

Impact Analysis of the Gauteng Youth Crime Prevention Desk Programme

Coordination between GIZ – Violence and Crime Prevention and the Department of Community Safety (Social Crime Prevention)

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1. Executive Summary

“Young people join the Youth desk because they are trying to define themselves, they want something to do, something that will give meaning into their lives. And they stay committed because of the support they receive. What keeps young people going is that there is finally someone that believes in them.”

With the purpose of enabling a community of practitioners to develop and implement their services to increase safety in public spaces, the GIZ initiated the Violence and Crime Prevention Programme in 2012. Among the four main pillars of the VCP there is a focus on Active Citizenship that further puts emphasis on the development and implementation of effective approaches which promote active participation of young people and youth focused stakeholders in community safety and violence and crime prevention. In this context and as a result of the joint effort between the GIZ - VCP and the Gauteng Department of Community Safety (DoCS), the Youth Crime Prevention Desk Programme was identified as one of the models with the potential to demonstrate active participation and contribution of youth in creating safer communities. Through this collaborative effort, VCP and DoCS agreed to implement an impact assessment of the YCPDs, focusing on identify factors of success, good practices as well as challenges within the structure, The overall findings of the impact assessment conducted over a period of three months are presented in three parts

Part one: the conceptual framework containing, on the one hand, a description of the policy framework which emphasizes more focus on young people. Furthermore, the conceptual framework is composed of the background description of the conceptualization of the Youth Crime Prevention Desk, its current Norms and Standards Document and a final summary of the current status quo of the structure based on the assessments conducted by the Department of Community Safety in 2008.

Part two: The second part of the report describes the framework of the research, namely; the research question, problem definition, main assumption and research objectives, as well

as an explanation of the methodology used for the research, including the research tools and their protocols.

Part three of the report comprises of the findings made throughout the research, firstly, in terms of the impact of the YCPD on the career path of its members, secondly, in terms of the functionality and efficiency of the Youth Desk as a structure and finally, explaining general findings that were associated with the main challenges currently facing the YCPD. The findings made it possible to identify the core factors of success presented in the last section of the report and further contained in the recommendations with regards to the areas for improvements and the support required.

2. Introduction

The National Development Plan (NDP) for South Africa, in its chapter on “Building safer communities,” places emphasis on active citizen involvement and co-responsibility, especially of youth, in addressing and resolving the root causes of violence and crime. It notes specifically that “young people should be engaged in programmes that promote taking responsibility for their own safety.” As such, measures that focus on involving young people in planning and implementing violence and crime prevention interventions are highly relevant and needed.

Currently, various institutionalized structures exist in South Africa aiming at enabling citizen participation in planning and executing initiatives to promote community safety at the local level. In the Gauteng Province, a unique model has been developed to specifically mobilize and involve young people in violence and crime prevention interventions, namely the Youth Crime Prevention Desks (YCPD). These volunteer-based structures mainly constituted of young people between the ages of 18 – 27 are based at police stations within the province. The YCPD is a joint initiative between the Department of Community Safety (DoCS), the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Community Police Forum (CPF). It was initially designed to promote the coordination between these entities and to create safer environment for young people.

The core objective of these support structures is to encourage and enable young people to actively participate in identifying the causes of youth violence and crime, and to jointly with other role-players design and implement relevant social crime prevention interventions in their communities.

The YCDP does not only deal with the issue from a crime prevention perspective but also from a youth development perspective by seeking to empower young people with the necessary skills that will enable them to become better citizens of the country.

Assumption:

Based on observational field visits carried out during the month of May, which led to the commencement of the joint analysis of the Gauteng YCPD between the DoCS and the GIZ-VCP, it was identified that not all the YCDP structures are yielding the desired outcomes as set by the DoCS. This may be due to certain strategic reasons; such as:

- A fragmented approach to Youth Safety
- Lack of shared resources towards Youth Safety Programs
- Lack of co-responsibility and complementarities between Youth Safety practitioners and civil society
- Lack of inter governmental coordination in relation to Youth Safety.
- The cross-cutting approach to Safety makes complicates linking Youth Safety Programs to mainstreamed issues.
- Lack of capacity by the Social Crime Prevention Coordinator from both SAPS and Department of Community Safety on Social Crime prevention/Youth Violence prevention methods and approaches

These assumptions were analyzed throughout the research, in order to provide solid evidence to back up the YCPD's diagnosis and outline possible areas for improvement.

The main objective of the joint cooperation between the parties is, firstly, the identification of the impact of the Youth Crime Prevention Desks at a local level. Secondly, the identification of challenges and support needed, as well as factors for success that would make the YCPD structures replicable and the relevant good practices that will eventually be showcased.

The target group for the intervention is YCPD members, the Social Crime Prevention Coordinators, the Youth Safety Manager and the initial YCPD conceptualizers. All partners involved in the constitution of the YCPD, namely the Community Police Forum, the Department of Community Safety and the South African Police Service also formed part of the assessment process.

The Collaboration is aiming for the following benefits:

- Showcasing of good practices for profiling and demonstrating the value add of the YCPD (e.g. glossy brochure, good practice publication, DVD with stories from the field)
- Exploring capacity building/training needs of Social Crime Prevention Coordinators both from the Department of Community Safety and SAPS (e.g. on youth mentorship) and YCPD leadership (e.g. peer to peer exchange mechanisms, leadership training and support)

- Enhancing the impact monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on the YCPD programme through Technical advice and support.
- Exploring possibilities for the potential exchange with other provinces and for replicating the YCPD model in other provinces

3. Conceptual Framework

3.1 Policy Framework

The current National Development Plan (NDP) for South Africa, in its chapter on “Building safer communities,” places emphasis on active citizen involvement and co-responsibility, especially of youth, in addressing and resolving the root causes of violence and crime. It notes specifically that “young people should be engaged in programmes that promote taking responsibility for their own safety.” As such, measures that focus on involving young people in planning and implementing violence and crime prevention interventions are highly relevant and needed.

Nonetheless, focusing prevention strategies and public policy on Youth is not new in South Africa. Similar to many developing countries, South Africa has a large population of youth, those between the ages 14-35; represent 42% of the total population and this was recognized by the South African constitution. By giving origin to the National Youth Commission under the Act 19 of 1996, the South African Constitution placed an emphasis on recognizing the need to empower young people and develop a National Youth Policy. In 2008, the focus was strengthened with the merger of the National Youth Commission and the National Youth Fund into the National Youth Development Agency NYDA. The main mission of this Agency was to facilitate youth development within all sectors of society from a multi level approach (individual, community, Provincial and National). The National Youth Development Agency derives its mandate from the legislative frameworks, namely the NYDA Act (54 of 2008), the National Youth Policy (2009-2014) and the draft Integrated Youth Development Strategy as adopted by the Youth Convention of 2006.

On the other hand, The National Crime Prevention Strategy (1996) is the document that guides the SAPS. This is a four pillar strategy that is also aimed at “intervening in the way in which society engages with and responds to crime and conflict.” (NCPS, 1996, p73)

The focus of this pillar falls on two national programmes, public education and school education and this is precisely where the YCPD play a pivotal role. At a provincial level, there

was a realization that youth criminality was a concern and this led to the development of the YCPD initiative. (Citizen Safety Unit (CSU), Discussion document, 2008)

At a provincial level, the Gauteng Safety Strategy (2006-2014), was developed, whose aim is to provide a framework for reducing and preventing serious and violent crime throughout the province, which draws from the NCPS and the White Paper on Safety and Security (1998). The NCPS and the White paper are strategies with a national focus on how to deal with crime, whereas the Gauteng Safety Strategy (GSS) is more localized in its approach.

