



Shifting safety agendas: crime prevention in the major cities

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City-level crime prevention in South Africa originated prior to the publication of the first policy document to deal with the issue: the 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security. The White Paper nevertheless stimulated city-level interventions by allocating the responsibility for enforcing by-laws and co-ordinating and initiating crime prevention projects to city government.

The approach to city-level prevention outlined in the White Paper was sophisticated, covering a range of activities, including social crime prevention, law enforcement and crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). This was in keeping with an international move away from a punitive approach to reducing crime towards a problem solving approach based on research into the causes of crime and programmes that targeted these causes.¹ The latter approach is, however, new to city government in this country, particularly social crime prevention and CPTED, and is rendered even more difficult by a range of factors unique to the South African history of managing crime. These include:

- The transition to democracy, which focused attention on new, sometimes contradictory, policy and continuous institutional reform.
- A harsh and punitive history of law enforcement characterised by a lack of attention to the factors facilitating high crime rates.
- A history of militarised law enforcement which mitigated against recognition of the role that police can play in crime prevention.
- A range of social factors conducive to high levels of crime such as structural inequality and poverty, as well as the marginalisation of certain groups, particularly the youth.
- A lack of expertise in crime prevention.
- Public distrust of the criminal justice system.
- Public pressure on government to implement a punitive, criminal justice based approach to crime prevention.

Emphasis on city-level prevention

In spite of these challenges, the recognition of the important role played by city management and government is in keeping with an international move which acknowledges that crime varies according to geographical location and therefore requires different interventions at different times and in different places.² Local government is seen to be important in the reduction of crime for the following reasons:

- There has been a large-scale failure on the part of national governments to successfully prevent crime or reduce the fear of crime. This has been attributed primarily to national governments' lack of understanding of the nature of, and variation in, crime from region to region, leading to universally applied national approaches, rather than interventions based on local circumstances and needs.
- The move to situational crime prevention has alerted government officials to the importance of understanding the dynamics of the geographical location in which one plans to intervene.
- The multi-disciplinary approach to crime prevention requires the co-operation of other service providers and civil society groups, many of whom may be locally, rather than nationally, based.

Urban local governments or city administrations are, therefore, strategically placed to bring together the various agents that have a role to play in crime prevention. Cities are traditionally responsible for functions like health, housing and urban planning, and have contacts with education, social welfare, and other departments.

As a starting point in considering city-level crime prevention in South Africa, it is useful to consider the international experience. A few key principles for effective crime prevention can be identified from this experience:

- A problem-solving approach should be adopted. The causes of crime, rather than the symptoms, should be identified, targeted and addressed.
- Community involvement is essential and communities should be involved in all stages of crime prevention planning and implementation.
- Although community-driven approaches are most effective, this requires that community based partners have the necessary capacity. This may need to be built or supported by state agencies.
- Systematic and thorough research is necessary and required at all stages of crime prevention and includes needs assessments, crime trend analysis, programme evaluations and public opinion surveys.
- Crime prevention initiatives tend to be long-term. However, investing in such initiatives is likely to offset continuous short-term expenditure on crime control and enforcement approaches.

- Crime prevention should take place in tandem with professional and efficient law enforcement.
- A multi-faceted plan that recognises that the causes of crime vary, and need to be tackled in a holistic manner, is likely to be most successful.
- A multi disciplinary crime prevention team is needed.
- The youth are a key target group.

Organising crime prevention in the cities

The cities surveyed for the study that informs this chapter were Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Durban.³ All four cities have (or have had) some form of Public Safety, or Safety and Security co-ordinating office, at the metropolitan level. Many of these offices have faced difficulties, and some of the crime prevention projects were undertaken at local, rather than metropolitan level.

'Safer Cities'

Safer Cities is the name for a group of approaches to urban crime prevention which were developed in some European cities. These initiatives were informed by discussion and collaboration in the European Forum on Urban Safety and other national and international meetings.⁴ Although the Safer Cities initiatives across the globe share a common paradigm about the causes of crime and the ethos of appropriate responses to crime (for example, bottom-up approaches that are partnership-driven), the actual programmes implemented in different cities vary greatly.

