Many who live with violence day in and day out assume that it is an intrinsic part of the human condition. But this is not so. Violence can be prevented. Violent cultures can be turned around. In my own country and around the world, we have shining examples of how violence has been countered. Governments, communities and individuals can make a difference.

Nelson Mandela
WHAT IS SAFERSPACES?

Building safer communities in South Africa is a collective responsibility of both the state and its citizens. It requires an integrated approach that brings together government, civil society, academia and business. And it needs to be informed by a sound knowledge base.

SaferSpaces is an online knowledge source for practitioners, government officials, academics, journalists and ordinary people that are working towards community safety and violence prevention in South Africa. It aims to become:

1. South Africa’s key knowledge hub on community safety and violence prevention
2. A central networking hub for practitioners to register, share knowledge and connect
3. An effective support to South Africa’s community safety and violence prevention agenda

In May 2017, the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service (CSPS) assumed the responsibility for managing SaferSpaces with the support and guidance from a cross-sectoral Advisory Group. The Advisory Group is a core group of government departments and non-governmental institutions that are committed to strategically promote, contribute to and guide SaferSpaces. The University of Cape Town’s Institute for Safety Governance and Criminology (SafGo) supports the CSPS in managing the site. Technical and financial support is provided by the founders of SaferSpaces – the Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention programme (VCP) implemented by the German Development Cooperation (through GIZ) and partners.

SaferSpaces is envisioned to serve as a key support mechanism for the implementation of the National White Paper on Safety and Security, which advocates an integrated approach towards violence and crime prevention informed by a sound knowledge base and active community participation.
Background and concepts

Crime and violence manifest in various forms and are primarily driven by socioeconomic factors. Crime and violence affect the psycho-social wellbeing and physical safety of citizens and have a negative impact on the productivity and sustainability of urban environments. Crime and violence also erode the democratic rights and constitution-al integrity of cities, particularly in regard to freedom of movement and access to public spaces. Further, the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) frames the importance of urban safety – Goal 11, in particular – namely as cities being engines of development, and therefore need to be inclusive, safe with emphasis on public space and participatory governance (inclusive particularly of vulnerable groups).

Institutional, fiscal and social interventions are needed to ensure that South African cities meet their developmental potential. These need to be part of an integrated preventive approach, which rests on a clear and common understanding of roles and responsibilities, and the requisite intergovernmental and cross-departmental relations. In practice, the integrated approach underscores social crime prevention, i.e. interventions and programmes that emphasise prevention alongside conventional law enforcement and policing, with a focus on vulnerable groups and targeting risky behaviours early on. Social crime prevention, as a long-term approach, deals with the root causes of crime and violence that are often embedded in social attitudes. For example, a global safer cities initiative in 2012 found that 92% of women in New Delhi experienced some form of sexual violence in public spaces during their lifetime (UN Women, 2013). It also found that, in Kigali, women are reluctant to participate in activities outside the home for fear of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence. Thus interventions need to target the root of the problem and encompass early childhood education, gender equality sensitization among youth and adolescents, as well as raising awareness around freedom of movement and the right of all to public space.

The concept of urban safety goes beyond the safety of persons, the integrity of investments and the sustainability of urban development – it invokes freedom of movement and access to public spaces, and unfettered participation in school, public life, and income-generating activities.

Why Urban Safety Matters

Urban safety is recognised globally as an essential ingredient of urban development. According to UN-Habitat, 60% of all urban residents in developing countries have been victims of crime at least once over the past five years – 70% of these residents live in Latin America and Africa. Urbanisation is typically accompanied by increased crime and violence, the proliferation of weapons, substance abuse and mass youth unemployment. These crime levels and feelings of insecurity hamper the social and economic development of cities. Thus the prevention of violence and crime is recognised internationally as a key feature of sound urban safety strategies.

There is a growing understanding of the importance of advancing urban safety. Because cities experience higher rates of crime than semi-urban and rural areas, safety challenges impose severe limitations to their growth and development, as well as quality of life of residents. In South Africa, uneven spatial distribution of safety affects the overall inclusivity, efficiency and functioning of cities. Further, as a result of poor planning, an exclusionary spatial form and socioeconomic factors, low-income areas, such as townships and informal settlements, suffer from especially low levels of safety. Research by the Urban Safety Reference Group (USRG) in 2014/15 revealed the impact of socioeconomic drivers on levels of safety and crime, as well as the impact of perceptions of crime on the growth, development and the liveability of cities. The research also found a relationship between the fear of crime and movement. The USRG’s 2016 research into citizen perceptions in crime hotspots within 3 cities reinforced this correlation. Read together, the studies speak to a diminished quality of life as a result of high crime and violence levels in cities. They suggest the need for urban planning, design and infrastructure development that emphasises safety. In particular, as cities move towards eco and non-motorised mobili- ty, they will need to consider how their violence and crime prevention strategies can be aligned with safety issues associated with these forms of mobility.

Safety in South African cities

Over the last 10 years, South Africa’s crime and safety trends have been mixed. Murder rates have declined considerably – by about 20% over the decade (2005/06–2014/15). This is a good sign, as the recorded murder figures are believed to be a good reflection of reality, and murder is considered a broad but reasonable proxy for crime, violence and safety in general.

However, in recent years, the downward trend has begun to reverse, increasing by 9% between 2011/12 and 2014/15. This pattern of a long decline that then slowed or reversed slightly in the last two or three years, is found for a number of other types of crime:

• Public/street robbery: decreased by a total of 27% over the decade, but up by 24% since 2011/12.
• Common robbery – down by about 35% over the decade, but by only 1% since 2011/2012.
• Carjacking – down by about 12% over the decade, but up by 29% since 2011/2012.
• Burglary at residential premises - down by about 15% over the decade, but by only 1.3% since 2011/2012.
• Theft of motor vehicles and motorcycles – down by about 43% over the decade, and down by 11% since 2011/2012.

Crime Hotspots Survey

The USRG conducted the Crime Hotspots Survey in three cities. The findings are published in the State of Urban Safety in South Africa 2017 Report.
Nine major municipalities are home to 38% of South Africa’s popu-
lation but experience a dispro-
portionate portion of crimes reported nationally. The nine mu-
icipalities are the City of Johan-
nesburg, City of Cape Town, eThek-
weni, Ekurhuleni, City of Tshwane,
Nelson Mandela Bay, Mangung, Buffalo City and Mzunduzi. Accord-
ing to the official statistics, 78% of all carjackings, 58% of all house
robberies, 51% of all common as-
saults and 47% of all murders oc-
cur in these nine municipalities.

The exception to the rule is, unsur-
prisingly, stock theft.

This imbalance may be because of reporting factors (e.g. longer dis-
tances to the nearest police station
can discourage reporting in rural
areas), but other factors make it
likely that, in reality, these crimes
are more prevalent in certain ur-
ban environments. This means that
as a crime in South Africa as a
whole can be disproportionately
measured at a city level as well as
for each police precinct within each city.

In this way, the differences within
each city – the “hotspots” that con-
tribute disproportionately to crime
figures – can be highlighted. Fur-
thermore, some of the indicators
require measurement along other
dimensions such as gender, age or
nationality. This dataset will need
to be developed progressively over
time.

**Second tier: social / structural
risk factors**

Crime and violence factors exist
within a range of social structures
and interact with them. Deciding
which of these structures to focus
on as indicators and possible driv-
ers of urban insecurity depends on
the theoretical approach adopted.
However, a strong basis can be
found in the three overlapping cat-
egories of urbanisation, marginal-
isation and the state of the social
and physical environment. As with
the objective indicators, the data
from these indicators should be
broken down into smaller areas of
the city, where possible, in order
to identify correlations and to draw
attention to the areas where crime
rates are high.

**Policy framework for urban
safety in South Africa**

In South Africa, the issue of safety and security figures strongly
in strategic policies and plans.
Chapter 12 of the National De-
velopment Plan (NDP) is entitled
“Building Safer Communities” and
proposes an integrated approach,
the decentralisation of police
and special provisions for vulnerable
groups including youth, women
and children. The government
has developed 14 Outcomes that
reflect the desired developmental
impacts to be achieved in order
to meet various national objectives.

The aim of Outcome 3 is that “all
people in South Africa are
and feel safe” (The Presidency, 2014).
This safety and security outcome
is driven by the Justice, Crime
Prevention and Security Cluster with
different departments, safety and
security MECs and community po-
licing forums (CPFs) identified as
delivery partners.

However, a barrier to making
cities safer in South Africa is the lack
of a clear and coherent framework
that pulls together all the different
policy intentions and directs, aligns
and integrates urban safety inter-
ventions, planning instruments and
investments by all government
spheres and sectors. Many of the
urban safety policy building blocks
are in place at national, provincial
and municipal levels, but they are
fragmented and uncoordinated. As
a result, there is no common un-
derstanding of what municipalities
should do in order to enable and
implement integrated responses to
making communities safer.

Municipal responsibilities re-
lating to traditional “public safety”
functions, such as traffic safety, fire
and emergency services, and disas-
ter risk management, are relatively
well-defined and accommodated
in municipal plans, budgets and
institutional structures. However,
the mandate of municipalities to
promote community safety (i.e. respond
to and prevent crime and violence)
are not sufficiently elab-
orated, and so community safety
fails to attract the required political
buy-in and prioritisation. Conse-
quently, municipalities struggle
to motivate for and secure adequate
(training and sustained, long-term)
fund-
ing, capacity development and oth-
er kinds of support to effectively
collaborate with community safety.

From a national perspective, a
more spatially differentiated policy
response is needed that takes into
account the concentration of vi-
olence and crime in the country’s cit-
ties and towns, and directs and pri-
oritises the allocation of financial
resources and technical capacity
development support accordingly.

Two quarterly briefs of the USRG
argue for this approach. The brief
on efficient budgeting for safety
calls for targeted approaches as
opposed to the mere allocation of
more funds and more police. The
brief on crime statistics emphasiz-
est the need for improved city-level
crime data and argues that Na-
tional crime statistics obscure the
immensely skewed distribution of
crime. Cities need to know the dis-

**Factors influencing crime and safety**

The inner tier, “conditions of crime
and violence” includes both crime and
violence statistics and people’s
perceptions of their safety. The sec-
ond tier refers to social/structural
factors that might increase condi-
tions of crime and violence. The
third tier covers existing and po-
tential policing, crime and violence
prevention programmes, which
cannot be measured quantitatively;
instead a qualitative assessment
is done over time to evaluate the
effects of the programmes.

Based on an extensive litera-
ture review, 21 proposed indica-
tors were identified, grouped into
two tiers, in order to standardize the
description and measurement of urban safety in South African cities. These indica-
tors, when adapted to take into
account each city’s unique context,
can provide the basis of compari-
sion, assessment and planning. For
some of the indicators, the data
exists and is available at municipal
level, but for others additional re-
search is required to make them
useful and comparable.

The data should be compiled
to provide the same description
and indicators and possible driv-
ers of urban insecurity depends on
the different spheres and sectors. Many of the

**Recent policy development**

The Vision 2030 of the NDP states that “In 2030, people living
in South Africa feel safe at home, at school and at work, and they en-
joy a community life free of fear. Women walk freely in the streets
and children play safely outside”.

