



PROMOTING SAFETY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION THROUGH INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

**Lessons from different informal settlement interventions
for practitioners and policy makers**

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2017



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This booklet is drawn from the extensive research undertaken through the Mainstreaming Urban Safety and Inclusion in Urban Upgrading project, Citylab sessions and insights from a pilot short course and is the result of a partnership initiative between the African Centre for Cities (ACC), the Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) and the Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention Programme (VCP) supported by the German Development Cooperation (GIZ).

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Cover image: Alexia Webster.



FOREWORD



South Africa's urban landscape offers us many opportunities to advance the social and economic conditions of our people. Government has, for over twenty years, been implementing policies and programmes designed to bring redress to marginalised communities, as we collectively tackle the legacies of poverty, unemployment and in particular, apartheid spatial planning.

Over 4 million housing opportunities have been provided by government in South Africa over the last two decades of freedom,

and housing options and choices are continually developing in order to meet the changing needs of a rapidly urbanizing country. It is a well-known fact, however, that government cannot yet keep pace with demand, in the provision of decent shelter for all families, which is our main ambition as a department. As we endeavour to find solutions through expanding options and choices, and creating partnerships for housing delivery, we also must recognise and respond to the needs of the thousands of people living in many informal settlements across South Africa.

It is for this reason that the department has a major Informal Settlements Upgrading Programme (UISP) that facilitates the structured upgrading of these settlements. It applies to 'in situ' upgrading of informal settlements as well as where communities are to be relocated for a variety of reasons. The programme entails extensive community consultation and participation, emergency basic services provision, permanent services provision and seeks to provide security of tenure.

Given the importance of this programme, and our need to deepen our understanding of informal settlement upgrading methodologies, in terms of design, form, services and residents' needs, its interrelatedness with the topics discussed in this excellent publication, '*Promoting Safety and Violence Prevention through Informal Settlement Upgrading*' is most welcome. The connection between informal settlement upgrading and urban safety is located firmly as a key lever in the transformation of space.

We are all aware that the realities of life in many informal settlements include exposure to unprecedented levels of fear, crime and violence, as well as poor social cohesion. The key objective from these pilot studies in the Cape Town environs, was, therefore, to test the relationship between informal settlement upgrading methodologies applied, and the mitigating impact these may have on levels of

crime and violence. The lessons learned from these assessments are highly significant, and our department is committed to deepening the 'urban safety lens' as we go forward with the UISP.

It is important to mention that the Department of Human Settlements has taken the lead too, in bringing the issue of urban safety into some of our international commitments. Indeed, South Africa has been one of the key advocates for the link between safety and human settlements and urbanisation, and we are very pleased that this link is established no less than 16 times in the New Urban Agenda adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urbanisation (Habitat III) in 2016. The New Urban Agenda clearly states that "We will integrate inclusive measures for urban safety and the prevention of crime and violence".

I therefore commend the GIZ Violence and Crime Prevention Programme (VCP) and its partners, the African Centre for Cities (ACC), Isandla Institute, and Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU), for initiating this profound study, and thus enabling government and its partners to adapt and learn from these methodologies. Some of the preconditions for success identified include multi-sectoral planning with community participation, tenure security, and targeted interventions to better protect vulnerable women, the elderly, the youth and the disabled, for example. Indeed, we know from experience that communities that are actively involved in their own development will respond and adapt more positively to change.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for this body of work, which has added invaluable insights and lessons learned for us to apply to our urban upgrading methodologies and approaches going forward. I look forward to continuing the dialogue going forward.

Ms Zou Kota-Fredericks, MP

Deputy Minister, Department of Human Settlements

FOREWORD

South Africa, together with many countries across the world, is experiencing the multiple impacts of rapid urbanisation amidst an economic climate of prevailing structural inequalities. Thus, the imperative to forge greater inclusivity for marginalised communities in the economy, and in the physical design of space, remains at the forefront of international urban development policies and commitments. Spatial transformation, through greater social and economic inclusivity and integration, is a key outcome in South Africa's national urban policy, The Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF).

Whilst it is widely acknowledged that urban environments provide opportunities for employment, access to public amenities and modern technologies, there remains for millions, globally, the harsh realities of coping with urban poverty, urban risks, and spatial injustices on a daily basis, resulting in exclusion from the many benefits of the urban environment.

Nationally, the steady migration to the cities and other urban areas - predicted to reach 80% of the population by 2050 - has resulted in the expansion of dense informal settlements on the fringes of many formalised urban spaces. Statistics SA has estimated that approximately 1.25 million people are living in these settlements, and despite the high urban household poverty levels, the belief prevails that *'the urban form shapes their access to improving their livelihoods'* (Statistician General 2017).

This insightful and wide-ranging publication, *'Promoting safety and violence prevention through informal settlement upgrading: Lessons from different informal settlement interventions for practitioners and policymakers'*, has been produced by the GIZ Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention Programme (VCP) and its partners. The publication demonstrates the power of intergovernmental, stakeholder commitments and partnerships, nationally and internationally, to re-shape the urban form, and thus the living conditions, in informal settlements.

Based upon the central premise that 'community safety

and violence prevention strategies in informal settlement upgrading methodologies are critical for the sustainability of (longer-term) efforts to improve the quality of life of informal settlement residents', this publication provides practitioners with key lessons learned from practice to adapt and build upon in strategy and practice.

Based upon three actual case studies, some of the key factors that emerge for government in particular refer to the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to municipal level development planning, and the development of a crosscutting lens for urban safety, that brings integrated approaches to the upgrading and re-shaping of these often under-serviced and dangerous physical spaces.

As described in this excellent and inspiring publication, there are then, multiple strategic and tactical interventions needed to achieve new urban forms, to 'design out' crime, and to progressively bring safety, security and service delivery to all settlement areas in South Africa. A key tactic is to build partnerships across the spectrum of leaders, practitioners, planners and communities concerned with holistic approaches to urban safety and violence and crime prevention in informal settlements.

A holistic approach to reducing crime and violence, as evidenced in this publication, requires a combination of intergovernmental and community approaches. These include improving access to infrastructure and services through 'in-situ' upgrading, investment in educational, sporting and cultural activities, growing the informal economy, and strengthening community relations with Policing and Safety and Security Services. Thus, through partnerships, we can collectively forge a range of interventions designed to improve the quality of life in many of our marginalised urban communities.

As we go forward, guided by the valuable lessons learned and shared here, we must ensure that we also build upon the frameworks for action provided by the National Development Plan, the Integrated Urban Development Framework, and the New Urban Agenda for Sustainable Urbanisation and Human Settlements. The adoption of Agenda 2030, a historic landmark towards the implementation of a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative sustainable development goals (SDGs) and targets, also guides our journey towards integrated and safe urban spaces. Of particular



resonance here is Goal 11, '*Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,*' and more precisely, in target 11.1. '*By 2030, ensure access for all, to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums.*'

Our global commitments must now find local expression. It is essential that we continue to work together to build socially just and inclusive urban neighbourhoods where communities, women, men, the youth and children, can live, work and play, without fear.

Mr Andries Nel, MP
Deputy Minister, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

1

INTRODUCTION



This booklet is drawn from the extensive research undertaken through the Mainstreaming Urban Safety and Inclusion in Urban Upgrading project, Citylab sessions and insights from training sessions and is the result of a partnership initiative between the African Centre for Cities (ACC) and the Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention Programme (VCP) implemented by GIZ.¹ The research done for the project was conducted in three informal settlements in the City of Cape Town and focused on different informal settlement upgrading methodologies.

The lessons presented in this booklet are based on the Cape Town case studies and while it is not possible to generalise the findings from the research to all informal settlements in South Africa, we believe this nevertheless provides an opportunity to highlight the important relationship between informal settlement upgrading methodologies and the impact of these on urban safety and violence. By presenting the findings from the research work, the booklet will show how each of the informal settlement upgrading typologies that were used had a mitigating impact on crime and violence in the informal settlements researched. Although each methodology impacts differently according to context, the recognition that physical infrastructure interventions should be complemented by socio-economic interventions in order to improve safety and livelihood conditions as part of informal settlement upgrading, has been a crucial learning.

URBAN SAFETY AND INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

1.1

This research took place within the context of a rapidly urbanising South Africa. According to Census data, approximately 1.25 million households were living in informal settlements in 2011.² This is nearly one in ten households. The Integrated Urban Development Framework projects that by 2030 70% of South Africa's population will be living in cities and towns, and many in informal settlements. Exacerbating this trend is the fact that urban areas in South Africa continue to be hampered by the legacy of racial segregation, poverty and exclusion from social and economic opportunities.³ The prospects are thus dire if no proper planning, alongside considerations of safety, is put in place to accommodate the rate of urbanisation.

Crime and violence is a general concern in South Africa, but in this booklet the lens will fall to informal settlements. The ability to actively address urban safety is tied into government approaches to informal settlements and their upgrading methodologies. The upgrading of informal settlements is an important component of national housing policy and the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP) became part of the Housing Code in 2009.⁴ In the New Urban Agenda⁵, space and its transformation is seen as a key determinant for inclusive, liveable cities, free from violence.

¹ The VCP Programme is a joint South African-German intervention steered by the South African Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) and various other departments and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

² StatsSA, 2012.

³ COGTA, 2016.

⁴ Huchzermeyer, Karam and Maina, 2014: 154.

⁵ The New Urban Agenda was adopted in October 2016 at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). It seeks to guide national and local policies on the growth and development of cities for the next two decades.

⁶ Huchzermeyer et al, 2014: 158.

⁷ UN-Habitat, 2007: vi.

In the South African experience, informal settlements in particular, are critical areas of intervention given that poor planning and socio-economic inequality are among the key drivers of violence and crime in them.

Informal settlements are defined as follows:

*"An 'Informal Settlement' exists where housing has been created in an urban or peri-urban location without official approval. Informal settlements may contain a few dwellings or thousands of them and are generally characterised by inadequate infrastructure, poor access to basic services, unsuitable environments, uncontrolled and unhealthy population densities, inadequate dwellings, poor access to health and education facilities and lack of effective administration by the municipality."*⁶

Informal settlements are also characterised by a lack of land tenure and security. The three most significant threats to safety and security in cities are: crime and violence; insecurity of tenure and forced evictions; and natural and human-made disasters.⁷ All of these factors apply to South Africa's informal settlements.

“ Informal settlement upgrading seeks to improve the lives of residents by not only providing infrastructure services and security of tenure, but also investing in public space, public facilities and other social and economic programmes that deal with broader structural inequalities. ”

In the 2016 Pretoria Declaration for Habitat III on Informal Settlements, there is a significant focus on security of tenure in the definition: *“Informal settlements – are residential areas where 1) inhabitants have no security of tenure vis-à-vis the land or dwellings they inhabit, with modalities ranging from squatting to informal rental housing, 2) the neighbourhoods usually lack, or are cut off from, basic services and city infrastructure and 3) the housing may not comply with current planning and building regulations, and is often situated in geographically and environmentally hazardous areas.”*⁸

Recently, South African policy makers have supported in-situ upgrading as critical to addressing urban poverty.⁹ Informal settlement upgrading done through an urban safety lens can have enormous positive effects. However, if upgrading projects are to bring benefits to residents they need to be participatory, integrated and holistic.¹⁰ Getting this right requires a complex process of negotiations and community participation. Community members need to have autonomy in the process and be in a position to guide and influence the upgrading.

⁸ United Nations, 2016: 1. See also the Western Cape Informal Settlement Strategic Framework, adopted in 2017.

⁹ Bosworth, 2016.

¹⁰ Brown-Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2016: 2. See also Western Cape Government, 2017.