All are however based on the view that "governments, at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, have a responsibility to ensure access to safety".⁵ Indeed, the South African Safer Cities initiatives were developed out of the United Nations Habitat processes:

Irvin Waller told the workshop on urban violence at Prepcom (the preparatory committee for Habitat II) that Habitat II could be a turning point in the harnessing of the world's crime prevention know-how to make communities secure from crime...The Ninth UN Crime Congress is expected to make recommendations for action to prevent crime, through policies that will serve as a basis for national preparations for Habitat II.⁶

The Safer Cities approach was initiated in South Africa in 1995 by various UN agencies, as part of the preparation for Habitat II.⁷ Officials in these UN agencies concerned with urban safety aimed to build an 'African Forum of Urban Justice and Safety', in order to strengthen African participation in the urban safety discussions at Habitat II in 1996:

The ICPC [International Centre for the Prevention of Crime] and the Urban Management Program—a partnership of the UN Development Program, the UN Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat) and the World Bank—in collaboration with other UN agencies, plan to launch strategies for 'demonstration cities' [pilot projects] in Africa and Latin America.⁸

In the course of mobilising South African support for the Safer Cities model, the UN Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat) funded a group of South Africans to attend an International Conference on Urban Security in December 1995.⁹ The main work of the conference was comparative discussions of city-based crime prevention models in Europe and in Africa.

Subsequent to the conference and the South African government's adoption of the National Crime Prevention Strategy in 1996, Johannesburg was selected by UN Habitat's Urban Management Program (UMP) as one of the demonstration cities. The Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council entered into an agreement with the UMP in 1996 to commence a Safer Cities programme. Funding for the Johannesburg pilot was secured from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in South Africa.

The first stage of the programme was to conduct a metro-wide crime victim survey to assess real levels of crime in the city.¹⁰ The second stage of the programme was to develop a strategy and set of project activities, based on the findings of the research and consultation with stakeholders in the city. The strategy for Safer Cities: Johannesburg, was approved by the council at the end of 1997.

Negotiations between the UMP and the cities of Cape Town and Durban were happening at the same time. However, there was a range of problems in obtaining donor funding to support those cities, and the Safer Cities programmes there did not take the same form as that in Johannesburg. As a result, the Safer Cities experience in the three cities has varied.

In Durban, the Safer Cities office has had full-time staff and has been located within a line function department of the local government. It enjoys

collaboration with Business Against Crime (BAC), the Metropolitan Local Councils in Durban, the Durban Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the South African Police Service (SAPS). Crime prevention projects have been informed by an advisory group made up of researchers and practitioners in the field of crime prevention. Durban is unique in having been able to integrate the work of a variety of crime prevention experts and draw on the skills of government, NGOs, private enterprise and civil society. Several social and situational crime prevention projects have been initiated by the City of Durban's Safer Cities office and are outlined later in this chapter.

The experience in Johannesburg, however, has been markedly different. The office was not integrated into the line management of the local government, and crime prevention projects were never properly 'owned' by the municipality. Partly because of this, Johannesburg's Safer Cities office has experienced a dramatic staff turnover, with three new co-ordinators in as many years. This has resulted in a lack of implementation of many of the projects conceptualised by the Safer Cities office. This, too, raises doubts about the commitment that the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council had to the Safer Cities office. The office has, as a result, not initiated new crime prevention projects in the last three years.

The Cape Town experience is in direct contrast to that in Johannesburg. The Safer Cities office in Cape Town has been unique in its focus on research into the nature and causes of crime. Several safety audits have been conducted by this office and have been used to recommend programmes for change. The changes suggested have largely focused on situational aspects of crime prevention, but the importance of addressing long-term structural inequalities such as poor housing and poverty have also been noted. Partnerships have been formed with planning departments in the municipality to address the way that high crime areas are designed and maintained. Partnerships with NGOs also feature in the Cape Town initiatives and several projects have resulted, some of which include:

- life-skills training for unemployed youth
- domestic violence workshops for the municipality
- sensitising communities to domestic violence
- a conference on combating crime and xenophobia
- training of neighbourhood watch groups.