The NDP proposes that local
government should play a more
prominent role in responding to
community safety concerns and vi-
olence prevention. Among the rec-
mendations are some concrete
suggestions of what local govern-
ment should do:

- **Local government should use its Constitutional mandate to promote community safety cre-
atively and innovatively.**
- **Municipalities and communities should be assisted to develop basic infrastructure.**
- **CPFs as mechanisms for com-
munity participation in safety should be strongly encouraged.**
- **Municipalities should under-
take safety audits with communities to establish safety needs and strategies.

- Local government should report on environmental designs addressed at the safety of women, children, and other vulnerable groups.
- Local governments should have safety plans and corresponding budgets.

Soon after the NDP was published, two other key policy processes were initiated: the revision of the 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security and the development of a national urban policy for South Africa, the IUDF.

2016 White Paper on Safety and Security

The 2016 White Paper on Safety and Security builds on the 1998 original and advocates a developmental approach to creating safer communities through addressing risk factors on different levels. It also advocates more effective and integrated planning and implementation by local government, informed by a sound knowledge base and active community participation.

Importantly, the new White Paper emphasises dealing with gaps within the intergovernmental system by proposing the roles and responsibilities of different government spheres and their interaction to community safety. Local government is recognised as “a key role player in the delivery of safety and security to communities.” The location of municipalities, (at the most direct interface of government with communities), and the mandate of municipalities represents the most immediate range of interventions required to create an enabling environment for delivery of services which impact on the safety and wellbeing of communities.

Integrated Urban Development Framework

The Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF, COGTA, 2016) is a policy response to South Africa’s current and projected urbanisation. The IUDF aims to provide a national framework for how best to manage urbanisation to reap the potential benefits for cities and towns that are more resilient and inclusive, and for the national economy.

The IUDF presents urban safety as a cross-cutting issue for urban development and good governance. It highlights the urban concentration of violence and crime in South Africa, as well as the consequent need for an urban safety approach as a part of the national response to making the country safer. The IUDF further emphasises safety in public spaces as being critical to improving the living conditions of creating liveable and prosperous cities.

While the safety of all communities (both urban and rural) matters equally, an urgent, dedicated focus on urban safety is needed due to the size and size of the national response to making the country safer. The IUDF further emphasises safety in public spaces as being critical to improving the living conditions of creating liveable and prosperous cities.

While noting the existing legislative and institutional frameworks in place to promote community safety, the IUDF draws attention to a range of challenges:

- The underlying root causes of violence and crime are not sufficiently addressed, i.e. inequality, unemployment, poverty, lack of social cohesion, availability of opportunities and motives for crime and victimisation.
- Most implementation mechanisms neither sufficiently reflect the multidimensional nature of urban violence and urban safety nor focus on prevention.
- Local safety is not sufficiently mainstreamed into the entire fabric of municipal programmes.
- Communities are not sufficiently activated and resourced to play a meaningful role in community safety.
- Poor planning and management make public spaces crime hotspots.

There are insufficient mechanisms for generating and transferring knowledge about community safety among practitioners and community members. As a result, various considerations and recommendations related to urban safety are found across the IUDF’s nine “policy levers”. These include the following:

- Public transport modes should be safe, inclusive, pedestrianised public spaces.
- Densification strategies should be considered.
- Networks should be clear and safe.
- Planning and management should make public spaces crime hotspots.
- There are insufficient mechanisms for generating and transferring knowledge about community safety among practitioners and community members. As a result, various considerations and recommendations related to urban safety are found across the IUDF’s nine “policy levers”. These include the following:

Urban Safety Reference Group

The National Safety Reference Group (NSRG) and the City of Johannesburg Safety Reference Group (URSG) provide a structured exchange on urban safety, complement and extend beyond conventional security approaches such as policing, law enforcement or the reliance on private security firms.

The NSRG also provides a basis for cities to collectively raise the profile of the topic of urban safety nationally, and advocates for necessary policy, legislative, institutional or fiscal reforms to empower cities and local governments generally to be more pro-active in a crime prevention and crime prevention.

The URSG is convened by the SACN with the support of the Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention (IVCP) Programme. The IVCP Programme is a joint South African-German intervention coordinated by the South African Department of Cooperative Governance and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The URSG comprises safety managers and practitioners from the SACN member cities. Other relevant institutions and departments represented include the South African National Department of Cooperative Governance (DoCoG), the Department of Social Development (DoSdD) and the Civilian Secretariat for Police. Thus, the URSG is more than a platform for urban safety managers and practitioners to share experiences and establish a common language around integrated strategies to reduce violence and crime; it is also a space for city practitioners to interact with their national counterparts.

In terms of its core objectives the URSG seeks to influence greater policy, legislative, institutional and fiscal investment in violence and crime prevention through:

- Facilitating peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing among urban safety practitioners.
- Creating safe space for regular interaction and networking among city practitioners and national departments with safety-related functions.
- Identifying topical matters requiring lobbying and interaction.
- Providing a platform for structured engagement between South African municipalities and international urban safety networks, such as the United Cities and Local Governments Africa (UCLGA), Global Network on Safer Cities, and the African Forum for Urban Safety (AFUS).

USRG Practices and approaches

Although policing and the criminal justice system are core components of dealing with violence and crime, as the NDP recommends, a far stronger focus on prevention is needed that addresses the many socioeconomic roots of the problem. Therefore, in addition to conventional law enforcement, integrated approaches to urban safety need to include spatial planning, educational, economic development, and social and economic development.

As a result of this new orientation, USRG member municipalities are increasingly viewing safety as a key consideration when planning and implementing new projects, and the upgrading of informal settlements and integrated transport developments.

USRG Member City Approaches and Strategies

Some cities are developing their city safety strategies and implementation plans in line with their IDP, while others are still conceptualising their plans. USRG’s interaction with each city, in particular its discussions with each city’s Safety and Security Management functions sit, has assisted member cities in thinking more deeply about the components necessary to their safety strategy, how these align with their IDP and the overall objective to harmonise the urban safety practices of cities.

Since 2011, the City of Johannesburg shared its draft City Safety Strategy (CSS) with the USRG. This comprehensive document is linked to the City’s IDP, which recognises the changing realities in Johannesburg and the need for a cogent response to the pressures of urbanisation in the context of the changing population dynamics, persistent inequality and resource scarcity, as well as new risks and new types of crime. Thus, the City of Johannesburg has adopted a tailored, multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach. Ethekwini Municipality is in the process of institutional reviewing its strategy and programme, 20 years following inception.

Institutional Arrangements in USRG Member Cities

There are key differences in language among cities with regard to urban safety and risk management. For example, some member cities refer to “community safety”, while others talk of “city safety” or “safer cities”. This has highlighted the need for an exercise in convergence in terms of harmonising practices. Beyond budget allocations to safety functions, part of USRG sharing and exchange has included discussion and analysis of how monies are allocated to safety and used across member cities.
Gangs and Youth – Insights from Cape Town

Any formal or informal ongoing organisation, association, or group of three or more persons, which has as one of its activities the commission of one or more criminal offences, which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol and whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity.

This official definition from South Africa’s Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA) is so broad that it’s almost unworkable. Mostly the police simply ignore it unless there have been multiple convictions.

My definition of a criminal gang (there are other types of gangs) is: a group of people with common interests who come together with common criminal purpose.

There are some general things we can say about such gangs:

- They’re an urban phenomenon found in most cities throughout the world where there’s crowding and low income.
- They’re mostly found within particular types or urban structure: tenements, low-cost neighbourhoods and squatter areas.
- They’re generally in areas of relative (not absolute) poverty.
- They’re mainly a male youth phenomenon.
- They have to do with identity.
- There are often parental attachment issues.
- There can be connections to mental & physical health issues.
- There’s almost always a drug connection.
- There are very often education issues – high percentages of gang members have dropped out of school early.
- There are often, but not always, links to a criminal economy.
- They have a bad rap and use it.

They can be structured as:

Hierarchies which are highly structured and bureaucratic with centralised control systems.

Networks which tend to have fluid nodes and supply chains. These are harder to take down.

Markets which buy and sell illicit products and services and are generally fiercely territorial.

Clans which are family-like and work through reciprocity and blood loyalty and display leadership through ceremony, clothes and tattoos.

Social disruption and family breakdowns Central to the gang problem is opportunity difference and family breakdown. The old working-class areas were socially integrated neighbourhoods with extended families which exerted high levels of social control.

Journalist Brian Barrow captured the sense of community this way:

Children everywhere. Shouting, laughing, whistling, teasing, darting between old men’s legs, running between fast-moving buses and cars and missing them by inches with perfect judgement. Poor, underfed children but cheeky, confident, happy and so emotionally secure in the bosom of their sordid surroundings. Everyone loved them. To them, it seemed, every adult on those busy streets was another mother; another father.

In the 1960s and 1970s Cape Town restructured along racial lines. All communities deemed non-white were ripped out and re-located to the Cape Flats. District Six is now grass and rubble where the social centre of the city used to be.

After 1994 Cape Town was recast as a world-class neoliberal city. This approach requires that the city is made safe and profitable for investment. Problems were largely pushed to the periphery and bad neighbourhoods remained bad neighbourhoods where poverty continued.

This was compounded by massive in-migration from rural areas – a nightmare for the city’s planners. In the past 22 years some things have got better for some but worse for many and many toxic environments remain.

What was the impact of these changes on parents in these socially churned-up areas?

In search of role models

One of the biggest indicators for male delinquency is absent fathers. They may be absent emotionally, abusive or simply not there. Around 60% of births in the Western Cape are to single mothers. So, in the absence of role models, how do young men assert their masculinity?

The dominant masculinity in movies or on billboards are affluent, light-skinned or African heterosexual men and not achievable for most. Yet such masculinity is held in higher esteem in areas of major gang activity than elsewhere. Their hyper-masculinity swings between being the super-hero of a Hollywood blockbuster and a useless, socially despoiled ‘skollie’.

Representability is out of reach, but they’re able to approach the desired values of toughness, success and control through crime. And gang bosses – with flashy cars, beautiful women and obvious power – are the role models.

It’s hard to be a young man in a low-income, high-risk neighbourhood.

Mothers and epigenetics

Something else to consider is bio-social adaptation to environmental stress which begins even before a child is born. Its mother is in an environment and is an environment. Her nutrition, chemical intake or stress levels are signals that effect an embryo’s development.

Hyper stress or drug use by a mother can lead to an overdevelopment of its serotonin system.

Gaining the goal is experienced as a child as a search for pleasure due to a search for pleasure.

Dopamine neurotransmitters are the ‘seeking’ system for things like exploring, foraging or sex. It prompts you to ‘go for it’. It raises levels of impulsive action, aggression and desire for reward.

For many young people, gang membership is a rite of passage into manhood and the urge for this type of association is very old and embedded in many traditions.

It is a time of anticipation for many young people, gang membership is a rite of passage into manhood and the urge for this type of association is very old and embedded in many traditions.

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pleasure. The serotonin does the opposite – it cools you down, regulates emotions and behaviour, and inhibits aggression.

The effect of this altered balance kicks in, particularly during puberty. There’s a direct relationship between dopamine highs and aggressive behaviour. Lower se-rotonin/higher dopamine means lowering of inhibition, increased impulsiveness, public spectacle hyper-masculinity and a greater pre-disposition to engage in violent behavior and lower overall resilience.

There is also a problem of early emotional attachment. Resilient youths seldom offend or resort to violence. Emotional resilience comes from low attachments and safe surroundings.

Children growing up where that is absent, have trouble making sustaining emotional connections. They have problems with their own feelings and the feelings of others. They carry feelings of shame and anger which they generally with bravado and, often, violence. They’re edgy and lock their emotions in a psychological vault. They are drawn to others like themselves without empathy, sympathy and caring.

