Country Assessment on Youth Violence, Policy and Programmes in South Africa

June 2012
The Social Development Department
The World Bank
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document has been prepared for the World Bank Social Cohesion and Violence Prevention Team as part of the project “Integrating Human Rights Principles into Youth Violence Programming in Policy in Mexico and South Africa.” This project is led by a team comprising Alys Willman, Lorena Cohan, Flavia Carbonari and Elizabeth Johnston of the World Bank, and has been generously funded by a Nordic Trust Fund (NTF) grant. The present assessment was prepared by Patrick Burton of the South African Center for Justice and Crime Prevention, with inputs from Sara Gustafsson of the Nordic Trust Fund, World Bank.
**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>Institute for Security Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAPS</td>
<td>Cape Area Panel Study</td>
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<td>CJCP</td>
<td>Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention</td>
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<td>CJS</td>
<td>Criminal Justice System</td>
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<td>CPF</td>
<td>Community Police Forum</td>
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<td>CSIR</td>
<td>Council for Scientific and Industrial Research</td>
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<td>CSVR</td>
<td>Centre for Violence and Reconciliation</td>
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<td>DCS</td>
<td>Department of Correctional Services</td>
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<td>DoJ</td>
<td>Department of Justice and Constitutional Development</td>
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<td>DSD</td>
<td>Department of Social Development</td>
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<td>DSS</td>
<td>Department of Safety and Security</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
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<td>GTZ</td>
<td>German Development Cooperation</td>
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<td>JCPS</td>
<td>Cluster on Justice, Crime Prevention and Security</td>
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<td>MRC</td>
<td>Medical Research Council</td>
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<td>NCPS</td>
<td>National Crime Prevention Strategy</td>
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<td>NCVS</td>
<td>National Crime and Victimisation Survey</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
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<td>NICRO</td>
<td>The National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders</td>
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<td>NIMSS</td>
<td>National Injury Mortality Surveillance System</td>
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<td>NYC</td>
<td>National Youth Commission</td>
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<td>NYDA</td>
<td>National Youth Development Agency</td>
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<td>NYDPF</td>
<td>National Youth Development Policy Framework</td>
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<td>NYLS</td>
<td>National Youth Lifestyle Study</td>
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<td>NYP</td>
<td>National Youth Policy</td>
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<td>NYSP</td>
<td>National Youth Service Programme</td>
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<td>NYVS</td>
<td>National Youth Victimisation Study</td>
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<td>PDP</td>
<td>Peace and Development Project</td>
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<td>SAPS</td>
<td>South African Police Service</td>
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<td>SGB</td>
<td>School Governing Body</td>
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<td>SPF</td>
<td>Sector Policing Forum</td>
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<td>UNISA</td>
<td>University of South Africa</td>
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<td>UYF</td>
<td>Umsobomvu Youth Fund</td>
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<td>VPUUU</td>
<td>Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is increasingly recognised that young people are central to issues of crime and violence in South Africa. While research, policy and programming have historically focused on children and adults, there is a growing emphasis on youth as both victims and perpetrators of violence.

This report presents the findings of a country assessment commissioned by the World Bank to support its Incorporating Human Rights into Youth Violence Programming and Policy Dialogues in Mexico and South Africa project. This aims to encourage policy dialogue on youth and violence with the South African government and other stakeholders. The report:

- examines the current situation of youth violence in South Africa;
- summarizes the policy response by the government and the prevailing legal and institutional framework;
- identifies innovative programming by civil society organisations; and
- identifies entry points for deeper policy dialogue and improved interventions to address youth violence.

The drivers of crime against and by youth

The drivers of crime are varied and complex, but the models of behaviour to which young people are exposed and the levels of care and support they receive play a key role. The research shows that violence is for many young people a part of life; it is a feature of their homes, schools and communities, and has become an accepted component of young people’s social interactions. Many poor children are also growing up in home environments where they lack the developmental investment needed to become healthy, well adjusted adults. These drivers are compounded by shortfalls in childcare, afterschool care and recreation, which could help to steer children toward more pro-social modes of behaviour; parenting practices that promote violence; and young peoples’ limited opportunities for personal growth.

Key issues in addressing youth violence

Addressing crime and violence amongst youth in South Africa requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach. It requires not only engaging young people, but also parents, teachers, principals and other thought-leaders in creating environments that provide youth with non-violent models of behaviour. It also requires viewing young people holistically and broadening interventions to help them to explore and develop personally. Those spoken to during the course of this research emphasised two issues, in particular:

- **The need for a life-cycle approach:** the drivers of violence impact on children from conception, through childhood and into adolescence and beyond. Addressing violence requires early intervention that targets not only youth but also caregivers and children.

- **The importance of parenting:** many caregivers in South Africa struggle to engage their children developmentally, communicate with them effectively or parent in a way that provides positive, non-violent models of behaviour. Supporting caregivers and equipping them with the skills to parent more positively is crucial in addressing violence.
**Gaps in the legislative and policy framework**

South Africa has in place promising legislation, policies and programmes to develop and support young people, protect their rights and deal with those in conflict with the law, but there remain gaps.

- There is very little in the way of legislation or policy that specifically addresses youth, or issues pertinent to violence.

- There is a particular gap with respect to adult youth in conflict with the law. The Children’s Act and the Child Justice Act support the needs and rights of children, and route them out of the criminal justice system, but there is no legislation dealing with older youth. This cuts them off from many of the rehabilitative mechanisms available to their younger peers and represents a lost opportunity to prevent a life of crime and violence.

- There is also insufficient emphasis on crime prevention. South Africa has in place progressive legislation to address the socio-economic drivers of crime and violence, in the form of the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS), but this has not been implemented. This too represents a lost opportunity, in this case for a proactive, integrated, multi-sectoral response to crime and violence in South Africa as a whole.

**Gaps in prevailing programming**

- As with the legislative framework, there is a gap in programming when it comes to older youth. The bulk of youth-oriented programmes focus on children or adolescents. Few target young adults, or address the needs and challenges encountered by young people in their late teens and early twenties.

- There are also gaps in the range of programmes. Government programmes tend to focus on the economic empowerment and offender-related initiatives. There are few initiatives that intervene at the family level, or that link the home and school environments. There is little emphasis on creating supportive after-school options or opportunities for youth to explore their talents and potential. There is also a dearth of interventions to support young people who have experienced violence and victimisation, a key gap given the association between victimisation and the perpetration of violence.

- Several non-governmental organisations run innovative programmes that address some of these gaps. However, funding constraints and a lack of integration between governmental programmes represent significant challenges to collaborations between government and civil society, as well as efforts to address holistically the drivers of violence.

**Entry points for dialogue and action**

The review suggests three entry points to engage with government and other actors on policy and programming. The strongest is the Department of Social Development (DSD), which is in the process of developing a Social Crime Prevention Strategy aimed at supporting an integrated approach to addressing crime and violence by a range of governmental actors. Other entry points include:

- **The national and provincial parliamentary JCPS clusters.** The JCPS clusters aim to coordinate the implementation of programmes by the Department of Justice, the Department of Correctional
Services and the Ministry of Police at the national and provincial levels and could facilitate strategic intervention in the criminal justice sector.

- **The National Youth Development Agency.** The NYDA is mandated to guide and facilitate youth development programmes. It has well developed programmes to enhance young people’s employability. It is also expanding its focus to encompass social cohesion and could potentially play a key role in facilitating engagement on this issue.

2. **INTRODUCTION**

It is increasingly recognised that young people are central to issues of crime and violence, in particular. While research, policy and programming in South Africa have historically focused on children and adults, there is a growing emphasis on youth as both victims and perpetrators of violence. Emerging data shows that young people suffer much higher levels of victimisation than adults. They are also often the perpetrators of violence against other youth and the population as whole. The issue of violence against and by youth is receiving growing attention in the media, and it is increasingly acknowledged that there will be a grave cost to government and to society if youth issues are not addressed.

This report presents the findings of a country assessment commissioned by the World Bank to support policy dialogue on youth and violence with the South African government and other stakeholders. The World Bank, through its *Incorporating Human Rights into Youth Violence Programming and Policy Dialogues in Mexico and South Africa* project, funded by the Nordic Trust Fund, intends to build on the Bank’s existing work on Urban Violence in South Africa. To support this process, this report provides a diagnostic of youth violence in South Africa, and pertinent policy and programmes. Specifically, it:

- summarizes the current situation of youth violence in South Africa;
- summarizes the policy response by the government and the prevailing legal and institutional framework;
- identifies innovative programming by civil society organisations; and
- identifies entry points for deeper policy dialogue and improved interventions to address youth violence.

