

STRATEGY PAPER ON YOUTH IN AFRICA: A Focus On The Most Vulnerable Groups

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I INTRODUCTION

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

Since the beginning of the 1990's, the population of urban youth living in poverty, and youth crime and crime by minors in cities in the developing world have increased significantly. As part of the Safer Cities initiative, UN Habitat has undertaken a number of exploratory surveys and studies in African cities which focus on the plight of youth in the correctional system, or those at risk of criminalization and victimization, such as street children. Through its Urban Management Programme, it has worked in collaboration with local partners on the development of youth junior councils and youth participatory mechanisms.

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

Building on the conclusions reached at the conference, a follow-up meeting was organized by UN Habitat to develop a strategy paper on Youth at Risk in Africa. This was in association with the World Bank facilitated *Youth Employment Summit* 2002, held in Alexandria, Egypt, September 7-11th. At that meeting the Expert Group, which included representatives of UN Habitat, city mayors, and international NGO's, discussed and developed a draft and made recommendations which form the basis of the current paper.²

At the global level in 2000, the United Nations World Programme of Action on youth established ten priority areas for improving the lot of young people in 2000 and beyond. These ten priorities include education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, girls and young women, and youth participation. In 2001, five new concerns which are having a major impact of young people were added to the list: globalization, information and communications technology, HIV/AIDS, conflict prevention, and intergenerational dependency.³ All of these are crucial areas of concern for Africa's youth.

1.1 OUTLINE OF THE PAPER AND ITS PURPOSE

This strategy paper sets out, first of all, the global context for concern about the plight of young people in urban settings, the extent and nature of those problems for African youth, and the urgency of the need for widespread and concerted action. While all young people in Africa are affected by rapid

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

Secondly, the paper outlines the crucial role which national and local governments must play in meeting these challenges, including the adaptation of government structures which will foster and enable the rights of children and young people to be protected and supported, and the development of youth policies and participatory mechanisms. It sets out the major steps which will enable cities and municipalities to develop effective local strategies. Such local strategies **should** form a key part of city development policies and practice, developing city-wide crime prevention aimed at improving the quality of life, and at the inclusion of youth, and a collective vision of how cities should function. In the context of NEPAD, a major aspect of such development lies in the enhancement of young people's capacity to contribute to strategic city plans.

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

1.2 WHY A FOCUS ON YOUTH AT RISK IN AFRICA

There is now ample and accumulating evidence in developed and developing countries that the conditions under which children and young people grow up are crucial for their mental and physical health, and emotional, social and intellectual development.⁴ A huge range of factors influence and shape their lives. The quality of early childhood care and conditions, and parental and family relationships, are especially important. Local and family poverty, poor housing and environmental conditions, all have a major impact on family life and the quality of such care. In adolescence, the availability, access to and quality of schools and role models, and attachment to family and peers are all additional factors influencing young people's well-being. This includes the availability of local educational systems which meet their needs and reflect local customs and cultures, and the presence of leisure and recreational facilities. The availability of healthy and rewarding employment opportunities and quality health care similarly play a major role. Adverse pressures include those from peers to engage in risky behaviours and the presence of guns, drugs, misuse of alcohol and street gangs.

It is now clear that, whatever the country, there are many common factors which place children and young people *at risk* of becoming involved in crime and unhealthy behaviours, or of being victimized. Patterns of risk factors include family factors, individual factors, school factors, and community or environmental factors. Gender differences are particularly important, since young girls and young

women are exposed to different sets of experiences and risks compared with boys and young men as they grow up. There is also clear identification of the kinds of *protective* factors which strengthen children and young people's resilience in the face of difficult living conditions. They include such things as good parenting, a stable and supportive home environment, a healthy and supportive environment, and good school achievement.⁵ There is also accumulating evidence of effective interventions which promote resilience and prevent future crime and victimization among youth.

In the African context, the presence of such risk factors is overwhelmingly evident among children and young people growing up in urban settings. Severe urban overcrowding and decay, increasing poverty, on-going wars, disease, child and youth exploitation, and trans-national trafficking and crime are multiplying the severity and range of risks to which children and young people in African cities are exposed.

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF AN URBAN FOCUS

Urban areas should provide greater opportunities than rural regions for children and young people, in terms of access to better housing, health services, schools and employment. However, for the majority of those growing up in cities in developing countries, poverty, the lack of good governance, and the high concentrations of people create greater risks compared with rural areas.⁶ These include greater health risks from overcrowding and poor sanitation, increased vulnerability to natural disasters, risk of eviction through the illegal occupation of land, greater vulnerability to changes in price or income because of the reliance on cash income and the lack of secure employment.

