sharp-force homicides.

FIGURE 3: Total number of homicides, firearm homicides, and sharp-force (knife) homicides identified in four metropolitan areas, 2003–07 (NIMSS data)²⁴

Figure 3(a): All homicides

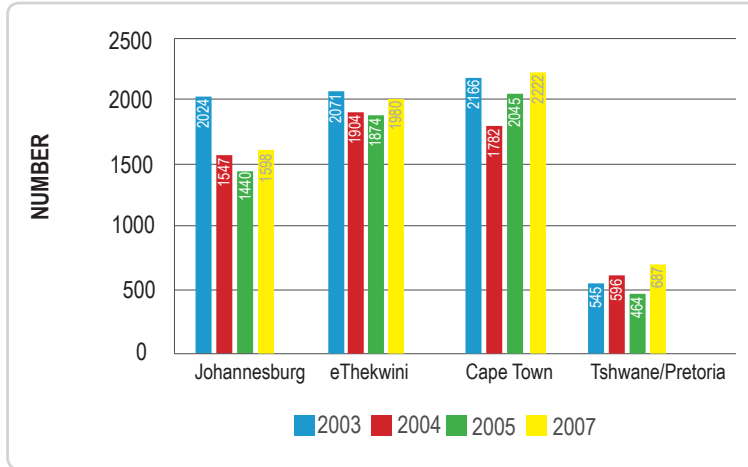


Figure 3(b): Firearm homicides

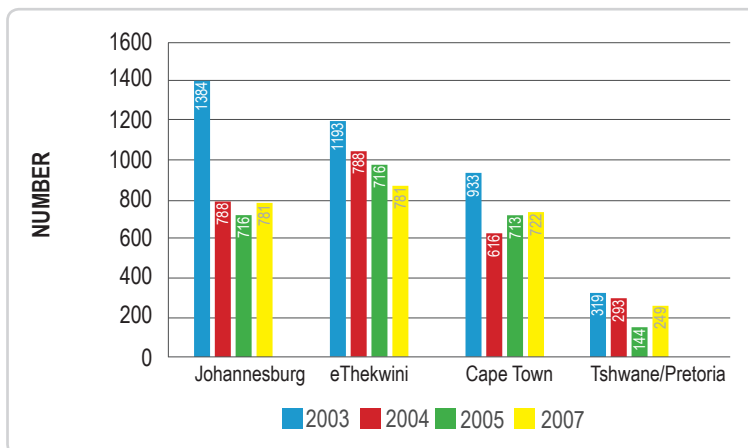
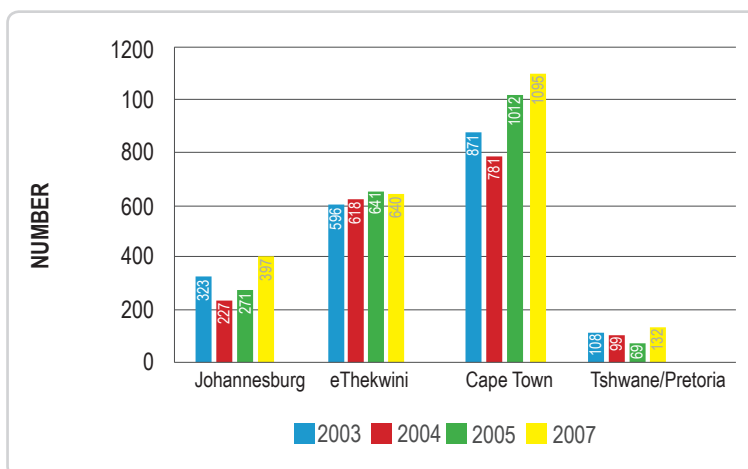


Figure 3(c): Sharp-force homicides



²⁴ Important note: The data in figures 3(b) and 3(c) for 2007 is not comparable to that for subsequent years. The 2003 report provided a figure for total number of gun and sharp force homicides in each city. However the subsequent reports did not provide such a figure and the data for these years is from charts provided on firearm and knife deaths “by age” which omits cases where the age of the deceased could not be ascertained.

Continued from page 22

2.3.2 Firearm violence

A key characteristic that distinguishes the four metros from other areas in the NIMSS system is the profile of weapons used in homicides. As reflected in Figures 4(a), (b) and (c), in the metros a higher percentage of homicides involve firearms, though the percentage of firearm homicides as a percentage of all homicides in the four metros may be declining, having dropped from 51% in 2003 to 43% in 2007.²⁶

Considering the concentration of aggravated robberies in the metro areas, does this mean that the firearm violence is primarily linked to these robberies, and does it make a less significant contribution to other forms of violence?

FIGURE 4: Percentage of firearm, sharp-force and blunt-force homicides inside and outside metro areas (NIMSS data)

Figure 4(a): Firearm homicides as a percentage of all homicides

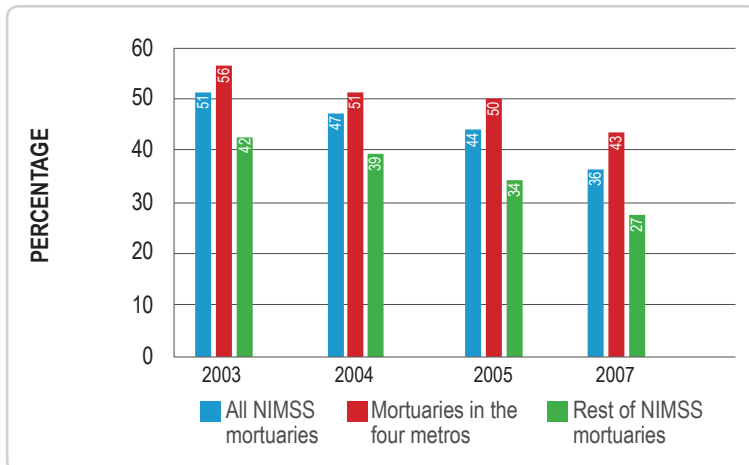
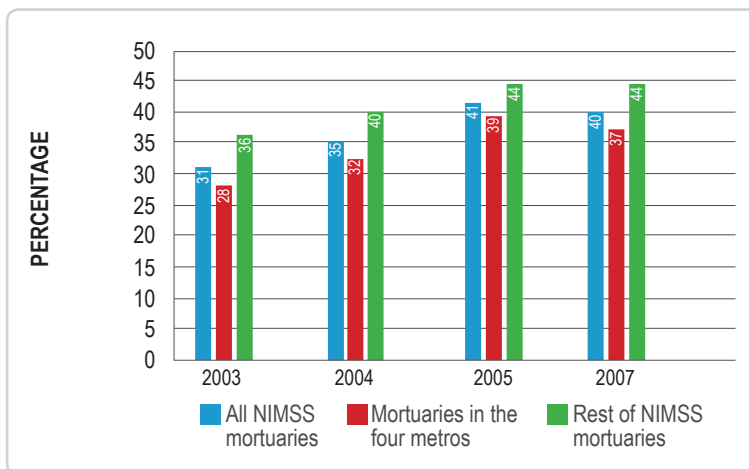
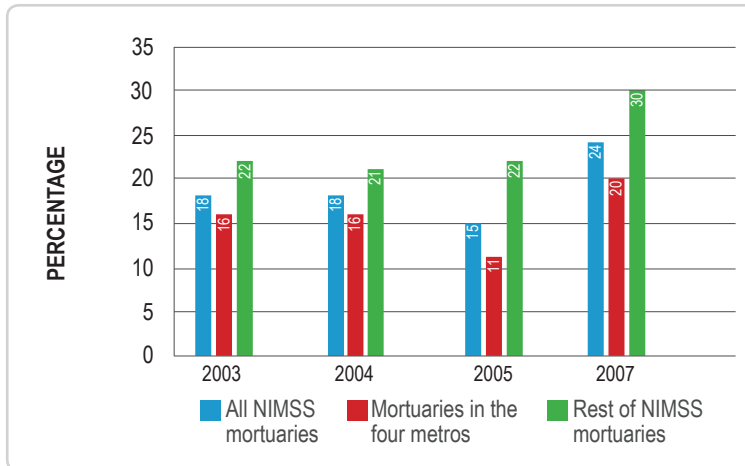


Figure 4(b): Sharp-force (knife and other sharp instrument) homicides as a percentage of all homicides



²⁶ The percentage of firearm homicides of all homicides in the four metros in 2005 was 50%. Despite declines in Johannesburg and eThekweni, Cape Town and Tshwane experienced increases in firearm homicides as a percentage of all homicides in 2005. Though firearm homicides have declined as a percentage of all homicides, their overall numbers remain relatively consistent, with the four cities recording 2 733 in 2004, 2 545 in 2005 and 2 611 in 2007, so that the overall decline in real terms is only 5%, reflecting the fact that overall homicide levels have in fact increased in the four metros during this period.

Figure 4(c): Blunt-force and other homicides as a percentage of all homicides



One answer to this question can be found in data from the CSVr murder study (Component 2).²⁷ The study examined murders over the period 2001–05 in six station areas with high rates of murder.²⁸ As reflected distinctively in NIMSS data, the metropolitan trend in terms of which firearm violence accounts for more deaths than sharp-force violence is not reflected in Cape Town. Instead, the Cape Town metro consistently records higher levels of sharp force homicide, though firearm homicides nevertheless also take a major toll (Figure 3). In the murder study the Cape Town metro bias towards sharp-force violence was most visibly reflected in Kraaifontein, where there were only four firearm homicides compared to 82 involving knives in the two main categories of murders in known circumstances (see Table 4).²⁹ In Nyanga in Cape Town there were also more knife homicides than firearm homicides, though here the difference between knife and firearm homicides was fairly minimal (48 as opposed to 44). But in both station areas in eThekweni and in both in Gauteng, firearm homicides were significantly greater than sharp instrument homicides, with the ratio at these stations being close to two firearm for every one knife homicide.

What emerges distinctively from Table 4 is that in areas where there are high levels of firearm usage including Nyanga and the eThekweni and Gauteng stations, firearm violence is not restricted to robbery type murders (Category B) but also makes a significant contribution to argument type murders (Category A), which frequently involve people who are known to each other.³⁰ Thus if one excludes the cases in Kraaifontein where sharp force killings predominate overwhelmingly, sharp force killings still make up a majority of the argument type (Category A) killings (58%), though firearm homicides also make a very substantial contribution (42%) to the overall Category A death toll.

²⁷ CSVr 2008a.

²⁸ Note that until recently the SAPS had a four-tier structure with management being located at the national, provincial, area and station level. The seven policing areas in Gauteng referred to in Table 2 are therefore command structures at the third (area level). The murder study examined murder at six police stations, these being command structures at the fourth level. The term station areas refers to the area of jurisdiction of the latter.

²⁹ Ibid. The study classified murders into various categories according to the circumstances in which they took place. Category A murders were linked to a wide variety of arguments or disputes between people. Category B murders were murders which took place during other crimes. Most of these crimes were incidents of robbery but they also included other property crimes (for example, vehicle theft) and some cases of rape.

³⁰ See the previous footnote for explanation of these categories.

In the case of robbery type (Category B) homicides, though, firearm homicides outnumber knife homicides by a factor of at least five to one in five of the six stations. The exception once again is Kraaifontein, where firearm homicides play a very small role, and where, potentially linked to this factor, robbery type homicides are very few in number as compared to the overall homicide rate. Though the general tendency is that firearm violence is more strongly linked to Category B murders than to Category A murders, firearm-related argument type homicides are on a par with firearm-related robbery type homicides in both Johannesburg Central (18 and 15 respectively) and Thokoza (13 and 14 respectively).³¹

TABLE 4: Murders in six station areas, 2001–05: Firearm and knife/sharp instrument homicides in two murder categories (Data from sample of police dockets — CSVr murder study data)³²

	FIREARM			KNIFE/SHARP INSTRUMENT		
	Category A: Argument-type murders	Category B: Murder during another crime	TOTAL Firearm homicides	Category A: Argument-type murders	Category B: Murder during another crime	TOTAL Knife/sharp-instrument homicides
Cape Town						
Kraaifontein	3	1	4	76	6	82
Nyanga	17	27	44	43	5	48
eThekweni (Durban)						
Kwa-Mashu	16	38	54	21	4	25
Montclair	10	15	25	12	2	14
Gauteng						
Johannesburg Central	18	15	33	16	2	18
Thokoza	13	14	27	10	2	12
Total	77	110	187	178	21	199

These issues are also alluded to in the case studies of perpetrators of violence (Component 5). One of the case studies tells the story of a sentenced perpetrator, “Fortune”, who, with some other boys, “successfully and regularly robbed people on their way to work, acquiring cash, wallets, cell phones, etc”. He uses a firearm as a robbery weapon but his firearm is also a major source of preoccupation in his life, apparently in part because of the status which it gives him. Eventually he lends one of his firearms to a “friend” and when this young man fails to return it, shoots and kills him with another firearm. The latter incident takes place while Fortune is drinking with some companions. Had he not shot the man, “I would have appeared [to his other companions] as if I don’t have guts or powers”, he said.³³

The point is further illustrated in Table 5 below, which also uses data from the murder study. One characteristic by which firearm violence appears to be distinguished is that it tends to be more strongly associated

³¹ The findings here should be taken into account in reading sections of the original murder report (CSVr, 2008a) including the discussion of the distribution of weapons between different categories in section 7.11 and the comparison between Category A and B referred to in section 14 and again in the discussion section (section 19.2.2). Note that firearm homicides in Category A also outnumbered firearm homicides in Category B in Kraaifontein, though here the phenomenon may mainly be seen to reflect the low rates of Category B killings and dramatically higher rates of killings in Category A.

