



THE SA
RECONCILIATION BAROMETER
-TRACKING SOCIO-POLITICAL TRENDS-

REVISITING RECONCILIATION: The People's View

Research Report of the Reconciliation Barometer Exploratory Survey

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Executive Summary

Welcomed by some, rejected by others, reconciliation has been a notion few South Africans could ignore. Based on a recently undertaken survey of a nationally representative sample of South Africans, this report examines the meanings and associations South Africans attribute to the concept of reconciliation, as well as where and how South Africans conceptualise the location and nature of the process. This is followed by an investigation of South Africans' evaluations of how the nation's leaders and the country as a whole are handling the process of reconciliation. Lastly, the report also documents public opinion on South Africa's attempt to deal with the unfinished business of its past. The primary findings are as follows.

What is reconciliation?

- Reconciliation is most frequently associated with notions of forgiveness, followed by unity, peace and racial integration.
- Black South Africans appear to favour notions of forgiveness above notions of racial integration, which are favoured by Whites.
- Notions of socio-economic justice and material redress do not feature prominently as perceived meanings of reconciliation.
- 30% of South Africans were unable or unwilling to offer any meaning of reconciliation.

Whose responsibility?

- 70% of South Africans favour the idea of a reconciliation process driven by some combination of multiple stakeholders.
- Only one in five South Africans believe they need to take considerable personal responsibility for the national reconciliation process.
- Whilst between 20% and 25% of Blacks, Indians and Coloureds take extensive individual responsibility for the process, less than 10% of Whites do.
- Only 17% of South Africans feel they can strongly influence the process of reconciliation.

So how are we doing?

- 16% of South Africans feel their national leaders are handling reconciliation very well, whilst 40% think they are handling it fairly well.
- Similarly, 13% assert that overall the country is doing very well at handling reconciliation and 40% think the country is doing fairly well.
- Whereas around two thirds of Blacks evaluate national leader and country performance positively, only about a third of Whites, Coloureds and Indians do so.

Ready to move on?

- There is great divergence of opinion on the question of White beneficence during apartheid and in its aftermath, with almost three quarters of black South Africans as opposed to less than a quarter of Whites in agreement.
- The issue of White apology reveals similar differences of perceptions amongst the race groups.
- There is relative inter-racial congruence on the question of the country's state of readiness to confront the past, with 79% asserting that South Africans should forgive those responsible for apartheid.
- Further, 73% agreed that South Africans should forget about the past and move on, and 70% stated that South Africans should get on with their lives, even in an absence of reparations.
- Despite an apparent unwillingness by white South Africans to take responsibility for the past, the majority of South Africans believe they ought to move on with their lives.

Introduction

From the time of the negotiated settlement, through the historic 1994 elections, the inauguration of President Mandela, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and talk of the 'rainbow nation', reconciliation has taken innumerable shapes and forms. Embraced by some and rejected by others, this notion has played a prominent role in South Africa's transition. Almost a decade into South Africa's democracy, there is a need to question whether the country is reconciling.

The Reconciliation Barometer project of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation is a longitudinal study that will monitor the reconciliation process. Through regular audits of actual social, political and economic transformation, bi-annual national surveys and ongoing anecdotal analysis of socio-political trends the Barometer seeks to find some answers to the question of how the country's reconciliation process is going.

Conferring an admittedly broad, though pre-conceived and academically constructed definition of reconciliation on the Reconciliation Barometer survey instrument would have been inappropriate. As a result an exploratory round of the survey, investigating the opinions of ordinary South Africans about the meanings and forms of reconciliation, was undertaken. This data will be utilised to guide the development of the research instrument to be used in the bi-annual surveys. What follows is a descriptive analysis of this *exploratory public opinion data*.

Part of the exploratory survey examined the meanings and associations South Africans attribute to the concept of reconciliation, followed by an investigation as to where and how South Africans conceptualise the location and nature of the process of reconciliation. This was followed by an evaluation of both the nation's leaders, as well as the country as a whole with regard to their performance in furthering the process of reconciliation. Previous research by the Institute has shown that the legacy of the past remains important for many South Africans. The survey also examined public opinion on South Africa's attempt to deal with the unfinished business of its past.

Survey Design

The analysis that follows is based on a survey of adult South Africans conducted between the 18th October and the 25 November 2002. The fieldwork for the survey was undertaken by Markinor and the information was obtained by adding a substantial set of questions to Markinor's M-Bus – an omnibus survey conducted on a nationally representative sample of South Africans aimed at measuring socio-political trends. Face to face interviews were conducted with 3 491 South Africans, 16 years and older. Only 5% of the originally selected respondents refused to be interviewed.

The survey instrument was first prepared in English and then translated into Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, North Sotho, South Sotho and Setswana. As a result, respondents were interviewed in the language of their choice. To facilitate more honest answers and reduce potential feelings of intimidation amongst respondents, all participants were interviewed by members of their own race.

A formal pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted on a convenient sample of seventy-five South Africans. Soft quotas were utilised to create a sample that closely resembles the probable proportions of these characteristics in the population as a whole. Thirty-five of the interviews were conducted in the Western Cape, whilst forty occurred in Gauteng, with at least 10 interviews conducted in each of the 7 official survey languages. In light of the pre-test outcome and interviewer feedback, a number of questions were re-worded and the order of questions changed.

Owing to historical factors from the Apartheid era, such as race classification and segregated residential areas (which still determine the available population figures), four distinct samples, one for each race group, was drawn by applying multi-stage stratification procedures. As a result the trained field-force interviewed 1 998 Blacks, 935 Whites, 388 Coloureds and 170 Indians. The sample covers both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. The racial composition of the sample in terms of its urban/rural location was worked out so that 50% of black respondents came from rural areas and 50% from urban areas, whilst approximately a third of white, coloured and Indian respondents were from rural areas and two-thirds from urban areas.

The black sample was created through a geographical area-probability sampling procedure with three calls, and respondents included people residing in informal settlements, as well as those living in multi-member households. The Coloured, White and Indian samples were created through area-stratified sampling procedures according to region, town, suburb and community size, with randomly selected sampling points. As in the Black sample, three calls were made before substitution. The smaller size of the White, Coloured and Indian sample demanded that the samples at each sampling point be quota controlled for gender, age and working status.

Due to the fact that some population sub-samples are not selected proportional to their size in the greater South African population, it is necessary to weight the data after data entry to render it more representative of the population as a whole. Some population groups are over-sampled to allow a sufficient number of cases to allow for statistically significant results. The table below reports the racial composition of the sample before and after weighting, as well as the actual (estimated) composition of the entire South African population.

Table 1: Racial Composition of Sample

	Racial composition of respondents interviewed (%)	Racial composition of weighted sample (%)	Racial composition of South African Population (%) [1]
Black	57	75	78
White	27	14	12
Coloured	11	9	8
Indian	5	3	3

At this juncture it should be noted that in making reference to South African racial sub-groups as Black, White, Indian and Coloured, no approval of the Apartheid-era classification system or its underlying theory of race is intended. The nature of present day South African society still bears the scars of an Apartheid past, and as such substantial differences between the conditions and orientations of the four main racial groups often persist and need to be rigorously analysed.

So what is Reconciliation?

To investigate the understandings and engagements of South Africans with reconciliation, respondents were provided with an open-ended and closed-ended question regarding what they understood by the term reconciliation.

In terms of the open-ended question, the data reported that almost 30% of the sample was unable to provide any answer for what reconciliation means. Although reconciliation is undeniably a complex concept, it is significant that 30% of South Africans were unable to ascribe it even some meaning. When compared to the 10% of South Africans unable to provide an answer to the same question asked about democracy in the 2000 Afrobarometer survey ¹, this portion may appear somewhat discouraging.

Amongst others,² Charles Villa-Vicencio contends that it may be better to live with definitional ambiguities, arguing that to define or own the concept too narrowly might render it too specifically space and time bound, stifling the social energy it is meant to create. He emphasizes the importance of reconciliation reaching beyond “the restrictive ghetto of any creed, culture or ideology. It must necessarily be both conceptually and substantially available to everyone.”