When infrastructure and services are lacking, urban settlements are among the world's most life threatening environments...
Innocenti Digest 10
UNICEF (2002)

Cities in Africa include some of the poorest and overcrowded urban environments, and a major consequence is that urban crime in Africa has increased rapidly over the past decade, and it is largely a youth-related phenomenon. Cities such as Dakar, Senegal, for example, have seen increases in petty theft, breaking and entering, the use of violence, threats and intimidation by young people through the 1990's.⁷ Yaoundé, Cameroon has similarly experienced increased aggression, theft, vandalism and sexual assault, as well as prostitution among young people.⁸ Overall, compared with other part of the world, rates of increases in crime in recent years have been highest in Africa.⁹

The risks to which urban youth are exposed in Africa do not exist in isolation from those shaping the lives of families and children. They form part of a continuum, so that policies which support and protect the family and child, will also help to protect and support adolescents as they grow into young adults and full adulthood. What is essential for youth at risk in the urban context, therefore, is the development of a culture of legality which is free from corruption, and local governance and policing which protects and promotes the rights of children, young people and women, and is able to deliver appropriate services.

1.4 WHO ARE THE URBAN YOUTH AT RISK?

Internationally, a number of terms are used to refer to young people, whether male or female. The term youth is often defined as those between the ages of 15 and 24, young people those of 10-24, adolescents 10-19 year-olds, and children, those under 10.¹⁰ Countries and regions have many

different conventions. In Africa, it is common to define young people as those up to 35 years of age, and to include those under 10. In general, this paper follows the international conventions where data exists, and uses some of these terms interchangeably.

'At risk' youth in urban settings include all those young girls and boys whose living conditions, health and circumstances or behaviours place them at risk of victimization and/or involvement in crime. They include, but are not limited to, youth already in conflict with the law, those living in urban slums, street children, youth gangs, school-drop outs, unemployed youth, substance abusing youth, those who are sexually exploited, war-affected children, and those affected by the pandemic of HIV/AIDS including orphans. These groups include both girls as well as boys. Girls in particular are often targets of sexual exploitation, and heavily affected by HIV/Aids. Thus, for the purpose of this paper, youth at risk are defined as 'those children and young people whose circumstances, life-style and/or behaviour put them at risk of future offending or victimization.' Urban youth include all those living in cities and townships under local government administration.¹¹

II. THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM AND CURRENT TRENDS

2.1 YOUTH AND THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

The situation of youth at risk in Africa is one of acute crisis. While it can be argued that youth in many parts of the world, especially in countries in development, are confronted with severe problems, it is very clear that African youth face conditions of very great risk and vulnerability. The lives of young people in Sub Saharan Africa, in particular, are marked by a combination of intense human injustices and disasters which may be greater than in many other continents.

Children and young people represent a very high percentage of urban populations in developing countries. In many African cities more than 50% of the urban population are under the age of 19.¹² They have been particularly affected by growing urban poverty, high levels of unemployment, changing family patterns, and deteriorating environmental and health conditions over the past twenty years. The frequency of contact, and the population density in cities, promotes the transmission of infections to which children and young people are especially vulnerable. They are especially vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS has become *the* major health crisis and is having a devastating impact on family units, health and education services, and deepening impoverishment and social inequality. As a group, young people are the most vulnerable sector of the population in relation to the disease. Further, young people are also affected more than others by the impact of globalization on values and cultures, which in some cases is rapidly destroying local cultural ties and affiliations, generational ties, and imposing sets of values which are destructive and ultimately unattainable.

Young people are heavily affected by the absence of sustainable employment. Generations of youth on the streets, attempting to generate an income for their families or themselves, have become a familiar sight in urban areas. The lack of employment opportunities, even for school and university graduates, has placed many young people at risk, and contributes to rising levels of youth delinquency. The impact of decades of war, the recruitment of child soldiers, and the growth in trafficking of children and young people have all added to the devastating conditions in which young people are growing up. This combination of poverty, unemployment, environmental and health problems, and conflict, has placed increasing populations of young people in African cities at risk of victimization and offending. The growing phenomenon of street children, crime and violence by young people, youth gangs, and the sexual exploitation of young people, especially girls and young women, all bear witness to the current crisis.

2.1.1 PAST LEGACIES

Of all the continents, Africa has undoubtedly experienced the greatest sustained conflict during the past 50 years. Wars of independence have been rapidly replaced by civil wars, some of which continue to be fought almost half a century later. Angola, the extreme example, where war has been a feature of life for almost 50 years, is by no means unique. Civil war has been a prominent feature in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Uganda for over 25 years. Where civil war has not been an on-going feature of daily life, sporadic coups, counter coups and revolutions have gone a long way towards destabilising both individual countries and regions. These have ranged from internal disputes, as in Nigeria, or disputes between neighbouring countries, such as those between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the Great Lakes Region and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DCR). In other cases, corruption has helped to bankrupt many post-independent states, such as Nigeria, Chad and the DCR. The large

number of conflicts has led to a considerable loss of human life and material possessions, spiralled an influx of refugees across nations in Africa, and kept entire populations in a precarious state. These wars have affected citizens' security even after the end of conflicts, with their legacies of war affected children, child soldiers and the expanding trade in light weapons. These legacies have helped create the conditions under which African youth must now live, but they are also confronted with the impact of an increasingly urban and globalized world.

