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I INTRODUCTION

This strategy paper has been developed in the context of UN-Habitat's Safer Cities Programme, and the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). It forms part of UN-Habitat's work on urbanization, the inclusive city, the problems of urban youth, and issues of governance and youth participation. It is in keeping with the Millennium Development Goal of achieving a significant improvement in the lives of urban slum dwellers by 2020.



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Since the beginning of the 1990's, the population of urban youth living in poverty, and youth crime and crime by minors in cities in the developing world have increased significantly. As part of the Safer Cities initiative, UN-Habitat has undertaken a number of exploratory surveys and studies in African cities which focus on the plight of youth in the correctional system, and those at risk of criminalization and victimization,

such as street children. Through its Urban Management Programme, it has worked in collaboration with local partners on the development of youth junior councils and youth participatory mechanisms.

In June 2002, in collaboration with the Government of South Africa, UN-Habitat initiated an international conference held in Nelson Mandela Metropole, on the development of citizenship among youth in conflict with the law in Africa. That conference brought together representatives of national governments, cities and municipalities, civil society organizations working with youth at risk, as well as youth leaders, criminal justice personnel, the research community and United Nations agencies. Its aim was to provide tools to support initiatives concerned with youth at risk, and young offenders, to elaborate a strategy on youth at risk, and to establish a network of cities and public and private organizations working with such youth. The conference resulted in a Declaration, and a Platform for Action, both of which focus both on the problems of the most vulnerable youth in African cities.¹

Building on the conclusions reached at the conference, a follow-up meeting was organized by UN-Habitat to develop a strategy paper on Youth at Risk in Africa. This was in association with the World Bank facilitated *Youth Employment Summit* 2002, held in Alexandria, Egypt, September 7-11th. At that meeting an Expert Group, which included representatives of UN-Habitat, city mayors, and international NGO's,

¹ The conference Declaration can be found in Annex I. The Agenda, background paper and conference report can be accessed at www.welfare.gov.za/documents/

developed a draft and made recommendations which form the basis of the current paper.

At the global level, in 1995, the United Nations *World Programme of Action on Youth* established ten priority areas for improving the lot of young people. They included education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, girls and young women, and youth participation. In 2000, five new concerns with a major impact of young people were added to the list: globalization, information and communications technology, HIV/AIDS, conflict prevention, and intergenerational dependency.² All of these are crucial areas of concern for Africa's youth. A global policy paper on *Children, Youth and Urban Governance*, which considers how greater participation by young people in national and local governance can be facilitated, was completed by UN-Habitat in 2004.

1.1 OUTLINE OF THE PAPER AND ITS PURPOSE

This strategy paper sets out the global context for concern about the plight of young people in urban settings, the extent and nature of those problems for African youth, and the urgency of the need for widespread and concerted action. While all young people in Africa are affected by rapid urbanisation, deteriorating health and economic and social conditions, the paper focuses on the most vulnerable

² www.un.esa/socdev

youth - young people whose background places them 'at risk' of future offending and victimisation. There is already a huge increase in youth crime and deviance among young people in the region. The concern here is with the serious impact of recent global and regional trends on the most vulnerable young people and the communities in which they live, and on their capacity to participate in their own societies and be included, productive, and fulfilled citizens.



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Secondly, the paper outlines the crucial role which national and local governments must play in meeting these challenges, including the adaptation of government structures which will foster and enable the rights of children and young people to be protected and supported, and the development of youth policies and participatory mechanisms. It sets out the major steps which will enable cities and municipalities to develop effective local strategies. Such local strategies

should form a key part of city development policies and practice, developing city-wide crime prevention aimed at improving the quality of life, and at the inclusion of youth, and a collective vision of how cities should function. In the context of NEPAD, a major aspect of such development lies in the enhancement of young people's capacity to contribute to strategic city plans. Finally, the paper outlines the important role the international community can play to support city initiatives in Africa in relation to at risk youth.

The overall purpose of the paper, therefore, is to provide guidelines for national, and especially local governments in Africa, as well as the international community, on the steps which must be taken to empower and meet the needs of urban youth at risk, and to promote community safety and better governance. It is intended for elected city officials, local government administrators and services, as well as others who work at the local level in the public and private sectors. In the context of this paper, *empowerment* refers to the circumstances and factors which enhance the development of citizenship and productiveness among young people as they move into adulthood. It is concerned with the adaptation of government structures and institutions to protect and deliver children's, youth and human rights, including the right to participation. Empowering African cities and municipalities, and youth themselves, will help to build healthy individuals and communities.

1.2 WHY A FOCUS ON YOUTH AT RISK IN AFRICA



There is now ample and accumulating evidence in developed and developing countries that the conditions under which children and young people grow up are crucial for their mental and physical health, and emotional, social and intellectual development.³ A range of common factors influence and shape their lives in all countries. The quality of early childhood care and conditions, and parental and family relationships, are especially important. Adequate local and family employment and income, good housing and environmental conditions, all have a major impact on families and their quality of life. In

³ See for example: Shaw, M. (2001). *Investing in Youth: International Approaches to Preventing Crime and Victimization*. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime.

adolescence, access to good schools which reflect their needs and culture, to good role models and leisure and recreational facilities, the availability of healthy and rewarding employment opportunities, and quality health care are all important.

Whatever the country, therefore, there are common factors which place children and young people *at risk* of becoming involved in crime and of being victimized. These risk factors also vary with gender. Young girls and young women are exposed to different sets of experiences from boys and young men as they grow up. The common *protective* factors which strengthen children and young people's resilience in the face of difficult living conditions have also been clearly identified. They include such things as good parenting, a stable and supportive home environment, a healthy and supportive environment, and good school achievement.⁴

In Africa, there is overwhelmingly evidence of the presence of such risk factors among children and young people growing up in urban settings. Severe urban overcrowding and decay, increasing poverty and unemployment, family and community breakdown, on-going wars, disease, child and youth exploitation, and trans-national trafficking and crime are multiplying the severity and range of risks to which children and young people in African cities are exposed, and call for urgent action.

⁴ See Hawkins et al., (2000) *Predictors of Youth Violence*. Washington: OJJDP US Dept of Justice; Shaw op cit., and Shaw, M. & Tschivula, L. (2002). 'Developing citizenship among urban youth in conflict with the law.' *Environment and Urbanization*, 14 (2) October 59-70.

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF AN URBAN FOCUS

When infrastructure and services are lacking, urban settlements are among the world's most life threatening environments...

Innocenti Digest 10 UNICEF (2002)

The world's population is becoming increasingly urban, and three-quarters of the urban population growth is occurring in developing countries. Existing urban areas are not equipped to accommodate such rapid population increases, and cities in the developing world are characterized by unplanned and overcrowded settlements without access to even the basic urban services. Children and young people represent a very high percentage of urban populations in such countries.

Urban areas should provide greater opportunities in terms of access to better housing, health services, schools and employment, than rural regions. The majority of those growing up in cities in developing countries, however, face greater risks than in rural areas.⁵ These include greater health risks from overcrowding and poor sanitation, increased vulnerability to natural disasters, risk of eviction through the illegal occupation of land, and greater economic vulnerability because of the reliance on cash income and the lack of secure employment.

⁵ See UNICEF (2002). *Poverty and Exclusion Among Urban Children*. *Innocenti Digest No. 10* Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.

1.4 WHO ARE THE URBAN YOUTH AT RISK?

Internationally, a number of terms are used to refer to young people. The term youth is often defined as those between the ages of 15 and 24, young people those of 10-24, adolescents 10-19 year-olds, and children, those under 10.⁶ Countries and regions have many different conventions. In Africa, it is common to define young people as those up to 35 years of age, and to include those under 10. In general, follows the international conventions where data exists, and uses some of these terms interchangeably. It focuses mainly on youth of 15-24.



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⁶ These are the definitions generally used by UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS and ILO, for example.

At risk' youth in urban settings include all those young girls and boys whose living conditions, health and circumstances or behaviours place them at risk of victimization and/or involvement in crime. They include, but are not limited to, youth already in conflict with the law, those living in urban slums, street children, youth gangs, school-drop outs, unemployed youth, substance abusing youth, those who are sexually exploited, war-affected children, and those affected by the pandemic of HIV/AIDS including orphans. These groups include both girls as well as boys. Girls in particular are often targets of sexual exploitation, and heavily affected by HIV/Aids. Thus, for the purpose of this paper, youth at risk are defined as 'those children and young people whose circumstances, life-style and/or behaviour put them at risk of future offending or victimization.' Urban youth include all those living in cities and townships under local government administration.⁷

⁷ This is normally taken to include populations of 150,000 or more, governed under city or municipal status with an elected mayor, although many Africa countries use a figure of 2,000 to distinguish between rural and urban settlements (UN Habitat (2001) *The State of the World's Cities 2001*).



Yaounde, Cameroon: © UN-HABITAT

II THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM AND CURRENT TRENDS

2.1 YOUTH AND THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

The situation of youth at risk in Africa is acute. While youth in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries, are confronted with severe problems, it is clear that African youth are especially vulnerable. Cities in Africa include some of the world's poorest and most overcrowded urban environments. The lives of young people in Sub Saharan Africa, in particular, are marked by a combination of severe human injustices and disasters.



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⁸ *Cities in a Globalizing World, Global Report on Human Settlement 2001*. Nairobi: UNHABITAT and Earthscan Publications

In many African cities more than 50% of the urban population are under the age of 19.⁸ They have been particularly affected by growing urban poverty, high levels of unemployment, changing family patterns, and deteriorating environmental and health conditions over the past twenty years. Among other factors, the population density in cities promotes the transmission of infections to which children and young people are especially vulnerable, including HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS has become the major health problem in Africa, with a devastating impact on family units and health and education services. It is deepening impoverishment and social inequality. As a group, young people are the most vulnerable sector of the population in relation to the disease.

Young people are heavily affected by the absence of sustainable employment. The lack of employment opportunities, even for school and university graduates, decades of war, the recruitment of child soldiers and availability of small arms, and the growth in trafficking of children and young people, have all contributed to the critical situation. Urban crime, largely a youth-related phenomenon, has increased rapidly over the past decade, and faster than in most other regions.⁹ Dakar, Senegal, for example, has seen increases in petty theft, burglary and violence by young people throughout the 1990's.¹⁰ Yaoundé, Cameroon has similarly experienced increased youth aggression, theft, vandalism and sexual assault, as well as

⁹ UNICRI (1998). *Survey of 18 developing countries*.

¹⁰ Trends in urban crime prevention, *UNCJIN Crime and Justice Newsletter 1994/5 Vol. 2 No. 2*.

prostitution.¹¹ The level of youth violence in South Africa has been a major concern in the same period.¹²

2.1.1 Past legacies

Of all the continents, Africa has undoubtedly experienced the greatest sustained conflict during the past 50 years. Wars of independence have been rapidly replaced by civil wars, some of which continue to be fought half a century later. Angola, the extreme example, where war has been a feature of life for almost 50 years, is by no means unique. Civil war has been a prominent feature in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Uganda for over 25 years. Elsewhere, sporadic coups, counter coups and revolutions have helped to destabilise individual countries and regions. These have ranged from internal disputes, as in Nigeria, to disputes between neighbouring countries, such as those between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the Great Lakes Region and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These conflicts have resulted in considerable loss of human life and property, spiralled influxes of refugees across African borders, and deepened poverty. They have left legacies of war-affected children, child soldiers and the expanding trade in small arms. Corruption has also helped to bankrupt many post-independence states, such as Nigeria, Chad and the DRC.

¹¹ Mang - Yon Thega, Y. (2001). *Enquete sur la delinquance juvenile a Yaoundé*. Nairobi: Report for UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme.

¹² Pelsler, E. (Ed.) (2002). *Crime Prevention Partnerships. Lessons from Practice*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.

2.2 URBANIZATION

2.2.1 Increasing Urbanization And Its Consequences

The world's population is becoming increasingly urban. Forty-seven percent of the world's population were located in urban areas in 2001 and is expected to rise to 50% by 2007.¹³ In industrialized countries the population is already largely urban. In the developing world the rapid urbanization trend points to an explosive demographic change over the next 20 years. It is estimated that by 2015 an important number of 'mega cities' with more than 10 million inhabitants will be located in the developing world.¹⁴ Three-quarters of this urban population growth is occurring in developing countries, through natural population growth and rural to urban migration, as populations migrate to find a better standard of living.

Existing urban areas are not equipped to accommodate such rapid population increases, and the lack of investment in infrastructure and its maintenance, and outdated city plans, have compounded the problems. Cities in the developing world are characterised by a lack of access to housing and shelter, basic urban services such as clean water, sanitation and electricity, as well as to education and

¹³ *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003* pg.25, Nairobi: UNHABITAT and Earthscan Publications.

¹⁴ *Cities in a Globalizing World, Global report on Human Settlement 2001*. Nairobi: UNHABITAT and Earthscan Publications.

health care. Unplanned and overcrowded settlements and informal housing areas, which provide accommodation to the poor and vulnerable, present numerous problems for the delivery of urban services.

In African cities, population growth is much faster than in other regions. The urban population has been increasing by an average of 6% per annum, double the rate for cities in Latin America or South East Asia.¹⁵ By 2010, it is estimated that 42.7% of the African population will be living in urban areas, and 47.9% by 2020.¹⁶ The city of Lagos in Nigeria, for example, is expected to have a population of more than 10 million by 2015, and 70 other cities will have more than one million people.

Much of this population growth has resulted in rapidly expanding informal settlements, where people are living in conditions of extreme poverty and privation, without adequate shelter, infrastructure provision or security of tenure. In Lagos and Nairobi, 60% of households are not connected to water.¹⁷ Currently, 60% of the urban population in Abidjan lives in unplanned settlements.¹⁸ The explosion of the informal sector in many cities reflects the overwhelming poverty and lack of jobs, and the inability of the national

economies to grow and create employment opportunities. High levels of unemployment and poverty are characteristic, as in Dakar, Senegal, where urban unemployment is at 30%.¹⁹

Unplanned settlements in Dar es Salaam have increased from 40% in 1979 to 75% in 1999....other problems include: further densification and growth of new unplanned settlements in peripheral villages on hazardous lands...suburbs without basic infrastructures and social amenities; uncoordinated city centre renewal; city centre traffic congestion; air pollution...

Andersson & Stavrou (2000)

Risk of eviction is a further hazard for families living in informal settlements and urban slum areas, disrupting family and social networks. In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 10-20% of households surveyed had been evicted in the previous year.²⁰

¹⁵ In cities like Nairobi, Nouakchott, Lusaka and Kinshasa, the population increased sevenfold between 1950-1990

¹⁶ *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003* pg.252, Nairobi: UNHABITAT and Earthscan Publications.

¹⁷ *The State of the World's Cities 2001*. (2001). Nairobi: UN Habitat.

¹⁸ World Bank Country Assessment Report, Cote d'Ivoire, January 2002, *Upgrading Low Income Urban Settlements*.

¹⁹ *City Profile, Dakar, IAGU-UMP, 1999*

²⁰ CARE/Tanzania (1998). *Dar-es-Salaam Urban Livelihood Security Assessment. Summary Report*. Dar-es-Salaam: CARE/Tanzania.

2.2.2 Poverty and exclusion

Exclusion within the city means:

- **Isolation** from the social development process
- **Unemployment** or exclusion from the economy
- **Marginalization, discrimination & rootlessness** or exclusion from mainstream political & cultural processes
- **Vulnerability** or exclusion from security networks

Poverty underlies the lives of the majority of the world's children and youth, and its reduction is one of the UN's eight Millennium Goals and major action strategies.²¹ The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that about 600 million children in developing countries live below the poverty line of \$1 per day and are thus deprived of the basic necessities of life. While wealthy countries have policies to deal with the social effects of unemployment, they are rare in many developing countries, and totally absent in Sub Saharan Africa. The average proportion of families living below the poverty line in urban areas is more than 30% and recent estimates put 60% of the population of Angola below the poverty line.²²

²¹ UN Development Group. *Halving Extreme Poverty: An Action Strategy for the United Nations. Final draft 10 November 1999. UN Millennium Goals www.developmentgoals.org*

²² UNICEF (2002). *Poverty and Exclusion Among Urban Children. Innocenti Digest No. 10. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.*

In such settings there is a thin line between what is legal and what is illegal. It is in this precarious environment that the majority of African youths are socialised, and many do not have a family member with a contract or steady salary in the last two generations. Poverty similarly limits access to education, and impacts the health of children and young people. Poverty has always been associated with forms of social exclusion – exclusion from the benefits of good services and quality of life, from access to power and decision-making - but the huge increases in the numbers of urban poor mean that far higher proportions of urban youth are now subject to such social exclusion.



Nairobi, Kenya: © Jimmy Shamoony/UN-HABITAT

2.2.3 Lack of and deteriorating services

A major feature of current urban areas is the absence of basic municipal services, or the breakdown or deterioration of services which had formerly been available. These include housing, water and power, sewage and cleaning, transport, roads, recreation and leisure provision, and public safety and security.

Community Profile: Canaanland Johannesburg

Site	0.6 hectares (1.49 acres)
Shacks	230-250
Density	c.13 shacks (about 55 people) per 250 square metres
Residents	c.1000
Languages	IsiNdebele, Sepedi, Sesotho, SiSwati, Setswana, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, and a few languages from elsewhere in Africa

Swart-Kruger, 2002

In Nairobi, Kenya, 60% of the population live in informal settlements squeezed into less than 6% of the city's land, and most plots in these settlements have neither toilet or water connections.²³ In Luanda, Angola, 75% of its some 4 million inhabitants live in informal settlements without infrastructure or services.²⁴ In Ibadan in Nigeria, only 22% of the population is attached to the municipal water system, and less than 1 per cent of households have sewer connections.²⁵

In Greater Soweto, South Africa, conditions in the former township areas are very variable, many people still living

²³ *Habitat Debate*, September 2001, Volume 7. Number 3, *Slum Upgrading: Lessons Learnt in Nairobi*

²⁴ *Community Based Solid Waste Management in Luanda's Musseques: a case study*. (1999). Development Workshop: Guelph, Ontario Canada.

²⁵ *The Sanitation Gap: Development's Deadly Menace*, by Akhtar Hameed Ahan, <http://www.unicef.org/pon97/water1.htm>

in extremely cramped and overcrowded informal settlements and 'back-yard' shacks with very minimal services - unpaved roads, no street lighting, storm drains or solid waste management.²⁶ In Canaanland, an informal settlement in the central business district of Johannesburg before their relocation, one tap served 1000 people, and there was no sanitation or electricity.²⁷

Poor families lack access to public space. The absence of recreational and leisure areas in the informal settlements, coupled with gated communities, and the harassment and exclusion of the poor from central business or residential areas, leaves families and young people without healthy and safe environments in which to play and develop their social and physical skills.