3. **METHODOLOGY**

The study primarily involved a desk-top review of the available literature and documentation on policy and programming. This data is supplemented by ten in-depth telephonic interviews with key role-players within government and civil society. These included representatives from the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA); the Department of Social Development (DSD); and academic and civil society organisations involved in research and programming on youth. An effort was made to engage the Youth Desk in the Presidency, but a representative could not be reached within the timeframe of the study. The review explores the:
• Principal types and nature of violence perpetrated by and affecting youth
• Principal causes of youth violence in South Africa,
• Perceptions of youth violence in public opinion and media
• Responses at the neighbourhood, community, local government and national levels
• Legal and institutional provisions for protecting young people’s rights related to development and freedom from violence
• Principal gaps in violence prevention programming
• Entry points for dialogue and action based on the assessment

4. DEFINING ‘YOUTH’ IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

In legislation and policy dealing with youth in South Africa, ‘youth’ spans mid-adolescence to the mid-thirties. The National Youth Policy (NYP) for 2009 to 2014 defines youth as people between the age of 14 and 35. This definition is in keeping with the National Youth Policy of 2000 and the National Youth Commission Act of 1996.¹ It is also largely consistent with the definition of youth contained in the African Youth Charter, which defines youth as those between the ages of 15 and 35 years.² The institution responsible for forwarding youth issues in governmental policy and programmes, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), uses the NYP’s definition.

This age range encompasses young people in different phases of life. It includes children and young adults who are in school, who are living with parents or guardians; people who are trying to find work; as well as those starting families of their own.³ The NYP justifies the high upper-limit on the basis of historical and present-day socio-economic conditions, which have prevented many young men, in particular, from gaining financial and social independence.

The broad definition of youth presents challenges for policy and programming, particularly in the crime and justice sector. Lauren Graham and her colleagues, for instance, argue that while an expanded definition usefully emphasises the need for employment programmes, it is less helpful for other developmental issues, such as youth violence, which require programmatically more targeted approaches.⁴ Ingrid Palmery agrees that the broadness is problematic from a criminological perspective, but maintains that it is appropriate in South Africa, as it is this group that is most likely to be involved in crime. She notes that although the nature of criminality or misconduct changes with age, and with these changes, the interventions needed to address it, many adults in South Africa live in poverty and are dependant on government social grants and their families for subsistence, placing them at risk of criminality, and making them a key constituency for development.⁵

The current NYP acknowledges that its definition of youth is broad and encompasses considerable diversity. The policy argues that the 14 to 35 age range is not a blanket general standard, and that within this age range, young people can be disaggregated by amongst others, race, age, gender, social class and geographic location. It argues therefore for a differentiated approach within the parameters of the age-bracket, which recognises different need-groups and the focus of different institutions dealing with youth-related issues in South Africa.
5. DEFINITIONS OF YOUTH IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SECTOR

South Africa’s criminal justice system does not formally distinguish youth as a category. It distinguishes only between children and adults, in line with its international obligations\(^1\), the South African Constitution and the guiding Children’s Act of 2005. These stipulate that all those under the age of 18 are considered children, and are not to be handled under the adult judicial or penal system, unless as a last resort. Guiding legislation includes:

- The Child Justice Act, 2008. This is concerned primarily with children under the age of 18, although it also provides for older youngsters under 21 who committed crime as children. It aims to create a separate criminal justice and procedural system for children.

- The Correctional Services Act, 1998. This recognises ‘young offenders’ between the age of 14 and 25. It stipulates that children under the age of 14 should not be detained while awaiting trial, and promotes a more rehabilitative approach to dealing with those younger than 26 – although the bulk of diversion and alternative sentencing programmes remain aimed at children.\(^6\)

Commentators view this lack of specification positively. Graham and her colleagues, for instance, argue that it is difficult to separate out ‘youth’ from other age cohorts, as youth violence is often rooted in early childhood experiences. They observe that some of the most effective measures to address violence are early childhood initiatives, and that it is necessary to take a view that considers issues pertinent to children and wider society.

This report follows the NYP, and defines ‘youth’ as young people between the age of 14 and 35, but recognises the influence of children’s issues in understanding youth violence.

6. DEFINING YOUTH VIOLENCE

Youth violence can be defined narrowly and more broadly. In its narrowest form, youth violence can be defined as the involvement of young people, whether as victims or perpetrators, in incidents involving the threat or use of physical force in the context of interpersonal, inter-communal or other conflict or crime. This violence may be inflicted with or without a weapon, and may or may not result in physical injuries or death.\(^7\) Such definitions focus on the physical aspects, and imply some degree of criminality or socially unacceptable or exceptional behaviour. Broader definitions move beyond the physical aspects and encompass damaging, but often normalised behaviour. The World Health Organisation (WHO), for example, defines violence as:

\[
\text{The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.}^8
\]

This definition recognises that non-physical forms of attack and abuse can have a profound impact. It also acknowledges an extensive international literature that shows that defining violence outcomes

\(^1\) South Africa ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995. The Convention defines children as human beings below the age of eighteen (Art 1).
solely in terms of injury or death limits our understanding of the full impact of violence on individuals, communities and societies.

The WHO proposes also a typology of violence. This distinguishes four modes in which violence may be inflicted: physical; sexual; and psychological attack; and deprivation. It further divides the general definition of violence into three often overlapping sub-types. These include:

- **Self-directed violence**, which includes self-abuse and suicide.

- **Interpersonal violence**, which refers to violence between individuals. This violence includes family and intimate partner violence, as well as violence between unrelated individuals who may or may not know each other. This category includes random acts of violence, rape or sexual assault by strangers, and violence in institutional settings such as schools, workplaces, prisons and nursing homes.

- **Collective violence**, which refers to violence committed by groups or states in support of particular social agendas.

This report adopts the broader definition used by the WHO, but focuses on interpersonal violence. Both self-directed and collective violence are issues in South Africa, but interpersonal violence is generally more common. Given that the dynamics underlying self-directed and collective violence are often different from those driving interpersonal violence, and require different types of interventions, the emphasis here is on those associated with interpersonal violence. Moreover, while poverty and other systemic factors can be interpreted as forms of violence, this report confines itself to types that cause physical or psychological injuries.

### Definitions used in this report:

**Children**: people under the age of 18 years

**Youth**: people between the age of 14 and 35

**Violence**: threatened or actual violence against another person that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury death or psychological harm

### 7. THE DATA ON YOUTH VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

There has been considerable focus on crime and violence in South Africa, but there is limited data available on young people’s experiences. The South African Police Service (SAPS) releases official crime statistics, but does not disaggregate these by age. The police data is supplemented by longitudinal data from nationally representative crime and victimisation surveys by Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), but these focus on adults. Thus, the discourse on youth has been largely centred on a handful of very small studies on offending youth conducted by the Centre for Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR).
Organisations have only relatively recently begun to fill this gap. The bulk of this data comes from the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP). Since 2005, CJCP has conducted two nationally representative victimisation and lifestyle surveys amongst young people between the age of 12 and 24, a national study on violence in schools, quantitative research amongst young offenders and research on cyber-bullying. Other sources include:

- studies by the Medical Research Council (MRC) on risk behaviour amongst secondary school learners;¹¹
- the Cape Area Panel Study (CAPS), which collects a range of data on the lives of young people in metropolitan Cape Town;¹² and
- specialised studies on topics such as sexual and gender-based violence.¹³

There is also some data on incarcerated youth, while the National Injury Mortality Surveillance Survey (NIMSS) conducted by the MRC and the University of South Africa (UNISA) provides data on the causes of non-natural deaths amongst young people.¹⁴

7.1. What does the data tell us?

The data on violence in South Africa suggests uniformly that young people are at high risk of violent victimisation, in the form of crime, abuse, corporal punishment, bullying and cyber-bullying. Youth are also often perpetrators of violence, much of which occurs in schools, as well as shopping malls and other public and private spaces that young people frequent. Although they are not explored here, the CJCP and NIMSS data also suggests that suicide and self-harm are significant problems.

In many instances it is difficult to distinguish victims and perpetrators. Graham and her colleagues note that in incidents of assault by young men, in particular, violence is often related to escalating arguments between two or more opponents, each of whom may be victims and perpetrators at different points. As internationally, the South African experience also shows that victims of violence are often violent towards others, and risk being caught up in cycles of violence.