The GSS is a four pillar strategy; pillar 2 of which speaks to the promotion of Social Crime Prevention in the province. A social crime prevention approach recognizes that many people engage in criminal behavior as a consequence of historical, social, economic and environmental factors that prevail in the community. According to the GSS, there are two broad categories of crime prevention, namely primary and secondary crime prevention. Primary crime prevention seeks to make the physical environment change to make it difficult for criminals to operate undetected. Secondary crime prevention is based on the recognition that certain groups of people are more at risk of either perpetuating or becoming victims of crime than people from other groups. (GSS 2006-214:15). The GSS has identified a number of high risk target groups within the youth age segment:

- Young people that have dropped out of school;
- Youth in trouble with the law;
- Youth involved in alcohol or drug abuse;
- Young people who have been victims of crime. (Guidelines Doc, Citizen Safety, p4)

It is also because of this that the South African Police Services (SAPS) and the Department of Community Safety has put in place interventions to establish the Youth Crime Prevention Desks, whose purpose is to address youth criminality. This programme seeks to address the problems of youth at risk of committing crime. As per an interview with an official in the Directorate: Citizen Safety (CS) the role of the youth desk has been identified as:

- To develop cooperative SAPS and youth relations,
- To assist in identifying youth safety needs,
- Develop and implement programs to address youth and general community safety needs,
- Enable the youth to act as good citizens and role models,
- Empower the youth in crime prevention and other skills for developmental and vocational purposes and lastly,

- To locate the youth desk within a supportive developmental environment, like the Intergovernmental Youth Forum.”

There are also significant opportunities for all YCPD. Government has become more responsive to general youth developmental needs, resulting in a multitude of services and programs being offered at provincial and local level, many of which are relevant to youth desks. (Discussion document CSU, 2008, p3)

3.2 Young people and their role in building safer communities

According to the 2009 report of the Department of Community Safety of the province of Gauteng, young people in South Africa (78% of the population under the age of 34 years) are typically perceived as either the main perpetrators, or victims, of crime and violence nowadays. Nonetheless, the National Development Plan for South Africa also recognizes that young people hold the key to realizing sustainable solutions to creating safer communities. By placing an emphasis on active citizen involvement and co-responsibility, especially of youth, the NDP seeks to address and resolve the root causes of violence and crime.

Furthermore, interventions pursuing such goal are currently taking place throughout the country; these interventions are led by government and the Civil Society Sector as well as partnerships with other sectors. A noticeable example is the Youth for Safer Communities Project; an initiative between Masifunde Learner Development and the VCP Programme. The initiative which is being implemented in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality in PE targeting grade 10, 11 & 12 learners aim to encourage youth to recognize their potential role in creating safer communities and give them a platform to voice ideas on how to make their communities safer.

Another relevant structure, and the core objective of analysis of the present research, that seeks to enable citizen participation in planning and executing initiatives aimed at promoting community safety at the local level are the previously mentioned the Youth Crime Prevention Desks (YCPD) in the Gauteng Province.

3.3 The Gauteng Youth Crime prevention Desk program

One of the mandates of the Gauteng Department of Community Safety (DoCS) is to initiate, lead and co-ordinate Social Crime Prevention initiatives in the province. This is in line with

Pillar 2 of the Gauteng Safety Strategy, which speaks to the promotion of Social Crime Prevention in the province. A social crime prevention approach recognizes that many people engage in criminal behavior as a consequence of particular historical, social, economic and environmental factors that prevail in a country. According to the Gauteng Safety Strategy (2006-2014), there are two broad categories of crime prevention, namely, primary and secondary crime prevention.

While primary crime prevention interventions seek to change the physical environment to make it more difficult for criminals to operate undetected, secondary crime prevention interventions are based on the recognition that certain groups of people are more at risk of either perpetuating or becoming victims of crime than people from other groups (Gauteng Safety Strategy 2006-2014: 15). One of the interventions put in place by the Department of Community Safety has been the establishment of Youth Crime Prevention Desks (YCPD).

Initial Aims and objectives

The Youth Crime Prevention Desks are charged with the responsibility to champion youth safety and development. The main objectives were outlined by the Norms and Standards document produced with the support of the DoCS. The evaluation used those objectives as the baseline to check whether the YCPD were fulfilling their legislated purpose or not.

The Objectives of the Youth Crime Prevention Desk:

- To increase participation and involvement of youth in crime prevention initiatives
- To establish, promote and maintain youth participation in the fight against youth criminality and the promotion of skills and development of young people in Gauteng Province.
- To develop strategic programmes and projects aimed at the eradication of common challenges facing young people in the province; i.e. substance abuse, lack of skills and education, unemployment etc)
- To source and provide priority information to the CPF, the Department of Community Safety and the South African Police service to ensure effective policing, arrest and conviction of criminal elements.
- To collaborate with government institutions, business and private stakeholders to formulate extended and sustainable youth programmes that will speak to the development of young people within the YCPD.
- To form a strata of all youth formations to create a network that will work together on various youth programmes aimed at youth safety, personal development and vocational commitments.
- To identify challenges, analyze them and chart campaigns aimed at addressing root causes thereof. (example: school safety challenges, teenage pregnancy etc)

Guidelines to a Functional Youth Desk

In 2008/09 the Department of Community Safety undertook a process evaluation on the functionality of the Youth Crime Prevention Desks in Gauteng. The goal of the research was to obtain baseline information on the functionality of youth desks in the province. The research objectives for this project were:

- To establish whether the number of youth desks are increasing or decreasing since the introduction of the concept.
- To recommend ways of ensuring that there is an increase in the number of young people who are involved in youth desks.
- To establish whether youth desks are recognized by the SAPS.
- To recommend measures that could be put in place to ensure that youth desks are established in all police stations in the province.
- To identify gaps in terms of training offered to youth desk members.

The study identified various reasons why the youth desk initiative was not functioning optimally in all the police stations where it had been launched. Some of the elements/factors the study looked at in order to assess the functionality of the youth desks were: resource allocation, issues of governance (leadership), effectiveness of training, how effective is the youth desk in executing its activities /projects, the relationship of the youth desk with the SAPS and the CPFs in their specific precincts as well as membership.

3.4 Current status quo of the YCPD

There are 22 cluster Youth Crime Prevention Desk structures and the provincial Youth Desk Leadership structure. In these 22 clusters, there are just over 92 functional Youth Desk structures in the police stations (out of the total of 141 police stations). In every police station there is a SAPS Coordinator responsible for the Youth Crime Prevention Desk among other things including coordinating the Victim Empowerment Centres (VEC) and the CPF. These coordinators work closely with the Social Crime Prevention Coordinators from the Department of Community Safety who are among other things responsible for the Youth safety programs. The Department of Community Safety through a partnership with the Department of Infrastructure Development has placed a total of **900(300 in 2011/12 and 600 in 2012/13)** Youth desk members on the National Youth Service Learnership for a period of 12 months, these young people are deployed in communities within the province to do youth safety work.

The youth crime prevention desk members coordinate youth safety activities and projects at police station level. The main pillars, in which they are working in, are school safety, substance abuse prevention, and the prevention of violence against women and children. With their key role being to organize the youth crime prevention desks, to mobilize other

youth structures in the community, to recruit young people, to participate and coordinate capacity building of young people and to jointly customize the safety programs into youth appealing projects that are attractive, sustainable, and implementable and responds to the specific safety needs of their community. In 2011, the department through a partnership with the Centre for Justice and Crime prevention developed a Social Crime prevention training programme for the YCPD members. 300 YCDP members were trained on the programme as a pilot which was to be rolled out to all the YCPD members. Selected YCPD members have been exposed to mentorship training as well as substance abuse workshops coordinated by Pillar to Post (service provider) and SANCA.