However, one of the difficulties that Cape Town has faced is controversy over where the Safer Cities office should be located—that is, whether the office should report to Protection Services or the Safety and Security portfolio in

the city government. That there is competition in the municipality regarding ownership is indicative of the success and high profile of the initiative. At the time of writing Cape Town was in the process of developing a metro-wide city safety strategy as was done in Durban. Nonetheless, and despite the absence of such a strategy, Cape Town has been able to deliver a far wider range of prevention projects than Johannesburg.

Section 21 crime prevention companies

Some years ago, the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council (now Tshwane) chose to set up a Section 21 (not for profit) company called The Greater Pretoria Safety and Security Association (GPSSA). It was set up to facilitate co-ordination of crime prevention initiatives at a metropolitan level. It was further intended that the company would enable business and other stakeholders to contribute financially to prevention initiatives implemented by the GPMC.

The reality, however, has been that business contributions have been scarce and, given that the municipality agreed to match funds provided by business, very few projects have been initiated from the GPSSA. In addition, all the posts envisaged in the GPSSA were not filled, and the GPSSA was essentially being operated by two individuals who did not have the support of all the directors. This resulted in a lack of capacity and low morale which made delivery of projects difficult.

As a result of the lack of business contributions and the staffing difficulties, the GPSSA stopped functioning. Many of its crime prevention initiatives have been run instead at a metropolitan level by the GPMC. However, there have recently been discussions about re-opening the company under new leadership.

It is nevertheless noteworthy that the former Centurion City Council also co-ordinated its crime prevention initiatives by means of a Section 21 company. Business contributions were forthcoming, and the company operated successfully from 1996, with several projects emanating from its office. This is probably attributable to the relative wealth of this community, as well as to the strong commitment of a few individuals who drive the Section 21 company.

Given the varying experience of the Safer Cities and Section 21 models in South Africa, it would seem that the co-ordination of city-level crime

prevention is influenced less by the model of organisation and implementation than was originally thought. Instead, it appears that more important than the structural position of the co-ordinating agency are:

- individual commitment of leadership figures
- financial and political backing from the local authority
- the dedication of full-time staff to crime prevention initiatives.

In addition, the failure of some crime prevention offices is probably due to a lack of appreciation for local circumstances. For instance, the Safer Cities model was an approach inherited from Europe that was funded externally to the city governments concerned. The extent to which it could be applied and would be effective in South Africa was not considered in sufficient detail before its implementation.

Similarly in the case of the GPSSA, an investigation into the willingness and ability of businesses to provide funding for crime prevention was not adequately assessed prior to setting up the company. Many businesses in the region felt that their contributions should be to Business Against Crime (BAC). A partnership between BAC and city government may have been a more appropriate method of accessing business funds.

The co-ordinating structures were also set up at a very uncertain time in the history of local government—just before the local government elections—when many people were filling positions in a temporary capacity. This may offer some explanation for what appears in some cities to be a lack of commitment to the success of these crime prevention offices.

City approaches to crime prevention

The White Paper on Safety and Security provides for several ways in which cities can address social crime prevention. These are:

- designing out crime
- education
- promoting social cohesion
- supporting youth, families and groups at risk
- breaking cycles of violence
- promoting individual responsibility
- socio-economic interventions to undercut causes of crime.

Each of these, and the extent to which local government is engaged in such strategies, is examined below. This is informed by information gleaned primarily from interviews with key officials in the four metropolitan cities. The interviews were largely unstructured although specific questions were included to pursue projects that were known, from previous research, to be in place. Officials were asked to speak generally about their crime prevention work rather than being asked specifically about projects. Further, the relationships between the crime prevention projects and the enforcement projects at city level were also probed. Information was also obtained from strategy documents, internal policies and mission statements.

Designing out crime

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), a form of situational crime prevention, refers to attempts to reduce crime through appropriate planning and design of the physical environment. It frequently includes reducing the amount of vacant land or open spaces in an area, ensuring that safe pedestrian routes and trading centres exist and ensuring that public spaces such as parks are well lit. Situational prevention projects have been adopted by all four cities. The most common examples in South Africa are outlined below.