These kids often turn to violence and aggression because they know these are a reliable method for reasserting their existence. Aggression gets them what they want. ‘I hurt others therefore I am.’

About education?

In 2016, around 800 000 pupils sat down to write their final matric exams. That was about half of the number who had started school 12 years earlier. That means nearly a million, young people failed to achieve the first rung of almost any career. A survey of grade six pupils across South Africa found that in 75% of schools, between about a quarter and half of the learners were functionally illiterate.

One third of young people in the Western Cape under 25 are not in education, employment or training. Most of them are on the streets with nothing much to do. These kids are essentially being socialized into failure.

Drugs

Cape Town is awash with drugs, from cocaine and heroin to crystal meths and nypyoe, a low-grade heroin made out with anything from rat poison to chlorine.

Their clandestine, illicit, syndicate-driven use is destroying families, causing epidemic problems in mothers, fatherlessness, raising levels of violence through turf wars, wanting police time chasing dealers and users, clogging courts and overfilling prisons.

The only sensible solution seems to be to follow the Portuguese example: decriminalize and institute systems of harm reduction.

Are there solutions?

The answer to the question is: of course, there are. But we need to first ask what we mean by solving the gang problems? If we mean solving crime, that’s a big ask. What I’m more interested in is to figure out how to solve violence and hopelessness among young people who, as things stand, have no alternative.

Helping young people live meaningful, resilient lives

Most members of gangs are young people – particularly young men who are seen as an identity; who have little money yet need stuff in high-density urban areas; and who have time on their hands and plenty of adolescent edginess and anger.

The real question is not so much about gangs, but what can we do to help young people live meaningful, resilient lives in environments that favour development of gangs, crime and violence?

It is pertinent to ask: Which young people? All adolescents have the tendency to push the boundaries. While for many youth bad behaviour is limited to adolescence, there are others whose risky behaviour becomes life-course persistent due to epigenetic stress, attachment problems, fatherlessness and high-risk environments. It is these about whom we need concern ourselves.

Rethink education

South Africa spends a huge amount on the roll-out of education but, for most kids, the education system is dysfunctional. There are problems of false dichotomy between hand and mind work, with craft skills less valued. Some people work best as mind workers, others as craft workers. It’s not a statement of intelligence but of aptitude.

If young people feel the skills they possess and interests they have are not valued, this might explain the high school dropout rate.

Rethink family & community

The first 1000 days from conception create the cognitive groundwork for the rest of a person’s life. A solid grounding at this stage has been proved to bring down anxiety and aggression levels 16 years later.

That’s why implementing the Early Childhood Development Policy is so important. Loving attachment is essential in forming resilient children. Resilience is what helps young people succeed in life and avoid gangs, drugs and early childbirth.

Rethink policing & prisons

Containing is what is happening with young people fall foul of the law.

The first stop is policing and it’s not doing too well. We need to know how policing can’t do. They cannot – and should not be expected to – solve the gang problem. Their job is to contain it until it’s solved by other departments.

Meanwhile this is how policing could be improved:

- Re-educate police officers to regard the violence. You need training and quality of training.
- Reinvent professionalism and pride by employing only the best person for the job.
- Improve police management to curb corruption.
- Simplify grievance procedures so communities can report corrupt officers.
- Reinstate promotion based solely on merit.
- Establish an independent, specialized anti-corruption unit.
- Make the Independent Police Investigative Directorate truly independent.

Rethink prisons

South Africa’s prisons are failure prisons. They ‘cook’ the crime by housing large numbers of criminals to get them off the streets.

The solution is to transform prisons into schools of industry or prisons into schools of industry.

We need to decriminalize drugs, set up support centres and treat drug-taking as a physical and mental illness. We have to stop stigmatizing and jailing drugakers.

Why we need to decriminalise drugs

- Criminalising drugs, hands the trade to illegal syndicates.
- It is in the interest of syndicates to get customers addicted.
- People who use drugs excessively don’t use them because it’s illegal in them but because of sadness, hurt, loneliness.

Positive effects of decriminalisation

- Stop the turf wars. Collapse the drug syndicates.
- Disincentivise international drug tasks.
- Hugely reduce the prison population.

To resist the lure of gangs, young people need to be resilient. Resilience is having or developing competencies in spite of a high-risk context.

Build personal resilience

Resilient kids are active, affectionate, good-natured, humorous, confident and competent. They handle frustration and anxiety, ask for help when they need it and can withdraw from stressful situations and postpone an angry response.

In high-risk environments, gang formation is a form of resilience. They build friendships and give meaning, albeit often at high cost. Young people in gangs are telling us what they need: affirmation, exciting ritual, acceptance and respect from peers and a significant adult. They want re-fathering, re-fathering and re-attachment in order to feel valued, wanted and respected.

Reclaim the neighbourhood

The way neighbours are structured has a direct influence on gang activity. Blocks of flats with poor street access favour gang activity because of poor community surveillance.

Any restructuring of neighbour-hoods or rebuild plans need to incorporate space for extended families and have verandas for informal community surveillance (one of the reasons District Six worked as a community). We need to value and support grandparen-t: they are the anchors of any community.

Reduce the flow of illegal drugs

Around 120 000 young people in the Western Cape could be using some sort of illegal hard drug. What we need to do is reduce the harm they can cause – especially to young people. To do that, we need to understand why kids take drugs. One of the main causes of drug taking is sadness, a failure to fit in and the absence of loving relationships.

We need to decriminalize drugs, set up support centres and treat drug-taking as a physical and mental illness. We have to stop stigmatizing and jailing drugakers.
LEARN HOW

Find tools for planning, implementing and evaluating community safety initiatives. Browse through manuals and guidelines covering issues such as youth resilience, urban safety, gender-based violence or school safety.

BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES - A TOOLKIT FOR PARTICIPATORY SAFETY PLANNING

The Toolkit for Participatory Safety Planning provides participatory tools and methods that are in line with the principles of the ‘National Development Plan – Vision 2030’. It aims to support the implementation of the above-mentioned national policy at local level, e.g. through the work of Community Safety Fora and the integration of safety into municipal Integrated Development Planning. The toolkit guides users in the systemic planning of violence prevention and safety measures at local level. It helps identify risk factors as well as sources of resilience to build on when planning measures and interventions towards promoting community safety. Engaging communities in making their own environments safer can achieve long-term behaviour change in young people and those that influence them directly or indirectly.

The toolkit draws on existing knowledge, research, guidelines and manuals to promote an integrated and holistic way of addressing the multiple risk factors for violence and crime.

SaferSpaces spoke to two safety practitioners – Lunga Minyayo and Natasha Poni – on their experiences of using the Building Safer Communities Toolkit. Here is their feedback:

NATASHA PONI

Natasha Poni grew up in Cape Town, but is originally from Elliott, a small town in Sakhisizwe local municipality, in the Eastern Cape. Natasha works as a Human Development Adviser at the South African Local Government Association (SALGA)'s Eastern Cape office.

LUNGA MINYAYO

Lunga Minyayo is from Motherwell, Port Elizabeth. He is the Eastern Cape Provincial Chairman of the Youth Crime Prevention Desk (YCPD). Lunga also serves as the YCPD Chairman of the Motherwell SAPS Station, Motherwell Cluster and of the Eastern Cape Provincial Youth Board.

How helpful is the Toolkit for Building Safer Communities?

Natasha

“The toolkit is very useful as it provides different approaches on how to build safer communities.”

Lunga

“It guides us in the implementation of activities to identify crime hotspots within our community and to respond with solutions to prevent crime.”

How does the Toolkit improve your work, in the context of municipal support, regarding safety planning?

Natasha

“The toolkit enhances the work that we do with municipalities, in that it assists us to advocate/ encourage municipalities to take an institutional approach when dealing with safety. The municipalities are made aware of how to mainstream safety planning and enhance sustainable development - this in turn assists in joint planning and funding for safety.”

Lunga

“The toolkit has an activity which we conducted, the Transect Walk, an activity to map out our communities and highlight points in need of safety intervention. We included the voice of the community through surveys, interviewing of community members and taking photos for to create a portfolio of evidence. We identified challenges such as broken street lights, unattended open spaces, incomplete municipal buildings, unlicensed alcohol outlets. Some of these identified places contribute to crime activities such as robberies, rape, murder and the use of drugs. The feedback is then taken to relevant office bearers in the municipality. Councillors and committees.”

What are the most relevant tools or sections assisting your work?

Natasha

“Book 4 ‘A TOOLKIT FOR PARTICIPATORY SAFETY PLANNING’ this book can be seen as one of Local Governments’ pillars, in that we need to encourage public participation in everything we do in order for communities to be part of the collective that comes with solutions to their challenges or addresses their needs.”

Lunga

“I am familiar with the toolkit, I went through a training and learnt how to use the toolkit to conceptualize, execute and monitor our work.”

What is your understanding of participatory safety planning concepts? Has the toolkit assisted you with a better understanding of safety planning concepts?

Natasha

“My understanding of participatory safety planning concepts, is that they provide one with tools and approaches/ methodologies that support organisations such as municipalities/ communities and other relevant stakeholders in implementing government policies or aligning local plans to national plans/ programmes. So in this way, the toolkit has assisted me to better understand safety planning concepts in relation to local government’s mandate.”

Lunga

“Yes, I have a better understanding of safety planning. I have completed a training and can address crime prevention and facilitate safety planning, and with the help of SaferSpaces online portal it makes things very easy.”

How are some of your colleagues using or receiving the toolkit?

Natasha

“Portfolio councillors and officials responsible for community safety within municipalities.”

Lunga

“I mostly work with young people, which includes in most cases more female participants.”

What group do you work with when using the toolkit? Women? Youth? Community Members?

Natasha

“‘Portfolio councillors and officials responsible for community safety within municipalities.”

Lunga

“I mostly work with young people, which includes in most cases more female participants.”

What else would be needed in order to improve the toolkit?

Natasha

“The toolkit must have a simplified version that can be easily understood by illiterate and literate users i.e. picture formats etc.”

Lunga

“The toolkits must have a model that can be easily understood by illiterate and literate users i.e. picture formats etc.”

The Toolkit for Participatory Safety Planning was developed by the Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention Programme in close cooperation with its partners.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention (VCP) Programme

The toolkit is freely available at www.saferspaces.org.za/learn-how
In a nutshell

Regular monitoring and reporting acts as a preventative measure against human rights abuses in prisons, including ill treatment and torture. The One Judge One jail campaign motivates for judges, magistrates and Members of Parliament to conduct annual holistic and consistent prison inspections. This campaign is led by the Detention Justice Forum in partnership with Sonke Gender Justice, NICRO and Africa Criminal Justice Reform.

What we do

South African prisons are fraught with conditions that lead to human rights abuses and high rates of sexual violence, HIV transmission and TB infection. The One Judge One jail campaign was born of the recognition that prison oversight is vital to the protection of inmates’ human rights. In order for prison oversight to be effective, it must be independent and accessible, and should include a number of different functions, including: robust inspection and monitoring, investigation, and reporting.

The Campaign was inspired by the Constitutional Court Prison Visits Programme, which was instituted in 2009 by the judges of the Constitutional Court and took effect from 2010. The Constitutional Court has since developed a commendable programme for prison visits and reporting that has the potential to increase transparency in places of detention, and could be replicated by other courts. This Programme has demonstrated that oversight can provide for the accountability of the executive and administrative branch of government to both the legislature and the public.

