

SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

ABRIDGED COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

2018 - 2022

“Promoting and building safer communities”



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a safety strategic framework that is aimed at building networks and partnerships seeking to create an enabling environment within the region towards reducing and preventing crime, creating awareness amongst community members on the scope of community safety, and encouraging communities to take ownership of their neighbourhoods through active participation in community safety initiatives.

It is common knowledge that crime in South Africa has occupied centre stage on the public agenda. Unacceptably high levels of crime, especially serious and violent crime, result in the people, especially vulnerable groups such as women, children, older persons and people with disabilities, living in fear and feeling unsafe. This escalated crime levels have resulted in public confidence towards the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster being eroded. This has further impacted negatively on the country's economic development, and undermines the wellbeing of people in the country and thus; hinders their ability to achieve their potential.

This safety strategy is further aimed at supporting and ensuring that national and provincial strategic objectives are successfully achieved through a responsive, accountable, effective, efficient and integrated implementation process of crime prevention initiatives. This safety strategy therefore; envisage the following:

Vision

To be a region of choice through valued partnerships in pursuit of building safer communities

Mission

Ensure coordinated and uniformed systems that will provide quality safety and security services in an efficient and financially sound manner.

Goals

- Promote ***institutional arrangements*** that will produce effective and “***SMART***” community safety programmes.
- Encourage active ***community participation*** and guardianship to challenge unacceptable behavior and increase reporting of incidents within our society.
- ***Improve crime prevention*** through increased levels of social responsibility and tolerance through education, intervention and information.
- Promote ***road safety awareness and education*** to reduce road crashes and fatalities in the region.
- ***Monitor and evaluate*** the impact of adopted interventions towards elimination and reduction of crime within our communities.

CRIME ANALYSIS REPORT 2013 - 2017

Decrease (-) in crime	Increase (+) in crime
SELECTED CRIMES	COMPARATIVE STATISTICS
Contact Crimes (Crimes against persons)	
Murder	22.3%
Attempted Murder	25.4%
Assault GBH	-0.1%
Common Assault	-19.6%
Total robbery aggravating & robbery with weapon	42.2%
Total common robbery (Attempted included)	-14.8%
Total sexual offence	-27.5%
Total contact crime	0.2%
Contact related crimes	
Arson	-42.2%
Malicious damage to property	-7.4%
Total contact related crimes	-9.5%
Property related crimes	
Burglary at residential areas (Attempted included)	-0.1%
Burglary at business premises (Attempted included)	7.3%
Theft of motor vehicles (Attempted included)	1.5%
Theft out of motor vehicles (Attempted included)	14.8%
Stock theft	-13.2%
Total property related crimes	3.1%
Other Serious Crimes	
Total of other crimes (Attempted included)	-7.2%
Commercial crimes	-27.0%
Shoplifting	-11.7%
Total other serious crimes	-11.4%
Crimes heavily dependent on police action for detection	
Illegal possession of firearm and ammunition	12.3%
Drug related crimes	322.2%
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	28.8%
Total crimes heavily dependent on police action for detection	172.0%
Subcategories of robbery aggravated (Excluding attempts)	
Carjacking	+54.1%
Truck highjacking	-19.0%
Robbery of cash in-transit	-29.4%
Bank robbery	300.0%
House robbery	32.5%
Business robbery	73.6%
Total crimes accounted for under robbery aggravating	47.7%
Breakdown of total sexual offences (Already accounted for under total sexual offences)	
Rape (Attempted included)	-29.5%
Sexual assault	-3.4%
Contact sexual offence	-20.5%
Total other serious sexual crimes	-27.5%

Source: Crime Research and Statistics of the South African Police Service

KEY PRIORITY AREAS

Pillar 01: Institutional Arrangements

Local governments are expected to create safe and healthy environment for its residents. However; it is common knowledge that this cannot be successfully achieved without the support and close working relationship with other state departments and non-governmental organizations. In essence, this safety strategy represents an attempt to apply the theory and practice of an integrated governance aimed at eliminating silo operations within Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster.