Table 2: Broad Categorisation of Meanings of Reconciliation (Open-ended Question)

Collapsed Categories	Percentage of all Responses able to provide an answer (%)
Forgiveness	22.9
Unity	15.7
Peace	12.7
Racial Integration	10.1
Forget	9.4
Co-operation	5.3
Dealing with the Past	5.2
Dealing with Difference	4.7
Socio-Economic development	3.5
Values	2.7
Ending racism	2.4
Human Rights	1.6
Other	3.9
N = 2 644, Total Number of responses = 3 938	

Question asked: “In recent years there has been much talk about reconciliation in South Africa. What, if anything, do you understand by the word ‘Reconciliation’? What comes to mind when you hear the word?”

At the same time, the danger of leaving reconciliation too undefined or abstract and therefore largely inaccessible or even contradictory to people at a grassroots level should also be noted.³ As such, the 30%

¹ Bratton, M (2001) *Wide but shallow: Popular support for Democracy in Africa* in McMahon, N and T. Sinclair (eds.) (2002) *The Performance of Democratic Institutions: Research and Policy Perspectives*. New York: Praeger/Greenwood.

² See Duxtader, E (2002) “Is it ‘Reconciliation’ if we Say It Is? Discerning the Rhetorical Problem in the South African Transition.” An unpublished paper; Villa-Vicencio, C (2002) “Reconciliation as Metaphor” in Holness, L & R. K. Wustenberg (eds) (2002) *Theology in Dialogue*. David Phillip Publishers: Cape Town.

³ See Pankhurst, D (1999) “Issues of Justice and Reconciliation in complex political emergencies: conceptualising reconciliation, justice and peace” in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 20, Iss. 1, pp 239 – 256; Hamber, B (2002) “Ere their story die: truth, justice and reconciliation in South Africa” in *Race & Class*, Vol. 44, Iss. 1, pp 61 – 79.

of South Africans unable or unwilling to define the concept of reconciliation should be considered within the larger question of optimal definitional ambiguity.

Further analysis with the original 68 different possible meanings of reconciliation is unwieldy and impractical, and many of the meanings are essentially closely related. Consequently a natural grouping process was undertaken, and all closely related answers collected into a limited number of categories.⁴

Amongst the 70% of the sample able to provide at least one meaning of reconciliation, the most frequently ventured answer was forgiveness, selected by 23% of respondents. The question that beckons answering is what do these people mean when they say reconciliation is about forgiveness? Do South Africans view reconciliation within a religious paradigm, inculcating theological demands for confession, repentance and, most importantly, forgiveness? Has Archbishop Desmond Tutu's call for reconciliation through forgiveness during the TRC years found resonance in the consciousness of South African minds? Do South Africans equate reconciliation with forgiveness because they believe that this is the final obstacle, which once removed, will allow the nation to become reconciled?

The rationalisation process behind this answer can be speculated upon at length.⁵ What is clear is the fact that forgiveness plays a central role in the understandings of reconciliation of a large portion of South Africans. The nature of the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation, and in particular the causal order of this apparent trajectory, has been the source of heated debate. In a national survey conducted by the Institute in 2000 78% of all South Africans agreed that national reconciliation requires that people forgive one another. In conjunction, these two findings suggest that for many South Africans forgiveness is a paramount dimension of reconciliation.

Forgiveness was followed by unity (16%), peace (13%) and racial integration (10%) as most commonly recurring responses. These very broad understandings of reconciliation could almost be placed on either side of a continuum. Peace, or the end of violent conflict, is often framed as the first step in the process of reconciliation, whilst unity or racial integration is seen as ideal states at the other end. In the light of South Africa's violent past, and in particular, the ongoing political violence that continues to ravage certain parts of KwaZulu-Natal and other regions of the country, it comes as no surprise that for many South Africans reconciliation is nothing more than the end of violence, threat and bloodshed.

In contrast to the essentially *forward-looking* meanings expressing the hoped-for end states of unity, peace and racial integration, the next largest response category was forgetting about *the past*, comprising 9% of responses. This could be interpreted in a number of ways. Amongst Whites it is likely to be the result of a weariness of being reminded of an uncomfortable and possibly guilt-inducing past. Amongst black respondents it may signify that they no longer wish to dwell on a past that embodies suffering and oppression. Others still may simply have resigned themselves to the idea that the past will never be sufficiently recognised, acknowledged or redressed and hence there may be little choice but to move on.

Forgetting about the past was followed by co-operation (5%), "dealing with the past" (5%) and then "dealing with difference" (5%). Significantly, bar associations with forgiveness and forgetting, other meanings of reconciliation that are directly associated with actively confronting the past, as popularly

⁴ Under most circumstances factor and reliability analysis procedures would have to precede the computing of new constructs. In this case the presence of a vast number of dichotomous variables (68) prevents such analysis. As a result these larger constructs have been created on the basis of *face validity*. See Appendix A for a list of each of the variables in these categories.

⁵ See Tutu, D (1999) *No Future without Forgiveness*. Rider: London; Graybill, L. S. (2002) *Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa: Miracle or Model*. Lynne Rienner Publishers: London; Cochrane, De Gruchy, J. and S. Martin (1999) *Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. David Phillips: Cape Town, Villa-Vicencio, C and W. Verwoerd (2000) *Looking Back Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa*. University of Cape Town Press: Cape Town.

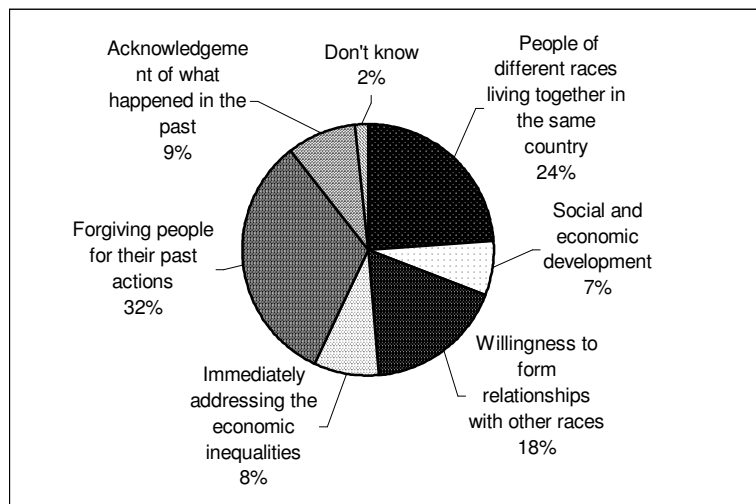
advocated by the TRC, are infrequent. Apology, acknowledgement, redress, confession and finding out the truth are not uppermost in the minds of many South Africans when they think about reconciliation.

Unexpectedly perhaps, *material compensation, financial redress and socio-economic development* did not feature prominently with less than 4% of South Africans automatically associating reconciliation with issues of socio-economic justice.⁶ This lack of immediate connection of reconciliation with the “harder” issues of socio-economic redress could be interpreted as these not featuring prominently in the minds of the majority of South Africans (approximately 78% of whom are Black). Alternatively it could be rationalised that reconciliation may not automatically be associated with redress, but redress seen as a mandatory condition for forgiveness, unification, peace, moving on or any other of the ‘softer’ issues.

Equally surprising is the scenario whereby the *human rights* paradigm of reconciliation so prominent in academic debate,⁷ found little resonance at grassroots level, with responses in this category comprising less than 2% of total responses.

An interpretation of the infrequent inclusion of first generation rights and/or socio-economic justice issues in people’s understandings of reconciliation suggests that the majority of South Africans view socio-economic development, racial reconciliation and democratic consolidation as separate and independent processes. Despite being the centre of innumerable academic debates, recognition of the significance of development, economic redress and tangible transformation for reconciliation was not clearly visible in the survey results. The data did not reflect any wide-spread realisation that in South Africa at present, reconciliation, reconstruction and transformation are unequivocally related and interlinked dimensions of the same problem. Aside from the relative lack of emphasis on human rights and socio-economic facets of reconciliation, the unprompted meanings of reconciliation provided by respondents cover a rich spectrum of reconciliation paradigms.