WHY THIS BOOKLET

1.2

Twenty-two years into democracy, South Africa has murder rates that are five times higher than the global average, with areas such as Khayelitsha reporting a rate of 150–200 murders per 100,000 persons.¹¹ This is among the highest rates anywhere in world for a country at peace. Perceptions of crime and violence, and the impact of fear on people’s use of public spaces (especially women) have debilitating social and economic consequences, especially for vulnerable communities.¹²

This booklet seeks to address the question of why urban safety interventions are important when informal settlement upgrading interventions are planned and how urban safety can be best pursued. The core argument of this booklet is that considering safety issues when working in and on informal settlements goes to the heart of building sustainable human settlements, where all residents enjoy a good quality of life. Various relevant government departments need to support and spearhead the interventions discussed in this work in collaboration with partners within their respective communities. This booklet seeks to provide guidance on what to focus on in working successfully on inclusive and participatory informal settlement upgrading, which works with a specific safety lens and integrates diverse measures for the prevention of violence and crime.

“ Considering safety issues when working in and on informal settlements goes to the heart of building sustainable human settlements, where all residents enjoy a good quality of life. ”

The point of departure for this booklet is that community safety and violence prevention strategies in informal settlement upgrading methodologies are critical for the sustainability of (longer-term) efforts to improve the quality of life of informal settlement residents. Understanding the positive impact is relevant to both government officials and practitioners. Informal settlement upgrading should incorporate physical, social and economic interventions. It should ensure that communities are actively involved in all aspects of the upgrading process.¹³

The role of physical improvements and the provision of basic services in informal settlements are crucial.¹⁴ The lack of basic services such as electricity, street lighting, proper walkways, safe public spaces and toilets heighten vulnerability and provide opportunity for crime and violence to take place. Women and children are often most affected. However, physical improvements may not significantly reduce residents' perceptions of crime and lived experience of violence, unless the vital safety aspects of the residents in informal settlements are considered. For example, location of services and layout of public space also matter.

The key findings of the research further indicate that physical improvements need to happen alongside social and economic programmes that deal with broader structural inequalities.¹⁵ Poverty, inequality and social exclusion are structural issues, which require urgent attention and addressing these structural factors is the long-term solution to combatting crime and violence.

“ Safety should be a priority in the upgrading process and not just a secondary result. ”

¹¹ See Crime Stats SA 2016 <http://www.crimestatssa.com/topten.php> and <http://www.issafrica.org/uploads/5th-Crime-Conf-2014/011-lan-Edelsten.Pdf>.

¹² See: <http://www.saferspaces.org.za/resources/entry/victims-of-crime-survey-2015-16>.

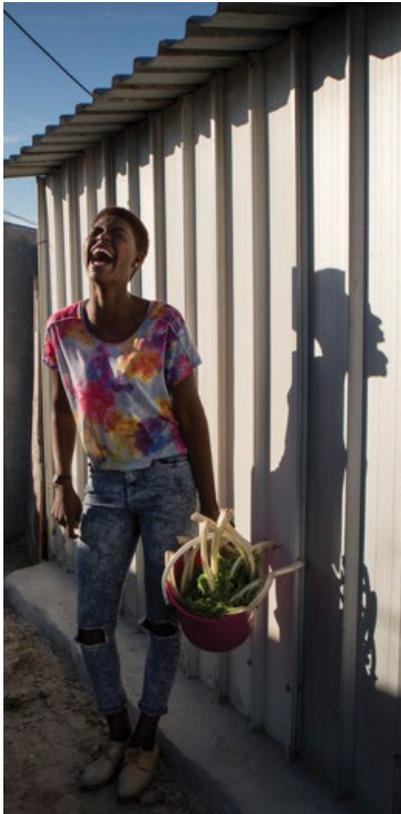
¹³ The active involvement of communities in upgrading requires meaningful community engagement in each step of the upgrading process - engagement where communities are allowed to have a real voice in shaping their settlement.

¹⁴ Mercy Brown Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2016: 1.

¹⁵ See Brown-Luthango (2014a).

HOW THIS BOOKLET HAS COME ABOUT

1.3



The content of this booklet was drawn from a series of interrelated components, namely:

- **DETAILED CASE STUDIES OF DIFFERENT UPGRADING METHODOLOGIES IMPLEMENTED IN CAPE TOWN:**
 - The Sheffield Road re-blocking project
 - The enhanced People's Housing Process (ePHP) in Site C, Khayelitsha
 - Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading in Monwabisi Park, Khayelitsha
- **A SERIES OF CITYLAB WORKSHOPS ON SPECIFIC TOPICS SUCH AS:**
 - Social Cohesion;
 - Integrated, Participatory Upgrading;
 - Knowledge, Policy and Practice;
 - Violence Prevention: Understanding and breaking the cycle of violence – role of ECD and youth development programmes;
 - Violence Prevention: Methods and Tools for Measurement.
- **A PRACTITIONERS' SHORT COURSE PILOTED IN APRIL 2015 JOINTLY BY ACC, GIZ VCP AND VPUU.**
- **AN ADVISORY GROUP MEETING ON URBAN SAFETY AND INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING ORGANISED BY ISANDLA INSTITUTE ON BEHALF OF GIZ VCP, ACC AND VPUU HELD IN MARCH 2017.**

The case study methodology was qualitative using in-depth interviews and focus groups to understand and analyse the impact of upgrading methodologies on the perceptions of crime and safety. The CityLab sessions were thematic and they made an important contribution to understanding urban safety in a broader context. The key findings of these initiatives are incorporated into this booklet to provide guidance and lessons learned for integrating urban safety considerations into the upgrading process.

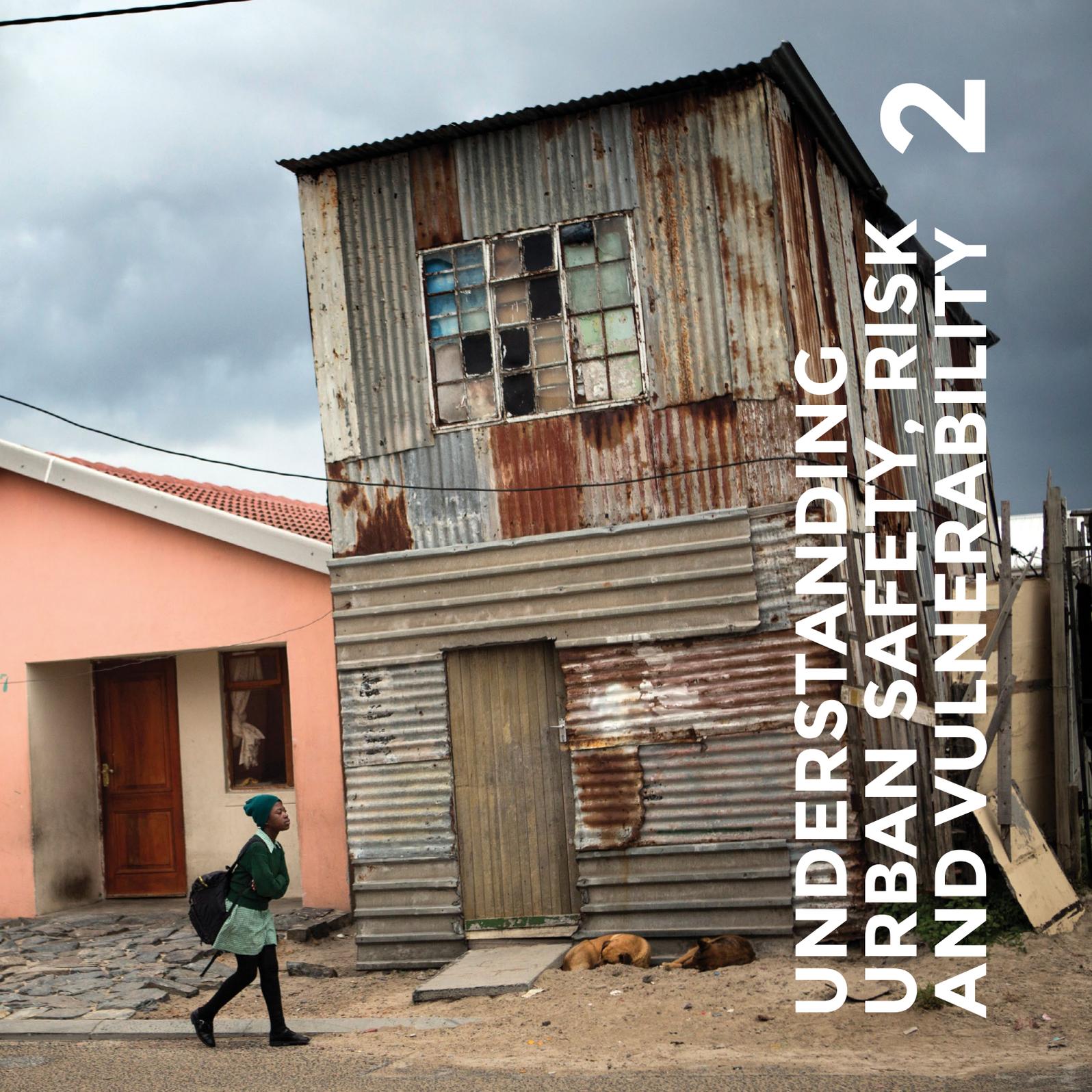


WHO THIS BOOKLET IS FOR

1.4

This booklet is targeted primarily at officials at all levels of government (national, provincial and local) who are involved in processes related to upgrading and housing. The booklet also targets practitioners and those involved in issues of safety, urban infrastructure, urban planning and management, housing, and social development from civil society, the donor sector and all three spheres of government.

In order to be successful, the approach proposed in this booklet needs coherent, multi-disciplinary planning from all spheres of government. It is also important to read the booklet in combination with the policies of the Department of Human settlements such as the UISP and the National Development Plan.



UNDERSTANDING URBAN SAFETY, RISK AND VULNERABILITY 2

2.1

SAFETY IS AN URBAN PRIORITY

“ The lack of access to adequate housing, socio-economic rights and security of tenure provides a context where crime and violence can more easily occur. ”

Global trends in urban safety, as outlined in The UN Habitat Global Report on Human Settlements, include a focus on urban planning, urban design and governance. Specifically, the report states, “crime and safety are top priorities in residential neighbourhoods, especially for the urban poor”.¹⁶ The New Urban Agenda adopted in 2016 in Quito, Ecuador seeks to better manage the relationship between sustainable development and urbanisation. One of the central priorities of the New Urban Agenda is sustainable human settlements and working towards safer urban areas.¹⁷ The Pretoria Declaration puts the informal settlement agenda as a top priority by highlighting the importance of in-situ upgrading as critical to poverty reduction.¹⁸ Sustainable Development Goal 11 also speaks to making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.¹⁹

The National Development Plan (NDP) recognises that safety and security are “directly related to socio-economic development and equality,” and require an environment “conducive to employment creation, improved educational and health outcomes, and strengthened social cohesion”. It argues further, “safety involves the criminal justice system, local government, community, and private sector and role players involved in economic and social development”.²⁰

In South Africa, safety issues are most prominent in urban areas. The presence of crime and violence is also contingent upon spatial distribution with townships and informal settlements the most effected. The lack of access to adequate housing, socio-economic rights and security of tenure provides a context where crime and violence can more easily occur.

The metropolitan municipalities experience the greatest number of reported crimes.²¹ Work done by the South African Cities Network (SACN) Urban Safety Reference Group (USRG), concluded that there is a relationship between the “fear of crime and movement” which negatively affects quality of life.

According to the Urban Safety Reference Group, key among the risk factors that heighten the likelihood of crime and violence are the interlinked dynamics of urbanization, marginalization and poor social and physical environments.²² It also makes the case that the absence of good quality governance can drive factors that lead to urban vulnerability and instability.

Informal settlements are most likely to suffer each of these 3 factors. The Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) and the IUDF Implementation Plan identify informal settlement upgrading as a targeted priority. A key action in the IUDF Implementation Plan is to identify priority informal settlements in targeted municipalities, package development interventions and facilitate social compacts for the upgrading of the priority informal settlements.²³

¹⁶ UN-Habitat, 2007: 275.