This strategy thus; seeks to create a wider spectrum by aligning planning processes, capacity and activities amongst various relevant actors whereby resources can be maximized and consolidated through formalized partnerships in the fight against crime. These partners include representatives from provincial government, local municipalities, community based organizations, media, businesses, including all individuals and organizations who can contribute their expertise and resources to resolving crime related problems.

All the partners should form part of a formalized structure and agree to become involve in a concerted way aimed at tackling problems of crime and insecurity of the communities. It is thus; required of elected public bearers to mobilize these partners within various wards across the region. These partnerships need to be supported both internally within municipalities and externally within communities, and should therefore; be sustained over long term periods. This will ensure the ability of the collective to identify relevant initiatives, develop concrete plans of action, and an effective implementation process. Partnerships are important in crime prevention because they are able to create lasting mechanisms for dealing collectively with all issues concerned with community safety.

Desired Outcome

Improved service delivery through efficient multi-faceted crime prevention approaches

Delivery Agenda

- Promote multi-agency approach to crime prevention
- Formalize IGR partnerships
- Maximize resources through joint planning
- Encourage business participation in crime prevention initiatives

Pillar 02: Community Participation

One of the challenges often confronted by Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster is the involvement of community members in criminal activities either directly or indirectly. Many people are prepared to buy stolen goods and not report criminal elements living in their neighbourhoods to the police as long as they don't directly affect them.

Community participation in government programmes such as community police relations, helps as it gives them a sense of entitlement towards influencing decisions within the space they are occupying. A community-oriented approach is in effect a different way of tackling crime-related issues and ensuring safety of the residents. It is therefore; important to ensure that communities form an integral part during the development of safety plans as they are better positioned and more familiar with the environments they live in.

This approach will enable the police to respond more effectively to public concerns about safety related issues, most notably in areas which experience high levels of crime. This will further strengthen relationships between the police and community members, thereby creating a space for building trust and openly discussing social issues affecting the community, and being able to respond to community needs and develop tangible solutions to the existing problems.

People's sense of insecurity is often based in their perceptions about crime. These perceptions whether or not, reflect actual crime levels they are influenced by many factors. They depend among others; the type and quality of sources of information about crime, or their own personal experiences of being victims of crime, their sense of personal insecurity and social vulnerability. This is often caused by common risk factors such as lack of social cohesion within our communities. This risk factors are often associated with the presence of drugs and prostitution, illegal liquor outlets, non-compliance to liquor ordinances by registered liquor outlets, condition of buildings and local environment, location of residential areas (isolated or industrial sectors), incivilities (graffiti, poor street maintenance, poor lighting, etc), media (sensational reporting) and violence against women and children.

Crime prevention as an information driven tool, therefore; requires effective and efficient holistic approach as a response process in addressing criminality within our communities. It should therefore; be conceded that crime does not take place in a vacuum space, but within the society. Involvement of community members in the fight against crime is imperative towards the elimination of this scourge. Feeling safe is an important quality-of-life indicator. If people do not feel safe in both private and public spaces it will impact on their freedom of movement and their ability to interact with society generally.

Desired Outcome

Improved community involvement in crime prevention activities

Delivery Agenda

- Promote social cohesion and neighbourly within our communities
- Support and strengthen community police relations structures
- Intensify social movement against crime

Pillar 03: Social Crime Prevention

Strategic crime prevention brings benefits well beyond increased community safety. It contributes to the social and economic development of the society, and works to improve the quality of life of the residents. Fear of crime and a sense of insecurity have negative repercussions on social life in general and on the quality of life within the society. High levels of crime have a significant impact on normal everyday activities such as going to and from work, spending time in public places, or going out to recreational activities at night. Overall, feelings of insecurity are increased among those who are or feel physically or socially more vulnerable, such as elderly, women and children, including people within their own residences. It is therefore; important to undertake a careful analysis of crime problems and risk factors affecting people's insecurities, and to develop an action plan which is customized to the local communities' needs.