In the 2010/11 report presented by the Department of Community Safety the following information was recorded:

Functional YCPD structures:

- There are 92 functional youth desk structures in the province
- 87 Youth Desk POA's were developed and consolidated into regional and provincial POA.
- Each youth desk structure has a management file that they utilize to keep records of all youth desk activities in their station.
- Youth desks are also provided with membership forms and a unique membership number is allocated to each member and captured on the provincial database
- There are 3366 Youth desk members registered on the Youth Desk data base

Support by the DoCS

The report indicated that the department set aside an amount of R1 043 850 for the implementation of Youth safety program and additional R730 000 was also budgeted for the implementation of the Substance abuse program for both Youth Crime Prevention Desks and School Safety Program.

This budget was mainly allocated for:

- Resources to implement the YCDP POA's
- Capacity Building of YCDP members
- Procurement of recruitment and educational material
- Referral for skills development trainings

YCDP members were trained on:

- Social Crime Prevention
- Substance Abuse
- Peer Mediation
- Communication skills

4. Analysis Framework

The analysis sought to determine whether the YCDP were yielding the desired outcomes as envisaged by the DoCS and all the other partners involved. This was not evaluated by crime stats but on target-group level, i.e. number and types of programmes initiated and implemented, number of young people reached and engaged impact on young people and youth desks members' lives and change in their attitudes. The analysis framework was developed and prepared during the month of June, carried out during the month of July and the results were analyzed and shared during the month of August, the detailed time frame is included at the end of this document.

For the purpose of the research, the analysis was divided in two main components:

4.1 Qualitative Impact Analysis

The first component of the impact analysis of the YCPD is a qualitative component. This qualitative component aimed to determine the reach of the structure in achieving the initial desired outcomes and the adjustments made throughout the project's evolution, focusing on how implementation challenges might have been overcome and as well as current challenges faced by the YCPD structures. Thus the research focused on gathering a diagnosis of the structures (initial and current) of the YCPDs.

Moreover, the qualitative component of the research also incorporated a Tracer Study, with the purpose of formalizing the initial conceptualization and establishment of the YCPD. Given that most adjustments have been made on an ad hoc basis and lack a proper record of the initial structure and the adjustments made, it was crucial that a Tracer Study of the YCPD be carried out, not only to make the experience replicable, but also to make the impact identifiable.

Ideally, the Tracer Study involved interviews with former and current YCPD members on how the relevance and effect of belonging to the YCPD structure has impacted in the development of their personal and professional lives. On the other hand, the Tracer Study also targeted the experience of the "conceptualizers" of the YCPD Programme, their perception of what the programme was intended to become and what it has turned out to be and the impacts they have witnessed throughout those changes.

This process was undertaken through in-depth interviews and focus groups. The focus groups were essential in seeking to explore the role of youth crime prevention desks in dealing with youth criminality, as well as underlying problems that may not be addressed by the youth crime prevention desks.

4.2 Quantitative Impact Analysis

Given that the joint analysis of the impact of the YCPD was carried out in a period of 3 months, a quantitative Impact Analysis of the YCPD desks on crime statistics lies beyond the reach of the present study, mainly because for such impact to be visible, identifiable and quantifiable there is, firstly a need for adjustments and for standardization of processes that can only be achieved through a qualitative impact assessment.

Nonetheless, it is recognized that, as a strategy designed to enhance youth cooperation towards crime prevention and to enhance youth responsibility towards safety, the Youth Crime Prevention Desks should not only have an impact on the attitudes, behavior and lives of their members, but also they should have a long term impact on the community dynamics and the levels of criminality. Understood as a collective action processes, the YCPD constitute an engine of social cohesion that fosters the involvement of young people in activities that benefit them and their communities. This in turn targets future generations, making it possible for the YCPD members to become positive role models, and thus break the vicious circle that in certain contexts makes criminality appealing. Furthermore, the proper implementation and development of the YCPD programme will eventually have an identifiable impact on the criminality, improving the living conditions of the communities.

Another relevant advantage of carrying out a qualitative analysis first is that it provides substantial evidence of compiled, recorded and standardized procedures and information for the identification of the YCPD's factors of success, challenges and good practices.

Aim and Objective of the research:

- To determine whether the Youth Crime Prevention Desks have yielded the desired outcomes as envisaged by the DoCS and all the other partners involved, especially in terms of active participation of youth in contributing to building safer communities
- To identify the aspects requiring intervention, adjustment and improvement as well as defining quality standards for each process.

Furthermore, the research seeks to identify challenges, good practices and, factors of success across different YCPD throughout the Province, in order to identify areas with room for improvements and determine the critical factors of success that will make the intervention replicable in other provinces –based on a random, but representative sample-

- Carrying out this objective requires:
 - To determine the gap between the desired outcomes and the current status quo of the YCPD.

- To determine the reach of the trainings imparted and identifying the differences between various types and levels of training.
- To identify and report the number and types of projects and programmes carried out by different YCPDs and establish their sustainability and persistence through time
- To determine the level of engagement of youth throughout different YCPDs across the province and establish which core factors are contributing to that involvement. (Does trainings and skills development make a difference?)
- To determine how the involvement and participation in the YCPD has impacted the lives and behaviors of the current and former YCDP members, the conceptualizers and the young people within the communities in which they operate.
- To identify career path opportunities for former and current YCPDs members.
- To Identify and showcase factors and individuals that will enact as role models and examples of the success of the programme.
- To assess the levels of co-operation, and coordination between the DoCS, the CPFs, SAPS and the YCPDs as well as other relevant stakeholders that participate in the support structure of the programme.
- Record and standardize the progression of YCPDs since their inception.
- Define the outline for a potential quantitative impact evaluation of YCPD on crime.
- Outline recommendation that will make the experience replicable.

5. Methodology of the Qualitative Impact Evaluation

The framework for the joint analysis of the YCPD between the DoCS and GIZ - VCP, answers to the need of a standardization of processes and a generalized impact assessment of these structures. The main advantage of assessing the impact of the YCPD and identifying their current needs is that it will make it possible to outline a model that could be replicated in other provinces, as well as recognizing the interventions and improvements needed to enhance their performance and allow them to achieve their fullest potential.

As it was mentioned before, the YCDP has been identified as a remarkable prevention intervention with the potential for demonstrating active participation of youth and how young people can contribute towards creating safer communities. The 2009 report commissioned by the DoCS, the 2012 Norms and Standards operational guidelines on the YCDP and the assessment of Youth Desk functionality from 2012; constitute the baseline and main sources of information for the research.

Besides applying the analysis tools that will be explained further in the document, the field visits made throughout the province also had the aim of verifying and monitoring the progress made by the YCPD in terms of the recommendations and suggestions made by the Department of Community Safety in the mentioned documents. The findings thereof are summarized in the Conceptual Gap Findings section of the document.

5.1 Sampling Youth Crime Prevention Desk - Randomization

According to the 2012 assessment on functionality of the YCDP; there are currently 92 functional youth desk structures in the province. Each youth desk has a management record of all youth desk activities at their respective police stations. Additionally there are 3366 members registered on the YCDP data base of the DoCS. However, this data base also reflects one of the challenges the YCPDs are currently facing. Given that they are voluntary structures comprising mainly of unemployed youth, there is high membership turnovers, due to the fact that youth lose interest, continue their studies or find fulltime jobs. As a consequence YCPD structures tend to be frequently re-established and an updated data base of all the Youth Desk members is hard to construct. In spite of the high effort of the DoCS, the high turnover rates that the Youth Desk faces, make it difficult to keep an updated data base of all their members.

The DoCS also supports these structures through the placement of “Social Crime Prevention Coordinators” who oversee and ensure that there are functional YCPD in each of the 144 Police Stations. Each social crime prevention coordinator is in charge of at least two clusters of Police Stations, in order to provide them support and guidance. The SAPS in turn, assigned an official responsible for Social Crime Prevention in each police station to support and monitor the activities of the YCPD. In addition, the YCPD fall under an umbrella structure receiving the support of the DoCS, the CPFs and the SAPS, while simultaneously following the organizational structure of the SAPS (144 police stations), 22 clusters and the Provincial Leadership structure.