2.2 URBANISATION

2.2.1 INCREASING URBANIZATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The planet's population is becoming increasingly urban, and urbanization refers to the process by which cities capture an increasing proportion of a country's population. Today more than 47% of the world's people live in urban areas, and by 2007 it is expected to increase to 50%. In industrialized countries the population is already largely urban. In the developing world the rapid trends in urbanisation point to an explosive demographic change over the next 20 years. It is estimated that by 2015 an important number of 'mega cities', cities with more than 10 million inhabitants will be located in the developing world¹³. Three-quarters of this urban population growth is occurring in developing countries, through natural population growth and rural to urban migration, as populations migrate to find a better standard of living.

Existing urban areas are not equipped to accommodate such rapid population increases, and the lack of investment in infrastructure and its maintenance has compounded the problems. Cities in the developing world are characterised by a lack of access to housing and shelter, basic urban services such as clean water, sanitation, electricity, as well as education and health care. Unplanned and overcrowded settlements and informal housing areas which provide accommodation to the poor and vulnerable, present numerous problems for the delivery of urban services. The ongoing violence in many countries, the growing number of countries suffering from political instability, together with outdated city plans, have all hindered the necessary investment in infrastructure and the economy, at the national and municipal level.

In African cities, population growth has reached much higher levels than in other regions - the urban population increases by an average of 6% per annum, which is double the rate for cities in Latin America or South East Asia¹⁴. By the year 2015, it is estimated that 47% of the African population will be living in urban areas, and 55% by 2030.¹⁵ The city of Lagos in Nigeria, for example, is expected to have a population of more than 10 million by 2015, and 70 other cities will house more than one million people.

Much of this population growth has resulted in rapidly expanding informal settlements, where people are living in conditions of extreme poverty and privation, without adequate shelter, infrastructure provision or security of tenure. In Lagos and Nairobi, 60% of households are not connected to water.¹⁶ Currently, 25% of the urban population in Abidjan lives in such unplanned settlements¹⁷. The explosion of the informal sector in many cities reflects the overwhelming poverty and lack of jobs, and the inability of the national economies to grow and create employment opportunities. High levels of unemployment and poverty are

.....unplanned settlements in Dar es Salaam have increased from 40% in 1979 to 75% in 1999....other problems include: further densification and growth of new unplanned settlements in peripheral villages on hazardous lands...suburbs without basic infrastructures and social amenities; uncoordinated city centre renewal; city centre traffic congestion; air pollution...
Andersson & Stavrou (2000)

characteristic, as in Senegal, where urban unemployment is at 30%¹⁸.

Risk of eviction, with all the disruption of family and social networks it creates, is a further hazard for families living in informal settlements and urban slum areas. In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, one survey found that 10-20% of households had been evicted in the previous year.¹⁹

2.2.2 POVERTY AND EXCLUSION

Poverty underlies the lives of the majority of the world's children and youth, and its reduction is one of the UN's major action strategies.²⁰ The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that about 600 million children in developing countries live below the poverty line of \$1 per day and are thus deprived of the basic necessities of life. Although rich countries have policies to confront the social effects of unemployment, they scarcely exist in many developing countries, and are totally absent in Sub Sahara Africa. The proportion of families living below the poverty line in urban areas is more than 30%. In Angola recent estimates put 60% of the population below the poverty line.²¹ In Africa, working in the informal sector is the solution to survival. However, this also means poor salaries, less productive work, insecure working conditions, and lack of any labour laws or protection. Support for the informal sector is marginal: limited credit facilities, purchasing or special services, little training or technical assistance, and minimal support for co-operative production networks. In most cities, this is the reality confronting many families.

Exclusion within the city means:

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

There is also an almost total absence of public space available for use by poor families, children and youth. The absence of recreational and leisure areas in the informal settlements, coupled with gated communities and the harassment and exclusion of the poor from central business or residential areas, leaves families and their offspring without healthy and safe environments in which to play and develop their social and physical skills.