Closed circuit television (CCTV)

CCTV was viewed by representatives of all four cities as an effective method of managing crime hotspots. In some cities it has been spearheaded by the municipality and in others by BAC:

- Among the Metros, CCTV was first initiated in Cape Town in 1997, and the city currently has the most extensive CCTV system.
- Johannesburg has implemented a pilot CCTV project and is considering the feasibility of an extended CCTV footprint.
- In Pretoria, a pilot study into the feasibility of CCTV was conducted. Most government officials in this region felt that CCTV was an effective method of crime prevention, but one that was extremely expensive. There was concern that CCTV might be implemented at the expense of other projects and no decision has yet been taken in the council on whether it will be implemented.
- Durban has a CCTV system that was developed and is managed by the former Durban City Police. It is situated in densely populated areas prone to crime, such as the beachfront.

Despite the effectiveness of the system often claimed by those who sponsor it, particularly BAC, there have been difficulties in the implementation of

CCTV in the cities. Firstly, there has been tension between BAC and the city government regarding the ownership of the system, and who is best placed to operate and manage it. Should management responsibility be allocated to BAC, the police, or trained private security guards? These tensions have highlighted the difficulty in maintaining long-term partnerships between groups who typically have different reasons for participating in crime prevention initiatives.

Secondly, there is currently no recognised or standard training for CCTV operators, making it difficult to determine who is best qualified to operate the system. Finally, in Pretoria where CCTV has not yet been implemented, some businesses in the inner city have implemented their own systems. These are not linked to a police response unit, and this privatisation or fragmentation of the system may undermine the preventive potential of CCTV.

A major concern is that the CCTV systems are not being independently monitored or evaluated. Not only is it necessary to investigate the effectiveness of the systems, but it is also necessary to establish the benefits of the systems relative to their costs, given that they are expensive to install and maintain.

Thus, although identified as a crime prevention initiative, the extent of the prevention benefit of CCTV is debatable. It is possible that the presence of cameras deters people from committing certain crimes in a particular area; but it does not prevent or reduce criminal motivation *per se*. It is not aimed at reducing the number of people committing crime, but rather at reducing the opportunities for those who are already involved in crime. It therefore needs to be operated in conjunction with projects that prevent people from becoming perpetrators.

Visible policing

Improving visible policing has always been a primary strategy to reduce crime in South African cities. Although a national function of the SAPS, local governments are involved in the provision of some forms of policing:

- In many places, officials are involved in guarding municipal property, and the use of uniforms and patrols in carrying out this activity can assist in increasing visibility of law enforcement officials around municipal premises. In more poorly resourced cities or areas where private security cannot be hired, municipal officials tend to perform this function.
- Increasing the visibility of traffic officials is a fairly common way for cities to increase their police presence. This is especially used over holidays, weekends

and the festive season; and the traffic officers often undertake joint operations with the SAPS. This has the dual benefit of increasing the number of uniformed personnel on the streets, and also widening the range of offences for which suspects may be arrested or fined to include traffic offences as well as criminal offences.

- Multi-agency enforcement teams have been tried in Johannesburg's inner city. This policing exercise was a response to the crisis in by-law infringements in Johannesburg's inner city. It involved personnel from the city's health, housing, building, planning and fire departments. Although not especially visible, this team did make an impact on the communities of illegal tenants and by-law-violating building managers and owners.
- Cape Town has a particularly large visible policing capacity. Municipal officials such as Civic Patrol are supplemented by Community Patrol Officers (CPOs), who are civilian reservists, trained by SAPS and paid by the local government or business. This has been a system that has received a great deal of public support and councillors feel it has been a highly successful project in that it provides both visible policing and job creation. CPOs are accountable to their local police station and the city council. There has, however, been resistance to the scheme from national government (particularly the SAPS), which is concerned that the CPO will police selectively and not be able to respond to a crime that happens outside of the region he or she is paid to guard.

Again, the extent to which these forms of policing are successful in reducing or preventing crime is not known because of the lack of evaluation research. However all municipalities have implemented this approach, probably because capacity exists for visible policing (through the traffic police and municipal guards) and the relative ease of establishing and managing such projects. Also, the White Paper specifically endorsed the establishment of metropolitan police forces, thereby providing a political incentive for city based policing. In addition, there is widespread public support for methods of visible policing, especially because it helps to reduce fear of crime.

