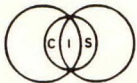


REPORT

THE FIRST NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON MONITORING AND RESEARCH INTO POLITICAL VIOLENCE

17 - 19 June 1991

Venue: Africa Enterprise
Pietermaritzburg



CENTRE FOR INTERGROUP STUDIES

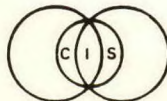
**THE FIRST NATIONAL WORKSHOP
ON MONITORING AND RESEARCH
INTO POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

17 - 19 June 1991

**Venue: Africa Enterprise
Pietermaritzburg**

**This workshop was made possible through funds generously
donated by Horton Products and the Institute for Risk and
Strategy Analysis.**

**COMPILED BY DAWID VENTER
AND PUBLISHED BY THE
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BACKGROUND AND ORGANISATION

The concept for this workshop arose from a concern about the antagonism and perception of bias between various research/monitoring groupings.

An investigation conducted among seven Natal groupings towards the end of 1990¹ confirmed a polarisation along ideological lines. This not only caused considerable tension between the groupings concerned, but also restricted access to information despite both public and private agreements to cooperate.

However, a number of groups expressed interest in a workshop held on neutral territory by a non-aligned agency. Africa Enterprise and the Centre for Intergroup Studies (CIS) were suggested by some groupings and were acceptable to all. In addition common ground was discovered between even the most openly opposed groups.

In January 1991 CIS officially accepted the task under the auspices of its project **Understanding the Violence in South Africa: Towards Interpretation and Intervention.**

At the end of April 1991, Dawid Venter was appointed convenor. The Centre underwrote the workshop and is extremely grateful to Horton Products and the Institute for Risk and Strategy Analysis for the funding which they generously contributed.

Steering Committee

Requirements for inclusion on the steering committee were: planning skills, knowledge of monitoring/research, membership of opposing camps, and commitment to working beyond the present impasse.

The steering committee met at the Institute for Contextual Theology (Johannesburg) on May 23rd 1991. The committee members were:

Nellis du Preez (Africa Enterprise)

Paul Graham (Regional Director, Idasa Natal)

Etienne Marais (Project for the Study of Violence, Wits)

Senzo Mfayela (Manager: Information Development, Inkatha Institute)

1. Peace in Natal, The Inkatha Institute, The Black Sash (Natal Midlands), The Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Action, The Centre for Criminal Justice (Univ Natal), The Unrest Monitoring Project (Centre for Adult Education, Univ Natal), Lawyers for Human Rights (Pmb).

Anne Truluck (Co-chair, Black Sash Natal Midlands)
HW van der Merwe (Director, CIS)
Khosi Xaba (Organiser, ANC Women's League)

In addition Susan Collin (Coordinator of the project Understanding the Violence in South Africa, CIS), Ron Kraybill (Director of Training, CIS), and Dawid Venter (Workshop Convenor) also participated in this meeting.)

The committee discussed fears and expectations for the workshop, outlined the objectives, and suggested an outline agenda. It was decided that additional members would be nominated to the steering committee at the workshop.

The convenor continued to consult with monitoring/research groups, of which 56 were invited to the workshop from 17 - 19 June 1991.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the workshop was stated as follows:

1 **Information-sharing**

- * to enable violence monitoring and research organisations to communicate with each other regarding
 - goals
 - methodologies
- * to enable joint evaluation of the strengths/weaknesses of the methodologies currently employed
- * to enable greater awareness of ways in which ideologies influence data-gathering

2 **Cooperation**

- * to agree on protocols for interaction
- * to agree on forums for future cooperation and critique
- * to explore means of cooperation in gathering, monitoring and sharing

A day was set aside to meet each of the above objectives.