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

2.2.3 LACK OF AND DETERIORATING SERVICES

A major feature of current urban areas is the total absence of services, or the breakdown or deterioration of services which had formerly been available. This includes such services as housing, water and power, sewage and cleaning, transport and roads, recreation and leisure provision, and public safety and security. In Nairobi, Kenya, more than half of the population live in informal settlements squeezed into less than 6% of the city's land, and most plots in these settlements have neither toilet or water connections.²² In Luanda, Angola, 75% of its some 4 million inhabitants live in informal settlements without infrastructure of services.²³ In Ibadan in Nigeria, only 22% of the population are attached to the municipal water system, and the city has no sewer system.²⁴ In Greater

Soweto, South Africa, conditions in the former township areas are very variable, many people still living in extremely cramped and overcrowded informal settlements and 'back-yard' shacks with very minimal services - unpaved roads, no street lighting, storm drains or solid waste management.²⁵ In Canaanland, an informal settlement in the central business district of Johannesburg before their relocation, one tap served 1000 people, and there was no sanitation or electricity.²⁶

Community Profile: Canaanland Johannesburg (Swart-Kruger, 2002)	
Site	0.6 hectares (1.49 acres)
Shacks	230-250
Density	c.13 shacks (about 55 people) per 250 square metres
Residents	c.1000
Languages	IsiNdebele, Sepedi, Sesotho, SiSwati, Setswana, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, and a few languages from elsewhere in Africa

Municipal services should also include the provision or creation of employment opportunities, and health and education services. Education and health services are major components of the modern state, yet in many African countries, these are either minimal or non-existent.

2.2.4 HEALTH SERVICES

The UNICEF Progress of Nations 2000 reported that every day, 30,500 children world wide die, often needlessly, as a result of ignorance and poverty. Health services are, at best, rudimentary in most African countries. Only a handful of African states have health services with minimum acceptable standards. UNICEF estimates that 209 million children in the developing world under the age of five suffer from stunted growth. In Egypt, this amounts to 25 percent of those under five years, compared to two percent in the US. Malnutrition and repeated illness are some of the main causes of this situation, as well as being responsible for nearly half of all child deaths. The main cause of death for under 15 year olds in Accra, for example, is infectious and parasitic diseases and child malnutrition is rapidly shifting from rural to urban areas.²⁷ The physical hazards for children and youth living in overcrowded slum areas are high: in Ibadan, Nigeria 1,236 injuries involving 436 children were recorded over a three month period. Less than 1% were treated in formal health facilities. In Kaduna Nigeria, 92% of children examined had blood lead levels above acceptable limits.²⁸

Africa has the worst ratio of medical personnel to people, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where only half of the population has easy access to health care. Africa generally has one-third as many nurses per capita as the rest of the world. Moreover, the current ratio of doctors is lower than one per 10,000 population; the world average is one per 800. Limited budgets, problems imposed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and few health care providers, mean that improving reproductive health services is a major challenge for most sub-Saharan African countries (see section below). Where good health services do exist, they remain the preserve of the upper income classes, as is the case in South Africa.

2.2.5 EDUCATION – ILLITERACY AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

Education is seen by many as the crucial link for youth participation in their society and for the development of responsibility and citizenship. Yet education has been especially affected by growing urbanization, and there has been a marked deterioration in the services provided as well as in its role. In Kenya, for example, a relatively wealthy African country, over 50% of primary school graduates do not attend secondary school, while free primary education was only introduced in January 2003, following the national elections.

Since the 1980's, formal education has progressively lost its place as a mechanism for social mobility and change. Traditionally education has been seen as the main form of social capital investment, but its value has been minimised for the overwhelming majority of African youth. Only a small elite are able to access education as a means of advancement, helping to perpetuate the status quo.

Schools in marginalised areas are especially impacted by poverty and exclusion. The construction and maintenance of school buildings is a local authority responsibility, yet has often been neglected. They may lack facilities such as recreational space and toilets, and are not environments which are conducive to learning. In many marginalized areas, families are unable to pay school fees, and schools suffer from poor facilities, few resources, outdated curricula, poorly trained teachers, or poorly motivated or corrupt teachers who lack interest in the future of their students. As a result, schools are experiencing increases in the rate of school drop out, and increasing violence. Fights between student groups who carry arms to school, violence towards teachers, sexual harassment among students, and sexual abuse of female students by male teachers, are all now common in a number of countries and reflect the behavioural patterns of the local environment of the schools.

In Africa, levels of education among youth are low. Many of those living in the most impoverished urban areas do not even enter primary education, because families cannot afford it, or because of lack of schools. Others never progress beyond primary level, again for reasons of cost as well as the availability of secondary education. Yet others leave school early, dropping out of school under pressure from families to earn money or provide family care, or because school teaching methods and curricula are outdated or irrelevant in the context of their lives. This increases their vulnerability to crime and victimization, and further reduces their opportunities to find productive work and involvement in their society.

Girls, migrant or immigrant youth, and those living in rural areas or in extreme poverty are especially likely not to enter, or complete, primary or secondary education. World-wide estimates put the number of children not in school at 130 million. The result is illiteracy, which world-wide is estimated to amount to in the region of 82 million young women, and 51 million young men. In Sub-Saharan Africa, illiteracy is estimated to amount to 25-30% of all young people. There are also considerable variations between countries, with rates of illiteracy as low as 8% in South Africa, but 49% in Senegal.²⁹

2.2.6 UNEMPLOYMENT

Youth employment is a major issue for Africa, given the high proportion of young people in the population, high rates of population growth and slow economic growth. It has been estimated that "each year in Africa, there would be 8.7 million new entrants into the labour markets for whom jobs would have to be found".³⁰ In developed countries, youth unemployment is usually twice the rate of adult unemployment. In developing countries it is often much higher.