Graph 1: Meanings of Reconciliation (Closed-ended Question)



Question asked: “If you have to choose, which one is closest to what you think reconciliation is about?” First Mention and Second Mention.

⁶ See Villa-Vicencio, C (2002) “The Courage to Live Together: Material and Subjective Reconciliation.” Paper delivered at A Conference on Truth, Justice and Reconciliation. Stockholm, Sweden. 23 –24 April 2002.

⁷ See Gerwel, J (2000) “National reconciliation: holy grail or secular pact?” in Villa-Vicencio, C and W. Verwoerd (2000) *Looking Back Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa*. University of Cape Town Press: Cape Town, Hamber, B (2002) “Ere their story die’: truth, justice and reconciliation in South Africa” in *Race & Class* Vol. 44, Iss. 1.

A more conclusive analysis of the meanings of reconciliation requires a comparative analysis with the results of the closed ended-question. In this question respondents were provided with six different possible meanings of reconciliation, and asked to select the statement most closely resembling their own notion of the term, followed by the second closest notion.

As before, the option stating that reconciliation is about forgiveness (32%) was the most commonly selected one. Peaceful coexistence, operationalised here as “people of different races living together in the same country” was the second most frequent choice (24%), followed closely by the meaningful racial integration item (18%). As before, a comparatively much smaller portion of South Africans singled out issues of financial redress (8%) and socio-economic development (7%) as their first choice.

An investigation of respondent’s second choices revealed that support for socio-economic definitions of reconciliation remained secondary. Significantly, the explanation asserting that reconciliation is about acknowledgment appeared more frequently amongst respondent’s second choices than amongst their first. No clear pattern of those favouring forgiveness as first meaning selecting the “harder” socio-economic justice options as second choice was apparent.

A comparison of the open and closed-ended questions reveals only minor differences. In both, the largest portion of respondents associated reconciliation with forgiveness. In both, notions of integration, peace, and unity feature prominently. In the closed-ended question, acknowledgement received more attention than was the case in the open-ended question. Notions of socio-economic justice and economic redress also received slightly more mention in the closed-ended question, but nonetheless do not feature as prominently as may have been expected.

On the whole it would seem that regardless of question format most South Africans associate reconciliation with its forgiveness, unity creating, peace instilling and racial integration dimensions. All these associations need to be examined further, but the association of reconciliation with forgiveness and forgetting about the past requires specific further investigation. The strong presence of notions of forgiveness in the minds of about four in ten South Africans and forgetting about the past in a further one in ten implies that for many the door on the past is not yet closed.

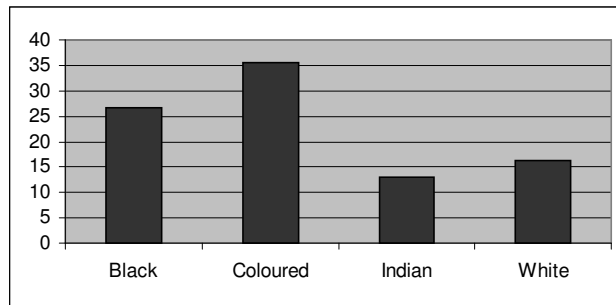
If this finding is to be utilised for the advancement of reconciliation, a further analysis of mandatory conditions for forgiveness and forgetting the past is necessary. Does forgiveness require an apology, some acknowledgement, recognition, material compensation, financial redress or something completely different? Does forgetting about the past mean that the past has to be avenged, redressed, acknowledged or simply ignored?

Meanings of Reconciliation in each Race Group

The open and closed-ended questions utilised in this survey revealed that South Africans really do hold various meanings of reconciliation, ranging from those looking at dealing with the past to those looking to forget the past, from those looking for utopian unified societies to those just wanting an end to the war. Reconciliation undeniably means different things to different South Africans.

The question that begs answering is whether certain population sub-groups favour certain understandings of reconciliation. Whilst it is most certainly not necessary for all citizens of a nation to hold the same ideas of what reconciliation means, the knowledge that different population sub-groups hold very distinct and divergent understandings of the concept could be beneficial for the facilitation of further dialogue.

Graph 2: No Meaning of Reconciliation ⁸



Question asked: “If you have to choose, which one is closest to what you think reconciliation is about?” First Mention and Second Mention.

The data reveals some differences in the portion of each race group unable to offer any meaning of reconciliation, with a comparatively larger portion of coloured respondents unable to do so. Focus group research conducted by the Institute revealed substantial disillusionment and alienation from the reconciliation process amongst Coloured focus group participants, with many asserting that during Apartheid they were “too black” and in the new South Africa they are “too white”.⁹ The high portion of coloured respondents claiming not to know what reconciliation means is difficult to explain. Some have suggested that this outcome may be more an expression of exasperation and disillusion with the process than ignorance of the meaning of the concept.

Table 3: Provided Meanings of Reconciliation (Open-ended Question) ¹⁰

	Black	White	Coloured	Indian
Forgiveness	27.7	8.7	15.3	9.2
Unity	14	18.1	18.2	31.3
Peace	13.7	9.9	10.9	9.1
Racial Integration	8.1	17.1	11.1	13.6
Forget about the Past	10	6.7	9	10.7
Dealing with Difference	4.3	5.4	6.1	6.1
Cooperation	4.3	8.2	7.8	7.7
Dealing with the past	5	5.3	7.1	3.7
Economic Development	3.8	3.1	2.5	2.1
Values	1.7	6.1	4.7	2.5
Ending Racism	2.8	1.9	1	0.8
Human Rights	1.4	2.2	2.3	1.6
Other	3.2	7.1	4	1.6
	N = 1 465, Total Responses = 2 133	N = 781, Total Responses = 1 131	N = 250, Total Responses = 403	N = 148, Total Responses = 271

Question asked: “If you have to choose, which one is closest to what you think reconciliation is about?” First Mention and Second Mention.

⁸ $\chi^2 = 77.54$, $p < .01$, Black: N = 1998, Coloured: N = 388, Indian: N = 170, White: N = 939.

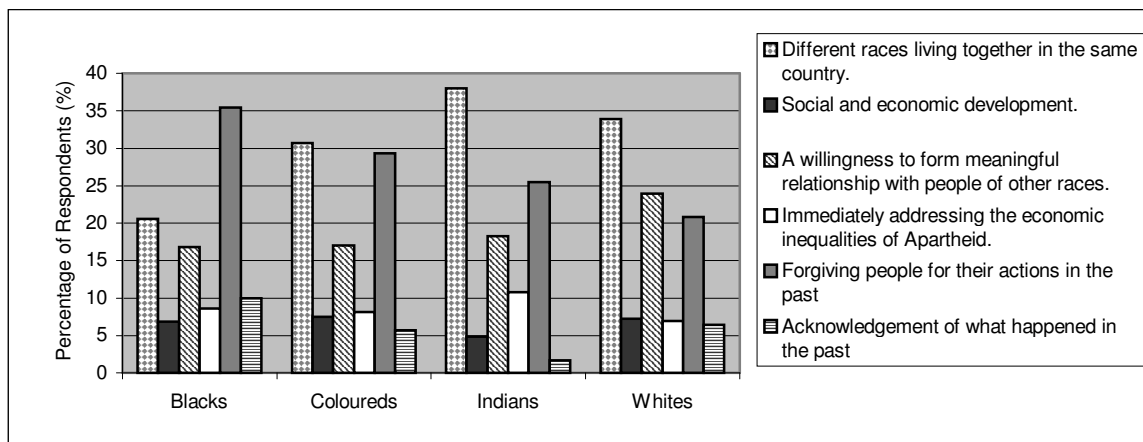
⁹ Du Toit, S. F., Biggs, R. and A. Greyling. (2001) “Project Reconciliation”. Research Report, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Rondebosch: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation

¹⁰ Only those able to provide an answer were included in the analysis. The chi-squares for each of these items were as follows: Forgiveness: $\chi^2 = 1078.9$, $p < .01$; Unity: $\chi^2 = 521.5$, $p < .01$; Peace: $\chi^2 = 60.4$, $p < .01$; Racial Integration: $\chi^2 = 414.8$, $p < .01$; Forget about past: $\chi^2 = 75.04$, $p < .01$. Black: N= 1998, Coloured: N=388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 939.