Ideally, a qualitative analysis would contain all the units of analysis within the sectors identified. However, given the limitations of the current evaluation, a rigorous sampling procedure was applied, in order to guarantee the representativeness of all the Youth Desks. For this purpose, a weighted randomization was carried out, taking into account the specific conditions in each cluster and station (number of youth desk per station, number of stations per cluster, etc), so that the sample is representative and not statistically different.

The sampling was done in consultation with the DoCS, to make sure that qualitative determining variables were not being left out through the randomization. Furthermore, the department was also consulted regarding logistic and administrative constrains that the sample might have entailed.

The level of observation of the research was the station level, making the unit of observation the YCDP. The methodology was applied in 34 stations and 10 clusters as follows:

CLUSTER	STATION	VISIT
Temba	Cluster field visit and Substance abuse event	07/07/2013
Hillbrow	Cleveland	10/07/2013
	Hillbrow	
	Jeppe	
	Rosebank	
Johannesburg Central	Johannesburg Central	18/07/2013
	Langlaagte	
	Sophiatown	
	Moffatview	
Honeydew	Roodepoort	22/07/2013
	Florida	
	Diepsloot	
Moroka	Dobsonville	22/07/2013
	Eldorado Park	
	Moroka	
	Kliptown	
Sebokeng	Sebokeng	15/08/2013

	Evaton	
Orlando	Westonaria	23/07/2013
	Orlando	
	Florida	
Katlehong	Tokoza	24/07/2013
	Katlehong	
	Zonkizizwe	
Carletonville	Carletonville	24/07/2013
	Khutsong	
	Westonaria	
Tembisa	Tembisa	06/08/2013
	Ivory Park	
	Oliefantsfontein	
	Kempton Park	

5.2 Time Frame

As it was mentioned before, the qualitative analysis of the impact of the YCPD was carried out within the 3 month period, outlining and defining the framework of the analysis during the month of June, carrying it out during the month of July and the results being processed and shared during the month of August.

2013

JUNE						
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JULY						
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AUGUST						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

	Design of the Analysis Framework
	Implementation of tools
	Analysis of information compiled
	Field visits

5.3 Research Tools

The research followed a tracer study like design, comprising one-on-one interviews, field observational visit, focus groups and observations and follow up of the YCDP activities.

Tracer Study

Following the ILO's tracer study handbook, a tracer study serves the purpose of: "tracing individuals some time after an event has taken place, and follow up on what has happened in their lives since then. The ultimate objective of a tracer study is to systematically analyze the lasting or significant changes – positive or negative, intended or not – in people's lives brought about by a given action or series of actions." (ILO, 2011)

A tracer study also allows comparing the compiled information to already existing data from similar groups (for example, census information of areas close to the intervention). A review of the initial outlines of the intervention is compared to the actual outcome in order to define the reach of the programme.

The research further included three main focused target groups involved in the study –YCPD members, conceptualizers and support structures (SAPS, Social Crime Prevention Coordinators, etc)-. Additionally, the study follows a multi- level approach tracing not only the involvement and impact of the intervention in the lives of the participants but also the progression of the concept, and support structures.

Multi level Approach

The multi level approach of the methodology seeks to comprehend the impact of the YCPD in an integral way. By understanding how the concept has developed and progressed since the initial intervention, the analysis aims to identify the challenges and adjustments made in terms of implementation.

Furthermore, by tracing down the effects of the YCPD membership on former and current participants, the study seeks to define the effects of the strategy on the career path of the members, so that successful cases can be showcased and replicated. Finally, the analysis further attempted to determine the constitution and relevance of the YCPD and its current support structures.

The levels of the evaluation were thus:

1. Tracing down the concept – (how it has evolved)
2. Tracing down the members -Career Pathing
3. Tracing down the support structure –Coordination, cooperation

Tools

1. One-on-one interviews with conceptualizers and leaders

The first phase involved one-on-one interviews with the initial conceptualizers and designers of the YCPD programme. These interviews were aimed at gathering background information on the initial conceptualization of the YCPD, among other purposes.

Additionally, one-on-one interview with the youth desks coordinators that have been part of the YCPD Programme were conducted. These interviews were aimed at understanding, amongst others, the challenges within the YCPD as well as expectations and adjustments since the introduction of the programme.

2. Focus group interviews/information

Focus group interviews were undertaken with various youth desk members across different police stations within the province. These focus group interviews were conducted to explore how their participation in the YCPD structures has impacted on their behaviors, attitudes and lives. These young people were engaged in an open discussion sessions and allowed to express their experiences and perceptions about the YCPD, as well as whether their expectations upon joining the structure were met.

3. Field visit - Observations

The impact assessment also included field visits to assess the existence of YCPD in police stations, with a view to determining their functionality, access to resources and current status quo. Field visits to observe the activities of the YCPD were also undertaken.

Additional components

In addition to the above-mentioned, the analysis further focused on the following specifics:

1. Usage of new media

The analysis assessed the innate interest and the usage of information and communication (ICT) technology and social media by the YCPD structures.

More specifically, the researcher addressed the question as to whether young people are using social media as tools for communicating and implementing their activities and promoting active participation, as well as assessing their level of involvement and expertise. The assessment further attempted to understand whether there is currently any innovative

process in the usage of social media for promoting the participation of young people in violence and crime prevention initiatives.

2. Gender approach

Here the objective was to analyze the current status of gender roles within the YCPD with regards to, firstly the active involvement and participation of girls and young women, and secondly; activities that specifically addresses the safety of women and girls especially in public spaces as well as gender roles that contribute to prevention. The research further focused in identifying whether the YCPD were serving as structures that empower young women in occupying leadership positions.

3. Leadership component

The leadership component of the analysis has the objective of; firstly, identifying whether the YCPD members have been trained **in skills**, such as public speaking and facilitation of group discussions, and thus identify which skills should be developed and/or enhanced further.

Secondly, the research focused on establishing whether there was a gap in leadership training and mentorship provided to YCPD leaders. In other words, identifying its effectiveness for both YCPD members and their mentors

The promotion of youth leadership development is also a way of promoting positive life skills learning.

6. Research Findings

As stated previously, the implementation of the research tools was carried out during a period of three months. Following the objectives and aims of the research and taking into account the assumptions based on the first field visits, the researcher focused on assessing, firstly, the impact of the Youth Desk in terms of their current efficiency and functionality, secondly, the impact of the Youth Desk in terms of its effect on the career paths of Youth Desk members and thirdly, the research was attempting to understand the evolution of the concept and the structure, in order to be able to trace down the concept. In addition, an emphasis was placed on different sub-themes predominately mentioned during the interviews with Youth Desk Members, support structures and conceptualizers, and thus identified during the process as part of the main challenges and factors for the success of

the YCPD: Support structures, Communications, Recognition, Branding and Identity Building, Recruitment, human and logistic resources, Planning, monitoring and evaluation and Administrative issues.

The findings presented below are also summarized and compiled as the identification of the factors for success. Finally, the recommendations made based on the analysis of the Youth Desks, seek to outline solutions to address the needs and main challenges currently facing the YCPD.

6.1 Conceptual Findings

Through designing the research in a tracer study like design, the researcher was aimed at outlining the initial conceptualization of the structure, the context under which it was conceived, the expected outcomes and objectives as well as their evolvment while overcoming all the implementation challenges. The conceptual gaps identified during this process provide answers to the comparison between the current status quo of the YCPDs and the concept documents produced by the DoCS. For this purpose, [a process](#) interview was designed focusing specifically on the initial conceptualizers and designers of the programme at the provincial level. Some of them are still currently involved with the Youth Desks and had the chance to witness their evolution since their inception.