³² The table excludes data from other categories of killings and on murders not linked to firearm or sharp-force violence.

³³ HSRC 2008: 65–67.

with stranger crime such as robberies and other violent property crime. But while the percentage of stranger murders involving firearms (68%) is distinctively higher than that in other known relationship categories, the percentage of incidents involving current or former intimate partners (40%), other family members, relatives or friends (37%) and the outer circle of relationships (44%) is still very substantial. (Note that the relationship “not recorded” category can be assumed to be predominantly composed of stranger homicides so that the high percentage of firearms in this category is consistent with the trend referred to here.)

TABLE 5: Murders in six station areas, 2001–05: Weapons used by relationship between victim and perpetrator (data from selected police dockets — CSVr murder study)

	FIREARM	KNIFE OR OTHER SHARP OBJECT	OTHER	NR	TOTAL	% FIREARMS	% KNIFE OR OTHER SHARP OBJECT	% OTHER WEAPON
Current or former intimate partner	23	26	3	5	57	40	46	5
Other family member, relative or friend	22	33	1	3	59	37	56	2
Outer circle of relationships	43	38	9	7	97	44	39	9
Known to each other but relationship unclear	60	75	10	8	153	39	49	7
A stranger	97	37	4	5	143	68	26	3
Not recorded	352	137	41	46	576	61	24	7
Total	597	346	68	74	1 085	55	32	6

Moving away from fatal violence, the picture changes somewhat, partly due to the fact that, unlike homicides, weapons are not omnipresent in incidents of non-fatal violence. A recent study of rape in Gauteng (Table 6) indicates that in 36% of incidents the perpetrator was armed. However, whether or not the perpetrator was armed differed quite substantially according to different victim age groups. Perpetrators were armed in 41% of rapes of adult women, 27% of rapes of 12–17 year olds, and 5% of rapes of younger children.³⁴

In areas recording high levels of firearm violence, many rapes, and particularly stranger rapes, nevertheless take place at gunpoint. In the Gauteng study, in almost two-thirds of stranger rapes (63%) the perpetrator was armed with a weapon, and in 51% of these cases that weapon was a firearm. This means that 33% of alleged stranger rapists were in possession of firearms. For those involving relatives and current or former intimate partners, both the percentage of perpetrators who were armed and those who were armed with firearms decreased substantially.

- In the case of relatives (the relationship category most frequently linked to the rapes of adolescent and pre-adolescent children), weapons were only used in 7% of cases. Firearms were used in 9% of cases where the relative was armed (1% of all cases involving relatives).

³⁴ Vetten et al. 2008. Also cited in CSVr 2008c: 57.

- In the cases of current or former intimate partners, weapons were used in 25% of cases. Firearms were used in 15% of cases where the relative was armed (4% of all cases involving these relationships).
- In the cases of friends, neighbours and other acquaintances, weapons were also used in 25% of cases. Firearms were used in virtually a third (32%) of these cases (8% of all cases involving these relationships).

It may however be noted that the higher levels of weapons use in stranger rapes did not necessarily translate into higher levels of injury. For adult victims “though a higher proportion of perpetrators in stranger rapes were armed, and a high proportion (36%) of stranger rapes involved two or more perpetrators, stranger rapes were apparently less likely to be associated with non-genital injuries than were current or ex-intimate partner rapes”.³⁵

Effectively therefore it appears that firearms are significantly implicated in each of the three major forms of violence in the metropolitan areas. Though they are more strongly associated with violence involving strangers, they also are used in a significant proportion of acquaintance murders and in some acquaintance rapes. It would also seem to be true that firearms are particularly strongly implicated in the “trio” types of robberies which have been a major concern for middle-class South Africans, including in 92% of house robberies in five station areas with very high volumes of house robberies.³⁶ The concentration of these high profile types of robbery in the metros and surrounding areas is therefore strongly connected to the overall concentration of firearm violence in these areas.

TABLE 6: Sample of rape dockets, Gauteng 2003: Weapons use by relationship between victim and perpetrator³⁷

RELATIONSHIP TO PERPETRATOR	FIREARM	KNIFE	OTHER SHARP OR BLUNT INSTRUMENT	OTHER	TOTAL WEAPONS	TOTAL INCIDENTS IN THIS RELATIONSHIP CATEGORY	% INCIDENTS INVOLVING WEAPONS IN THIS RELATIONSHIP CATEGORY	% FIREARMS OUT OF INCIDENTS IN THIS RELATIONSHIP CATEGORY	% FIREARMS OUT OF WEAPONS IN THIS RELATIONSHIP CATEGORY
Relative	1	8	2	0	11	169	7	1	9
Current or former intimate partner	11	18	17	27	73	289	25	4	15
Friend / acquaintance / neighbour	44	48	21	24	137	550	25	8	32
Someone they just met	11	8	3	4	26	80	33	14	42
Stranger / known by sight only	226	127	46	38	437	689	63	33	51
Other	14	5	4	2	25	145	17	10	56
Unknown	2	1	2	1	6	61	10	3	33
Total	309	215	95	96	715	1 983	36	16	43

³⁵ CSVR 2008c: 47.

³⁶ Newham 2008: 10.

³⁷ CSVR analysis of data from Tracking Justice study (Vetten et al. 2008) December 2008. Note that the data relates to all incidents

2.3.3 Sharp-force (knife) violence

Referring back to Table 4, it may be noted that, apart from the Cape Town stations, the contribution of firearms to the overall level of fatalities was similar to that of knives in the “argument type” murders, which tend to involve people who are known to each other (57 firearm incidents, 59 sharp-force incidents) while in the “crime type” or robbery-type killings firearms far outnumbered knives. This broadly suggests, then, that firearms are the predominant weapon in fatal stranger violence, while the significance of knives increases in “acquaintance violence” incidents.

As suggested in a 1998 study of police dockets in Randburg and Mamelodi, the use of knives in acquaintance violence incidents may make a very significant contribution to the overall toll of non-fatal injuries. The study found that:

The overwhelming majority of injuries, including stabbing and burn injuries and ‘cuts and bruises’, were related to incidents of acquaintance violence. As opposed to the 30 incidents of non-fatal injury caused by firearms, there were roughly 78 that were linked to stabbing, of which a large number were ‘violence where assailant/victim knew each other’ (51), as well as domestic violence (9).³⁸

Knives, then, may be more significant than firearms in non-fatal acquaintance violence. But this does not necessarily mean that they are used more in acquaintance than in stranger violence. In Table 6 it is apparent that overall firearms (309 cases) outnumbered knives (215) in rape incidents as well as in stranger rapes (226 firearms, 127 knives). Knives outnumbered guns in rapes involving other types of victim-perpetrator relationships including in cases:

- Where perpetrator and victim were relatives: knives were used in eight cases, while firearms were used in one.
- Involving current or former intimate partners: knives were used in 18 cases, while firearms were used in 11.
- Involving friends, neighbours and other acquaintances: knives were used in 48 cases, while firearms were used in 44.

Nevertheless, even though knives outnumbered firearms in the various acquaintance rape categories, the majority of rapes involving knives (127 out of 215 or 59%) were perpetrated by strangers, a statistic which reflects the fact that the majority of rape incidents in which weapons were used (437 out of 715 or 61%) were rapes by strangers.³⁹

in the Tracking Justice study where weapons were involved. See the comparison in Table 13 indicating that these were primarily incidents involving adult victims. Note also that it appears that in roughly 70 of the incidents involving weapons, the perpetrators had more than one type of weapon and therefore that this data probably relates to about 640 incidents. However, multiple weapons were probably more common in rapes involving more than one perpetrator, who also tended to be a stranger, and to a lesser degree “friend/acquaintance/neighbour” relationships, so that the relationship categories which were most likely to involve multiple perpetrators were also those most likely to involve weapons.

³⁸ South African Law Commission (2001: 107) as discussed in CSV (2007:153). The concept paper goes on to note that “However, a large number (17 out of 30) of the incidents of gunshot injury were classified in the docket analysis as attack by a stranger”. Combined with the small number of robbery incidents that led to non-fatal firearm injury, this meant roughly two-thirds of the incidents of non-fatal firearm injury were probably stranger crimes. Rape cases were not included in the Law Commission study.

³⁹ Stranger rape accounted for 35% of rapes overall, though with women of 18 years and over the figure was 48%.

In summary, what this appears to indicate is that while fatal violence tends to involve weapons, many incidents of violent crimes such as rape do not. We can also conclude that:

- Incidents of stranger violence are far more likely to involve weapons such as guns or knives than incidents of acquaintance violence.
- Where firearms are used (at least in the metros), this is more likely to be firearms in incidents of stranger violence (including rape and murder incidents) and knives in incidents of acquaintance violence.
- In incidents of acquaintance violence where weapons are used, these are more likely to be knives.

Robbery is generally a stranger crime and it may be reasonable to assume that these generalisations apply, at least in relation to robbery in the metropolitan areas. As it is, robberies are recorded by the police as “aggravated robberies” when either a firearm or a knife or some other potentially lethal weapon is used by the perpetrator — whether this is to intimidate the victim, or to hurt or kill them. Aggravated robberies are therefore by definition mostly firearm or knife robberies. In the metros, at least, firearms appear to strongly outnumber knives in robberies where the victim is killed, and there appear to be relatively few knife as opposed to firearm robbery-associated homicides (in Table 4, 110 such firearm homicides and 21 knife homicides).

Aggravated robberies are by definition mostly firearm or knife robberies

Some of the “high profile” sub-categories of aggravated robbery clearly tend to be associated with the use of firearms⁴⁰ though as discussed further below these high profile categories make up the minority of aggravated robberies. Consistent with this, in Gauteng the majority of stranger rapes which were perpetrated with weapons were perpetrated with guns and it is likely that aggravated robbery

follows this pattern in Gauteng. However, on a national level the picture is likely to be different though the evidence is not consistent. Data from National Victims of Crime surveys in 1998 and 2007 indicated that knives or other sharp objects slightly outnumbered guns in robberies, though in the 2003 survey guns dramatically outnumbered knives.⁴¹

2.3.4 A culture of violence and criminality

How then should we account for this phenomenon of high levels of aggravated robbery and the partly associated phenomena of high levels of stranger firearm and knife violence in the metros?

A relatively small proportion of robberies, including some of those involving foreign groups, might be said to involve more sophisticated organised crime groups or crime syndicates. It is primarily in so far as these types of crimes impact on suburban middle-class areas, usually in the form of trio robberies, as well as in relation

⁴⁰ A 1999 article indicates that firearms were used in 92% of bank robberies overall, and 87% of vehicle hijackings in KwaZulu-Natal and 66% of “attacks on farms and smallholdings” (Hennop 1999).