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

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

While there is little reliable data for most countries in Africa and there will be variations between countries, youth unemployment is clearly very high.³¹ In South Africa in 2000, 56% of youth were unemployed; studies in the 1990's in Egypt, and Morocco found youth unemployment was 35%, and in Algeria 39%.³² In Tunis, one in three young people are unemployed.³³ Long-term unemployment among youth is also likely to be higher than in other regions, a factor known to be associated with

negative consequences such as ill health, involvement in crime and delinquency and substance abuse.³⁴ There would appear to be a deficit of decent jobs in the formal economy, as well as jobs which match qualifications, and the informal sector is a major source of livelihood. A youth survey in Malindi Kenya identified lack of access to finance and skills for business development as major problems. Private banks were unwilling to provide credit or loans to young people with no collateral.³⁵

Youth & the informal economy

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

O'Higgins (2002: 6)

Unemployment rates are higher for young women than young men, and they are even more likely to have to rely on the informal sector and subsistence agricultural activities.³⁶ Cultural biases against the education, training or employment of girls are among the major causes.

2.2.7 CHILD LABOUR

Child labour usually involves a number of factors which place such children at risk. Unacceptable and unhealthy work conditions can ruin a child's health and limit his/her physical or mental development. It cuts them off from educational opportunities. Domestic work ("little maids" in West Africa for example), whether poorly paid or unpaid, constitutes one of the most difficult forms of exploitation to expose, and deprives those girls of an education.³⁷

Child labour places children and young people, especially girls, at risk of involvement in illegal activities such as prostitution or drug trafficking, and increases the risk of AIDS. It exposes them to illegal environments, authoritarianism and exploitation, all with long term consequences. It deprives them of important healthy childhood needs such as free time and play, and is likely to result in frustrated adolescents, ultimately unqualified for the job market. In the case of young girls, prostitution may be the only choice. Finally, close contact and links with family, are essential for children. Yet the impossibility of maintaining regular contact with family members, because of distance, transport costs, or the danger of travel, or the lack of strong family bonds, coupled with exploitative working conditions, can transform child workers into street children.

2.3 A GLOBAL WORLD AT WAR WITH ITS YOUNG

2.3.1 THE DOMINATING VALUES OF GLOBALISATION

Global values, which encourage competition and unlimited consumption, are impacting the lives and cultures of young people throughout the world, even in countries where economic and social conditions are rapidly deteriorating. The general 'survival for the fittest' culture of social competition affects all aspects of life, including relationships, attitudes and behaviours. This phenomenon exists even in parts of Africa where deeply rooted traditions are still practised.³⁸ The culture of a globalised world overemphasises the value of consumption, rather than community and reciprocity, and projects it on all aspects of life. The commercial world offers youth an image of a society in which people are valued on the basis of their assets, yet fails to grant most of them access to those assets. The marginalisation of poor urban sectors, as a result of inappropriate policies, and the encouragement of such unrealistic expectations, affects young and marginalized populations more than many others.

2.3.2 SOCIAL CAPITAL, SOCIAL EXCLUSION, AND THE BREAKDOWN OF SOCIAL CONTROLS

One of the manifestations of urbanisation in this global context is the disintegration of existing normative and ethical value systems. In Africa the concept of 'ubuntu' refers to the principle that we are all connected to each other, and influenced by the people around us. It recognizes the importance of relationships, and of building communities. The disintegration of ubuntu is occurring at a number of levels, but is especially significant in relation to the family, the school and the local neighbourhood. This can be seen as the disintegration of social capital.

While there is still considerable family and community support and care in many informal settlements which shelter the majority of African youths, as well as some pride among residents, the appalling living standards, inadequate shelter and non-existent services, rarely offer adequate socialisation structures.³⁹ They lack sufficient legitimate regulatory mechanisms and social controls. Disorder and violence characterize such neighbourhoods. The poor conditions and lack of legitimate employment, means that alcohol or drug abuse, gang violence, risky sexual behaviours and promiscuity are all common among young people, while a hierarchy of receivers, local bosses, and gang leaders become recognised as leaders and 'models' in the neighbourhood.

The **institution of the family** is now characterized by vulnerability and instability, directly impacting young children. The separation of parents due to migration, whether for employment reasons, or the intolerable conditions of the family's environment, increases the proportion of poor single-parent families. Almost all of these are headed by women, a situation which has affected more than half the families in some urban areas. In rural areas nuclear families are also on the decline for similar reasons. This has weakened the transmission of traditional family values, affected early childhood education - so crucial for social and individual development - as well as threatening subsequent social integration.