2.2.4 Health services

In the developing world, one in six children is underweight or suffering from stunting, one in seven has no health care at all, one in five has no safe water and one in three has no toilet or sanitation facilities at home. Over 640 million children live in dwellings with mud floors or extreme overcrowding. More than 30,000 children die of preventable causes worldwide every

²⁶ Beall, J., Crankshaw, O. & Parnell, S. (2002). *Social differentiation and urban governance in Greater Soweto: a case study of post-apartheid reconstruction*. Crisis States Working Paper No. 11. London: Development Research Centre. www.crisisstates.com

²⁷ Swart-Kruger, J. (2002). *Children in a South Africa Squatter Camp Gain and Lose a Voice*. In Chawla, L. (Ed.) *Growing up in an Urbanizing World*. Paris: UNESCO & Earthscan Publications.

day.²⁸ The main causes of death and stunted growth are malnutrition and disease, both very prevalent in Africa. In Accra, for example, the majority of those under 15 years die from infectious and parasitic diseases. In Egypt, 25% of those under five years have stunted growth, compared to two percent in the USA. Child malnutrition is rapidly shifting from rural to urban areas.²⁹ The physical hazards for children and youth living in overcrowded slum areas are also high. In Ibadan, Nigeria 1,236 injuries involving 436 children were recorded over a three-month period, and less than 1% were treated in formal health facilities. In Kaduna Nigeria, 92% of children examined had blood lead levels above acceptable limits.³⁰



Yaounde, Cameroon: © Laura/UN-HABITAT

²⁸ Alberto Minujin, Enrique Delamonica, Edward D. Gonzalez and Alejandra Davidziuk *'CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY', A review of child poverty definitions, measurements, and policies, Desk Review paper for UNICEF's Conference on "Children & Poverty: Global Context, Local Solutions"*

²⁹ WHO *Global Database on Child Growth and Malnutrition.*

³⁰ UNICEF (2002). *Poverty and Exclusion Among Urban Children. Innocenti Digest No. 10.* Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.

Health services are, at best, rudimentary in most African countries. Only a handful of states have services with minimum acceptable standards. Africa has the worst ratio of medical personnel to people, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where only half of the population has easy access to health care. Africa generally has one-third as many nurses per capita as the rest of the world, and the ratio of doctors to patients is lower than one per 10,000 people, compared with the world average of one per 800. Where good health services do exist, as in South Africa, they remain the preserve of the upper income groups.

2.2.5 Education – illiteracy and early school leavers

Education is the crucial link for the development of responsibility and citizenship among young people, but it has been particularly affected by growing urbanization. There has been a marked deterioration in the services provided in many African cities. Traditionally education has been the major form of social capital investment, but its value has been minimised for the overwhelming majority of African youth. Since the 1980's, formal education has progressively lost its place as a mechanism for social mobility and change. In Kenya, for example, a relatively wealthy African country, over 50% of primary school graduates do not attend secondary school, while free primary education was only introduced in January 2003, following national elections.

Schools in the most impoverished urban areas are especially impacted by poverty and exclusion. The construction and maintenance of school buildings is a local authority responsibility, but has often been neglected. Schools lack resources and facilities such as recreational space and toilets, and often have

outdated curricula and poorly trained and motivated teachers. Increasing rates of school drop out, fights between student groups who carry arms to school, violence towards teachers, sexual harassment among students, and sexual abuse of female students by male teachers, are all now common in a number of countries, and reflect patterns of behaviour in the local school environment.³¹

Many of those living in informal settlements do not even enter primary education, because families cannot afford it, or lack of schools. Others never progress beyond primary level, again for reasons of cost as well as the availability of secondary education. Yet others leave school early, under pressure from families to earn money or provide family care. This increases their vulnerability to crime and victimization, and further reduces their opportunities to find productive work and involvement in their society.



Nairobi, Kenya: © Sabine/ UN-HABITAT

Girls, and migrant or immigrant youth, are the least likely to enter, or complete, primary or secondary education. World-wide estimates put the number of

³¹ See Pelsler (2003) op. cit.

children not in school at 130 million. The result is illiteracy, which world-wide is estimated in the region of 82 million young women, and 51 million young men. In Sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated 25-30% of young people are illiterate,³² although rates range from 14% in South Africa, to 60% in Senegal.³³

2.2.6 Unemployment

...young people are a potential resource for growth and social development if gainfully employed and productively engaged. But they could also be a source of devastating social tension and conflict if not.

Youth and Employment in the ECA Region (2002). ECA

Youth employment is a major issue for Africa, given the high proportion of young people in the population, high rates of population growth and slow economic growth. It has been estimated that 'each year in Africa, there would be 8.7 million new entrants into the labour markets for whom jobs would have to be found'.³⁴ In developed countries, youth unemployment is usually twice the rate of adult unemployment. In developing countries it is often much higher.

³² ECA (2002). *Youth & Employment in the ECA Region. Economic Commission for Africa.*

³³ Human Development Report 2004, UNDP

³⁴ ECA (2002). *Youth & Employment in the ECA Region. Economic Commission for Africa.*

While there is little reliable data for most countries in Africa, and variations between countries, youth unemployment is clearly very high.³⁵ In South Africa in 2000, 56% of youth were unemployed; studies in the 1990's in Egypt, and Morocco found youth unemployment was 35%, and in Algeria 39%.³⁶ In Tunis, one in three young people are unemployed.³⁷ Long-term unemployment among youth is also likely to be higher than in other regions, a factor known to be associated with negative consequences such as ill health, involvement in crime and delinquency and substance abuse.³⁸

Youth & the informal economy

...in countries where there is no adequate social safety net, youth unemployment greatly underestimates the size of the problem which is compounded by substantial levels of informal sector work as well as by underemployment...

O'Higgins (2002: 6)

Given a deficit of decent jobs in the formal economy, as well as jobs which match qualifications, the informal

³⁵ *The ILO has good youth employment data for only 6 out of 53 African countries (Youth & Employment in the ECA Region. Alexandria, Egypt, 2002).*

³⁶ *ECA (2002). Youth & Employment in the ECA Region. Economic Commission for Africa.*

³⁷ *Ramsey, F. (2002). City Development Strategies and Youth Employment Experiences from Africa. Paper prepared for the Youth Employment Summit, Alexandria, Egypt, September 7-11th.*

³⁸ *O'Higgins, (2002). Government Policy and Youth Unemployment.*

sector is a major source of livelihood. This sector means poor salaries, less productive work, insecure working conditions, and lack of any labour laws or protection. Financial support for the informal sector is marginal, with limited credit facilities, purchasing or special services, little training or technical assistance, and minimal support for co-operative production networks. A youth survey in Malindi Kenya identified lack of access to finance and skills for business development as major problems. Private banks were unwilling to provide credit or loans to young people with no collateral.³⁹ Unemployment rates are even higher for young women than young men, and they are more likely to rely on the informal sector and subsistence agricultural activities.⁴⁰ Cultural biases against the education, training or employment of girls are among the major causes.

2.2.7 Child labour

Child labour often places children at risk. Unacceptable and unhealthy work conditions can affect health and limit physical or mental development, and such children are cut off from important healthy childhood needs such as free time and play and educational opportunities. Domestic work ("little maids" in West Africa, for example), whether poorly paid or unpaid, constitutes one of the most difficult forms of exploitation to expose, and deprives such girls

³⁹ *O'Higgins, (2002). Government Policy and Youth Unemployment.*

⁴⁰ *UMP regional office for Africa, Malindi City Consultation reports 2002.*

⁴¹ *UNICEF (1998). Child Domestic Work. Innocenti Digest No. 5 Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.*

of a formal education.⁴¹ Child labour also increases the risks of exposure to illegal activities such as prostitution or drug trafficking, and increases the risk of AIDS especially among girls. Finally, close family ties are essential for children, but child labour often inhibits regular contact with family members, because of distances and transport costs. Coupled with exploitative working conditions, these problems can transform child workers into street children.



Nairobi, Kenya: © Justo/ UN-HABITAT

2.3 GLOBAL VALUES AND THE BREAKDOWN OF SOCIAL CONTROLS

2.3.1 The breakdown of social controls

Global values which encourage competition and consumption, rather than community and reciprocity, are impacting the lives and cultures of young people throughout the world, even in countries where economic and social conditions are rapidly deteriorating. They affect all aspects of life, including relationships, attitudes and behaviour. The commercial world offers youth an image of a society in which people are valued on the basis of their assets, yet fails to grant most of them access to those assets. One of the manifestations of urbanization is the disintegration of existing normative and ethical value systems. In Africa, the concept of 'ubuntu' refers to the principle that we are all connected to each other, and influenced by the people around us. It recognizes the importance of relationships, and of building communities. The disintegration of ubuntu is occurring at a number of levels, but is especially significant in relation to the family, the school and the local neighbourhood.

With some 39% of South African society aged between 14 and 35, young people clearly comprise a substantial part of South African society. However, due to the policies of past governments, a significant number of young women and men have not been afforded the opportunity to develop their full potential. They have experienced poor housing conditions;

limited and racially-biased access to education and training; limited employment opportunities; high levels of crime and violence and a general disintegration of social networks and communities.

National Youth Commission, Youth Policy 2000.

The **family** is now characterized by vulnerability and instability, directly impacting young children. Migration for employment reasons often separates parents, and increases the proportion of poor single-parent families. Almost all of these are headed by women, and make up more than half the families in some urban areas. This has weakened the transmission of traditional family values and affected social integration. While there is still considerable family and community support in informal settlements, as well as some pride among residents, the appalling living standards, inadequate shelter and non-existent services, do not support adequate socialisation structures.⁴²

At the **neighbourhood** level, informal settlements lack legitimate regulatory mechanisms and social controls, and their place is often taken by a hierarchy of receivers, local bosses, and gang leaders who become recognised as leaders and 'role models' in the neighbourhood, encouraging alcohol or drug abuse, gang violence, risky sexual behaviours and promiscuity among young people. Informal areas also tend to be culturally heterogeneous in terms of ethnic backgrounds, language and religion. In Abidjan, for

⁴² See for example, Swart-Kruger (2002) for an account of resident's pride in Cnaanland South Africa.

example, up to 40% of the population were not born in the Ivory Coast. They use a variety of languages or dialects, and adhere to a number of religions.⁴³ This cultural diversity results in different norms and behaviours, leading to conflicts which are difficult to minimize or resolve. Traditional modes of conflict resolution characteristic of rural areas exist in certain urban areas, but in most informal settlement areas this traditional leadership no longer exists.

In Abidjan, traditional leaders resolve the majority of day-to-day conflicts, as well as negotiating inter-ethnic solutions to problems. Conflict between generations is resolved in the same manner in Senegal, through links between traditional leaders (the 'wise men') and young people involved in neighbourhood security. Support for such traditions by city governments, or the establishment of a stable mediation process, constitutes one of the most effective and economic approaches to conflict resolution and social control in the city.

Given the current circumstances of young people in overcrowded cities, they are unlikely to attain a higher standard of living than their parents or previous generations, and are denied access to citizenship.⁴⁴ Few African countries currently recognize youth as citizens, or ascribe them the status of equal citizenship within their societies. Without involvement in decision-making, children and youth are excluded from their

⁴³ Sankoré, P. (1995) *Accessibility to justice by the poor in Africa.*

⁴⁴ Citizenship is often defined as a 'common membership' of a community with a set of rights and obligations between individuals and the state.

society and their rights are often unrecognized.⁴⁵ In such circumstances, young people become vulnerable targets for alternative sources of legitimacy to counteract their exclusion. The most marginalized young people, who cannot identify with the norms and practices of their society, are those most at risk, often stigmatised and victimized through their attempts to survive or assert themselves.

2.4 HIV/AIDS

Why the crisis is unique for children

- The huge scale of the problem
- An AIDS-weakened infrastructure
- The vulnerability of orphans
- Grief before death and the tragedy of losing both parents
- The AIDS stigma

UNICEF 1999 Children Orphaned by AIDS

2.4.1 The impact on African society

In Africa, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS exploded from fewer than 1 million cases in the early 1980s to approximately 25 million cases by the end of 2003. Between 1990 and 2003, the number of children orphaned by the disease in sub-Saharan Africa increased from fewer than 1 million to more than 12 million.⁴⁶ The average life expectancy in the region has dropped from 62 years to 47 years. An estimated one third of all currently infected individuals are youth

aged 15 to 24.⁴⁷ Every day, about 1,700 children become infected with HIV. There are an estimated 2.1 million children worldwide under age 15 currently living with HIV. In 2003, about 630,000 children under the age of 15 became infected.⁴⁸ About 1.7 million new



Nairobi, Kenya: © Justo/ UN-HABITAT

⁴⁵ See UN HABITAT policy paper 2004 *Children, Youth and Urban Governance*.

⁴⁶ UNICEF, *State of the World's Children Report 2005*

⁴⁷ UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*.

⁴⁸ UNICEF, *State of the World's Children Report 2005*

adolescent HIV infections – over half of the world's total – occur in sub-Saharan Africa.

The spread of HIV/AIDS has been facilitated by gender-based violence in wars and conflicts. One study found that in 11 of 17 countries surveyed, girls had been abducted, press-ganged or forcibly recruited into armies: 'nearly all girls abducted into armed groups are forced into sexual slavery... [and] become infected with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and, increasingly, HIV/AIDS.'⁴⁹ Some of the worst cases of child exploitation by armed groups occurred in Africa. In Uganda, one of the worst affected countries, 21% of some 11,000 abducted children were female, and nearly all of them were sexually exploited.⁵⁰ Sexual exploitation also affects many young recruits who volunteer to join armies.

There is a way to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS. We must focus on young people. More than half those newly infected with HIV today are between 15 and 24 years old.

UNICEF 2002 *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*



Nairobi, Kenya: © UN-HABITAT

2.4.2 Social and economic consequences

In Africa, HIV/AIDS has had a devastating impact on social inequalities and the cycle of poverty already present in the region.⁵¹ In the Ivory Coast, for example, household income in urban households can fall by up to 67% when a family member has AIDS, and expenditures on health care quadruple.⁵² It is estimated that in 2010, over 18 million African children under the age of 18 will have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS, and the number of double orphans – children whose mother and father have died – will increase by about 2 million over the same period, breaking down family units and increasing youth poverty.⁵³ The loss of teaching staff to HIV/AIDS is seriously impacting the

⁴⁹ **The Machel Review, September 2000.**

⁵⁰ **UNICEF (September 2001). *Abductions in Northern and South-western Uganda, 1986-2001.***

⁵¹ **HIV/AIDS and Local Governance in Sub Saharan Africa, A UMP-ROA Occasional Paper 2002**

⁵² **UNICEF (1999) *Children Orphaned by AIDS*.**

⁵³ **UNICEF, *State of the World's Children Report 2005***

provision of education. Treatment and health service costs can expect to increase dramatically in the near future, draining resources from education, agriculture and other sectors of national economies. By 2005, AIDS treatment costs are expected to account for more than one third of Ethiopia's government health spending, more than half of Kenya's, and nearly two-thirds of Zimbabwe's.⁵⁴

Increasing mobility, urban poverty and social exclusion are all implicated in the causes, and in the fight against, HIV/AIDS. For young people who are more likely to

engage in risky behaviours, the existence of taboos about sexuality, coupled with the stigmatisation associated with HIV/AIDS, and the lack of services catering for their needs, all help to increase their exclusion from the larger society. As the highest risk group, young people are also seen as the *key* to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

This section has outlined the challenges facing youth in African cities. The specific case of youth at risk is discussed in the next section.



Nairobi, Kenya: © UN-HABITAT

⁵⁴ See Jogunosimi, T.(2001) February. *The Facts: The HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa. Advocates for Youth.* www.advocatesforyouth.org



Nairobi, Kenya: © UN-HABITAT

II YOUTH AT RISK



Nairobi, Kenya: © Kanyua/UN-HABITAT

The most vulnerable urban youth in Africa include a number of often over-lapping groups who face the greatest risks - those already involved in the justice system - and those on its margins. 'At risk' youth in urban settings include all those girls and boys, young women and men, whose living conditions, health and circumstances or behaviours place them at risk of victimization and/or involvement in crime. They include youth already in conflict with the law, those living in urban slums, street children, youth gangs, school-drop outs, unemployed youth, substance abusing youth, those who are sexually exploited and war-affected children, and those affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including orphans.

3.1 RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

As suggested earlier, there is now widespread agreement in developing and developed countries about the common factors, which place children and young people *at risk* of offending and victimization.⁵⁵ The risk factors include *family factors* such as early childhood care and parental behaviours and parenting; *individual factors* such as aggressive behaviour at an early age or learning difficulties; *school factors* such as the quality of teaching and the atmosphere of the school, as well as a child or young person's ability to learn and stay in school; and *community or environmental factors*, including the quality of surroundings, recreational facilities, employment opportunities, and other local influences such as the presence of youth gangs or drugs and guns (see box page 24).⁵⁶

Thus some risks are associated with individual families and their children, others with the kind of area or neighbourhood in which they grow up. Yet not all children living in a difficult neighbourhood will become involved in risky behaviours, and there is now widespread agreement about the kinds of *protective*

⁵⁵ See Shaw, M. & Tschivula, L. (2002). 'Developing citizenship among urban youth in conflict with the law.' *Environment and Urbanization*, 14 (2) October 59-70; Shaw, M. (2001). *Investing in Youth: International Approaches to Preventing Crime and Victimization*. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime; Hawkins et al., (2000) *Predictors of Youth Violence*. Washington: OJJDP US Dept of Justice.

⁵⁶ *Youth Violence in Schools*. (1999). Joint Framework Document. Pretoria: Secretariat for Safety and Security.

factors, which strengthen the resilience of children and young people. These include such things as good parenting, a stable and supportive home environment, a healthy and supportive environment, and good schooling and school achievement.⁵⁷ There is also accumulated experience from developed countries, which demonstrates that when good programmes are *targeted* to the children, families or areas most at risk, then they are likely to be successful in reducing levels of offending as *well* as a number of other social and economic problems.⁵⁸ For example, giving support to high risk families improves the chances that their children will do well in school, find employment, and reduces offending or substance abuse problems.

Risk factors for youth offending:

- Poverty, poor environment
- Harsh, erratic parenting
- Poor supervision
- Early aggressive behaviour
- Parental conflict, family violence
- Lack of facilities or jobs
- Poor schooling, truancy, exclusion

While there are many common risk factors, some groups of young people have specific needs because of their experiences and exposure, including:

- Young offenders and young people already in conflict with the law
 - Youth groups, gangs

⁵⁷ See Shaw (2001) *op cit.*, and Hawkins et al., (2000) *op cit.*

⁵⁸ Sansfacon, D. & Welsh, B. (1999). *Crime Prevention Digest II: Comparative Analysis of Successful Community Safety*. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime.

- Violent youth
- Young offenders in institutions or returning to the community
- Street children
- Substance abusers
- Sexually exploited young women or young men
- War affected children and youth
- Young women or men who are victims of HIV/AIDS

Youth offenders are those already subject to the criminal justice system, having been found guilty or sentenced. *Youth in conflict with the law* is a rather broader term which includes those who may be known to the justice system but not prosecuted, those reported to the police, as well as those charged with offences and found guilty. Street children, youth gangs and violent youth, like substance abusers, may or may not be known to the justice system. Many young people may fall into a number of these categories, and their risks of victimization and criminalization will be multiplied.

3.2. GENDER DIFFERENCES

Gender differences among youth at risk are very important, since young girls and young women are exposed to different sets of experiences and risk factors compared with boys and young men as they grow up. Some of these differences are partly genetic e.g.:

- Differences in health development, and vulnerability to accidents and risk-taking behaviours
- Differences in the rate at which girls and boys mature as they grow up.