Implementation of this safety strategy should be able to consider various causal factors associated with criminal behavior and identify interventions that will have the greatest impact in improving community safety. This safety strategy is therefore intended to create enabling environment whereby a responsive support would be provided to address related causal factors such as unemployment, poverty, inequality, including others that might be tempt and motivate involvement in criminal activities. Coordinated approach is vital towards eradication of risk factors related to substance abuse, gender based violence, schools' violence, recidivism, liquor related incidents, ineffective or inconsistent parental supervision, social and economic exclusion, family conflicts and domestic violence, etc. These risk factors often forced those living in impoverished and disadvantaged communities to feel isolated and left with little option but to become involved in crime or organized crime often prey upon them. This includes youth being forced or recruited into organized drug trafficking and prostitution, including child trafficking for sexual exploitation or forced labour.

Practical involvement of all relevant and interested parties is sought to ensure that socio-economic factors deemed to be causal factors towards crime are reduced and eliminated. This parties include Schools, NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, Businesses, SAPS, Social Development, Correctional Services, etc. within the communities they serve. Children

are often the most vulnerable groups in being abducted or kidnapped, and easily influenced often by peer-pressure towards criminal acts.

It is therefore; encouraged that relationship be developed between schools and community members in order to mobilize social networks that comprises both community members, parents, SGBs, local municipalities, SAPS and other relevant stakeholders in the identification of criminal elements, especially within which the schools are located. This will ensure that all participants become more vigilant, committed and co-operative in seeking solutions to existing challenges.

Desired Outcome

Reduction of social related crimes within our communities

Delivery Agenda

- Intensify preventative initiatives to reduce schools based crimes
- Support intervention measures aimed at recidivism (re-offending)
- Strengthen community awareness initiatives to curb gender based violence
- Intensify the mainstreaming of crime prevention through environmental design principle

Pillar 04: Road Safety Promotion

Road safety promotion requires multi-disciplinary approach to address related issues affecting all road users. This competency cannot only be left to its custodians, namely; national and provincial government, including local municipalities. It therefore; needs integrated approach comprising of various actors which include most importantly, the communities. Their participation therein is critical to influence and support strategic objectives of government on road safety promotion. There is a general ignorance of road rules by road users, vandalism of road signs, including creation of unauthorized taxi ranks within the society, thus road safety education is vital in this regard. Scholar transport, public and private transport also needs regular monitoring and law enforcement for road ordinances compliance. Enforcement of by-laws should be encouraged to deal more specifically with the influx of hawkers especially alongside pavements and walking spaces. This impact negatively to traffic management services, policing of the affected areas and their role towards pedestrians' fatalities.

Local municipalities must be encouraged to effectively plan, implement and deliver customized road safety programmes relevant to their communities. Through local municipalities' wards, regular interaction with the residents, schools, government agencies, businesses and other stakeholders should be strengthened to address issues of road safety. This multi-faceted approach is vital as road safety like any other community

safety initiatives requires a holistic view of risk factors affecting road users, roads, vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians, motor cyclists, etc., as all have a role to play in helping to keep our roads safe. It is therefore; essential for stakeholders' cooperation, including formalization of partnerships for accountability purposes and assurance that road safety is dealt with in a cohesive and integrated manner.

Road safety campaigns and community outreach programmes are vital in influencing the attitudes and behaviours of all road users. Schools based road safety education can also impact and instill positive attitudes on young people, especially when this occurs an early stage of life. To ensure that all road safety campaigns are of the highest standard and can exert maximum positive impact on road users, it is needed that a customized road safety action plan be developed with achievable targets, set at short, medium and long term. This action plan should provide a clear and succinct overview of both provincial and national road safety strategies and activities over a predetermined period.