At the **neighbourhood** level, both formal and informal settlements have become sites of tension and conflict between modernity and tradition. Informal areas tend to be very heterogeneous culturally, in terms of ethnic backgrounds, language and religion. In Abidjan, for example, up to 40% of the population were not born in the Ivory Coast. They come from many countries, use a variety of languages or dialects and adhere to a number of religions.⁴⁰ This cultural diversity results in different norms and behaviours, leading to conflict which it is difficult to minimize or resolve.

In most urban areas, uncontrolled urbanisation has led to the disappearance of traditional modes of conflict resolution and behaviour. These have been characteristic of rural areas, under the guardianship of the wise, elders or recognised leaders. The tradition of local leaders does remain in certain urban areas, even the very poorest. Nevertheless, there is a risk that such traditions will be abandoned rather than supported by city governments, or confined to secondary roles. Young people in urban areas are losing access to their cultural traditions and modes of conflict resolution.

Traditional cultural ties, even if they still exist among community leaders, have to all intents and purposes disappeared from the culture of the street....leading to the breakdown and disintegration of the historical shared networks of support of the extended family or the clan.....this is happening at the same time as the loss of other supportive subordinate relationships, such as those between parent and child or first born to last born.....such relationships have been replaced almost everywhere by an intense subordination to the values of money, riches and power.
G. Herault (1997) *Jeunes, culture de la rue et violence urbaine en Afrique* IFRA.

In some cases representative leadership, even in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods, is capable of resolving day to day conflicts. In Abidjan, traditional leaders resolve the majority of day to day conflicts, as well as negotiating inter-ethnic solutions to problems. Conflict between generations is resolved in the same manner in Senegal, through links between traditional leaders (the 'wise men') and young people involved in neighbourhood security. The 'wise men' act as guides to young volunteer guardians in their work with youth at risk, helping them treat them in a positive way.

However, in most of the informal settlement areas, low-income or 'at risk' neighbourhoods, this traditional leadership does not, or no longer, exist. On the other hand, there is no political will to establish a stable mediation process, even where cultural traditions do exist. To do so would constitute one of the most effective and economic approaches to conflict resolution and social control in the city.

2.3.3 REDUCED PERSPECTIVES OF YOUNG GENERATIONS

Young people face a Herculean task if they wish to attain a higher standard of living than their parents or previous generations. Not only do they have to deal with poverty, conflict, unrest, ill health, marginalization and contrary global values, but they are also being systematically stripped of their citizenship. Citizenship has been variously defined, but for most it implies 'a common membership' of a community, and a set of rights and obligations between individuals and the state.⁴¹

Few African countries currently recognise youth as citizens, or ascribe them the status of equal citizenship within their societies. Without involvement in decision-making, children and youth are excluded. Nor are their rights often recognized. For example, the rights of children and youth in Uganda have not been ensured, helping to perpetuate the power of the state and elites.⁴²

With some 39% of South African society aged between 14 and 35, young people clearly comprise a substantial part of South African society. However, due to the policies of past governments, a significant number of young women and men have not been afforded the opportunity to develop their full potential. They have experienced poor housing conditions; limited and racially-biased access to education and training; limited employment opportunities; high levels of crime and violence and a general disintegration of social networks and communities. *National Youth Commission, Youth Policy 2000.*

In such circumstances, young people become vulnerable targets for alternative sources of legitimacy to counteract their exclusion, including emigration, joining gangs, entering street prostitution, warlordism, or following populist political and religious leaders. The most marginalized young people, who cannot identify with the norms and practices of their society, are those most at risk. These young men and women become 'youth at risk' because they are stigmatised, or victimized, and through their attempts to survive or assert themselves.

2.4 HIV/AIDS

2.4.1 THE IMPACT ON YOUTH

UNICEF estimates that the total number of people infected by the HIV virus world wide has reached 34.3 million. Since the disease may not manifest itself for years, the true figure is anyone's guess. HIV/AIDS has affected Africa more than any other continent. At present the majority of new HIV infections occur in young adults and the average life expectancy in the region has

Why the crisis is unique for children

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

UNICEF 1999 Children Orphaned by AIDS

dropped from 62 years to 47 years. HIV/AIDS seriously affects adolescents throughout the world. UNICEF estimates that one third of all currently infected individuals are youth aged 15 to 24, and half of all *new* infections occur in youth the same age. More than five young people acquire HIV infection every minute; over 7,000, each day; and more than 2.6 million each year. Girls are more easily infected than boys, probably because of lack of information, as well as their greater vulnerability. Sexually transmitted infections are a taboo subject in many African countries.