CPFs programme did not specifically address youth issues

During the interview with the conceptualizers it was possible to establish that the YCPD's were initially established to address the gap in the youth programmes especially in relation to violence and crime prevention. While the CPFs establish to facilitate and promote good relations between the police and the general community in contributing towards creating safer communities, there was still a big gap in reaching out to and involving the youth in such interventions. Since the CPFs are volunteer based structures, created to support the police and even carry out patrolling tasks, this made it difficult and challenging for them to have youth focused interventions. On the other hand, young people were starting to be identified as the main perpetrators of crime in the communities, which made evident the need for an intervention that would involve them in social crime prevention interventions.

For this purpose, the DoCS and the CPF implemented a survey in some of the police station precincts which allowed them to establish that young people were actually interested in participating in the fight against crime. They were looking for a structure that would allow them to interact and receive information from their peers. Even though there was clear motivation to get involved in the structures and programmes that the CPFs and SAPS were organizing, there was a generalized fear at interacting with the police. Young people were

interested in getting involved and participating within the structures to which would allow them to relate to and not having threatening interactions.

First engagement of communities was done in Soweto

The first engagement of communities that the DoCS carried out with the support of the CPFs to start involving young people in Social Crime Prevention intervention was done in Soweto. The Youth Crime Prevention Desk concept was developed during the provincial Youth Crime Prevention workshops done in 7 policing areas in 2001-2002.

Access to information and involvement of other departments

A second need that the Youth Crime Prevention Desk approach was seeking to address was the fact that young people did not have access to government information that was applicable to them. For that purpose, the DoCS engaged different departments, like the Department of Education, on further education and training as well as sponsorship for those that did not finish their Matric.

6.2 Youth Desk as a skill development platform – Changing career paths of Young People

By tracing down the concept of the Youth Desks, its first expected outcomes and their evolution through time, it was possible to identify that the Youth Desk were not only designed to be support structures to the CPFs and the SAPS that sought to engage young people in crime prevention interventions, but also, the Youth Desk were understood as a skills development platforms, where young people would have the opportunity to acquire skills required by the job market. The interviews with the conceptualizers proved that the intended goals of the structure was expected to go far beyond a youth social club against violence and crime. In other words the conceptualizers designed the youth desk as a win-win interaction, whereby the CPFs and the SAPS could finally find a channel of communication with the Youth in their communities, while at the same time, empowering the same youth with different skills that will keep them away from criminality and position them in the job market. The Youth Desk in that sense, constituted, a prevention strategy themselves.

“The Youth Desks are about preparing young people for the job market. They constitute a passage where young people get the skills their needs.”

By spotting out the individuals that have been able to succeed making use of the skills gained while they were within the YCPD programme, it is possible to qualify the fact that the Youth Desks are actually serving the purpose of becoming a platform for youth

development. It is important to clarify, however, that the level of skills and the usage they make of them depends also on their cooperation and their pro-activeness in their career paths. According to the conceptualizers, many of the Youth Desk members became employed as a result of the skills development programme initially provided by the DoCS and other partner institutions.

A former member of the YCPD, who is currently one of the Social Crime Prevention Coordinators at the DoCS, gave testimony that when she was still a member of the structure, she was able to be capacitated with relevant skills which prepared her for the position she is currently occupying. The examples of the skills she acquired included: leadership, conflict management, public speaking, project planning among others. The GIZ/VCP engaged with the DoCS to identify previous members of the YCPD with successful career paths, in order to showcase their experience. The following list was provided by the DoCS:

1. Thomas Shoko (Coordinator)
2. Mpho Koboekae (Lenasia South)
3. Thoko Radebe (Katlehong)
4. Tintswalo Maluleke (Sunnyside)
5. Bontle Tsholele (Naledi)
6. Nonkululeko Ngwenya (Lenasia)

Throughout the focus groups made in different police stations, the youth desk members were asked about their main reasons/intentions for joining the Youth Desks. Training and capacity building featured as one of the main reasons for them joining the youth desks, with expectations that the trainings would provide an opportunity for their skills development. According to Dr. Vanguard Mkosana, at the Department of Labour's 18th Annual Labour Law Conference, "In South Africa it is estimated that about 70% of the unemployed are those younger than 35 years old." While members generally join to participate in the fight against crime, they often also join to obtain any form of training that could assist them in securing employment.

While it was constantly brought up that the commitment of young people is sometimes a challenge for the Youth Desks, the initial conceptualizers explained that the purpose of the organization is not to encourage young people to stay for years, because the idea is for it to be a platform where they can develop the necessary skills and leave.

In order for it to achieve its fullest potential, it is necessary to develop standardized procedures for induction, training and follow up especially in those trainings, that will keep

the youth involved not only professional skills valued on the job market, but also those that would make the structure efficient and functional.

According to the DoCS, the Youth Desk are also viewed by young people as platforms where they can network or exchange ideas with other young people from different communities. They see the Youth Desk as a structure which allows them to achieve the self development that they are looking for.

The expectation of **getting training and skills development** is a significant reason for them joining the Youth Desks. Currently, there are many Youth Desk members who **became employed** as result of the skills development programmes provided through the DoCS, SAPS, Municipalities and other partners.

Such can be identified in the following quotes:

“I decided to join the Youth Desk to learn more about social crime prevention and how the SAPS work...and my expectations have been fulfilled because I have learned the SAPS ranks and protocols. You learn so many things just by being a member”

“With the support of the CPFs and the SAPS, the YCPD have been a platform for us to be aware and gain experience on how to talk to people, how to approach certain issues, that is also why we have been able to recruit 200 members”

In a nutshell, the YCPD is fulfilling the purpose of serving as a skills development platform for young people in vulnerable communities. Nonetheless, as in any area of practices there is still room for improvements, that will allow the structure to achieve its whole potential and enhance the effect that it is currently having on the career path of the Youth Desk members.

During the research, the following challenges were identified as the main challenges faced by the YCPD in relation to skills development and career pathing focus:

- Accredited trainings - Many youth desk members mentioned that the problem is not the types or amount of trainings they are receiving, but the fact that there is no recognition of those trainings from potential employers especially since most are not accredited. Given that most of the trainings they receive does not have a national recognized certification, most of the Youth desk members indicated that

even though they feel that they are developing specific and relevant skills, those are not being valued within the job market.

- Lack of standardize follow-up procedures on the trainings received. Currently it is not possible to know who has attended which types of training and if the skills acquired are actually being applied. The trainings lacks follow up, and no proper monitoring and evaluation on the impact.
- Lack of a clear process of selecting the trainees and training courses decided on. In the absence of training needs analysis of each youth desk because it is quite possible that the needs might differ from one youth desk to another and therefore a blanket approach cannot be followed.
- A broad youth age cohort, in that it includes persons ranging from adolescent teenagers, who are a little more than children, to mature and intellectually developed adults in their twenties and thirties who present themselves for a particular training needs.

According to DoCS, there is currently no specific youth training course in place, there is a community development course, which has a youth module. However this still creates a challenge especially since when speaking about youth development, youth management or youth work, we need to be specific as to what it is that we want to do or achieve around that and then further engage with the institutions of higher learning.. Furthermore it is necessary and important for the youth desk executive to receive more specialized training to enable them to lead the young people within the structures. This can only be achieved through conducting a skills audit to identify the gaps and ensure more targeted training interventions.

“It’s so painful to volunteer your time for more than 3 years... and then when a job posting comes out, even though you know the job inside out, they take other people just because you don’t have the qualifications.”