7.2. Youth as victims of violence

Young people are at high risk of violent crime. The National Youth Victimisation Study (NYVS) conducted by the CJCP in 2005, showed that one out of every four (26%) youngsters between the age of 12 and 22 had been victims of violent crime in the 12 months preceding the survey. This was five times the adult rate (5%) found in a methodologically comparable, adult-focused National Crime and Victimisation survey (NCVS) carried out by ISS in 2003. A second sweep of the CJCP and ISS studies in 2008 and 2007 respectively, show a similar pattern (14% compared to 4%). The NIMSS data, collected since 1999, also shows that violence is the leading cause of unnatural death amongst 15 to 34 year olds, with young men considerably more likely than women to die from violence.¹⁵

Youth experience the same types of crime and violence as adults, as well as kinds that are specific to their developmental stage. Respondents in the CJCP’s 2005 and 2008 surveys experienced high levels of assault and robbery, all at more elevated levels than the adults surveyed by the ISS in 2003 and 2007 (Figure 1).¹⁶ They also reported higher levels of sexual assault – although both the CJCP and ISS data may underestimate the scale of sexual violence, as respondents are often reluctant to report intimate violations in a household survey. The self-administered Youth Risk Behaviour Surveys conducted by the MRC amongst secondary school learners in 2002 and 2008 suggest that levels of sexual violence could be closer to 10%, but these may overestimate the problem due to ambiguity in the way questions were phrased.¹⁷ The data also shows that youngsters experience other forms violence, such as abuse, corporal punishment and bullying.
Much of this violence takes place in schools. The CJCP’s 2008 National Schools Violence Study (NSVS) found that young people experienced a range of psychological and physical victimisation at school (Figure 2). The study shows that one out every six learners in primary and secondary schools (15%) had experienced some form of violence at school, or immediately outside the school gates. Assault, sexual assault or sexual harassment and robberies affected learners of all ages, both boys and girls. Other studies have produced similar findings. The MRC’s 2008 Youth Risk Behaviour Survey, for instance, found that 27% of learners felt unsafe at school, 16% had been threatened or injured at school by someone with a weapon, while 21% had been involved in physical fights. This was fractionally more than in 2002, when the figures were 15% and 19% respectively.

**Figure 2: Victimisation at school (n=4391)**

Source: Leoschut, 2008
Young people also experience high levels of violence in their homes. The 2008 school study found that approximately one out of every five learners (17% of primary and 19% of secondary school learners) had been beaten, punched, kicked or slapped at home. One-tenth (10%) of secondary school learners and 5% of primary school learners had been robbed at home, and roughly 2% of learners had experienced some form of sexual violence.\(^{19}\)

### 7.3. Youth as perpetrators of violence

Learners are primarily responsible for the violence against their peers. The CJCP’s school study shows that majority of the violence experienced by learners in South African schools is perpetrated by fellow pupils – although as Table 1 shows, teachers are also responsible for a substantial amount. At least some of this is associated with corporal punishment, which although illegal in South Africa, is still common. In the National Youth Victimisation and National Youth Lifestyle studies, for instance, just over half of the youngsters surveyed (51% and 52% respectively) had been caned or smacked by a teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: People responsible for violence against school children</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary school</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Types of violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Threats of violence (n=985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault (n=293)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault (n=211)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery (n=399)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 5.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Leoschut 2008

The available data suggests too that young people are responsible for violence outside the school environment. In research on murders by the CSVR, young people were suspects in 75% of murders of children, 83% of murders of other youth, and 61% of murders of adults.\(^{20}\) Similarly, data from a study on the attrition of rape cases through criminal justice system in Gauteng province by the CSVR, found that youngsters between the age of 15 and 34 were charged with 42% of the rapes committed against children under the age of 12.\(^{21}\)

It also points to high levels of intimate partner violence amongst young people. In the MRCs 2008 Risk Behaviour survey, for example, one out of every six of young people (15%) had been assaulted by their boyfriend or girlfriend, while only slightly fewer admitted that they had assaulted a partner. As noted earlier, one out of ten reported having been forced to have sex when they did not want to, while only slightly fewer (9%) had themselves forced someone to have sex.

The statistics on incarceration support such findings on the role of youth in serious crime. Data published by Department for Correctional Services (DCS) shows that in March 2010, there were 56 520 youth between the age of 18 and 25 incarcerated nationally, comprising 34% of the entire prison population. Half of these youth were incarcerated for violent crimes, with the majority (62%) between the age of 22 and 25. There were also 1 275 children under the age of 18 years either awaiting trial or sentenced nationally.\(^{22}\)
7.4. **Emerging issues**

In addition to these dynamics, the South African experience highlights two emerging issues. These are:

- **Cyber-bullying:** the role of internet, cellular and cyber technologies in violence is garnering increasing attention in the South Africa media, although the issue has yet to receive significant attention from researchers, government or civil society. South Africa is the fourth fastest growing mobile market in the world, and several high-profile cases in which cell phones have been implicated in violence and bullying suggest that cyber-bullying is likely to become an increasingly important component of the violence dynamic.

  In one of the few pieces of research, the CJCP explored cyber-bullying amongst 1 726 young South Africans. The study found that almost one half (46.8%) had experienced some form of cyber aggression, including being harassed in telephone calls and text messages. Levels of cyber-bullying were highest amongst African youngsters; almost half (49%) reported incidents of cyber aggression at home and two out of five (39%) at school.23

- **Female offending:** The available data suggests that young women are frequently perpetrating violence, often against young men. This issue and the surrounding dynamics have yet to be explored properly, but snippets of information in other studies on violence suggest that girls and women are active participants. As Figure 3 shows, the MRC’s 2008 study indicates similar rates of victimisation and perpetration amongst young men and women. The results from the CAPS research too indicate that young women are often perpetrators. Data collected in 2009 shows that while one out of four of the young men surveyed had hit someone in the three years before, so had one out of eight young women.24 The data on incarceration rates also point to the issue. In March 2010, there were 1 024 young women in prisons across South Africa, accounting for 5% of all imprisoned youth.

**Figure 3: Violent victimisation and perpetration rates amongst secondary school children**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assaulted</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaulted partner</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced to have sex</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced someone to have sex</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
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8. THE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUTH VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

There is an extensive literature exploring the correlates of crime and violence in South Africa, and there exist a number of theories on why crime and violence are so prevalent. These include:

- the dislocation created by apartheid, which profoundly altered social structures, and created parents who lacked the parenting skills required to raise healthy children;
- the violent legacy of the political struggle, which entrenched the notion of violence as a legitimate means of achieving change;
- the political transition, and the associated reshaping of forms of social control and legitimacy;
- the rising criminality and violence associated with South Africa’s growing population of young people, or its ‘youth bulge’;
- high levels of poverty and inequality;
- high levels of substance abuse and the increasing availability of illegal drugs, such as cocaine and methamphetamine (Tik), particularly in parts of the Western Cape;
- violent imagery and messaging in the media and in films and computer games;
- the normalisation of violence; and
- gender identities and gender insecurities, particularly amongst young men.

This literature points to several key points on the causes of crime and violence in South Africa. The first is that youth violence is a multi-sectoral issue, embedded in the complex interaction of risk and protective factors at play in young people’s families, peer groups and neighbourhoods. The second is that while individual factors like personality variables, age and gender clearly impact on the likelihood that young people will experience or perpetrate violence, the environment in which children are raised plays a central role in determining whether they experience or engage in violence. The third is that, while material poverty underlies many of these dynamics, it is the models of behaviour that people see around them and the levels of care and support they receive that mediates violence. Key issues include:

- **Young people’s exposure to violence:** Many young South Africans are growing up in social contexts rich in pro-violence models and messages. As noted already, many children are exposed to violence, both as victims of crime and other kinds of interpersonal violence. This violence often occurs in the most formative spheres of their lives: homes and schools. It is also often at the hands of caregivers, teachers and other authority figures. Growing up this way impacts profoundly how young people perceive violence. Children living in homes and communities where parents, caregivers, peers and other authority figures adopt violent and aggressive behaviour are more likely to use violence. Young children, in particular, often internalise the violence they experience at home, coming to regard it as a normal and acceptable means of resolving conflict.

- **High-risk environments:** They are also often growing up in high-risk environments that are conducive to crime and violence. Research shows that many youngsters know people in their area who commit crime; in some cases they have friends and family members who commit crime, or at least condone it. Alcohol, weapons and drugs are often readily accessible. Data from the CJCP’s 2008 Lifestyle Survey, for instance, shows that many youngsters can easily obtain alcohol and drugs, even at a young age (Figure 4).

- **Shortfalls in childcare, afterschool care and recreation:** Poorer parents often spend most of their time working or looking for work, and have limited access to resources such as childcare and after-school care, leaving youngsters unengaged and unsupervised. There are often a limited number, if
any, facilities where young people can obtain help with schoolwork and homework, or participate in constructive recreational activities. A study in Cape Town, for instance, found that South African high school learners reported high levels of leisure boredom, while another study exploring children’s views of gang activity showed that limited access to after-school activities made gangs attractive.

- **Parenting practices:** Parenting practices often compound rather than ameliorate the negative messages children receive. Using violence to discipline children, for instance, helps to normalise violence. Caregivers also often spend little time actively bonding and socialising with children. CJCP’s research amongst offenders showed that many felt that their parents were not interested in their schooling and other daily activities, which they interpreted as not being loved and cared for.

- **Shortfalls in developmental services, care and support:** Many poor children are growing up in home environments where they lack the developmental investment needed to become healthy, well-adjusted adults. Early Childhood Development (ECD) services can help to fill these gaps, but are rarely available; it is estimated that less than 20% of children receive any kind of ECD assistance. What services there are tend to focus on cognitive issues, to the detriment of health, nutrition, social and emotional aspects. Schools can also provide safety net, but overcrowding and inadequate resources often limit the support they provide.

