

**THE PROVISION OF LOW COST HOUSING IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE:
CHALLENGES FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION FROM 1994-2008**

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MAY 2015



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Abstract

So much has been written about xenophobic attacks against refugees (asylum seekers, economic migrants, etc) in South Africa which reached its apogee in May 2008. However, the “reintegration” process has attracted little study so far. The issue of integrating foreigners into host countries is not a South African problem, but a global one. This study examines certain factors which predisposed foreigners, from the diaspora especially Zimbabwean nationals to xenophobic attacks by South Africans in South Africa, and the wider socio-cultural meanings and implications of this crisis for the coexistence of South Africans and Zimbabweans. This work investigates efforts at “reintegration” and the various forms pursued by the South African government. Issues examined in the study include: how well this has been carried out, the responses the attempts have generated and the disposition of the foreign nationals to the gesture. Using semi-structured interviews, 53 respondents participated in the study. Competition for scarce economic resources like jobs and housing mainly confined to the informal sector was a real source of conflict between South Africans and Zimbabweans. Many participants indicated that they have not been reintegrated into the society and the major constraint was that of documentation. As done by other nations, South Africa should come up with an amnesty period during which Zimbabweans would be permitted to regularize their stay. It would be unfair to place the burden of “reintegration” on the South African government alone. SADC countries as a matter of urgency should find a mechanism to take care of their own people.

Keywords: Xenophobia, refugee, asylum seekers, economic migrants, reintegration, diaspora.