<p>DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM:</p> <p><u>CHALLENGES</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up • Selection of trainees and trainings • Age Cohort problem • Linkages to the job market • Skills beyond Safety and security • Induction process and Youth Training course
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6.3 Effectiveness and Functionality of youth desks

The youth desks provide an opportunity for young people to participate in government programmes and to identify, develop and implement youth safety initiatives contributing to the reduction of youth criminality. As stated before, in the assessment made by the DoCS in 2008, a functional YCPD should be able to fit within the following criteria:

2008 Assessment

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource allocation/fully resourced • Governance / existence of a leadership structure • Training conducted • Effectiveness (projects/activities documented) • The relationship with the SAPS and CPFs • Membership |
|--|

However, during the joint assessment it was possible to establish that some of the issues identified above are still presented as challenges for the Youth Desk in terms of their functionality. Based on this, it was possible to identify and assess 6 key issues that are currently determining the functionality and most of all the efficiency of the Youth Desks that were put into place and improved since the first assessment.

2013 Joint Assessment

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Structures • Recruitment • Branding, Recognition and Identity building • Strategic Planning, monitoring and evaluation • Communications |
|---|

An interesting finding in terms of the progress made by the structure since the assessment made by the DoCS in 2008 is that most activities that the Youth Desk were leading are still being carried out and sustained. By asking the members to provide solid evidence of the activities that they had carried out during the last couple of months, the researcher was able to identify the following:

- Sports against Crime
- Prison Talks
- High School Debates
- Motivational Talks
- Substance Abuse Campaigns
- School talks
- School Safety Desks
- Road shows on safety
- Substance abuse projects
- Child protection
- House numbering program
- Crime awareness through public meeting

The evidence provided by the members demonstrated how some of the Youth Desk structures were able to apply their creativity in implementing their activities despite the lack of resources. The supporting documents presented by the structures included pictures, posters, hand painted flyers, and short videos amongst others.

6.2.1 Support Structures

The YCPD support structure is comprised by SAPS, the CPF and the DoCS. The YCPD are legislated under the constitution of the CPF and respond to one key areas of action which focuses on youth. Resources such as office space, transport, stationery and the usage of computers are provided by SAPS and the DoCS is in charge of championing and guiding the placement of new structures as well as providing financial resources to carry out their planned activities

These support structures were identified as a core factor of success for the YCPD at different levels. For instance in stations or clusters where there was a strong support from all the 3 structures, the youth desks were able to carry out their tasks efficiently and successfully.

Relationship with the SAPS

During the focus group interviews it became clear that there were some challenges in how the youth desks were relating to some in some of the police stations. Some of the comments received **from** the youth desks included them indicating that they often receive assistance from SAPS. Whilst other youth desk members mentioned that the SAPS tend to use them as additional human resources belonging to the police station, this they do by giving them tasks and trying to occupy all their free time. In some stations, it was also possible to identify that when the SAPS do not really understand the relevance and value of the YCPD and do not see them as a key partner in contributing to creating safer

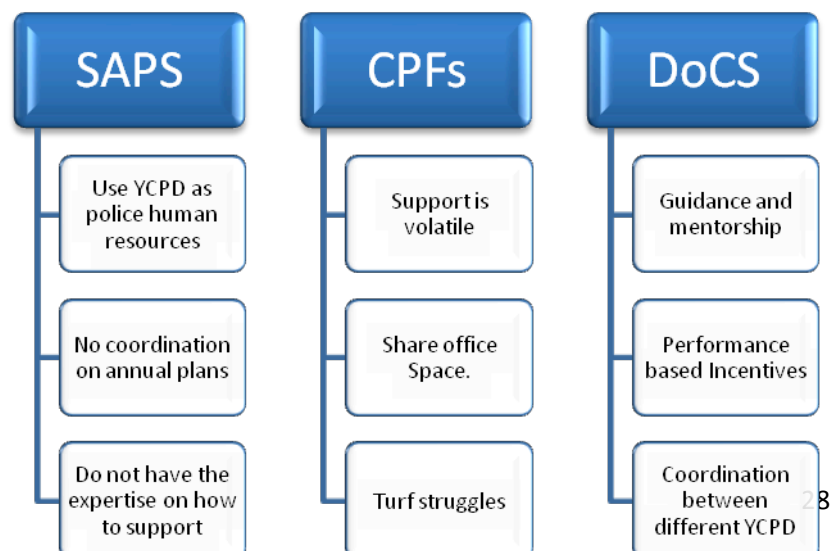
communities, their activities were not supported. Furthermore, the youth desks indicated that members of SAPS tend to belittle them and discouraging them by saying that their interventions are not effective in reducing the involvement of young people in criminal activities.

During the interviews with the SAPS coordinators, it was came out clear that the working relationship between the coordinator is the youth desk is determined by whether the coordinators were clear about their understanding of the aims and objectives of the youth desk structures. A former social crime prevention coordinator from SAPS, who is now the Social Crime prevention Coordinator in one of the municipalities indicated that during her time with SAPS she was not clear of her roles and responsibilities since there were no guidelines or training on how to deal with the Youth Desks. She had to apply the process of learning by doing which is completely dependent on how proactive the SAPS coordinator is.

The Social Crime Prevention Coordinators do not have the training or the expertise to deal with issues related to youth, and in many instances they do not even have the skills to manage and coordinate youth related initiatives. Apart from them having tasked with the responsibility of supporting the Youth Desk, the SAPS coordinators are also in charge of the overall coordination of all social crime prevention related activities carried out at station level. When these coordinators do not see the value and the role of the Youth Desk they tend to use them as additional human resource for SAPS.

During one of the cluster station meetings it was possible to establish that, even though both structures have annual action plans agreed upon at the beginning of the year, those are not being considered for coordination purposes. Both the Youth Desk and the SAPS tend to have conflicting events planned for the same target audience. In some instances the Youth Desk even had to postpone or cancel their events because of SAPS not willing to reach a compromise.

According to the assessment made by DoCS in 2008, 130 selected coordinators from all police stations were trained using the National Crime Prevention Strategy as the document that informs the coordination of youth led activities at



local level. However the challenge has always been the lack of consistency and uniformity. SAPS does not have a standardized placement criteria for the Social Crime Prevention Coordinators, most coordinators are being placed out of their passion thus there is no sustainability and the training is still not well coordinated (fragmented).. It is important to recognize, however, that this initiative did impact positively on the relationship between the SAPS and the youth desk members. The YCPD see SAPS as a support structure they can rely on.

As mentioned earlier, the selection of the coordinators is not being guided by a document that identifies the skills that a person working with young people should have. Previously, the coordinators were appointed by the Station Commander if he/she had a member to spare. In some instances these coordinators are not even properly briefed on their added function and how it relates to the mandate of the SAPS. Due to some limitations, the research could not identify if this is still the case or whether there have been some improvements in the selection process. The challenge is thus to define a certain group of skills that a social crime prevention coordinator should possess and base the selection process only on the individuals that show commitment and willingness to working proactively with young people. Skills and support training has not sufficiently taken into account these other training interests.

One of the main progresses that the link between SAPS and Youth Desk has managed to achieve is to create a channel of communication between the SAPS and the youth networks in communities. Initially, SAPS was not able to access the schools and had a purely confrontational relationship with the youth in their jurisdictions. Through the Youth Desk it has been possible to build trust and a collaboration environment that allows the police to identify problematic young people from a preventive perspective. This has demonstrated how SAPS has taken a proactive and preventative approach in coordinating safety interventions in schools. . The SAPS was also able to understand the role of the Youth Desk not only as an additional task or a burden but as a proactive intervention whereby they interact and engage young people in prevention activities. Some of the challenges identified during the research include:

- Lack of guidance, leadership and support for the Youth desk structures and unrealistic expectations
- Insufficient resources to carry out tasks

Lack of understanding the roles and responsibilities of the youth desks by SAPS management: in some police stations the station commanders wanted the youth desk

members to establish street committees; take statements from complainants, answer telephones, registering complaints and even draft affidavits

Relationship with the CPF

During the focus group interviews, it became clear that the relationship between the youth desk members and the members of the CPF is a very volatile and subjective one. In some police stations, there are definite turf struggles between the CPF members and the youth desk members, mainly because they are currently sharing office space and other resources such as stationary, telephone lines.