- **Limited opportunities for personal growth:** Many young South Africans have limited opportunities for personal growth. Young people frequently have few avenues to explore their potential talents and skills. This drives a sense of hopelessness, low self-esteem and risk-taking, all of which are associated with violent behaviour. A recent review on youth violence in the South African Development Community (SADC) concurs, noting that activities that enable young people to reach their potential are crucial, not simply as a way of keeping youngsters off the streets, but as developmental interventions in themselves.

**Figure 4: Comparative rates: Easy access to alcohol and drugs**

![Graph showing comparative rates of alcohol and drugs access]

Source: Leoschut, 2009
Barbara Holtmann and Charmain Badenhorst from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) summarise many of these drivers into what they term the Cycle of Crime and Violence (Figure 5). The cycle is based on research conducted by the CSIR on communities’ experience of crime in the Central Karoo in the Western Cape. They identify six themes: drugs; alcohol; the availability of guns; high levels of poverty and the vulnerability that results; a lack of purpose and employment; and the constant shifts that occur in communities as migrants passed through in search of opportunities. They argue that this life cycle begins with dysfunctional families. In the worst cases:

...Children were neglected and abused and violence was normalised at an early age – children were both victims of violence in their homes and bystanders to violence between adults. During their early childhoods, they did nothing and were often to be seen sitting passively and unsupervised, staring out at the street. When they went to school, they could be truant without consequence and once again were left to their own devices in the afternoons, leaving them vulnerable to further victimisation outside of the home.37

In this sense, youngsters who become involved in crime and violence are both victims and perpetrators at different points in the life cycle.

Figure 5: The cycle of crime and violence

These themes point to the importance of viewing the drivers of violence holistically. Violence is for many young people an everyday part of life. It is a feature of homes, schools and communities. Addressing violence requires a correspondingly multi-sectoral approach involving governmental actors from all these spheres. At a programmatic level, the emphasis must be on fostering safe and positive home and school environments.38 Those spoken to during the course of this research emphasised two issues, in particular.

- **The need for a life-cycle approach:** the drivers of violence impact on children from conception, through childhood and into adolescence and beyond. Addressing violence requires early intervention that targets not only youth but also caregivers and children.
• The importance of parenting: respondents noted repeatedly that many caregivers in South Africa struggle to engage their children developmentally, communicate with them effectively or parent in a way that provides positive, non-violent models of behaviour. Supporting caregivers and equipping them with the skills to parent more positively is therefore also crucial in addressing violence.

9. SOUTH AFRICA’S PERCEPTION OF ‘YOUTH’

The way young people are perceived has evolved over the last two decades. Young people were at the forefront of the struggle against Apartheid, but as the infrastructure of Apartheid was dismantled, the public and decision-makers from the Nationalist and liberation parties increasingly saw youth as a threat, rather than an asset.39 Jeremy Seekings argues:

Between 1989 and mid-1993 South Africa was gripped by episodes of ‘moral panic’ focused on the political and social threat supposedly posed by young black South Africans. Broken homes, boycotted schools, violent streets and a depressed economy were deemed to have bred a ‘lost generation’ of ‘marginalised youth’, living outside of the social structures and devoid of any values deemed essential for civilized society. Media reports conjured up images of unemployed black youth with no future, no home, busy destroying everything in their way: homes, shops, schools, infrastructures and traditions.40

The government’s perspective on youth softened during the course of the late nineties and into the new millennium. Government thinking shifted, at least rhetorically, from dealing with the youth ‘problem’ to recognising and developing young people’s potential to contribute valuably to society. The emphasis shifted from addressing the deficiencies of youth, to seeing them as assets to the new South Africa.41 This is reflected in the NYP 2009 – 2014, which argues that shaping young people as active and productive citizens is critical in achieving the demographic dividend promised by South Africa’s relatively youthful population. To this end, it aims to provide the foundation for policy and programming that empowers young people “to realise their full potential and understand their roles and responsibilities in making meaningful contributions to the development of a non-racial, prosperous South Africa”.42

Public perceptions, helped by often sensationalised reporting by the media, have been slower to change. There remains a strong popular perception that young people and young men, in particular, are disruptive and a law unto themselves. For instance, the media and many at the community level, blamed gangs of restive, angry young men for instigating much of the xenophobic violence that shook South Africa in 2008, and as Seekings and Thaler observe, public violence is often seen as the preserve of “these boys” or “young guys”.

There are also questions over government’s transition in approach when it comes to crime and violence. Several of those spoken to in the course of this study noted that, in practice, officials continue to view youth from a deficit rather than an asset perspective. As one observed, “people are frightened of youth; the focus is still very much on stopping young people from committing crime”.43
10. **THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

There is very little in the way of legislation or policy that specifically addresses youth, or issues pertinent to violence. The Constitution of South Africa in its Bill of Rights (Chapter 2) states that everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person, which includes the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources. This includes young people even if they are not singled out as a specific group. The Constitution protects children specifically, including in the situation when children are in conflict with the law. South Africa has progressive legislation, in the form of the recently passed Children’s Act and Child Justice Bill, aimed at protecting and enhancing young people’s rights, but these are confined to children under the age of 18, in line with the Constitution. It also has the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS), which promotes holistic, developmental crime prevention measures alongside conventional law enforcement and criminal justice, but this does not deal specifically with young people. The NCPS has also been sidelined as government has shifted towards a more law enforcement and punishment-oriented approach to crime. The only policy dealing specifically with youth issues is the National Youth Policy, which focuses on youth development.

This section provides an overview of each of these pieces of legislation and policies, as they all have a bearing on efforts to address youth violence; the Children’s Act and Child Justice Act are included due to the overlap in the definition of children and youth.

10.1. **The National Youth Policy**

South Africa’s approach to youth since the first democratic elections in 1994 has been expressed primarily in three documents: the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2000, developed in 1997, the National Youth Development Policy Framework (NYDPF) and the second-generation NYP 2009 – 2014. The first NYP was never officially adopted, but informed the development the NYDPF, which was adopted in 2002. This covered a period of five years, ending in 2007. The NYDPF has been reworked into NYP 2009 – 2014, which was adopted by government in 2009.

The NYP 2009 – 2014 lays a foundation for integrated youth-focused policy and programming. The policy emphasises the importance of placing young people at the centre of national development initiatives, both as beneficiaries of development and active participants. The policy is based on the principles of social and economic justice, human rights, empowerment, participation, active citizenship, the promotion of public benefit, and distributive and liberal values. (p 6) It calls for an integrated approach that focuses on the holistic development of young people. It also highlights the need for various aspects of public policy to function synergistically to provide youth, particularly those outside of the social, political and economic mainstream, with the knowledge, skills and values they need to make appropriate choices. The policy rests on four pillars:

- Education
- Health and well-being
- Economic participation
- Social cohesion

10.1.1 **The implementing infrastructure**

The implementation of the NYP on the part of government, and the interests of youth generally at the national level, rest with two institutions primarily: the newly established Youth Development Agency
(NYDA) and the Youth Desk in The Presidency. There are also Provincial Youth Commissions (PYCs), and in many cases Youth Desks or Units, at the local government level. All of these take their lead from the NYP, but are separate entities from the Youth Desk and NYDA.

The National Youth Development Agency

The NYDA is the result of a merger between the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) and the National Youth Commission (NYC). Before their amalgamation, the NYC was responsible for ensuring that youth issues were considered in public policy, while the UYF was mandated to facilitate and create jobs, and develop and transfer skills to young people.  

The NYDA became effective in October 2009. It is responsible for initiating, facilitating, implementing, coordinating and monitoring interventions aimed at reducing unemployment and promoting social cohesion. Most pertinent to the issue of youth violence, the NYDA is mandated to:

- advance youth development through guidance and support to initiatives across all sectors of society and spheres of government;
- embark on initiatives that seek to advance the economic development of youth;
- facilitate youth economic participation, empowerment, and their achievement of education and training;
- initiate programmes aimed at combating crime, substance abuse and social decay amongst the youth; and
- promote the interests of youth generally, and youth with disabilities, specifically.

10.1.2 The Youth Desk in the Presidency

The Youth Desk in The Presidency is primarily responsible for monitoring and policy development. The Youth Desk provides support and advisory services on youth development issues to political principals. It coordinates the activities of government departments through the government cluster system. It is mandated to monitor the performance of the NYDA, which is accountable to the Presidency. Since the creation of the NYDA, the Youth Desk also performs some of the functions which previously fell to the NYC, such as policy development and the co-ordination of youth development activities across government spheres.