¹⁷ Habitat III, 2016: 1-24.

¹⁸ United Nations, 2016.

¹⁹ UNDP, 2015.

²⁰ The Presidency, 2012: 405.

²¹ SACN, 2016a: 17.

²² Ibid: 34. Also see work by South African Cities Network in collaboration with the Africa Centre for Migration and Society, which looks at linkages between migration, mobility, urban space and governance (See SACN, 2016b).

²³ COGTA, 2016: 29.

2.2

RESPONDING TO RISK FACTORS IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

As indicated, poor physical environments, lack of access to adequate housing and security of tenure, and lack of social facilities all contribute to a context of risk and vulnerability to crime and violence. Table 1 reflects conditions that influence crime and violence and protective factors that help to prevent urban violence and criminal activities.

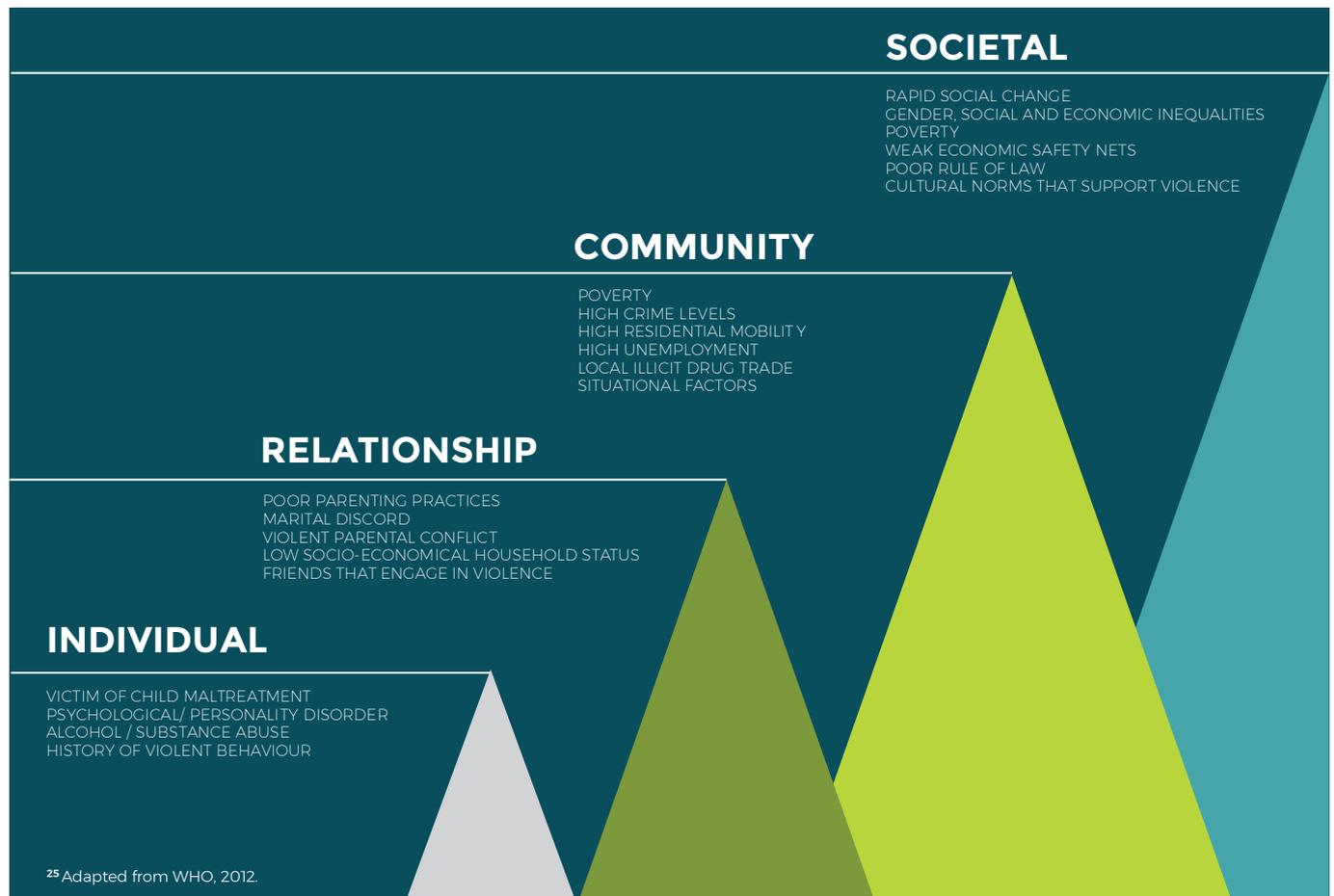
Table 1. Factors influencing and preventing crime and violence ²⁴

RISK FACTORS	PROTECTIVE FACTORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rapid population growth• Population density• Lack of social coherence• Poverty• Income inequality• Youth unemployment• Deprivation of services• Informal housing• Infrastructure• School conditions and violence• Access to drugs, alcohol and firearms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A functioning social security system• A national strategy for comprehensive violence prevention and functioning institutions for its implementation• Social policies promoting and protecting the rights of children and the youth• Solidarity within society• A functioning law enforcement

Development approaches are central to addressing the crime and violence risk factors associated with urbanisation. A development approach requires attention to all risk factors and crime and violence from an individual, family, community and structural perspective. For example, building individual resilience would be a central approach to addressing individual risk factors, while the formalisation of informal spaces could address risk factors associated with the community by way of environmental design and urban settlement upgrading. Municipal departments such as health, social and economic development can equally play a role.

²⁴ Risk factors from SACN 2016a: 34; protective factors taken from <http://www.saferpaces.org.za/understand/entry/how-can-we-prevent-violence>

Figure 1. WHO multi-level risk factors ²⁵



2.3

PROFILE OF VULNERABILITY AND RISK

The Urban Safety Reference Group produces an annual aggregation of National Crime Statistics at a city level. The 2017 State of Urban Safety in South Africa Report says that South Africa experiences some of the highest levels of violent crime in the world – its 2015/16 murder rate of 34 per 100 000 people is more than five times the global average of 6.2 per 100 000.²⁶ Despite a considerable reduction in its murder rate over the past two decades, of concern is the increase in the murder rate for the fourth year in a row, representing the first sustained upward trend in the history of democratic South Africa. Over the long term, eThekweni has seen the greatest decrease in murder rates since 2005/06, while Cape Town has double the murder rate of the other cities and has seen its murder rate rise since 2009/10, increasing by 40% between 2011/12 and 2015/16. The nine large, urban municipalities analysed are home to about 40% of the residents of South Africa, but record about 77% of the carjackings, 74% of the vehicle thefts, 64% of the aggravated robberies, 58% of the residential robberies and 47% of the murders.

Cities need to be able to quantify their crime rate benchmarks and track relative versus absolute progress over time in order to craft and resource their interventions appropriately. However, the Urban Safety Reference Group's Policy Brief on improving crime statistics for local government puts forward that national crime statistics obscure the real distribution of crime, e.g. by country/city/neighbourhood/household levels.²⁷ A contributing factor to this is the fact that the boundaries of police stations do not overlap with city boundaries, which makes it hard for cities to track crime trends within their municipalities. In addition, currently national statistics only refer to the share of crimes reported, which is called the "iceberg effect".²⁸ There is an iceberg effect in terms of gender-based violence and violence perpetrated against vulnerable groups, particularly where reporting of crime is linked to relationships with police and trust levels.

5 times

South Africa experiences some of the highest levels of violent crime in the world – its 2015/16 murder rate of 34 per 100 000 people is more than five times the global average.

4 years

Despite a considerable reduction in its murder rate over the past two decades, of concern is the increase in the murder rate for the fourth year in a row, representing the first sustained upward trend in the history of democratic South Africa.

40%

Cape Town has double the murder rate of the other cities in South Africa and has seen its murder rate rise since 2009/10, increasing by 40% between 2011/12 and 2015/16.

“ Young people are the most at risk of victimisation, as well as of offending. ”

Young people are the most at risk of victimisation, as well as of offending. The rate of “non-natural” deaths of young people provides a good indication of the degree to which they are disproportionately affected by violence. The 15–19 age group is most affected by non-natural causes of death, with 34.5% of all deaths due to non-natural causes. Assault is the most common cause of death, accounting for 11.2% of non-natural deaths in this age group. In 2014 over 24% of the sentenced proportion of inmates, and over 40% of those in remand fell within the defined age range for juveniles (between the ages of 18 and 21 years). In all age groups males are seen to have an overall higher proportion of deaths due to non-natural causes (14.9% male deaths due to non-natural causes).

Living in conditions of violence and witnessing violence also has negative effects on youth. A study done in a working class urban community in Cape Town found that out of 617 adolescents between the ages of 12–15 years, 98.9% had witnessed community violence, 68.9% had seen someone get shot in their neighbourhood, and shockingly 47.7% had seen a dead body in a street.

“ By targeting and investing in making informal settlements with the most vulnerable population safer, the whole city will profit and become safer. ”

This demographic profile on age resonates with the importance of early intervention, multi-systemic and cognitive therapy, Early Childhood Development interventions and school-based programmes, in order to reach a significant percentage of the population at risk. Provision of these services requires pro-active planning and management of informal settlements. In planning for any upgrading intervention, community safety and violence and crime prevention strategies should be incorporated from the outset, and need collaboration and cooperation between different departments. Statistics and research about the scale of violence and crime in South African informal settlements indicate that crime rates are the highest compared to other urban-formal neighbourhoods. This is due in part to socio-economic conditions and the lack of adequate services, as well as because of neglect and open discrimination. This booklet makes the argument that by targeting and investing in making informal settlements with the most vulnerable population safer, the whole city will profit and become safer.

Gender is also a significant factor in the discussion on urban safety in informal settlements. Women and children are the most vulnerable in informal settlements due to poverty, HIV and Aids and gender-based violence.²⁹ Female-headed households in South Africa are also more likely to experience poverty than male-headed households. A lack of basic services and informal housing affects women residents the most. So too, do the conditions in informal settlements relating to children. Given the impoverished nature of these communities, youth centres or after school activities that one would find in more affluent communities, are virtually non-existent in these areas.³⁰ Gender-based violence is a huge cause of concern in South Africa since it has one of the highest rates of reported rape in the world³¹ – noting that the scale of the problem is considered to be much higher, as gender-based violence remains among the most under-reported crimes.

²⁶ SACN, 2017a.

²⁷ SACN, 2017b.

²⁸ The term is used to describe the amount of unreported or undiscovered crime – which is the part of the iceberg that remains below water and therefore invisible.

²⁹ Nadvi, 2011.

³⁰ Posel and Rogan, 2009.

³¹ Gotsch et al, 2014: 12.

2.4 POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND CRIME

12.9% of the South African population live in informal dwellings, the highest proportion being in the North West (21% of the province's population), then Gauteng (19,2% of the province's population), Western Cape (14,8% of the province's population). 4,9% of households in South Africa have no access to toilets/use bucket toilets.³² Accurate estimates of the population living in informal settlements at any particular point in time are difficult to come by because many settlements grow very fast and population sizes can increase on a monthly basis. This needs to be kept in mind when planning for upgrading.