When all the responses of South Africans in the various race groups who were able to provide a meaning of reconciliation are examined, some differences become apparent. The table reveals that the biggest racial differences occur with regard to meanings of forgiveness, unity and racial integration. Almost 30% of all the responses provided by black South Africans contained some reference to notions of forgiveness, whilst a far smaller portion of coloured (15%), Indian (9%) and white (9%) responses did the same. An examination of the responses referring to unity also reveals substantial divergence, with almost a third of Indian responses falling into this category. The proportions in the other races are substantially lower, at 18% of coloured and white responses respectively, and an even lower portion of 14% amongst black responses. These results could have been influenced by the fact that of the sample of 170 Indian respondents, only 148 were able to provide an answer, rendering a relatively small sample. Responses inculcating notions of racial integration (17%) comprised a far greater portion of white answers than they did those of black responses, where they only comprised 8%.

These differences were verified by a comparison with the differences in the closed-ended question. As before, black South Africans most frequently selected the forgiveness option, whilst Whites selected the racial integration and peaceful coexistence meanings. Amongst coloured respondents there is some difference between answers to the two question formats with meanings of racial integration more prominent in the closed-ended question.

Graph 3: Selected Definitions of Reconciliation (Closed-Ended Question) ¹¹



Question asked: "If you have to choose, which one is closest to what you think reconciliation is about? First Mention".

On the whole, analysis of the open-ended and closed-ended questions suggests that black South Africans more often appear to associate reconciliation with forgiveness than with meaningful racial integration or peaceful coexistence. Whites, on the other hand, appear to understand reconciliation as meaning some form of relationship building between the races, with less emphasis on forgiveness and acknowledgement.

Coloureds appear to favour notions of peaceful coexistence amongst all of South Africa's race groups, with forgiveness as relatively prominent meaning, whilst Indian South Africans favouring notions of unity, and to some extent peaceful coexistence as the foremost meaning of reconciliation. No group prominently favours the socio-economic justice dimension of reconciliation in their immediate associations with reconciliation.

¹¹ $\chi^2 = 867.236$, $p < .01$, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

These differences in understandings, which, contrary to expectations, appear to revolve around the relative and comparative importance of forgiveness and racial integration, require further qualitative analysis. Of particular importance is the concept of forgiveness. Similarly to reconciliation, forgiveness is a complex issue that most certainly means different things to different people.

The Unfinished Business of the Past.

The results of the first two questions show that the past still features prominently in the understandings of reconciliation of many South Africans. The survey included a battery of questions looking at the perceived state of readiness for dealing with the past.

Table 4: Dealing with the Past

	Percentage of respondents (%) ¹²			Factor 1 Loadings	Factor 2 Loadings
	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree		
<i>I think those who suffered under Apartheid should be ready to forgive those responsible.</i>	78.8	12.4	6.1	.581	
<i>Despite reparations not having been paid, people should be ready to move on.</i>	69.5	19.1	8	.660	
<i>I think South Africans should forget about the past and just move on with their lives.</i>	72.9	16.2	8.9	.650	
I think the people who suffered under Apartheid have received enough financial payment or compensation to be able to move on. ¹³	38.7	20.8	27.1	.301*	-.242*
I feel that white people should be ready to apologise for what happened to the people under Apartheid.	67	15.7	14.4		.691
In the past, whites profited greatly from Apartheid, and most continue to profit today from the legacy of Apartheid.	65.8	16.7	12.5		.706
N = 3 491. Maximum Likelihood Analysis with Oblimin Rotation with Kaiser Normalization yielded two components. ¹⁴				$\alpha = .65$ *Excluding item	$\alpha = .65$ *Excluding item

Factor analysis of the responses showed that there are two distinct factors or underlying social constructs. The first is concerned with whether people ought to be ready to confront the past and move on, whilst the second concerns whether white South Africans ought to recognise and consequently apologise for their beneficiation under apartheid. Correlation analysis reveals that there is almost no correlation between the two underlying constructs ($r = .176$). This indicates that opinions on the two constructs are not closely associated and seem to function almost independently of each other. Although this requires further rigorous analysis, it would seem that opinions on the will to move forward are not closely tied to the will of whites to acknowledge and take responsibility for their role in the past.

The data indicates that the three items in the construct concerning the perceived state of readiness to deal with the past were all similarly well supported by respondents. The fact that very few white South Africans were victims of abuse under apartheid could lead one to hypothesize that white South Africans might demonstrate greater support for forgiveness to transpire, or, alternatively, for South Africans to forget

¹² "Don't know" has not been included. Due to this and rounding, percentages may not add to 100%.

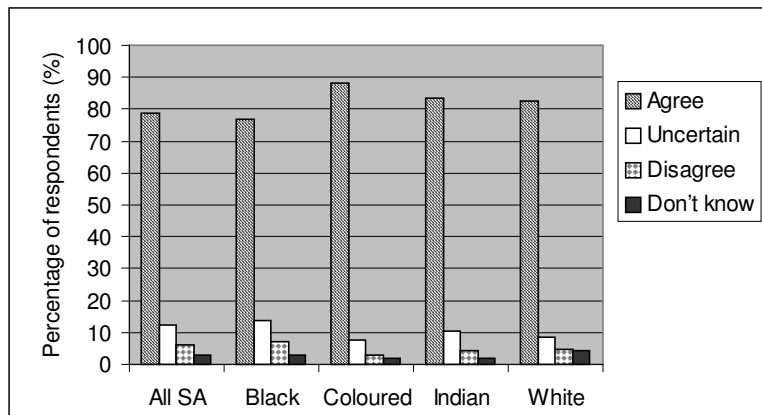
¹³ A sizeable portion of 13.4% of respondents provided "don't know" as answer to this question.

¹⁴ Component 1 accounts for 32.4% of variance and component 2 accounts for 25.8% of the variance.

about the past and move on. To investigate this hypothesis each of these items will be examined independently.

When the data is disaggregated by race, more than three quarter of all Black respondents (77%) agree that forgiveness should be forthcoming, and the percentages amongst the other racial groups are even higher (Coloured: 88%, Indian & White: 83%). This is an interesting finding, particularly when seen in the context of the fact that in 2000, almost 80% of South Africans felt that forgiveness was necessary for reconciliation.¹⁵ It should, however, be recognized that the data documents the percentage of South Africans who believe that reconciliation should be forthcoming, and not the percentage which are willing to forgive those responsible for Apartheid. Translating this widely supported sentiment that reconciliation should be forthcoming into an actual willingness to forgive is an area in which some intervention may be useful.

Graph 4: Forgiveness ¹⁶



Question asked: *Do you agree, are uncertain or disagree with the following statement: I think those who suffered under Apartheid should be ready to forgive those responsible.*

The notion that South African ought to forget about the past and move on also received relatively wide-ranging support, but once again it can be speculated that those who suffered most would find it more difficult to forget, implying that black South Africans would not support this option as widely as white South Africans. Others have, however, argued that those who benefited in the past, and may still be dealing with the guilt arising from this, may be the ones who cannot forget the past, let alone face the challenges of the future.

The data appears to substantiate the first hypothesis more than the second, in that 90% of Whites agreed that South Africans should forget about the past and move on with their lives, whilst 69% of Blacks agreed. Somewhat surprisingly Indians (90% agreed) are almost as supportive of South Africans being ready to forget about the past as Whites, whilst 76% of coloured respondents agreed.