About 1.7 million new adolescent HIV infections – over half of the world's total – occur in sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, nearly 70 percent of people living with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa, and over 80 percent of AIDS deaths have occurred there. Although HIV/AIDS rates vary considerably throughout sub-Saharan Africa – generally lower in the west and higher in the south – the epidemic has had a devastating effect on most African youth, who often lack access to sexual health information and services. In particular, unmarried youth have great difficulty getting sexual health services.

Cultural, social, and economic norms and pressures often put young African women at excess risk for HIV infection. In some impoverished communities, high HIV infection rates may be partly explained by early sexual initiation, consensual or coerced. For example, in a survey of 1,600 urban Zambian youth, over 25% of 10-year-old children and 60% of 14-year-old youth reported already having sexual intercourse.⁴³ One study of adolescents in 17 African countries showed that those with more education were far more likely to experience casual sex and to use condoms for casual sex when compared to less educated youth.⁴⁴

Inadequate sexual health information and limited access to health care act as impregnable obstacles to lowering adolescent HIV/STD infection rates. African youth cite lack of knowledge, inaccessibility, and safety concerns as primary reasons for not using contraception. For example, one study showed that less than 50% of youth in Madagascar and Nigeria know about contraception.⁴⁵ Limited resources also make contraceptive use lower in Africa than in other world regions. Where information may be available, cultural conservatism also acts as a barrier to knowledge transfer and safe sex as African health services workers feel it is inappropriate to provide contraceptives to adolescents, often making it difficult or impossible for youth to obtain condoms and other contraception. For example, a study in Kenya found that three-quarters of family planning workers were unwilling to provide contraceptives to young women who had not given birth.⁴⁶

The spread of HIV/AIDS has also been facilitated by conflict. Graca Machel (2000) has referred to the gender-based violence seen in many war contexts: "Nearly all girls abducted into armed groups are forced into sexual slavery... [and] become infected with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and, increasingly, HIV/AIDS".⁴⁷ In at least 11 of the 17 countries studied, girls had been abducted, press-ganged or otherwise forcibly recruited. The highest incidence occurred in Africa, where some of the worst cases of child exploitation by armed groups have been reported. In Uganda, one of the worst affected areas, 21% of some 11,000 abducted children were female, nearly all of them were sexually exploited.⁴⁸ Sexual exploitation also affects many young recruits who volunteer to join armies.

2.4.2 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCIES

The most devastating impact of HIV/AIDS is that it contributes to impoverishment, aggravates forms of social inequality and deepens the vicious cycle of poverty already very present in the region.⁴⁹ In the Ivory Coast, for example, household income in urban households can fall by up to 67% when a

family member has AIDS, and expenditures on health care quadruple.⁵⁰ By the end of the year 2000, 12.1 million children in Africa had lost their mother or both parents to the epidemic, breaking down family units and severely deepening youth poverty. The loss of teaching staff to HIV/AIDS is seriously impacting the provision of education. One of the major social consequences of HIV/AIDS, therefore, is the increasing phenomenon of neighbourhoods and cities populated only by children, young people and the elderly, which means that young people will have to take on new roles and responsibilities in the reconstruction and development of those communities.

Some of the consequences of poverty are that it often leads to prostitution or the trading of sexual favours for material goods, increasing the risks of infection and the transmission of HIV. Poverty also results in poor nutrition and a weakened immune system, making people more susceptible to illness. Treatment and health service costs can expect to increase dramatically in the near future, draining resources from education, agriculture and other sectors of national economies. By 2005, AIDS treatment costs are expected to account for more than one third of Ethiopia's government health spending, more than half of Kenya's, and nearly two-thirds of Zimbabwe's.⁵¹

Increasing mobility, urban poverty and social exclusion are all implicated in the causes, and in the fight against, HIV/AIDS. For young people who are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, the existence of taboos about sexuality, coupled with the stigmatisation associated with HIV/AIDS, and the lack of services catering for their needs, all help to increase their exclusion from the larger society. As the highest risk group, young people are also seen as the *key* to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

There is a way to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS. We must focus on young people. More than half those newly infected with HIV today are between 15 and 24 years old.
UNICEF 2002 Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis

III YOUTH AT RISK

This paper is concerned with the most vulnerable urban youth in Africa, and has defined youth at risk as 'those children and young people whose living conditions and circumstances, health, life-style and/or behaviour put them at risk of future offending or victimization.'

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

The most common form of survival behaviour suggests that: "given the harshness of social relations in the African city, acting in one's own personal interest becomes the daily norm which is constantly reinforced, and there is no room for moral considerations." Sevede Bardem 1997 (p. 49).