How we do it

The aims of the One Judge One jail campaign are:

• to encourage all judges to undertake one prison visit per year and to report on their visits to the Office of the Chief Justice (OCJ);
• to strengthen the working relationship between the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services (JICS) and the judiciary so as to ensure that inspections are comprehensive, and address areas identified by JICS as being problematic;
• to encourage civil society involvement in highlighting priority concerns at prisons; and
• to strengthen civil society’s role in monitoring prisons and publicising findings.

The importance of judicial visits to prisons has been recognised by the National Operating Committee (NOC) for the OCJ, which took a resolution on 11 April 2015 to “recognise that the judiciary of its duty in terms of section 99 of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 to conduct prison visits to monitor the conditions of correctional centres.”

It was with this resolution in mind that the Detention Justice Forum developed the One Judge One Jail guide, in the hope that it will provide useful context and guidelines for any person mandated to conduct such prison visits.

What we have learned

Case Study: The Constitutional Court Prison Visits Programme

Currently, JICS and DCS do not report on judicial correctional centre visits, although they do refer to individual visits in their annual reports. However, in 2009, the judges of the Constitutional Court established a system of correctional centre visits which took effect from 2010. The Constitutional Court has since developed a commendable programme for prison visits and reporting that has the potential to increase transparency in places of detention, and could be replicated by other courts. The Constitutional Court Prison Visits programme is coordinated by Judge Edwin Cameron. Each year he establishes a schedule of correctional centre visits for the Justices of the Constitutional Court. Judicial officers who undertake correctional centre visits compile reports on their visits, which are sent to the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, the National Commissioner for Correctional Services, the Portfolio Committee for Justice and Correctional Services and the Inspecting Judge of JICS. The reports together with responses from the Minister or heads of correctional centres are then published on the Constitutional Court’s website, which is easily accessible to the public.

In 2015, a report on one of the judges’ visits to Pollsmoor Remand Detention Facility was helpful in corroborating the evidence provided by detainees at the facility showing that the conditions were extremely overcrowded and inhumane. This allowed Sonke Gender Justice and Lawyers for Human Rights to successfully challenge these conditions, resulting in a dramatic reduction in overcrowding levels at the facility. A visit to another prison ensured the resumption of ARVs to inmates who had, until then, been unable to access their essential medication, in violation of their constitutional rights to health care and medical services in prison.

This project profile was compiled by Ariane Nevin who works as a National Prisons Specialist at Sonke Gender Justice.

Related resources

Correctionsal Services Act No.111 of 1998 (Policy/Legislation)
27 Nov 1998

Why is prison oversight important? (Factsheet)
08 June 2017 | Sonke Gender Justice

Why should we care about prisoners? (Factsheet)
29 June 2017 | Sonke Gender Justice

Project resources

- One Judge One Jail Factsheet (Factsheet)
- Report on Justice Johann van der Westhuizen’s Visit to Pollsmoor Correctional Centre on 18 December 2012 (Report/Study)
- Report on Justice Cameron’s Visit to Pollsmoor Correctional Centre – Remand Centre and Women’s Centre on 23 April 2015 (Report/Study)

Find them on SaferSpaces

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**ONE JUDGE - ONE JAIL CAMPAIGN**
ABOUT DISRUPTIVE CHANGE AND WRESTLING WITH LAWS

27 Jun 2017 | by Jeanne Bodenstein | Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust

Topics: Criminal justice system • Sexual violence

I recently read a chapter from a book called Roots for Radicals: Organise for Power, Action and Justice by Edward T. Chambers and once again it struck me that change is a strange thing. This book reminded me that at its core change is disruptive, unruly and often quite troublesome. It requires us to do things that disrupt the peace that we all crave. But if we envision a world that looks different from the world that we live in now, one with a criminal justice system that supports survivors, we need to make peace with disruptive change. The Rape Survivors’ Justice Campaign (RSJC) constantly works to achieve peace with disruptive change. The Rape Survivors’ Justice Campaign (RSJC) constantly works to achieve peace with disruptive change.

“But if we envision a world that looks different from the world that we live in now, one with a criminal justice system that supports survivors, we need to make peace with disruptive change.”

In a previous blogpost “Small Victories, Big Change” I spoke about our engagements with Parliament on the legislative framework for sexual offences courts and Parliament’s work to define this. As a result of our first meeting with the parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services, we met with the Deputy Minister of Justice and seven Regional Court Presidents (RCPs) representing magistrates on a provincial level. This meeting provided us with the opportunity to hear the very real and practical concerns that magistrates have with the current wording of the legislative framework, which just provides for exclusive sexual offences courts. Most of the concerns they had were about maximising the use of courtrooms and maximising court time because of the large backlog in unheard cases they face and how they want to catch up. We discussed the possibility of exclusive court rolls (meaning that magistrates will exclusively hear sexual offences cases for the duration of the sexual offences court roll) which would address these concerns, but we couldn’t reach an agreement.

Although they put a great deal of pressure on us to support the removal of the exclusivity provision, we asked for time to confer and spent an anxious ten minutes in the corridor outside the bathroom debating a compromise in a short, fierce argument that left us in complete agreement. When we returned to the room we explained that we were there to represent and protect the interests of rape survivors and therefore cannot agree to a legislative framework that will inevitably give rise to long delays in rape cases being heard in court or rape cases being heard in courts that lack the necessary personal, services and facilities. These words were greeted by an icy pause, but we stuck to our position, uncomfortable as it was to face such an intimidating group of people; people we needed on our side. At the end of the meeting we were asked to suggest new wording of the legislative framework for consideration by the Department of Justice.

“We are closer than ever to seeing the legislation providing for these courts operationalised with wording that is supported by the Department of Justice and the RCPs.”

We had two days to draft new suggested wording for the section of the Bill, which addressed the concerns raised by the RCPs and protected the interests of survivors and the exclusivity of sexual offences courts. This was accepted by the Department of Justice (with minor adjustments) and has been referred to the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces to be passed. Once the President has signed off on this Bill then for the first time ever, sexual offences courts will be defined in legislation. We are closer than ever to seeing the legislation providing for these courts operationalised with wording that is supported by the Department of Justice and the RCPs.

Jeanne Bodenstein is the Advocacy Coordinator of Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust and heads up the Rape Survivors’ Justice Campaign.

Jeanne Bodenstein discusses how the Rape Survivors’ Justice Campaign has engaged with magistrates and Parliament on the legislative framework for sexual offences courts.
**AFTER-SCHOOL GAME CHANGER**

*In a nutshell*

The After School Game Changer is an after-school programme and one of the Western Cape Government’s seven game changer projects. The programme is based on the premise ‘that regular and consistent participation of learners in after school programmes will improve learner outcomes, reduce school dropout rates and reduce risk-taking behaviour’.

**What we do**

Many young people in the Western Cape leave school each day and enter unsafe, violent neighbourhoods and homes, where they often lack adult supervision. Consequently, they are at high risk of engaging in destructive and anti-social behaviour, such as abusing alcohol and drugs, engaging in sexual risk-taking behaviour and becoming involved in gangs. Involvement in these activities threatens their futures and, more often than not, leaves them trapped in a cycle of poverty.

In response, the Western Cape Government initiated the **After School Game Changer (AS GC)** programme. This After School Programme of Change (ASPoC) is for children from no/low fee schools. The programme aims to provide positive, quality after-school activities and an alternative after-school environment to children living in violent and socio-economically deprived communities in the Western Cape.

**After School Game Changer Goal**

The measure of success, or Key Performance Indicator, is that at least 20% of no-fee and low-fee learners in the Province - 112 000 learners - regularly and consistently attend quality after school programmes at least twice a week.

**Targeted outcomes**

- Improved attitude towards learning
- Improved school outcomes
- Improved school retention
- Improved matric results
- Reduction in risk taking behaviour

To achieve the programme goal, the Western Cape Government’s AS GC focuses on three key levers of change:

- **Lever 1: To create an enabling environment for ASPs**
  - This includes ensuring there is good leadership, information on the available offerings, safe and secure spaces for ASPs, IT access and access to food.
- **Lever 2: To ensure learners in ASPs have access quality programmes**
  - This includes ensuring learners have access to a choice of sport and non-sport courses, arts and cultural life skills and academic support programmes (four pillars). In addition, these programmes must actively engage learners and build learners skills and mastery.
- **Lever 3: To expand the ASP through collaboration and partnerships**
  - This focuses on developing mechanisms for harnessing the collective resources of all spheres of government, donors and civil society to expand quality programmes in the Western Cape. Currently, the focus is on developing different collaborative mechanisms at five sites in the province.

**How we do it**

The AS GC has an inter-departmental and intersectoral approach. The programme is a collaborative effort between the City of Cape Town and five of the Western Cape Government Departments. These departments are:

- a) Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports (DCAS),
- b) Department of Community Safety (DOCS),
- c) Department of the Premier (DotP),
- d) Department of Social Development, and
- e) Western Cape Education Department.

The AS GC project office is located in the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports. The AS GC works with the City of Cape Town to provide ASPs at recreational hubs and libraries. This work is currently focused on Atlantis and Glynna. The AS GC is hoping to extend this partnership to other municipal areas and NGOS. The AS GC works closely with civil society and in particular NGOs offering ASPs. This work is coordinated via The Learning Trust and Community Chest, both established donors with existing NGO networks, as stakeholders. Programme partners are involved in the following interventions.

**MOD Programme**

- The Mass participation; Opportunity and access; Development and growth (MOD) programme is managed by the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports. It provides an opportunity for children from underprivileged communities to engage in sports, arts, cultural and healthy recreational activities after school in a positive, supervised and safe environment. It operates from around 2pm-6pm at MOD Centres which are usually situated at schools in disadvantaged communities. The programme was initiated in 2010, and there are now 181 MOD Centres providing after school activities to over 40 000 learners.

**WCED’s ePortal**

- The WCED’s ePortal provides online educational resources for educators, caregivers, learners, school management and school governing bodies (SGBs). Its primary aim is to assist learners to better their educational outcomes.

**YearBeyond Programme**

- The YearBeyond Programme is an initiative of the Western Cape Government in partnership with non-governmental entities including the Action Volunteers Africa, ikamvaYouth, Shine, Edunova, and the Frederick Van Zyl Slabbert Leadership Institute at Stellenbosch University. The programme has a volunteer development and a learner development component. It involves peer educators (volunteers aged 18-25) tutoring primary and high school learners at after school facilities, and is managed together with the MOD programme. Program objectives for learners include: to assist struggling students with their school work and to improve their overall academic performance; and to reduce the number of learners dropping out of school.

**After School Programmes run by NGOs and local authorities**

- Other ASPs are run by NGOs, CBOs, and local municipal authorities in partnership with the Western Cape Government.

**After School Partial Care**

- In keeping with their mandate under the Children’s Act, the Department of Social Development funds numerous NGOs in the province to manage after school programmes at partial care facilities.

**What we have achieved**

The AS GC has a strong monitoring and evaluation focus, in order to ensure that programme efficacy and impact is maximized.

**Achievements include:**

- The development of a code of conduct;
- Establishing of a community of practice which meets once a quarter and is managed by The Learning Trust;
- The establishment of the Excelence Awards, which are leadership awards for principals;
- The establishment of the NGO award and Sports coach award;
- The creation of an interactive map under Edu-colaborative mapping;
- The development of all ASPs;
- The creation of an auditing tool and practising practitioner capacity building and training programmes, including an accredited course.