In most societies there are very important cultural and social differences in the way girls and boys are brought up by parents, and treated by others. This often begins

at birth, and continues into adulthood, with boys generally being given greater personal freedom and access to education and training, and girls less freedom outside the home and expectations of household employment. In African countries some of these differences are very great because of customs and tradition or religious beliefs, as well as the impact of poverty, and they significantly affect the types and level of risks to which girls and boys are exposed. They include:

- Differences in the control exercised over them as they grow up, with far more controls over many aspects of girls' lives than boys
- Differences in how they spend their time in and outside the home
- Differences in the type and extent of physical, emotional and sexual abuse experienced growing up in the home and outside it
- Differences in expectations about, and access to, education, training and employment
- Differences in access to, and participation in, community life and decision-making.

Some of the consequences are that boys and young men are much more likely to become involved in offending than girls and young women. However, gradual changes in social and cultural expectations about girls in a number of countries have resulted in some increases in recorded crime by girls and young women. The increases are relatively small, but together with the much greater recognition of the differences in their needs as young women compared with boys, has led many countries to pay much more attention to them. In addition, girls are more vulnerable to certain types of risky behaviours or exploitation than boys, including

those associated with sexual exploitation, child labour and prostitution, and HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.



3.3 YOUNG VICTIMS AND YOUNG OFFENDERS

In most countries, young people as a group are likely to be the most common victims of crime.⁵⁹ Partly because of their life style, they are more vulnerable than older people or children to being victims of assault or theft and other property crime. These crimes are usually perpetrated by other young people they know. The *majority* of individual victims of youth offending, whether property or violence, are likely to be other young people living in the same neighbourhoods, or attending the same schools, rather than adults, or local

⁵⁹ Shaw, M. (2001). *op cit*; Menard, S. (2002). *Short and Long term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization. Youth Violence Research Bulletin*. Washington: OJJDP, US Department of Justice.

businesses and shops. In Dar es Salaam, 27% of young people of 15-25 surveyed in 2000 had been victims of assault, compared with 9% of those over 40 years of age. Forty four percent of the same age group had been victims of simple theft, compared with 25% of those over 40.⁶⁰ In South Africa, one study found that young people under 18 were responsible for 30% of violence against youths.⁶¹

Studies in developing countries have demonstrated that young people who have been victimized in childhood or adolescence are at greater risk of themselves using violence, having mental health problems, offending or using illicit drugs.⁶² Those who are *isolated* or *excluded* may themselves turn to bullying others or offending in order to survive on the street.⁶³ Thus the kinds of behaviours, risks and circumstances, which lead to law-breaking among young people, are often similar to those leading to victimization.

⁶⁰ **Crime in Dar es Salaam. (2001). Robertshaw, Louw and Mtani. Nairobi: UNCHS & Institute of Security Studies.**

⁶¹ **Youth Violence in Schools. (1999). Joint Framework Document. Pretoria: Secretariat for Safety and Security.**

⁶² **Menard, S. (2002). op cit.; Loeber, R., Kalb, L & Huizinger, D. (2001). Juvenile Delinquency and Serious Injury Victimization. Washington: OJJDP, US Department of Justice.**

⁶³ **For example, studies of the young homeless in Canada and Australia find they experience high levels of physical and sexual victimization from their peers, and are the least likely to report offences to the police or seek help for injuries. (See Shaw, 2001 op. cit).**

3.4 YOUNG OFFENDERS & YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Not all young people become involved in delinquent behaviour. It is a rite of passage in many countries especially among boys, and the majority grows out of it. It forms a continuum from minor to more serious activities and risk-taking, but for some it is the beginning of a longer and more serious offending career. Risky behaviour is particularly characteristic of adolescence. Taking part in vandalism, stealing, getting involved in gangs and illicit activities, drug abuse and engaging in unsafe sex, joining 'tags' in dangerous situations, engaging in individual or group fights etc., are all risky behaviours which affect public order and a sense of safety. For young people, however, they may have positive benefits in terms of providing a sense of belonging, and control over one's life in a personal or collective manner.

In Africa, detailed information on youth offending is lacking, with the absence of reliable databases in most countries, although countries such as Tanzania, Namibia and South Africa are beginning to collect information to map future trends. Nevertheless, there is evidence of increasing law-breaking among young people. Victimization surveys in several countries, as well as qualitative observations, suggest delinquency among young people (12-25 years) is increasing at a much higher rate than in the developed North.⁶⁴ This includes violent behaviour, drug related offences, and

⁶⁴ **For example, UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme has undertaken victimization surveys of youth and young offender profiles in Yaounde, Dakar, Douala, Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam.**

gang activity. In Douala, Cameroon, for example, crime, violence and insecurity have increased in recent years, especially in informal settlements and difficult neighbourhoods.⁶⁵ A major influence on young people has been the so-called Feyman, white collar criminals and corrupt officials who are able to get away with offending without prosecution, and have become a source of admiration and inspiration for the young.⁶⁶ In Dakar, Senegal, increases in petty theft, breaking and entering, the use of violence, threats and intimidation by young people have occurred through the 1990's. More generally, attacks on people in the street have resulted in homicide, and violent or armed robberies have increased insecurity and led to the increasing use of private security and protection.⁶⁷

Youth crime rates are invariably linked to the age structure of a population, and most offenders are male which is similar to global patterns. In recent years, nevertheless, the numbers of young urban women involved in criminal activities or gangs in African cities seems to be growing, although there is often a correlation between such involvement and a history of sexual or physical abuse.

⁶⁵ M'Packo, M. (2000). *Violence, delinquance et insecurite a Douala*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. August.

⁶⁶ Mang - Yon Thega, Y, (2001). *Enquete sur la delinquance juvenile a Yaoundé*. Nairobi: Report for UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme.

⁶⁷ Trends in urban crime prevention, *UNCJIN Crime and Justice Newsletter 1994/5 Vol. 2 No. 2*.

3.4.1 Youth gangs and groups

Gangs and groups of young people engaging in delinquent or criminal behaviour are found in most countries. The great majority are male, and in most cases they are in a transition stage. Their formation is often a reaction to exclusion and marginalization in society, and they serve to provide alternative legitimacy and support. They offer acceptance, status, identity and social and recreational opportunities, as well as economic gain. They range from loose social or friendship groups – youths who hangout together - to more organized and structured gangs engaging in unlawful acts such as 'taxing', fighting rival groups, drug dealing or violent crime and intimidation. The latter often have a common style of dress, codes of conduct and language. Gangs of street children, on the other hand, are rather different, since their primary aim is survival, not crime.



Nairobi, Kenya: © Kanyua/UN-HABITAT

There is little information on the extent of youth gang formation in Africa, although it is clearly problematic in countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. Most current information in Nairobi, for example, is based on journalistic accounts, or limited anecdotal information.⁶⁸ Many youths in Nairobi lack support from their families or other institutions, making the transition out of the group or gang much more difficult. Often from overcrowded and poor homes, they seek opportunities to acquire money elsewhere. This has resulted in an increase in criminal gangs, whose specialization ranges from petty theft and drug dealing, to violent crimes and the arms trade. The availability of small arms at a relatively low cost has increased the propensity towards violent crimes in many African countries.⁶⁹ While youth gangs have formerly been involved in petty theft, they are now more often involved in serious offences such as hijacking vehicles, armed robbery and murder. In Cape Town, youth gang activity is becoming more widespread, even in wealthy neighbourhoods. Recent incidents include the massacre of seven young boys in a massage parlour, prompting concern with the ability of gangs to 'control' public space at the expense of the community, local government, or the police.

⁶⁸ See *Streetchildren and Gangs in African Cities*. (2000). UMP Working Paper Series 18. Nairobi: UN Habitat; and Stavrou, A. (2002). *Crime in Nairobi. Results of a Victims Survey*. Safer Cities Series #4. Nairobi: UN Habitat.

⁶⁹ See *The Small Arms Survey Yearbook 2004*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Case Study Nairobi, Kenya.⁷⁰

In Nairobi, Kenya, recent surveys found that young children are left to take care of themselves in violence-torn communities that do not provide any support services. Children in informal settlements often exhibit risky behaviours including substance abuse, gang membership, aggression, stealing and other criminal activities, or early pregnancy. High unemployment rates result in the formation of youth groups, which may develop into gangs, as a means of economic survival. Substance abuse almost inevitably leads to criminal behaviour since gangs control trafficking. The main issue confronting most youth in Nairobi is a breakdown in the transmission of social values and norms, which should take place through the family and the local community. This is reinforced by the often poor physical environment, inadequate or poorly distributed economic and recreation opportunities in the city, and the lack of social supports. The breakdown of traditional sanctions to combat the culture of violence enables the cycle of violence to continue. One of the direct consequences is the movement of youth onto the streets. The family and the school have ceased to operate as primary socializing agents, and many youth in Nairobi have opted for a life in street gangs or in social groups, which are similar to gangs. The street culture or gang has become the primary socializing agent and friendship support network.

⁷⁰ Assiago et al., (2002) *Youth and Crime in Nairobi: Some Exploratory Issues*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. In this study young offenders were defined as those aged 14-25.

3.4.2 Violent youth

Youth violence can be found in all countries, but increases in such violence have been of considerable concern over the past twenty years. Most of this violence involves boys rather than girls. Some of the increase in youth violence has resulted from changes in the way violent youth behaviour has been responded to. In countries such as the United States, increases in violent youth crime up to the mid 1990's have been associated with drugs, guns and gangs.⁷¹ More recently, there have been significant reductions in violent youth crime in developed countries, after years of increasing rates.

A recent study found that 1 in 2 males who were serious, violent juvenile offenders were violently victimized compared with 1 in 10 of their non delinquent peers. Being victimized in turn may lead to victimizing others.

OJJDP Loeber et al., 2001

Africa, like Latin America, has been no exception to rising violence by youth, but shows no sign of a decrease, perhaps because of the increasing economic hardship and recession experienced in many parts of the region. The majority of violent youth behaviour in a country usually involves minor property vandalism (more than two thirds), and in this respect, Africa is no different from other regions. Nevertheless, serious violence including robbery and car hijacking, as well as sexual assault have all increased. In Abidjan, for example, armed robbery by youths increased from

⁷¹ Shaw (2001) *op. cit.*

2% to 40% of youth offences between 1986 and 1995.⁷² However, the situation varies from one country to another, and town to town. The most common car thefts are often at gunpoint, and resistance is likely to be fatal in countries such as Kenya, Cameroon, South Africa, Ivory Coast and Nigeria. Much of the increasing violence is a direct consequence of carrying firearms, facilitated by the trafficking of small arms. Several studies in East and West Africa show that violent behaviour is often accompanied by drug taking.

3.4.3 Youth in institutions or returning to the community



Nairobi, Kenya: © Kanyua/UN-HABITAT

Young people already in the justice system form a group at risk whose circumstances and needs require particular attention. Recent studies in Dar es Salaam, Nairobi and Douala, illustrate some of the characteristic problems confronting young people already involved in the justice system in African cities. A study of young offenders in custody in Dar-es-Salaam highlights some

⁷² *City Profile, Abidjan, BNETD-UMP, 1999.*

important characteristics of youth in the justice system.⁷³ Half of all young offenders come from single parent families. Around a quarter have been victims of physical abuse in their families. Their level of education is very low: 20% have never been to school, and a very small proportion completed primary education. A fifth of them have a family member who has been in trouble with the law. Drug use is common among them. As a group they have a reputation for deviance and provocation, although most of their offending has been spontaneous rather than planned.

Kenya

As rates of violent crime climbed, reports of police corruption, harassment, use of excessive force, and unlawful confinement were routine...

Human Rights Watch World Report 2002: Kenya.

The study also found that in less than a quarter of the cases had legal aid or representation to protect their rights been provided. While in custody they are often victims of threats and abuse from fellow inmates, and sometimes the police. Detention limits of 24 hours were not respected in 20% of cases, while rehabilitation centres were very variable in terms of the accommodation and services they provided. Post-release support, which would help them to be integrated back into their communities, is almost non-existent. In Kenya, a qualitative study in Nairobi found that the juvenile justice system was primarily criminalizing poverty, rather than prosecuting young offenders. Many of those placed in institutions were

⁷³ Andersson & Stavrou (2001) op. cit.

street children who had not broken criminal laws.⁷⁴

3.5 STREET CHILDREN



Nairobi, Kenya: © Justo/UN-HABITAT

The behaviour of young people in many African cities often fluctuates between survival strategies and risk taking.⁷⁵ Street children - those with disrupted or no family ties, who survive in urban areas on the streets - form the most tragic and extreme examples of social exclusion, and risky behaviour.⁷⁶ They are one of the fastest growing problems in Africa (as well as other

⁷⁴ Assiago et al., (2002) *Youth and Crime in Nairobi: Some Exploratory Issues*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. In this study young offenders were defined as those aged 14-25.

⁷⁵ See *Streetchildren and Gangs in African Cities*. (2000). UMP Working Paper Series 18. Nairobi: UN Habitat.

⁷⁶ UMP (2000). *Street Children and Gangs in African Cities*. Urban Management Programme. Nairobi: UN Habitat.

places in the South). They tend to be seen as a nuisance or a menace, and are generally stigmatized, excluded and discriminated against, subject to routine harassment, abuse and criminalization (see box below⁷⁷). In police custody they can similarly expect to be abused and mistreated, as a recent study of street children in Egypt underlines.⁷⁸

They include a number of different groups:

- Children sent out by parents on a daily basis to earn money by whatever means – usually returning home at night
- Children ‘of the street’ with loose family contact, occasionally returning home to their families
- Children without any family contact, living in temporary shelters and with other street children in close-knit groups or gangs
- Children of street children or adolescents.

We didn't sleep at all last night. That's why we're sleeping now, during the day. Night is the most dangerous for us. The police come while we're sleeping and catch you off guard and hit you. They'll take you to Makadara court and then you'll be sent to remand [detention] for months. Last night there was a big roundup and we had to move so many times to avoid being caught. There was a large group of police in a big lorry, driving around, looking for kids.

Moses Mwangi, Nairobi, Kenya 1997

⁷⁷ From *Children's Rights. Street Children. Juvenile Injustice: Police abuse and detention of street children in Kenya. (1997)* Human Rights Watch www.hrw.org/children/street.htm quoted in UNICEF (2002) *Innocenti Digest No. 10*.

⁷⁸ Human Rights Watch (2003). *Charged With Being Children: Egyptian Police Abuse of Children in Need of Protection. Vol. 15 (1)*. Human Rights Watch www.hrw.org/children/street.htm

It is extremely difficult to estimate their numbers. In cities like Nairobi, with about three million inhabitants, the number of street children can range from 10,000 (Census 2000) to 25,000 (UNDP, 1993) and even estimates of 60,000 have been proposed (GTZ, 1998). An estimated 10,000 live and work on the streets of South Africa.⁷⁹ Street children often live in slums, deserted or dilapidated areas of the city, have their own territories, and their gangs may specialize in crime – pick-pocketing, prostitution, or begging. They are themselves especially vulnerable to being victimized.

The causes for this phenomenon are many, including poor family circumstances forcing children to look for jobs to sustain themselves; lack of space at home; failure in school; or parental behaviour and bad treatment. They may include children orphaned by the HIV/Aids pandemic, or affected by civil wars or natural disasters. The street group offers some kind of ‘liberation’ or acceptance, but return to the family or home may be impossible. Street children have very specific needs: survival (food and shelter) health care and education, apart from love and care, but they are the group most likely to be the subject of stigmatization and criminalization, and the most difficult to reach.

3.6 SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

Increasing drug use among youth has been highlighted by the world report on drugs (UNDCP, 1997). The patterns of drug use by youth in developed countries are beginning to influence those elsewhere. There is evidence of the invasion of a drug-taking culture, a

⁷⁹ UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*.

decrease in the age of the first drug use, and of the 'normalisation' of drug taking in some African cities. Trends in drug production, consumption and trafficking across Africa have enormous implications for youth at risk, particularly with more easily accessible and cheaper synthetic drugs.⁸⁰

A UNODC study found that in more than 80% of African countries studied, there was an increase in the percentage of cannabis smoking (bhang) over the 1990's.⁸¹ For most of sub-Saharan Africa, cannabis cultivation is the main form of drug production, and a growing income survival strategy. Widespread unemployment in urban areas is a catalyst for illicit income generation: "the foundations for an 'industry' of illicit drug trading in African cities appear to be in place"⁸². In South Africa, the use of illicit drugs among youth is increasing in urban areas, particularly in overcrowded informal settlements. Such increases in drug use in African cities have exacerbated the criminalization of young people in the poorest and most marginalized areas, with illegal trafficking, recruitment of dealers and gangs.

3.7 SEXUALLY EXPLOITED

Sexual activity usually begins in adolescence although there are cultural variations. While there is little systematic information, wide variations appear to exist across cultures and countries within Africa. Early marriage is common in a number of African countries, e.g. in Niger 76% of girls are married by 18 years.⁸³ In a number of countries the degree of independence accorded to women affects both their vulnerability to sexual exploitation, and their own sexual behaviour.

The sexual exploitation of children and adolescents is often linked to subsequent sexual activities such as prostitution, although there are many other causal factors. Women's lower status prevents them from having full control of their sexual relationships. Studies of women's first sexual experience show that over half of young women in Malawi, and over 20% of young women in Nigeria, experienced forced sexual intercourse. It is clear that both sexual exploitation and sexual activities place young people, especially girls and young women, at very high risk of future criminalization, STD infection and HIV/AIDS, and social exclusion.

⁸⁰ UNDCP (1998). *The Drug Nexus in Africa*. United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

⁸¹ UNODCCP (2002). *Global illicit drug trends*.

⁸² *Ibid*: 44

⁸³ UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*. UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*.

3.7.1 Sexual assault

One study found that 30% of rape cases in South Africa among 15-19 year-olds involved a school teacher.

Human Rights Watch 2001

Girls and young women experience high levels of sexual abuse inside and outside the home in many countries in Africa. In South Africa, surveys of rape and sexual assault estimate that 55,000 women over the age of 16 were rape victims in 1997. A 1996 study found that 40% of rape victims were under the age of 18.⁸⁴ Almost half the rapes occurred in the home, and only 24% were by strangers. Harassment, sexual abuse and rape are a particular problem for young girls in school.⁸⁵ Recent reports of increases in sexual assault of children are associated with myths about HIV and AIDS.⁸⁶ In Nairobi, rates of gang rape are very high – around 20% of sexual abuse cases.⁸⁷ In Botswana, a recent study of rape and sexual assault found an increasing incidence of rape and sexually related crimes. Based on police-reported incidents, there was an 18% increase in rape or attempted rape, and a 65% increase in reported sexual offences against girls under 16 years between 1996 and 1998.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Bollen et al., 1999; South Africa, 2000.

⁸⁵ Human Rights Watch, 2001.

⁸⁶ These include myths that intercourse with a virgin will protect against HIV and AIDS.