Desired Outcome

Reduction of road crashes and fatalities in the region

Delivery Agenda

- Support Programme of Action seeking to improve road safety in the region
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of local businesses and other key stakeholders in road safety initiatives
- Improve coordination of local government road safety initiatives with provincial and national road safety initiatives
- Encourage high level of integrity among law enforcement officials

Pillar 05: Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of an integrated approach to community safety depends on the process used to implement it and determine the impact thereof. This involves making strategic choices, setting objectives and developing appropriate plans of actions and timelines. To meet these objectives, individuals and groups must be willing to work through a number of stages of the crime prevention process and be measured accordingly in terms of the impact made, thereof. Review process of the safety strategy will be conducted on annual basis through both internal Council protocols and external stakeholders' engagements.

The entire process of monitoring, evaluation and review should take into account linkages between prevalent crime problems and socio-economic factors regarded as key drivers of crime, as there is often interdependency between these key areas. This safety strategy should be able to identify the linkages and the relevancy of an action to be

undertaken and the critical hot-spot where problematic crimes are taking place. There should be consistent tracking of events and determine the impact made in response to the identified crimes and related drivers. This will further improve financial accountability, and ensure that programmes meet the objectives set, and effectively assess the impact of those programmes.

Monitoring in the context of this safety strategy should be an on-going process of keeping track of trends in crime, victimization and preventive measures outputs. Crime prevention should therefore; be “*SMART*” in its approach to ensure positive outputs with ultimate outcomes as envisioned. The implementation of the plan of action must be tracked, and progress be monitored to ensure successful achievement of the targets within the planned timeframes. The implementation components should be captured in annual Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plans of the municipalities and other participating agencies.

Evaluation is generally concerned with measuring the process, outputs and outcomes of adopted strategies and plans of actions. This process is necessary for improving accountability, informing relevant policies and practices, developing sound evidence base, and understanding what works best and can be considered a good practice model in responding to crime problems. This also allows for problems encountered during the implementation process, or new concerns to be addressed in subsequent phases. Evaluation process is therefore; dependent on meeting the set milestones and completion and submission of reports for review and comment. Programmes that have been implemented should be assessed for value for money, sustainability, achievement of objectives and successful implementation of strategies.

Annual reports on the progress of the strategy need to be published in order for public to also observe the progress thereof, and input accordingly as and when needed. There should be an interval whereby required adjustments or revisions to the safety strategy are considered and effected.

Desired Outcome

“*SMART*” Programme of Action for implementation of community safety initiatives.

Delivery Agenda

- Develop a programme of action with targets and timelines
- Provide oversight on the implementation of the adopted action plans
- Conduct safety audits within communities
- Utilize local media for information sharing on crime prevention initiatives

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Successful implementation of the safety strategy depends on its ability to mobilize and meet its intended targets. Communication and public relations services are regarded as crucial components of a successful crime prevention strategy. They are key in transmitting messages and information to the public on behalf of Council, hence; active participation of elected public bearers, especially Ward Councilors is key in the implementation of this safety strategy. These can be achieved by canvassing the views, needs and expectations of the communities, communicating information about all stages of the adopted process, and ultimate results achieved. Implementation of the safety strategy should be executed as follows:

- Adopted communication strategy should be linked to all stages of the crime prevention strategies.
- Release regular media publications on the successes achieved for public consumption.
- Conduct public safety surveys as sources of information gathering in relation to communities' perceptions on crime.
- Circulate related articles on crime prevention themes internally for staff members and externally at public events for information purpose.
- Share information on available approved resources and services that support crime prevention initiatives for convenient accessibility by community members.

Another way that can be used as a communication tool, is through the creation of a dedicated toll-free telephone line, and/or a website as a platform to encourage community members to communicate their concerns and participate creatively in suggesting solutions to local community safety problems.

Media relations is also forms an integral part of communication strategy. Media usually gives the greatest coverage to sensational, and very atypical crimes within communities. Sensationalist crime stories can have a direct impact on the levels of public insecurity within the society. It is therefore; important to educate local media about the importance of focusing on factors underlying community safety issues, encourage them to provide balanced information to the public about the actual levels of crime in the community, and also for them to provide possible solutions thereto.