10.2. The National Crime Prevention Strategy

The National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) was passed by Cabinet in 1996. The NCPS promoted social crime prevention and sought to implement its principles within criminal justice policy. The Strategy drew strongly on research and international experience, and was influenced greatly by input from NGOs concerned with crime prevention issues. It represented a sharp break from the previous government’s approach; it shifted the emphasis away from reactive measures to control crime to a more proactive preventative approach that included actors beyond the criminal justice sector. The NCPS rested on four pillars:

- Making the criminal justice system more efficient and effective, while also ensuring sufficient deterrents to reduce the risks of re-offending
- Reducing crime through environmental design, including systems to reduce the opportunity for crime and increase the ease of detection and identification of criminals
- Changing public values, particularly the way communities react to crime and violence through public education and information
- Trans-national crime programmes aimed at improving the controls on cross border crime
Although it is still in force, the NCPS was never fully implemented. Faced with the reality of high crime levels, policy swung back to a control-oriented approach that placed the police at the centre of the ‘war on crime’,49 as embodied by the National Crime Combating Strategy (NCCS) of 2000.50 In this context, implementation focused on strengthening the criminal justice system (CJS), which allowed other institutions such as the Departments of Social Development (DSD), Education, Health, Housing and Transport to abdicate their responsibilities, “with the result that the police continue to be seen, incorrectly, as the primary crime prevention agency”.51 As Barbara Holtmann and Charmain Badenhorst note:

An unintended consequence of this has been that the police are very often required to play the role of other service providers; to fill the gap for social workers, educators, health providers in responding to crime and violence. An example of this is for instance the Adopt-a-Cop programme in which police officials are required to spend time in schools...such models are often presented as “best practice” internationally and there is an attempt to replicated them here, yet in the South African environment the police are overburdened and do not have the capacity to achieve the goals of such interventions while at the same time their attempts to do so negatively impact their capacity to achieve their core mandates.52

In the last two years, government practice has shifted even further away from crime prevention to enforcement. In 2009, President Zuma’s administration renamed the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) the Department of Police and militarised the rank system within the police. The Minister of Police has invoked a shoot-to-kill policy and is spearheading a tough on crime approach. The number of police officers also increased between 2008 and 2009, from 173 241 at the end of March 2008 to 190 000 at the end of March 2010.53

10.3. Provincial and local crime prevention strategies

Gauteng has developed a Safer City Strategy. The Gauteng Safety Strategy 2006-14 was launched in August 2006. It recognises the value of crime prevention and adopts a life cycle approach to guide initiatives to promote social crime prevention throughout Gauteng. The strategy consists of four key pillars that frame a number of measurable objectives. These pillars include:

- encouraging community participation to reduce crime;
- improving the quality of policing;
- promoting social crime prevention; and
- strengthening the institutional arrangements of provincial government to better understand and respond to crime.54

Several municipalities have also developed Safer City Plans, assisted by UN Habitat. The Tshwane (Pretoria), Johannesburg and eThekwini (Durban) municipalities have strategies.

10.4. The Children’s Act

The Children’s Act was signed into law in 2010. The Act was endorsed in two parts. The initial act, the Children’s Act 38 of 2005, dealt with the national government’s responsibilities towards children and came into force in mid-2007. A second act, the Children’s Amendment Act 41 of 2007, dealt with provincial service areas and came into effect in 2008. The two Acts have now been consolidated into the Children’s Act 38 of 2005, which came into effect April 2010.55
The Act establishes the framework for a holistic range of social services and interventions for children and their families, based on a developmental model of social welfare. These include:

- ECD programmes aimed at providing learning and support appropriate to children’s developmental age and stage;
- support for vulnerable children and their families, including child household heads, aimed at keeping children in school;
- drop-in centres in vulnerable communities, including after-school programmes to assist vulnerable children with homework, and provide nutritious meals in areas with high levels of food insecurity; and
- measures to combat the child labour.

The Children’s Act introduces various measures to protect children and promote their safety and well-being. These include creating children’s courts designed to minimise any secondary trauma associated with judicial processes, child protection measures and the establishment and maintenance of a National Child Protection Register. This register is to include a record of the abuse and/or neglect suffered by a child, the aim being to protect them from further harm and to ensure that the appropriate services are provided. All convictions involving the abuse or deliberate neglect of a child, and all the findings of the children’s court that hands down such convictions, are also to be recorded.56

The Act has been welcomed by those working on children’s issues, but there are challenges involved in implementing it. A key constraint is the critical shortage of all types of social service practitioners. The Act provides for probation officers, development workers, child and youth care workers, youth workers, social auxiliary workers and social security workers, as well as ECD practitioners and volunteers, all of which are in short supply. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that only practitioners who are registered under the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 may perform functions under the Children’s Act — currently the only social workers and auxiliaries can register.57

10.5. The Child Justice Act

Parliament passed the Child Justice Act in 2008.58 The Act takes a rights-based approach to dealing with children who are accused of committing a crime. It aims to create a criminal justice system that is appropriate to the needs and protection of children. Importantly, it recognises the need for crime prevention and aims to minimise children’s contact with the criminal justice system. It also entrenches the principles of restorative justice and recognises that the offender should work to repair the harm done. Specifically, the Act’s detailed provisions aim to:

- create the context for community and victim involvement;
- protect people after arrest;
- provide diversion programmes, which aim to limit children’s contact with the criminal justice system and channel them into appropriate intervention programmes aimed at reducing the risks of re-offending;
- offer offenders different values and alternative role models and refer children away from the criminal justice system to an appropriate programme prior to conviction and sentencing;
- provide for restorative justice for victims, offenders and the community.59

The Child Justice Act has been lauded as a major step forward by practitioners, but as with the Children’s Act, inadequate resources constrain implementation. Government lacks appropriate diversion and alternative sentencing services, and there is inadequate capacity within the non-
10.6. The DSD’s Social Crime Prevention Strategy

The DSD is developing a Social Crime Prevention Strategy. The strategy is being designed with the assistance of the CSIR and draws strongly on the Safe Community of Opportunity model developed by Barbara Holtmann during her term as the head of the Crime Prevention Research Group at CSIR. This model draws on the CSIR’s research in the Western Cape and establishes 48 elements required to achieve and sustain safe communities, the role-players involved, and the actions required (see Appendix 1). The strategy also draws on the objectives of the NCPS.

The strategy aims to address the six areas identified in the Cycle of Violence (Figure 5) through a bundle of legislation and activities. These are to be driven by the needs in communities, but span support for vulnerable parents, early childhood development, health, developmental interventions, victim support, reducing alcohol and substance abuse, policing, rehabilitation and diversion. The strategy takes a multi-sectoral approach. It has six pillars:

- strengthening internal and external capacity to address crime and violence;
- establishing partnerships between government departments and civil society to deliver services holistically;
- Site-based, responsive and integrated delivery
- Promoting sustainable mechanisms at the community level to address underlying problems;
- Promoting social cohesion; and
- Early childhood development.

The strategy is still being reviewed internally within the Department, and is not yet a public document. Once it is approved at the national and provincial levels, DSD will engage other departments and actors for their input.

10.7. Gaps in the legislative and policy framework

These policy instruments provide a sound framework within which to address crime and violence in South Africa, but there remain gaps. The most obvious of these is the paucity of policy and legislation dealing with ‘adult youth’ over the age of 18, particularly in the crime and justice sector. The Children’s Act and the Child Justice Act both constitute significant progress in dealing with child-victims and perpetrators, but existing legislation and policy provide no framework for dealing with youth between the age of 18 and 35 – the bulk of the youth demographic.

People in this age group are treated as adults within the judicial and penal systems. Although the Correctional Services Act of 1998, and the Correctional Services Amendment Bill now before Parliament, provides some concessions for young people between the age of 18 and 26, there are no laws or policies that specifically call for more rehabilitative approaches for this age group. Moreover, while the Criminal Procedure Act of 1977 empowers courts to detain young people under the age of 22 in Youth Care Centres or Youth Development Centres, there are relatively few of these facilities, and many are housed in adult prisons. This exposure to the penal system can help to entrench
criminal and violent behaviour, both through the “prisonerisation” of offenders and by reducing the economic opportunities available to them on their release.66

11. INTERVENTIONS BY GOVERNMENT

Government runs relatively few programmes pertinent to addressing crime and violence, and most of these are run in partnership with NGOs. The NYDA runs several programmes aimed at developing youth generally, but at present these focus on entirely creating economic opportunities for young people, and do little to address other aspects of youths’ marginalisation in South Africa. Within the criminal justice arena, most programmes involve diversion and the rehabilitation and, to a much lesser extent, the reintegration of offenders. There are only a handful of initiatives dealing with the more preventative aspects. In both cases, the majority are run by NGOs with varying levels of input from the government departments concerned.