EXPECTATIONS

The steering committee identified the following expectations for the workshop:

- 1 the establishment of a network
- 2 the overcoming of antagonisms between various groupings
- 3 a joint commitment to objective research
- 4 the development of mutual respect and tolerance
- 5 agreement on a standard technique of monitoring
- 6 the development of standards for research
- 7 the development of a cooperative working mode
- 8 consensus on how monitoring and research contribute to the resolution of conflict
- 9 an emphasis on peace

PARTICIPANT ORGANISATIONS

The following 29 organisations attended the workshop:

Natal:

Albert Lutuli Institute
Black Sash, Durban
Black Sash, Pietermaritzburg (Pmb)
Centre for Criminal Justice
Community Research Unit
Conflict Monitoring Service, Idasa
Dept of Journalism, Natal Technikon
Echo
End Conscription Campaign (ECC)
Imbali Support Group
Inkatha Institute (observer status only)
International Committee of the Red Cross
Legal Resources Centre, Durban
Maurice Webb Unit, Centre for Social Development Studies
(CSDS), Univ Natal
Project for Conflict Trends (CSDS), Univ Natal
Project on Contemporary Violence, Univ Natal
Project for the Study of Violence, Wits
South African Police, Pmb Riot Unit

The Daily News
Toti Crisis Centre
Urbanisation and Violence Project, Institute for Social and
Economic Research (ISER), Univ Durban-Westville
Unrest Monitoring Project, Centre For Adult Education, Univ Natal
Vuleka Trust/Koinonia

Transvaal:

Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE)
Institute for Multi-Party Democracy
Lawyers for Human Rights
The Black Social Workers' Association

Cape Province:

Centre for Intergroup Studies (CIS)
Unrest Monitoring Action Committee (UMAC)

Prior to the workshop each participant was asked to submit a summary of their organisation's work, outlining their field of activity, sources, methodology and perceptions as to whom they are seen to represent. The replies were summarised into an information package handed out at the workshop.

Thirty-four invited organisations did not attend, in many cases because they were unable to make senior staff available at such short notice:

ANC Women's League
ANC/Inkatha Joint Working Committee, Natal
Cape Times
Cheadle Thomson and Haysom
Church of the Province of SA
Committee for Conflict Intervention
Committee on Violence and its Effects on Children
Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)
Die Burger
Five Freedoms Forum
Human Rights Commission
Human Rights Trust
Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)
Ilanga
Independent Board for Inquiry into Informal Repression
Independent Mediation Services of South Africa (IMSSA)

Innes Labour Brief
Institute for the Study and Resolution of Conflict, Univ Port
Elizabeth
Legal Resources Centre, Port Elizabeth
National Association for Democratic Lawyers (NADEL)
Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Action (PACSA)
Rapport
SA Community Mediation Project
South African Foundation for Conciliation (SAFCON)
South African Council of Churches (SACC)
South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR)
Sowetan
Sunday Times
Tembisa Peace Corps
The Natal Witness
The Star
Vrye Weekblad
Weekly Mail
Women for Peace.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Workshop participants first met together on the evening of Monday 17 June in plenary for a review of the proposed agenda. Prof H W van der Merwe (CIS) was in the chair.

Most of Tuesday was taken up by participants introducing their organisations. In addition, a session on bias was conducted using an interview format.

That evening, voluntary group discussions addressed:

- 1 relations between researchers and monitors
- 2 relations between monitoring/research groups and other actors (press, police, political parties, relief workers, communities other researchers, communities in crisis).

On Wednesday morning, a facilitated discussion focused on what action would be appropriate to register dissatisfaction at the non-participation of some groupings.

Feedback from the discussion groups was used to stimulate discussion and decision about the way forward during the afternoon session. Presentations were made by Dawid Venter and Clive Emdon (Dept of Journalism, Natal Technikon).

Paul Graham (IDASA) and Ron Kraybill (CIS) shared the facilitation for both days.

The workshop sessions were framed within a developing and open-ended agenda. Two major aims of the format were to enhance participation by as many as possible, and to allow participants to own and control the direction of the workshop. No papers or lectures were given.

Workshop conclusions

- 1 A **national directory** of monitors and researchers into 'political' violence was decided on by participants. Antoinette Louw of the University of Natal and the Human Sciences Research Council joint Project for Conflict Trends, was mandated to compile this.

The proposed directory will be used for exchange on projects. It will function as a mailing list to circulate available research findings.

- 2 A draft **code of conduct** will be circulated for comment (See Appendix 1). It includes suggestions for using others' information, reciprocity, access to information, and the social responsibility of researchers/monitors.

In the event of the draft not being welcomed nationally, some Natal groups will adopt the code and ask others who deal with them to do the same.

- 3 **Communication with the police.** Consultation with the police on mechanisms of communication will be explored by Etienne Marais (Project for the Study of Violence, Wits).

The workshop mandated Etienne to explore the possibility of setting up a meeting between a number of monitoring groups and the police, both SAP and KwaZulu.