The relationship between poverty, inequality and crime and its impact on safety outcomes is acknowledged in the NDP. Drawing a simple causal relationship between crime, violence and poverty,

however, is misleading, as the relationship is more complex. Although there is little evidence demonstrating that poverty in itself causes crime, there is substantial evidence demonstrating that those who live in poverty are more vulnerable to, and affected by, crime and violence. This is evident in the risk factors for crime and violence discussed above. People living in communities characterised by a lack of services, with little or poor access to water and sanitation, childcare, recreational and health facilities, educational and employment opportunities, or who are marginalised or excluded, are at the most vulnerable to falling victim to criminal violence; at the same time, they are also most likely of engaging in crime and violent behaviour due to the high amount of risk factors. They are also the least able to access the criminal justice system or

victim support services, and are therefore, most at-risk, most vulnerable to, and most affected by high levels of crime and violence.³³

Furthermore, there is much evidence of environmental factors that contribute to crime.³⁴ Town planning, and in particular, the planning of roads, are a factor which can facilitate crime. The lack of surfaced roads and registered streets makes it difficult for non-local police officers to operate there. A lack of street lighting in wide areas makes it easier for violence and crime to happen. So too does the lack of proper housing structures and addresses.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL COHESION 2.5

KHAYELITSHA COMMISSION REPORT

“Twenty years into our democracy, Khayelitsha remains a gateway to the City of Cape Town for many poor migrants from the Eastern Cape. Although service delivery has markedly improved in Khayelitsha in the last twenty years, there is much to be done. Most residents still live in informal housing, and many still have no access to water, sanitation or electricity within their households. Unemployment is widespread, and particularly acute amongst young people. The consequence is significant, but not uniform, poverty. Khayelitsha has very high rates of contact crime, which means that people feel unsafe much of the time. Feeling unsafe, coupled with the debilitating effects of deep poverty, make Khayelitsha an especially hard environment for all who live and work there.”

(Khayelitsha Commission, 2014: 40-45)

³² StatsSA 2016: 59, 61, 68.

³³ StatsSA, 2014.

³⁴ See for example Rauch, 1998.

Another significant factor in crime and violence is the presence or absence of social cohesion. Despite significant progress since 1994, South African society remains extremely divided. There are strong links between the absence of social cohesion and heightened levels of interpersonal violence within communities. Community dynamics may foster or impede a series of protective factors, especially in relation to interpersonal violence, such as: parents’ healthy attitude towards child bearing and child rearing; stimulating learning and social environments; as well as the availability of adult role models, adult monitoring and supervision of children. Social cohesion is an important element supporting in dealing with the challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality, but especially addressing issues of safety and security.



INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING AS A KEY URBAN SAFETY STRATEGY

2.6

These research findings are in line with international trends highlighting that residents of informal settlements are the most marginalised both spatially and economically. By improving different aspects of mobility such as access to infrastructure and providing social and economic opportunities, quality of life is much improved. The IUDF states:

“The physical environment and public spaces in many areas are neglected and poorly planned, designed and managed, particularly in townships and informal settlements. This contributes to urban violence and crime.”³⁵

Violence manifests differently in different contexts, however violence prevention requires an integrated approach that targets health, policing, economic development and a supportive environmental design, education, early childhood and youth development.³⁶ Other aspects of urbanisation and development that might contribute to crime include the influx of people and density of accommodation in informal settlements. Instead of seeing housing provision as the main/only solution to informal settlements, cities can play a particularly important role by enabling tenure security and investing in public amenities and public space:

“[T]hey must move forward by securing occupational rights, providing services and allowing households to build or improve their own houses – and supporting this process in a participatory manner. This process must also enable the construction of collective amenities including public space, play areas, community halls and more.”³⁷

Viewing informal settlements as part of the broader sustainable human settlements milieu necessitates that approaches to urban safety be considered within their context and further that direct intervention strategies be developed to address the specificities. Lessons learned through the case study research resonates with other work done on urban safety in South Africa and provides an interesting set of implications for policy, practice and institutional modalities.

The most important quality of life considerations in informal settlements in South Africa include material living standards, housing and basic services, social connectivity and personal health.³⁸ These quality of life factors and a broad perspective on urban safety demonstrate that physical infrastructure and socio-economic factors are equally important to informal settlement residents.

An approach that effectively connects upgrading with urban safety is 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' (CPTED). This refers to *"the proper design and effective use of the built environment for reducing the fear and incidences of crime"*.³⁹ Specifically, there are four principles associated with CPTED: 1) territoriality; 2) natural surveillance; 3) activity support; and 4) access control. These principles touch on a series of physical and social conditions that either encourage or mitigate against crime. For instance, lack of lighting, piles of rubbish or abandoned buildings are negative factors in the physical environment whereas clear visibility and informal surveillance have a positive impact on the fight against crime. The negative factors in the physical environment are heightened in informal settlements with the absence of formal housing and basic services.

“ Considering safety issues when working in and on informal settlements goes to the heart of building sustainable human settlements, where all residents enjoy a good quality of life. ”

As part of the VPUU programme a specific application of the CPTED principles to low income areas in South African townships was developed with the following urban design principles: surveillance and visibility; owned spaces; defined access and safe movement; image and aesthetics; physical barriers; operation, maintenance and management; and, inclusive design. These principles are supported by the following implementation tools: assemblage of activities, integration of uses, site lay out, active frontages and landscaping, visual connections, signage, and movement networks.

(See Krause, et al 2014)

³⁵ SCOGTA 2016: 46.

³⁶ Bernal, 2015: 10.

³⁷ Huchzermeyer, 2017.

³⁸ Richards, O'Leary and Mutsonziwa, 2007: 386.

³⁹ Sohn, 2016: 86.

POLICY FOR ADDRESSING URBAN SAFETY

3.1

In response to the challenges of informality and pervasive crime and violence, South Africa has over the past two decades developed a policy framework (see Table 2) to guide initiatives in crime and violence prevention. These frameworks and policies acknowledge that law enforcement is just one aspect of the strategies employed to solve the extent of the problem. Integrated and long-term developmental strategies are needed to address socio-economic and development risk factors. Access to basic education, early childhood development, youth development, proper housing, and health care must be provided. However, the multi-layered nature of risk factors, and their dispersed responsibility over multiple functional departments from urban planning to education to health, make realising the concerted and coordinated efforts of all a complex task. Implementation is made more difficult due to competing priorities, poorly aligned planning and unfunded mandates. Despite these challenges, organisations have continued across multiple sectors to strive to make the country safer. These efforts, over two decades, have produced interesting learning and insights.

Integrating urban safety considerations into informal settlement upgrading provides an opportunity to begin to deal with the crime and violence in these communities in a more sustainable way. In fact, it is in informal settlements that a focused and coherent approach to violence prevention should be pursued, as it is in these settlements where the highest risk factors exist and most crime and violence is experienced.

There is an existing policy framework for addressing safety. Table 2 provides a brief overview of the relevant policies and strategies, in relation to the linkages between urban safety and informal settlement upgrading.

Table 2: South African Policy Framework

SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT/ DEPARTMENT	POLICY/ STRATEGY	RELEVANT SECTIONS
Inter-departmental Strategy Team comprising of the Departments of Correctional Services, Defence, Intelligence, Justice, Safety and Security and Welfare.	National Crime Prevention Strategy 1996	Pillar 2: Reducing crime through environmental design
Department of Social Development	Integrated Social Crime Prevention Strategy 2011	<p>6 strategic objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening internal and external capacity to sustain better service delivery. 2. Facilitating targeted collaborative partnership with other government departments and civil society organisations. 3. Ensuring equitable and integrated site-based service delivery for local service providers. 4. Promoting sustained institutional mechanisms in communities. 5. Improving social fabric and cohesion within families. 6. Ensuring investment in prevention and early intervention services with long-term benefits.
Civilian Secretariat for Police Service	White Paper on Safety & Security 2016	<p>Section 7.1.2 Early intervention to prevent crime and violence, and promote safety</p> <p>Section 7.1.4 Effective and integrated service delivery for safety, security, violence and crime prevention</p> <p>Section 7.1.5: Safety through environmental design</p> <p>Section 7.1.6 Active public and community participation</p>
Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs	Integrated Urban Development Framework 2016	<p>Cross-cutting issue: Urban safety with a main objective of creating safe and liveable urban spaces.</p> <p>Lever 3 - Integrated sustainable human settlements</p> <p>Lever 7 – Empowered active communities</p>

“ Law enforcement is just one aspect of the strategies employed to solve the extent of the problem. ”

3.2

SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION

The National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) emphasised that the causes of crime need to be disaggregated for the purposes of preventive interventions. Particular types of crime have different causes; these in turn may vary from locality to locality and thus require specific solutions. Crime prevention strategies also focus on groups that are most at risk of either offending or becoming victims of crime, for example, poor communities, the youth, women and children and the disabled. Comparative international research indicates that programmes focused on the youth, families and communities as well as programmes focused on reducing the opportunities for crime, have reduced delinquency, violence and insecurity in both the short and long-term.

The 2016 White Paper on Safety & Security reflects the importance of preventive interventions and emphasise that not all crime types can be solved by policing. In particular, crime in poor communities can often be traced to socio-economic circumstances, which cannot be addressed by the police alone. Thus the White Paper includes a focus on social crime prevention, which is aimed at reducing the social, economic and environmental risk factors conducive to particular types of crime.

The White Paper encompasses a vision that by 2030, South Africa will be a society in which all people:

- Live in safe environments;
- Play a role in creating and maintaining the safe environment;
- Feel and are safe from crime and violence and conditions that contribute to it;
- Have equal access and recourse to high quality services when affected by crime and violence.



To rely on law enforcement alone would incur huge costs associated with investigation, prosecution, imprisonment, rehabilitation and reintegration – not to mention the trauma and health-related costs to treat physical and psychological injuries. Therefore, without an adequate focus on crime prevention, the justice system (and health care system) would remain overburdened. International experience suggests that it is more cost effective in the medium to long term to invest in projects, which prevent crime, than in simply spending more on the institutions of policing, courts, corrections and psycho-social interventions. Such reactive responses to crime, in addition to proving more expensive in the longer term, also do little to improve the quality of life of the country's citizens or the socio-economic development of cities and countries.⁴⁰

The vision of the White Paper is aligned to the National Development Plan (NDP) and rights and values enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). The purpose of developing a new policy on safety, crime and violence prevention is to promote an integrated and holistic approach to safety and security, and to provide substance and direction to achieving the NDP's objectives of "Building Safer Communities". The White Paper will facilitate, where necessary, new legislative and institutional arrangements needed for the operationalisation of its objectives. It also provides direction to government departments' respective policies, strategies and operational plans in order to achieve safer communities.

“ Crime in poor communities can often be traced to socio-economic circumstances, which cannot be addressed by the police alone. ”

Twenty years after the adoption of the NCPS, South Africa still grapples with the challenges of integrated implementation, but increasingly line ministries are recognising and responding. The 2016 White Paper on Safety and Security acknowledges this and tries to rectify the lack of implementation of past policies and put in place feasible institutional arrangements to promote the implementation of integrated violence prevention measures.

The Department of Social Development adopted the Integrated Social Crime Prevention Strategy (ISCPS) to guide its delivery across areas such as early childhood development, family preservation, social assistance, domestic violence and victim empowerment programmes, amongst others. The ISCPS emphasises the prevention of crime, rather than entirely relying on the criminal justice process to arrest and convict offenders. It is based on the idea that the South African Police Service (SAPS) alone cannot reduce crime. Respective government departments, communities, NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs are equally responsible for reducing crime. The rationale for developing the ISCPS is to enable the government departments to respond to crime-related issues in a coordinated and focused manner, specifically looking at issues causing crime. The strategy also promotes joint efforts for creating a common understanding and vision on how to combat crime, bringing together concerted interventions within government departments as crucial initiatives for social crime prevention.

⁴⁰ White Paper on Safety & Security, 2016.

3.3

INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT

In the local government sphere, the recently released IUDF attempts to mainstream crime and violence prevention initiatives in urban planning. The 2016 IUDF is the government's policy position to guide the future growth and management of urban areas. Given the effects of the spatial divide, inherited from the former apartheid system, and increasing unplanned and unmanaged urbanisation in many provinces, supporting policies and frameworks are needed that can leverage the urbanisation process for increased development gains and sustainability. Increasingly, practitioners and policy-makers are proposing that upgrading should be reconsidered through the lens of appropriate standards and not conventional standards. The IUDF interventions are designed to unlock the development synergy that comes from coordinated investments in people, the economy and places. This will result in inclusive, resilient and liveable cities and towns.