**What we have learned**

A significant challenge for the AS GC programme is ensuring the safety of the after-school spaces and ensuring the safety of learners, programme leaders and educators when leaving the after programme. An independent audit of MOD and Partial After Care sites found that between a quarter and one third of the sites experienced some violence impacting on learners’ safety and participation in such programmes. These same audits found that about half of the school safety plans include some plan for after school hours and about a quarter had trained after school staff and volunteers in the plans. These audits also showed there is no comprehensive approach for ensuring the safety of learners, educators and programme staff at after-school facilities.

The AS GC has piloted a number of interventions to address these safety challenges, including:

- Overtime for School Resource Officers (SROs) who provide safety support to after-school programmes at ten of the SRO intervention schools.
- Use of Neighborhood Watches (NHWs) - As part of the NHW pilot intervention at Dr Nelson Mandela High, two NHW members were on duty during Saturday and holiday classes. Additional NHW agreements have been concluded at five other sites.
- Extension of school safety marshals to include coverage of after school programmes at three schools.

While there are pros and cons to each of these interventions, the real challenge is provision of support to all 300 after school programmes in a cost-effective manner.
Yesteray the Minister of Police released the 2016/17 crime statistics. As always the ‘good news’ aspects of report- ed crime in South Africa were im- mediately emphasised, namely that the number of cases of report- ed ‘serious crime’ had declined by 1.8%. However, ‘serious crime’ in- cludes 17 sub-categories of crime, and over the past 20 years there have been numerous allegations by crime researchers and analysts of substantial and persistent under-reporting for many of these sub-categories, especially the various forms of robbery, assault, and sexual crimes.

Perception surveys have sug- gested that this under-reporting has been due to: a lack of trust in the police; the inaccessibility of police stations (particularly in rural areas); adverse notions of the util- ity of reporting crime statistics to the SAPS; concerns about being stigmatised by family and/or com- munity members; and fears about being further victimised by the perpetrator of the original crime (especially in the case of domestic violence and rape). Hence, lump- ing all serious crimes together as an aggregate indicator of criminal offending is unhelpful and mis- leading.

“Murders in South Africa are typically the outcome of aggressive verbal disagree- ments between young men in the context of alcohol con- sumption, or during the per- petration of another crime, such as robbery, in some areas face rivalries result in killings.”

The aggregate manner in which the crime data and statis- tics are presented also masks the disproportionate nature of violent crime in South Africa, which for decades has been concentrated in about 20 per cent of police pre- cincts. Most of these high crime precincts are densely populated, infrastructurally marginalised and characterised by high levels of poverty. In addition, high crime areas are potentially perilous for those SAPS members that are re- quired to work within them. That is, these spaces are forbidding and difficult to navigate often due to a lack of streets, systematic dwelling numbering systems and lighting. Police have been frequently in risk of the police is often severely lacking. Therefore, in seeking to gauge a more informed analysis of crime a focus on high crime precincts pro- vides a more enlightening touch- stone for the state of violent crime in South Africa.

Globally murder (or homicide) is widely regarded as one of the most statistically reliable crime categories. The reason for this is that the occurrence of this intentional form of killing is most of- ten linked to a corpse, with such a corpse typically being exam- ined by a medical official who is required to declare the apparent manner of death. This informa- tion is then logged in the death registry and a death certificate is issued. This process has common- ly been followed in South Africa. Given the problem of reliability of other reported crime categories, murder is used in many countries as a crude measure of the state of violent crime in general.

Drilling down to precinct level, murder data for the high crime areas makes disquieting read- ing. In many areas traditionally affected by gang violence in the Western Cape, the murder levels increased by more than 20% com- pared to 2015/16 reporting year. This included Delft (28% increase), Bishop Lavis (26% increase) and Philippa East (23% increase). In Bishop Lavis and Philippa East the annual number of murders has in fact doubled over the past 10 years. In other high crime areas in the Western Cape there were even more dramatic increases in murder, such as Worcester (55% increase) and Paarl East (77% in- crease).

Similarly, in KwaZulu-Natal there have been alarming escala- tions in murder cases in Kwaduku- za (50% increase) and Plessislaer (37% increase). Umlazi and Inanda have seen increases in the region of 20% increases, and Chatsworth experienced a 17% increase. In Gauteng there have been between 20% and 30% increases in murder in Evaton, Orange Farms, Rietgat, Booyens and Dobsonville; whilst both Ivory Park and Roodepoort experienced more than a 50% in- crease in reported murder cases. In the Eastern Cape there were more than 15% increases in mur- der in Duywa and Port St Johns, more than 26% increases in Li- bode and New Brighton.

There were however significant decreases in murder in some tra- ditionally high crime areas, such as Gugulethu (26% reduction), Em- pangeni (26% reduction), Tembisa (16% reduction), Hillbrow (13% re- duction) and Mitchells Plain (13% reduction).

Murders in South Africa are typically the outcome of aggress- ive verbal disagreements between young men in the context of alcohol consumption, or during the perpetration of another crime, such as robbery. In some areas, gang rivalries result in killings. Research on masculinity and vi- olence suggests that such lethal confrontations have been closely tied to notions of manhood that reverses dominant and aggressive men. Such a type of masculinity reveres dominant and aggressive masculinity and over the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in reported murder cases.

“Consequently, the role of the police in reducing and preventing murder and other violent crime is somewhat limited. Indeed, as the Minister of Police has empha- sized, a more professional and ser- vice-oriented SAPS is an essential component, combined with police actions that result in the confisc- ation of illegal firearms, as well as the arrest and successful con- viction of perpetrators. However, what is ultimately required is a whole-of-society and whole-of-gov- ernment approach to reducing and pre- venting violent crime.”

What do we know about murder in South Africa?
07 Nov 2017 | Lizzie Lancaster | Institute for Security Studies

For a country with one of the highest global murder rates, lit- tle is publicly known about the murder trends.

Related posts
What do we know about murder in South Africa?
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New White Paper on Safety and Security: An integrated approach to preventing violence and crime
22 Jun 2016 | Civilian Secretariat for Police Service

The 2016 White Paper on Safety and Security was adopted by the South African Cabinet in 2016 as a policy on safety, crime and violence prevention that promotes an integrated and holistic approach to safety and security in line with the National Development Plan.

Related resources
Murder and Robbery
- Infographic
24 Oct 2017 | Institute for Security Studies

2016 White Paper on Safety and Security
- Policy/Legislation
07 Apr 2016 | Civilian Secretariat for Police Service

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BE INSPIRED

BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES THROUGH YOUTH-LED RADIO INITIATIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA

In a nutshell

Building safer communities through youth-led radio initiatives in South Africa is a project of the Children’s Radio Foundation (CRF) run in partnership with Gun Free South Africa and local radio stations, and funded by the European Union. The overall objective of the project is to increase awareness and knowledge levels among young people around issues of violence (with a particular focus on gun violence) and crime within 18 individual communities across all nine provinces in South Africa. It also serves to provide platforms for youth to serve as leaders, advocates, and peer educators to reduce and prevent violence and crime and help contribute to safety within their communities. In partnership with Gun Free South Africa, youth and community stories will be used for parliamentary submissions to influence gun control laws coming under review.

What we do

Children’s Radio Foundation (CRF) is a partnership-based organization that sees as a core part of its mandate to provide support, capacity building, project management systems, and clear pathways for CBOs, community radio stations included, to increase their impact on youth populations. All partner CBOs are provided with access to these support systems, and ongoing opportunities for organizational advancement.

CRF is building Community Discussion Boards (CDBs) at each site that will serve as community-based coalitions of concerned youth, leaders, citizens, and representatives from civil society. Built into the initiative’s curriculum development activities is the creation of open-source materials and training and project management resources that enable sharing of knowledge, best practices, and replication.

Youth have increased participation in governance, accountability and public policy processes through this project. In partnership with Gun Free South Africa (GDSA), CRF enables youth participation to inform public policy, shape youth-targeted community interventions, and promote local accountability around violence reduction and crime prevention-related initiatives. Radio broadcasts, dialogue events, and outreach activities aim to mobilize a wide cross-section of youth within individual communities to share their experiences and participate in interventions concerning issues of violence reduction and crime prevention. Through creating inter-generational community-based dialogues, youth participation in community structures will be elevated, and create greater accountability.

How we do it

Activity 1: Project launch event

- A project launch event with project stakeholders (including NGOs, government, CBOs, media, and youth) was held to ensure visibility and buy-in to the initiative, and to share information that was uncovered during the baseline study (hosted by GDSA, with assistance from CRF).
- CRF and GFSA utilized baseline findings to develop a three-week social media strategy for the project launch, targeting national stakeholders and listening youth participation at the project sites. CRF works with all radio station partners to ensure that local launches occur through their broadcast and other communication channels. This commenced the community engagement activities for the initiative, and assisted radio stations in growing interest among their listenership (the social media strategy is developed by GFSA, with CRF coordinating with radio station and CBO partners).

Activity 2: Curriculum Development around issues of crime prevention and violence reduction

- 22 radio production guides and 6 outreach discussion guides have been created for young reporters to enable well-informed, nuanced, and ethical reporting and broadcasting on issues related to community safety, crime, and violence. These issue-driven production guides are geared towards providing youth reporters with the tools to interrogate how the topic actsuallizes itself within their community, and provides pathways for tackling the topic through a variety of lenses. The outreach discussion guides also includes tutorials on community organizing and activism, and topics related to legislation and policy around crime and violence. All tools are shared on CRF’s Learning Room for open source use by other radio stations and organizations (all materials are developed by CRF with input and topic-specific training from GFSA).

Activity 3: Curriculum development for training workshops

Curriculum manuals and training resources have been developed for 4 CRF Regional Trainer Training of Trainers workshops (RT-ToT), 6 Local Facilitator Training of Trainers workshops (LF-ToT), and 4 youth reporter training workshops. These will also serve as regional and local implementation guides for the larger project, and provide these key resource people with the support systems, methodologies, and tools to engage youth to achieve project objectives. These curriculum manuals and training resources enable 2 RT-ToTs in both the year 1 and 2, 3 LF-ToTs in both years 1 and 2, and ongoing youth trainings throughout the two-year cycle. All tools are shared on CRF’s Learning Room for open source use by other radio stations and organisations (all materials are developed by CRF with input and topic-specific training from GFSA).
Activity 4: Youth facilitator training
- 4 training workshops (RT-ToTs) are conducted over 5 days with CRF’s five regional trainers over the two-year period. The CRF’s five regional trainers carry out training workshops and ongoing capacity building and support for 3-4 of the 18 radio stations within the region in which they are based. These RT-ToTs enable a clear understanding of the project initiatives and the issue-based materials, and allow the regional trainers to provide the appropriate lines of support to the community radio stations and other initiative partners. They enable regional trainers to build community based partnerships, and to assist local community radio station youth facilitators in supporting youth reporters. All tools are shared on CRF’s Learning Room for open source use by other radio stations and organisations (all materials are developed by CRF with input and topic-specific training from GFSA).
- 6 training workshops (LF-ToTs) will be conducted over 2 days with 24 radio staff youth facilitators over the two-year period. Each of the radio station youth facilitators will carry out ongoing issue-based workshops and administer support to youth reporters who are tackling the issues of crime prevention and violence reduction in their reporting and broadcasting efforts. Each training is designed to a) add value to project management tools, b) advance issue-based knowledge around a specific theme, and c) provide additional youth participatory media skills. All tools are shared on CRF’s Learning Room for open source use by other radio stations and organisations (all materials are developed by CRF with input and topic-specific training from GFSA).