⁸⁷ Ravestijn, S. (2002). *Survivors Speak. A Snapshot Survey on Violence Against Women in Nairobi. Safer Cities Series #3. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme.*

⁸⁸ Botswana, 1999, 2001

3.7.2 Sex-Trade and trafficking

Whether child trafficking is regarded as a child labour issue, an illegal migration issue, or a juvenile justice issue, there is...a tendency to overlook the underlying economic and cultural factors behind trafficking, thereby placing the trafficked child somewhere in a vast pool of 'social deviance'. There is little perception that trafficking is first and foremost, a violation of human rights..

UNICEF (2002:7)

The trafficking of children and young people in Africa has remained unrecognized nationally and internationally until recent years.⁸⁹ Young girls living poor and marginal lives are especially at risk of commercial exploitation by the sex trade, as well as through international trafficking. Apart from exploitation and health risks, children who are trafficked are likely to be criminalized. Studies of trafficking in West and Central Africa countries including Cote d'Ivoire and Gabon indicate that they are usually seen as young offenders to be detained in police stations, rather than victims in need of care and protection.⁹⁰ Countries have differing perceptions of the problem, in some cases regarding it as an issue of child labour, in others of illegal migration.

⁸⁹ The adoption of the 2000 Palermo Protocol which supplemented the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime forms the most recent milestone in terms of international recognition of the problem.

⁹⁰ UNICEF (2002). *Child Trafficking in West Africa: Policy Responses.* Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Apart from trafficking, the most common form of commercial sex involves young single mothers who use it as a survival tactic for income. In some parts of West Africa young middle class women may use it to supplement their income or finance their education, and in South and East Africa, the community tolerates the phenomenon of schoolgirls with ‘sugar daddy’ relationships . This ceases at marriage and does not appear to be stigmatised by society or their family. All such activities increase the risk of HIV/AIDS. In Abidjan, an estimated 70% of adolescent sex workers are HIV positive.⁹¹

3.8 HIV/AIDS AFFECTED YOUTH

Girls are very vulnerable

Adolescent girls are at the very highest risk of getting infected. The pattern is especially clear in Sub Saharan Africa.... The danger of infection is highest among the poorest and least powerful.

UNICEF (2002) Young People and HIV/AIDS



Nairobi, Kenya: © UN-HABITAT

Young people in Africa are among those most affected by HIV/AIDS. Worldwide, an estimated 11.8 million young people aged 15 to 24 are living with HIV/AIDS of which 8,600,000 are living in sub-Saharan Africa.⁹² It is estimated that half a million African youth aged 15 to 24 will die from AIDS by 2005.⁹³ In Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, it is estimated that more than 60 per cent of boys aged 15 today will become infected with HIV during their lifetime.⁹⁴ The situation for young women is even worse. In one city in South Africa, six out of 10 women aged 20 to 25, were HIV infected; among youth in their early 20's, women's infection rates were three times higher than men's. In Kenya, nearly one teenage woman in four is living with HIV, compared to one in 25 teenage males.⁹⁵

⁹¹ *UNICEF (2002) Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis.*

⁹² *United Nations Children's Fund, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization, Young People and HIV/AIDS Opportunity in Crisis (2002)*

⁹³ *This section draws on the summary paper by Jogunosimi (2001).*

⁹⁴ *United Nations Children's Fund, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization, Young People and HIV/AIDS Opportunity in Crisis (2002)*

⁹⁵ *This section draws on the summary paper by Jogunosimi (2001).*

Attitudes towards sexual behaviour amongst youth greatly affect their risk of infection and their ability to live with it. In sub-Saharan Africa a culture of silence surrounds most reproductive health issues. Many Africans feel unable to discuss sexuality across gender and age barriers. Health service workers and many parents and adults are uncomfortable talking about sexuality with their children, and in many instances they lack accurate sexual health knowledge. Even where condoms are available, as is the case in South Africa or Kenya, many adults are reluctant to provide them to sexually active adolescents. The increasing phenomenon of neighbourhoods populated by children, young people and the elderly means that young people will have to take on new roles and responsibilities, and will need supports and not social exclusion. Young people are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, and the existence of taboos about sexuality, the stigmatization associated with HIV/AIDS, and the lack of services catering for their needs, all help to increase their exclusion from the larger society.

3.8.1 Orphans

UNICEF reports that the AIDS pandemic has orphaned 15 million children worldwide⁹⁶, and 82% of them are

in Africa.⁹⁷ In sub-Saharan Africa 12.3 million children had been orphaned by AIDS by the end of 2004.⁹⁸ By 2010, Southern Africa is expected to have 5.5 million maternal or double orphans, of which 86% will be orphaned by AIDS.⁹⁹

As orphaned children under stress grow up without adequate parenting and support, they are at greater risk of developing anti-social behaviour and of being less productive members of society.
See Fourie & Schoentech (2001:39)

The increase in youth-headed households has been staggering in many parts of Africa. In many villages in the Great Lakes Region, the majority of households are headed by youth, often younger than 18 years of age, as a result of conflict and HIV/AIDS. AIDS orphans are among the most vulnerable members of society. They are more likely to be malnourished, to be denied education, susceptible to illness and sexual exploitation, and subject to the shame, fear and rejection surrounding the disease than other AIDS victims.

⁹⁶ UNICEF (2005) *State of the World's Children Report*

⁹⁷ UNICEF and UN-AIDS, *Children on the Brink 2004- A Joint Report of New Orphan Estimates and a Framework for Action* (July 2004)

⁹⁸ UNICEF and UN-AIDS, *Children on the Brink 2004- A Joint Report of New Orphan Estimates and a Framework for Action* (July 2004)

⁹⁹ Fourie, P. & Schoentech, M. (2001). *Africa's new security threat. HIV/AIDS and human security in Southern Africa. African Security Review*, 10 (4) 29-42.

3.9 WAR AFFECTED CHILDREN

3.9.1 War, child soldiers and small arms

Children who are dislocated from their family and social networks are easily transformed into fearsome and uncompromising soldiers.... Once secured, they are more readily moulded into unquestioning fighters. Within the military ranks, young adolescents often develop the sort of loyalty towards their 'superiors' that, they would towards elder family members in a 'normal society'.

Stavrou et al (2000).

Adolescents have become the 'principal' participants in most of Africa's wars during the latter years of the 20th Century.¹⁰⁰ In Africa's remaining wars, many 'rebel' militias or movements are comprised almost entirely of adolescents and pre-adolescents. Of an estimated 300,000 children thought to be fighting wars around the world, nearly half are found in Africa.¹⁰¹ Some of

¹⁰⁰ Young African men (and women) have always played prominent roles in defending their villages. The distinction between adolescence and adulthood has often been blurred and has largely been dictated by survival strategies. Amongst the Masai, Xhosa and Zulu, initiation ceremonies for male and females celebrating their transition to adulthood take place at the ages of 12 and 14. Hence, if an adolescent was capable of bearing arms, they were recruited as warriors.

¹⁰¹ Afua Twum-Danso, ISS, Monograph No 82, (April 2003), *Africa's Young Soldiers- The Co-option of Childhood*

those children were as young as seven or eight. In the most tragic cases, such as Sierra Leone, up to a third of recruited minors were girls. In Mozambique, 27% of demobilized soldiers had been recruited before the age of 18 years. This phenomenon currently affects at least ten African countries. Some children are recruited from cities or rural areas as volunteers, but tens of thousands have been forced to join armies or rebel combat groups. Given that over half of Africa's population is under the age of 18 years, it is perhaps not surprising that there has been a proliferation of child soldiers.¹⁰² Life in the army often offers a powerful alternative to a subsistence way of life.¹⁰³ A major catalyst in the increase in child soldiers is also the proliferation of small arms. Africa has been flooded by redundant, cheap but efficient weapons, often traded illegally by migrant refugees from civil war. Current estimates place the number of light arms in Africa at 100 million.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Under international law, it is not illegal to recruit 15 year-old children for training as soldiers for active combative duty. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child signed in 1989 established that "childhood" ends at the age of 18 years. Although forbidding the death penalty for all children under 18, as well as setting a host of other standards for their protection, the UN sanctions the right of a 15 year-old to kill or be killed 'in the line of duty'. *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.*

¹⁰³ Stavrou, S. and Stewart, R. Stavrou, A. (2000). *The re-integration of child soldiers and abductees: a case study of Palaro and Pabbo, Gulu district, Northern Uganda.* Paper presented at the International Conference on War-affected Children, Winnipeg, Canada.

¹⁰⁴ ISS "Small arms proliferation in Africa" Newsletter. Dec, 1998

With their exposure to the extremes of violence often reported, child soldiers are likely to suffer very serious physical, psychological and sexual harm. Overcoming the effects of those experiences, as well as dislocation from families and communities of origin, and loss of traditional education and socialization, and integrating back into the community, presents huge challenges. Governments who fail to acknowledge the participation of children as fighters, and exclude them from benefits have not always recognized their needs. Many other children and youth have also been affected by the impact of war on their families and communities, and the destruction and dislocation which has resulted.



Nairobi, Kenya: © Kanyua/UN-HABITAT



Nairobi, Kenya: © UN-HABITAT

IV THE WAY FORWARD: COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES

4.1 THE IMPACT ON CITIES AND YOUTH

4.1.1 Increasing crime and insecurity

The cumulative impact of these cross-cutting problems on African cities, and on the growing numbers of youth affected by them, is enormous. The breakdown of social controls in the family, schools, and neighbourhoods has contributed to increased crime and insecurity in urban areas. The development of ghettos and areas of lawlessness controlled by local gangs and racketeers, and increasing numbers of street children, have resulted in an increasing resort to deterrent and tough criminal justice responses, as well as private security and vigilantism.

In Douala, Cameroon the reaction to increasing crime and violence has been apathy and resignation on the part of much of the population, but also resort to popular justice in high-risk areas rather than calling the police. There has been an increasing use of firearms, security fencing, private security guards and guard dogs, and among some groups, increased pressures on local and national government to use tough and deterrent measures.¹⁰⁵ Gated communities around wealthy

¹⁰⁵ M'Pako, M. (2000). *Violence, delinquance et insecurite a Douala*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. August.

residential areas are now commonplace in many African cities, such as Johannesburg, Cape Town or Nairobi, further increasing a sense of exclusion and the risk of invasion. In Dakar, Senegal, armed robberies and street attacks have fuelled the sense of insecurity in the city, and private protection and security has proliferated.¹⁰⁶

In Dar es Salaam, some 43% of residents surveyed have been burgled, and 61% of residents feel unsafe in their homes after dark, and nearly two-thirds in their neighbourhoods.¹⁰⁷ Insecurity impacts women in particular, the majority of those surveyed in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam viewed their homes as less safe than public places outside, in part because of domestic abuse, but crime also seriously affects their use of urban space and city services.¹⁰⁸

4.1.2 Stigmatization and exclusion of youth at risk

Children are aware of the larger socio-political context. They develop a sense of social identity that is personally experienced as a hierarchy of social status, domination and power. These hierarchies are reflected in their neighbourhoods and are important in the development of personal

¹⁰⁶ Trends in Urban Crime Prevention. UNCTAD Crime and Justice Letter 1994/5 vol2 (2).

¹⁰⁷ Robertshaw et al., op cit.

¹⁰⁸ See Robertshaw et al., op cit; Ravestijn op cit.; and Mtani, A. (2002). *Safety Planning and Design: The Women's Perspective the Case of Manzese, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*. Paper given at the 1st International Seminar on Women's Safety, Montreal May 2002. www.femmesetvilles.org

identity. The children of Canaansland found themselves at the bottom of the social hierarchy, subject to prejudice, and relatively powerless.

Swart-Kruger 2002

The impact on youth at risk themselves is enormous. Their prospects for a safe and healthy future are minimal. They have a greatly reduced life expectancy, almost no expectation of legitimate employment, and are further stigmatized, socially excluded and criminalized. Such young people are aware of their exclusion and inferior status from an early age. Children in Canaansland squatter camp in Johannesburg, for example, were victimized and abused by outsiders: 'when people knew they were 'squatters' they were blamed for anything that went wrong in the area.'¹⁰⁹ For the increasing numbers of youth in the justice system, is on the increase, without the necessary training and support services for their rehabilitation.¹¹⁰

As surveys in Kenya and Tanzania have underlined,¹¹¹ all youth, regardless of their socio-economic background, reported feeling neglected and ignored by society, especially by the government, which fails to provide them with education, employment and a future. Their exclusion from most decision-making processes on issues that touch their lives can lead to a sense of hopelessness and disillusionment, and increases their marginalization from the communities and cities in which they live.

¹⁰⁹ Swart-Kruger, *op. cit* p. 121.

¹¹⁰ Andersson & Stavrou (2001).

¹¹¹ Andersson & Stavrou (2001); Stavrou (2002).

Given the very complex and interrelated nature of the problems confronting millions of young people in African cities, relying on traditional repressive and criminal justice responses to deal with youth at risk will not tackle the factors which have led to their situation, nor the insecurity of other citizens. Arresting street children, destroying and confiscating informal sector goods under arcane city regulations, excluding war or HIV affected children from protection, employment, education and care, criminalizing those addicted to drugs, are in the long run very costly responses to disorder and crime. They are likely to increase the alienation and violence of young people, and their vulnerability to further exploitation. The following sections of this report are concerned with the steps that can be taken by national and local governments, and the international community, to reverse these trends.

4.2 THE WAY FORWARD: COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

We therefore appeal: To National Governments

- To implement legislation to protect human rights as they relate to youth
- To adopt and implement social crime prevention policies and programmes, and allocate financial resources for the prevention, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration, as appropriate, for children and youth in disadvantaged social conditions who are at risk

- Give high priority to marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged youth, especially those who are separated from their families, children living or working on the streets
- To devolve and decentralize some responsibilities for local authorities to be actively involved in preventing youth crime and reintegrating young offenders
- To ensure that issues of youth in conflict with the law are central to national youth policies.

Extract from the Nelson Mandela Metropole Declaration, June 2002.

Countries and cities in Africa, as well as the international community, face an enormous challenge in responding to the problems outlined. This is also a challenge which will repay the investment many times, and one for which there already exist some clear guidelines and effective strategies.

A final compelling reason for considering the situation of urban children lies in the fact that, despite the long term trend towards more urbanized societies, many governments in Africa....still lack a fully developed urban policy, despite....substantial differences between most rural and urban areas as regards the factors that pose the greatest threats to child survival.

UNICEF Innocenti Digest (2002)

Recognizing the size and nature of the problems, which place children and youth at risk, and their underlying causes, is an essential first step. Secondly, the establishment of good governance, with

comprehensive national and urban policies which pay specific attention to the needs of children and youth, is also essential. Finally, it is important to realize the potential of youth themselves, and to engage their participation in the development of appropriate responses and solutions.



Yauonde: © Laura/UN-HABITAT

UN-Habitat's Safer Cities Programme and its Global Campaign on Urban Governance, both provide considerable guidance and experience about how this can be achieved. The Global Campaign promotes the goal of the 'inclusive city', one based on the principles of sustainability, subsidiarity (or decentralization), equity, efficiency, transparency and accountability, civic engagement and citizenship and security.¹¹² The Safer Cities Programme has supported the establishment of strategic approaches in African cities and elsewhere which include the needs of youth

¹¹² **The Global Campaign on Urban Governance. (2002). Concept Paper 2nd Edition. Nairobi: UN Habitat. See also Simone, A.M. (2002). Principles and Realities of Urban Governance in Africa. Nairobi: UN Habitat.**

at risk, and promote safe communities through sustainable comprehensive prevention programmes. National governments and local governments cannot expect to make any inroads into these problems unless they work together to facilitate much broader comprehensive preventive strategies. This requires a strong national enabling framework, and increased powers on the ground at the local level. And it requires the burgeoning populations of young people to be full participants in the shaping of solutions and their own future.

At the national level, therefore, each government in Africa needs to develop a *policy of good governance in relation to all youth*, which addresses:

- Legislation to protect the human rights of children and youth¹¹³
- A national policy and action plan addressing the needs of youth and youth at risk
- Devolution of certain powers, including some fiscal autonomy
- Facilitating partnerships at the local level between key actors (such as law enforcement, criminal justice, schools, churches and mosques, and municipal governments)
- Developing a policy of social inclusion and participation which empowers youth
- Developing a policy framework to facilitate the re-insertion of specific groups of youth at risk
- Encouraging exchange of expertise between cities and countries.

¹¹³ See **UN HABITAT Policy Paper (2004) *Children, Youth and Urban Governance***, and **UNICEF (2002) *Poverty and Exclusion among Urban Children***. **Innocenti Digest No. 10**. Florence: **Innocenti Research Centre on legislative support for youth and children's rights**.

4.3 DEVELOPING COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL POLICIES ON YOUTH

National Youth Policy South Africa: principles & values

- Redressing imbalances
- Gender inclusive
- Empowering environment
- Youth participation
- Youth driven
- Mainstreaming youth issues
- Responsiveness

- Cultural & spiritual diversity
- Sustainable development
- Rural emphasis
- Transparency & accessibility

Many countries in Africa do not have a comprehensive national youth policy, which provides a guiding framework for action. Youth policies which do exist at the national level are often uncoordinated and piecemeal, regardless of their quality. International protocols and conventions on the development of youth policies provide only general guidance and are not tailored to the circumstances of individual countries.

It is essential, therefore, for national governments to provide clear guidance by outlining a national policy on youth, setting out strategic objectives and policies, and creating frameworks to support and encourage action at the local level. Such frameworks must reflect the specific social, economic and cultural realities of their countries. They need to be models of good

governance which recognize the rights of children and youth, encourage participation from citizens and youth, emphasize the inclusion, rather than exclusion, of all sectors in society, and build in accountability. The policy needs to provide an integrated and inclusive framework, covering such issues as family support, health care, education, employment and leisure activities. This can be achieved by developing the national youth policy systematically, in collaboration and consultation with all stakeholders at the national and local levels.

An example is the National Youth Policy initiated by South Africa in 1997. It is based on a set of essential principles and values, and has a number of goals and objectives, including recognizing and promoting the participation and contribution of youth.¹¹⁴ The policy also establishes priority target groups including young women, unemployed youth, those out of school, youth living and working on the street, youth at risk, rural youth, disabled youth, and those with HIV/AIDS.

“the needs of children and youth, particularly with regard to their living environment, have to be taken fully into account. Special attention needs to be paid to the participatory processes dealing with the shaping of cities, towns and neighbourhoods; this is in order to secure the living conditions of children and youth and to make use of their insight, creativity and thoughts.” Habitat Agenda, para 13.

¹¹⁴ National Youth Strategy, South Africa, 1997. Chapter 3.

National governments are therefore urged to:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive national youth policy supporting their rights and integrating all government policies affecting young people
- To do so in consultation with all stakeholders, including women, ethnic and cultural minorities
- Encourage full and representative youth participation, including youth at risk
- Include strategies for youth at risk
- Set priority targets in consultation with stakeholders and young people
- Ensure accountability

4.4 PARTICIPATION AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT MECHANISMS

In developing national youth policies, national governments have a major opportunity to empower young people by engaging their participation, as the Habitat Agenda urges (see box). This is also reaffirmed by the Declaration of the Nelson Mandela Metropole conference of June 2002,¹¹⁵ and requires the adaptation of government structures at national and local levels, to protect and deliver human rights, and the rights of children and youth, including their right to participate.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ *Developing citizenship among urban youth in conflict with the law in an African context. The conference papers and Declaration can be accessed at www.welfare.gov.za/documents/*

¹¹⁶ See UN HABITAT (2004) *Police paper on Children, Youth and Urban Governance*.