Urban renewal and the City Improvement Districts

City improvement districts (CIDs) have been a popular approach to urban regeneration. They began in North America and have spread rapidly, now also existing in Australia, the UK and Africa. World-wide, there are over 1,500 city improvement districts and in New York alone there are over 40.

CIDs have been a well received contribution to crime prevention in the cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Pretoria, with the first African CID being

established in Johannesburg in 1994. Johannesburg currently has seven CIDs and intends to spread these out to cover the entire inner city.

Typically, CIDs are set up by the property owners in the area, who elect a board and an executive committee. A management company or individual is appointed to run the day-to-day management of the CID. Levies which cover the costs of the CID activities are paid by the property owners into a Section 21 company.

Internationally, CIDs vary greatly in the services they offer. The focus in South Africa has been on both crime and grime. High visibility security has been prioritised, with security officials wearing brightly coloured uniforms and being based on the pavements. They are in contact with a central control room and with one another. Cleaners are also highly visible and so contribute to the crime prevention effort.

In Johannesburg, security guards have also been trained to act as ambassadors for the city in order to assist tourists and make people feel more comfortable as they travel around the city. Some of the city improvement districts have also included the management of informal trade as a priority. In central Johannesburg, crime statistics provided by those involved in the project indicate that since the development of the CIDs armed robberies are down by 63%, muggings by 73%, shopliftings by 50%, pick-pocketing by 80% and malicious damage to property by 78%.¹¹

A different approach to urban renewal has been implemented by the Cape Town City Council in the Mitchell's Plein area. Surveys were conducted with communities in order to establish crime hotspots and priorities. Situational prevention mechanisms such as street lighting were then implemented. In addition, attempts have been made to upgrade the taxi ranks and the trade nearby. This is a response to the finding that large amounts of money are spent outside of Mitchell's Plein every day. The aim is to ensure that people shop within Mitchell's Plein to promote economic development of the area. In addition, housing is being planned close to these developing economic spheres so that they can be easily accessed.

Unlike the Mitchell's Plein case above, few projects take cognisance of economic, situational and social causes of crime in a holistic manner. This is a good example of how economic development and crime prevention can be effectively integrated. This project is led by the planning department of the former City of Cape Town administration.

Regulating hawking and informal trade

All cities in the study recognised that the informal sector not only offers employment to a large number of people, but also makes our cities distinctively African. As a result, there has been a general move away from the prosecution of informal traders towards their incorporation in municipal planning and development activities:

- In Pretoria's inner city, informal parking attendants have been used as intelligence gatherers—'eyes and ears'—for the municipality. In exchange, they are allowed to continue their activities, provided they provide the Safety and Security Department with information on crimes taking place and on fellow car guards. This system worked particularly well in the Pretoria area.
- The CID of Warwick, in the Durban Metropolitan area, has focused on providing an environment conducive to informal traders. An organisation known as Traders Against Crime has been established to watch for criminal activities in its area and report them directly to the SAPS or the Metro Police.
- In Johannesburg, a market has been built in Yeoville where informal traders operate. Through the establishment of this market, hawkers have been provided with access to sanitation, water, freezers for meat products and security.
- In Cape Town, a structure was set up for informal traders to obtain assistance with their operational needs, and settle disputes among themselves. Through this structure, they also reported crime to local government officials, and in return traders were provided with formal blocks/stalls from which to operate, which improved their relationships with formal business and the municipality.

The collaboration with informal traders in the cities reflects a major mind-shift within city government. Informal traders are no longer seen as unemployed people who commit crime and break by-laws. They have been identified as critical partners in the fight against crime and a valuable part of city life. This approach also allows street traders to be seen as a crime prevention resource. It should therefore also be considered whether other people who spend a large amount of time on the streets (such as the homeless, street children or sex workers) could not also be integrated into similar crime prevention initiatives.

Informal settlements

Urban renewal strategies focused on informal settlements have been established in some of the cities considered in this chapter. For instance, Durban has developed the Cato Manor project—a social housing project aimed at improving the quality of life of those living in this informal

settlement. The City of Durban has also introduced the Greater Warwick Junction and Grey Street urban renewal project, both of which contain a social housing component. This project aims primarily to attract business and investment to the area, and provide better transport and social housing to those living in the area.