The support that the CPF gives to the Youth Desk is not standardized and varies from station to station. In the cases where the CPF members were previous Youth Desk members and had an understanding of the support and activities that the Youth Desk were supposed to carry out, the relationship was proactive and the CPF were serving the purpose of being a support platform that the youth desk could rely upon. In this instance it was easy for the researcher to identify and make the conclusion that most of the youth desks which are functioning well have a better relationship with the CPF than the ones that are struggling to function. There is a possibility that the relationship is good because the roles have been clearly defined and the leadership structures are solid.

Nonetheless, the relationship between the CPF and the Youth Desk has managed to address the limitations that the CPF used to have in terms of engaging and approaching the Youth in their communities. Through the Youth Desk the CPFs have been able to make social crime prevention activities attractive to young people in their communities. This is a remarkable progress in that previously the CPFs used to identify and give a negative painting to young people as the main perpetrators of violence. Most of CPFs further alluded to the fact that they often face challenges with providing support to the Youth Desk structures due to the lack of a systematic and practical support from government.

Relationship with the DoCS

The Social Crime Prevention coordinators of the Department of Community Safety are responsible for providing guidance and mentorship to the YCPD structures as well as providing support in carrying out their activities. During the field visits and interviews it was possible to identify that the more proactive the coordinator was, the more effective and engaged the Youth Desk members were. Some of the structures were even proactive in designing and implementing interventions beyond those outlined by department. Some of the coordinators are actually applying a problem oriented interventions approach, whereby they involve the Youth Desk in the diagnosis of the main challenges affecting young people in their communities and designing prevention interventions to overcome those challenges.

Currently the Department of Community Safety is monitoring the progress of the coordinators on a performance based indicators that are measured on a weekly basis. The coordinators are supposed to bring hard evidence to back up their results. The main challenge with that approach is that some coordinators turn to put pressure on the YCPD structures and demand that they produce the evidence to back up their results and sometimes they end up carrying out the responsibilities of the coordinators, and in some instances even ending up producing weekly reports for them.

Another challenge is that of lack of communication channels between the YCPD at station level and the DoCS coordinators, the communication between Youth Desks at station level depends entirely on the SAPS Social Crime Prevention Coordinator of the cluster. Youth Desks are not talking to each other and are not coordinating to develop their activities. The generalized perception of the YCPD is that the DoCS is only there to provide the venue and catering for the events and are not there to provide guidance when planning this activities.

<p>SUPPORT STRUCTURES: <u>CHALLENGES</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection criteria • Permanency and terms of office • Clear cut Roles and responsibilities • Communication Channels • Performance based incentives • Coordination
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Additional Challenges

Besides the performance based incentives for the DoCS and the coordination between Youth Desks, the support structures still face the challenge that there is no clarity regarding the criteria for selecting the coordinators. Some of the members of SAPS, CPF and DoCS are still lacking the required skills and training to work with young people. For instance it was identified that in instances where the department has absorbed former YCPD members as their SCP coordinators this has made a significant impact in the YCPD programme

Other additional challenges identified:

- Inconsistency of SAPS SCP coordinators - this was predominately mentioned as the biggest challenge during the interviews: the term of office for the Coordinators largely affects the performance of the YCPD. This is mainly due to the fact that the coordinators manages to build networks and gain the trust of the members within those networks only to be replaced in a period less than 2 years, which harms the continuity and sustainability of the structures, their programmes and activities.

- Lack of clear roles and responsibilities between the coordinating structures: (SAPS, DoCS and CPF)

Independence was an issue brought up by many of the Youth Desk interview and while it seem to be overestimated, it is key to understand that the fact that there are no clear roles and responsibilities defined between DoCS, CPFs, SAPS and YCPD sometimes creates turf struggles mainly between the CPF and YCPD. There is still no clarity in terms of the roles and responsibilities that each member of the support structures is supposed to fulfill. On top of that, the communication channels between support structures and YCPD is still predominately informal which makes it harder make follow ups. At an institutional and policy level, YCPD are relatively new and not fully developed, leading to a lack of clarity on functioning and relationships.

- Lack of strategy and M&E frameworks:
- Strategic Planning, monitoring and Evaluation are not currently being implemented. Some Youth Desk members expressed the need to understand what is happening with the weekly reports that they have to give to the DoCS. They further indicated that they rarely get feedback on the reports they write which create a challenge for them to do follow ups on the activities and programmes that they have implemented. This also makes it difficult for them to make improvements to their interventions and

6.2.2 Recruitment Process

One of the current objectives of the DoCS is to increase the number of youth joining the YCPD structures. . However, there is no clarity on how the process should be carried out and on what criteria the YCPD should base the selection process for recruiting new members. So far, it was no possible to identify a standardization of the recruitment process. For example, while attending the first meeting of a Youth Desks in the Johannesburg cluster an executive committee was selected among the youth that were attending the meeting for the first time. They were selected during a very chaotic and uniformed process.

On the other hand, there is a high level of expectations when young people join the structures. Many of them believe that they will get remuneration as members of the YCPD or that it will prepare them for the job market. Expectations are currently determining the level of involvement and commitment that each YCPD is able to reach. The adjustment of these expectations should be done during the recruitment process and it is important to make clear that the Youth Desks can serve the purpose of becoming a skills development platform that could prepare them for the job market, if and only if, they play a proactive role in their professional development.

The main challenge regarding the recruitment process is that the new Youth Desk members are not receiving proper induction whereby their expectations can be clarified and full commitment achieved.

6.2.3 Branding, Recognition and Identity Building

During the interviews with the Youth Desk members the issue of recognition came out very strong. Most Youth Desk indicated that they are currently facing challenges when approaching the community for the first time, because they do not have any symbols to identify themselves. Their legitimacy and that of the activities and interventions is often questioned. They are often challenged and questioned by the schools and other community groupings they interact with about their role and purpose. In addition, Youth Desk members feel **demoralized** by this dynamic, given that they always have to explain themselves every time they want to put any plan into action, which ends up harming their commitment to the structure.

The challenge in terms of recognition also rests on the fact that and the YCDP have not been branded to create an identity within the structure and provide them with legitimacy within the communities they work in. Many successful practices can be identified and showcased to demonstrate the benefit that supporting and welcoming a Youth Desk structure can bring to the communities. An awareness campaign that showcases and exposes the importance and the role of the Youth Desk is thus necessary. This will help build the credibility of the YCPD

“Sometime is frustrating, because our programmes and activities are not recognized”

“The fact that we don’t even have a uniform, or anything to identify us as members, makes it harder to earn the trust of the community”

On the other hand, the fact that there has not been a process of identity building within the structure indicates a lack of sense a clear vision and mission for the youth desk members. Moreover, many members end up curtailing their activities and prioritizing police tasks, because they do not clearly comprehend their role of prevention and believe that daily policing tasks are part of their responsibilities.

Furthermore, the Youth Desks are currently facing a big challenge in terms of recognition. Given that they are based in police stations and are supported by the SAPS the youth networks in their communities –especially in problematic neighbourhoods- tend to perceive them as police spies and providing them information. The Youth Desk structures that are faced with such challenges were the ones finding it hard to recruit new members since they

do not have trust in them. The provincial YCDP leadership structure also emphasized the fact that such a perception in the communities puts the members in danger, since some of them turn to be targeted by organized criminal structures that see them as police informants.