⁴¹ Pharoah 2008: 8.

to other robberies impacting on the formal business sector (bank robberies, cash in transit heists and truck hijackings), that they tend to be associated with the more sophisticated criminal groups. These groups may for instance be more stable, tend to have an identified leader who participates in the robberies, or boss for whom the work is conducted, and established receivers who will exchange the cars or other goods procured in robberies for cash. These groups would possibly come closest to conforming to established notions of “organised crime”. But even in the metros, these groups account for a relatively small proportion of aggravated robberies and an even smaller proportion of robberies more generally, though again the Western Cape, which has a history of more formalised gangsterism, may be a partial exception.⁴²

Nevertheless the greater part of the problem of stranger violent crime in the metros (particularly that which takes place outside of the suburbs in townships and inner city areas) is associated with young men who tend to be invested in some kind of criminal identity and associate with other like-minded people, but cannot be said to be part of any organised crime groups or syndicates. Those involved fall across a spectrum which includes criminals who operate as individual rapists or robbers, to large numbers affiliated to mainly informal but sometimes more formal groups or gangs. Many of these young men are associated with informal groups and these are the key drivers of the problem of aggravated robbery. They may also tend to be associated with many of the group rapes which in Gauteng, for instance, tend to be stranger crimes.

.....

Many of those who are now involved in the more sophisticated type of organised robbery groups would have first ‘learnt the ropes’ of robbery as street robbers working with friends or other peers in informal groups

.....

The involvement of more sophisticated groups and networks in robberies appears to be increasing, and it might therefore be said that types of organised crime groups have started to become an entrenched factor contributing to and driving rates of aggravated robbery in the metropolitan areas. But many of those who are now involved in the more sophisticated type of organised robbery groups also would have first “learnt the ropes” of robbery as street robbers working with friends or other peers in informal groups. Even the problem of violent organised crime associated with some of the more sophisticated and daring aggravated robberies can itself be seen to have most of its roots in the broader culture of criminality and violence which has institutionalised itself in these areas.

At root it would appear that the pervasiveness of these types of crimes reflects the consolidation of a widespread brutalised and criminalised culture in the metropolitan areas. Focusing on the origins of a culture of violent criminality in Gauteng, Kynoch, for instance, describes the forces that produced this culture in the following terms:

⁴² See Newham 2008: 11. See also Irish-Qhobosheane 2007. On the Western Cape specifically, see Pinnock 1984, Standing 2006 and Steinberg. Conversations with Antony Altbeker and Gareth Newham were also helpful in developing this assessment of the significance of organised crime, although the view presented should be seen as that of CSVr.

At the heart of a massive migrant labour nexus, the Witwatersrand industrialised earlier, to a greater extent and more rapidly than any other urban centre in colonial Africa. Successive South African governments devoted significant resources to limiting and regulating the urban African population. These developments require that we move beyond the labour question to consider the ways in which African migrants shaped and adapted to a volatile, and frequently brutalising, mining environment and how mineworkers influenced patterns of violence in the urban locations. We have to take account of state policies that exposed millions of boys and men to humiliating police harassment and a violent prison system. Finally, state sponsorship of township violence further undermined the rule of law. These conditions, unique to South Africa, nurtured a culture of violence that has reproduced itself ever since.⁴³

While this culture has a long history, it has consolidated itself within the environment of cheek by jowl affluence and poverty which distinguishes current day metropolitan South Africa.

Rather than specialising in a specific type of violent crime, many offenders are involved in multiple forms of criminality and violence. Data in the sexual violence report (Component 3) on the types of previous convictions for alleged rapists from a sample of 2003 Gauteng police dockets indicate that of alleged rapists with criminal records, 5% had criminal records for rape only. The remaining 95% consisted of:

- 4% who had criminal records for rape and other violent or property offences.
- 7% who had previous convictions for robbery, sometimes combined with other violent or property offence convictions.
- 25% who only had previous convictions for violent offences other than robbery such as murder, attempted murder or assault GBH.
- 11% who had previous convictions both for violence and for (not violent) property offences such as theft.
- 48% who only had previous convictions for theft and/or a category of “other” offences which mostly included drinking, drug or driving related offences.⁴⁴

Therefore 52% of alleged rapists with previous convictions had convictions for offences of violence including assault GBH, robbery, murder, culpable homicide and illegal possession of a firearm.⁴⁵ Alleged perpetrators of acquaintance rapes were just as likely to have criminal records as those arrested for stranger rape.⁴⁶

An SAPS study on the criminal records of those arrested for murder shows that more than a third of those with criminal records had previous convictions for violent offences such as murder, assault GBH, sexual violence, robbery and illegal pointing of firearms.⁴⁷ As in the rape data referred to above, the murder report (Component

⁴³ Kynoch 2006: 32. See, for instance, Mokwena 1991; Altbeker 2001; Segal, Pelo and Rampe 2001; and Simpson 2001 for other perspectives on the origins and character of this culture.

⁴⁴ CSVr analysis of data from the Tracking Justice study in CSVr 2008c: 98 (Table 23).

⁴⁵ CSVr 2008c: 98. Eighteen percent (18%) of suspects in this study had previous convictions.

⁴⁶ Ibid: 100.

⁴⁷ Data from SAPS 2004 as summarised in CSVr 2007: 127. Of 1 725 identified suspects for whom dockets contained information on previous convictions, 1 485 (86%) had no previous convictions.

2) shows that alleged perpetrators of “argument type” murders associated with acquaintance violence (Category A) were just as likely to have previous convictions as those arrested for “crime type” murders associated with stranger violence (Category B).⁴⁸

Perpetrators of aggravated robberies are frequently linked to other forms of armed violence. Many of those who are imprisoned for crimes such as murder linked to incidents of acquaintance violence also indicate that they have long criminal careers in robbery. The vast majority of perpetrators of violent crime in the case studies (Component 5) were involved in violence both as part of active criminal activities and within their social relationships.⁴⁹

This point is reinforced by Table 7, which deals with the criminal records of suspects in rape and murder cases. In both the rape and murder studies, suspects with previous convictions were a minority of suspects who were arrested or otherwise positively identified (18% in the rape study and 19% in the murder study). However, previous conviction data may be seen to substantially underestimate the extent of previous involvement by arrestees in offending.⁵⁰ It is of little value in evaluating the *extent* of previous offending by suspects but far more useful in exploring questions to do with the *type* of previous offending associated with certain groups of suspects.

There is, however, an important qualification to this point. As reflected in Table 7, a further feature of this type of data is that it is heavily weighted towards acquaintance violence. This is apparent at two levels. Firstly, far more suspects are arrested for acquaintance violence than stranger violence cases (the latter are much more difficult to apprehend). As a result suspects in stranger violence cases are likely to be relatively poorly represented in overall samples. Secondly, because stranger violence cases are more difficult to solve (related to the fact that perpetrators are more difficult to identify) they tend to make up a relatively small proportion of all recorded previous convictions. In both Table 7(a) and (b) this is apparent from the relatively small number of robbery cases among both categories of previous convictions, with convictions for robbery (both aggravated and common) only 5% (12 out of 24) of previous convictions in the rape cases, and 13% in the murder cases.

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Previous conviction data may be seen to substantially underestimate the extent of previous involvement by arrestees in offending. It is of little value in evaluating the *extent* of previous offending by suspects, but far more useful in exploring questions to do with the *type* of previous offending associated with certain groups of suspects

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⁴⁸ CSVr 2008a: 101. 19% of suspects in this study had previous convictions.

⁴⁹ HSRC 2008.

⁵⁰ This applies even in a context such as that of Australia of lower offending rates and relatively greater criminal justice efficiency (see, for example, Lievore 2004).

TABLE 7: Previous convictions of suspects in stranger and acquaintance murder and rape cases⁵¹

Table 7(a): Rape cases

	STRANGER	ACQUAINTANCE	TOTAL	% STRANGER	% ACQUAINTANCE	TOTAL %
Robbery convictions	4	8	12	33	67	100
Other violence	24	68	92	26	74	100
Other convictions	37	108	145	26	74	100
Total	65	184	249	26	74	100
% robbery convictions	6	4	5			
% other violence convictions	37	37	37			
% other convictions	57	59	58			
Total %	100	100	100			

Table 7(b): Murder cases

	STRANGER	ACQUAINTANCE	TOTAL	% STRANGER	% ACQUAINTANCE	TOTAL %
Robbery convictions	2	8	10	20	80	100
Other violence	4	33	37	11	89	100
Other convictions	2	27	29	7	93	100
Total	8	68	76	11	89	100
% robbery convictions	25	12	13			
% other violence convictions	50	49	49			
% other convictions	25	39	38			
Total %	100	100	100			

Part of the significance of this data however is the distribution of previous robbery convictions among those arrested or otherwise identified as suspects in respectively stranger and acquaintance rape and murder cases. Previous convictions for robbery are singled out here as being an indicator of previous involvement in stranger violence and appear partly to serve as a predictor that a suspect will be linked to a stranger rape or stranger murder.

- Thus the “% stranger” column indicates that suspects in rape and murder cases who had previous convictions for robbery were slightly more likely to be suspects in stranger crime cases than a person with previ-

⁵¹ Source: Further analysis of data from CSVr murder study (CSVr 2008a) and CSVr analysis of data from Tracking Justice study (Vetten et al. 2008). Data in the tables denotes types of previous convictions for 79 murder suspects and 189 rape suspects. However, data for previous convictions for “not recorded/unknown” and “other” relationship categories has been excluded so the total number of suspects is slightly less than this. Note also that there are differences in the “other” category as between Table (a) and (b). In Table (b) this pertains to housebreaking, theft, fraud, and malicious damage to property cases. In Table (a) it pertains to housebreaking and theft convictions as well as a mixed group of “other” convictions discussed in more detail in the sexual violence report (CSVr 2008c: 97).

ous convictions for other violence or other crime. While the numbers are small in both cases and should be approached with some caution, the same pattern is apparent in both tables, with the percentage of suspects with previous robbery convictions being slightly greater in both tables than those with “other violence” or “other” convictions.

- The same point is apparent in the “% robbery convictions” rows in Table 7(a) and (b), in which those implicated in acts of stranger violence (rape or murder) are more likely than persons implicated in acquaintance violence to have previous robbery convictions.

But the key point in terms of analysis being conducted here is not the apparent correlation between “stranger violence” and previous robbery convictions. What is apparent is that suspects in incidents of acquaintance rape and murder were not dramatically less likely to have been implicated in robberies. Thus in the case of suspects in rape cases, 4% of suspects in acquaintance violence cases had previous convictions for robbery, a percentage only slightly smaller than the 6% of suspects in stranger rapes.

As indicated, data of this kind over-represent acquaintance violence and under-represent stranger violence suspects. Nevertheless it appears significant that two-thirds of those with previous robbery convictions in the rape cases (eight out of 12) were suspected of acquaintance rapes. Likewise eight out of ten of those with previous robbery convictions in the murder cases were suspects in acquaintance murders. Overall this suggests that suspects in acquaintance violence cases are only slightly less likely than stranger violence suspects to have previous robbery convictions.

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Suspects in incidents of acquaintance rape and murder were not dramatically less likely to have been implicated in robberies

.....

Furthermore as suggested by the “% other violence” row in both Table 7(a) and (b), suspects in stranger rapes or murders appear just as likely as suspects in acquaintance rapes or murders to have “other violence” previous convictions. A large proportion of these convictions are for common assault or assault GBH, offences which tend to be associated with acquaintance violence, suggesting that suspects in stranger violence cases are as likely as suspects in acquaintance violence cases to be linked to acquaintance violence.

What is distinctive about violent crime in South Africa is not merely the criminal identity which young men are invested in, the diverse character of the groups and formations associated with it, nor the overlapping involvement of participants in multiple forms of violence. A central distinguishing feature is the prominence of weapons, including firearms as well as knives or other instruments of “sharp force”.

As illustrated above in Table 6, many incidents of violent crime in South Africa do not involve the use of weapons. But at the heart of the problem of violent crime in South Africa is a culture of violence and criminality. The ability to operate and achieve credibility within this culture is strongly related to one’s readiness to resort to

extreme violence with a weapon. It is this readiness and willingness to use lethal weapons which is the principal factor underpinning the current reign of violence in metropolitan South Africa.

2.4 Violent crime outside of the metropolitan areas

The most detailed data that we have is focused on the metropolitan areas and therefore cannot be relied on as a consistent source of information for what is taking place outside the metropolitan areas. Nevertheless, as reflected in Figure 4 above and in data which will be presented further in this section of the report, data from outside of the metros tend to demonstrate certain consistent features. It therefore would appear reasonable to use this in an attempt to reach some tentative conclusions about the ways in which violence outside of the metropolitan areas differs from that inside of them.