He was also asked to prepare a statement on behalf of the workshop on the role of monitoring and facilitative processes with relation to the violence.

- 4 **Further national conferences.** Paul Graham (Idasa) was nominated to explore the need for such a conference with some other participants in September 1991.
- 5 **Training of black monitors.** The workshop noted the lack of black monitors, and black researchers. It was suggested that existing training organisations should include monitoring training.
- 6 **Press releases.** Nicky Cunningham-Brown (Daily News) as well as free-lancers Lena Slachmuisjlder (Black Sash, Durban) and Dawid Venter were given permission to write articles on the workshop (see Appendix 3).

Delegates' strong feelings about the absence of some whom they regarded as "key players" were expressed in a press statement (see Appendix 2). The non-participation of the Inkatha Institute caused particular disappointment.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

An oral evaluation session concluded the workshop. What follows reflect the feelings of participants, with additional comments by the convenor.

Venue

Africa Enterprise, situated in the rolling hills of Natal and adjoining the Queen Elizabeth Game Park, drew compliments. However, the lack of a pub for facilitating social interaction in the evenings was regretted by some.

Participants

The participants were open and positive. Some felt that more advance notice would have enabled a better response.

Delegates expressed strong feelings about the absence of some whom they regarded as "key players". A major reason for their own participation had been dialogue with opposing groupings. It was argued that the workshop contained people who more or less agreed on method and ideology.

The non-participation of the Inkatha Institute caused particular disappointment. It was agreed that the Inkatha Institute observer could only stay on if a press statement was released deploring the Institute's non-

participation. The press statement also regretted the absence of the Human Sciences Research Council and the SA Institute of Race Relations.

It was proposed that, should any future conferences be arranged, ground rules as to who attends and on what terms should be decided on in advance and codified. Observer status should be disallowed, with only full participation acceptable.

Participants expressed a strong desire to improve working relationships with those organizations and institutes not present.

Researchers were represented in far greater numbers than monitors (four participant groups only monitor).

There was concern about the isolation of monitors/researchers from one another. This isolation also occurs between one region and another. Of particular concern was the lack of consultation by the Transvaal with Natal groupings.

There was considerable appreciation for the number of organisations that had been drawn together. Even those within the same region, city (eg. Pietermaritzburg) or the same institution (eg. the University of Natal) had had difficulty in the past in getting to meet one another.

Agenda

According to some participants the agenda should have been clearer. It should also have been mailed in advance.

Some questioned whether, given the collective experience of monitoring and research into violence - and given the number of organisations present - the root causes could not have been addressed, rather than once more reviewing only the symptoms of violence.

The agenda was criticised as being research oriented. This meant that mediation and intervention groups were to some extent left out. Where the agenda did focus on monitoring, it concerned reactive rather than proactive activities.

An analysis of specific methods of information gathering would have been valuable.

Format

Many participants appreciated the sharing of information about their work. Others regarded the introductions as too long, and felt that these should rather have been circulated in writing.

Some suggested that the bias section should have been included in the presentations. However, most appreciated the interview format that was employed for this session.

The need for clearer workshopping process in small groups was expressed.

Participants wanted more presentations from different perspectives ie SAP, monitors, researchers, etc.

The questionnaire, circulated to all organisations invited to the workshop, caused discomfort and suspicion amongst some of the groupings that had suffered under the security system of the previous regime.

CONCLUSION

The workshop fulfilled the role of bringing together organisations and strengthening their links. The decisions and further activities planned reflect the measure of ownership by participants. The emphasis on proactive monitoring shows a desire to move beyond present research/monitoring activities.

APPENDIX 1

DRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MONITORS AND RESEARCHERS

We the undersigned agree to uphold and apply the following principles:

Using others' information

- 1 Acknowledgment in own work of sources of material where applicable - whether other researchers or monitors.
- 2 Sensitivity to:
 - the real costs of monitoring, consultations, retrieval of data
 - re-imburse (where appropriate and possible) research costs to groups in producing data
 - the difficulty of requesting data from others in a form which is incompatible with the way data is stored
 - caution in sharing sensitive or confidential data

Reciprocity

- 3 A general commitment to reciprocity

Access to information

- 4 A commitment to public access to publications and data - except where legitimately confidential

Social Responsibility

- 5 Recognition that researchers and monitors have a deep social responsibility to work for the protection of human life.