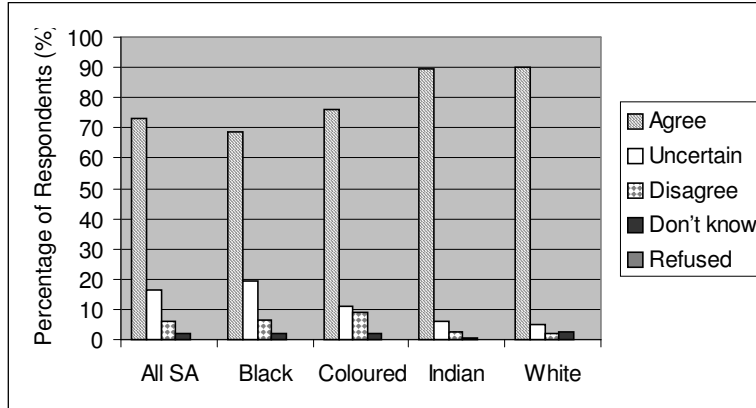
Hence the majority in each racial group agrees that South Africans ought to forget about the past and move on, although support for this sentiment is somewhat lower amongst Blacks than Whites and Indians, with Coloureds in between. A number of interpretations of the wide-ranging support for this opinion can be

¹⁵ MacDonald, H. (2000) "Reconciliation Survey Research Report". Research Report, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Rondebosch: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation.

¹⁶ $\chi^2 = 513.073$, $p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

offered. Amongst coloured and black respondents this could be indicative of disillusionment with the way the country has dealt with an insufficiently addressed or confronted past.

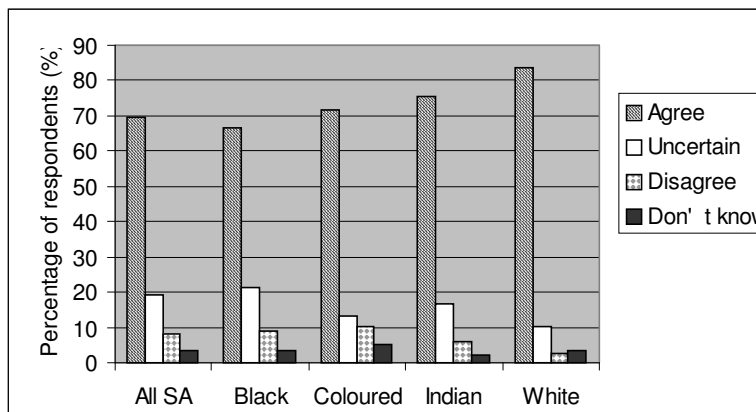
Graph 5: Forget about the Past¹⁷



Question asked: *Do you agree, are uncertain or disagree with the following statement: I think South Africans should forget about the past and just move on with their lives.*

This data could be suggestive of a resignation to the fact that no apology, no acknowledgement and no real socio-economic redress will be forthcoming, and hence speaking about the past is going to do little except reopen old wounds better left for time to heal. Alternatively, this could be indicative of a shift away from a pre-occupation with the highly politicised past to present challenges and problems that have little to do with the past. For black and white South Africans the looming threat of HIV/Aids and the increasingly precarious global economic situation could have become more important than dwelling on the past. This requires further investigation.

Graph 6: Unpaid Reparations¹⁸



Question asked: *Do you agree, are uncertain or disagree with the following statement: Despite reparations not having been paid, people should be ready to move on.*

Interestingly the differences amongst the racial groups are similar on the question whether an absence of reparations should prevent people from moving on with their lives. Once again, an almost 20% larger portion of Whites (84%) than Blacks (67%) agreed that people ought to move on, even in an absence of

¹⁷ $\chi^2 = 1327.180$, $p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

¹⁸ $\chi^2 = 878.067$, $p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

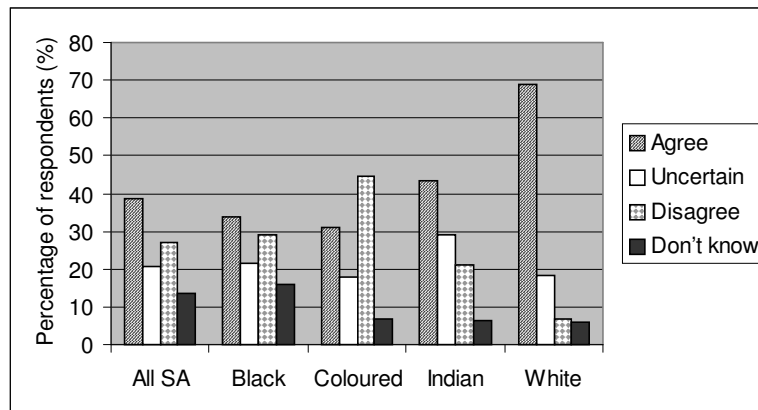
reparations. It is, at the same time, worth noting that a significant percentage of all South Africans do not explicitly emphasize the need for reparations.

Whether this indicates that for most South Africans reparations are not as important as Victim Support Groups, the media and the recent high-profile international law suits may portray them to be, or whether people have resigned themselves to a long wait for reparations but hope to move on with their lives in the mean time, can be debated at length. This will also need more extensive examination.

In general, support for the three items that constitute the construct examining whether ordinary people think that they should be ready to confront the past and move on is relatively high, although significant intra-racial differences are apparent.

Whilst victims of gross human rights violations identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission received some interim reparations and are likely to receive substantial reparations in the near future, it is not clear whether South Africans think that others who suffered or were disadvantaged under apartheid have been adequately compensated for this abuse. The next statement was phrased in such a way to prevent specific direct reference to these reparations, whilst the term victims was also omitted in an attempt to remove this question from the ongoing debate surrounding reparations discussed above.

Graph 7: Financial Compensation ¹⁹



Question asked: *Do you agree, are uncertain or disagree with the following statement: I think the people who suffered under Apartheid have received enough financial payment or compensation to be able to move on.*

The data demonstrate that differences between the race groups are far larger than was the case with the previous questions. Only approximately three out of ten Coloureds (31%) and Blacks (34%) and four out of ten Indians (43%) felt that sufficient financial payment or compensation had been made, whilst the portion amongst white respondents is almost double that at 69%.

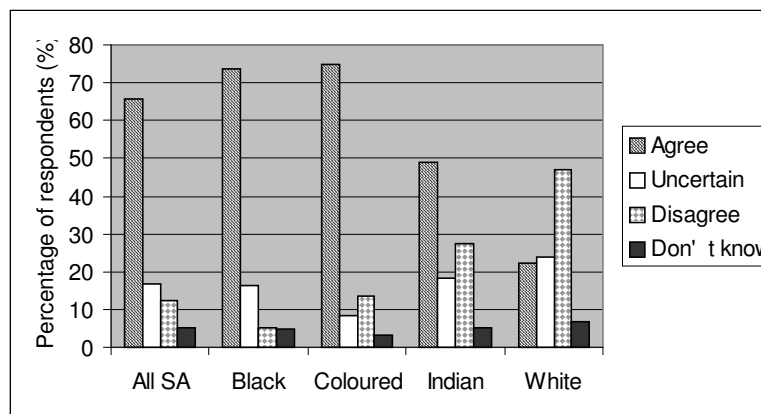
It can be speculated that those Whites who agreed could be overestimating the redistributive capacity of policies, such as Affirmative Action, Black Economic Empowerment and Land Redistribution. Amongst Blacks, Coloureds and Indians, it appears that these government policies are not perceived as having yielded very much compensation. Alternatively the high portion of agreement amongst Whites could also be the result of an unwillingness to acknowledge that little economic redress has really happened, which might once again force some responsibility on Whites to compromise or make economic and social sacrifices.

¹⁹ $\chi^2 = 3056.829$, $p < .01$., All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

A similar pattern is visible in response to the statement that Whites profited from Apartheid and continue to do so today. Less than one quarter of Whites (22%), compared to just short of three quarter of Blacks (74%), agreed with the statement.