It is thus; critical to invest in communication with local residents in as many ways as possible through meetings, newsletters, door-to-door, official municipality websites, radio, focus groups, leaflets, etc.

EVENTS SAFETY PLANNING

Events Safety Planning is a very important component which is often neglected during plenary proceedings for various events that are held within communities. To mitigate for possible incidents that may be detrimental to the lives and safety of people including assets at planned mass events, Ministry of Sports and Recreation developed a legislative framework in the form of Safety at Sports and Recreational Events Act No. 02 of 2010. This Act provides provisions and stipulations which need to be complied with for every scheduled mass event. The Act requires that measures to safeguard the physical well-being and safety of persons and property at sports, recreational, religious, cultural, exhibitions, organizational or similar events held at stadiums, venues or along a route be considered and put in place at all times.

Events safety planning aims to prevent and mitigate major incidents or disaster at events but also to ensure rapid and effective response in case of incidents. Events safety should be emphasised and adhered to ensure that relevant processes are followed and implemented accordingly during plenary, staging and post phases of events taking place under the umbrella of Sedibeng District Municipality, including any other external institutions and organisations.

The Act requires that the SAPS must be involved during events plenary proceedings so they can conduct risk assessment and advise accordingly. It should further be recognized that the SAPS has the power stop all proceedings relating to the scheduled event if not satisfied with certain aspects affecting the event. Events Safety Committee shall be chaired by the Commissioner of Police or a delegated senior police official as per the prerequisite of the Act. It is on this basis that SAPS can disapprove any application related to the hosting of event and/or stop any event in progress if compliance issues were not satisfactorily addressed.

Events planning must be an integrated and coordinated process. Therefore; all identified actual and potential role-players should play an active role in compiling plans and instituting measures that will help to ensure community safety and well organized events. This process should therefore; be executed through a multi-disciplinary *Events Safety Planning Committee* which will be responsible for safety and security at the planned event. This is very important because it will ensure that compliance to the Act is not compromised. It should be noted that non-compliance to the provisions of the Act can constitute a criminal offence which, on conviction can carry significant penalties.

BENEFITS OF AN INTEGRATED SAFETY STRATEGY

Various successes can be achieved through an effective and efficient implementation of community safety strategies. An integrated approach is therefore; crucial in this regard where all relevant parties are actively involved and committed towards the common course, namely; promoting and building safer communities of Sedibeng region. The under-mentioned benefits can be persuaded and derived from this process:

For the municipality

- Creation of safer environments may lead to improved quality of life of communities and the municipality can be a more attractive place for investors.
- Better control of expenditure and costs reduction associated with renovating or replacing public buildings contaminated by graffiti and other associated defects.
- Property value of residential, businesses and industrial sites can significantly increase as a result of crime reduction and improved insecurities among community members.
- Increased participation by residents in social, cultural and organized sports activities at different times of the day and night, especially at municipal facilities, thereby generating revenue for the municipality.

For residents

- Reduction of personal assets losses from residential burglaries and vandalism.
- Reduction of insurance costs on house-holds assets and motor vehicles, as a result of safer environments.
- Increase in value of residential properties.
- Increased sense of security in the neighbourhood, especially for women, children and elderly.
- Increased sense of security at recreational places and on public transport.
- Increased participation of the residents in general community programmes and recreational activities.
- Reduction of school drop-out rate and children's participation gangsters.
- Development of skills and capacity building to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner, especially in schools, on streets and within families.
- Safer recreational and leisure areas for children and young people to play and socialize.
- Reduction of the sense of isolation of people living alone.
- Improved quality of life and safety in public housing areas.
- Reduction of social exclusion and homelessness.
- Improved support to victims of crime.

For business and commerce

- Reduction in costs associated with theft, break-ins and vandalism.
- Reduction in costs of commercial insurance.
- Reduction in the need for private security.
- Provision of a safer working environment for staff and better quality residential environment.