APPENDIX 2

PRESS RELEASE

THE FIRST NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON MONITORING AND RESEARCHING POLITICAL VIOLENCE INCLUDED 30 ORGANISATIONS - AMONG THEM THE SA POLICE, BUT REGRETTABLY NOT THE INKATHA INSTITUTE

The workshop, hosted by the Centre for Intergroup Studies was held in Pietermaritzburg this week.

It decided to:

- * Establish a basis for the exchange of information and research
- * Call for cooperation in the training of community-based monitors of violence
- * Establish guidelines for dealing with the police, crisis workers and the press

Among the issues discussed were the problems related to gathering information on outbreaks of conflict and the dissemination of monitoring information and research.

There was a focus on the role agencies could play in intervening in areas of conflict and the support and empowerment of communities in the crisis.

It was noted that key players in monitoring violence and conflict research were not participating.

These included:

- * Inkatha Institute
- * The Human Sciences Research Council
- * The S A Institute of Race Relations

A major motivating reason for the workshop was the potential for meaningful dialogue and the establishing of links between monitoring and research organisations perceived to be on different sides in the conflict.

Of particular regret therefore was the non-participation of the Inkatha Institute. It was felt its participation would have been of crucial importance to the workshop.

The workshop welcomed the presence of the SA Police and expressed a strong desire to improve working relationships with those organisations and institutes not present.

The workshop felt that in the period of political transition, owing to the level of conflict and violence, the role of independent monitoring was crucial.

APPENDIX 3

This article was published in *Vrye Weekblad* 28 June - 4 July 1991

NEW APPROACH TO MONITORING VIOLENCE

Dawid Venter, convenor of a workshop on monitoring and researching political violence, outlines major decisions taken.

A commitment to exchange of information and a draft code for working relationships were two of the results of the first national workshop on the research and monitoring of "political" violence. The two-day residential workshop - which included the SAP - was held recently in Pietermaritzburg under the auspices of the Centre for Intergroup Studies, Cape Town. The 30 participating monitoring and research organisations made several decisions. These include the establishment of a national directory for exchanging information, of guidelines for dealing with the police, and co-operation in training community-based monitors.

A draft code of conduct with suggestions for interaction between monitoring and research groups was drawn up to be circulated for comment. One of the points emphasised is "that researchers and monitors have a deep social responsibility to work for the protection of human life".

Most groups said they experienced great difficulty in dealing with Inkatha, because of suspicions from within the organisation regarding their political affiliations. The Inkatha Institute was regarded as easier to approach. Participant Seshi Chonco, of the Institute for Multi-Party Democracy, reflected a significant trend in the workshop when he warned against the polarising effect of often repeated statements which reinforce stereotyping.

The workshop demonstrated an awareness that the present situation requires new approaches. Black researchers gave examples of how verbal interviews can be used in township research - with reports being written up soon afterwards - instead of notebooks. The latter's appearance often signalled the exit of any useful information, they said.

Radley Keys from Peace in Natal - as well as Idasa (Natal)'s Unrest Monitoring Service - exemplified the trend to go beyond reactive monitoring. Keys emphasised the importance for proactive monitors to keep communication-channels with all parties "well-oiled" - even with those one disagrees with.

Pierre Cronjé, representing the newly-founded Albert Lutuli Foundation, strongly recommended the vertical linking of monitoring groupings with other development agencies in a given area. He felt that a major problem facing such groupings at present was their isolation.

The interaction between monitoring and research groupings and the communities within which they operate came into focus. Some questioned whether their work was contributing positively or negatively to the violence. Any engagement should be consistent and long-term, instead of causing confusion by moving in and out of communities, participants agreed. There was agreement that the final goal must be to empower communities to deal with their own needs. But John Aitchison - director of the Unrest Monitoring Project of the Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal - cautioned that this goal may be beyond the capacity of monitoring groups.

The major aim of the workshop had been to promote links between groupings perceived to be duplicating the antagonisms of different sides of the conflict in their relations with one other.

The absence of organisations such as the Human Sciences Research Council and the Institute of Race Relations - whom participants described as "key players" - therefore aroused strong feelings. The non-participation of the Inkatha Institute caused particular disappointment.

Yet the workshop "expressed a strong desire to improve working relationships with those organisations and institutes not present".

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