Both these projects are examples of long-term crime prevention strategies based on the principles of sound urban design. However, they have not been monitored specifically in terms of their impact on crime, because they are seen as urban renewal projects, rather than crime prevention projects. Initial steps are being taken to complete a victim survey in Cato Manor. Although this is extremely useful, it does not allow for a comparison with crime levels prior to the housing project. The crime related impacts of these projects are seen as incidental and implied rather than researched.

Ideally a monitoring project which compared crime and fear of crime in the area before, during and after the implementation of these projects should be established. This would help guide the city council (and other cities) when targeting other areas for social improvement.

Education

Little education directly related to crime prevention has been undertaken by city governments. However, municipalities have an important role to play. For example, Pretoria has engaged in educational programmes aimed at clarifying the role and functions of various municipal officials and how the public would be able to identify them. Similarly, a youth project in the former Centurion Town Council attempted to educate children about what crime is and their role in reporting crime.

However, given the enhanced role of local governments in crime prevention, including, but not limited to, the development of new services such as municipal police, there is much more room for public education. This could potentially take the form of education around the role of the municipal police, the procedures for reporting by-law contraventions, and work with community groups that raises awareness about crime prevention. In addition to impacting on crime, this would give safety and security departments direct contact with the public, which could help to improve municipal-public relations.

Some municipalities are, however, engaging in educational programmes for officials. For example the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation

has conducted orientation and training courses for the new Johannesburg metropolitan police on issues of trauma and conflict management. Thus NGOs and other training service providers in the field of public safety have an important role to play in directing their training programmes towards local government.

Promoting social cohesion

This aspect of the White Paper is somewhat vague, as any project can be seen to 'promote social cohesion'. However, the promotion of social cohesion probably refers to conflict resolution, reconciliation and rebuilding the social fabric of our society through the promotion of institutions that are sources of social capital.

Little of this work is traditionally done by city governments in South Africa. However some such projects may be run by civil society organisations or government departments (such as the department responsible for social welfare) at national or provincial level.

Those working on the promotion of social cohesion should identify the crime prevention benefits of their existing programmes, and the opportunities for working together with cities, rather than allowing the city's safety and security departments to invent new programmes on social cohesion and make these their core business.

Youth crime prevention

Local and international experience indicates that interventions aimed at preventing crime and victimisation among the youth are vital to effective crime prevention. Given that many cities are now working from a social and situational paradigm, the youth are a central target for crime prevention activities.

In South Africa, municipalities devote some resources to youth development activities, but often do not maximise their crime prevention potential. Only a few city governments have undertaken programmes that are explicitly aimed at youth crime prevention:

- The former Centurion Town Council in Pretoria established a safer schools project that aimed to help educators, learners and the School Governing Body address safety issues in the school and identify possible safety risks due to the design of the school. Learners were educated to understand crime, how they

could prevent it and what to do if they witnessed a crime. They were asked to sign a pledge stating that they would not take part in crime. Ideas were given to educators about holiday activities for children to reduce their involvement in crime. This project is currently being extended to other parts of Pretoria.

- Youth crime prevention comprises a major part of the recently completed Durban Safer City strategy which states that:

Studies have shown that many schools within the city are unsafe and often become places for criminal activity and recruitment. Drug dealing and violence represent only two concerns which challenge the safety of some schools. Given that schools represent the places where young members of society begin their training, it is imperative that they be made safe from criminal activity.¹²

In response to this commitment, a youth programme has been established in the KwaMashu area of Durban, in partnership with various NGO and community groups. This focuses primarily on diverting young people from crime through sports, art, cultural and literary activities and includes the development of recreational facilities and the organisation of sporting, cultural and life-skills activities. In addition, it aims to facilitate relationships between young people, the SAPS, the community police forums and other agencies of the criminal justice system.

These two projects show how diverse youth crime prevention programmes can be at city government level. In the absence of evaluation, it is difficult to establish which approach is likely to be more successful in the long term.

Preventing crimes against women

Although most South African cities would have some sort of gender desk or women's affairs department, few have initiated crime prevention programmes specifically aimed at reducing levels of victimisation among women. For instance, the City of Cape Town offers self-defence classes to women and provides information pamphlets on how to avoid becoming a victim of crime. In both Johannesburg and Cape Town, safety audits for women have been conducted in order to make environmental changes that will improve women's safety in particular parts of the city.