Before doing so it is important to note the diversity of the areas which are being referred to, which include at least one other metropolitan area (Nelson Mandela metro, which is the smallest of the metros), as well as towns including cities such as East London, Bloemfontein, Nelspruit and numerous smaller towns, farming and other

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Murders which take place outside of the metros are more likely to involve other weapons, including knives, 'blunt force' or other forms of physical violence than do those in urban areas

rural areas. It would appear that when talking about the areas "outside of the metros", roughly a third of the population of these areas might be described as urban, with the other two-thirds living in farming and other rural areas.⁵²

Included here are both the Northern Cape, which has consistently recorded some of the highest levels nationally of rape and assault GBH, and Limpopo, which for several years has recorded the lowest levels in a

number of the serious violent crime categories. Thus even if there are some consistencies in the data for the parts of South Africa outside of the metros, this is likely to conceal some substantial differences between different areas.

Nevertheless it appears that violence outside the metros is in some ways distinct from that inside them.

Firstly, it would appear that murders which take place outside of the metros are more likely to involve other weapons including knives, "blunt force" or other forms of physical violence than do those in urban areas. As reflected in Figure 4(a), firearm homicides account for a higher percentage of all homicides inside the metros than of homicides outside them. In fact in the three most recent years covered by NIMSS (2004, 2005 and 2007), a greater percentage of homicides outside the metropolitan areas involved knives than involved firearms. Though in 2004 the difference between the two was relatively small, in 2007, sharp force killings

⁵² Based on statistics indicating that the metros account for roughly 40% of South Africa's population. Close to 60% of South Africa's population is supposed to be urbanised and therefore roughly 20% of South Africa's urban population, and 60% of South Africa's total population, lives outside of the metros.

accounted for virtually half (44%), while homicides with firearms were close to a quarter (27%) of homicides outside of the metros.

Secondly, as reflected in Table 2 there seems to be little question about the concentration of aggravated robbery, and particularly the trio robberies, in the metros and areas surrounding them. Not only do the police statistics unequivocally point to this conclusion, but this is also the conclusion of the 2003 Victims of Crime survey, with 3.6% of metro residents reporting being victims of robbery in this survey, more than in any of the other types of area surveyed.⁵³

The 2003 National Victims of Crime Survey indicates that Gauteng (3.9%) and KwaZulu-Natal (2.4%) recorded the highest percentage of respondents saying that they had been victims of robbery. But levels of robbery recorded in the Western Cape (1.7%) were similar to those recorded in North West (1.7%) and Mpumalanga (1.6%).⁵⁴ From April 2001 to March 2005, SAPS statistics indicate that the per capita rates of common robbery in the Northern Cape were lower only than those in Gauteng and the Western Cape but higher than all other provinces. The sharp differential in robbery rates between Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape and the other provinces is not confirmed by all other data.

As reflected in Table 8, SAPS crime statistics for 2005–06 indicate that the high proportion of aggravated robbery cases in the 13 key policing areas referred to in Table 2 is partly a result of the high concentration of cases in the “high profile six” key robbery categories which have tended to attract the most media atten-

tion. For these the 13 areas accounted for 81% of cases in 2005–06. But in relation to “other” aggravated robberies (which might be referred to as “street robberies” or “robberies in public space”), the share of the 13 areas falls to 67%. Most striking here, however, is that the share of the 13 areas in relation to “common robbery” is a mere 23%.

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The high proportion of aggravated robbery cases in 13 key policing areas is partly a result of the high concentration of cases in the ‘high profile six’ key robbery categories which have tended to attract the most media attention

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⁵³ Burton et al. 2004: 135.

⁵⁴ Ibid: 136. Also Pharoah 2008: 7.

TABLE 8: Percentage of categories and sub-categories of robbery in metropolitan and surrounding areas in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape (SAPS statistics, 2005–06)

	“HIGH PROFILE” SUB-CATEGORIES OF AGGRAVATED ROBBERY						Total “High profile six”	Total aggravated robbery	Balance (Aggravated robbery in public space)	Common robbery
	Vehicle hijacking	Residential robbery	Business robbery	Cash in transit	Bank robbery	Truck hijackings				
Gauteng (seven policing areas)	6 890	5 909	3 068	143	45	425	16 480	49 784	33 304	24 420
Durban North	979	642	153	7	0	17	1 798	9 424	7 626	3 362
Durban South	1 317	554	136	21	3	20	2 051	6 538	4 487	2 868
Umfolozu (KwaZulu-Natal)	467	206	52	9	1	8	743	3 660	2 917	2 036
Midlands (KwaZulu-Natal)	142	254	139	16	2	26	579	2 292	1 713	1 097
West Metropole (Cape Town)	593	299	57	23	0	5	977	7 230	6 253	4 552
East Metropole (Cape Town)	358	127	42	23	1	4	555	4 846	4 291	3 330
Sub-total	10 746	7 991	3 647	242	52	505	23 183	83 774	60 591	17 245
National	12 825	10 173	4 387	385	59	829	28 658	119 726	91 068	74 723
% of national in Gauteng and six other police areas	84	79	83	63	88	61	81	70	67	23

If these statistics are reliable they indicate that while the 13 areas have a disproportionately high share of aggravated robbery, and particularly of the high profile “big six” categories, they have a disproportionately low share of common robbery relative to population (Gauteng alone has 21% of the national population).⁵⁵ This would imply that common robbery is in fact most concentrated outside the metros.

As indicated, what is supposed to determine whether a robbery is classified as “aggravated” or “common” is whether or not a weapon such as a firearm or knife is used in the robbery. Understood in these terms, therefore, the lower levels of aggravated robbery outside the metros would appear to reflect not only lower levels of firearm use, but less use of weapons overall in robberies outside the metros. In so far as it is less weapons-based, it is also far less likely to be linked to fatalities. Because wealth is fairly concentrated in the metros, it may also be assumed that the potential gain from such robbery is in general much lower. But the available evidence indicates that robbery is nevertheless a widespread phenomenon, with close to half (48% in 2005–06) of the

⁵⁵ Some questions about trends in official statistics on common robbery are raised in the concept paper. (CSVR 2007: 42–43 (paragraph 4.1.2)).

combined total of all reported aggravated and common robberies taking place outside the 13 policing areas which represent the major metros and areas around them.

As reflected in Figure 1, both assault GBH and sexual violence appear to be more evenly distributed throughout the country than are aggravated robberies. While the Northern Cape stands out as having the highest rates of reported cases in both categories of offences, its population is relatively small. As a result, despite the high rates of these offences in the province, the number of cases in the Northern Cape makes only a small contribution to the national total. Nevertheless these high rates would appear to fit in with a phenomenon documented in the 2003 National Victims of Crime Survey in terms of which “Coloured respondents were most likely to say they had been assaulted (3%), compared to other ethnic groups (2% each)”.⁵⁶

The 2003 National Victims of Crime Survey indicates that “respondents from metro (3%) and urban (3%) areas were more likely to say they had been assaulted in the last year than those from farming (2%) and traditional rural areas (1%)”.⁵⁷ While the survey suggests that these differences in reporting “may be linked to conservative notions” prevalent in rural areas “about what constitutes an assault”, it is possible that there is some truth to these figures. If so this would mean that assault is a general urban phenomenon rather than being especially concentrated in the metros.

2.4.1 The gender profile of victims of homicide

A further way in which murders outside and inside the four metros appear to differ from each other is in relation to the gender profile of victims (Figure 5). It should be emphasised that the differences here are small. Thus for the three years (2003, 2005, and 2007) for which we have data on this issue:

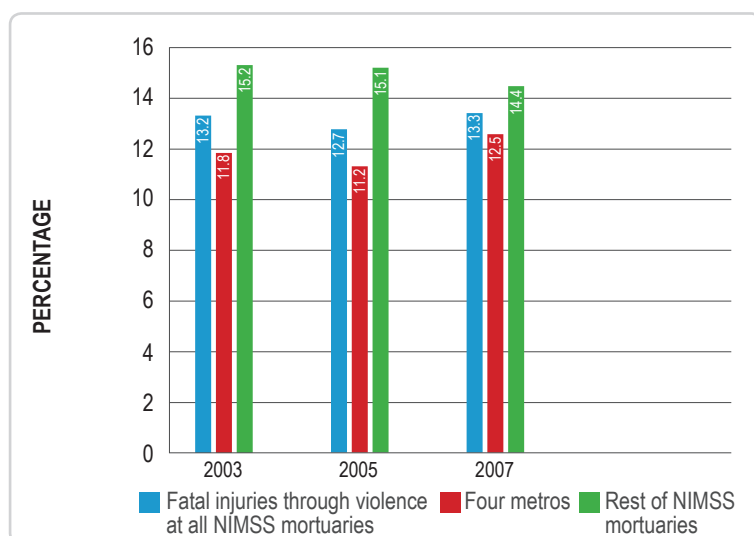
- The biggest difference recorded so far was in 2005, when women accounted for 11.2% of homicide victims in the metros and 15.1% outside of them, a difference of 3.9 percentage points.
- The smallest difference recorded so far was in 2007, when women accounted for 12.5% % of victims in the metros and 14.4% outside them, a difference of 1.9 percentage points.

But though the differences here might be regarded as small, there nevertheless appears to be a consistent tendency for the percentage of victims of homicide who are female to be higher outside of the metros than inside them.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Burton et al. 2004: 128. See also CSVN 2007: 131–133.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Though there are fluctuations in the proportions in all of the metros in the NIMSS system, Tshwane also may be singled out as tending to record a higher percentage of female homicide than the other metros, with over 16% of murders in both 2003 and 2005 involving female victims.

FIGURE 5: Percentage of victims of homicide who were female (NIMSS data)

The difference in the profile of weapons used inside and outside the metros appears also to be partly aligned with the gender of victims. As suggested by NIMSS 2003 data (Figures 6(a) and (b)), in all localities male victims are more likely to be victims of firearm or sharp-force violence.

- The 53% of male victims who were victims of firearm violence accounted for 90% of all victims of firearm violence.
- The 31% of male victims who were victims of sharp-force violence accounted for 88% of victims of sharp-force violence in that year.
- By implication the 40% of female victims who were victims of firearm violence, and 27% who were victims of sharp-force violence, accounted for 10% of victims of firearm violence, and 12% of victims of sharp-force violence respectively.

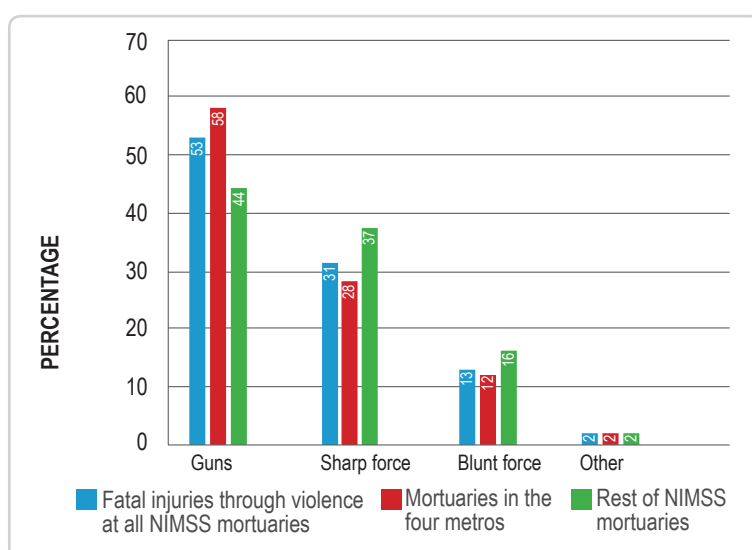
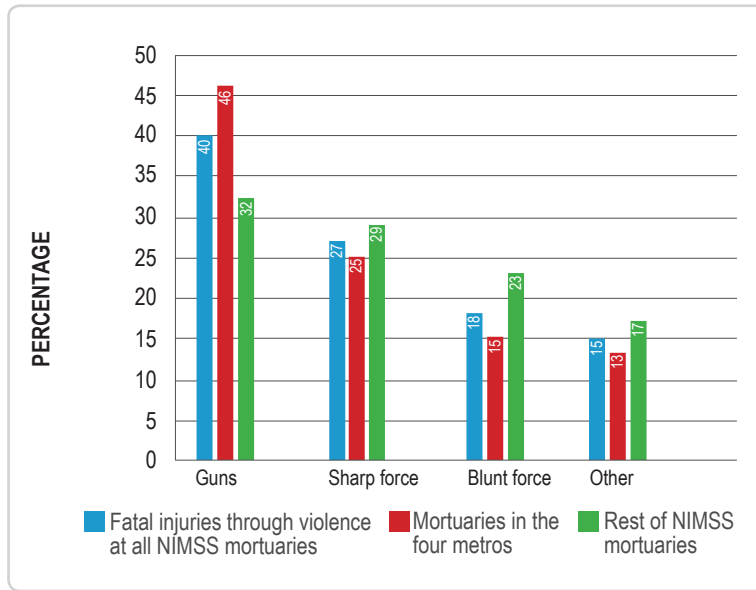
FIGURE 6(a): Male victims of homicide 2003 — weapons or force used (NIMSS data)

Figure 6(b): Female victims of homicide 2003 — weapons or force used (NIMSS data)



On the other hand blunt force was responsible for only 12% of male deaths in the metros, and 16% outside of them. For female victims, though, 15% of victims in the metros and virtually a quarter (23%) outside them were victims of blunt force injuries.