Empowering young people will enhance their development of citizenship and productiveness as they move into adulthood. Children and young people hold the key to change as tomorrow's community leaders, and are creative, innovative, and a great resource. Ensuring that they grow up feeling comfortable in, and positive about, the communities in which they live, is a key to intergenerational progress. A number of models for youth participation now exists. The coalition of youth councils developed in Kenya illustrates how the participation of youth can be incorporated into national government youth policy planning.

Case study: Kenya National Council of Youth for Habitat

The *Kenya National Council of Youth For Habitat* is part of a larger coalition of youth organizations developed, with the technical support of UN-Habitat, following the Istanbul Conference Habitat II. The Kenyan chapter has evolved into a society working in partnership with local governments, with the objective of establishing municipal youth structures, which include the most vulnerable youth. At the national level the Council has been appointed by the Ministry of Local Government to a technical committee revising the Local Government Act, to make recommendations on youth decision-making structures at local level. Similarly, it has been appointed by the Ministry of Gender, Sports and Culture to assist with the development of a national youth policy. It has also established joint understandings with the local governments of Nairobi and Malindi, to assist with profiles of urban youth and the launch of junior councils

with ward level structures. It has assisted with the development of a training programme for the two model youth councils together with UN-Habitat and GTZ.¹¹⁷

4.5 CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR DECENTRALISATION

The devolution of powers from national to local governments is a prerequisite for effectively tackling the issue of youth at risk. National governments are too distant to respond to the daily needs and realities of their citizens. Cities and local governments, on the other hand, are close to them. Local governments need to be able to assume a leadership role in the management of socio-economic and integration policies at the city level. Devolution will provide an *institutional framework* giving them the power and capacity to make certain decisions at the local level, as well as the *financial resources* to support well-planned and strategic local prevention policies. Some degree of decentralisation to the city level, accompanied by central government monitoring to ensure local and national accountability, are essential precursors for tackling the problems of youth at risk in Africa. Thus national governments should:

- Establish a framework for decentralization to the local authority level through
- Enabling legislation
- Fiscal devolution
- Setting up accountability structures

¹¹⁷ **Contact point: Project Leader Kenya National Council for Youth For Habitat. Email: Youth4habitatkenya@planetmail.com**

4.6 INTEGRATING POLICIES

The major areas of national policy which have an impact on youth, including family policies, education, training and employment, and policing and the criminal justice system, need to be integrated within comprehensive national youth policies.

4.5.1 Family policy

Families are the primary institution responsible with the socialization and education of children, and their role is crucial. Support to families is one of the most important, successful and well-tested areas of prevention for reducing children and young people's risks of becoming involved in offending and victimization.¹¹⁸ The state should establish a legal, social and institutional framework, which protects families, and allows them to play their key role. The framework needs to take account of the different kinds of families which coexist (nuclear, single parent or polygamous) and religious or ethnic background. This protective framework should be based on respect for the rights of the child, as well as the rights of women to autonomy. In many countries women's inability to inherit property or land following divorce or death can reduce households to subsistence level. Strengthening women's access to information and advice is, therefore, important. Central government should provide a legal and financial framework for programmes, which facilitate family support mechanisms at the local level. For example, support

¹¹⁸ See Shaw, M. & Tschiwula, L. (2002). 'Developing citizenship among urban youth in conflict with the law.' *Environment and Urbanization*, 14 (2) October 59-70.

for victims of domestic abuse, nurseries for teenage-mothers, support for the reintegration of street children, legal assistance to poor families etc.). National governments need to:

- Establish a legal, social and institutional framework for strengthening and supporting the family and the rights of women
- Recognize all forms of family, regardless of cultural or religious background
- Facilitate the creation of family support mechanisms for the reintegration of youth at risk.

4.5.2 Education policy

Education is a major tool for socialization, for future employability, and for the development of responsible citizenship. National governments should develop clear educational policies which take account of the failures of current systems. Primary and secondary education need to be made accessible to all children and youth, and training and curriculum policies revised to meet the current needs and life circumstances of youth in African cities. Specific provision needs to be made for youth at risk to enable them to access education. This could include micro-credit projects providing loans for education as in the case of Togo (see box).¹¹⁹

Micro-credit project in Togo

The Education Loan Programme in Togo pools the efforts of those carrying out income generating activities and contributes to community development....

The aim was to provide small loans to 50 women for income-generating activities, reducing the

need to send children away to earn an income, and therefore, boosting the chance that children would go to school.

The initiative resulted in major changes for the families concerned...it now has...capital to assist 800 mothers.

UNICEF (2002:16)

National governments need to:

- Strengthen educational provision and accessibility
- Provide frameworks for the development of curricula and training programmes which reflect the realities of the lives of African children and youth
- Make specific provision for the education and training of youth at risk

4.5.3 Training and employment policy

A Zambian lesson:

There is an Enterprise Programme which has made training available to over 200 young people, to support them with loans to start their own micro businesses which are thriving and growing.

A Tanzanian lesson:

This country is supporting youth by promoting the establishment of small businesses under the umbrella of an NGO (SKUVI).

Andersson and Stavrou (2001: 76).

Developing comprehensive training and employment generation policies for youth is essential. This includes specific attention to the needs of girls as well as boys. Combining the resources of government and non-government sectors in communities is one approach to the problem. The city of Tunis, Tunisia, for example, where 1 in 3 youth are unemployed, has developed such a city-wide comprehensive strategy (City Development Strategy).¹²⁰

Specific attention needs to be given to assisting youth at risk. Programmes to re-insert such youth into the job market often have only very short term and limited success, so there is a need for employment or training initiatives to be supplemented by social support programmes. National governments should:

- Facilitate the development of comprehensive job-training and job-creation programmes for youth
- Ensure the provision of training and employment for young women and girls
- Facilitate the development of such programmes for youth at risk, together with social supports.

4.5.4 Corruption, policing and criminal justice systems

Working to eliminate corruption at all levels of government is an essential aspect of good governance and a prerequisite for strengthening institutions. This requires state institutions to be well structured legally, and capable of identifying and sanctioning corrupt

¹¹⁹ UNICEF (2002). *Child Trafficking in West Africa: Policy Responses*. Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.

¹²⁰ Ramsey, F. (2002). *City Development Strategies and Youth Employment Experiences from Africa*. Paper prepared for the Youth Employment Summit, Alexandria, Egypt, September 7-11th.

behaviour. The police and the courts are two facets of the criminal justice system which can play a major role in reducing the marginalisation of youth at risk, as well as in their rehabilitation.¹²¹ A corrupt or inefficient police and justice system encourages calls for tough responses and vigilante justice, and affects the extent to which youth at risk trust state institutions, and can be expected to abide by laws and policies.



Dares Salaam, Tanzania: © UN-HABITAT

Reforming the police is one of the most urgent tasks. Several African countries have already initiated reforms which respond to increases in crime and youth offending including:

- Establishing a professional police force which respects human rights, and is guided by clear, coherent and strategic plans. This includes the use of problem-solving approaches based on careful analysis of problems and their causes, rather than a reactive approach.

- Working closely with local partnerships and coalitions, and being accountable to civil society and municipal authorities.
- Appointing specialized police officers to work with at risk youth in partnership with local services.

Establishing a youth justice system, which similarly respects the rights of children and young people, and includes a focus on reconciliation and rehabilitation, is a second prerequisite. Interventions based on traditional African values and practices and principles of restorative justice can help to reduce the exclusion and criminalization of youth at risk. Community forums and victim offender mediation approaches support family and community involvement in the process of sanctioning, and the use of community rather than custodial sanctions can contribute to the community as part of the long-term re-integration of at risk youth. As the *Nelson Mandela Metropole Declaration* affirms, criminal justice systems must take account of the needs of youth at risk and promote¹²²:

- Dedicated youth courts
- Principles of restorative justice
- The use of diversion programmes such as mentoring, education and job training, as alternatives to custodial sentences
- Provide free legal and social assistance
- Affirm the role of families, schools and communities in supporting youth in conflict with the law, e.g. through multi-sector partnerships

¹²¹ See Shaw & Tschwula (2002) *op. cit.*

¹²² See also Skelton, A. (2002). Restorative justice as a framework for juvenile justice reform: a South African perspective. *British Journal of Criminology*, 42 (3) 496-519.

Many of these principles are contained in South Africa's *Child Justice Bill*, framed around a restorative justice paradigm.¹²³

4.7 SPECIFIC POLICIES TARGETING YOUTH AT RISK

As this paper has outlined, national governments need to develop policies and strategies targeting the specific needs of groups of at risk youth. National governments should establish policies and frameworks to recognize and safeguard the rights of **street children** by, for example, facilitating the development of assistance and shelter programmes, and monitoring police practices and conditions of children in custody.¹²⁴ For **young offenders and youth in conflict with the law**, further stigmatization, exclusion and the escalation of offending behaviour can be reversed under a reformed youth justice system, as suggested above, and by:

- Decriminalizing minor and status offences
- Increasing the use of and availability of diversion projects for young first-time offenders
- Using community-based alternatives to custody, including restorative options.

¹²³ Skelton, A. (2002). *United Nations Technical Assistance on juvenile justice: a focus on children's rights and restorative justice*. Presentation at the Port Elizabeth conference June 17-19 2002. www.welfare.gov.za/documents/

¹²⁵ Skelton, A. (2002). *United Nations Technical Assistance on juvenile justice: a focus on children's rights and restorative justice*. Presentation at the Port Elizabeth conference June 17-19 2002. www.welfare.gov.za/documents/

Such strategies and policies should support the rehabilitation, or (re) insertion of young people at risk back into families and communities, and productive meaningful lives, as well as establishing prevention policies which will help to reduce entry into the justice system in the first place. In South Africa, a national integrated strategy to address youth violence in schools recognizes the interrelated nature of the causes of school violence, and provides a good framework for partnership intervention at the local level.¹²⁵ Similarly, the *One-Stop Youth Justice Centre* provides an example of a multi-disciplinary partnership at the local level tackling youth justice issues, which national governments can encourage and enable.

The Mali National Plan to Combat Child Trafficking includes:

- Cooperation agreements
- Identifying locations
- Establishing reception & transit facilities
- Raising awareness
- Educational and vocational guidance
- Building professional skills
- Adoption of laws & regulations against trafficking
- Establishing mechanism for coordination & monitoring

See *UNICEF (2002:10)*

¹²⁵ See Human Rights Watch (2003) Vol 15 (1). *Egypt: Charged with Being Children*.

Case Study: Stepping-Stones One Stop Youth Justice Centre Nelson Mandela Metropole, South Africa.

This youth justice centre in Nelson Mandela Metropole (pop. 1 million) is run by a magistrate and an NGO, under the direction of the national Ministry of Social Welfare. It provides an integrated series of services and re-education and rehabilitation programmes for young people in conflict with the law, including restorative justice programmes. The Centre aims to avoid the use of incarceration as far as possible. As a “One Stop Centre” it groups together all administrative, judicial, police, social and educational services involved in youth arrest and prosecution. Individual cases are dealt with by a multi-disciplinary team, including justice and social services, NGOs, and youths, their families and community. More than 200 minors pass through the Centre each month. Over a five year period the Centre has developed practices and tools that can be used in other cities or countries. Seventy percent of the youths who pass through the Centre receive alternatives to incarceration, including community service and education. Together with lodging centres, it uses specialized education and rehabilitation programmes for the more serious cases. A training programme on child victims is designed for parents, teachers and instructors. The drug addiction education programme targets young drug addicts, to help develop their life skills. The Centre also provides

¹²⁶ **Youth Violence in Schools. Joint Framework Document (1999). National Youth Commission, Department of Education, Secretariat for Safety and Security. Pretoria, South Africa.**

multidisciplinary training programmes for services in the region who work with or monitor youth in conflict with the law.¹²⁶

Recent international protocols on **child trafficking** have been accompanied by the development of national policies in some African countries. In West Africa, a recent study by UNICEF highlights progress in eight countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, Nigeria and Togo.¹²⁷ National Plans of Action have been developed or are under development in Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Cote d’Ivoire. Awareness-raising campaigns, education programmes, and border monitoring have all begun to impact this issue in these countries, but there is clear need for stronger legal frameworks at the national level, and inter-country agreements. Policies of repatriation also need to be reviewed.

Policies for children and youth affected by **HIV/AIDS** should include the establishment of public education to reduce their social exclusion, and facilitate treatment services and support systems and training for all institutions working with them.

National and local governments must also jointly intervene on the issue of **child labour**. While national governments can develop legislation on child labour, its implementation can only be achieved at a local level, since exploitation takes place in local communities, and forms part of the local informal

¹²⁷ **Contact point: Dawie Marais, Project Coordinator, Provincial Ministry of Social Development, SA. Email: ssyc@yahoo.com**

economy. In relation to **war-affected children**, governments should recognize their specific needs (see box), and national and local governments work jointly to develop strategies and programmes meeting those needs.

Needs of War Affected Children

- Nutrition
- Health (STD's and drug use)
- Trust and self esteem
- Human dignity, participation
- Rehabilitation benefits
- Preparation of family to reintegrate them
- Amnesty for acts committed
- Protection from new recruitment
- Mental disarmament
- Education (conflict resolution, training)
- Employment creation

Mark Malan (2000).

In relation to the **control of small arms**, several regional meetings have stressed the need for close collaboration of governments to prevent the commercial trade in arms, as well as the importance of involving the public. International experience shows that controlling the small arms trade cannot be done *without* the intervention of organized community support. This may become a priority for local coalitions in the fight against crime and insecurity. At the national level, therefore, governments should:

- Establish frameworks to ensure the development of specific prevention policies for different groups of youth at risk
- Facilitate the inclusion and reintegration of marginalized young people
- Work internationally and nationally to control child trafficking and exploitation and the trade in small arms.





V THE WAY FORWARD: COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL STRATEGIES

We therefore appeal: To Local Governments

- To mobilize partners and recommend the formulation and review of **integrated, gender sensitive and cross-sectoral youth policies** at the local level addressing substance abuse, street children, youth gangs, young offenders and restorative justice, involving all stakeholders, especially youth. Youth issues should not be treated in isolation, but mainstreamed into all policy making.
- To allocate local funds, develop strategies and implement **social integration programmes** with particular focus on youth at risk of marginalization, including among others: youth affected by violence (including violence against women), youth affected by drug and substance abuse and young offenders. Offering rewarding and continuous learning and training opportunities for youth is paramount.
- To develop mechanisms promoting youth participatory decision-making, **fostering responsible citizenship** and promoting technical, human and financial support focused on assisting marginalized and vulnerable youth to address their own needs and interests and make their particular contribution to social progress. Extract from

the **Nelson Mandela Metropole Declaration**, June 2002

5.1 NEED FOR LOCAL POLICIES ON YOUTH AND YOUTH AT RISK

Local governments are the best placed to directly impact the lives of young people in their communities. It is beyond the capacity of national governments to assess the extent and causes of local problems affecting a city. Nor do they have the capacity to organize partnerships, coalitions and action between local government and local stakeholders, such as the police, members of civil society, community or business groups.

There is a growing fund of knowledge and experience about how cities can impact the lives of young people for the better, in particular that accumulated by UN-HABITAT's Safer Cities Programme. Like national governments, municipalities can begin to tackle the challenges by recognizing the underlying problems of poverty and exclusion which put youth at risk; supporting and protecting the rights of children and young people; and establishing integrated youth policies. In South Africa, Johannesburg was the first major city to implement the Convention of the Rights of the Child (see box).

The potential for action by urban governments on children's rights and for children to participate in and contribute to the decisions that affect their

life has led to the development of the **Child Friendly Cities movement**...the unifying principle is that a city is considered friendly when it is able to assure the rights of children... By 2001, 182 cities had joined the movement...

In South Africa, the city of Johannesburg is the first major urban centre to make a commitment to implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the local level.

UNICEF Innocenti (2002 :16)

Integrated youth policies at the municipal level can build on and complement national strategies. One example from the North is the youth policy of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. This addresses the particular needs of youth at the local level, and augments youth policies at the national level. The policy aims to integrate and enhance youth care and broader youth policies including education, youth development and family support.¹²⁸

Local authorities should set out clear guidelines relating to youth across the range of municipal services. Some of the areas which the strategy might cover include the development of sports, recreation and cultural centres and programmes; education provision for illiterate youth; entrepreneurship and job training; youth employment campaigns; and public education campaigns and initiatives for youth on health, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, violence, guns and gangs.

¹²⁹ **Information on the Rotterdam municipal youth policy, projects and monitor can be accessed through www.stadhuus.rotterdam.nl and www.opgroeien.rotterdam.nl**

City of Aberdeen Youth Strategy, Scotland

The city council strategy for improving services to young people of 16-24 and involving them in community life. It stresses: *coordination* of services for young people, *participation* of youth, encouraging their involvement in their community, *equal opportunities*, to deal with exclusion of at-risk youth, and *a voice*, establishing youth representatives. Task forces on employment and training, crime, and participation made recommendations for implementation in a *Youth Strategy Action Plan*. To develop the Strategy a Youth Action Committee of young people advised the City Working Group. Services for youth were reviewed, workshops held with youth agencies and young people.

It is important to establish inventories of existing programmes and services in collaboration with all stakeholders, including youth themselves. This will help to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision, and specific needs. The participation of youth in the development and implementation of local youth policies can be facilitated by including youth advisors as in the northern case of Aberdeen (see box), or by the creation of Junior Councils of elected youth leaders (as in Malindi, Kenya, see below). These enable youth leaders to take a full part in decision-making and help foster responsible citizenship. Thus local governments should:

- Support the rights of children and young people
- Develop an implement an integrated youth strategy with local stakeholders and youth

- Promote the social inclusion of all youth
- Enable the participation of all young people in local decision-making
- Develop specific targeted policies for groups of youth at risk

5.2. DEVELOPING A LOCAL STRATEGY FOR YOUTH AT RISK

As with national youth policies, specific provision needs to be given to youth at risk within the local youth strategy.¹²⁹ Local strategies for youth at risk will include projects which target areas and neighbourhoods, and those providing services to individual youth. Such work needs to be done within a legal framework *supported* by central government. Collaboration between municipal authorities and the police or judiciary, for example, need to be supported nationally. It also depends on the decentralization of powers with increased fiscal resources and flexibility at the local level. Developing an effective local strategy will be greatly facilitated by encouraging a *cross-cutting approach* within the municipality, establishing a *permanent support mechanism*, and by enabling *collaborative partnerships* between the municipality and other local institutions and civil society, including youth themselves.