Safety is considered as cross-cutting issue in the IUDF and is reflected and considered in all nine policy levers. The IUDF principles include the following:

- “Public transport nodes should be safe, inclusive, pedestrianised public spaces.
- Densification strategies should require communal and open spaces with clear urban management plans that consider the safety and security of users.
- The principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) should be actively encouraged and supported, along with municipal norms and standards in urban design, planning and management that give priority to safety considerations in enhancing people's experience of the built environment.
- The lack of safety and high rates of crime are also a direct deterrent to household and private sector investment, and negatively affect informal, small and township businesses and neighbourhoods in particular”.⁴¹

These principles speak directly to many of the urban safety concerns in informal settlements. In its reference to urban safety, the IUDF argues that the fear of crime and violence particularly affects women and children. These concerns are especially high on public transport and in public spaces. Lever Three of the IUDF on “Integrated sustainable human settlements” highlights the importance of safety in informal settlement upgrading. It includes the requirement for all human settlements of “transforming public spaces into safe spaces of community life”.⁴² To date however, much of this work has been limited to formal areas.

Regarding the role of local communities (Lever 7), the IUDF recognises that people living in informal settlements are affected by locational disadvantage, which prevents them from fully participating in local governance and civic life. At the same time, however, the IUDF posits that communities are resourceful and that government needs to recognise that they can play an important role in local planning and coproduction processes.⁴³ The IUDF also has an implementation plan that envisages an accelerated upgrading of informal settlements, with the objective of reducing urban risk and improving quality of life.⁴⁴

⁴¹ SACN, 2016a: 44.

⁴² COGTA, 2016: 67.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ The 2015 discussion document ‘Towards the development of a White Paper on Human Settlements’ issued by the Department of Human Settlements commits to the scaling up of informal settlement upgrading. It includes a specific focus on tenure security.

Public infrastructure and facilities should create conditions for people to have a sense of belonging. Municipalities should provide quality, safe public spaces where citizens feel valued, that complement public transport and other basic services (Levers 2 and 4), and that contribute to creating safe and sustainable human settlements (Lever 3).

IUDF, Lever 7 (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2016: 96).



4

LESSONS FROM
PRACTICE



4.1

APPROACHES TO INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

Previous sections have shown that crime and violence are multi-dimensional in nature, and that infrastructure and social interventions can play an important role in mitigating against crime and violence, and against perceptions of risk and violence. Section 2 has also highlighted the extent to which socio-economic conditions exacerbate crime and violence and that informal settlements are a particular context of risk and vulnerability to crime and violence.

This section introduces three case studies, each pursuing a different informal settlement upgrading methodology. Table 3 summarises the three informal settlement upgrading methodologies and associated sites. All sites are located in Cape Town. It is worth noting that the purpose is not to compare these approaches to each other and identify which approach is preferred over the other two. Rather, the intention is to distil principles, lessons and challenges for further learning and practice in other settlements and municipalities.

The three case studies provide practical evidence of the experiences of each community and their perceptions of the impact of the informal settlement upgrading methodology pursued on crime and violence. Although perceptions form the basis of the findings, the qualitative work was intensive and triangulated between resident perceptions, police findings and the experience of social workers and community groups.⁴⁵ Ascertaining the hard statistics pertaining to crime in a specific area is difficult because of the way that data is aggregated and further complicated by the lack of overlap between municipal boundaries and policing stations.

The three upgrading methodologies featured here share a common approach: incremental upgrading with strong community involvement. Participatory upgrading requires an active and engaged community who are empowered to collaborate in decision-making. Each methodology has its strengths and challenges. For explanatory purposes, the type of informal upgrading methodology used and a brief overview of each case study site are presented before summarising the implications for safety. A table summarising key principles, successes and challenges is presented at the end of each case study.

This section concludes with a number of key success factors, based on the three case studies of different informal settlement upgrading interventions in Cape Town presented here.

⁴⁵ Discussion with Mercy Brown- Luthango, 31 January 2017.

Table 3: Informal settlement upgrading in Cape Town – sites and methodologies

SITE	INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING METHODOLOGY
Sheffield Road, Philippi East	Re-blocking;
Section C of Site C, Khayelitsha	Participatory upgrading through the enhanced People's Housing Process (ePHP) approach;
Monwabisi Park, Khayelitsha	Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) as part of an in-situ upgrading approach.

4.2

RE-BLOCKING IN SHEFFIELD ROAD⁴⁶

WHAT IS RE-BLOCKING?

Re-blocking is part of an in-situ upgrading methodology which re-configures settlements to ensure the better use of space and the provision of municipal services. The re-blocking case study took place in Sheffield Road, Philippi East. The upgrading of the settlement took two years and was a partnership initiative. The re-blocking process focused on physical infrastructure improvements to informal settlements but also on social cohesion benefits.



CASE STUDY

Sheffield Road is an informal settlement in Philippi in Cape Town, which was established in 1993. It housed roughly 167 households. In 2009 54.4% of the economically active population was employed while 46.6% were not. The settlement was blighted with poor living conditions and experienced flooding, evictions and multiple shack fires. Between 2010 and 2012 a re-blocking exercise was undertaken in partnership with the Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC), the Informal Settlement Network (ISN), the Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP) and the City of Cape Town.

The re-blocking approach has a strong participatory methodology and the process is guided by a community leadership collective. The approach ensures that community members are active in the re-ordering of their settlement and that no household loses their shelter.

⁴⁶ Case study information and lessons/insights related to the intervention and its impact on crime and safety are drawn from Brown-Luthango, 2014b and 2015a.

55.4%

In 2009 54.4% of the economically active population of Sheffield Road informal settlement was employed.

46.6%

In 2009 46.6% of the economically active population of Sheffield Road informal settlement was unemployed.

80%

Interview respondents felt that Sheffield Road was safer after the re-blocking exercise.

IMPLICATIONS ON SAFETY AND CRIME

The Sheffield Road Re-blocking exercise is an important example of how this informal settlement upgrading methodology can have a significant impact on quality of life. Through the re-configuration of the settlement, there were a number of important urban safety benefits. These included fewer shack fires, better protection from harsh weather conditions, improved water and sanitation services (especially more and better located toilets), and a cleaner and neater settlement. The improved shelter quality heightened feelings of personal safety.

Given the strong role played by the community, they were able to interact effectively with partners such as the City of Cape Town, which resulted in the allocation of new toilets for the settlement.

Interviews with residents of Sheffield Road highlighted the following benefits from the upgrading intervention:

- The shelters are bigger, cheaper, taller, better quality, better constructed and better looking due to new stronger metal sheets.
- The roofs do not leak.
- The shelters are safe from fires and housebreaking or forced entry.
- There are more toilets.
- The environment is cleaner.

Around 64% of people interviewed for the project felt that the re-blocking had been beneficial. One of the on-going concerns in the settlement was the lack of electrification, although it was noted that the City of Cape Town had approved plans for Eskom to electrify the settlement in future.

Overall, however, 80% of interview respondents felt that Sheffield Road was safer after the re-blocking exercise.

Table 4. Successes and challenges of Re-blocking in Sheffield Road

RE-BLOCKING IN SHEFFIELD	
ABOUT SHEFFIELD ROAD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal settlement in Philippi in Cape Town, established in 1967 • 167 households. • In 2009 54.4% of economically active population was employed. • Poor living conditions and experienced flooding, evictions and multiple shack fires. • 2010-2012 re-blocking, in partnership with Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC), Informal Settlement Network (ISN), Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP) and the City of Cape Town. 	
UPGRADING METHODOLOGY: REBLOCKING	KEY PRINCIPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-situ upgrading methodology. • Re-configures settlements to ensure better use of space and provision of municipal services. • Medium-term intervention – 2 years. • Partnership intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical infrastructure improvements to informal settlements. • Re-ordering of settlement into cluster configuration • Social cohesion benefits
POST-INTERVENTION SUCCESSES	POST-INTERVENTION CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer shack fires. • Better protection from harsh weather conditions. • Improved water and sanitation services (especially more and better located toilets). • Cleaner and neater settlement. • Broader social benefits. • Better use of open spaces meant public realm less threatening. • Community members more engaged with each other. • Perception of crime and violence less widespread. • Better use of public space had community benefits especially for children. • Public spaces better managed. • Provision of toilets closer to shelters improved safety of residents, especially women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate walkways. • Lack of formal streets. • Difficulties experienced by police and emergency services in accessing settlement. • Methodology does not specifically incorporate livelihood strategies or socio-economic interventions - source of frustration.

“ The Re-blocking approach can have a positive impact on safety because the clustering of shacks ensures that there is better neighbourliness, increased passive surveillance and better community oversight of public spaces. ”

(Brown-Luthango, 2014b: 6.)



PARTICIPATORY UPGRADING THROUGH THE ENHANCED PEOPLE'S HOUSING PROCESS (EPHP) IN SITE C, KHAYELITSHA⁴⁷

4.3

WHAT IS THE ENHANCED PEOPLE'S HOUSING PROCESS (EPHP)?

The People's Housing Process (PHP) is a participatory upgrading methodology that emerged out of the need to develop community-based initiatives to access housing, land and services.⁴⁸ PHP was incorporated into the Housing White Paper in 1994 and has been a fundamental, if evolving, feature of housing policy since then.

The importance of the PHP process as outlined in the Housing Code of 2000 is that it allows beneficiaries to be actively involved in the planning and construction of their own homes. Through the provision of finance and institutional support, National Government promoted community-driven approaches to housing development. There was much criticism of the PHP method advocated by government initially and the approach was revised into the Enhanced People's Housing Process (ePHP), which ensured that local communities maintained greater control over the process and the housing product.

The participants in this study live in Section C of Site C in Khayelitsha although the ePHP process was more broadly undertaken in Site C. During the ePHP process, community members actively built their own formal housing through a combination of savings and government subsidies. The improvements in the settlement were a consequence of formal housing, more spacious living conditions and the provision of municipal services.

“ A People's Housing Project is one where people build or manage the building of their own homes. ”

CASE STUDY

Site C in Khayelitsha is the site of the ePHP upgrading intervention reviewed in this case study. According to census data, Site C has a population of 49 866 (2011) although the exact number of households is unknown. Site C is in Khayelitsha, a densely populated area in Cape Town where a large number of residents live in informal dwellings and levels of service are variable in the settlement.

Site C, Khayelitsha provided the context for the People's Housing Project. Established in 1983, a group of residents embarked on a People's Housing Process to build their own homes with the assistance of the South African government, savers, the South African Homeless People's Federation and the Urban Poor Fund.

⁴⁷ Case study information and lessons/insights related to the intervention and its impact on crime and safety are drawn from Brown-Luthango, 2014b and 2015c.

⁴⁸ Carey, 2009: 5.

IMPLICATIONS ON SAFETY AND CRIME

While many residents acknowledged a decline in crime and violence post the upgrading, some interviewees still felt unsafe in their neighbourhood. Many felt that the prevalence of drugs, alcohol and gang activities were the major problems. There was also scepticism expressed by some community members regarding the efficacy of the police in the area. Mention was also made of open spaces, which made residents vulnerable to crime, including routes to the train station and taxi ranks.

There appeared to have been improvements in good neighbourliness and social cohesion amongst some households post upgrading. This was attributed to the decongestion of housing as well as ongoing cooperation around local issues including crime. At the same time, there was the view that there was greater collaboration in fighting crime and violence when the area was informal. Although the upgrading was viewed positively, frustrations remained around issues of structural inequalities and the lack of opportunities, especially for youth.