In the metros 13% of female victims were killed by other⁵⁹ means while outside the metros the percentage was 17%. These are substantially higher percentages than the 2% of men who were victims of other methods in both types of localities.

However, this does not mean that women suffer a heavier burden from blunt force and other violence. Because of the dramatically higher rates of male homicide, most of the raw figures in these categories in fact translate into a higher overall number of male deaths. For instance the 23% of female blunt force victims outside of the cities amounts to 134 victims, a number substantially lower than the equivalent 16% of male victims (494). It is only in relation to other methods outside the metros that the 17% of female victims (100) translates into a higher figure than those for males (68 victims).

Ultimately what this data indicates in terms of the gender breakdown is not that women suffer more from blunt force or violence other than that delivered by firearms or sharp force, but that men suffer dramatically higher levels of fatal firearm and sharp-force violence than do women. In fact, men also suffer higher levels of fatal blunt force violence (1 186 cases in 2003) than do women (255 cases). (It should be mentioned that this violence, whether suffered by women or men, is usually at the hands of other men.)

In 2003, at least, the only category in terms of which women and men suffered an equivalent level of fatal injury in terms of national level NIMSS data was in “other” causes of fatal injury (a total of 410 such deaths were recorded, of which roughly 50% each were deaths of women and men).

⁵⁹ The “other” category includes strangulation or asphyxiation as well as other methods such as poisoning.

The marginally greater percentage of female homicides outside the metros is perhaps a by-product of the fact that levels of firearm violence and fatal aggravated robbery, both of which tend to have male victims, are lower outside the metros. It also reflects the fact that areas outside the metros have proportionately more females than do the metropolitan areas.⁶⁰

2.4.2 Acquaintance violence and stranger violence

One question about the differences between the metros and other areas relates to the distinction between “acquaintance violence” and “stranger violence”. Acquaintance violence is violence between people who are known to each other in some way, whether they are intimate partners, members of the same family or household, friends, neighbours, or merely fellow community members.⁶¹ Stranger violence is distinguished by the fact that victim and perpetrator are not acquaintances.⁶²

Urban areas appear to be far more heavily affected by stranger violence than are other areas. It seems reasonable to assume that this is true as encounters with strangers are a pervasive feature of urban life, while presumably being far less common outside of urban areas and even quite rare in some more rural parts.

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Encounters with strangers are a pervasive feature of urban life, while presumably being far less common outside of urban areas and even quite rare in some more rural parts

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The implication of this is that the concentration of robbery in metropolitan areas is linked to a broader pattern in which stranger violence is more concentrated in these, and other urban, areas. Similarly the implication is that stranger rape is much more strongly associated with urban than with rural areas, though as this report will indicate, the evidence does not uniformly support this conclusion.

The inference is not that the metropolitan areas have less acquaintance violence. Levels of acquaintance violence in the metros are probably at least as high as they are in most of the areas outside of them. The implication is merely that outside the metros, and particularly in rural areas, stranger violence is much rarer.

Evidence that a high percentage of some of the key forms of violent crime tends to involve acquaintances has been provided by the SAPS (see Table 9). This suggests that roughly nine out of ten cases of assault GBH and assault common, four out of five cases of murder, and three out of four cases of rape which are recorded by the police are reported to involve perpetrators who are known to the victim.

⁶⁰ Thus for instance Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, which are the two least urbanised provinces, have the highest percentage female populations (Kok and Collinson 2006: 22) and the metros, particularly Gauteng (National Population Unit), have higher percentage male than female populations. This reflects the fact that economic migrancy to the main economic centres tends to be more male than female.

⁶¹ The SAPS refer to this as “social contact crime”.

⁶² See the discussion in the concept paper (CSVR 2007: 39–40 and 91–101).

TABLE 9: Victim-offender relationships as per SAPS study of 9 623 dockets relating to cases of violent crime⁶³

	% RELATIVES AS PERPETRATORS	% PERPETRATORS WHO ARE RELATIVES, FRIENDS OR ACQUAINTANCES OF VICTIM	% PERPETRATORS KNOWN TO VICTIM	% STRANGER
Murder	20	62	82	18
Attempted murder	9	41	59	41
Rape	16	57	76	24
Assault GBH	25	72	89	11
Common assault	26	66	89	11
Average of above categories	19	60	79	21

One of the big questions is about the reliability of SAPS studies. In general SAPS reports do not provide much detail about what efforts have been made to ensure that docket samples represent the broader docket population.⁶⁴ At the same time, while their exact sampling methods are often not clear, their studies apparently tend to have reasonably good national coverage, so the information provided by them is not to be disregarded.

But though the SAPS tends to be fairly unequivocal in its assertions about the extent to which violence in South Africa involves acquaintances, other research evidence does not uniformly support their conclusions.

- According to SAPS figures, the perpetrator was known to the victim in three out of four incidents of reported rape. If it is true that stranger violence is more concentrated in the metro and other urban areas, this would lead one to infer that stranger rapes are more likely to take place in urban areas, while acquaintance rape is the predominant form of rape elsewhere. Figures from a police docket-based study of rape in Gauteng in 2003, indicating that 35% of rapes overall involved perpetrators who were strangers (see Table 6),⁶⁵ might be seen as consistent with the SAPS statistics, as they are from a province which is heavily urbanised and metropolitan and therefore, in terms of this framework, likely to have higher levels of stranger rape.

⁶³ CSVr 2007: 93 adapted and modified from table provided in SAPS 2006: 56. It is assumed that the data provided excludes cases where the relationship was unknown. Note that each row of the two right-hand columns adds up to 100%. The SAPS annual report notes that the number of these cases was proportionately higher among murder cases, accounting for 27.5% of murder dockets examined in this study.

⁶⁴ The SAPS figures on murder cases for instance presumably exclude a substantial number of murder cases where the relationship between the perpetrator and victim is unknown. It might be assumed that these are mostly stranger murders and therefore their methodology would potentially tend to inflate estimates of the proportion of acquaintance murders. However, this type of factor should not be particularly significant in other types of cases where the still living victims are able to state whether they knew the perpetrator or not. It has also been suggested that, because the SAPS bases figures such as these on closed dockets this is likely to lead to distortions in the sample as these are disproportionately acquaintance violence cases that are closed more easily (Altbeker 2008: 132). Again, however, in so far as this is a problem, this is likely to apply more to murder cases, which are on average kept open far longer than are other cases. On the other hand there are many who assume that cases of violence, including particularly rape cases, are far more likely to be reported if they involve strangers, but if this is so the SAPS figures would be likely to under, rather than overrepresent acquaintance violence.

⁶⁵ That is 689 out of 1 983 victims.

However, it should be noted that in a late 1990s survey of women in the largely rural provinces of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape, stranger rape was also said to account for 50% of rape incidents in the past year. While it has been suggested that this study is likely to under-represent forced sex involving acquaintances,⁶⁶ it nevertheless suggests that it may be a mistake merely to equate the phenomenon of stranger rape with more urban parts of the country and that stranger rape may also be widespread in some non-metropolitan areas.

- According to SAPS figures, assaults, including both those classified as assault GBH and common assault, are the violent offences most likely to involve acquaintances, with acquaintance violence accounting for nine out of ten recorded cases. Very similar figures were also provided in a study, now somewhat dated, of police dockets in the Northern Cape, which also found that at least 84% of cases of assault GBH involved acquaintances.⁶⁷ While these figures are not implausible, again it should be mentioned that the 2003 National Victims of Crime Survey found that 31% of perpetrators of assault were not known to the victim⁶⁸ while the 2007 national survey indicated that 24% were strangers,⁶⁹ suggesting the possibility that the SAPS figures might be an overestimate.

Despite some ambiguities in the evidence as to the exact degree to which this is so, it seems reasonable to

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The highest estimate is that strangers account for 31% of assaults

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believe that most violent crime takes the form of acquaintance violence. From the figures quoted above, the highest estimate is that strangers account for 31% of assaults. While not wishing to dismiss evidence pointing to substantial levels of stranger rape, even in largely rural provinces, it would seem that the weight

of evidence and experience of people working in the field of violence against women points strongly to acquaintances being the major perpetrators of sexual violence. Robberies as a form of violent crime tend to involve strangers,⁷⁰ but robberies themselves only account for a fifth to a quarter of reported violence, and so the relationship patterns in robberies are not decisive in determining the overall profile of incidents of violent crime in terms of the relationship between victim and perpetrator.

If it is true that stranger violence tends to be much less outside of the metros, and particularly outside of the urban areas, than it is inside of them, and that violence in these areas is overwhelmingly acquaintance violence, then this would also be consistent with some of the differences observed between the two types of areas.

⁶⁶ Jewkes and Abrahams 2002: 1235.

⁶⁷ See Mistry et al. 2001, quoted in CSV 2007: 96.

⁶⁸ Burton et al. 2004: 129.

⁶⁹ Pharoah 2008: 9.

⁷⁰ A high proportion of robberies take place in a situation where victim and perpetrator are strangers but a significant proportion of robbery victims appear to know the perpetrator(s). In the murder study, for instance, 45% of crime type (Category B) murders were identified as involving strangers and a further 31 as “relationship unknown”, which also may be seen as tending to imply stranger relationships. Nevertheless, though none of these murders were linked to intimate relationships, 24% were identified as involving victims and perpetrators who were known to each other in some way (CSV 2008a: 49). Also see a survey of violence and crime against children which indicates that robberies at schools and other robberies involving children may fairly frequently involve acquaintances. Leoschut and Burton 2006: 57–58. See also The 2003 National Victimization Survey which provides a figure of 30% of victims knowing the perpetrator specifically in armed robberies in the home (Burton et al. 2004: 136).

Estimating that the 13 areas account for roughly 40% of the national population, it is apparent that rape and assault GBH in these areas is roughly commensurate with their share of the national population (Table 10). On the other hand robbery and particularly aggravated robbery is much more concentrated in the metro. The areas outside the metros appear to have a share of robbery, and particularly aggravated robbery, substantially lower than their 60% share of the national population. While murder is mainly linked to the argument and dispute type situations associated with assault GBH, it is also significantly linked to aggravated robbery and the disproportionately greater share of murder in the metros might be seen to reflect this fact.

If acquaintance violence is more predominant outside the metros than inside them (as a result of the lower levels of stranger violence outside the metros), then better data from outside the metros is likely to contribute to shifts in our picture of violence in South Africa.

TABLE 10: Percentage distribution of major offence categories inside and outside metros (SAPS statistics, 2005–06)

	% IN AND AROUND METROS (13 POLICING AREAS)	% OUTSIDE METROS
Robbery aggravated	70	30
Robbery (aggravated and common)	52	48
Murder	48	52
Rape	41	59
Assault GBH	37	63

For instance it appears that acquaintance murders are more likely than stranger murders to target female victims. In the murder study (Component 2) for instance, women accounted for 18% of victims of argument-type murders (which primarily involve acquaintances) but only 8% of murders occurring “during the commission of another crime” (which are primarily stranger murders).⁷¹ If the current data is biased towards areas with relatively high levels of stranger violence, then further improvements in data from outside the metros, and more comprehensive coverage of rural homicides, is likely to be associated with an increase (though probably quite small) in the percentage share of women as victims of homicide.

Similarly as indicated above, the profile of weapons used in rural areas appears to be significantly different. It may be assumed that improvements in information on rural homicide are likely to further strengthen the current evidence that sharp force homicides outweigh firearm homicides — though firearms remain the primary homicide weapon in metropolitan areas.