11.1. Youth development programmes

The policy framework on youth has consistently called for the holistic development of youth, but in practice government’s emphasis has been on integrating youth into the economy, primarily through skills development and training. The UYF, with its focus on economic development, was the primary conduit for programming. The most visible of its initiatives was the National Youth Service Programme (NYSP), which aimed to involve unemployed young people in government service delivery, while providing skills to increase their employability, and providing them with exit opportunities.67 The national government, in partnership with provincial and local governments, also seeks to create jobs through its Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), but this does not specifically target youth.68

The creation of economic opportunities for youth now falls to the NYDA, which has as a key performance area, initiating, facilitating, implementing, coordinating and monitoring interventions aimed at reducing unemployment. There are several interventions in the NYDA’s stable. Most are well-established programmes developed by the UYF. These focus on developing skills, employment opportunities and young entrepreneurs. In addition to the NYSP, these include finance and loan initiatives, business consultancies, a job-seekers database, and a volunteer action programme. The NYDA’s 2009/10 Annual Report also identifies a new intervention, the Education and Skills Development Programme, comprising skills development initiatives for in-school and out of school youth.69

Since 2009, government’s focus has broadened. The NYDA’s activities remain slanted towards economically-oriented programming, but it is now mandated to tackle the lack of cohesion evident in many South African communities. The NYDA’s Annual Report for 2009/10 particularly emphasises this role. In this respect, the report notes that the NYDA aims to engage youth “in activities that build their social capital and networks and strengthen the relationships that bind people and communities together”.70

The need to address the issue of social cohesion was brought to the fore in the NYP 2009 – 2014, but policy has yet to be translated into programmes. The NYP identifies what it sees as social cohesion-building activities, such as community service, civic participation and volunteering, and promotes the NYSP as a critical tool. The NYDA, however, is still in the process of conceptualising the very broad,
and rather woolly concept of cohesion; it is defining what it understands as social cohesion, what building it involves and how the NYDA can contribute.\textsuperscript{71}

The NYDA recognises, however, that building social cohesion requires a multi-sectoral, collaborative approach that taps existing activities by government departments, civil society and the private sector. It envisages supporting and developing amongst others programmes that foster patriotism; contribute towards nation building; establish a sense of belonging; and achieve social justice. These are likely to include:

- Arts and Culture Programmes
- Social Dialogues
- Capacity-building initiatives
- Voter education
- Volunteering opportunities
- Restorative Justice programmes
- Programmes to reduce alcohol and substance abuse\textsuperscript{72}

11.2. Crime prevention programmes

The government runs very few crime prevention-oriented programmes. In keeping with government’s general swing towards crime control, the national government does not emphasise prevention-oriented programming. The government has encouraged community involvement in policing, primarily through fora such as Community Police Forums (CPF) and the more recent Sector Policing Forums (SPFs), but these address aspects of prevention in a generalised way. Some structures are ostensibly involved in preventing crime, but ‘prevention’ usually takes the form of neighbourhood watches, street committees and other security-oriented inventions. The implementation of the CPFs and SPFs has also been fraught with challenges.\textsuperscript{73}

Government departments do run some proactive programmes in partnership with non-governmental organisations. These are largely \textit{ad hoc} in nature, are conducted at the behest of provincial and local authorities, and are focused on only a few cities and provinces. These include the:

- **Northern Cape Safer Schools programme.** The Northern Cape’s Department of Education is implementing an Integrated School Safety Plan and plans during the 2011/12 financial year to conduct Safety Emergency Readiness programmes in 200 schools.\textsuperscript{74}

- **The Groblershoop Youth Resilience Demonstration project, Northern Cape.** The CJCP runs the Groblershoop project in partnership with the DSD in the Northern Cape. It aims to reduce youth offending in the Upington region of the Northern Cape, by mitigating the risk factors and strengthening the resilience factors associated with youth criminality. This project also includes the work of the Northern Cape community-based diversion project, which aims to reduce repeat offending by youths through a constructive mentorship programme that diverts those at risk of repeat offending from the formal criminal justice system. The programme targets children and adolescents.

- **The Hlayiseka Project, Northern Cape and Western Cape.** The Hlayiseka Early Warning Toolkit was conceived and developed jointly by the National Department of Education, the Open Society Foundation of South Africa (OSF-SA) and the CJCP. The Toolkit advocates a ‘whole school approach’ to school safety, and training is provided to principals, educators, the school governing bodies (SGBs) and learners. It aims to help schools understand, identify and respond to security
issues and threats; establish reporting systems and to manage reported incidents; monitor schools’ progress in addressing safety over time; and integrate existing departmental policy and legislation to ensure school safety. The Toolkit has been rolled-out in schools in all nine provinces. In Gauteng, the Department of Community Safety is an important partner in the implementation of the toolkit.  

- **Strengthening families, Western Cape.** The CJCP is also involved in a project in Wesbank and Belhar in the City of Cape Town that aims to improve community safety by strengthening families. This project is implemented in partnership with the Western Cape DSD (see www.cjcp.org).

- **The Peace and Development Project (PDP), Tshwane, Gauteng.** The PDP has been funded by German Development Cooperation (GTZ) for more than ten years. The project started in the Western Cape in 1997 with support from the German Foreign Office. In 2000 it became part of the Urban Conflict Management Programme, a joint project between the National DSS and GTZ and was extended to Soshanguve in the Tshwane metropolitan council in Gauteng. In 2006 it was extended to an additional five areas, and the Tshwane Metropolitan Police Services assumed financial and management control of the project. GTZ terminated its funding in September 2010, but it is developing a new programme that builds on the key elements of the PDP project. This is due to start in mid-2011.

The PDP selected community peace workers to engage with their communities for one year. The monitors participated in community events, provided first aid and victim support services, ensured that pensioners were safe on pay-days, provided scholar patrols for learners, and advised schools on the risks of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS and provided guidance on child abuse. During the year, workers received operational training with additional training in leadership, patrolling, HIV/AIDS counselling, rape crisis intervention, conflict mediation and resolution. The core training modules were provided by accredited training service providers and were, where possible, aligned with the National Qualifications Framework. Advanced skills in conflict resolution and school safety were offered to those peace workers who specialised in the ‘Safer Schools’ component of the project (see www.gtz.de/en/weltweit/afrika/suedafrika/29465.htm).

- **Durban Safer City project, eThekwini (Durban), KwaZulu-Natal.** The Durban Safer City strategy emphasises the need for crime prevention activities targeted at youth. Following on this commitment, a youth programme was established in the KwaMashu area of Durban, in partnership with various NGO and community groups. This focuses primarily on diverting young people from crime through sports, art, cultural and literary activities. It includes the development of recreational facilities and the organisation of sporting, cultural and life-skills activities. It also aims to facilitate relationships between young people, the SAPS, CPFs and other agencies of the criminal justice system.

- **The Youth Violence Prevention Programme, Gauteng.** The CSVR’s Youth Violence Prevention Programme has partnered with the Gauteng Department of Education to advise, train for and support a Safe Schools Programme. The project started in four schools in Soweto and has since involved more than 40, with training provided over the course of three years. The project provides trauma counselling and training aimed at informing safety initiatives, as well as helping schools to create plans to prevent and manage crime and violence. The project prioritises four core areas: victim care and education about safety; safety in school premises; environmental design; and school-community partnerships. The programme targets learners, teachers and safety teams created in each school. It recognises that addressing the four core areas requires a range of
interlinked activities and processes that require various participants to drive them, and aims to develop strategic partnerships with actors such as the police, CPFs and SGBs (see www.csvr.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=7&Itemid=61&limit=1&limitstart=1).

11.3. Governmental diversion and offender-oriented programmes

The bulk of programmes aimed at changing violent or criminal behaviour amongst youth are carried out by NGOs, only sometimes in partnership with government actors (see, for example, Table 2). The DCS does run programmes, but they are for the most part focused on adults. Moreover, although DCS would seem to be an important player in diversion, rehabilitation and the re-integration of offenders, it has established few partnerships with outside organisations, and provides very little funding to NGOs to fill gaps in service delivery. The DSD is the most involved in youth-oriented programmes, and has established partnerships with non-governmental actors, primarily NICRO and Khulisa Services.

Table 2: Offender-oriented programmes run by non-governmental organisations

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<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Programme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educo Africa</td>
<td>Siyavuka, experiential learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noupoort Youth and Community Development Project (NYCDP)</td>
<td>Life skills training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diversion programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Africa (BBBSSA)</td>
<td>Mentoring programme</td>
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<td>Diversion into Music Education (DIME)</td>
<td>Diversion and mentoring programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>President's Award for Youth Empowerment (TPA)</td>
<td>Reintegration and Diversion for Youth (READY)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outward Bound Trust of South Africa (OBT)</td>
<td>Nature-based diversion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restorative Justice Centre (RJC)</td>
<td>Drama therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Group Conference/ Conferencing (FGC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Othandweni Street Youth Programme</td>
<td>Guardianship for diversion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekupholeni Mental Health Centre</td>
<td>Life skills training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Peace Accord Trust (NPAT)</td>
<td>Ecotherapy diversion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South African Young Sex Offenders Programme (SAYStOP)</td>
<td>Life skills training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source Steyn, 2005

11.3.1 Programmes run by the DCS

The DCS runs several programmes aimed at addressing criminal and violent behaviour, but do not specifically target youth. The DCS runs a range of programmes aimed at changing offenders’ conduct. Many young people participate in these by virtue of being incarcerated, but they are not designed
specifically for youth. It is compulsory for all sentenced offenders serving a sentence of 24 months and longer to attend programme sessions. These include the:

- Anger Management Programme
- Crossroads Correctional Programme, which focuses on the causes and consequences substance abuse and criminal behaviour
- Preparatory Programme on Sexual Offences
- Pre-release Programme
- Substance Abuse Correctional Programme
- Restorative Justice Orientation Programme
- New Beginnings Orientation Programme, which aims to empower offenders and help them to become more self-aware

The DCS does have some programmes targeting youth, but primarily by virtue them being in youth-oriented correctional facilities. The Department has established 15 prisons, or so-called Youth Development Centres, that accommodate medium and maximum-security offenders between the age of 18 and 22 - although as noted already, many remain in adult prisons. These host a range of primarily education-oriented training programmes. These include:

- formal schooling;
- skills development, comprising vocational and entrepreneur training;
- sports, recreation, arts and culture programmes (SRAC); and
- production and agriculture workshops and care programmes.