¹²⁹ See for example the resource book developed for cities by CSIR South Africa: Palmary, I. & Moat, C. (2002). *Preventing Criminality Among Young People: A Resource Book for Local Government*. City Safety Project. Johannesburg: CSV. www.csvr.org.za

5.2.1 Promoting a cross-cutting approach

Since the factors placing urban youth at risk are multi-dimensional and over-lapping, a cross-cutting approach which engages with the policies and energies of all municipal departments is essential. This includes departments such as transport, infrastructure, housing, recreation, social services, education and health. Heads of departments need to recognize how their policies can impact youth at risk, and work to integrate their policies with other municipal services, rather than working in isolation. For example, local by-laws prohibiting youth from selling goods in the city business district can increase their risk of criminalization, but making alternative spaces available could enable them gain an income. It is these key municipal leaders who can help to establish an overall strategy for the city or municipality, and develop actions plans in close collaboration with local stakeholders. This work can also be facilitated by practical and expert exchanges between cities or countries.

5.2.2 Permanent coordination and support mechanisms

Local prevention policies need to be *embedded* in the local government structure. This means there must be a permanent co-ordination mechanism at the local level, including a *high level crime prevention or community safety committee*, and a technical support team. The city or municipality needs to establish a committee responsible for urban safety under the leadership, for example, of the mayor or town clerk. This brings together key members of the municipal government, both elected officials and permanent administrators, the police, criminal justice system, and

the partners in the civil society. Their role is to guarantee the continuity of the overall strategy for long term prevention, within a framework of good governance.

A *technical support team* will provide continuity within the municipal system, so that work is not affected by political changes resulting from municipal elections. Such a permanent support team works at the heart of the local government system, and develops its activities as part of the local authority's overall programme of work. It is responsible for co-ordinating all stages of the development of local prevention policies, from detailed assessments of local problems, the identification and selection of priorities to be tackled and of action to be taken, to identification of the most appropriate partners to carry out each action. The team supervises the work of various partnerships, ensuring their continuity and their focus on strategic objectives. The Safer Cities co-ordinator in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, provides an example of such a permanent municipal coordinating role.

5.2.3 Working in multiple partnerships

As well as working with the full range of municipal services, local authorities need to work in partnership with civil society at the local level. Such partnerships enable a wide range of knowledge, skills and expertise to be shared, and can lead to very creative solutions to problems. In assessing the policy and strategy for tackling youth at risk, the partnership can help in:

- Assessing or diagnosing the problems and their causes
- Developing a plan of action
- Implementing, monitoring and evaluating the action plan.

A *community safety diagnosis* helps to identify the locations, neighbourhoods, groups and individuals involved in or affected by specific problems. This can include the use of surveys of victimization and needs, and surveys carried out by youth themselves. The partnership also needs to be involved in the development of a *plan of action* for tackling the problems identified and deciding on the priorities for action. Each priority action may involve a different set of partners. A substance abuse prevention project may include health officials, drug counsellors, teachers, police, prosecutors, judges, and community organizations specializing in drug rehabilitation, for example, and a programme to address school violence in schools, education administrators, teachers, parent associations, student organizations, social mediators, the police and local businesses. For every problem there will be an appropriate partnership, and the permanent support team helps to guide and co-ordinate partnership activity. *Implementation* of the action plan needs to be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that the goals and objectives of the plan are being met.



Durban, South africa: © Ismail/UN-HABITAT

5.3 YOUTH – THE ESSENTIAL LOCAL PARTNERS

Major Components of Effective Programmes for Child and Youth Participants

Training in authentic participation and different methods to achieve it

Listening to young people and their families

Systematic research qualitative as well as quantitative.....

Networking to create alliances of people at local, municipal and national levels.....

Lobbying to keep children's right to participate a salient political issue.

From Chawla (2002:233)

As with national governments, the participation and involvement of youth themselves in local plans and strategies offers a major opportunity to support and engage young people, and benefit from their ideas, capacities and energy. Traditionally, young people have not been included in municipal government. Breaking down the traditional approach of developing policies for youth, rather than *with* and *by* them, is essential, and help to renew or implant a sense of civic responsibility and pride.¹³⁰

Youth groups and associations can be involved in the identification of the local problems and priorities that concern them. This can be done in very creative ways, as the recent *Growing Up in Cities* projects have demonstrated with young children in cities in eight

¹³⁰ See UN HABITAT Policy Paper (2004) *Children, Youth and Urban Governance*.

countries.¹³¹The creation and use of public space, the use of social, cultural, sports and recreational facilities or policies to improve relations between young people and the police, all need to be discussed with young people and youth organizations. One American city, for example, requires candidates for the police to be interviewed by a panel of young people elected by their peers. A number of cities have created a dialogue between young people and the municipality and channeled graffiti activity into public murals. The development of youth participatory budgeting in South American cities provides a good model of youth participation in municipal government. The creation of Junior Council's is another way of ensuring on-going youth involvement in municipal government and decision-making, as the case study of Malindi indicates.

Case Study: Malindi Youth Consultation Process¹³²

The town of Malindi on the Kenyan coast has a population of approximately 140,000. The economy of Malindi relies almost entirely on tourism and associated industries. The industry is highly sensitive to regional disturbances and events, there is currently a decline in visitors, and tourist facilities are under-utilized. Prior to the establishment of the Junior Council in Malindi, only 7% of youth had any involvement with the municipal council, and 40% identified the lack

¹³¹ Chawla, L. (Ed.) (2002). *Growing up in an Urbanizing World*. Paris: UNESCO & Earthscan Publications.

¹³² Source: UMP Regional Office for Africa, Malindi City Consultation reports.

of a safe and enabling environment as a major constraint for youth, as well as the poor infrastructure and harassment by the police and council employees. In 2001, the Municipal Council and the Kenya National Council of Youth for Habitat signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* to mobilize youth in the development of Malindi, based on the following principles:

- A safe, healthy and environmentally friendly place for youth in the community.
- Strong involvement and participation of young people in decision-making in local, national and international issues.
- A strong anchor for youth development programmes in the municipal service delivery plan.
- Recognize young people as active contributors towards sustainable exploitation of capital assets for community development.

The *Malindi Youth Consultative Committee* (MYCC) was launched in September 2002 (Malindi Youth Day) by the Mayor and Municipal Council. Youth showcased their activities at the ward level, which was sponsored by USAID and cash awards were given to the three best wards. The MYCC has an elected youth representative from each of the 12 wards and its Secretariat includes the Junior Mayor, 2 Vice Chairmen, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The Steering Committee representing businesses, municipality, central government, religious and community leaders and MYCC provides guidance to the youth and city consultation process.



Nairobi, Kenya: © UN-HABITAT

A youth survey was carried out by youth researchers in each ward (trained and supported by the NGO ITDG). The survey reached 3000 youth through questionnaire interviews, and a further 1000 through focus group discussions, transect walks, and livelihood mapping exercises. It found that youth had very little understanding of the municipal decision-making process and limited participation. The main problem facing them was unemployment and lack of marketable skills (77%), and a poor and unsafe enabling environment. Lack of access to credit, and continued harassment by police and municipal officials and a lack of information on opportunities were a problem. Youth identified the need to create a space for their views. A Plan of Action was developed through a consultative process, and focused on capacity building both within the MYCC, and the Municipal Council of Malindi. Recommendations in the youth Work Plan included:

- Developing a youth information centre and youth network, possibly with a newsletter;
- Developing an MYCC website;
- Making inputs to the Municipal Council budgeting process;
- Being a key stakeholder in the development of the Municipal Strategic Plan;
- Investigating the creation of a Youth Bank or Youth Entrepreneur Loans.

The Municipality provided office space and desks in the council buildings for the Secretariat, and ITDG presented two computers and a printer, as well as stationary. It was expected that the MYCC Secretariat will become fully operational and involved in council policy and decision-making processes on issues affecting youth by 2003.

5.4 ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY

Communities in African cities have traditionally provided socializing and supporting structures. While there has been a breakdown of such traditional social controls in many cities, local communities have much to offer in terms of supporting youth at risk. Residents are most likely to develop a real sense of community control and commitment if they are involved in the development and implementation of social prevention measures in the community. Providing education or training for local youth at risk, or supporting locally based mediation and conflict resolution initiatives are examples. In the INANDA project in Durban, South Africa, for example, prevention in the neighbourhood

community is supported and reinforced by the work of a local mediation team who defuse conflict situations, and provide support to individuals or families in critical situations (see below). This has helped to transform the entire local community's sense of responsibility for local problems, while taking account of different cultural practices and attitudes. Another example is a ward-level community programme designed to promote safety and security, and employment and participation, among poor unemployed youth in Dar es Salaam.

Case Study: Sungusungu and Poultry Farming, Ilala, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania¹³³



Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: © UN-HABITAT

This project provides work for 97 unemployed and poor youth in the Kitunda ward, one of 22 wards in the Ilala municipality. The population of 10,000 lives in unplanned settlements with little infrastructure or social services. Some 90% of

¹³³ Contact Point: Anna Mtani, Safer Cities Coordinator, Dar es Salaam City Council, Tanzania. Email: safersm@raha.com

the population have no formal employment and subsist through petty trading and agriculture. The high levels of unemployment have led to increasing insecurity, crime and drug abuse. The Sungusungu group was established by the community to provide night-time security. The Sungusungus receive militia training (mgambo) from local retired army officers. Membership is voluntary and helps to strengthen community cohesion and citizenship, and increases community safety and awareness of crime prevention.

Since it is difficult for the youth to remain group active members without income, an income-generating poultry project was started to provide employment and skills training. The Kitunda ward is known for its poultry farming, so the project utilizes existing neighbourhood skills. There is a good market for both eggs and chickens throughout the entire area of Dar es Salaam. Other activities provide income from vegetable growing and carpentry. Some of the income generated will be invested back into the project to support further development of activities including carpentry and tailoring. The creation of more jobs over time will help to build the sustainability of the Sungusungu and their security work. The direct beneficiaries are the 97 Sungusungu, as well as their families. The indirect beneficiaries are the community of Kitunda since crime is being reduced through the night watch provided by the Sungusungu.

5.5 PROGRAMMES TARGETING SPECIFIC AT RISK GROUPS

The accumulated knowledge about the risk and protective factors which affect children and young people point to a number of ways in which municipalities can intervene: supporting at risk families; providing support to individual children and youth who have particular problems; intervening in the environment to improve living, recreational, education and employment conditions, and helping to strengthen the social capacities of communities. Programmes targeting families and communities include those concerned with the prevention of violence against women and children, since this is a major factor affecting both the health and capacities of women and children but also attitudes to the use of violence. While there are many overlapping problems facing different groups of youth at risk, tailoring projects to meet the needs of specific groups is especially important.

5.5.1 Young offenders and young people returning to the community

Developing community-based alternatives to imprisonment for young offenders, and the use of restorative justice programmes should become a goal for local youth policy. A number of African cities have developed community sanctions designed for young offenders and those being released from custody back into the community, based on these principles, and they sometimes involve young offenders themselves in the design and delivery of programmes. In South Africa, a range of community-based initiatives have been developed in various cities. They include programmes developed in the *One Stop Youth Justice*

Centre in Nelson Mandela Metropole discussed above; community-based programmes for first-time children and young offenders, and post-release reintegration programmes with continuing support; and the INANDA project in Durban.

Case Study: Khulisa South Africa – Rehabilitate - Educate – Reintegrate¹³⁴

Khulisa is a non-profit organization dedicated to crime prevention, especially among young offenders and youth at risk of 12-25. Most programmes are facilitated by former offenders and graduates of youth development programmes. Rehabilitation programmes not only work with young people in prison, but also provide post-release support to help them reintegrate into families and communities. All programmes are based on restorative justice principles, using mediation to deal with conflicts, and working on the underlying problems, which led to criminal activity, and they are developed in consultation with young people themselves as well as professional services. Programmes include *Primary Matters*, an intervention programme in primary schools to provide the skills to divert children from risk; *Make it Better* providing leadership skills to school leavers to run community projects; *New Directions*, a community-based course for first time offenders which provides on-going support; *Discovery*, an in-prison rehabilitation project including life skills, creative writing, and vocational skills training and which is linked to *Destinations* a post-release

¹³⁴ See **Khulisa Crime prevention programmes with a difference.** www.Khulisservices.co.za

reintegration programme providing on-going support.

Case Study: The Inanda Family Protection Programme in Durban, South Africa¹³⁵

This family protection programme in Inanda (500,000 inhabitants) began in 1996. It is a 'round the clock' community programme with 10 local instructors trained on-site. It targets at risk children and families, youth at risk, those in conflict with the law and those who have completed a sentence. It has three main goals: developing a sense of belonging to the community; providing a safe home where young people are recognized and loved; and providing youth with education and access to employment. These are seen as best provided through the family and the community in which children and youth grow up.

Family protection is extended to the *community* through the 'ubuntu' culture, which considers the community as an extended family. The programme works through a partnership of neighbourhood leaders, families, schools, police and grass-roots organizations. By adopting its members' perspective and listening to them, the community is able to identify vulnerable families and youths and to put them in touch with the project. The project is able to respond to different types of problems, including sexual and physical abuse, mental illness, drug abuse and the needs of youth released from institutions. The project collaborates with other specialized organizations to enable it to respond to specific needs.

¹³⁵ Source: **Safer Cities Mission report March 2001.**

In terms of youth violence and youth gang prevention a number of intervention programmes have been developed. For example, projects providing employment opportunities for gang members seem to have been successful in South Africa.¹³⁶ School violence prevention projects have been developed in a number of cities. In South Africa, *Tiisa Thuto* is an effective school-based crime prevention project, which aims to reduce levels of crime and violence. It works through a partnership with parents, teachers, the South Africa Police Service and the Departments of Safety and Liaison, and Education, Business Against Crime and other local NGO's.¹³⁷ In KwaZulu Natal, the Independent Project Trust, works with municipal police and schools, and pilot projects have been able to reduce levels of violence in schools in Durban.

Case Study: School Violence Reduction, IPT project Durban, South Africa¹³⁸

In Durban schools gang-related violence is a major problem, security measures tend to be inadequate and counselling for victims of violence and rape virtually non-existent. Demoralization, vandalism and substance abuse are serious problems. Attendance by students, and often teachers, can be sporadic. The majority of students report feeling unsafe travelling to and from school.

¹³⁶ **Palmary & Moat (2002) op. cit.**

¹³⁷ **See Tiisa Thuto Schools, Project Update March 2003. Business Against Crime, South Africa www.bac.ca.za**

¹³⁸ **Harber, C. (2001). Schooling and violence in South Africa: creating a safer school. *Intercultural Education*, 12 (3) 261-271.**

ITDG an NGO specializing in conflict resolution, undertook a detailed assessment of problems, held workshops for students, teachers and the police, and acted as the catalyst to enable schools to develop their own security plans. A year later, students, staff and police felt the schools were safer places, there was some decline in crime reported, fear levels and fatalism were much lower, spot checks by police had encouraged students to feel they did not need to carry guns and knives for protection; fences and property were repaired, counselling rooms set up for victims, suspicions about neighbouring ethnic schools had been reduced, and antagonism between the police and schools significantly reduced.

5.5.2 Street children: a local partnership rehabilitation policy

A new dawn for street families

The Ministry of Local Government and the Nairobi City Council with the help of international Organisations and NGOs have developed a strategy to remove some 10,000 or more street children in the city to rehabilitation centres and social halls, providing food, bedding, care, recreation, schooling...and begin the long process of social transformation.

East African Standard February 10th 2002

Dealing with the problem of street children requires a major initiative on the part of the local authority. The use of prosecution and punishment may be a short-term way of clearing the streets, but it is in the end very

costly, and does not protect the rights of young people. Short-term assistance for street children such as shelter and food is sometimes provided by NGO's, but this is not a long-term solution. Working directly with street children and developing alternative protection including shelter, food, clothing, education, health, alcohol or drug treatment, counselling and friendship, will help them to get off the streets, and become reintegrated back into neighbourhoods and some form of family life. Some of the needs of girls and boys will be different – since girls are more likely to be sexually exploited or active, and their health risks may be greater. Both approaches require local city plans and protocols, partnerships with businesses and organizations, advocacy and education to sensitize the public, backed up by good national policies. Involving the knowledge and skills of street children themselves is also important.

In Nairobi, Kenya, the new government and City Council introduced a major initiative to respond to the huge numbers of street children in the city in 2003, involving housing and educational provision.¹³⁹ Some Guidelines for local authority action are already in existence.¹⁴⁰ It is important to create a series of progressive approaches for their social reintegration, beginning with a thorough diagnosis of the local problem of street children since there will be considerable variation from city to city. This should include: the approximate numbers of such children; their main characteristics (ages, locations, activities

¹³⁹ See *East African Standard The Big Issue*. February 10th 2003. www.eastandard.net/archives/

¹⁴⁰ UN HABITAT (2000). *Streetchildren and Gangs in African Cities*. (2000). UMP Working Paper Series 18. Nairobi: UN Habitat.

etc.); the existing provision of services catering to their needs (health, schools, NGOs, churches, mosques etc), and their quality; and their scope for expansion of services, particularly the willingness of community organizations to form part of an integrated service.

Undugu Society, an NGO dealing with street children in Nairobi, Kenya) has struggled to promote youth activities, mainly in the areas of sports and recreation. In Mathare slum village, there are established youth groups in boxing, football, tae kwon doe and table tennis...

UMG (2000: 67)

The very complexity of the task of integrating street children back into society requires partnerships between important stakeholders, such as the criminal justice system, social services, churches, schools, neighbourhood leaders, philanthropic organizations, hospitals or clinics that treat them, specialized NGOs, and the private sector. The role of the local authority is to provide dynamic leadership and co-ordination, and support action by decentralizing some powers e.g. to ward level. The local authority co-ordination must ensure:

- The establishment of partnerships in which *all* partners are represented, including youth
- The assigning of clear responsibilities to each of the partners
- The existence of accessible youth centres in the most frequented areas (i.e., where the children are – most often this is the city centre)
- The development on an integrated series of services capable of meeting the needs of street children at different stages of their reintegration

- The establishment of an evaluation process for the strategy
- Education campaigns to raise residents' understanding of the need for rehabilitation
- Ensure that the local authority undertakes tasks which other partners cannot, for example, setting up accessible technical training schools.

The common approach has been to develop centres which provide substitute families, bringing together groups of street children who want to be integrated back into the main society. Under the guidance of older peers they have access to a range of support, training and education services provided by specialized instructors. A number of such programmes exist. In Dakar, Senegal for example, instructors assume responsibility for the re-education of youths, and serve as guarantors for their apprenticeship.

Case study: Municipal instructors bypass stigmatisation in Dakar

Street children in Dakar are often excluded and stigmatised by traders or informal workshop owners who could help them enter the job market. Many of them would like to benefit from school or technical training, or internships, which would facilitate their reintegration. The municipality of Dakar, in partnership with specialist NGOs, uses instructors who enable the youths to access training and internships. The instructors act as sureties for the youths with micro-entrepreneurs in the informal sector, who take them on as apprentices.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Source: Safer Cities Programme.

Similar neighbourhood programmes in the Tanzanian city of Mwanza use micro-enterprises informal sector to provide paid training and local family placements for a day or two each month for street children. In Kenya, volunteers from the community of origin of groups of street children work to develop friendly relationships with them, and a local community resource centre offers food, clothing, informal education, medical care and counselling. The centre is able to direct children to special training programmes run by NGOs.¹⁴²

5.5.3 Alcohol and drug prevention

Community-based approaches: a community-based approach to child trafficking is essential... Community capacity-building should include community surveillance and awareness-raising. It should empower communities and households to improve living conditions..
UNICEF (2002:25)

Effective alcohol and drug prevention policies need to be based on the principles of public health and harm reduction, rather than repression. Local policies should encompass both legal (e.g. alcohol and cigarettes) and illegal drugs (marijuana, etc). They should aim to break the stigma associated with youth addiction through family and neighbourhood education programmes, and use peer instructors and former drug addicts in rehabilitation programmes.