Activity 5: Youth reporter trainings
- 4 youth reporter training workshops will be conducted over 3 days with 360 young reporters at 18 community radio station sites over the two-year period, in order to ensure that youth reporters are well-versed with the content areas, that their technical radio and broadcast skills are well-developed, and that the project administration systems are in place to support their wide range of reporting, broadcast, and outreach activities. Trainings are designed to foster a clear understanding of the relevant issues and to support the localising of content material to achieve context-sensitive community engagements. CRF’s trainings bring together diverse community stakeholders, and skill the youth to engage in community-based and collaborative reporting around the specific topical focus around crime prevention and reducing violence (CRF’s RTs will assist LFs to facilitate all youth trainings).

Activity 6: Youth reporters produce and broadcast youth produce radio programmes about violence, crime and community safety
- Youth reporters produce radio programmes about violence, crime and community safety twice a month at all 18 sites. CRF’s youth reporters have broadcast slots each week on their partner community radio station, and produce shows that resonates with the vast interests and livelihoods of its listeners. CRF’s youth reporters dedicate two shows per month to themes of violence reduction, crime prevention, and community safety. Each radio show consists of a collection of youth reporting that was conducted in the preparation period for each show, and is packaged and presented within a live radio format. Youth reporters work in partnership with CBOs and other members of the CDBs to inform the specific topic for each show, and to encourage collaboration and broad participation in reporting and broadcast. Each community radio station facilitates audience participation via SMS, WhatsApp, Facebook, and call-ins to the station, and is able to track listener response. After broadcasting shows, youth reporters incorporate community feedback into their planning for subsequent shows, to ensure responsiveness and consistency from show to show (CRF’s RTs will assist LFs to facilitate all youth reporting and broadcast).

What we have achieved
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is ongoing. Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning systems are conducted by CRF and radio station staff.
- Ongoing M&E relates mainly to attendance, radio, audience and other technical aspects and not directly to measuring impact but rather quality.
- Ongoing monitoring at a local site level is conducted by the radio station youth facilitator in the form of attendance registers and monthly reports on broadcasts, CDB and outreach activities. This includes radio broadcast summaries and records of listeners’ feedback through calls, text and social media.
- CRF regional trainers will conduct focus groups with beneficiaries, most significant change story interviews as well as surveys and reports on training workshops during their site visits.
- Surveys are conducted using tablets, which are automatically shared with a centralised database. CRF’s RTs will assist LFs to facilitate the career planning workshop.
- Graduation cermonies will be held at each site to celebrate the achievement of the youth reporters, involving their parents, and other community members. CRF graduates will receive a personalised letter of recommendation along with a certificate of achievement (CRF will facilitate all graduation activities, and will provide letters and certificates).

Activity 7: Youth reporters conduct 108 outreach dialogue activities
Youth reporters conduct 108 outreach dialogue activities with in schools and in partnership with CBOs as part of the CDB activities. These youth-led outreach activities will be shaped around select specifically themed broadcasts on the community radio stations, where they utilize radio productions and other audio material to generate a discussion within the outreach audience. With 54 outreach activities scheduled for each year, these dialogue events are also utilized to facilitate inter-generational conversations, and to ensure adult perspectives and inputs are included within the scope of the larger initiative. Each group compiles a report on their outreach dialogue activities to enable sharing of ideas and best practices from site to site. Hosted to share youth reporters in partnership with the community radio station, the outreach dialogue activities are also structured to promote the youth broadcast and other initiative activities, and to grow the participation of the CDBs (CRF’s RTs assist all LFs to facilitate all outreach dialogue activities).

Activity 8: Youth career planning workshop and graduation ceremony
- CRF will host a one-day career planning workshop at each project site, including sessions on visioning and planning for one’s future, career guidance and study/employment opportunities, CV writing, and role-playing of job interviews. CRF will involve local organisations, businesses, and educational institutions to facilitate the process, and to share opportunities for youth participants (CRF’s RTs will assist LFs to facilitate the career planning workshop).
- Graduation cermonies will be held at each site to celebrate the achievement of the youth reporters, involving their parents, and other community members. CRF graduates will receive a personalised letter of recommendation along with a certificate of achievement (CRF will facilitate all graduation activities, and will provide letters and certificates).
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HAZARDOUS ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND VIOLENCE – THE IMPORTANCE OF EVIDENCE FOR PREVENTION

05 May 2017 | by Regan Jules-Macquet | Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention

Topics: Alcohol & substance abuse • Prevention concepts

Background

The recreational use of alcohol is usually considered harmless, besides an occasional headache. However, the abuse of substances like alcohol and drugs is associated with many negative outcomes, including an increase in violence. While most alcohol drinkers are not violent, much of the crime and violence that is perpetrated in South Africa, and indeed around the world, is enabled and exacerbated by substance abuse. This makes addressing substance use and abuse, an essential component of any violence prevention initiative.

The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) is currently running a violence prevention project (the Umhlali Project) in Walmer Township, Port Elizabeth. Data from the baseline study conducted prior to the implementation of this project showed that alcohol was by far the most frequently consumed substance in the community (64.6%), compared to marijuana (2.7%) and other drugs which were reported by less than 1% of the sample. (ii) A small study was subsequently conducted to determine how the alcohol use was, in fact, hazardous and whether the level of substance abuse was likely to impact on the levels of violence in the community.

Relevance of Alcohol Consumption for Violence Prevention

There is a wealth of evidence linking violence and hazardous alcohol consumption. For example, a study in 2012 found that 65% of those who report social contact crimes, such as murder, attempted murder, rape, and assault, occur in the context of alcohol abuse, and to a much lesser extent, abuse of other substances. Alcohol abuse has also been found to directly contribute to intention-related violence as well asmate partner violence, as well as abuse of other substances.

Alcohol consumption for violence prevention has been found to provide an accurate measure of the extent of alcohol abuse, as well as FAS. This high score could possibly be attributed to the slightly higher number of females in the sample when compared with the general population of Walmer Township. Males made up the majority of probable alcohol dependence drinkers at 52%.

When analysing the data by age, we found that 82.3% of high-risk drinkers were between the ages of 21 to 40 years. The same age group accounts for 88.3% of probable alcohol dependence drinkers. From the data, it appears that the at-risk age groups for hazardous alcohol consumption for women are between the ages of 21 to 30. For males, it is 21 to 40 years.

It showed that high risk (35%) and probable alcohol dependent drinkers (26%) account for more than 60% of the adult population of the township, while low-risk drinkers (20%) and abstainers (19%) account for the remaining 40% of the population. This finding is of vital significance for the project, as it provides evidence that alcohol abuse is a pervasive activity in the community and that if unaddressed, may inhibit the effectiveness of the intervention.

When exploring the gender differences, the study showed that female participants constituted the majority of abstainers (63.5%). Low-risk drinking patterns were equally shared between males (50%) and females (50%). In this sample, a higher percentage of females (52.2%) were present in the high-risk drinkers category than males.

This is unusual, and warrants closer attention when developing hazardous alcohol consumption interventions, as women head up 41.2% of all households in South Africa. This has implications for increased risk of child neglect and possible abuse, as well as FAS. This high score could possibly be attributed to the slightly higher number of females in the sample when compared with the general population of Walmer Township. Males made up the majority of probable alcohol dependence drinkers at 52%.

When analysing the data by age, we found that 82.3% of high-risk drinkers were between the ages of 21 to 40 years. The same age group accounts for 88.3% of probable alcohol dependence drinkers. From the data, it appears that the at-risk age groups for hazardous alcohol consumption for women are between the ages of 21 to 30. For males, it is 21 to 40 years.

Assessing Alcohol Consumption in Walmer Township

The World Health Organisation’s Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) was used to measure hazardous alcohol consumption in Walmer.

The AUDIT was developed by the WHO as a screening and brief intervention tool for primary health care practitioners so that they can identify people who require support for reducing or ceasing alcohol consumption. The AUDIT produces a score which is used to refer people to appropriate interventions. The AUDIT has been found to provide an accurate measure of risk across gender, age and cultures.

The Umhlali Project is an early crime and violence prevention project based in Walmer Township, Port Elizabeth. It has the overarching goal of designing, implementing and evaluating an early crime and violence prevention project that can be replicated in other areas.
of age. This means that there is a wider spread of hazardous drinkers amongst males than females. This also means that the planned interventions should be age-appropriate for adults. Counter-intuitively, the youth and young adults 20 years and younger had the least hazardous alcohol consumption for both genders.

Next, we compared the alcohol consumption patterns to the general Drinkers’ Pyramid. The Drinkers’ Pyramid is a reference tool used in the AUDIT manual, based on general norms, which need to be adjusted to local alcohol consumption patterns. The alcohol consumption patterns of Walmer Township illustrated drinking patterns that exceeded the normative Drinkers’ Pyramid. There are far fewer abstainers and low-risk drinkers in Walmer Township, and far more high risk and probable alcohol dependence drinkers than what is generally considered to be normal.

This data is extremely useful when it comes to developing and implementing a campaign to reduce hazardous alcohol consumption. When we know which groups are most at risk, we can target interventions accordingly. The WHO AUDIT also provides guidance as well as educational materials which can be used for interventions. These can be found in the AUDIT guide.

### Recommendations for Implementation

The WHO makes the following multi-level recommendations to address problematic alcohol consumption:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Community level</th>
<th>Family level</th>
<th>Individual level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Align interventions with existing policies and legislation such as the National Drug Master Plan 2013-2017</td>
<td>• Align interventions with existing policies such as the Eastern Cape Provincial Safety Strategy</td>
<td>• Regulate alcohol outlet density</td>
<td>• Education to increase awareness and create platforms upon which to build further strategies</td>
<td>• Accessible services to address hazardous or harmful alcohol consumption</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National control of the production and sale of alcohol</td>
<td>• Provincial control over the production and sale of alcohol</td>
<td>• Health service responses</td>
<td>• Use of evidence-based screening tools</td>
<td>• Use of evidence-based brief interventions and screening tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National minimum age of consumption</td>
<td>• Restrictions on drinking in public</td>
<td>• Awareness raising activities</td>
<td>• Education to increase awareness and create platforms upon which to build further strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Marketing and advertising restrictions and product placements</td>
<td>• Restrictions on sales</td>
<td>• Community mobilisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Raising the price of alcohol</td>
<td>• Addressing illicit production and sales</td>
<td>• Regulating the availability of alcohol</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increase taxes on alcohol</td>
<td>• Limit days or hours of sale</td>
<td>• Education to increase awareness and create platforms upon which to build further strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ban below-cost selling or volume discounts</td>
<td>• Enhance law enforcement of sale of alcohol to minors</td>
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### Comparing Walmer Township to the Drinkers’ Pyramid

To these, we add the following recommendations based on the data which emerged from the Walmer AUDIT. We will be implementing these recommendations within the Umhlali project and will be evaluating the impact of this work in 2018.

A. We will be putting in place a structured intervention with targeting licensed and unlicensed taverns in Walmer Township that focuses on:

- 1. Creating distribution points for people to access information on hazardous alcohol consumption;
- 2. Education and engagement around the link between violence and hazardous alcohol consumption;
- 3. Ethical business practice; and
- 4. Creating a self-driven platform where taverns owners and community members can work together to address issues arising from alcohol consumption and crime.