2.5 Towards a more accurate and equitable picture of violent crime

2.5.1 The politics of violent crime

Available data is biased towards the metros but even within the metros there are factors which contribute to the visibility of some types of violence and the relative invisibility of others.

⁷¹ CSVr 2008: 45.

- South Africa's middle class is heavily concentrated in the urban and metropolitan areas, as are influential business groups. In so far as middle class South Africans and business groups are affected by violent crime, this often takes the form of the six "high-profile" categories of aggravated robbery (see Table 8). Though this applies to the minority of these cases, these crimes are sometimes associated with fatalities or other physical violence including rape (rather than merely the threat of violence, which is a feature of most robberies) and therefore a major source of fear for middle class South Africans. As in other countries, the middle classes and business are better able to make their voices heard than are poorer people, and so their concerns relating to crime have a disproportionate impact on the national anti-crime agenda. While it is imperative to hear and address middle class and business concerns relating to violent crime, it is no less important to respond to violent crime as it impacts on the lives of poorer people.
- South Africa has a range of civil society lobby groups which have contributed to greater awareness of issues such as violence against women and firearm violence and have assisted government in developing measures to address these problems.
- For various reasons to do with the economics of the media and news values, the media also foreground cer-

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As in other countries, the middle classes and business are better able to make their voices heard than are poorer people, and so their concerns relating to crime have a disproportionate impact on the national anti-crime agenda

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tain issues and ignore others. The media are not a homogenous entity. Nevertheless due to social and economic factors the media, and particularly the printed media in South Africa, serve mainly as a voice of the middle class, and tend to foreground the concerns of the middle class, and give greater coverage to crimes against middle class South Africans.⁷² The media also give coverage to statements and publications by civil society groups, and rely on the staff of some of these groups as commentators on key issues of the day. The effect of this is merely that the media primarily give

added volume to the voices of the middle class and of civil society groups, but do not necessarily give exposure to the concerns of other victims of violence who are not represented by either of these.

It should not be assumed that the politics around violence uniformly disadvantages or silences the poor. The types of violence which impact on affluent communities, such as business robbery, also impact on poor communities, and efforts to strengthen the response to business robbery may assist not only in addressing business robbery in wealthier communities but also in poorer ones. Violence against women and firearm violence have a devastating impact on poor communities and the work of civil society groups in addressing these forms of violence may be seen to have contributed substantially to work done thus far in addressing violence in poorer communities.

⁷² These generalisations do not apply to a newspaper like the Sun. But though the paper is the largest circulation daily in the country it probably does not have much impact on policy makers.

But few, if any, of the various responses to violence which have emerged in South Africa may be said to have been based on a thoroughgoing concern to understand how violence plays itself out in, and impacts on, the lives of people in poorer communities in South Africa.

2.5.2 Neglected types of violent crime⁷³

One measure of the impact and seriousness of different types of violent crime is in their contribution to the murder rate. This is not the only measure of violent crime's impact. Violence wherever it happens has harmful consequences of various kinds, including physical pain and suffering, trauma, financial loss, fear and diminished freedom. Violence makes a substantial contribution to the overall burden of non-natural death, injury and disability on South African society. Violent crime against the middle class and the business sector feeds immigration and the loss of skills critical to South Africa's social and economic development and in other ways inhibits economic growth.⁷⁴

Nevertheless the fact that specific types of violence are critical contributors to the murder rate should in itself be seen as a powerful motivation for giving them priority. But the two types of violence, which together probably make the biggest contribution to the murder rate in South Africa, have received little attention from researchers, the media or government. These types of violence (sub-categories of the "assault" and "robbery" forms of violence) are:

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In the six areas focused on in the murder study, 45% of victims of murders in known circumstances were men who were involved in arguments, and roughly 90% of these arguments were with other men

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- **Male-male assaults:** A high proportion of murders are linked to incidents where two men are involved in a dispute or argument which escalates into murder. As indicated, over 80% of homicide victims in South Africa are male, with this figure being close to 90% in the metro areas. While homicides take place in a diversity of circumstances, the biggest single driver of the homicide rate nationally is violence related to various types of interpersonal arguments and disputes. Many of these incidents take place between men and women, but incidents of this kind which culminate in a fatality disproportionately involve two male protagonists. In the six areas focused on in the murder study, for instance, 45% of victims of murders in known circumstances were men who were involved in arguments, and roughly 90% of these arguments were with other men.⁷⁵

⁷³ The word "types" is used here in the sense referred to in Table 1. The two categories of violence referred to in this section are part of the "major forms of violence" referred to in this report; that is male-male assaults are types of assaults and street robberies are types of "violent property crime".

⁷⁴ See further CSVR 2007: 152–160.

⁷⁵ Based on 243 incidents with male victims in argument-type Category A (Table 28) as a percentage of 545 of murders occurring in known circumstances (Table 25). Of incidents where men were victims, perpetrators were male in 95% of cases, though this percentage was possibly lower in murders in argument type murders. Men were suspects in 91% of the incidents where suspects were identified in argument type (Category A) murders (see data in Table 56), CSVR 2008a: 42, 45, 93 and 94.

- **Street robberies and other robberies in public spaces:** In more affluent suburbs, the big concern for some years was vehicle hijacking. In recent years residential robberies have also become a major concern, with business robberies also taking a high toll on owners, workers and patrons of shops, malls and restaurants. In addition to serving to articulate middle class concern about these types of aggravated robberies (along with “smash and grab” common robberies), media institutions have also given prominence to cash-in-transit heists. In fact, those most likely to be killed in cash-in-transit heists are security guards, one of the more marginalised employee groups in South Africa, but media attention has little to do with a concern for employees of the security industry. The concern with bank robberies and truck hijacking is also part of this pattern. All of these categories of robbery then have been the focus of concerted efforts by the police and business groups to address them. But the vast majority of aggravated robberies are street robberies and other robberies which take place in public spaces. In the metro areas in 2005–06 these accounted for 72% of aggravated robbery (see Table 8) and there is every reason to believe that these are the robberies which make the greatest contribution to the murder rate.⁷⁶ In poorer areas, such as township and inner

The vast majority of aggravated robberies are street robberies and other robberies which take place in public spaces. In the metro areas in 2005–06 these accounted for 72% of aggravated robbery, and there is every reason to believe that these are the robberies which make the greatest contribution to the murder rate

city areas, robbery primarily involves street robbery. In the murder study, 13% of murders occurring in known circumstances were robberies of pedestrians in streets or other public places. These accounted for 62% of all robbery-related murders and 54% of murders committed during the course of another crime.⁷⁷ This of course does not mean that business robberies or residential robberies are not also a pervasive problem in these poorer areas. But in these areas business robberies or residential robberies are very much part of the broader aggravated robbery problem which primarily involves robberies of civilians which take place on streets and in other public space.

The neglect of addressing these types of violence is probably not only related to the fact that they have not been prioritised by the middle class or by lobby groups. A further factor is the culture of violence itself. Many people in poorer communities are more likely to identify incidents of stranger violence (be they robbery or incidents of rape) as acts of violent crime, and to take steps to report these to the police. However because violence is to some extent normalised (or at some level, tolerated) in social relationships between people, violence may not be identified as an act of crime by the victims, perpetrators or bystanders, or neighbours who witness or hear incidents of such violence. This contributes to the fact that incidents of male-male assaults, along with other acquaintance violence, are frequently disregarded.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ That is the “high profile six” accounted for 28% (23183 out of 83774).

⁷⁷ CSVr 2008a: 67.

⁷⁸ See also the discussion of differences in perceptions of national priorities and the evidence from some surveys on this on page 30 of the concept paper and at footnote 13. (CSVr 2007).

A further factor feeding into the tendency to disregard male-male violence is that the victims tend to be marginalised young black men. Members of this demographic group tend to be perceived (not unfairly) as the main source of the problem of violence. In some incidents the victim and perpetrator roles are not so clearly distinguishable. It may be valid to see both parties as mutual aggressors in a conflict, despite the incidents having a fatal outcome. Influenced by prevailing stereotypes of the “victim”, within and outside the communities in which this violence takes place, many people’s automatic response is not to apply the label of victim to these young men.

2.5.3 The roots of violent crime

Effectively therefore there are two types of hierarchies at work in shaping the South African state’s and society’s responses to violent crime:

1. A hierarchy in terms of which the priorities of the affluent take precedence in metropolitan areas.
2. A hierarchy in terms of which the metro areas take precedence over other areas which lie outside of them.

These hierarchies are shaped by a collection of factors including the urban bias of research and data collection, the disproportionate political influence of the middle class, the role played by lobby groups, the impact of the media, and the normalisation of violence (the culture of violence) and the marginalised social status of the victims of key types of violence.

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The perception among young men that they need to be willing to defend themselves against assault from other men feeds the demand for firearms and other weapons

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These factors shape our understanding of violent crime (what we tend to think of when we think of violent crime) but have also played a decisive role in shaping responses to violent crime.

This has not in general been a bad thing. Violence against women, firearm violence, and the high profile aggravated robberies which have been the principal driver of middle class victimisation and fear are critical parts of the problem of violence in South Africa. The work of groups who have sought to address these problems has been invaluable in efforts to address the issue of violent crime in South Africa. Taking into account that there are parts of South Africa such as the Northern Cape which have extremely high levels of violence, it nevertheless appears valid to say that violent crime is to some degree concentrated in the metros. Whether the bias towards the metros has been conscious or unconscious, it is therefore at least partly valid for work that is being done to address and understand violent crime to be focused on the metros.

But at the same time this tendency to focus on isolated parts of the problem of violence may be self-defeating. The neglect of key types of violence occurs not only at the expense of the poor:

- Localised cultures which are characterised by high levels of male-male violence are critical in contributing to the culture of violence. The perception among young men that they need to be willing to defend themselves against assault from other men feeds the demand for firearms and other weapons, and in turn plays itself out in the armed violence against women and stranger violence which impacts on South Africans from all walks of life.
- Street robberies serve as a training ground for many of the robbers who become involved in more sophisticated types of robbery targeted at the middle classes and business.⁷⁹

Pervasive violence in South Africa therefore has its roots in a culture of violence and criminality which has consolidated itself in the township and inner city areas of metropolitan South Africa. Addressing this culture of criminality and violence is therefore critical if we are to succeed in addressing violent crime in South Africa.

2.6 Causes of violent crime

It is important to bear in mind that some violent crime arises from active and deliberate criminal lifestyles where violence takes place within the context of predatory criminal acts (stranger violence). Other violence is more a way of asserting power and establishing control within the day-to-day lives of the perpetrators, forming

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The core of the problem of violent crime in South Africa is a culture of violence and criminality, associated with a strong emphasis on the use of weapons

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part of everyday interactions between people who are often known to each other (acquaintance violence). Many perpetrators of predatory acts of violent crime are also likely to be involved in violence in ordinary interactions in their social lives. As the case studies of perpetrators of violent crime (Component 5 of this project) concludes:

[R]ather than taking place in discrete arenas, either as violence in the public domain against strangers, or violence in the 'private' domain against intimate partners ... many of these individuals are implicated in a wide range of violent or coercive interactions, whether with girlfriends, 'friends' or the 'strangers' they explicitly go to rob and hijack.⁸⁰

Though the two types of violence do not always go hand in hand, the core of the problem of violent crime in South Africa is a culture of violence and criminality, associated with a strong emphasis on the use of weapons, in which these two forms of violence coalesce. Specific factors which sustain this culture may be seen to include:

- **Inequality, poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and marginalisation:** The role of these factors in feeding into violent crime is the subject of Component 4 of this project.⁸¹ The character of South African society is well represented by statistics such as these cited in the report:

⁷⁹ Note that this is not just a one-way relationship and there are likely also to be ways in which stranger violence contributes to exacerbating the problem of acquaintance violence. For instance, firearms which are procured for use in stranger crime might also be used in more spontaneous acts against acquaintances, exacerbating the likelihood of a fatal outcome.

⁸⁰ HSRC 2008: 103.

⁸¹ CSVr 2008b.

- » While the poorest 20% of the population in South Africa earns less than 4% of GDP, the richest 10% earns nearly 45%.
- » The 10% of households with the highest incomes earn more than three times the incomes earned by the next richest 10% of households.
- » The richest 10% of households earned nearly 18 times as much as the median household, and six times more than the average household.
- » The average income of the richest 10% of households is not much less than 90 times greater than the average for the poorest 50% of households.
- » As of 2005–06, the richest 10% of households earned something like 220 times more than the poorest 10% from salaries and self-employment, a differential that is only slightly reduced by social grants.

