

Achieving sustained citizen safety through social integrated policing

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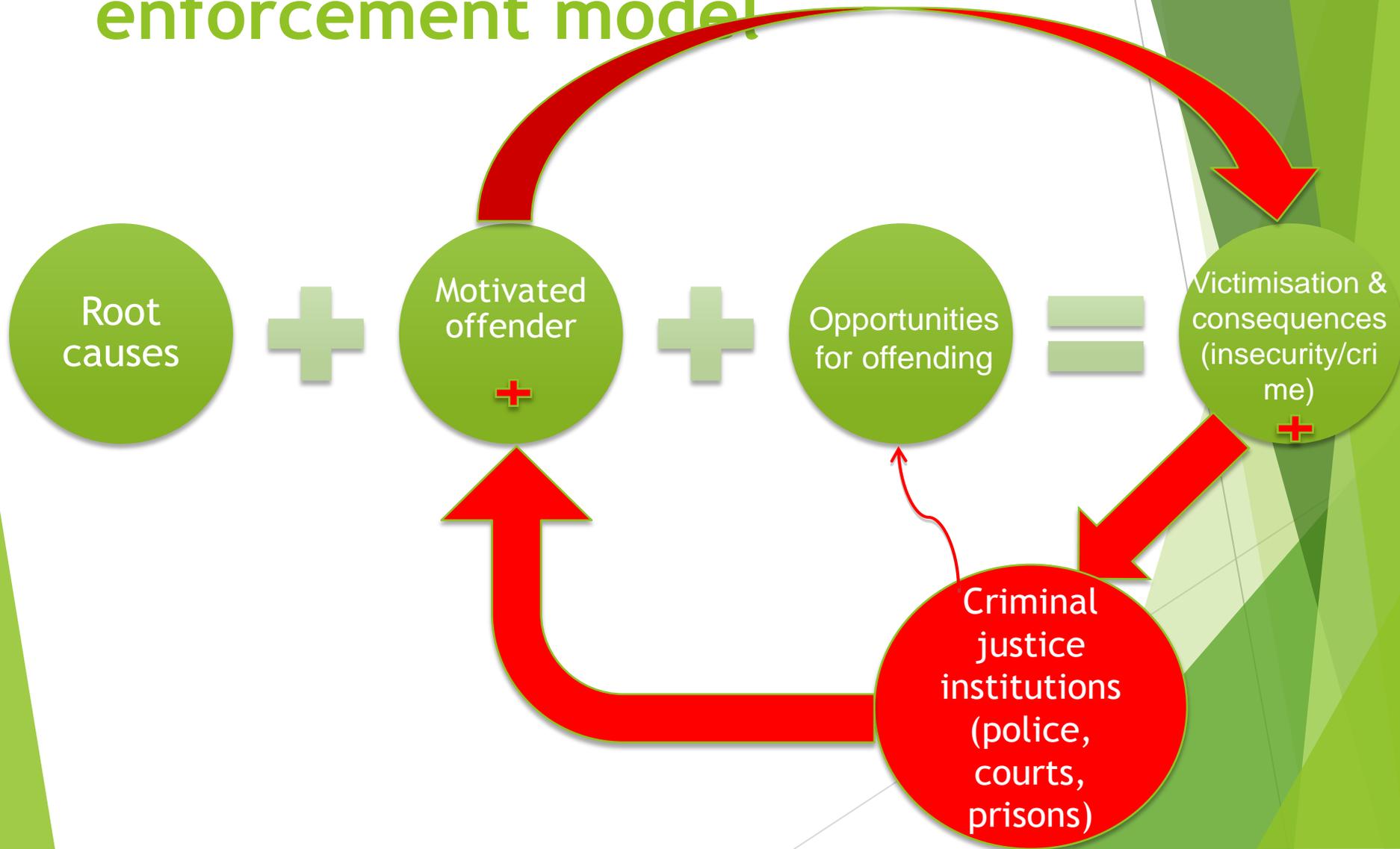
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What do we know about our current policing situation?