¹⁴² A.Wema, Dzikus, Ochola and Kumarasuryar.....UMP report on City development Strategies

The development of affordable and accessible youth treatment and rehabilitation centres is also crucial for good prevention policies. Educational campaigns can be developed using the media, schools, churches and mosques, youth associations and neighbourhood organizations. The local municipal partnership can:

- Keep in touch with the police and specialized bodies
- Communicate with local residents regularly
- Mobilize funds for campaigns and treatment
- Evaluate campaigns and rehabilitation projects
- Protect neighbourhoods from drug traffickers
- Refer drug abusers to support organizations
- Create on-going support systems after rehabilitation
- Work with drinking establishments to enforce standards for minors
- Facilitate mediation in the neighbourhood and schools.

5.5.4 Sexual exploitation, war affected children

Common components of a gender violence reduction programme include:

Defining violence against women and understanding the range of gender-based violence.

Changing attitudes of young people towards sexism and increasing awareness of the myths about gender violence.

Identifying violence-related attitudes among youth.

Learning non-violent relationship skills such as communication and dealing with anger.

Identifying community resources for victims of gender violence, such as shelters, counselling services etc.

Palmary & Moat (2002:36)

Action to tackle the sexual exploitation of children and young people needs to take place on the ground, apart from at national or international levels. Local authorities in a number of West African countries such as Benin have developed networks of local village committees which work to raise awareness about trafficking and child labour, report cases of sexual abuse, planned placement and trafficking, and monitor the reintegration of children when they are returned to their communities.¹⁴³ Such an approach could be adapted to urban neighbourhoods as part of local government youth plans.

The development of trauma clinics and support groups attached to local schools or neighbourhoods, to work with victims of sexual and gender-based violence, unaccompanied children and youths, or young refugees, are all examples of projects at the local level involving NGO's, police services and local authorities.¹⁴⁴ Overall, local authority plans need to take into account the specific and different needs and experiences of young women and young men in developing policy and projects in the municipality to deal with sexual exploitation.

¹⁴³ **UNICEF (2002). *Child Trafficking in West Africa: Policy Responses*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.**

¹⁴⁴ **For example, CSVR, Business Against Crime and CSIR in South Africa have worked to develop such projects.**

5.5.5 Children and youth with HIV/AIDS

The experience of the City of Msunduzi in South Africa provides some guidance on how to develop both prevention, and care and treatment programmes in the municipality for children and youth who have contracted HIV/AIDS.¹⁴⁵ Under the leadership of the Deputy Mayor, the city engaged all sectors of civil society in a city-wide consultation process, collected in-depth information and held a two-day workshop to develop strategies. These include:

- Education, openness, awareness and prevention
- Treatment and care for people living with HIV/AIDS
- Care for vulnerable children including orphans

Local government is undoubtedly the sphere of government closest to the people, and regardless of what National and Provincial/regional levels may be doing, our communities and local organizations expect us to take a leading role in addressing the AIDS epidemic.

Dr Julie Dyer (2002)

The latter includes developing a co-ordinated response for children, with the municipality working closely with local children's NGO's, creating easier access for grants and birth certificates, making their needs one of the five top priorities for the Council, with budgetary provision, and making council buildings available to NGO's working with child-headed households to assess and support their needs.

¹⁴⁵ Dyer, J. (2002). *HIV/AIDS and the Role of Local Authorities in Combating it*. Paper presented at the ICLEI African mayors WSSD Preparatory Meeting, Johannesburg, July 2.

A final case study of a youth sport association in Kenya, demonstrates the great potential for growth, and the range of benefits which well-organized local neighbourhood projects, developed in partnership, can have in meeting the needs of urban youth at risk, and when they are targeted to, and involve, those most in need.

Case Study: The Mathare Youth Sports Association in Kenya¹⁴⁶

MYSA started in 1987 as a self-help youth sports and community service projects in the Mathare Valley, one of Africa's largest and poorest slums. Today, with over 9,000 youth between 9-18 years old on over 640 teams in 94 football leagues, MYSA is the largest youth sports and environmental cleanup organization in Africa. Since 1988, the teams carry out weekly slum cleanup projects, as the huge piles of uncollected garbage and contaminated water in blocked drains are major causes of disease, disability and deaths. The Mathare slum is also a high-risk area for AIDS. Since 1994, over 126 young boys and girls received intensive training and have now reached over 25,000 youth with critical information on AIDS prevention. Under the Gender Partnership Project started in 1996, over 3,500 girls are now members. Half the part-time staff are girls who earn enough on weekends to pay their own school fees. Under the Leadership Awards project MYSA also pays the school fees

¹⁴⁶ See UN HABITAT Best Practices Database: www.bestpractices.org

for over 50 top youth leaders. MYSA projects outside the Mathare slums include providing lunch for jailed kids at the Juvenile Court and renovating the cells and toilets. In 1998 MYSA set up a self-help sports and community service programme for 30,000 refugee children at Kakuma Camp in northern Kenya. MYSA is run for and by the youth of the Mathare slums. Most of the several hundred elected MYSA officials, staff, trainers, leaders, volunteer coaches and referees are under 16 years old.

This section has outlined the ways in which local governments in a number of countries in Africa have begun to meet the challenges of urban youth at risk, have been successful in working in a strategic way, and developing integrated comprehensive partnerships across municipal institutions and with civil society. The following section looks at the role of the international community.



Nairobi, Kenya: © UN-HABITAT



Douala, Cameroon: © Vincent Kitio/UN-HABITAT

VI THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

What can the international community do to help local and national governments in Africa and at risk youth meet the challenges facing them? This section considers the opportunities for support by such groups as donor countries, international organizations, associations of cities and municipalities, non-governmental organizations, foundations and international and regional business organizations.

..specific initiatives for children...are not as important as the changing awareness of children that ideally they inspire...what makes the difference is a more general change in assumptions and standards without which change can never become widespread. It must become a routine matter to think in terms of young people as citizens with rights...

Sheridan Bartlett, 2004

In keeping with the UN Millennium Goals, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the World Programme of Action for Youth, and other international conventions, declarations and protocols, which urge the protection of youth at risk, there are many opportunities for action. In the first place the international community should vigorously support

those conventions and agreements, and *build dialogue and cooperation internationally* around the need for action for urban youth in Africa.

Secondly, the international community should partner with national and city-level governments in Africa to provide *technical and financial support* for the development of viable strategies and programmes. As recent experience of integrating the environmental rights of children into municipal action in developing countries has shown, there is a fund of case studies of good practice and experience to draw on, but much work needs to be done in terms of embedding them as a routine part of municipal decision-making and practice.¹⁴⁷ Similarly, many examples of effective programmes to deal with youth violence or youth gangs, or to intervene with at risk families to prevent crime and victimization exist in the North, as well as in Africa and other regions in the South. Expanding or adapting such programmes to other cities or areas is not straightforward, and each context will bring its own challenges. Donor countries, for example, could partner with local, regional or international NGO's and national or local governments, providing technical and financial support for:

- The development of national and local youth policies
- The development of good data collection on youth issues including surveys of victimization, local area profiles of the needs of youth, and of youth in the criminal justice system

¹⁴⁷ See Sheridan Bartlett's review (2004) in *Children and Local Governance. Save the Children, Sweden. Children, Youth and Environments, Vol 14 No. 1. www.colorado.edu/journals*

- Education and public awareness on the needs of youth at risk
- Education and training for institutional, municipal and service officials who work with at risk youth
- Youth justice and community-based and restorative programmes as alternatives to custody
- Social and community level good practice projects for at risk neighbourhoods and youth
- Building research and monitoring capacity.

A major vehicle for such support can be through *city-to-city exchanges of expertise*, taking place over a period of two-three years, for example. This would allow for the supported development and implementation of a youth strategy in a city, rather than just short-term or one-off exchanges of experience. These should include North-South as well as South-South exchanges, or city-to-city exchanges between African cities, a model which has been successfully used in UN-HABITAT's Safer Cities Programme. Associations of cities are similarly well placed to support city-to-city exchanges. Another vehicle could be through the support for sub-regional training programmes and the expansion of Safer Cities programmes within countries, and across the region.

Thirdly, donor countries, businesses and foundations, municipal associations and NGO's can contribute in a major way by developing and promoting *networks and exchanges* to enhance the capacity of young people themselves to participate in the decision-making which affects them. This could involve sponsoring youth participation such as junior councils, youth participatory budgeting, and youth training and involvement in research and advocacy in city planning and crime prevention; youth employment and training; the development of youth micro-credit schemes; sports, cultural and recreational facilities; specific programmes to provide education and training for girls, and to change attitudes to the use of violence against women and children; partnering with local governments and NGO's in the establishment of good practice support services for youth at risk; developing specific academic exchange programmes for individual youth, and exchanges between youth groups to help build capacity and knowledge.

Similarly, the international community can support national and local governments in promoting media and education campaigns on youth at risk, to promote better understanding of their needs, and their integration into the community. The international

community can also contribute in a major way to the development, adaptation and dissemination of *good practices and tools* focusing on the needs of urban youth at risk. For example, international business organizations and foundations can support the development of manuals and toolkits, which help to build capacity and train trainers, including youth groups and leaders and municipalities.

UN-HABITAT's own depth of experience in supporting the development of community safety at the city level in Africa and in other regions through its Safer Cities

and Urban Management Programmes provides considerable resources. This includes the current development of a manual to support the Safer Cities approach.¹⁴⁸ UN Habitat's Safer Cities Local Crime Prevention Toolkit is being developed in collaboration with CSIR, South Africa, and will provide practical examples of the processes of developing and implementing a city-wide strategy, including youth at risk.

¹⁴⁸ **UN Habitat's Safer Cities Local Crime Prevention Toolkit is being developed in collaboration with CSIR, South Africa, and will provide practical examples of the processes of developing and implementing a city-wide strategy, including youth at risk.**

ANNEX 1

Nelson Mandela Metropole Declaration on The Development of Citizenship among Youth in Conflict with the Law on the African Continent

We are meeting in Nelson Mandela Metropole, South Africa, on the occasion of the International Conference on “Developing citizenship amongst youth in conflict with the law on the African Continent”, June 17 to 19 2002.

We are representatives of national governments, cities and municipalities, civil society organisations working with youth at risk, the research community and multi-national experts, the police, magistrates and youth leaders, international networks and United Nations agencies from five continents, twenty one countries and thirty five cities and municipalities.

We adhere to the recommendations put forth in:

- The World Youth Forums of the UN system, Vienna 1994 and 1996, Braga 1998 and Dakar 2001
- The World Conference of Ministers in Charge of Youth, Lisbon 1998
- The World Programme of Action for Youth to the year 2000 and beyond (UN 1996)
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)
- The OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child (2000)
- Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Riyadh 1990) • Minimum Standard

Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing, 1985)

- UN Child Summit (New York 2002)
- UN Guidelines on Crime Prevention (Vienna 2002).

We affirm the principles of the Habitat II Conference (1996) where national governments for the first time recognized local governments, civil society, business communities, youths, women, and other local stakeholders as equal partners in the decision making process that affects human settlements. The conference resulted in a global plan of action known as the **Habitat Agenda**, which stipulates that youth should play an active and creative role in building sustainable communities and be accepted as a key partner for the implementation process.

Given That: The continued deterioration of the status of youth worldwide and as it applies in Africa, facing growing levels of unemployment, poverty, armed conflict, epidemic diseases (and in particular HIV/AIDS), functional illiteracy and substance abuse – among other social and economic challenges - places youth at risk in society.

[1] Youth violence – in particular in urban areas – has increased and the age of entry into delinquency is decreasing. Since the 1980's, countries in the South have witnessed the growing phenomena of child abuse, street children, youth gangs, school dropouts, widespread social exclusion and civil wars involving child soldiers aggravating the situation of youth crime. Violence has become a serious threat to the well being, personal development and health of young people.

Youth crime and violence occurs in different contexts, has multiple causes and requires multiple responses. The various causes should be analysed locally, both in the urban and rural context and responses developed locally through the joint efforts of key civic and neighbourhood actors. Youth are a positive and undeniable force in society and have enormous potential for contributing to the development of societies.

Guided by the principles of:

- **Sustainable and economic development**, networking and cooperation across the continent of Africa. Policy and strategy regarding youth and in particular youth in conflict with the law should be aligned with and central to the policies and strategies of NEPAD.
- **Inclusive partnerships** at international, regional, national and local levels, between intra and inter-governmental, non-governmental and community based organisations as well as partnerships with individuals and civil society and in particular the youth.
- Targeted investment in youth must begin in the **early childhood years**.
- **Social development and an end to exclusion** through a comprehensive range of environmental, educational, economic, judicial, social and infrastructural strategies to promote respect for the rule of law, commitment to strong social fabric and a healthy and peaceful lifestyle.
- **Full and inclusive participation of youth** in civic affairs; youth must be empowered to participate effectively in decision-making

processes. The civic capital of marginalized youth must be recognized and supported.

- **Good governance** including accountability, sustainability, monitoring, evaluation and feedback regarding strategies, policies, programmes and interventions.
- **Family** as it is understood in the African context, to include extended family and community members as appropriate.

We Therefore Appeal:

To National Governments:

- To implement legislation to protect **human rights** as they relate to youth.
- To adopt and implement social **crime prevention policies and programmes**, and allocate financial resources for the prevention, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration, as appropriate, for children and youth in disadvantaged social conditions and who are at risk.
- Give high priority to **marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged youth**, especially those who are separated from their families, children living or working on the streets.
- To **devolve and decentralize** some responsibilities for criminal justice to the local authorities and set up mechanisms for local authorities to be actively involved in preventing youth crime and reintegrating young offenders.
- To ensure that issues of youth in conflict with the law are central to **national youth policies**.

To Local Governments:

- To mobilize partners and recommend the formulation and review of **integrated, gender sensitive and cross-sectoral youth policies** at the local level addressing substance abuse, street children, youth gangs, young offenders and restorative justice, involving all stakeholders, especially youth. Youth issues should not be treated in isolation, but mainstreamed into all policy making.
- To allocate local funds, develop strategies and implement **social integration programmes** with particular focus on youth at risk of marginalization, including among others: youth affected by violence (including violence against women), youth affected by drug and substance abuse and young offenders. Offering renewed and continuous learning and training opportunities for youth is paramount.
- To develop mechanisms promoting youth participatory decision-making, **fostering responsible citizenship** and promoting technical, human and financial support focused on assisting marginalized and vulnerable youth to address their own needs and interests and make their particular contribution to social progress. To the Criminal Justice System:
- To promote the establishment of prevention, support and caring services as well as justice systems specifically applicable to children and youth taking into account the principles of **restorative justice**; fully safeguarding children's rights and promoting youth's reintegration into society.
- To recognize and ensure that alternatives to institutionalization are the highest priority in determining correctional measures. Efforts should be made to reunite youth with their families. Traditional peace and conflict resolution mechanisms should be amongst the tools used for dealing with juvenile justice, offender rehabilitation and reintegration.
- To put in place sensitization and integrated multi-sectoral training programmes on the special needs of children and youth, ensuring that their rights accorded under international and national law are enforced by all service providers.
- To work towards the establishment of **youth courts** with multi-sectoral, dedicated service providers.
- To take steps to provide youth with **free legal and other assistance** in court. Magistrates should make special efforts to ensure that youth understand the nature of the proceedings, the status and disposition of their cases. Parents or family members should take part in the proceedings.
- To affirm the important role that **families, peers, schools and communities** play in youth development. Family must be supported and strengthened so as to participate effectively in youth justice, offender reintegration and crime prevention.

- To explore alternative ways of diverting youth from criminal activities and substance abuse, gang-related activities and crime through targeted **mentoring, cultural, and educational programmes** and also through sports and recreational activities.

To Youth in Society and Youth Organisations:

- To take the lead in **peer-to-peer training** to stimulate, support and facilitate the role of marginalized and vulnerable youth in the wider society, recognising that young people are the best agents for delivering positive change for other young people.
- To **network** and develop and institutionalise mechanisms for sustained youth empowerment and participation in decision-making at all levels, with particular emphasis on local-to-local exchanges.
- To **mobilize and promote awareness** on the causes and costs of social exclusion and to promote programmes that foster social integration.

To Local Communities:

- To ensure that the **family is supported** as the cornerstone of the community.
- To **facilitate the integration** of youth into society through education, providing support, transmitting values and contributing to the development of young women and men into responsible adults.

- To act as an **agent of socialization** and provide local and accessible role models, building on traditional forms of social control including conflict resolution and mediation, traditional laws, ethnic values and religion.

In support of the above, to United Nations Agencies and the International Community:

- To build an **effective culture of peace** through education and training, aimed at social progress, fighting inequalities and recognising the importance of dialogue and co-operation.
- To provide **technical and/or financial assistance** in order to establish and promote programmes for youth development and the rehabilitation and reintegration of youth in conflict with the law.
- Develop and promote **networks and exchanges** to enhance the capacity of youth. Promote and enable the exchange of experiences and information between youth, especially young people living in extreme poverty and those requiring protection from violence, in particular young women.
- To promote **awareness-raising campaigns** reinforcing positive behaviours and seek to transform negative practices in a constructive and positive way in young people, including marginalized and excluded youth.

- **To advocate and promote capacity building** by contributing to the development, documentation, adaptation, dissemination and replication of good practices and tools RESOLVE TO
- Establish a **network of cities and youth** at the local, national, sub-regional and regional level in Africa, with a functioning secretariat, with the objective of promoting community-wide participation and partnership approaches as crucial to the accurate assessment of the problem of youth in conflict with the law, the identification of viable solutions and the formulation and implementation of appropriate strategies, policies and programmes.
- Establish a (bi-annual) **forum** for regional exchanges of experiences on restorative justice approaches and youth empowerment models in the framework of city-to-city cooperation.
- Present and further explore the conference outcomes at the **Youth Employment Summit and the World Summit for Sustainable Development to** be held this year in Alexandria and Johannesburg respectively, as well as the 5th World Youth Forum of the United Nations system.
- Call on all African governments to develop programmes to **give African youth a meaningful voice** in governance. [1] From the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy, Dakar, August 2001

ANNEX 2

The Safer Cities Programme

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Safer Cities Partners

Safer Cities operates in close partnership with a number of international organisations specialized in crime prevention and development. They are involved in the implementation of the programme through a Coordinating Committee. Members of the Coordinating committee and programme partners are:

- The European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS)
- The International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC)
- The Institute for Security Studies (ISS)
- Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania (CESEC)

- SUR
- Comité d'action femmes et sécurité urbaine (CAFSU)
- Penal Reform International (PRI)
- The Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG-EA)
- The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC-USA)

About The Safer Cities Programme

The Safer Cities Programme is housed under the Disaster, Post-Conflict and Safety Section of UN HABITAT. It co-ordinates urban safety and security issues which are part of UN HABITAT's global advocacy functions under the Global Campaign on Urban Governance.