B. We will also be putting in place targeted interventions aimed at the following vulnerable groups:

- 1. Females aged 21 to 30 years
- 2. Males aged 21 to 40 years

C. Given the high rate of hazardous alcohol consumption in Walmer, the following components will be built into the intervention strategy:

1. Prevention activities aimed at encouraging and/or maintaining abstinence aimed at children, youth and adults.
2. Develop intervention material based on the WHO Brief Intervention for Hazardous and Harmful Drinking which will form the basis of prevention activities.
3. Use the self-completed screening tool in group settings within the existing Umhlali programme activities, such as life skills and parenting skills development.
4. Develop appropriate educational leaflets and handouts to leave at local taverns.
5. Implement regular educational workshops on hazardous alcohol consumption.
6. Establish counselling and monitoring intervention within the existing family service.
7. Establish external referral system to specialists who can conduct diagnostic evaluations and prescribe treatment.
8. Establish a partnership with existing alcohol dependence service providers to render monitoring and counselling services.

Through this targeted and evidence-based approach, we hope to prevent violence in the short and long term by reducing the amount of hazardous alcohol consumption in Walmer.

For the full list of references used for this article, please refer to its online version on SaferSpaces.
BE INSPIRED

SOCIALLY ACTIVATED SPACES IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

In a nutshell

The Emthonjeni project forms part of VPUU’s greater mission to upgrade public spaces in informal settlements to reduce violence and inequality and thus improve greater quality of life for residents living in informal settlements. The isXhosa word Emthonjeni is referring to ‘being at the fountain’ – a place by the water. Traditionally, communities gather around an Emthonjeni to fetch water, do washing or simply spend time catching up on latest news and chatter. Such a place also exists in informal settlements: public taps.

What we do

Residents in urban-context informal settlements do not have access to running water in their homes. Typically 25-50 households share a public tap. This is the only place people can get water for drinking, washing and cooking. Public spaces play an important role in everyday life – it is seen as a ‘breathing’ space in between the dense housing setting. The goal of the Emthonjeni project is to drive social cohesion, improve safety and access to specific basic services by optimising the use and functionality of the existing spaces in between the dense houses. While the Emthonjeni can be used as a multi-functional place, in our work it is mostly promoted as a space for Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes and water collection point. Safe walkways link the space to other nodal points, such as ECD centres.

How we do it

Following a participatory approach, the community and the VPUU NPC as project partner identify public spaces at water taps. These spaces are mapped on a spatial map of the overall settlement. Through a participatory discussion and design process specific spaces are prioritised and designed with the community members to function as Emthonjeni. Local members construct and landscape the Emthonjeni under professional supervision. Once the Emthonjeni is completed, opportunities for activation are vast: space for vaccinations, health awareness, safety meetings, youth programmes, training ground. We encourage local ECD centres to use it as an outreach space.

What we have achieved

Scale

The Emthonjeni project has taken route in 2 large informal settlements benefiting 30,000 residents. To date more than 20 Emthonjenis’ public spaces have been implemented in those settlements. The concept has been replicated by a number of organisations and municipalities, primarily as an upgrade of the function of water collection and washing point.

Within the Emthonjeni projects the individual spaces are part of an overall public space system in informal settlements that link key facilities with each other and thereby being part of a systemic approach.

Community Ownership

Participatory conceptualization, design, implementation, operation and maintenance are key success factors that lead to community ownership. A high degree of transparency, integrity, promotion of voluntarism and accountability are factors that have contributed to the high acceptance in the communities we work in. Implementation is measurable and accountable to the funding partners and the community. Employment of local labour whilst at the same time working with local volunteers, who gain access to skills development is important to ensure sustainability and long-term community ownership.

Strategic Partnerships

The complement of local partners, strategic and research partners, combined with an integrated VPUU Team provides a holistic and participative process of design, active decision-making and practical problem solving. Joint learning is intended at all levels of engagement with community, state, partners and VPUU Team. The collaborating partners are the community, specifically neighbours around the existing public space. Early Childhood Development (ECD) partners and forums, Neighbourhood Watch representatives, Safe Node Area Committee (local project leadership), Municipal Line Departments and VPUU NPC as the intermediary organisation, funders and interested and strategic stakeholders.

What we have learned

To achieve lasting change in building integrated communities, it is imperative to promote:

• Community Ownership
• Strategic Partnerships
• Implementation at local level to test methodologies, processes and outcomes towards improved quality of life
• Monitoring of Emthonjeni
• Coping strategies for residents are supported through the ECD programmes
• Creation of a public space network in an informal settlement via a safe walkway
• Intermediary facilitation between community and public sector
Practical responses to violence in schools: the whole school approach
18 Apr 2017 | by Gillian Makota and Joanne Phifer | Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention

Topics: Children • Prevention concepts • School safety

School violence is a huge challenge to universal schooling and the right to education. How it manifests often depends on the context in which it occurs. As such, whether the violence is perpetrated by learners against fellow learners, by educators against learners, by learners against educators or by external persons against both learners and educators will vary. Similarly, the causes of school violence vary, and can be rooted in social, cultural, historical and economic factors. Due to its multi-faceted nature, the elimination of violence in schools calls for engagement of all members of the school community.

"Due to its multi-faceted nature, the elimination of violence in schools calls for the engagement of all members of the school community."

The Whole School Approach to violence prevention attempts to achieve this, addressing school violence as a collective rather than individual challenge and involving the school community, parents, organisations and the local community.

Integrating school safety plans: The National School Safety Framework

This approach is taken in the National School Safety Framework (NSSF), developed by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP), in partnership with the National Department of Basic Education. This framework was developed because the school environment is often one where learners fear for their safety and are subject to direct and indirect forms of violence; this certainly does not encourage optimum learning (to find out more, see the National School Violence Study 2012).

Yet, learner safety is not always prioritised in schools, or when it is, emphasis is placed on target hardening approaches to improving safety such as increasing police presence in schools, installation of burglar bars, hiring of security guards, and erecting walls and fences rather than on establishing and enforcing school safety policies, disciplinary procedures and implementing interventions aimed at modifying and managing learner behaviour.

The NSSF advocates for school safety to become part and parcel of a school’s cultural norm rather than being viewed as an add-on to the school management’s responsibilities. It provides school management with the tools to effectively formulate, implement and monitor school safety plans. This includes having policies and regulations in place, conducting school safety audits and the development of school safety plans with the intention to address issues relating to violence and school security. These basic steps towards school safety are often absent in schools, resulting in school management feeling totally overwhelmed when a violent incident occurs.

School violence is a community challenge

School violence is not solely a school problem, but instead, is a reflection of family environments and problems in the wider community at large.

The whole school approach strives to take this into account, through recognising the many different actors that make up the school community, such as:
- learners,
- educators,
- principals, and school management teams (SMTs),
- school governing bodies (SGBs),
- parents or caregivers,
- and the community.

The approach encourages schools to create a shared understanding of school violence among these actors and to carry out effective needs analyses in order to successfully identify and address any safety-related issue.

In this way, accountability and the development of school safety plans with the intention to address issues relating to violence and school security. These basic steps towards school safety are often absent in schools, resulting in school management feeling totally overwhelmed when a violent incident occurs.

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Implementing the Whole School Approach. Lessons learned

The NSSF is currently being implemented by the CJCP in 40 schools as part of the Sexual Violence Prevention in Schools in South Africa (SeViSSA) project, which aims to reduce sexual violence in schools.

During implementation of the NSSF, many lessons have emerged regarding how best to promote violence prevention in schools.

Stakeholder accountability

While involving a wide range of stakeholders is vital to the prevention of school violence, a lack of accountability among stakeholders is one of the challenges that is deterring many schools’ progress in managing school violence and safety incidents.

Most schools do not have structures in place with dedicated office bearers and clear roles and responsibilities for those who manage school safety. It has also emerged that there is a gap between having a policy and actually implementing it. Practices, policies, and procedures are not being implemented consistently and with transparent fairness throughout the entire school system.

Furthermore, in many cases, stakeholders do not engage with each other, and work within their dedicated ‘silos’. This has highlighted the need for schools to prioritise encouraging all stakeholders, from learners to school management, to take some responsibility for school safety and work together to implement plans and policies.

Even without a dedicated school safety officer, if all members of the school community are accountable, there is the potential that violence prevention in schools can be realised. This need for accountability must also be extended to parents, caregivers and communities so that they are aware of the role they play in instilling positive behaviour changes in learners.

Absence of adequate capacity, support and mentoring of educators

School staff have voiced concern about not having the capacity to manage school violence themselves. It is essential for school management, with support from district and provincial safety officials, to ensure that opportunities for educator capacity development are provided.

“Learners need to be involved in coming up with interventions that address violence and school safety in order to ensure their ‘buy-in’

Critical skills, such as positive disciplining of learners in an appropriate and empowering manner, as well as, training for educators to identify the early warning signs of school violence, are key in creating a non-violent learning and teaching environment.

Restricted learner driven initiatives

A key finding during interactions with schools has been that there are few platforms in schools created for learners to contribute and express their fears, as well as opportunities to showcase their skills and participate meaningfully in school safety initiatives.

Leaders need to be involved in coming up with interventions that address violence and school safety in order to ensure their ‘buy-in’. Allowing learners to contribute to a school’s safety initiatives also provide learners with opportunities to realise some of the consequences associated with their behaviours and to participate in decision-making processes in and around the school.

Implementing and monitoring of the safety action plans

An effective school safety action plan emphasised prevention, intervention, and emergency mechanisms. However, during implementation of this intervention it is emerging that most schools don’t have school violence response plans in place. This speaks to the observation that schools often consider safety an additional duty, and so many schools do not find time to dedicate to their safety needs.

Without school violence response plans, it is difficult to measure if a school is making progress in addressing violence. Monitoring mechanisms play a crucial role in informing the schools in a timeous manner of any anomaly that needs to be addressed. As it stands, schools only become alerted to the gravity of situations at a point when it is difficult to respond with their limited capacity.

Conclusion: Violence prevention in schools is possible with a few simple steps

The insights gleaned from our interactions with schools suggest that there are many institutional challenges that prevent the success of violence prevention initiatives in South African schools.

Schools often lack the basic requirements to promote safety, whether it be the essentially policies needed to structure schools’ responses to violent incidents or the active engagement of stakeholders in purposefully working towards school safety. This may not be surprising, considering the many responsibilities school staff already have to attend to.

However, it also suggests that violence prevention in schools is possible, if schools are able to take a few simple steps to establish the necessary institutional infrastructure. This includes ensuring that the school has:

- The Policies (e.g. Learner Code of Conduct), Procedures (e.g. Emergency Procedure) and Plans (e.g. School Safety Plan) in place that promote safety and that staff and learners know the content of these documents;
- Good relationships with stakeholders who can support the school’s violence prevention efforts, e.g. the police and community leaders; and
- A clear understanding among staff regarding who is responsible for what aspects of safety within the school.

The well-being of a school as a whole, depends on the prevention of violence within it, and can be achieved through the mobilisation of all actors in and around the school.

This article was compiled by Gillian Makota and Joanne Pfyffer of the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.

For the full list of references used for this article, please refer to its online version on SaferSpaces
The Social Justice Coalition (SJC) is a membership-based organisation. Our members are primarily poor working-class people living in Khayelitsha, Kraaifontein, Nyanga, Philippi and other areas across Cape Town. Since our inception our work has had a marked situational crime prevention focus.