- ▶ Violent crime is on the increase
- ▶ Fear of crime has not abated
- ▶ Cities and suburbs - 'architecture of fear'
- ▶ Private security companies and street committees growing in size and importance
- ▶ Low levels of trust between citizens and police - especially within less resourced communities
- ▶ Police are frustrated, fatigued and directionless
- ▶ Countless commissions of inquiry in regard to police brutality/use of force (Marikana; Hangberg; Kayalitsha)
- ▶ Social problems have become policing problems (homelessness and informal housing; drug addiction; mental health; family violence)

- ▶ Focus too much on **law enforcement as a solution** – dangerous approach
- ▶ Police do not currently recognise that reducing crime will require a combination of interventions, including those **originating from outside the criminal justice system** (such as from NGOs, ex-offenders, universities, etc)

Current approach: Law enforcement model



Why is the law enforcement approach limited?

- ▶ Its ability to prevent crime is largely limited to **deterrence**
- ▶ Does not focus on **root causes crime and disorder**, such as
 - poverty and inequality
 - unemployment and underemployment
 - social disintegration
 - poor education
- ▶ Its focus on **opportunities** (CPTED) is limited
- ▶ **Crime cycle reinforced** rather than broken (e.g. through incarceration and dispersal strategies)
- ▶ Community members feel **mistrustful and uncertain of police intervention strategies**
- ▶ Police are **not engaged in problem solving** – often excluded from governance of security networks and deliberations

What should our starting principles be?

The **police cannot be everything to everybody** – use all resources and knowledge available to create safer environments

We need to **fundamentally question existing and historic security paradigms**

We need to **focus on problem oriented and social policing** rather than on conventional enforcement approaches to policing

Engage police in **whole of society diagnostics and strategizing**

Police need to be clear about their **core functions** and focus on these in a way that is people-centred and responsive

Whole-of-society model



What are the advantages of an socially integrative safety strategy?

- ▶ **Focus on the future, not on the past** - “how do we get the future right?”; “how can we avoid this happening again?” i.e. problem solve
- ▶ **Focus on root causes and opportunities** - reduce harm by reducing root causes and opportunities for offending; create opportunities that encourage good actions
- ▶ **Identify, mobilise and integrate a wide range of knowledge, capacity and resources** - Police are a part of society, not apart from it and they are a key referral agency
- ▶ **Allow police to focus on their core function** - investigation; responding to citizen calls for intervention; restore public disorder with proportional force
- ▶ **Police operate as a key referral agency** - they need to have quick access to network partners with established ways of working collaboratively

A re-imagined (social) police service should:

- ▶ Participate in problem solving networks in ways that are imaginative, forward thinking and integrative
- ▶ Recognise that rank-and-file officers are important knowledge bearers (they know the streets and the hoods)
- ▶ Be involved in changing the environment such as creating safe transport hubs that allow for economic and social flow
- ▶ Motivate for, and contribute to, socio-economic enhancement programmes, particularly in urban spaces
- ▶ Define their core functions very precisely: police cannot be everything to everyone (Know when to intervene and when to use force)
- ▶ Core functions -intervene forcefully in dangerous and signal crime situations/ investigating crime effectively/ curtail serious public disorder
- ▶ Recognise that it is the roots of crime and disorder, not its consequences, that are the 'enemy' - shift thinking paradigms
- ▶ Be flexible and adaptive, while at the same time predictable
- ▶ Strive to be accountable, professional and highly regarded by 'whole of society'

- Be responsive to community needs rather than blindly enforce ‘the law’
- Bring the state closer to civil society through recognising and supporting non-state contributions to creating safer environments
- Not impose a ‘police mentality’ on other safety nodes/actors
- When absolutely required, be an ‘or else’ actor as mandated by law
- Work with local government to identify safety needs and what resources are available to fill security gaps Not only respond to police defined ‘serious crimes’ - work with what communities define as ‘socially offensive’
- Emphasise public initiation of police intervention - key to democratic policing
- As far as possible avoid pre-emptive policing - be responsive problem solvers within a network

- ▶ Low crime societies are societies where people do not mind their own business, where tolerance of deviance has definite limits, where communities prefer to handle their own crime problems rather than hand them over to professionals. In this, I am not suggesting the replacement of 'rule of law' with the 'rule of men'. However, I am saying that the rule of law will amount to a meaningless set of formal sanctioning proceedings which will be perceived as arbitrary unless there is community involvement in oralizing about and helping with the crime problem' (John Braithwaite, 1989: 8)