Table 5. Successes and challenges of the Enhanced People's Housing Process (e-PHP) in Khayelitsha

ENHANCED PEOPLE'S HOUSING PROCESS (E-PHP) IN SITE C, KHAYELITSHA	
ABOUT SITE C, KHAYELITSHA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 1983. • Population 49 866 (2011). • Exact number of households unknown. • Densely populated area in Cape Town. • Residents live in informal dwellings and levels of service are variable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of crime and violence. • Residents built 122 own homes with assistance of South African government, savers, South African Homeless People's Federation and Urban Poor Fund.
UPGRADING METHODOLOGY: e-PHP	KEY PRINCIPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory upgrading methodology. • Emerged out of need to develop community-based initiatives to access housing, land and services. • Incorporated into Housing White Paper in 1994. • Long-term intervention. • Partnership intervention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members actively built their own formal housing. • Combination of savings and government subsidies
POST-INTERVENTION SUCCESSES	POST-INTERVENTION CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in settlement as a consequence of formal housing. • More spacious living conditions and provision of municipal services. • Safety benefits: electrification, roads, toilets. • Waste management facilities such as bins. • Positively improved public spaces. • Physical improvement of settlement. • Formal housing reduced vulnerability to shack fires and other environmental safety issues. • Greater collaboration in fighting crime and violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of crime and violence within broader settlement remained. • Individual households pursued their own crime prevention, e.g. fences and alarms. • Prevalence of drugs, gang activities and alcohol abuse ongoing. • Public spaces such as train stations and taxi ranks continued to be perceived as unsafe. • Improvements in good neighbourliness and social cohesion amongst some households post upgrading. • Frustrations remained around issues of structural inequalities and lack of opportunities, especially for youth.

4.4

VIOLENCE PREVENTION THROUGH URBAN UPGRADING (VPUU) IN MONWABISI PARK, CAPE TOWN⁴⁹

WHAT IS VIOLENCE PREVENTION THROUGH URBAN UPGRADING (VPUU)?

VPUU in Monwabisi Park is part of a broader program called the Informal Settlements Transformation Programme. What sets it apart from many other approaches to crime and violence prevention is its holistic and participatory nature. It is founded on the premise that an integrated approach to violence prevention is the most effective methodology, as it addresses the multiple complex factors underpinning violence in settlements.

VPUU combines a number of violence prevention approaches:

- The WHO life cycle approach with the elements of Early Childhood Development, youth interventions, and access to economic opportunities;
- The UN Habitat Safer Cities methodology by combining social, situational (built environment) and institutional crime prevention;
- Trust building between the public sector and the local residents; and,
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Development of public spaces and monitoring of installed basic services is part of the methodology; however, the installation of basic services is seen as a contribution by the local authority. Part of the VPUU methodology is a formal agreement between communities and the municipalities facilitated by VPUU. The agreement allows to maximise the impact in informal settlements and to coordinate the various interventions between partners.

The Monwabisi Park example differs from the other case studies because it occurs in a context where the upgrading of shelters is explicitly not the primary upgrading intervention. Instead, the work follows a holistic approach that focuses on community development, the development of a sense of neighbourhood, social cohesion, and how crime and violence issues that negatively impact development can be overcome.

⁴⁹ Case study information and lessons / insights related to the intervention and its impact on crime and safety are drawn from Bernal, 2015.

The methodology of the VPUU process is significant because it details an optimal community participation process. Constant community involvement, leadership training and negotiation are important elements of the approach. This approach is compiled in a Community Action Plan, which becomes the development plan agreed between the municipality and the residents and linked to the IDP. The phasing and synchronisation of public sector financial resourcing and donor funding is key for the success. VPUU requires an intensive process of engagement within communities and the municipality and its interventions address the needs of a multiplicity of groups including women, children and the youth. An interdepartmental coordinating team on municipal level was set up for Monwabisi Park.

By the end of the research process, the following projects were delivered as part of the VPUU intervention:

- 7 emthonjeni (public spaces);
- 2 kick about fields;
- 1 community facility;
- Electrification of the area;
- Social services such as early childhood development (ECD) improving access to ECD from 19% to 53% within 3 years;
- Gender-based violence support;
- Legal aid;
- Business creation support;
- Establishment of Neighbourhood Watches;
- A representative leadership forum;
- An interdepartmental coordinating team within the City of Cape Town;
- A Spatial Reconfiguration Plan prioritising in-situ upgrading;
- Transportation study;
- Conceptual engineering design;
- Costing for the upgrading of the entire settlement;
- Environmental impact assessment;
- More than 30 small scale projects to improve social cohesion via the Social Development Fund;
- A water tap and toilet monitoring system linked to a repair programme run by local volunteers linked to the water and sanitation department of the City;
- Community resource office to run a full enumeration by the community in collaboration with the City of Cape Town and distribution of occupation certificates.

CASE STUDY

Monwabisi Park is an informal settlement in Khayelitsha in Cape Town. Monwabisi Park is an informal settlement with 25 000 residents in 6 867 households. It is located close to a nature reserve and the False Bay. The settlement has high unemployment with one fifth of households having no income. The shelters are made of temporary materials and residents have limited access to services with shared sanitation and water facilities but they do have electricity. The settlement is densely populated and has a difficult topography as it is built on top of a number of dunes. It is characterised by high levels of crime and violence.

Monwabisi Park was established in 1996. The VPUU project started in 2009. Since then, there have been a number of VPUU interventions supported by the community. These include a Community Action Plan signed between the City of Cape Town and the local community, a Spatial Reconfiguration Plan, an environmental basic assessment, a full enumeration that led to occupation certificates being issued by the City to all heads of household, social projects such as creating small public spaces, sports and community facilities, electrification, work in Early Child Development, the prevention of gender-based violence and business creation.

⁴⁶ Case study information and lessons/insights related to the intervention and its impact on crime and safety are drawn from Bernal, 2015.



IMPLICATIONS ON SAFETY AND CRIME

The social crime interventions in Monwabisi Park were well received by community members with many affirming the improvements resulting from the programmes, especially for children, as well as a decrease in mob violence and a better relationship with police. Interviews with residents indicated that more than 50% of respondents felt that safety had improved at the Emthonjeni spaces after the involvement of VPUU. In general, 60% of interview respondents felt that the projects had brought positive change with less crime and better infrastructure services. Perceptions of crime and violence were as follows:

- Respondents felt there was less mob violence post VPUU.
- Some respondents felt there had been a decline in rape and domestic violence.
- Respondents felt that violence against children had decreased as a result of the VPUU process.

These perceptions have been corroborated by police statistics, which show that the murder rate in Monwabisi Park has significantly been reduced between 2009 and 2013. Similarly, research conducted by UCT's Public Health Department also suggested a positive correlation between living in a VPUU intervention area, reduced risk of violence and improved mental health.⁵⁰

Still, despite the successful delivery of community projects, community members were frustrated by the lack of housing and employment. Because these are government-driven, VPUU is unable to fulfil these needs directly. Community concerns remained over housebreaking and robbery as well as the dangers posed by open spaces. Although residents of Monwabisi Park were positive about the VPUU approach, there were broader concerns about the lack of housing and toilets, and ongoing social and economic marginalisation. This illustrates the difficulties in pursuing a multi-sectoral approach requiring many governments departments. To optimize results, it is ideal to maximize the engagement of all government departments in the process.

⁵⁰ IDRC, 2016.

Table 6. Successes and challenges of Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading in Khayelitsha

VIOLENCE PREVENTION THROUGH URBAN UPGRADING IN MONWABISI PARK, KHAYELITSHA	
ABOUT MONWABISI PARK, KHAYELITSHA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 1996. • 25 000 residents in 6 867 households. • High unemployment - one fifth of households having no income. • Shelters made of temporary materials. • Dense layout with difficult topography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlement partially (20%) in road reserve and bordering a nature reserve. • Limited access to services (including electrification), with shared sanitation and water facilities . • High levels of crime and violence.
UPGRADING METHODOLOGY: VPUU	KEY PRINCIPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VPUU project started in 2009. Baseline and annual surveys, Community Action Plan as guiding plan for community and municipality, • Number of VPUU interventions supported by community, including social projects: creating small public spaces, sports and community facilities, ECD, addressing gender-based violence and business creation. • Integrated approach to violence prevention is the most effective methodology. • Addresses multiple complex factors underpinning violence in settlements. • Spatial planning, legal land preparation and engineering conceptual design for the long-term intervention. • Requires active partnerships, including with municipality – e.g. to electrify the area and occupation certificates for all residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal community participation process. • Detailed understanding of community is required before embarking on process. • Baseline study conducted, and reviewed later to measure impact of interventions. • Constant community involvement, leadership, monitoring and negotiation required for a successful outcome. • Overall long-term development plan linked to IDP. • Formal planning process and land use management process. • Incremental tenure system. • Need sustained financial resources from government and donors.
POST-INTERVENTION SUCCESSES	POST-INTERVENTION CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social crime interventions well received by community members. • Improvements resulting from programmes, especially for children, • Security of tenure and long-term plan. • Decrease in mob violence and better relationship with police. • Projects delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7 emthonjeni (public spaces) - 2 kick about fields - 1 community facility - Social services such as early childhood development - Gender-based violence support - Legal aid - Business creation support - Occupation certificates for all residents, - Electrification of the area - Legal land preparation, Spatial Reconfiguration Plan - Budget strategy and costing - Water tap and toilet monitoring and repair programme run by community volunteers - Reduced crime levels - Representative leadership forum - Interdepartmental coordinating team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members remain frustrated by the lack of housing and employment. • Concerns remained over housebreaking and robbery as well as dangers of open spaces. • Residents positive about VPUU approach, but discontent remained due to lack of housing, toilets and ongoing social and economic marginalisation.

4.5 KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

The three case studies of different informal settlement upgrading interventions in Cape Town presented above suggest a number of preconditions for success, which arguably apply to any local development intervention, whether it concerns infrastructure, spatial design, economic development, human development programmes or a combination thereof. These core preconditions for success are: an overall development plan linked to the IDP; mobilising the requisite technical expertise to do spatial planning, engineering services and budgeting; and, ensuring interdepartmental coordination with senior management buy-in and adequate financial resourcing.

More specifically, from the perspective of enhancing safety and violence prevention in informal settlements, the case studies, together with the risk and protective factors associated with violence and safety (discussed in section 2), reveal a number of broad success factors. These are:

1. The pursuit of physical upgrades through an urban safety lens. The lack of access to infrastructure and basic services has a negative impact on quality of life in informal settlements and increases residents' vulnerability to crime and violence. Therefore, improvements in the physical environment can reduce vulnerability to crime and violence and enhance people's sense of safety. However, it is also important to think of where these upgrades are located, as this can contribute to improved safety and security.
2. Tenure security. Upgrading interventions provide residents with a sense of security, even if they do not receive title deeds. This reduces residents' perceptions of vulnerability, including the risk of evictions.
3. Community participation. Unless communities are involved in the upgrading process, there is a risk that the interventions will not meet the needs of all residents, or are not deemed acceptable by local residents.
4. Creating safe public spaces. Unmanaged public spaces make residents of informal settlements more vulnerable to crime and violence. Furthermore, lack of public spaces can create a local environment that is hostile and alienating to local residents and can undermine the potential of social cohesion. Therefore, investing in safe public spaces can significantly enhance residents' sense of safety and well-being.
5. Protecting and building social cohesion. In informal settlements social cohesion can play a critical role in managing risk and vulnerability related to crime and violence. Social cohesion needs to be protected, because it is an important community asset.
6. Supporting multi-sectoral development interventions for women, children and the youth. Women, children and youth are the most at risk in informal settlements. Therefore, it is necessary to have programmes that focus directly on these groups.

