COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION POLICY: A CHALLENGE FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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COORDINATION OF SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

One of the major stumbling blocks has been the difficulty of coordinating social crime prevention projects. The coordination problem has a number of aspects:

- Often, metro-based offices failed, and many of the former municipal local councillors implemented their own crime prevention projects. This is admirable but problematic as resource allocations vary markedly between the former municipal local councillors, making crime prevention possible in some areas but not others. A key role for a metro-wide crime prevention function would be to assist under -resourced areas of the city with crime prevention.

- City boundaries do not match the jurisdictional boundaries of other government agencies which are critical to the crime prevention enterprise namely the SAPS and Departments of Health, Education and Welfare. This makes it extremely difficult to establish city-wide leadership structures.

- There has been, in some cases, a failure to link government   -initiated projects with non-government practitioners and initiatives in the field. This can lead to duplication and wastage of resources.

INADEQUATE RESEARCH AND POOR EVALUATION

Although many crime prevention projects have been initiated in the cities, most have not been based on adequate research.

Palmary (2001:36) in Mothibi (2012) maintains that a clear research agenda is necessary in order to establish what projects are likely to have the greatest impact on crime in the city, and what the priority sites for intervention should be.

It is essential, in the face of limited resources, that the projects being implemented are those that will be successful.

The main reason why monitoring and evaluation are such a necessary part of programme implementation is because the crime prevention benefits of particular projects are often assumed rather than tested.

SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION AS REACTION

Although there is some knowledge of social crime prevention in the various councils, and a desire to implement social crime prevention, the projects that have been developed tend to be reactive in that they are a response to problems that have been presented to council by particular interest groups.

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

This is a source of frustration to police and other officials responsible for safety in these developments.

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

THE STATUS OF SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION

Social crime prevention needs to be understood as an activity in its own right, which is, at least in part, the responsibility of all local government departments particularly municipalities.

In order to ensure its prioritisation, it needs to be incorporated into the strategic plans of the city and allocated adequate funding.

City leaders need to recognise that metropolitan policing as well as any other forms of visible policing or CPTED is only one aspect of crime prevention and that budget allocations should also be made for the more social aspects of crime prevention.

Palmary (2001) in Mothibi (2012) argues that a balance needs to be found between social crime prevention and law enforcement, and this balance needs to be based on thorough research into the nature of the crimes committed in the cities.

SCP PROJECTS NOT LOCATED IN A BROADER PLAN OR WIDE CITY STRATEGY

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LACK OF INTEGRATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT POLICIES WHICH IMPACT ON SAFETY AND SECURITY

There is lack of synergy or integration between the range of strategies and plans dealing with issues of safety and security.

LOCATION OF SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION DIRECTORATE

The location of most cities' social crime prevention functions within metros/ municipalities is related a number of problems:

- It resulted in a police-centered and police-driven approach to social crime prevention;

- It inhibited a city-wide focus on social crime prevention due to its location; and

- It had insufficient authority to compel cooperation and performance of other line function departments.

PROJECTS

- Weak Conceptualisation and Design of Projects

- Weak Management of Projects

- **Questionable Methodology Applied by the Projects**