However, many civil society organisations have a well developed focus on issues relevant to women's safety. The relative lack of city government-initiated safety projects for women may therefore be appropriate, as it may

be more useful for the municipality to draw on the organisations currently working in the field, and build partnerships with NGOs and women's organisations. As yet, these potential partners have not been successfully drawn into the cities' safety strategies and programmes.

Breaking cycles of violence

The prevention of repeat victimisation and preventing victims from becoming perpetrators of violence is relatively under-developed in South Africa. However, support to victims of crime is essential because "victims of past criminal activity if untreated, frequently become perpetrators of either retributive violence or violence displaced within the social or domestic arena".¹³ The cities have traditionally not been involved in victim empowerment, although this is starting to change:

- The Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council developed a victim services directory covering the entire metro area. The directory covers all service providers that offer services to victims of crime in the greater Pretoria area. In a similar move, the City of Durban is conducting a survey to identify best practices with regard to victim services in the greater Durban area.
- Internally within most municipalities, trauma counselling is provided to staff who have witnessed or experienced traumatic events, through internal EAP programmes. Some city governments sub-contract this out to professional trauma service providers. (The municipalities could do more to act as a referral agency for members of the public who require trauma counselling, as Pretoria did).
- In Pretoria, the provision of services to victims of crime has been the one aspect of crime prevention where partnerships have been established effectively. This is due to the fact that the city government acts only as a referral agency, sending people to the service providers. This means that the relationship is not complex, so the roles and responsibilities of the partners are not contested. The Centurion Council had a safe house in Rooihuiskraal, where victims of crime or serious accidents could stay to recover. The safe house was staffed by a doctor, a psychologist and a social worker. This house was used particularly for children who were victims of rape. The Centurion Council also had a drug crisis centre.

City governments have many other functions which could be utilised in victim empowerment, such as libraries, clinics, crèches and welfare services. These have yet to be mobilised for their full crime prevention potential.

Promoting individual responsibility

Again, this is a rather vague responsibility delegated to local government in the Safety and Security White Paper, and it is difficult to determine the extent to which crime prevention programmes do actually promote individual responsibility. Few existing city government prevention programmes target individuals, with most focusing on urban design or the management of groups seen to be a threat to safety and security. However, aspects of crime prevention programmes that raise awareness of crime and encourage people to report crime (such as the youth project in Pretoria) could be said to incorporate this aspect of prevention.

Socio-economic interventions

As described above, the Mitchell's Plein urban renewal project has included a combination of CPTED, economic upliftment and social development, primarily through provision of housing in close proximity to economic centres. In other cities, crime prevention projects that have impacted on the socio-economic causes of crime have been projects that formalise informal workers such as car guards and car washers. In the absence of a thorough investigation, however, it is unclear to what extent the provision of more secure employment has impacted on crime, and whether the economic situation of people who were previously informally operating as car guards, for example, has actually improved with city government regulation of their operations.

Challenges facing the cities

In terms of the seven areas of intervention outlined in the White Paper on Safety and Security, the most progress has undoubtedly been made in the area of crime prevention through environmental design. This is probably because most city governments have well established planning departments that already undertook such work. In addition, these are projects that are relatively easy to implement, and are less complex than the purely 'social' crime prevention initiatives.

It is the crime prevention projects aimed at addressing deeply entrenched social inequalities—such as poverty or family instability—that have not yet been tackled by South African cities. Given the complexity of these projects, it is appropriate that they be undertaken in partnership with other agencies

and organisations with specialised skills in the area. Such an approach requires local government, at the very least, to be aware of the full range of crime prevention projects happening in their jurisdictions, in order to enable the most effective synergies for social crime prevention.

Many government and NGO projects that might have an impact on crime are not being monitored for this impact, making it difficult to determine their effectiveness. City governments may be able to assist with such monitoring and evaluation, as they have access to and co-ordinate large amounts of local information.

The key challenge is to establish meaningful partnerships at city level, which is extremely difficult when few other agencies operate in city-sized units.