<p>RECRUITMENT, RECOGNITION, IDENTITY BUILDING, BRANDING: <u>CHALLENGES</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legitimacy and commitment to the structure • Sense of mission • Need of induction sessions • Expectations of new recruits • Perception as police informants • Lack of credibility
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This identity building challenge also manifest itself on the fact that the YCPD leadership at both stations and cluster level has not been trained on leadership skills and most of the time, have to rely on their own innate abilities. A leader should be able to communicate the vision and work towards achieving it in a disciplined manner. They should not only be designing prevention strategies and skills development trainings, but also programmes that challenge the minds of the young people involved in the structures and incentivizing them into remaining committed.

As it is a characteristic of most voluntary youth structures, YCPD also has a high membership turnover. As other interested youth join in, others lose interest and move out. Youth desks generally have inherently short life span and need to constantly be re-established. It is also the responsibility of the leadership to help new members adjust their expectations towards the structure. Many of them, for instance, expect a stipend, with a few of them not understanding the concept of volunteerism.

The researcher is of the opinion that as soon as everyone's role has been clarified the membership figures will increase. The formalization of the relationship between the SAPS, CPF, the department and the YCPD must be the precursor to the role clarification and to realizing the objectives of the structure.

6.2.4 Communications

The interaction between the YCPD and its supporting structure (SAPS, CPF and DoCS happens mainly on a face to face basis and through informal channels. There are no standardized procedures on how they should communicate or interact.

With regards to the communication with the SAPS and the CPF, the channels vary from station to station. However, most YCPD share office space with the CPF. They normally use this space to coordinate and interact with each other. In addition, YCPD's station leadership structures attend station and cluster management meetings, which take place on a regular basis (at least once a month). It was further identified that some YCPD prefer having formal communication with SAPS, to properly request for support such as transport and venues to coordinate and plan their activities and events.

In terms of the interaction between YCPD and other youth networks in the community, the communication is predominately on a one way process, there are often minimal dialogues between the YCPD structures and the youth in communities.

AS previously indicated, lack of clear communication challenges was brought up as one of the main challenges that the Youth Desks are currently faced with. The YCPD structures within a cluster and even at provincial level rarely coordinate and communicate with each other and predominately only do it through the DoCS Social Crime Prevention Coordinators.

All youth desk members that were interviewed indicated that they are all capable of utilizing social media (meaning mainly Facebook and Whatsapp.) Members predominately prefer WhatsApp to interact and coordinate with other members as well as to market, send invites to events or to showcase their activities. Social media is also used as a one way communication tool, but not as a platform for dialogues between young people. Clear example of the communication challenges that the Youth Desk are facing was witnessed in one of the field visits. The main intention of the visit was to assess the functionality of a recently created YCDP structure. The dynamics presented during the meeting proved that there was no direct communication between the new YCDP members and the coordinator from DoCS. First, the coordinator did not know the purpose of the meeting, nor did he know that all the members of the interim executive board had stepped down and that a new committee was about to be elected.

An intervention in terms of communication is necessary because on the one hand it will give the YCPD wider reach in the youth community, it will allow them to market and brand themselves properly and further defy the misleading perception that sometimes make the community not to trust them. For this to happen, communication and strategic communication skills amongst the leadership of the YCPD is required.

Interventions in terms of strategic effective communications are needed. Currently the Youth Desk do not see social media as tool and platforms of dialogue but, more as one way communication channels to make their programmes visible. It is a core factor of success

They have been using the social networks more effectively; they have been able to reach out more people than before and make the recruitment process easier.

COMMUNICATIONS: CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic communication • Channels of Comm. with Support structures • Social media as platforms for dialogue
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6.2.5 Administrative Issues, Human and Logistic Resources

An assessment of the functionality of the youth desks was conducted at various police stations throughout the regions in the Gauteng Province.

Telephones, computers and office space are the most basic resources that are required for youth desks to start functioning.

“I am using a lot of airtime from my own pocket, petrol sometimes I have to go to forum meetings on foot for 2 hours.”

“If something fails it is not blame on the institution, but it sticks to your name, so that drives you into using your pocket money.”

During the focus group interviews the majority of the respondents confirmed that lack of resources are the reason why they are not functioning optimally. Some of the resources identified include transport, airtime for their mobile phones, and stationery. Members indicated that they have to use their own money for airtime and transport. The lack of resources also impacts on their ability to organize events.

It is also necessary to compile a data base on the Youth Desks members that will enable the coordinators to assess turnover rates and identifying critical focus were interventions might be needed. Capacity building in terms of knowledge and information management was brought up as a main challenge by most of the coordinators.

6.2.6 Gender Approach Empowering of young women

According to the DoCS, 60% of the members of the youth desk are women and the 40% are men. However, in terms of leadership roles, men are still taking the lead and there is a need for the structure to serve as a platform for empowering young women.

7. Recommendations and Core Factors of Success

7.1 Core Factors of Success

Based on the findings made in regards to the conceptualization of the Youth Desks, the role of the Youth Desks in career paths of young people and their functionality and efficiency assessment, the following factor of success were identified. These critical factors determine the difference between a successful YCPD and those structures with areas for improvement. Focusing on these factors of success will allow any of the set structures to achieve their fullest potential:

CORE FACTORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentorship, support and guidance from structures of support – Guarantee commitment • Involvement of DoCS coordinators in strategic planning • Specific training for the executive committee (where they have leadership skills they become role models) • Induction Process (adjust expectations) • Clear cut criteria for selection of coordinators • Exposure and awareness: Building ownership, recognition and legitimacy through branding • Standardize training and follow up procedures • Efficient information and knowledge management
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7.2 Recommendations

“I didn't come in with expectations. I wanted to make a difference in youth criminality. I would say the primary expectations of what the youth desk are suppose to be, have been met, like in any area of practice, improvements can still be made.”

CAREER PATHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardize training procedures, selection of trainees and follow up tools • chair persons (leadership skills, social crime prevention skills, team work, team building) • SAPS and CPFs coordinators, (continuity, sustainability, legitimacy and trust) • Certification of trainings nationally recognized • Linkages to the job market :private and relevant stakeholders that might value the skills learned through the Youth Desks • Team building and team work workshop to fight individualistic perception of merit
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A developmental approach should be adopted and a renewed focus on accredited training must be followed. Each participant should get a nationally recognized certificate which should be awarded on completion of the training.
<p>PROBLEM SOLVING ORIENTATED INTERVENTION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting the problems, identifying diagnosis and corresponding interventions in each jurisdiction
<p>SUPPORT STRUCTURES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building intervention (training and selection criteria) Clear definition of roles and responsibilities between the main stakeholders
<p>RECRUITMENT, BRANDING AND IDENTITY BUILDING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear guides on how to recruit new members and how to explain the relevance of the structure Standardized procedures for Induction and recruitment Support definition of a branding strategy. Give visibility and identification to YCPD. Mainstream the debate uniforms, recognition create identity and a feeling of belonging to something bigger than just the structure
<p>COMMUNICATIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus support on strengthening strategic communication. Creating platforms of dialogue
<p>TRAINING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardized training for youth with follow up tools (take into account the age cohort problem) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social crime Prevention Leadership Public Speaking Project planning and management

- Team work and Team building

A suggestion brought up by one of the focus groups on the Moroka cluster was that there should be training camps, where YCPD members can not only develop skills that they require for the job, but also where they can interact with other YCPD and exchange ideas. A training camp can be the platform to kick- start the interaction between youth desk while there is a proper development of the core skills needed to make the structure efficient.

Given the issues on the lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities that the respective role-players must fulfill, and the lack of systems and /or processes, a strategy needs to be developed. A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal. It is also a direction that needs to be taken by making certain decisions on allocation of resources.

This document should have a clear vision, mission and objectives especially created in collaboration with the youth desk members. The strategy would also guide activities that the youth desks should be involved in. The process of strategy development should be followed by an implementation plan which clearly outlines the key projects and activities that the YCPD should be involved in.

“There might not be a job for everyone in South Africa, but there is work to be done for everyone in South Africa”

8. References

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