11.3.2 Programmes run by NICRO

NICRO is the most established actor. NICRO operates in all nine provinces. It works with primarily young people over the age 16, but in the case of its diversion programmes, the focus is on 14 to 18 year olds, as it is people in this age group that is most likely to be diverted. NICRO receives funding from DSD, the National Lottery Fund (Uthingo) and foreign donors – although it is increasingly struggling to find funding. It works with the Ministry of Police, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ), DCS and the DSD. NICRO runs several different programmes:

- **Non-custodial sentencing:** The Chance to Change programme promotes and oversees sentences served outside of prison. It aims to address negative behaviour and ensure that young people make amends for their crimes, and includes a bundle of interventions ranging from anger-management to positive parenting skills and restorative group conferences.

- **Offender reintegration:** The Tough Enough programme works with offenders in prison and their families and communities to smooth their reintegration. They also provide learnerships and sponsor the Arts Award for Prison Art.

- **Diversion:** These include the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), a lifeskills training programme; pre-trial community service; family group conferences that bring offenders, their caregivers and victims together to seek redress; and the Journey programme, an intensive three-month programme that encourages self-expression, commitment, accountability and a sense of community.
**Entrepreneurship:** The *Economic Opportunities Project* (EOP) provides non-financial, skill-oriented training to young people wishing to start or improve a small business (see www.nicro.org.za).

NICRO targets different groups of young people, and often also provides services to their families. While the non-custodial sentencing and offender reintegration programmes focus on young people who have broken the law, the diversion programmes also involve youth at risk of offending, and the entrepreneurship programme victims of crime, offenders’ families and ex-offenders.

### 11.3.3 Programmes run by Khulisa Services

Khulisa Services is a newer, but increasingly visible role-player. Khulisa is based in Gauteng, but also runs national programmes. Until relatively recently, Khulisa received approximately 80% of its funding from government, including the DSD, National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the DoJ, but due to payment delays and reduced funding, Khulisa is developing alternative funding streams, including establishing a holding company to generate income. It is gradually moving away from partnerships with government, which it sees as financially unsustainable. Khulisa targets primarily, but not exclusively, children under the age of 18. In addition to offender reintegration, diversion and mentoring programmes, it is also involved in crime prevention projects. As discussed in the next section, the latter is a growth area, and it is in the process of expanding its programming into the region. The former include:

- **Early intervention programmes:** Khulisa runs diversion and ‘mini-diversion’ programmes for young people between the age of eight and 18, who are in conflict with the law or generally at risk. These include its *Positively Cool* diversion programme; a *Restorative Justice, Conflict Resolution and Peacemaking* programme for serious offenders which brings together imprisoned and ex-offenders, victims and families; a *Justice and Restoration* programme that explores alternative ways of dealing with crime; and the *Mirror* programme which aims to develop participants’ emotional intelligence.

- **Rehabilitation programmes:** Khulisa’s rehabilitation programmes target sentenced offenders in prison, ex-offenders, young people in diversion and alternative sentencing programmes and youth at-risk of offending. These include the *Silence the Violence* programme, which explores the roots of violent behaviour and more constructive ways of dealing with conflict; *My Path* which promotes behavioural change and skills development; and a peer education programme on drugs (see www.khulisaservices.co.za/Programmes/index.ashx?programmefd=8).

### 11.4. Issues and gaps

As with the legislative framework, there is a gap in programming when it comes to older youth. The bulk of the programmes reviewed target children or adolescents, or in the case of the DCS, adults generally. There are relatively few programmes targeting young people in their late teens and early twenties who often have different needs from children and older adults. Given the importance of early intervention to address violent and criminal behaviour, the emphasis should be on younger youth, but there remains scope for engaging more this age group.

There are also gaps in the range of programmes. While the emerging literature on crime and violence shows the importance of effective parenting, strengthening families, after-school care and support, and creating opportunities for self-actualisation, governmental programming focuses primarily on schools and offender-oriented interventions. There are few initiatives that intervene at the family
level, or that link the home and school environments. There are also few that attempt to fill the space left absent caregivers or the lack of recreational and extra-curricula activities in many poor communities. There are also a dearth of interventions to support young people who have experienced violence and victimisation. This is part of a more general problem in South Africa, where there are also few sources of support adults. Given the role of victimisation in driving violence, this represents a key gap.

The integration of programmes is also a challenge. The non-governmental actors spoken to during the course of this research noted repeatedly the lack of unity within and between government departments and the different levels of government. They noted that even within government departments there is tendency to work in silos, and fund programmes accordingly. For example, within the DSD, diversion and offender-oriented programmes are usually funded by the Crime Prevention Directorate, while initiatives to support vulnerable children are funded through Family Services. This presents difficulties for NGOs aiming to provide holistic programming that addresses the many different drivers of crime and violence. Moreover, while national departments make policy decisions, it is provincial authorities that fund programmes, and policy directives are often not translated into action at the provincial and local levels.

Funding too is an issue. Both NICRO and Khulisa Services have seen declining levels of funding from government. Where funding is available, lengthy delays in releasing money have seriously jeopardised programmes, to the extent that organisations like Khulisa are increasingly moving away from government-linked projects. This is concerning, given government’s reliance on the NGO sector to deliver programmes, and suggests the need for greater attention to the prevailing funding modalities. To this end, it may be useful to conduct a detailed review of how programmes are funded, to assess ways of streamlining and increasing the efficiency of funding flows.

12. PROGRAMMES BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The majority of the programmes aimed addressing violence by and against youth are run by civil society. These programmes often involve government as stakeholders, but are funded and implemented independently of government. This section discusses several innovative initiatives that address key issues, such as parenting and giving youngsters opportunities to explore their talents and express themselves. These represent emerging good practice and provide possible models for governmental programming in these areas. They also suggest areas for collaboration between government and non-governmental actors in the future. They include the:

- **Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU), Western Cape.** The VPUU is funded by GTZ. It focuses on Khayelitsha in the City of Cape Town, Cape Town’s largest township area. The project involves helping local communities to create four Safe Node Areas. The VPUU adopts a participatory approach. It encourages the residents in each node to interact and engage with the programme in order to take ownership of the urban environment and the social interventions of the programme. The VPUU project is also developing a variety of sporting facilities, ranging from informal sporting facilities such as parks or sports fields, to school amenities and clubs that comply with international standards. GTZ is promoting sporting activities by partnering with Kicking for Peace, a cup tournament that is contested three times a year amongst teams from low income...
neighbourhoods under auspices of the Western Cape Community Peace and Development Network (see www.vpuu.org/page.php?page=6#44).

- **Both Sides of the Story, Gauteng and Western Cape.** Both Sides of the Story is a training programme run by a psychologist. The programme provides ‘human relations training’ aimed at equipping caregivers with the skills to engage the children in their care and discipline them without resorting to violence. The programme uses talented participants from previous courses to train caregivers, and aims to develop a team of facilitators in each area that can mentor others both formally and informally after the course. The project initially focused on Soweto and other townships in Gauteng and was affiliated with CSVR and funded by business Against Crime – then a key partner of Gauteng’s DSS. The programme has since been expanded to the Western Cape and now receives funding from non-governmental sources. Training is often requested by and run through crèches, schools and SGBs, but trainers also work through other structures depending on the needs in particular communities.

- **HIPPYSA, Gauteng.** The Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) programme in South Africa is a home-visiting programme that targets caregivers. It aims to equip caregivers with the skills, tools and confidence to nurture their pre-school children, and support their childhood development. Caregivers who have been through the programme mentor other caregivers. They meet families weekly in their home or in small street groups and support parents in implementing various strategies to improve their child’s circumstances. Initiatives include antenatal and newborn care; play programmes where caregivers play with and bond with their children; school preparedness programmes; and sessions covering topics like psycho-social support, nutrition, education, care, shelter, and legal rights, as well as referral to specialists where required (see www.hippysa.org).