Co-ordination of crime prevention activities

It is clear that in the period since the White Paper identified a role for local government in crime prevention, significant progress has been made, with many crime prevention projects being established. One of the major stumbling blocks has been the difficulty of co-ordinating crime prevention projects. The co-ordination problem has a number of aspects:

- While many of the former Metropolitan Local Councils (MLCs) implemented their own crime prevention projects, a key role for a metro-wide crime prevention function would be to assist under-resourced areas of the city with crime prevention.
- City boundaries do not match the jurisdictional boundaries of other government agencies which are critical to the crime prevention enterprise—notably the SAPS and Departments of Health, Education and Welfare. This makes it extremely difficult to establish city-wide leadership structures.
- In some cases there has been a failure to link government-initiated projects with non-governmental practitioners and initiatives in the field, leading to duplication.
- As crime prevention is not the direct responsibility of any one department, those attempting to co-ordinate crime prevention projects lack the authority to ensure that other departments are involved in projects. This is particularly the case when crime prevention has been initiated from metro level. In many cases, individuals have simply taken the initiative to facilitate inter-departmental work.

The complexity of managing crime prevention initiatives also points to the difficulty in establishing partnerships with groups outside local government. In many cases, investment from potential partners has not been forthcoming. In addition when crime prevention initiatives are implemented

by a range of stakeholders, there are problems with the ownership and management of the projects.

The need for research and evaluation

Although many crime prevention projects have been initiated in the cities, most have not been based on adequate research. Crime prevention has rather been driven by individuals with their own priorities and beliefs about the relative importance of various interventions. A clear research agenda is necessary in order to establish what projects are likely to have the greatest impact on crime in the city, and what the priority sites for intervention should be. It is essential, in the face of limited resources, that the projects being implemented should be those that are likely to be successful. In order to ensure this, all projects implemented by cities should have built-in monitoring and evaluation systems to determine the costs and benefits of the project, and to respond to aspects of the project that are not as effective as anticipated. This information could also assist other cities considering South African best practices.

The main reason why monitoring and evaluation are such a necessary part of programme implementation is because the crime prevention benefits of particular projects are often assumed rather than tested. For example, it may be assumed that municipal officials are 'doing crime prevention' because they are out patrolling. This does not provide any information about whether they are patrolling the most crime-ridden areas, and whether they have training on identifying crimes and dealing with perpetrators and victims of crime. It also does not show whether the presence of municipal officials is a deterrent to potential criminals or whether the general public can even identify those on patrol as municipal officials.

Crime prevention as reaction

Although there is some knowledge of and desire to implement crime prevention projects in the various city governments, the projects that have been implemented tend to be reactive in that they are a response to problems that have been presented to council by particular interest groups. This is often the case in CPTED strategies.

Often, crime prevention is not taken into account when planning a new development, and expensive strategies to ensure safety need to be adopted after the development has taken place. This is a source of frustration to

police and other officials responsible for safety in these developments. A more proactive approach to the identification of priorities for crime prevention should be taken, with the police and community being consulted about safety at the design stage.

The reactive nature of crime prevention can also be seen in the fact that few city governments have done any work on youth crime prevention. If prevention is the aim, children, especially those at risk of committing crime, should be the target of interventions and should be prioritised. Internationally, there has been an extensive focus on youth and most city-wide prevention programmes are targeted at young people. Given our knowledge about the potential of victims to be re-victimised and perhaps to commit crime, the area of prevention of repeat victimisation and breaking the cycles of violence should be a priority.

A balance needs to be found between reacting to issues that have already become problems to city government and addressing issues that may develop into serious safety problems for the cities.

The status of crime prevention

Crime prevention needs to be understood as an activity in its own right, which is, at least in part, the responsibility of all city government departments. In order to ensure its prioritisation, it needs to be incorporated into the strategic plans of the city (as has already been done in some of the cities) and allocated adequate funding.

City leaders need to recognise that metropolitan policing (and any other form of visible policing or CPTED) is only one aspect of crime prevention and that budget allocations should also be made for the more social aspects of crime prevention. A balance needs to be found between law enforcement and crime prevention, and this balance needs to be based on thorough research into the nature of the crimes committed in our cities.