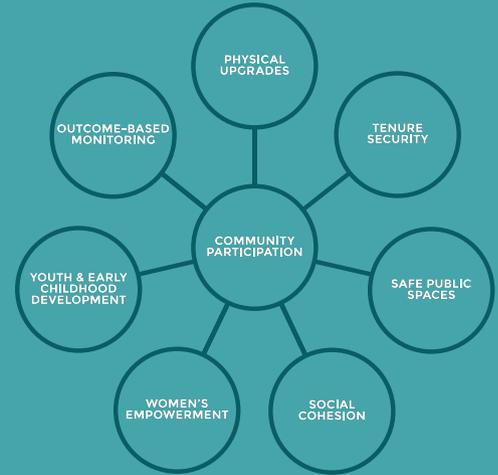
These success factors are further discussed in the next section as key principles for promoting safety and violence prevention in informal settlement upgrading.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, PRACTICE AND INSTITUTIONAL MODALITIES

5

The importance of informal settlement upgrading in the South African context is clear. Many municipalities have not prioritised informal settlements and this has hindered the provision of basic services and other amenities.

So too has the delay in formalizing some informal settlements which means that residents are denied access to services and tenure, which puts them at risk of sudden eviction. While there are fiscal constraints which slow-down the upgrading process, there are also instances where upgrading of a settlement, or parts thereof, is not possible as a result of geological or other factors – for example, areas that are prone to flooding or are located under electricity pylons. The inability of some local authorities to respond progressively and proactively to informal settlements has resulted in living conditions that are in most circumstances dire. Government policy on informal settlements no longer focuses only on eradication, but on in-situ upgrading as a better option. Informal settlement upgrading thus provides an opportunity to address other critical urban issues such as crime and violence prevention.



The previous section concluded with a number of key success factors regarding urban safety when government and other entities embark on informal settlement upgrading. In addition to these, outcome-based monitoring and evaluation of interventions is critical. This section will further unpack these factors and present them as key principles informing informal settlement upgrading. Figure 2 shows these factors and locates community participation at the centre of any informal settlement upgrading intervention. Experience has shown that the involvement of local residents in all aspects of the upgrading process is essential to achieve sustainable and locally appropriate outcomes.

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR PROMOTING SAFETY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING:

1. Pursue physical upgrades through an urban safety lens
2. Prioritise security of tenure
3. Work with communities every step of the way (participation, not just consultation)
4. Create safe public spaces through partnerships
5. Protect and build social cohesion
6. Support women's empowerment
7. Support youth and early childhood development programmes

PURSUE PHYSICAL UPGRADES THROUGH AN URBAN SAFETY LENS 5.1.1

The in-situ upgrading of informal settlements incorporates a number of standard physical environment upgrades. Work done on crime prevention and violence reiterates the importance of the physical environment as a contributor to crime in terms of a wide range of issues including accessibility and informal surveillance. Some of the most salient points raised in the research speak to the real impact that improved physical infrastructure can have on crime and violence. For instance:

- The provision of municipal services such as water, electricity and sanitation;
- Formalising of existing housing;
- Improvement in the quality of housing.

If these physical upgrades take place through an urban safety lens, their impact is even greater. By understanding the multi-dimensional attributes of violence, infrastructure planners must recognise how informal settlement residents can benefit from basic service provision. Municipal services such as electricity, water, sanitation, housing, public spaces and the provision of roads have benefits that extend into urban safety, building social cohesion and preventing social crimes and violence. However, these functions are multi-sector, thus strong intergovernmental and stakeholder partnerships are essential to properly interpret the urban safety lens. In order to optimise the benefits, these factors need to be considered in the planning phase. Most often, housing departments in municipalities do not mainstream urban safety as part of their upgrading processes. Given that housing is a national, provincial and local responsibility, strong relationships are needed to drive this agenda.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN THE UPGRADING PROCESS

PROVISION AND LOCATION OF WATER AND SANITATION:

The provision and location of communal toilets and communal taps is crucial. Often, toilets and communal taps are located on the periphery of the settlement making it unsafe for women and children. The situation is worse after dark due to insufficient lighting and visibility. By locating these services more optimally, that danger can be alleviated.

ELECTRIFICATION:

Electrification of settlements has multiple benefits both in terms of environmental safety and personal safety. A well-lit settlement including walkways and open spaces makes for a safer public environment. Electrification of settlements also helps to avoid illegal tapping into wires and prevent fire outbreaks.

SHELTER CONFIGURATION:

The restructuring of housing and of the broader settlement has important safety benefits. By closing off alleyways and relieving congested pathways, residents are less vulnerable to crimes such as muggings. The provision of formal housing also allows residents to feel safer in their own homes and less vulnerable to environmental factors such as flooding and fires.

PRIORITISE SECURITY OF TENURE

5.1.2

An ongoing issue in informal settlements is the issue of security of tenure. As the Monwabisi case study showed, security of tenure is directly related to perception of safety and is vital in reducing the vulnerability of informal settlement residents. For one, tenure ensures that municipalities service settlements. Secondly, tenure security protects residents against an on-going threat of evictions. Tenure security also ensures that land is viewed as an investment, whereby residents invest in improvements to their own dwellings⁵¹ - which can include safety-related improvements.

Granting tenure can take a formal regularisation approach or an incremental tenure approach. An incremental approach to tenure allows communities to consolidate their settlements and supports the development of social connections.⁵²

Increasingly, housing policy is highlighting the provision of tenure as an important step towards informal settlement upgrading. The Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Bill of 2015 further emphasises the rights of occupiers, the legal rights of occupiers and the regulation of the rights of occupiers upon eviction.

“**Social engagement of communities is as important as physical design, because unless you plan with the community for maintenance and the safe keeping of public spaces, you definitely create opportunities for their appropriation by anti-social elements.**”

(CityLab, April 2014: 6)

WORK WITH COMMUNITIES EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

5.1.3

A common feature of the upgrading processes reviewed was sustained community participation. Creating local structures to drive the process and supporting dialogue is an important ingredient for success. Empowering communities to be involved in their upgrading priorities ensures that immediate needs are met. Practices such as targeted basic service provision in priority areas using consultative methods have a higher likelihood of success. This is equally the case when focusing on urban safety needs. Communities must have the space to highlight, address and propose solutions to urban safety concerns in the upgrading process.⁵³

External organisations such as local authorities or NGOs entering communities need to respect existing dynamics, support existing good practice or assist in the elaboration of new practices. There are numerous methods that can help to establish communication within the community in order to work jointly on ideas and priorities. These include stakeholder mapping, a baseline survey and household assessments. VPUU, for example, has several mechanisms that support the process of community participation. These include Community Action Plans (CAPs), which allow for upgrading priorities to be decided in discussion with the communities. These priorities then go through an institutional process within government. VPUU therefore also acts as an intermediary/mediator between communities and government.

⁵¹ Smit and Abrahams, 2010: 8

⁵² Smit and Abrahams, 2010: 4

⁵³ It is essential to develop a participation methodology that is appropriate for urban safety processes.

CREATE SAFE PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

5.1.4

Closely aligned with the CPTED principles is the creation of safe public open spaces. Unsafe public spaces are a dominant feature of most informal settlements. The creation of public spaces is not only a function of an improved physical environment but also requires active community involvement in the planning, use and maintenance, which in turn supports natural surveillance. The case study review of Monwabisi Park illustrated how open spaces that are often places that residents fear are transformed into safe spaces for the benefit of community members through concerted efforts to design, occupy, utilise and manage public space.

Safe public spaces serve multiple purposes – not only do they provide a public realm that can be occupied, they also offer urban spaces that can be used to pursue activities that build social cohesion and community networks such as sports, recreation and cultural activities.⁵⁴ Safe public spaces, as demonstrated through the case study material, can have a preventative effect. The reconfiguration of settlement patterns in Sheffield Road enabled better passive surveillance of public open space, which acted as a deterrent to criminality.

Safe public spaces also directly benefit children and the youth. In Sheffield Road and Monwabisi Park, the benefits to child safety were substantial. Once there was greater community oversight of open spaces, children were safer playing in those spaces. The transformation of public spaces used by mothers and children such as those in the VPUU process have been very successful. Other public facilities such as libraries and community centres can support youth development activities. Given that government departments do not have the resources to manage all public spaces effectively, encouraging the active ownership and participation by community members is important for sustainability.⁵⁵

The joint planning of public spaces underpins both the re-blocking and the VPUU approaches discussed above. By allowing residents to map their settlements and pinpoint areas of crime and violence, there is an opportunity to re-configure those spaces in a safer and more productive way. For instance, open fields, congested walkways, isolated areas around ablution facilities all heighten the vulnerability of residents to crime. By being aware of these difficulties, municipalities can plan better to manage them, in consultation with communities.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Massey, 2013: 611.

⁵⁵ See www.saferpaces.org.za for further insights.

⁵⁶ See GIZ Toolkit for Participatory Safety Planning "Building Safer Communities through Systemic Approaches to Violence Prevention" (GIZ, n.d.).

“ Prosperous and liveable cities are urban spaces where citizens feel safe from violence and crime, and can take full advantage of the economic, social and cultural opportunities offered by cities. ”

(COGTA, 2016: 33)

PROTECT AND BUILD SOCIAL COHESION

5.1.5

Building new community relationships while maintaining existing social cohesion is vital. It is important that community relationships are preserved and not compromised in the upgrading process. In circumstances where there is much poverty and inequality, social cohesion is an important protective factor and can be a force for resilience in a community.

Social cohesion is not a neutral term concerned only with how people collaborate for mutual gain, but it is also defined by how people can collaborate to exclude others. As such these dynamics need to be carefully managed. In any community, people pursue certain agendas through how they structure relationships. There is always a danger of unintended consequences in upgrading projects including the loss of social cohesion if processes depart dramatically from existing methods of engagement and interaction.⁵⁷

In all of the case studies, the existing social cohesion in the settlement was altered during the upgrading process. In Sheffield Road and Site C, new housing forms strengthened social cohesion. The result was improved community collaboration, which worked to the benefit of community safety more broadly. However, because upgrading can unintentionally alter existing social dynamics, practitioners need to be aware of the complexity of community relationships and issues of exclusion and inclusion. Each community has its own political dynamics that need to be understood. Consideration must also be given to the gendered nature of community dynamics. Issues such as gender-based violence need to be dealt with sensitively. This brings us to the next principle for promoting safety and violence prevention in informal settlement upgrading.

⁵⁷ See Brown-Luthango, 2015c

“Social cohesion is an important factor in protecting the common good in neighbourhoods.”



SUPPORT WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

5.1.6

Section 2 has highlighted that women and young girls are disproportionately affected by the undignified living conditions in informal settlements, as they tend to be the ones responsible for household health, hygiene and wellbeing. However, lack of basic services such as water and sanitation does not only add to their burden of care; having to access such services at a significant distance from their homes also increases the risk of being subjected to sexual assault and rape. Similarly, inadequate shelter and unlit areas in the settlement can contribute to an environment of vulnerability and risk to gender-based violence.

As the example in Monwabisi Park has shown, investing in programmes aimed at addressing gender-based violence as part of an urban design intervention can result in declining trends in rape and domestic violence. Moreover, offering early childhood development programmes does not only benefit children, as discussed below, but can also allow women to invest their time in income-generating opportunities, thereby supporting their economic empowerment.

Understanding how women and girls experience the physical environment is vital to ensure that the right responses are developed in the right places and at

the appropriate times. Ensuring the adequate representation of women in community structures is important, but equally important is the need to be cognisant of community dynamics that may marginalise women in development processes and community structures. Targeting women for empowerment programmes, including skills programmes and capacity building opportunities to support neighbourhood development, will not only benefit women and their families, but communities at large.



SUPPORT YOUTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

5.1.7

As described in section 2, much of the population of informal settlements are young. Therefore, addressing the role of the youth in urban safety is crucial. The benefits of youth development as a part of the upgrading process cannot be over-emphasised.