Exclusion is not only a product of the dynamics associated with inequality but is reinforced on various levels by factors such as the lack of skills, physical location and social networks. As argued in the report, “inequality and exclusion” create violence both at the level of “rational calculation ... that some forms of crime — including violent crime — seem to be the most promising (realistic) avenues to a better life” and “at the level of the psychosocial consequences of high levels of inequality and of exclusion” which translates into feelings of insecurity and inadequacy, frustration, hopelessness, discontent and grievance.⁸² These feelings “are magnified by the fact that they are based on exclusions, the roots of which lie in the injustices of the past”.⁸³

- **Perceptions and values relating to violence and crime:** Part of the issue here concerns ambivalent attitudes regarding crime and the law, reflected in a tolerance of certain acts of criminality (as long as the perpetrators are involved in victimising people outside their own community).⁸⁴ The structural factors referred to above contribute to minimising individual motivations to invest in more pro-social norms. The socialisation factors referred to below compromise the potential for development of pro-social values and behaviour. A critical issue in relation to violence specifically is the normalisation related to a culture of violence. Several factors feed into the perpetuation of the culture of violence, including:
 - » Being exposed (as victim or witness) to violence in family and community.
 - » The prevalence of weapons and perception by young men that they need to be able to use violence to protect themselves and obtain respect from others.
 - » Beliefs that legitimate coercive male sexual behaviour against women.
 - » The logic of violence that forms part of becoming involved in an active lifestyle of predatory criminality.
- **Vulnerability of young people linked to inadequate child rearing and poor youth socialisation:** The childhood experiences of many young people in South Africa involve multiple levels of adversity. In the case studies of perpetrators of violent crime (Component 5) this is illustrated in relation to their experiences of family life and school. Some of the participants in the study, for instance, describe childhoods characterised by unstable living arrangements in which they were forced to move between the homes of different parents or relatives, factors which in turn undermined their ability to succeed within the school

⁸² Ibid: 9. See Froggio et al. 2009 and Rebellon et al. 2009 for some recent European research on these issues.

⁸³ Ibid: 49.

⁸⁴ See, for instance, Irish-Quobosheane 2007: 60–63, 86–88, 135–137. Also Standing 2006: Chapter 4, especially 194–231.

environment.⁸⁵ Quantitative research by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention based on research with 395 young offenders also illustrates this point, indicating that 41% of these young offenders “had lived mostly with their mothers only” and that 53% indicated that they had not received emotional support from their fathers “who were either not around, or, if they were, did not seem to care much”.⁸⁶ This South African research clearly resonates very strongly with research conducted in other countries which consistently illustrates that “the children who become persistent offenders tend to grow up with more negative family and school experiences” characterised, for instance, by being “born into a family in relative poverty and inadequate housing” and “brought up with inconsistency and uncaring parenting including violence”.⁸⁷

- **Weaknesses of the criminal justice system and aligned systems** for dealing with perpetrators of violent crime. This includes:
 - » A context where many police officials (and officials elsewhere in the criminal justice system) are corrupt and lack credibility or authority.
 - » A general lack of capacity for investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of crime.
 - » Weak systems for identifying young people at risk of criminality and diverting them from crime and the criminal justice system.

Children who become persistent offenders tend to grow up with more negative family and school experiences

»The experience of incarceration often reinforcing criminal or violent tendencies, and the weakness of systems intended to support offenders in rehabilitating and reintegrating into communities after incarceration.

• **Other factors** which feed into the high level and degree⁸⁸ of violence in South Africa include:

»The widespread availability of firearms, their proliferation and unlawful possession and use alongside other (particularly knife type) weapons.

- » Beliefs about male sexual entitlement, and threatened masculinity.
- » Alcohol and other substance use and abuse.
- » The domestic, regional and global criminal economies.
- » The legacy of war in Southern Africa and the impact of regional instability.⁸⁹

This report has argued that current information on violent crime in South Africa is most useful for understanding violent crime in the metropolitan and surrounding areas. Outside of these areas we have less detailed information, therefore it is important to understand this report in particular as focusing on the metros.

⁸⁵ HSRC 2008.

⁸⁶ Pelser 2007: 4.

⁸⁷ Waller 2006: 23.

⁸⁸ See CSV (2007: 40) for an explanation of these terms.

⁸⁹ This framework is in part based on the framework for explaining the causes of violent crime set out in the initial concept paper (Component 1 of this project). See CSV 2007: 161–175.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

While these recommendations may inform efforts towards addressing violent crime throughout South Africa, they should therefore be understood primarily as aiming to address violent crime in the metros and areas that surround them.

3.1 Aligning interventions with the violent crime profile of each jurisdiction

Considering the variations between the metros and areas outside of them, between one metropolitan area and the next, and between different areas within each of the metros, it is important for interventions to be aligned with the violent crime profile of each area. This applies both at the provincial level as well as at a more local level. Thus from a provincial or metro-wide perspective, it is clear that firearm violence is a substantial problem in all of the metros. However, although all of the metros could benefit from a weapons strategy that is broader than dealing with firearms, it is apparent that this issue is most pressing in Cape Town, where, though its per capita firearm homicides may be on a par with those of Gauteng, they are outnumbered by sharp force killings. This suggests that more emphasis should be given to the role played by provincial, metro or local level structures in shaping interventions to address, for example, the use of weapons in crime, to ensue greater alignment with the specific needs of each jurisdiction.

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Although all the metros could benefit from a weapons strategy that is broader than dealing with firearms, it is apparent that this issue is most pressing in Cape Town

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One of the principal implications of this approach is that the provisions of Section 206(1) and (2) of the Constitution, with respect to ensuring that there are provincial inputs into national policing policy, should be put into practice. In addition other steps may be worthwhile to ensure that policing policy is more responsive to variations between different geographical areas.

3.2 The question of state capacity and resources

In developing a framework for addressing violent crime a central question concerns the nature of the South African state, its current capacity and resources and what capacities it may have in the future. This obviously has major implications for what type of state initiatives may be viable in South Africa, and therefore whether recommendations are meaningful (in terms of the potential that they could be implemented in an effective and sustained manner) or hopelessly impractical.

For instance, people who are concerned with violent crime in South Africa often ask questions about the rehabilitation of offenders and the absence of effective rehabilitation programmes. While there is mixed evidence on the potential value of rehabilitation, it is apparent that those rehabilitation programmes which have the

most potential to change offender behaviour are resource-intensive and require the involvement of highly skilled and dedicated personnel. But in a context where prisons are heavily overcrowded, dominated by gangs and a culture of violence and criminality; where “staff are overwhelmed by the combination of poor prison conditions and unmanageable crowding, so that even a modicum of prison programming too often seems to be beyond reach”;⁹⁰ and where the Department of Correctional Services is only able to retain the services of a handful of psychologists and social workers, it seems unrealistic to recommend large-scale rehabilitation programmes. In addition it would appear that these are hardly the immediate priority, and that improving the overall standards of management in prisons, so as to try and ensure stable and consistent standards of “safe custody”, would be a necessary prerequisite for any rehabilitation programmes to have a meaningful chance of success.

However, rehabilitation programmes would also require the involvement of a substantial number of highly trained and dedicated social workers (if not even more highly trained psychologists). But in thinking about the question of how to address violent crime in South Africa it is apparent that there are a number of potential levels at which the services of social workers would perhaps be of more value. These would include:

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Improving the overall standards of management in prisons would be a necessary prerequisite for rehabilitation programmes to have a meaningful chance of success

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- A large variety of potential developmental crime prevention measures (see below) including interventions targeted at improving parenting, or assisting young children, school children or young adults particularly in poorer communities.
- Implementation of diversion type programmes for children such as those envisaged in terms of the Child Justice Bill.
- Support to released inmates to improve the chances of prisoner reintegration by helping to address likely difficulties in finding housing or jobs, avoiding renewed substance abuse, and in connection with questions of family and communication.

Even if South Africa were to get to the point where social workers are being trained, rehabilitation would still only be one of a number of competing priorities. Some would take the view that developmental programmes or investment in diversion type programmes for young offenders should be prioritised over interventions with imprisoned offenders as being more likely to have an impact on overall crime levels in the long term. While it is obviously preferable to continue investing in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, the approach we have taken here is to prioritise interventions at the level of child and youth development and diversion on the basis that these have the most potential to make a powerful impact in preventing violent crime.

⁹⁰ Clear 2008a: 1.

3.3 Five levels of intervention

This report has argued that the crux of the problem of violent crime in South Africa is a culture of violence and criminality which is strongly connected to the problem of armed violence. In explaining the causes of violent crime in South Africa we gave priority to the following issues:

- Inequality, poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion and marginalisation.
- Perceptions and values relating to violence and crime.
- Vulnerability of young people linked to inadequate child rearing and inappropriate youth socialisation.
- Weaknesses of the criminal justice system and aligned systems.
- Other causes including the availability of firearms and widespread use of other weapons, the role of alcohol, attitudes of male sexual entitlement and the domestic, regional and local criminal economy.

The recommendations in this report are partly aligned with this framework and also are conceived of at five levels:

- Focusing and strengthening the criminal justice response to violent crime.
- Adopting other safety measures.
- Addressing the culture of violence and criminality.
- Supporting positive and healthy child and youth development.
- Engaging in issues of social justice.

These five levels of response to the problem of violent crime are discussed separately in more detail in what follows.

3.3.1 The criminal justice system

Some of the key questions in relation to criminal justice issues concern the governance (to do with coordination and communication between different levels and structures) and overall management (to do with recruitment, day-to-day supervision and management practice, and strategic management and guidance) of the criminal justice system. We have alluded to governance issues briefly above in relation to the need for strategies to be aligned to the characteristics of violent crime in specific areas. These recommendations, however, do not address the governance issues but are primarily about the types of initiatives that we believe are necessary to impact on violent crime.⁹¹

While there are perpetrators who are linked to acquaintance violence but not to other crime, the core of the culture of violence and criminality involves offenders whose violent and criminal behaviour is manifested both as acquaintance and as stranger violence. It is therefore not just robbers who are repeat violent offenders. Many

⁹¹ Governance issues are one of the focal points of the current Criminal Justice Review, which also has initiatives to strengthen crime investigation and prosecution.

violent offenders are apparently linked to repeat acts of violence and they do not necessarily specialise only in one type of violent offence but are linked to a diversity of violent offences. Though many of those with previous convictions have convictions for non-violent offences it would nevertheless appear that the strongest predictor of likely involvement in violence is a previous conviction for violence.

What distinguishes these perpetrators also is not simply that their violence is expressed in a diversity of contexts but that it is armed violence. Violent offenders who engage in armed violence on average present more of a danger to others, and are what gives the current epidemic of violent crime in South Africa its most malevolent edge. In our view, therefore, while there are nuances that can be added by focusing on specific crime types, in terms of the high level strategy to address violent crime it does not make sense to have distinct “robbery”, “murder” or “rape” strategies.⁹² In apprehending and convicting, or taking other appropriate measures to deal with perpetrators of one type of armed violence, one is often likely to be apprehending and convicting the perpetrator of other types of armed violence as well.

Recommendation 1: A strategy to address armed violent crime in metropolitan and surrounding areas.

Violent offenders who engage in armed violence on average present more of a danger to others, and are what gives the current epidemic of violent crime in South Africa its most malevolent edge

The heart of a strategy to address violent crime in the metros should therefore be a broad ranging strategy focusing on perpetrators of armed violence. Such a strategy will not address all aspects of violent crime, but it should make a profound difference to levels of murder, aggravated robbery, and stranger rape. Implementation of such a strategy would potentially involve:

- (a) Policing strategies for addressing armed violence: There should be a focus on the development of models of good practice for tackling armed violence in different types of jurisdictions. These models need to be adapted to the profile of armed violence in specific areas. Tackling armed violence in middle class communities in which the main problem often involves hijacking or residential and business robberies would involve different strategies from those implemented in poorer communities, where armed violence includes aggravated street and other robbery, most stranger rapes, and many potentially lethal assaults.
- (b) Government should invest in research aimed at identifying and publicising good practice in local level policing in addressing armed violence.
- (c) Strengthening evidence-based crime investigation and prosecution: Efforts to strengthen the process of crime investigation and prosecution should seek to maximise the potential of the criminal justice system to effectively investigate and prosecute cases involving armed violence using evidence-based approaches. This includes improving support to police and prosecutors in relation to the use of different types of evidence including witness evidence, physical evidence and confession evidence. For instance, the increased

⁹² See for instance Clear 2008b. The Gauteng provincial government has also initiated a robbery strategy which is focused on categories of aggravated robbery. The strategy has been incorporated as part of the Criminal Justice Review.

use of DNA evidence envisaged in the draft Forensic Procedures Bill should be focused on suspects and convicted persons related to cases of armed violent crime. A critical issue here will also be a more sophisticated response to the problem of witness intimidation.