The Safer Cities Programme was launched in 1996 at the request of African mayors who wanted to address urban violence by developing a prevention strategy at city level. The programme supports the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, which acknowledges the responsibility of local authorities in crime prevention. Furthermore, the Programme is in line with the ECOSOC Resolution 1995/9 of 24 July 1995.

The main objectives of the programme are to:

- (1) Build capacities at city level to adequately address urban insecurity; and thereby
- (2) Contribute to the establishment of a culture of prevention.

ANNEX 3

A Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) For Urban Youth In Africa

Introduction

The United Nations Youth Agenda, *Empowering Youth for Development and Peace*, recognises that young people everywhere are at risk. It recognises too that they have aspirations, and that they are key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. It recommends that those growing up in today's world should live under conditions that encourage their imagination, ideals, energy and the vision to flourish¹.

At present, over 3 billion individuals or just over 50 per cent of the world's population are children or youth. In terms of youth alone, there are 1.3 billion young people aged between 15 and 24. According to the *World Youth Report 2003*, almost 60 per cent of these young people live in the developing countries of Asia. Another 15 per cent are in Africa, and approximately 10 per cent are in Latin America and the Caribbean. About 15 per cent live in developed regions.

In today's rapidly urbanising world, the biggest danger many of them face is exclusion and marginalisation. International Labour Organisation estimates indicate that young people comprise 40-75 percent of the total number of the unemployed

Unemployment, crime, HIV/AIDS, neglect by higher authorities and often abandonment to their fate because of various forms of discrimination, top the list of problems towns and cities have to deal with. African youth have to also face daily severe obstacles merely to survive. This situation is especially acute in the region, which is experiencing the world's largest rate of transition from a rural way of life to urban living. Africa's urban population is forecast to double from 295 million in 2000 to 590 million in 2020 - a growth rate consistent with the most rapid urban growth rates in the world. By 2020, one half of Africa's population will be living in cities.

The new millennium thus presents a picture of hopelessness to millions of children and around the continent. According to the *World Youth Report 2003*, most warfare that rages today is in developing countries, particularly in Africa, where an estimated 300,000 young soldiers – many of them child-soldiers are forced into armed conflict willed by adults.

In many cities around the continent, more than 50 per cent of inhabitants are under the age of 19.2 The lives of young people, in Sub-Saharan Africa are blighted by a combination of intense human injustice and disasters. In addition, youth have over the past 20 years been particularly affected by growing urban poverty, child trafficking, sexual exploitation especially girls and young women, high unemployment, and the growing phenomenon of street children. Crime and violence by young people, the breakdown of family life, environmental degradation, worsening health conditions and the transmission of infectious diseases, new and old, and, of course, the worsening HIV/AIDS pandemic unfortunately also add to the list.

Young people are also adversely affected by the impact of globalisation on values and culture, which in some cases is rapidly destroying local cultural ties and affiliations as well as traditional inter-generationalities. It is also carrying new sets of values, which are ultimately unattainable. The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, told a world conference of youth ministers in Lisbon, Portugal in 1998:

“No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline.”

The UN *Youth Initiative* acknowledges that the young need to be considered equal partners in policymaking processes. Yet all too often, these promises have in reality meant little more than ‘consultation’ and the resulting policy has been a perceived notion of ‘what is best’ for young people. This has led to a consistent failure to address the underlying concerns of young people or the causes of youth unemployment and subsequently, the problem has continued unchecked.

Everywhere in the world and Africa is no exception, young people have similar dreams and ambitions, but all too often, their voices remain unheard. Young people when given the opportunity can positively influence their communities and distinguish themselves as positive agents for change. Young people are now asking that their voices be heard, that their issues be addressed and that their roles be recognised. Rather than being viewed as objects of grooming for future citizens, they want to be accepted as *partners* in development, in helping chart and shape our future.

This is the backdrop to the Global Partnership Initiative launched by UN HABITAT in co-operation with selected cities in Africa and the world in Barcelona, Spain, at the Second World Urban Forum in 2004. Building on the collective experience within the UN system working on youth and youth-related issues, the GPI focuses specifically on Youth in Urban Areas.

Goal And Purpose:

UN-HABITAT regards young people as a major force for a better world. Thus their empowerment through effective and meaningful participation in decision-making is crucial. In this new millennium, they can be active partners in meeting the challenges posed by the world’s human settlements crisis.

Adopted by 171 countries at the 1996 City Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, the *Habitat Agenda* recommends a participatory approach to promote employment, training, and crime prevention. It also stresses the role of young people in the alleviation of poverty and inequality.

UN-HABITAT is developing a strategy aimed at integrating youth concerns into UN-HABITAT’s overall policy decision-making process. Its prime objective is to identify areas for youth participation and to ensure the development of a strategy for the active engagement of young people in addressing issues related to sustainable urbanisation. Our role is to help nurture partnerships, lobby governments, and offer avenues for further collaboration.

In May 2003, the UN-HABITAT Governing Council adopted a resolution on the engagement of youth in the work of UN-HABITAT. Resolution GC19/13 directs the Executive Director to “ensure the active participation

of UN-HABITAT in the Secretary General's initiative on youth employment; as well as to develop a Global Partnership Initiative on Urban Youth Development in Africa, in partnership with other relevant United

Nations agencies, multilateral institutions and private foundations in the context of New Partnership for Africa's Development".³

The Global Partnership Initiative is important because it seeks to integrate the Millennium Development Goals with development programmes at the city level focusing on and working with urban youth in Africa. Consistent with a number of the MDGs, including Goal 7 Target 11 and Goal 8 Target 16⁴, the GPI must be seen as an integrated effort to fulfil the MDGs and their targets.

The GPI is also consistent with UN HABITAT's global campaigns for *secure tenure and urban governance*, and as such is instrumental in fulfilling the objectives of these campaigns. The GPI should be established well within UN-HABITAT's current work programme, incorporating the standards identified in the UNHABITAT and the draft Youth Strategy.⁵

The overarching goal of the initiative, while respecting and integrating the various international covenants on human rights, gender equity, democratic values and sustainable development, is to mobilize and harness the resources of Africa's youth, to empower them and improve the quality of life for young people in cities and towns. This requires tackling amongst others unemployment, crime and governance issues. Another function of the GPI is to devise concrete methods and partnership projects to fulfil the overarching goal of the GPI within an agreed timeframe.

Partnerships

The GPI should be based on innovative partnerships between grass root actors, civil society, private sector and entrepreneurs, educational institutions, governments at all levels and the international community, both at bi-lateral and multilateral levels. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should play a key role by providing the young with a means to promote its objectives. The partnerships should be used to promote policies related to youth empowerment at the appropriate level, pursue fair gender policies, strengthen and upgrade educational opportunities for urban youth, develop strategies for youth employment through skilled and professional vocational training, with the aim of developing bona fide apprenticeship diplomas. The partners will become part of the network to promote youth in urban development. This will be achieved through measures such as a common website, exchange visits, and One-on-one project/thematic pairing to build local capacities.

The role of art and culture is often ignored in building consciousness and raising self-esteem among young people. Partnerships in this area are often few and far between, but could be initiated to help develop selfempowerment and raise awareness on urban development issues. This is why in part, UN-HABITAT has arranged the world's first international Hip-Hop concert in Barcelona, and dialogues with the stars featuring as "Messengers of Truth" during the World Urban Forum.

A number of modalities to operationalise GPI can be identified. Integrated youth centres cooperating with national or local authorities, private sector and youth

organizations, local youth councils and student bodies at universities are already in operation in many urban areas, fostering participation in governance projects. "One stop Youth Information Centres" addressing issues related to justice, drug abuse and youth employment are already established in certain countries in Africa. Programmes that demonstrate ways that enable young people to use their knowledge and often limited education can be used to influence policies at all levels. Further, other innovative ways of engaging youth must be found to revive good traditions that have been lost.

Intended Outcomes

At the end of a pilot phase, when UN-HABITAT celebrates its 30th anniversary, scheduled to take place in Vancouver, Canada in 2006, concrete results of the GPI should be evident. These should show progress in four fields:

In Employment and capacity building replicable systems for vocational training and apprenticeships should be in place with increased employment opportunities, gender mainstreaming, new employment ideas, and slum upgrading.

In crime prevention – there should be progress on crime and delinquency prevention, and information on HIV/AIDS.

Urban governance- young people should be participants in governance projects, and there should be local and national policies in place on youth empowerment with tangible results through arts and culture.

In regional networking - a NEPAD system should be functioning to promote urban youth development.

Monitoring And Evaluation

A system of monitoring the development of the GPI is important to the development of these goals. Parallel to the designing of projects should be the development of indicators and criteria to measure progress - or the lack thereof. This task should build successfully on existing knowledge within UN-HABITAT. To advance the monitoring of the MDGs, UN-HABITAT has already developed a set of criteria and indicators that can be of relevance to the GPI.

A key factor here is the ability to assess the sustainability and growth of the GPI initiative. Monitoring and evaluation can also be undertaken by the young themselves, both at the programme level through systems developed by programmes such as *Growing up in Cities*, and at the city level with tools developed by the UN Youth Unit such as the *Making Commitments Matter - A Toolkit for Young People to Evaluate National Youth Policy*.

Actors Involved In The GPI

The Partners and Youth Section of UN-HABITAT is facilitating the development of the implementation strategy that will involve African countries already engaged with UN-HABITAT programmes. Several international organisations, within the multilateral system, such as the World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, UN-DESA, UNEP and UNODC will also be involved.

The GPI Road Map, September 2004 – September 2006

The development of the GPI will involve a threefold process during its pilot period between the Barcelona and Vancouver meetings. The first phase will start after the launching of the GPI at WUF in Barcelona in September 2004 and last until the Habitat Governing Council in April/May 2005. A steering group will be established and its first meeting is scheduled early in 2005 prior to UN-HABITAT's 20th Governing Council meeting. The second phase will cover the period until the end of 2005, and the final phase until the Vancouver meeting in 2006. The phases are planned as follows:

Phase I (September 2004 – May 2005)

- Identification of selected cities and solicitation of political commitment from the cities including partner twin cities
- Identification of eminent personalities (both adult and youth) to champion the process.
- Presentation of initiative to invited member states to review and reaffirm support to GC 19/13 resolution on the GPI
- Secure a written commitment from the respective local governments (Mayor/City Council) to participate in the project for three years. The letters should clearly define what the commitment of the city involves (resources, funds, etc.).
- Preparation of a fund raising strategy at local, national, regional and international levels, and

engaging bilateral and multilateral partners in fundraising campaigns

- Identifying and developing GPI specific projects on the intended outcomes and engaging different actors in the projects, civil society, governments at all levels, the private sector and the UN agencies.
- Creating a global coalition of development partners and private sector/corporations
- Identifying additional partner cities in developing and developed countries.
- Co-ordinating the GPI with other UN initiatives on Youth

Phase II (May 2005 - December 2005)

- Identify pilot cities (also during phase I) These may be picked from among the UN-HABITAT technical assisted cities in Africa
- A regional network of selected cities with each city having established Local Youth Councils/GPI-coalitions to exchange best practices on a regular basis
- Develop indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the GPI intended outcomes, and start developing the manual and tool-kit
- An established GPI-coalition in each city with membership from key stakeholders
- Recommended next steps for expansion of the project (based on evaluation results)
- Develop a set of best practices from the selected cities that will serve as a template for other urban areas

- Training the selected cities in coalition building and planning the development of the network with a view to making the GPI projects operational.
- Develop a strong network of cities and youth by setting deadlines and targets, communications systems and replicable co-operation networks between cities to share best practices.
- Establishing a timeline for GPI activities, events and benchmarks, and evaluation
- Establish a means of communication among the members of the GPI Network.
- Create an international city-to-city co-operation programme, pairing pilot cities with other cities from around the world with the goal being to exchange information and share experiences.
- Development of an international network of youth and youth agencies that can share experiences and knowledge.

Phase III (January 2006 – September 2006)

- Execute an evaluation of the GPI projects.
- Evaluate the sustainability and growth of the GPI initiative
- Prepare a special session at Habitat +30 in Vancouver on the GPI including a recommendation on how to proceed with the GPI after the pilot Phase is over.
- A Potential Best Practices Forum in Vancouver during the Third World Urban Forum in 2006 that could highlight youth practices.

Conclusion

The efforts are many and varied. UN-HABITAT's Global Partnership Initiative on Urban Youth Development in Africa being launched in Barcelona will be a test case for the governments and the international community of agencies and organizations addressing the impact of rapid urbanization and social exclusion of vulnerable categories of young people.

ANNEX 4

The Messengers of Truth Project: Artists Join Hands to Deliver *The Message* to Young People

The Context

Current world estimates of people living in slums and inner cities stand at more than 1 billion, with projections of over 2 billion by 2030, if present trends continue. It is estimated that 72 percent of the urban population in Africa, 37 percent in Asia and 26 percent in Latin America live without adequate shelter, clean water or sanitation. While these figures average about 6 percent in developed countries, inner-city neighborhoods are witnessing persistent levels of unemployment significantly above the national average. In both cases, the consequences include crime and violence, urban decay and pollution, loss of economic opportunity and productivity.

According to UN-HABITAT's 2001 Global Report on Human Settlements, more than 1 billion people are between 15 and 24 years of age. Nearly 40 per cent of the world's population is below the age of 20, of which 85 per cent live in developing countries, where many are especially vulnerable to extreme poverty. It further states that the combination of poverty, unemployment, environmental and health problems, often exacerbated

by violent conflicts, is placing increasing numbers of young people in cities at risk.

The Message

UN-HABITAT sees young people as a major potential force for improving living conditions and particularly those of urban poor. Their empowerment through effective and meaningful participation in decision-making is crucial to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). UN-HABITAT therefore involves youth through various initiatives, such as the use of music in raising awareness on diverse issues. It is in this spirit that the Messengers of Truth (MOT) Project, was launched during the second World Urban Forum held in Barcelona Spain, in 2004.

Messengers of Truth seek to deliver *The Message*, which is about empowering disenfranchised urban youth by giving them a chance to voice their views and opinions. It further seeks to empower youth socially, politically and economically through avenues such as,

- Information and awareness-building on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Participation in decision making
- Learning from each others' success stories

The project uses artists and groups who are socially committed and willing to raise awareness on youth issues and the MDGs. These include

- Carlinhos Brown, musician from Brazil
- Bebo Valdes, pianist from Cuba
- Fernando Trueba, film director from Spain; and the following Hip-Hop artists

- La Haze, and Geronacion from Spain
- Gidi Gidi Maji Maji from Kenya
- Godessa from South Africa
- DJ Awadi from Senegal
- Nukke Posse from Greenland
- MV Bill from Brazil
- La Etnia from Colombia
- K'naan from Somalia/Canada
- Equicez, and MADCON from Norway
- Kelly Love Jones from USA

This project is coordinated by the Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme (BLP) of UN-HABITAT. BLP is a global network of advocacy institutions dedicated to the identification and exchange of solutions for sustainable development. This involves

- Documenting and disseminating lessons learned from best practices,
- Assessing effective policies and model legislation using a participatory approach.

The Intention

To empower the youth socially, the project aims at informing youth living in slums and inner cities of the MDGs through:

- Songs, performances and lyrics in several languages, by socially committed Hip-Hop artists;
- Mainstream media reporting on “underground” events
- “Underground” media reporting on mainstream issues worldwide.

To empower the youth politically, the project aims at:

- Providing platforms where the voices of urban youth can be heard

- Promoting youth participation in decisions affecting their lives
- Recognizing outstanding youth leadership and entrepreneurship.

To empower the youth economically, the project aims at:

- Facilitating, documenting and disseminating selected youth projects from around the world and assisting them to raise funds;
- Training in fields that would enable youth generate their own income.

A Partnership

To date, MOT partners include:

- Hip-Hop artists, who use their music for the benefit of both local and international communities
- Other artists who use their respective art to raise awareness on youth issues
- Music industry, that is willing to contribute to the social, economic and political empowerment of youth
- Youth groups and their representatives, who work towards youth empowerment and development;
- Private sector, who are committed to addressing social, economic and environmental problems
- Local authorities that are committed to empowering their communities through innovative approaches such as hip-hop
- Media, involving those reporting, monitoring and evaluating work done by artists/groups

- The international development community that is working in partnership with others towards the realization of the MDGs.

Mot Activities to Date:

- In September 2004, the first appointments of the Messengers of Truth, the first Global Hip-Hop Summit and Concert took place in Barcelona, Spain. This was part of the second World Urban Forum activities. Participating in the events were representatives of youth groups, media, music industry and private sector. A *Declaration of Principles and Call for Action* was adopted, as the framework through which the MOT project would become operational.
- Canada: With Inner City Visions (ICVISIONS) taking the lead, the country is working on the Thousand-Word Project and a World Hip-hop festival. The Thousand Word Project involves the development of 12-15 murals in various parts around the world using themes, which focus on the MDGs. Canada will use "Beautiful Struggle" as a theme. On the other hand, entertainment and education will be used to create awareness on MDGs, during the festival.
- Germany: With BASF Germany taking the lead, the country will hold a summit and concert. The summit will encompass workshops with youth representatives, Hip-Hop artists and independent music labels from Germany, Africa and Latin America. Participants will exchange views and experiences on youth empowerment and development. This will be followed by a town

hall meeting to discuss the results of the workshop, as well as ways and means for forging public-private-community partnerships to address complex social, economic and environmental issues, in a holistic manner. A cinema-debate session showcasing films/documentaries illustrating issues related to youth and the MDGs, will also take place. The concert will involve artists from Germany, Africa and Latin America.

- Kenya: With Gidi Gidi Majimaji, Kenya's Messengers of Truth, taking the lead, young Hip-Hop artists are working on a music competition on one or more of the MDGs. Winning lyrics will be compiled in a fundraising album. A Youth Information Centre for sharing experiences, resources and information is also being developed.
- South Africa: With Native Rhythms Productions taking the lead, the country is working on an African Global Hip-hop Summit and a book initiative entitled, *Urban Youth Speaks!* The summit will be in support of the Ministry of Housing's initiative to eradicate slums by 2015. It will include the development of a data-base of young people living in slums, with demographic and socio-economic statistics on youth between the ages of 15 and 24. *Urban Youth Speaks!* is a collection of rhymes or spoken word/ slam poetry from youth living in slums, and will be handed to the African Union Parliament as a message to African Presidents.
- Tanzania: With the Dar es Salaam Safer Cities Project and DEIWAKA Productions taking the lead,

the country is working on a series of song and lyrics competitions on MDGS that involve young people in low- income neighborhoods. Finalists will receive intense professional training on music production.

- The African President's Project: DJ Awadi is the most recently appointed Messenger of Truth. His 2005 "African President's Tour" covers 13 countries in East, Central and Southern Africa, and Indian Ocean regions. This project aims at highlighting history through rap by using the speeches and ideas of Africa's famous leaders and luminaries, for the future development of the continent. Posing the

question: "Where are all these dreams today?" - DJ Awadi hopes to enable an interactive dialogue with Rap artists and to use urban music to communicate with the younger generation of Africans.

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