- **Khulisa Services, Gauteng.** In addition to its work with young people in conflict with the law, Khulisa Services is also involved in projects aimed at operationalising the Safe Community of Opportunity model. Khulisa Services is working closely with Barbara Holtmann to address the drivers of crime and violence in Hammanskraal, Sasolburg and Westbury in Gauteng.

- **Skills Village, Gauteng.** Skills Village 2030 is a non-profit intervention that aims to develop skills amongst young people and adults through both an educational and community action campaign and community events. An important aspect of their work is to disseminate and communicate eco-social information to support decent livelihoods, social inclusion, cohesion and integration. Skills Village is affiliated with the international Seasons for Peace and Non-violence campaign, and through its 64 Days Community Initiative 2011, it aims to promote non-violence (see www.skillsvillage2030.co.za/64days/?cat=1).

### 13. ENTRY POINTS FOR DIALOGUE AND ACTION

The review suggests three main entry points for dialogue and action on youth violence: the DSD, the NYDA and the inter-ministerial Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster Committee.

The review suggests that the DSD is a strong entry point. Although there is scope for more and more coherent action, the DSD is by far the most active of the government departments in addressing the
drivers of youth violence. It is also a logical entry point given its core business of “developing South Africans from the cradle to the grave”.

The Department’s Social Crime Prevention Strategy provides an ideal vehicle for greater engagement with a range of governmental role-players, although this may require waiting until the strategy is released into the public domain. The Strategy has been under development for several years, but at the time of writing the document was before the DSD’s national and provincial Director Generals (DGs) for approval, suggesting that it may be available soon. Procedurally, the Stakeholder Management Directorate within the Minister’s Office is responsible for managing external stakeholder engagement.

Given its mandate to guide and facilitate youth development programmes, the NYDA is another potential partner, although it may not be in the best position to engage optimally at the present time. The NYDA is newly formed, and like any new institution, is settling in to its mandate. The Agency is also facing criticism over its use of government funding, specifically the very large amount it spent on the 17th World Festival of Youth and Students in December 2010. The questions over the use of the money have affected its credibility, particularly with civil society actors and the media. It is nevertheless an important actor, which should be involved. It has well developed programmes to enhance young people’s employability, and with its expanding focus on social cohesion, could potentially play a key role in facilitating engagement on the drivers of violence.

Within the criminal justice sector specifically, the Clusters on Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) represent another entry point. The national JCPS aims to coordinate the implementation of programmes by the participating government departments to improve the synergy between them. These include the DoJ, DCS and the Ministry of Police. There are also provincial cluster committees in some provinces, tasked with integrating service delivery at this level.

14. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Addressing crime and violence amongst youth in South Africa requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach that addresses the diverse factors driving violent and criminal behaviour. This requires not only engaging young people, but also parents, teachers, principals and other thought-leaders in creating environments that provide youth with nonviolent models of behaviour. It requires viewing young people holistically and broadening interventions to help them to explore and develop personally. It also requires early initiatives that put in place the developmental, emotional and social infrastructure required for children to become healthy, productive and emotionally well-rounded adults. South Africa has in place promising legislation, policies and programmes, but there remain gaps. Key findings include:

14.1. Gaps in the legislative and policy framework

- There is very little in the way of legislation or policy that specifically addresses youth, or issues pertinent to violence. There is a particular gap with respect to adult youth in conflict with the law, where the focus is on the treatment of children within the criminal justice system. While there is an emphasis on diversion and alternative sentencing for children, older youth are treated as adults by the judicial and penal system. This cuts them off from many of the rehabilitative mechanisms available to their younger peers and represents a lost opportunity to prevent a life of crime and violence.
• There is also insufficient emphasis on crime prevention. The NCPS provides a progressive platform for addressing the socio-economic drivers of risk in South Africa, but it has been largely sidelined as government has shifted towards a more reactive approach to crime. This too represents a lost opportunity, in this case for a proactive, integrated, multi-sectoral response.

14.2. Gaps in prevailing programming

• As with the legislative framework, there is a gap in programming when it comes to older youth. The bulk of youth-oriented programmes focus on children or adolescents. Few target young adults, or address the needs and challenges encountered by young people in their late teens and early twenties.

• There are also gaps in the range of programmes. Government programmes tend to focus on two areas: the economic empowerment and integration of youth and offender-related initiatives. There are few initiatives that intervene at the family level, particularly amongst parents, or that link the home and school environments. Similarly, there is little emphasis on creating supportive after-school options or opportunities for youth to explore their talents and potential. There is also a dearth of interventions to support young people who have experienced violence and victimisation, which constitutes a key gap given the association between victimisation and the perpetration of violence.

Several non-governmental organisations run innovative programmes that address some of these gaps. These are sometimes run in partnership with government, but are mostly implemented independently. Many of these programmes focus on equipping caregivers with the skills to engage productively with their children, providing youngsters with opportunities to grow as people, and creating generally safer, healthier communities. These programmes point to possible models for future government programmes, as well as potential entry points and partnerships. However, funding constraints and a lack of integration between governmental programmes represent significant challenges to collaborations between government and civil society, as well as efforts to address holistically the drivers of violence.

14.3. Entry points for dialogue and action

In light of these issues, the Social Crime Prevention Strategy being developed by the DSD represents an ideal entry point for dialogue and more varied and coherent action. This is still undergoing an internal review process, but takes its lead from the NCPS and proactive, community-wide approaches to addressing crime and violence. It takes a holistic view and aims to facilitate an integrated approach by a range of governmental actors. The Strategy has been under development for several years, but there are signs that it may be moving towards finalisation, and might soon enter the public domain.

Other entry points include the national and provincial parliamentary JCPS clusters and the NYDA. The JCPS clusters aim to coordinate the implementation of programmes by the DoJ, DCS and the Ministry of Police at the national and provincial levels and could facilitate strategic intervention in the criminal justice sector, specifically. Given its mandate to guide and facilitate youth development programmes, the NYDA’s work has a direct bearing on the issue of youth violence. With its well developed programmes to enhance young people’s employability, and its expanding focus on social cohesion, it could potentially play a key role in facilitating engagement on this issue.
15. APPENDIX

The Safe Community of Opportunity model
16. NOTES


4 Ibid.


6 Ibid.

7 Graham et al, op cit.


15 Ibid.

16 They also asked whether anyone in the household had been hi-jacked, but as these did not necessarily involve the respondent, these are not included here.

17 See Reddy et al, 2002 and 2008, op cit. In comparable national surveys on risk behaviour amongst secondary school students carried out in 2002 and 2008, approximately 10% percent of the learners surveyed in each sweep reported having been forced to have sex when they did not want to. Not all of these cases would have involved sexual violence, however, and some may reflect different understandings of the meaning of word ‘forced’.


19 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
25 See Graham et al, 2010, for an extensive review of prevailing theories.
27 Ibid.
29 Interview, Senior lecturer, University of Cape Town, Department of Psychology, 14 February 2011.
30 Human Rights Watch, cited in Ward C., “‘It feels like it’s the end of the world’: Cape Town’s young people talk about gangs and community violence’. Report to the ISS on the child participation study in support of the COAV Cities Project, HSRC, Cape Town, 2006
31 Ward, ibid.
32 Interview, Director, Both Sides of the Story, 23 February 2011.
34 Biersteker, L., cited in HIPPY South Africa, organisational information pack, no date.
35 Interview, previous head of the Crime Prevention Research Group at CSIR, 10 March, 2011; Interview, Senior Manager: Operations, Khulisa Services, 18 February, 2011.
39 Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA), Modelling Youth Development Approaches, Umsobomvu Youth Fund, March 2007
40 Cited in VOSESA, ibid, p. 13.
41 VOSESA, Ibid.
43 Interview, previous head of the Crime Prevention Research Group at CSIR, op cit


Holtmann and Badenhorst, 2010, op cit, p. 4.


Muntingh, cited in Redpath, 2007, op cit; Department of Correctional Services, *Annual Report: 2001/02*, 2002. The latter does not provide figures on the number of children sentenced, only the number of ‘juveniles’ under the age of 21.


Interview, Director, Department of Social Development, 22 February 2011.

Interview Conrad Sebego, Monitoring and Evaluation Programme, NYDA, 3 March 2011.

Personal communication, Monitoring and Evaluation Programme, NYDA, 3 March 2011.


78 Interview, Skills Development Manager, Khulisa Crime Prevention Initiative, op cit.
79 DCS, Correctional Programmes Targeting Offending Behaviour, no date.
81 Umsobomvu Youth Fund, 2006, op cit.
82 Interview, Khulisa Services, op cit.
83 Personal communication, GIZ Programme Manager, GTZ, 25 February 2011.
84 Interview, Both Sides of the Story, op cit.
85 Personal communication, Director, HippySA, 16 February 2011.
86 Interview, Fundraising officer, Khulisa Services, 18 February, 2011.
87 Interview, Department of Social Development, op cit.