- (d) Improving crime intelligence and other strategies specifically focused on organised crime — this component of the overall strategy may be most relevant to identifying groups and individuals involved in “high profile” types of aggravated robbery.
- (e) Strengthening measures to ensure police integrity including strategies to identify corrupt police and to ensure effective investigations and disciplinary or criminal prosecution of police members implicated in corruption.
- (f) Use of stop and search tactics including vehicle stops and, in areas where there is a substantial problem of street robbery, the stop and search of pedestrians, in order to locate illegal firearms.
- (g) Clarifying police powers, and exploring potential police strategies, to address the use of knives or other instruments associated with sharp-force violence.
- (h) Supporting more professional use of force by police. Including:
 - Developing a statement of policy for the police which clarifies the principles which should guide the use of lethal force.
 - Supporting police in their ability to engage with armed suspects effectively.
 - Supporting police in developing their understanding of the type of tactics to employ in intervening in fights and situations of acquaintance violence.
- (i) Improving child justice: A strategy to reduce armed violence is likely to lead to the apprehension of more young people involved in armed violence. In the murder study, for instance, 21% of suspects in argument type murders, and 31% of suspects in “crime type” murders were 19 years and younger.⁹³ Though in cases of murder, and some others, it would be necessary to combine this with more robust correctional measures, it is nevertheless important that the optimum use should be made of forms of diversion for those identified as engaged in crime at an early age.

Other than in relation to diversion type measures such as those associated with the Child Justice Bill, and in advocating strongly for greater safety in correctional centres, this report does not engage with questions to do with a response to convicted perpetrators. However, it may be anticipated that the approach which is put forward here would lead to an increase in incarceration levels. As others have argued, this implies that the current minimum sentencing legislation is likely to be unsustainable. We have also expressed uncertainty about what type of investment in rehabilitation is possible or is likely to be worthwhile, though in general terms we are of course in favour of strengthening rehabilitation type measures. Programmes which facilitate and provide support for offenders’ re-entry into the community also need to be developed.

⁹³ CSVr 2008a: 98.

3.3.2 Other safety measures

The core task of the criminal justice system lies in responding to perpetrators of violent crime. Though the police can also carry out types of “crime prevention” activities, such as by means of patrol, their mode of operation is not oriented towards providing physical safety and protection at specific physical localities. While the SAPS or metro police agencies may have a role in this, the job of ensuring safety at specific locations can to some extent be seen as lying outside of the jurisdiction of the police.

Recommendation 2: Creating safety in public and other spaces. Within public space, recreational facilities, schools, correctional institutions and in society more broadly there should be a stronger emphasis on establishing safe spaces which are free of violence, including:

- (a) Establishing public spaces which are secure and where the carrying of guns and other weapons is prohibited and prevented: This may involve the use of private security or other “guard” type units empowered to intervene to prevent the carrying of weapons and to discourage violent crime.
- (b) Efforts at discouraging violence at schools, including measures to ensure that violence and bullying are reported within the school,⁹⁴ and working in a focused way with bullies and their victims to stop bullying.⁹⁵
- (c) Creating weapons-free zones in drinking establishments: There are considerable difficulties and complexities involved in intervening in the sale of alcohol. However, proprietors of drinking establishments should be held responsible for ensuring that no weapons are carried inside their establishments, and for acting to prevent violence in the vicinity of such establishments.
- (d) Improving the standards of safety in prisons so that prisons themselves become violence-free environments: The culture of violence and criminality is nurtured within South Africa’s prisons and pervasive violence in prison is one factor which powerfully reinforces this culture. Creating prisons which are violence-free would be a profound way of challenging it.

3.3.3 Child and youth development

South Africa already invests substantially in education, health and social grants and it is not clear how much scope there may be for more investment of this kind. Furthermore, unless such investment is carried out through people who combine suitable skills with a strong positive motivation to carry forward this type of work it is likely to be unproductive. That being said, it seems clear, and there is strong evidence to support this argument, that investment in “auxiliary” measures to support child and youth development is a necessary prerequisite if more young people are to be able to escape from the trap of marginalised social circumstances that many of them are born into.

⁹⁴ See the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, undated: 5, regarding informal pressures in the school environment not to report violence and other bullying.

⁹⁵ See Waller 2006: 30–31.

Recommendation 3: Supporting positive and healthy child and youth development. Greater investment needs to be made in supporting children and young people to ensure that they are able to derive the optimum benefit from the educational system and lead healthy and constructive lifestyles. The core of any effort needs to be a stable and reliable primary and secondary education system. This requires a “sustained effort to improve the management and quality of South Africa’s schools, so that they function more positively as places of positive socialisation”.⁹⁶ Part of this would be the measures suggested above to address bullying or other violence at schools. In addition, the case studies of perpetrators indicates that “truancy from school needs to be seen as an early warning sign that schools need to assist parents to deal with, possibly through the employment of social workers as truant officers”.⁹⁷ Other worthwhile developmental support measures would include:⁹⁸

- (a) Setting up a coherent and sustained family support programme that focuses on single-parent households, particularly those headed by teenage mothers, to support good parenting practice.
- (b) Establishing a dedicated and comprehensive early childhood development programme that provides support to the children coming from dysfunctional households (for instance, those households in which the primary breadwinner has been imprisoned) to increase the social and cognitive abilities of underprivileged children and prepare them for and support them in schools.
- (c) In addition, regarding the large number of child-headed households as deserving of similar types of interventions.
- (d) Developing interpersonal and emotional pro-social skills, including the ability to manage conflict and aggression for primary and adolescent school children.
- (e) Establishing after-school care programmes intended to assist young people in finding creative and positive ways of using recreational time.
- (f) Establishing victim empowerment programmes targeted at young victims of violence, including those involved in “male-male” violent conflict.
- (g) Setting up programmes aimed at promoting positive and constructive lifestyles for young people in the 14–22 year age group including in particular those who are not in school or working.
- (h) Reducing the use of alcohol by pregnant women as well as providing nutritional support to pregnant women, infants and young children.
- (i) Involving social workers in interventions intended to support young children in households from which domestic violence calls are made to the police.

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Greater investment needs to be made in supporting children and young people to ensure that they are able to derive the optimum benefit from the educational system and lead healthy and constructive lifestyles

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⁹⁶ Pelser 2007: 5.

⁹⁷ HSRC 2008: 106.

⁹⁸ The recommendations here integrate specific points put forward in Pelser (2007: 5) with a set of measures outlined in CSVSR (2007: 176–177). The latter points are based on Waller 2006: 24–32.

The Child Justice measures motivated above could also be implemented so as to contribute to positive youth development.

3.3.4 Addressing the culture of violence and criminality

Current programmes of advocacy and mobilisation against violence, such as the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children, single out specific sub-categories or types of violence. While such mobilisation is important, it is as necessary to expand the focus of mobilisation and work against violence to address the problem of violence in its entirety.

Recommendation 4: Addressing the culture of violence. As in the mid-1990s when South Africans mobilised against political violence, there is potential to use forms of public education, awareness raising, and community level activism to mobilise against the culture of violence. Such initiatives could include:

- (a) Advocating against violence, with political and other leaders promoting a non-violent culture.
- (b) Implementing national programmes of action to strengthen non-violence.
- (c) Developing public education initiatives providing information about acquaintance violence and how to intervene in or prevent it.
- (d) Working with communities to develop programmes of action against violence.

Measures suggested above which could also be seen as impacting on the culture of violence would include:

- Creating safe spaces — public space, at schools and for young people after school; ensuring safety within prisons.
- Strengthening measures to support the professional use of force by police.

3.3.5 Social justice — bringing the experience of poorer South Africans into public discourse

There can be little doubt that the dynamics which sustain inequality, poverty, unemployment and exclusion are part of what drives violent crime in South Africa. But as the socio-economic report (Component 4) makes clear there is no simple formula for addressing these problems. The report for instance argues that:

The single most important vehicle for reducing inequality would be the dramatic expansion of employment, especially for the unskilled. It is, to say the least, not at all certain how this may be effected and, as importantly, whether the political will exists to create the economic and labour market policies needed to create hundreds of thousands of jobs that would, inevitably, be poorly paid. Worse still, it is also not obvious that if the political will did exist to effect these changes, that this would have the effect of dramatically increasing employment, especially of the unskilled.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ CSVr 2008b: 50.

Recommendation 5: Addressing violence in poorer communities. In important, though less obvious, ways South Africa still continues to privilege the interests of the well-to-do over those of the poor. One of the ways in which this works, which is a central concern of this report, is the way in which types of violence which cause the greatest loss of life are not addressed in public policy. While we have indicated that there is an interconnected set of reasons for this, what this reflects are the difficulties which face poorer South Africans in having their concerns heard in the public arena. This implies that not only do poor people face deep and intractable problems related to structural economic factors, but that their exclusion is reinforced through the fact that their voices and experiences are not admitted into public discourse. In turn the social practices which allow this reinforce the dynamics of exclusion which contribute to violence.

While it is critical for the South African government and society in general to engage in a sustained manner with the challenge of addressing poverty, unemployment and inequality, what is also critically important is a greater societal openness and awareness about the lives and experiences of the poor. Understanding and engaging with the problem of violence as it impacts on poorer people would be an important step towards this.

The developmental crime prevention measures recommended above would also contribute to reducing marginalisation.

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Not only do poor people face deep and intractable problems related to structural economic factors, but their exclusion is reinforced through the fact that their voices and experiences are not admitted into public discourse

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3.3.6 Other recommendations

- 1. Data collection and reporting:** The National Injury Mortality Surveillance System NIMSS:
 - » Support should be given to the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System to facilitate improved reporting on non-metropolitan areas.
 - » In addition to the reports on the four metropolitan areas, NIMSS should provide reports on demarcated geographic areas outside of the metropolitan areas.
- 2. Crime statistics:** The SAPS should resume the practice of using the former policing areas as a unit for the reporting of aggregate crime statistics as these smaller areas of jurisdiction are more meaningful than are the provinces for purposes of examining trends in violent or other crime.
- 3. Understanding violence:** State, academic and civil society organisations should seek to strengthen understanding in South Africa of the assessment, profiling and types of interventions that may be of most benefit in preventing armed violence and other violent crime.

3.4 Conclusion

Recommendation 1 motivates for efforts at strengthening the criminal justice system to give particular attention to the problem of armed violence. It is envisaged that the core problem on which the criminal justice system would be focused is the widespread phenomenon of people involved in a culture of violence and crimi-

nality associated with the use of weapons such as firearms and knives. Such a strategy would potentially focus the resources of the criminal justice system on key dimensions of the problem of violence in South Africa, including the overall problem of high rates of murder, aggravated robbery and stranger rape. While this report has motivated that this strategy should make optimum use of diversion type measures, it should nevertheless be acknowledged that such a strategy would be likely to lead to an increase in levels of incarceration.

One of the central themes of this report and the Project on the Violent Nature of Crime has been the distinction between stranger violence and acquaintance violence. A strategy which is focused on armed violence is not a comprehensive strategy for addressing either of these problems. Much stranger violence, and most acquaintance violence, does not involve the use of arms. In the normal course of things it is the task of the criminal justice system to prosecute persons involved in any form of violence for which they have been convicted and we assume that this will continue to be so.

Nevertheless, while the issues here are complex, what we are in some way advocating is that outside of the problem of armed violence, the central societal strategies to address violence should be seen as residing within the domain of the other four recommendations which we have put forward. Essentially this is because the criminal justice system has numerous debilitating impacts on society, partly in the cost of maintaining it, but also in terms of its tendency to reinforce rather than prevent problems of violence and criminality. Of necessity South Africa must use the instruments of the criminal justice system to address the problem of armed violence. While these instruments will also continue to be involved in responding to other violence, South Africa needs to increasingly place its emphasis on other approaches if it is to be relieved from the burden of massive investment in criminal justice and a continuing cycle of violence.

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