Youth are most at risk in informal settlements as both victims and perpetrators of crime and violence. Urban safety can have a positive impact on the lives of young residents. Often, the persistent problems of dysfunctional schools, lack of (especially) male role models and high levels of unemployment constrain the options available to youth. In these contexts, a focus on social crime prevention is even more pressing and it is here that programmes which emphasise youth development and early childhood development should be fully integrated into the upgrading process.

Primary prevention is particularly important in this context and refers to aspects that will address risk factors in the general population known to be associated with violent behaviour. Primary violence prevention is directed at people who have not necessarily experienced or applied violence. The aim of primary prevention measures is to discourage violence even before it develops by identifying the conditions that lead to violence and changing them. It is aimed at strengthening and building capacity and self-reliance in a child within the family by providing public education and awareness campaigns, strengthening community-based responses and family preservation, and ensuring that children remain in school. This includes making social grants accessible to all those who qualify.⁵⁸

The learnings from the research and engagements in the course of the project highlight the benefits of supporting development opportunities that benefit the youth and children. The integrated programmes in informal settlements that target youth include: social support, education, leisure and sports, workshops on issues affecting the youth and job training.⁵⁹ While the re-blocking and the ePHP projects did not have a deliberate focus on youth development, these could be incorporated and become an integrated part of the upgrading methodologies.

South Africa's informal settlements need strategies that are short, medium and long term. Early childhood development interventions are specifically beneficial for changing the social fabric in the medium to long-term because the intervention begins at an early age thereby providing children with the best possible foundation for long-term success. Providing these children with opportunities for mobility has the enormous potential of creating generational change for the better.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Bernal, 2015: 45.

MONITOR AND EVALUATE FOR RESULTS

5.1.8

Careful evaluation in the upgrading process is critical to ensuring that urban safety concerns remain a central tenet of informal settlement upgrading. The case study reviews, the discussions in the CityLabs on “Urban Violence, Safety and Governance” and with an advisory group representing governmental and non-governmental institutions, undertaken through this project, have demonstrated how evaluations can provide critical insights into the projects. Through the involvement of community members, the project team was able to do a detailed assessment of the impact of the three informal settlement upgrading methodologies on urban safety.

A focused impact assessment provides significant data to make a stronger case for mainstreaming urban safety concerns. However, it is important to consider that the impact of current interventions, such as ECD, might only be evident in the social fabric in years to come.⁶⁰ Building in the actual monitoring of crime statistics with the police and through community crime watch organisations would go a long way to understanding the impact of various interventions over time.

To date, not all methodologies are being formally evaluated.⁶¹ The full impact of the work is being underestimated as a result of the lack of structured mechanisms for the exchange and sharing of experiences and actual quantitative measurement of impact. Both municipal officials in cities and practitioners have much to learn by sharing research activities. Further, monitoring the results of interventions with police stations in the areas would be highly beneficial. The urban safety component of the upgrading can be optimised by committing to a series of participatory monitoring and evaluation methods before the project starts, and ensuring that evaluation is core to the work.⁶²

⁶⁰ CityLab, 30 October 2014(d): 4.

⁶¹ As part of the IDRC’s Safe and Inclusive Cities project, VPUU was one of the case studies reviewed during the period 2013-2016. The final research findings have not yet been published, but initial findings confirmed that perceptions of safety have improved and that murder rates in had dropped in VPUU intervention areas. See IDRC policy brief (n.d.).

⁶² Ibid.

INTEGRATIVE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

5.2.1

Municipalities are large and complex institutions with multiple functions. In many instances, there is no collaboration or integration amongst the functions of various municipal departments. The need for a multi-disciplinary approach to municipal level planning and the benefits thereof are also evident in the work done through the informal settlement upgrading and urban safety case studies. As the case studies have demonstrated, it is important that municipalities review their public safety policies considering safety more in an integrated way. As a second step, programmes need to be linked to upgrading interventions.

Promoting urban safety requires cities to begin developing a cross-cutting perspective on urban safety. Municipal officials need to consider how the provision of basic services makes a significant contribution to urban safety. This needs to happen alongside important protective socio-economic interventions including early childhood development (ECD), a focus on the role of the youth and the importance of safeguarding public space. Housing departments need to begin viewing public safety, social development and economic development departments as their allies in informal settlement upgrading.

During the planning of in-situ upgrades for informal settlements, the following municipal, provincial or national departments should be involved:

- Human Settlements
- Public Safety (including Metro-police)
- Infrastructure Services
- Development Planning (including the IDP / Ward Level Plans)
- Spatial Planning and Urban Design
- Roads & Public Transport
- Social development
- Health
- Education
- Economic development
- Energy / Eskom.

Achieving this level of integration will require a very deliberate shift away from current thinking. The creation of a permanent (or at least mid-term) multi-stakeholder team is required to bring all the different departments on board. Once a multi-stakeholder team is in place, it can be actively involved in planning and implementation of the upgrades. This is fundamental and should be encouraged at all spheres of government, not just at a municipal level, through proper funding frameworks that allow flexibility.

There are a number of important learnings from the case studies and the CityLab series that can be incorporated into the informal settlement work being pursued by local, provincial and national government. An integrated approach between spheres of government is equally vital to the success of urban safety. The case studies have shown that without proper planning and consideration in the beginning, upgrading processes have positive effects on certain segments while safety aspects were often not sufficiently addressed, which also limited the success and sustainability of the interventions. Apart from the positive impact that the provision of municipal services and security of tenure has on informal settlement residents, the case study work makes a significant contribution to the thinking around how various government departments can address safety as a feature of the upgrading process.

“Achieving this level of integration will require a very deliberate shift away from current thinking.”

INSTITUTIONAL INTERVENTIONS

5.2.2

City governments can have significant influence on urban safety. Local government's regulatory framework gives it control of planning regulations. These planning regulations can be used in a progressive manner to support informal activity, which promotes active surveillance, for instance. The provision of municipal services and the support from urban management department within municipalities can also provide critical public safety support.⁶³

Furthermore, the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) provides the opportunities for local government to feed urban safety concerns into the planning process. It can ensure that communities get involved in planning processes, so that funding for implementation from the relevant departments gets secured and in the longer term communities become safer and more secure. To date, safety issues are presented in the Community Safety chapter of the IDP and not in the Human Settlements/Housing chapter. The alignment of these aspects will add value to the planning of urban safety interventions.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

5.2.3

Urban communities in South African cities have a long history of partnerships in the fight against crime and violence. These include Neighbourhood Watches, Community Safety Forums and Community Policing Forums.⁶⁴ Given that there are deeply held suspicions between community members and the police in many communities, successful partnerships can be difficult to establish and maintain. Police are also often not sufficiently capacitated to perform their services effectively.

Urban safety has multiple dimensions and therefore multi-sectoral sets of partnerships are the most appropriate. Local authorities need to support both multi-stakeholder government teams and create alliances and collaborate with NGOs and community members to receive community inputs that will assist in optimising planning and delivery. Upgrading not only improves the lives of urban dwellers in the specifically

targeted settlements but also provides the opportunity to reduce city-wide risk factors for crime and violence. However, in order to optimise interventions, practitioners need to really understand the communities in which they work. This includes understanding local socio-economic realities, community dynamics, livelihood strategies and how people manage to survive in mostly dire situations. Furthermore, municipal officials, who start engaging with the community, require detailed knowledge of the infrastructure requirements in these settlements and the existing restrictions to land tenure.

⁶³Gotsch et al 2014: 23.

⁶⁴According to the Community Safety Forums Policy of 2011, the Community Safety Forum (CSF) acts as coordinating structure for collaboration, integrated planning and implementation of safety programmes in the local sphere. Its purpose is to enable a multi-sectoral approach on safety, whereas the Community Policing Forum facilitates community-police relations within a specific police station precinct. CSFs fulfil three functions: 1) coordinating the multi-sectoral approach on community safety and security to enhance synergies; 2) facilitating regular safety audits in partnership with civil society; and, 3) coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of safety programmes or projects.

Informal settlements are places of daily exposure and vulnerability to risks, hazards and violence. Transforming the undignified and unsafe living conditions in informal settlements is not only a moral imperative; it is also a policy directive in South Africa.

Informal settlement upgrading is multi-faceted and includes working towards the provision of services and infrastructure, tenure security, public space and public facilities and other social and economic programmes that deal with broader structural inequalities. While informal settlement upgrading in and of itself can contribute to reduced vulnerability to violence and enhanced safety, this booklet has sought to demonstrate that a deliberate focus on the diverse factors underpinning violence and crime as part and parcel of informal settlement upgrading interventions will lead to better, and more sustainable, outcomes.

Drawing on global literature and local case studies, pursuing physical upgrades through a safety lens has been identified as the first key success factor in advancing safety and violence prevention in informal settlement upgrading. Other key success factors identified relate to security of tenure, community participation, the creation of safe public spaces, protecting and building social cohesion, supporting multi-sectoral development interventions for women, children and youth.

These key success factors provide practical guidance to municipalities in their efforts to transform informal settlements into liveable, safe and dignified neighbourhoods. While the findings from the research in settlements in Cape Town cannot be generalised to all informal settlements in South Africa, the examination of how each of

the informal settlement upgrading methodologies had a mitigating impact on crime and violence in these respective informal settlements offers useful insights to government officials and practitioners when planning and implementing informal settlement upgrading elsewhere. Although each methodology impacts differently according to context, it is evident from the case studies presented that physical infrastructure interventions should be carefully considered in consultation with local communities, that specific safety components need to be an integral part of such interventions, and that they need to be complemented by socio-economic interventions in order to improve urban safety as part of informal settlement upgrading.

Given the multi-faceted nature of the task at hand, the coordination and cooperation between different municipal departments and spheres of government is essential. Working with other stakeholders, such as civil society organisations supporting local communities and upgrading processes, will also add value. While single interventions can result in good outcomes, ultimately better, more sustainable and locally appropriate solutions will be achieved if promoting safety and violence prevention through informal settlement upgrading is pursued as a concerted, partnership-based approach.

CORE PROJECT MATERIAL INFORMING THIS BOOKLET

A. Case Study Reports

- Bernal (2015) Mainstreaming Urban Safety and Inclusion in South Africa. The Case of VPUU in Monwabisi Park, Cape Town. African Centre for Cities and GIZ.
- Brown-Luthango, M. (2014a) "Mainstreaming Safety and Inclusion in South Africa" Synthesis of Research Findings. Project Sites: Freedom Park (Mitchell's Plain), Sheffield Road (Philippi), Monwabisi Park (Khayelitsha) and Site C (Khayelitsha).
- Brown-Luthango (2014b) Enhancing Safety through Upgrading – Experiences from Cape Town. The Case of Re-Blocking in Sheffield Road, Cape Town. African Centre for Cities and GIZ.
- Brown-Luthango, M. (2015a) 'Enhancing security through upgrading: Experiences from Cape Town' accessed on 29 January 2017 on www.saferspaces.org.za
- Brown-Luthango, M. (2015b) Mainstreaming Urban Safety and Inclusion. Site C Khayelitsha. African Centre for Cities and GIZ.
- Brown-Luthango, M., Reyes, E. and Gubevu, M. (2016) Informal settlement upgrading and safety: experiences from Cape Town, South Africa. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, July 2016: 1-23.

B. Urban Violence, Safety and Governance CityLab Meetings, Convened by the African Centre for Cities

- Social Cohesion. CityLab Meeting – 30 April 2014. (Summary of Main Discussion Points).
- Integrated, Participatory Upgrading – Knowledge, Policy and Practice. City Lab Meeting – June 2014. (Summary of Main Discussion Points)
- Understanding and breaking the cycle of violence – role of ECD and youth development programmes'. CityLab Meeting – 28 August 2014. (Summary of Main Discussion Points).
- Urban Violence, Safety and Governance. CityLab Meeting – 30 October 2014. (Summary of Main Discussion Points).

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