A portion of the Whites disagreeing probably truly believe that the end of apartheid-era exclusionist and repressive policies and the dawn of Affirmative Action and Black Empowerment strategies have resulted in a situation where whites no longer benefit from Apartheid. The disproportionate pessimism with which whites, particularly in light of affirmative action policies, view their chances of finding employment or obtaining promotions may also play a role. It is also possible that Whites refusing to recognise that they continue to benefit could be a reaction to the fear that acknowledgement brings with it some responsibility to redress the unfair beneficitation.

Graph 8: White Beneficitation ²⁰



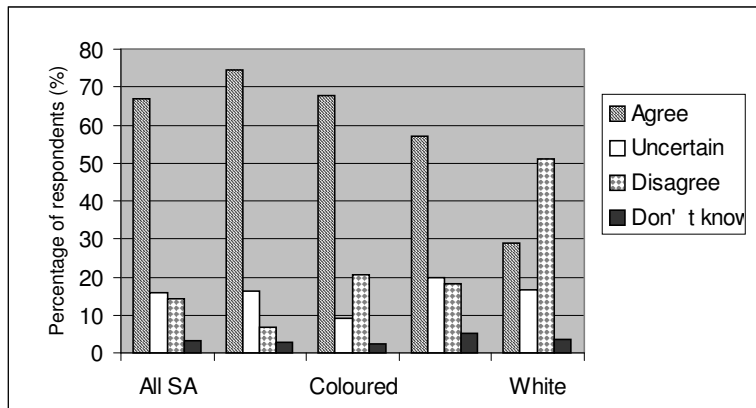
Question asked: *In the past, whites profited greatly from Apartheid, and most continue to profit today from the legacy of Apartheid.*

Large-scale support for this statement amongst Blacks reveals that a sizeable number of the national majority agree that despite the presence of policies aimed at reducing the racially skewed economic gradient, Whites continue to benefit economically from the long-term systemic after effects of apartheid. This wide divide between Black and White opinions should be monitored as it could destabilize the larger reconciliation process. At the same time, the widespread denial of white beneficitation can, and may in fact already, have crystallized into a complete unwillingness to compromise or make any sacrifice towards redistribution and the narrowing of the country's economic inequality.

The responses to the question of a White apology are equally sharply divided by race. Whilst three quarters of Blacks, two thirds of Coloureds (68%) and 57% of all Indian respondents agreed, less than a third of all Whites (29%) deemed a white apology necessary. Whatever the reasoning, Blacks and Whites differ greatly on this issue. The massive disparity between the majority of Blacks (and Whites) feeling those who suffered should now forgive and the majority of Whites who feel they do not continue to benefit and need not apologise may have long-term repercussions for the nation-building process

²⁰ $\chi^2 = 7107.142$, $p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

Graph 9: White apology ²¹



Question asked: *Do you agree, are uncertain or disagree with the following statement: I feel that white people should be ready to apologise for what happened to the people under Apartheid.*

The data demonstrate a stubborn unwillingness by Whites to recognize that taking responsibility for the past is necessary for addressing the past and simultaneously facing future challenges. Even if public acknowledgement or an apology is not forthcoming, the acceptance of some responsibility is paramount. Projects that channel this responsibility towards the upliftment of those apartheid left impoverished or that involve white compromise for greater redistribution may be a more viable vehicle for responding to this need.

The question of white responsibility reveals little congruence of opinion across race groups, whilst perceived readiness to gain closure on the past enjoys greater congruence and the support of the majority in each race group. The original perfunctory factor analysis appeared to indicate that attitudes towards these two issues are held independently of each other. In light of widespread White refusal to acknowledge or apologise for their beneficitation, this comes as quite a relief. Whilst White recognition and acknowledgement of the past does not appear to be a mandatory pre-condition for forgiveness and moving on, the patience of people who since 1994 have not seen any concerted efforts by Whites to change the apartheid era socio-economic *status quo* should not be overestimated.

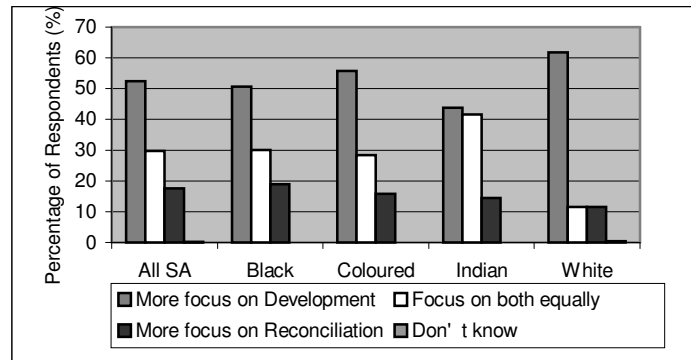
Reconciliation and Development

This close relationship between socio-economic redress and development on the one hand and reconciliation on the other was clearly enunciated by President Mbeki when he asserted: "It's a very delicate thing to handle the relationship between these two elements [transformation and reconciliation]. It's not a mathematical thing; it's an art ... If you handle the transformation in a way that doesn't change a good part of the status quo, those who are disadvantaged will rebel, and then goodbye reconciliation."

The survey instrument also investigated the relative salience of development and reconciliation for the general public. Reconciliation was clarified as referring to the rebuilding of relationships between people, whilst development was defined as dealing with unemployment, crime, a lack of housing and the like, embodying the so-called socio-economic rights.

²¹ $\chi^2 = 7609.158$, $p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

Graph 10: An Evaluation of the comparative importance of reconciliation and democracy ²²



Question asked: *Some people say government should be focusing on reconciliation between people, whilst others say it should focus on development, like dealing with crime, unemployment, housing. Others have views somewhere in between. On a scale of 1 to 10, where would you put your views?*²³

As may have been expected, more than half of all South Africans claimed that government should focus mostly, if not exclusively, on development. With much of South Africa's population still unemployed and a great many residing in substandard housing in sprawling informal settlements, this outcome presents no surprise. What is surprising is that almost 30% express the view that government should focus equally on development and reconciliation, whilst a further 18% assert that government should focus more, or even exclusively, on the subjective rebuilding of relationships between people

This somewhat startling finding indicates that for a substantial portion of South Africans the subjective relations between people are as important a task of government as development. A comparison of the different races demonstrates that Whites show the greatest support for government focusing more on development, with Indians revealing the greatest support for dual governmental focus. Increased government focus on development, as supported by about two thirds of Whites (62%), would largely exonerate any other role players, be they individuals, groups, or business, from having to take responsibility or make compromises for development. At the same time it is possible that Whites do not really deem the "healing of relations" as a task requiring government attention.

The 10% lower level of support amongst black South Africans (51%) for greater focus on development is somewhat confounding, primarily because the largest portion of those desperately in need of socio-economic development and poverty alleviation mechanisms are Black. It could be argued that some black South Africans see the delivery of sound economic infrastructure and welfare support for the poor as tasks that should be undertaken by government, together with business, individuals and civil society, hence not requiring that much governmental attention. Alternatively higher levels of support amongst Blacks for government attention to reconciliation could be attributed to the fact that Blacks are more aware of- and concerned about the need to address the relations between South Africans from different sides of historical divides.

²² $\chi^2 = 840.853$, $p < .01$. All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935.

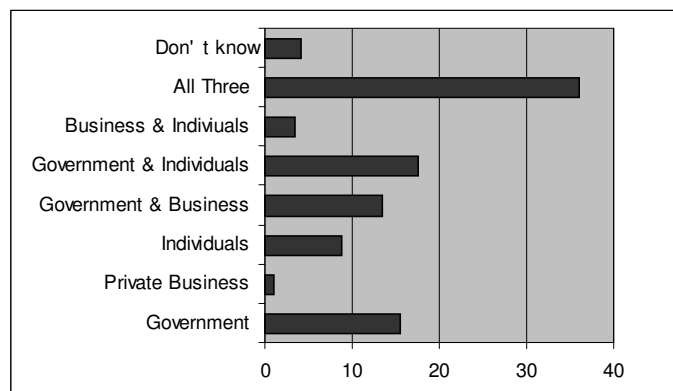
²³ The 10-point Likert scale was collapsed as follows. 1: Government should focus exclusively on reconciliation; 2 – 4: Government should mainly focus on reconciliation; 5 – 6: Government should focus on both equally; 7 – 9: Government should mainly focus on development; 10: Government should focus exclusively on development.