One of the SJC’s first campaigns focused on the lack of safety experienced by our members and other residents of informal settlements when making use of either shared communal flush toilets, “temporary” chemical toilets (outside of the home) or clearings to relieve themselves. As a result, the SJC has consistently campaigned for a greater budget share to ensure that access to safe and dignified sanitation is progressively realised.

The City of Cape Town (the City) has opposed our sanitation campaign and has dismissed the situational crime prevention argument by insisting that the lack of safety experienced by residents is to be blamed on the South African Police Service (SAPS). The SJC has taken a more nuanced approach highlighting the failures of both the City and the SAPS.

In order to ensure the accountability of the SAPS, the SJC successfully campaigned for the convening of the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of Police Inefficiency and a Breakdown in Relations between SAPS and the Community of Khayelitsha (the Commission). Even though the terms of reference of the Commission were limited to the work of the SAPS the Commission did speak to the need for situational crime prevention. For one the Commission found that in Khayelitsha “there is no doubt that inadequate lighting is a security issue.”

On paper, and in theory, the City of Cape Town, it would appear, agrees with the statement “inadequate lighting is a security issue.” In a document titled Design and Management Guidelines for a Safer City, the City states, “Good lighting is one of the most effective means of increasing levels of safety and deterring crime”.

Given the SJC’s situational crime prevention work we were interested to determine the extent of “inadequate lighting” in Khayelitsha and to what extent the City’s Guidelines for a Safer City has been met. Below is a map centred on Khayelitsha that we requested and received from the City of Cape Town’s Geographic Information Systems (GIS) department.

If one considers that the City's....
Guidelines for a Safer City characterizes "effective public lighting" as lighting on poles approximately 3 meters high and at intervals of 8 to 10 meters, it is clear that Khayelitsha lacks "one of the most effective means of increasing levels of safety and deterring crime". If one considers that the City's guidelines argue that "high-mast spotlights that cast dark shadows" should be avoided, it is clear that Khayelitsha lacks adequate lighting.

The map also makes it clear that the distribution of public lighting between communities is inequitable. The map reveals that historical black African townships, like Khayelitsha, receive mostly high-mast spotlights "that cast dark shadows" and that "effective public lighting" is almost entirely reserved for main roads, thoroughfares and other communities.

"The map also makes it clear that the distribution of public lighting between communities is inequitable."

In his testimony to the Commission, Executive Director for the City of Cape Town Safety and Security, Richard Bosman, stated that high-mast lights were only provided "where it is not possible to install street lighting, because there are no roads."

However, contrary to this stated approach, the map makes it abundantly clear that both formal and informal areas, areas with roads and without, are predominately provided with high-mast lights only.

The implications of this are literally life and death.

The primary purpose of public lighting is nighttime visibility for security and safety in public. Now consider the compounding effect of only having access to a toilet in the public realm, at some distance from your home, and having to access that toilet with inadequate lighting. The very real risk to bodily integrity is here only overshadowed by the near constant fear all informal settlement residents in Khayelitsha must live with.

Khayelitsha's public transport users must leave their homes with similar degrees of trepidation.

Given the consequences of apartheid spatial planning, Khayelitsha's position on the urban edge and Cape Town's extreme levels of traffic congestion, the worst in the country, Khayelitsha's public transport users, up to 95% of residents, are often required to leave home before sunrise and often get home after sunset. On 21 June, the shortest day of the year, the sun only rises 10 to 15 minutes before 08:00 and sets 10 to 15 minutes before 18:00.

According to the City of Cape Town's Transport Authority the average direct transport cost for this public transport user group (low and low-medium income groups) is on average 45% of monthly household income. It lists the largest indirect costs as crime and a lack of safety.

The chart above shows the number of street robberies, that had aggravating circumstances and in which a weapon was drawn, per 100,000 people over the past four years. It compares the street robberies per 100,000 people for South Africa (a national average) to the three police precincts in Khayelitsha. The number of street robberies is calculated by subtracting the number of "Sub-categories of aggravated robberies" from the number of "Robbery with aggravating circumstances" included in the SAPS Annual Crime Statistics.

What the chart makes abundantly clear is that Khayelitsha experiences, year in and year out, more than double the number of street robberies than the national average. To make matters worse, according to the National Victims of Crime Survey for 2015/2016, the numbers above may only reflect 55% of street robberies perpetrated.

These statistics make it clear that residents of Khayelitsha are at real risk of being robbed at gunpoint, knife-point or blunt-point, when walking to the shops, to school, to a neighbour, to catch public transport, to relieve themselves or when heading home.

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The City of Cape Town has promoted both the idea of violence prevention through urban upgrade and the programme Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrade (VPUU). It has articulated its views on the benefit of public lighting. It has articulated what it deems effective. By its own measure, it must concede that the VPUU has delivered hardly any effective public lighting in Khayelitsha. By its own measure, it must concede that as a City it is failing the people of Khayelitsha.

This article was compiled by Dalli Weyers of the Social Justice Coalition.
RESOURCES

Browse through all resources across the site. Filter them according to your needs and interests. Find resources uploaded by individual projects. As a member, you can upload and promote your own resources.

THE MOST DOWNLOADED RESOURCES, WHICH WERE PUBLISHED IN 2017:


Type: Report/Study
Published: 23 Aug 2017
Organisation: South African Cities Network

This is the second annual report on urban safety in South Africa, providing an update on crime and violence in South Africa's major cities. The report provides an overview and analysis of city-level trends with the purpose of enabling "better urban safety planning and strategy development".

Read more on SaferSpaces

Victims of Crime Survey 2016/17

Type: Report/Study
Published: 28 Sep 2017
Organisation: Statistics South Africa

The Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS) seeks to provide an overview of the nature and prevalence of crimes in South Africa from the perspective of victims. It also explores individuals' experiences of the criminal justice system.

Read more on SaferSpaces


Type: Guide/Manual
Published: 01 Feb 2017
Organisation: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

Government policy and legislation urge local government to take the lead in implementing local level crime prevention programmes. This manual provides concise, user-friendly, practical guidance and outlines a step-by-step process to develop and implement a community-based crime prevention strategy.

Read more on SaferSpaces

Violence against Women in South Africa: A Country in Crisis

Type: Research/Academia
Published: 01 Apr 2017
Organisation: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR)

Despite the myriad of legal protections and interventions by state and non-state actors, women in South Africa continue to experience extremely high rates of violence.

Read more on SaferSpaces

South African Crime Quarterly 59

Type: Research/Academia
Published: 01 Mar 2017
Organisation: Institute for Security Studies, Centre of Criminology

This issue explores topics related to domestic violence, refusing parole, and mental illness as a defense.

Read more on SaferSpaces

School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report

Type: Report/Study
Published: 17 Jan 2017
Organisation: UNESCO

The report focuses on violence and bullying in formal educational settings, in particular violence and bullying between students, and on actions that can be taken by the education sector and schools to prevent and respond to the problem.

Read more on SaferSpaces

www.saferspaces.org.za/resources
STATS & FIGURES


By the numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Last year</th>
<th>Last year%</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2017%</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Registered members</td>
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<td>+39%</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered organisations</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Resources</td>
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<td>+77%</td>
<td>296</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Site users

- 68,476 Site users
- Last year*: 63,563

Site users breakdown:

- Understand: 40,248
- Be Inspired: 25,286
- Connect: 17,386
- Blog: 14,603
- Resources: 9,334
- Learn How: 2,176
- Events: 2,279

*Aug 2015 - Sept 2016

Flow of users per month

- Jan 2017: 268
- Feb 2017: 278
- Mar 2017: 274
- Apr 2017: 274
- May 2017: 241
- Jun 2017: 228
- Jul 2017: 206
- Aug 2017: 190
- Sep 2017: 176
- Oct 2017: 152
- Nov 2017: 136
- Dec 2017: 115

How do users browse through SaferSpaces?

- 5% Tablet
- 45% Cell phone
- 50% Desktop

Flow of users per month

Which were the most viewed sections?

- Understand: 40,248
- Be Inspired: 25,286
- Connect: 17,386
- Blog: 14,603
- Resources: 9,334
- Learn How: 2,176
- Events: 2,279

Top 10 – Favourite pages

1. Be Inspired | A Safer South Africa for Women and Children
2. Understand | What is violence?
3. Understand | How can we prevent violence?
4. Understand | Gender-based violence in South Africa
5. Understand | What is the situation in South Africa?
6. Organisation | People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA)
7. Understand | Youth violence
8. Understand | Gun violence and prevention in South Africa
9. Be Inspired | Youth Crime Prevention Desks
10. Understand | Public spaces: More than ‘just space’

Top 5 – Resource downloads

1. White Paper on Safety and Security 2016 | Civilian Secretariat for Police Service
4. Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) | Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

Top 5 – Organisations contacted (website clicks)

1. People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA)
2. RAPCAN (Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect)
3. A Safer South Africa for Women and Children
4. Institute for Safety Governance and Criminology (SaGo)
5. Inkwenkwezi Youth Development Sporting Foundation

Imprint

Published in March 2018
Published by: Civilian Secretariat for Police Service (CSPS)
GIZ: Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention (VCP) Programme
Institute for Safety Governance and Criminology
Giselle Warton (SaGo)
Hannelie Yaso (CSPS)

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Twaai design

All content is provided by members and authors of respective text entries on SaferSpaces. The showcasing of projects and organisations in the Gazette aims at promoting knowledge exchange – it does not represent an endorsement by the CSPS, SaGo, GIZ or other parties involved.

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Facebook

www.facebook.com/saferspaces.sa

Likes: 531
Last year*: 392

*As of 6 October 2016

Twitter

@safer_spaces

Tweets: 844
Last year*: 529
Following: 497
Last year*: 449
Followers: 572
Last year*: 351

*As of 6 October 2016

Most popular tweet

www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMrAHMPvYf4

Watch: Safes and Inclusive Public Spaces - Participatory Planning in Johanneburg / ZA / Griekswaard

Published by: Civilian Secretariat for Police Service (CSPS)
GIZ: Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention (VCP) Programme
Institute for Safety Governance and Criminology (SaGo)

Activities

* As of 6 October 2016

See more on www.saferspaces.org.za
**CONNECT**

SaferSpaces is an online knowledge source for practitioners, government officials, academics, journalists and ordinary people that are working towards community safety and violence prevention in South Africa. As a practitioner, you can register with a few clicks and start sharing your publications, showcasing your organisation and projects and announcing public events. You can also contribute by writing blog posts or developing a thematic page on safety-related topics. Most importantly, SaferSpaces allows you to connect with and learn from other practitioners.

**Community of Practitioners**

More than 200 practitioners and over 100 organisations from different sectors in government, civil society and academia are currently listed on SaferSpaces. Are you a practitioner working towards community safety or violence prevention in South Africa, maybe for an NGO, a think tank or government? Then register on SaferSpaces and start sharing your knowledge so that other practitioners can learn from and connect with you.

www.saferspaces.org.za/members/register

**Let’s share our knowledge & learn from each other!**

SaferSpaces helps you make your knowledge, insights and experiences easily accessible to other practitioners.

Why? So that we can learn from each other and be more effective in promoting safer communities throughout South Africa.

www.saferspaces.org.za/connect

**Organisations**

Over 100 organisations are currently listed on SaferSpaces (as of December 2017) all of which are working in one way or another towards building safer communities and preventing violence. They share many of their publications and project insights via SaferSpaces so that other practitioners can be inspired, learn from or connect with them. If you work in such an organisation, write to us at: contact@saferspaces.org.za