Reconciliation and Participation

In view of the fact that the majority of South Africans assert that government should focus predominantly (if not exclusively) on development, it is necessary to determine whom they would task with taking primary responsibility for reconciliation.

The data reveal that although 16% of South Africans thought that government should take sole primary responsibility, a similarly sized portion thought government should share this responsibility with Individuals, whilst a substantially larger 36% thought it should be the task of all three. This is an essentially positive finding, indicating that the majority of South Africans feel that numerous role players should take ownership or primary responsibility for reconciliation.

Graph 11: Source of Primary Responsibility for Reconciliation ²⁴



Question asked: *In your opinion, who should take primary responsibility for reconciliation? Should it be government, private business, individuals or some combination of these?*

Interestingly, despite the recent high-profile lawsuits in which victims of gross human rights violations challenged multinational corporations to stand trial for their support of the apartheid regime, a need for business to nurture a culture of corporate responsibility does not appear to have manifested itself in the minds of the majority of South Africans, with only 1% of respondents tasking big business with primary role.

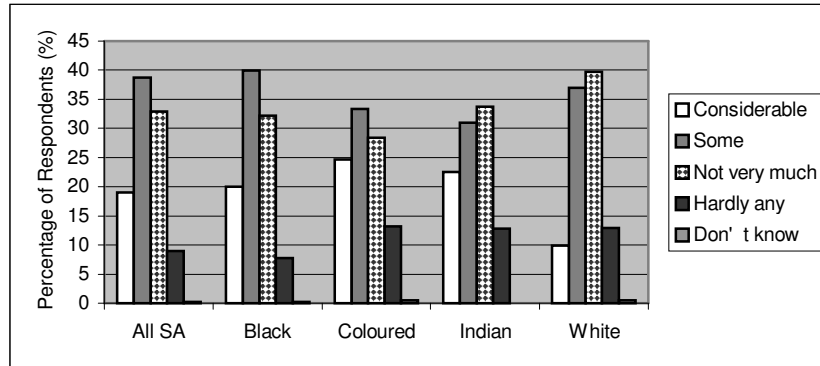
Cumulatively 70% of the sample thought that individuals, either alone or in conjunction with business and/or government, should take primary responsibility for reconciliation. This abstract support for a multi-stakeholder driven reconciliation process is not, however, reflected in the next table, which reveals that only 19% of South Africans were willing to take considerable responsibility for reconciliation. Between 20 and 25% of Coloureds, Blacks and Indians claim to accept considerable individual responsibility, whereas acknowledgement of individual responsibility amongst Whites is significantly lower, with approximately 10% accepting considerable responsibility. More positively 38% of respondents accepted some individual responsibility for the process.

Overall, however, respondents appeared reluctant to acknowledge considerable responsibility. It is feasible that this perceived lack of personal responsibility is strongly influenced by ideas of the process being too large and distant for ordinary people to influence. Thus, except in the case of high-profile individuals, many ordinary citizens could perceive no reason for individuals to take great personal

²⁴ $\chi^2 = 718.838$, $p < .01$. All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

responsibility. Statistical analysis shows that feelings of responsibility towards the process are closely correlated to perceptions of an ability to influence the process ($r = .586, p < .01$).

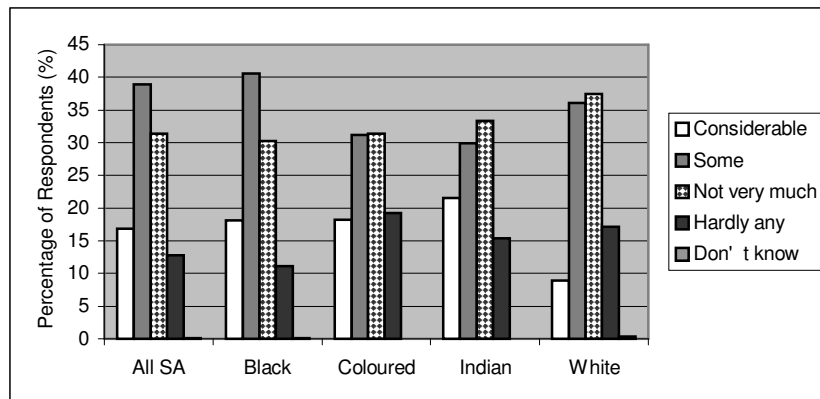
Graph 12: Perceptions of Personal Responsibility ²⁵



Question asked: *When you think about your everyday life, how much responsibility do you think you personally have for the process of reconciliation? If "1" means no responsibility and "10" means great responsibility, where would you place your level of responsibility?*²⁶

Just short of 17% of South Africans believe they have considerable influence on the process of reconciliation. Interestingly, whereas more than 20% of Indian South Africans think they have considerable influence on the process, less than 10% of Whites think they do. The opinions of coloured and black South Africans range in between.

Graph 13: Perceptions of Personal Influence on the process of Reconciliation ²⁷



Question asked: *When you think about your everyday life, how much do you think you can personally influence the process of reconciliation? If "1" means no responsibility and "10" means great responsibility, where would you place your level of responsibility?* ²⁸

This sense of individual powerlessness within this process could be indicative of a perception of reconciliation as being a grand national process completely separate from the daily interactions of ordinary citizens with other ordinary citizens. Alternatively, the perceived magnitude of obstacles to reconciliation could contribute towards ordinary people seeing their individual efforts as interminably small and

²⁵ $\chi^2 = 758.656, p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 3 491, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935.

²⁶ The 10-point Likert scale was collapsed as follows. 1 – 2: hardly any, 3 – 5: not very much, 6 – 8: Some, 9 – 10: Considerable.

²⁷ $\chi^2 = 843.199, p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935

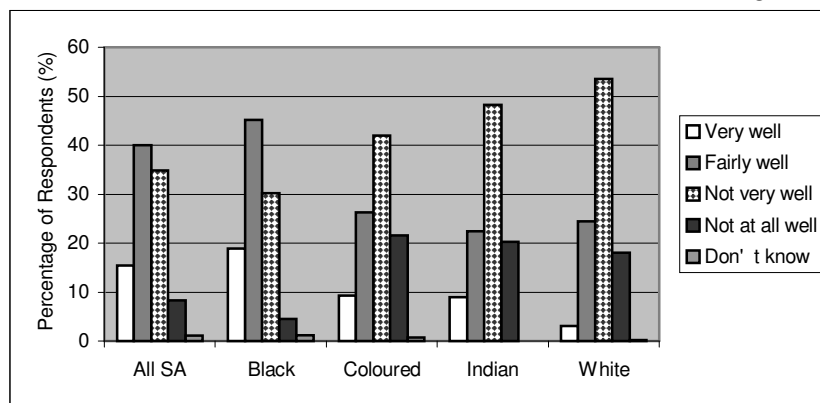
²⁸ The 10-point Likert scale was collapsed as follows. 1 – 2: hardly any, 3 – 5: not very much, 6 – 8: Some, 9 – 10: Considerable.

ineffectual. Whatever the reasons, this relatively widely held belief in the inability of individuals to influence and shape the process presents a major obstacle to creating the kind of social energy that is necessary for systemic transformation and national reconciliation.

Evaluations of Performance

It appears that whilst many South Africans are quick to claim that reconciliation is not the sole responsibility of government, low levels of feelings of personal responsibility or capacity to influence the process of reconciliation reveal that individuals may indeed have higher expectations of government than of themselves.

Graph 14: An Evaluation of the Performance of National Leaders in handling Reconciliation ²⁹



Question asked: *When you think about the country's national leadership, how well do you think they are handling reconciliation? If "1" means very badly and "10" means very well, how would you evaluate the country's national leadership?*³⁰

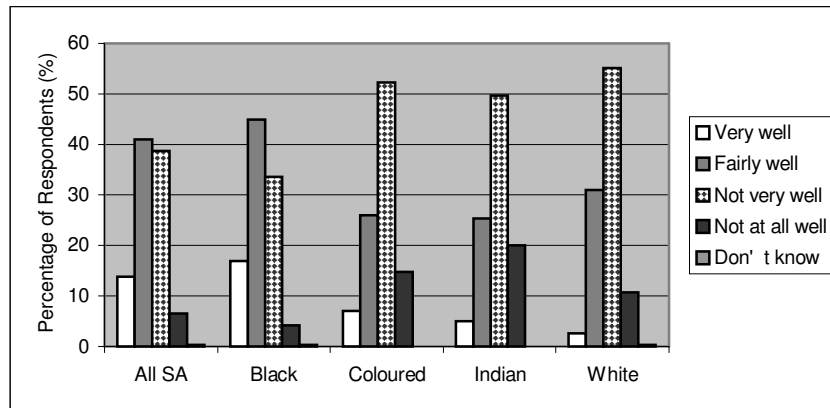
16% of respondents thought the national leadership were doing very well and a further 40% asserted that they were doing fairly well. Disaggregation of the data by race, however, reveals that these sentiments were not shared by all South Africans. Whilst a substantial 64% of Whites, 69% of Indians and 72% of Coloureds thought the country's leaders were not doing very well or not at all well at handling reconciliation, a much smaller 35% of Blacks thought the same. The less favourable evaluation by these race groups, compared to the comparatively more positive assessment of black South Africans, could be an indication of different expectations, as well as different yardsticks against which performance is measured.

A similar pattern emerged when respondents were asked to evaluate how the country as a whole was handling the reconciliation process, with black South Africans offering a far more positive appraisal. 70% of Indian respondents, 67% of coloureds respondents and 66% of white respondents asserted the country was handling reconciliation not very well or not at all well. Only about half this portion of Blacks (38%) agreed with this evaluation.

²⁹ $\chi^2 = 3962.538$, $p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, Coloured: N= 935.

³⁰ The 10-point Likert scale was collapsed as follows. 1 - 2: Very badly, 3 - 5: Not very well, 6 - 8: Fairly well, 9 - 10: Very well.

Graph 15: An Evaluation of the National Performance in handling Reconciliation ³¹



Question asked: *When you think about the country as a whole, how well do you think they are handling reconciliation? If "1" means very badly and "10" means very well, how would you evaluate the country's national leadership?*³²

Correlation analysis of the evaluations of the performance of the national leaders and the country as a whole are in fact closely linked ($r = .688, p < .01$). Correlation does not imply causality, and hence no conclusions about the one evaluation influencing the other can be drawn. What is clear, however, is that these two remain closely connected, and that this relationship should be further investigated, if useful conclusions for advancing reconciliation are to be drawn.

Conclusion

"A great national dream must be simple and accessible to ordinary people. It must be easy to incorporate into folklore and the cultural tapestry of a society."

Saki Macozoma

Saki Macozoma's quote succinctly identifies one of the paramount ingredients imperative for any big national undertaking to succeed. A 'national dream' must become part of the everyday ideas, thoughts and experiences of ordinary people. Most certainly he did not mean for all citizens to have the exact same interpretation of the dream or how it can be achieved. The Institute's reconciliation workbook suggests that reconciliation "can also never be owned or fully described from one perspective only, because every citizen is a potential participant or opponent. An understanding of "social reconciliation" takes shape as a multiplicity of voices start to converge on the same challenges".

It seems, therefore, that such a dream requires citizens to engage with each other about the same critical challenges. Irrefutably the legal, social and political framework for this engagement needs to be in place. Critical to this facilitative environment is visionary leadership, not only in government, but also in civil society, faith communities and business. Success depends, however, on more than a facilitative environment.

A common understanding of each other's vocabulary is pivotal. A common understanding of national challenges is crucial. A common understanding that engagement and real dialogue is a mandatory step to working out how to get there is paramount. But above all, if reconciliation is to become a 'national dream' success story, ordinary people have to take ownership of the process, and this can only be achieved if it is

³¹ $\chi^2 = 2933.171, p < .01$, All SA: N= 3 491, Black: N= 1 998, Coloured: N= 388, Indian: N= 170, White: N= 935.

³² The 10-point Likert scale was collapsed as follows. 1 - 2: Not at all well, 3 - 5: Not very well, 6 - 8: Quite well, 9 - 10: Very well

made accessible, if feelings of personal responsibility towards the dream become tangible, if ordinary people feel they have a capacity to influence this process.

At first glance the data indicate that reconciliation has not yet been widely incorporated into the cultural tapestry of South African society as the ready and frequent use of the word in public debate might suggest. It is, however, feasible that whilst many South Africans struggle to provide any clearly defined understanding of the term, their opinions on the range of components or dimensions of 'reconciliation' tested in the survey indicate that respondents are not unfamiliar nor non-committal about these issues. The inability or unwillingness of many to provide a meaning, combined with the spectrum of meanings provided by the rest, imply that there is great definitional ambiguity around the concept. Whether this ambiguity is too wide to allow sufficient focus or wide enough to allow creative and constructive interpretations remains open to debate.

In the end, however, it is not the word that counts but the process and the social commitment and energy that goes into the process. Should these be present, South Africa's national dream is not compromised. Unfortunately and despite substantial abstract support for a multitude of stakeholders taking primary responsibility for reconciliation, in reality there are relatively low levels of support for individual responsibility.

Despite the fact that South Africans still appear to have a long way to travel to truly engaging in deep dialogue and addressing stubborn problems, such as racism, cultural alienation, accepting diversity, learning to live with the intolerable and finally reconciliation, it seems that most are willing to leave the past behind. It is greatly encouraging that for many reconciliation is about forgiveness.

All of this seems to imply that despite vociferous academic denial of the importance of forgiveness for reconciliation, for ordinary South Africans forgiveness is important, it is necessary for reconciliation and most South Africans think the time for forgiveness to be granted has come. Even in spite of the apparent unwillingness of Whites to acknowledge and take responsibility for the past and their role in it, South Africans on the whole appear to want to forgive for the past and face the future. It is a question of how.

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Appendix A

Collapsed Categories	Items
Forgiveness	Forgiveness (unspecified), forgiving for previous mistakes, Forgiving those that did bad things during apartheid, Forgiving for the past, People of all races forgiving each other for things done in the past, Forgiving Afrikaners, Forgiving Whites
Unity	Togetherness, Unification (unspecified), People coming together as one nation, People learning to live in one country People living together in the same neighbourhoods
Peace	Peace (unspecified), Making peace with other races, End of fighting/wars, Previously quarrelling people coming together and moving on, Settling past disputes
Racial Integration	Black and White people living/staying together, Black and White people working together, Harmony between all races, Integration between races
Forget	Forgive and forget, Forget (unspecified), Forget about what happened in the past
Dealing with Difference	People of different views coming together, People talking about their differences, Reconciling the differences between people
Co-operation	Helping each other, Sharing ideas, Co-operation, People working together for a better future
Dealing with the Past	Truth, Acknowledgement of past wrongs, Confession of past wrongs, Apologising for past wrongs, Asking for forgiveness of past wrongs, Revealing past wrongs, Agreeing that people sinned in the past, Talking about what happened in the past, Making amends for what happened in the past, Coming to terms with the past, Finding out why bad things happened in the past, Healing, Compensation for what happened in the past
Socio-economic development	Sharing the country's wealth, Social Development, Economic Development, Rectifying inequality,
Values	Understanding (unspecified), Understanding between races, Tolerance (unspecified), Tolerance between races, Trust, Humanity, Respect, Love
Ending racism	The end of racism, The end of discrimination, The end of Apartheid
Human Rights	Freedom, Equal rights for all, Equal opportunities for all
Other	Reverse Apartheid, Reconciliation has not happened in this country, Change in people's lives, Change in people's thinking, Other