3.1 RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

As was suggested at the beginning of the paper, there is now widespread agreement in developing and developed countries about the factors which place children and young people *at risk* of offending.⁵² There are many common factors which place children and young people at risk of becoming involved in unhealthy behaviours and crime, or of being victimized by others. The patterns of risk factors include *family factors* such as early childhood care and parental behaviours and parenting; *individual factors* such as aggressive behaviour at an early age or learning difficulties; *school factors* such as the quality of teaching and the atmosphere of the school, as well as a child or young person's ability to learn and stay in school; and *community or environmental factors*, including the quality of surroundings, recreational facilities, employment opportunities, and other local influences including youth gangs or drugs and guns. In South Africa, the risk factors for violence in schools have been clearly identified (see box).⁵³

Risk factors for youth offending:

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

Thus some risks are associated with individual families and their children, others with the kind of area or neighbourhood in which they grow up. Yet not all children living in a difficult neighbourhood will become involved in risky behaviours, and there is now widespread agreement about the kinds of *protective* factors which strengthen the resilience of children and young people. These include such things as good parenting, a stable and supportive home environment, a healthy and supportive environment, and good schooling and school achievement.⁵⁴

There is also accumulated experience from developed countries which demonstrates that when good programmes are *targeted* to the children, families or areas most at risk, then they are likely to be successful in reducing levels of offending *as well as* a number of other social and economic problems.⁵⁵ For example, giving support to high risk families improves the chances that their children

will do well in school, will find employment, and reduced their chances of offending or substance abuse problems.

It is clear, therefore, that there are multiple factors influencing the lives of each individual child or young person, and considerable overlap in terms of their exposure to particular risk factors. Nevertheless, there are some specific groups whose exposure to risk factors means that they present some particular problems and have some specific needs which must be met. Gender differences *within* these groups are particularly important, since young girls and young women are exposed to rather different sets of experiences and risk factors compared with boys and young men as they grow up. This section of the paper focuses, therefore, on the following specific groups who are at risk of offending and victimization:

- Young offenders and young people already in conflict with the law
 - Youth groups, gangs
 - Youth violence
 - Young offenders in institutions or returning to the community
- Street children
- Substance abusers
- Sexually exploited young women or young men
- War affected children and youth
- Young women or men who are victims of HIV/AIDS

Young offenders are those already subject to the criminal justice system, having been found guilty and sentenced. *Youth in conflict with the law* is a rather broader term which includes those who may be known to the justice system but not prosecuted, those reported to the police, as well as those charged with offences and found guilty. Youth groups, gangs and violent youth, like substance abusers, may or may not be known to the justice system, but they represent many of the concerns of communities and governments about youth behaviour and community safety. Street children include a number of different groups who live or work on the streets for a variety of reasons. Thus many young people may fall into a number of these categories, and their risks of victimization and criminalization will be multiplied.

3.2 GENDER DIFFERENCES

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

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

In most societies, however, there are very important cultural and social differences in the way girls and boys are brought up by parents, and treated by others. This often begins at birth, and continues into adulthood, with boys generally being given greater personal freedom and access to education and training, girls less freedom outside the home and expectations of household employment. In African countries some of these differences are very wide because of customs and tradition or

religious beliefs, as well as the impact of poverty, and they significantly affect the type and level of risks to which girls and boys are exposed. They include:

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

Some of the consequences are that boys and young men are much more likely to become involved in offending than girls and young women. However, gradual changes in social and cultural expectations about girls in a number of countries have resulted in some increases in recorded crime by girls and young women. The increases are relatively small, but together with the much greater recognition of the differences in their needs as young women compared with boys, has led many countries to pay much more attention to them. In addition, girls are more vulnerable to certain types of risky behaviours or exploitation than boys, including those associated with sexual exploitation, child labour and prostitution, and HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. This is especially the case for young girls and women at risk in African cities.

3.3 YOUNG VICTIMS AND YOUNG OFFENDERS

In almost all countries, young people as a group are often the most common victims of crime.⁵⁶ Partly because of their life style, they are more vulnerable than older people or children to being victims of assault or theft and other property crime. They are often the victims of crime and violence perpetrated by other young people they know. The *majority* of individual victims of youth offending, whether property or violence, are likely to be other young people living in the same neighbourhoods, or attending the same schools, rather than adults, or local businesses and shops. For example, in South Africa, one study found that young people under 18 were responsible for 30% of the violence against youths.⁵⁷ In Dar es Salaam, 27% of young people of 15-25 surveyed in 2000 had been victims of assault, compared with 9% of those over 40 years of age, and 33% of those who were unemployed. Forty four percent of the same age group had been victims of simple theft, compared with 25% of those over 40.⁵⁸

Young offenders have often been victimized in childhood and begin to victimize others as they grow older, or their offending behaviour places them in much riskier situations which invite victimization. Studies in developing countries have demonstrated that young people who have been victimized in childhood or adolescence are at greater risk of themselves using violence, having mental health problems, offending or using illicit drugs.⁵⁹ Thus the kinds of behaviours and circumstances which lead to law-breaking are often similar to those leading to victimization. Given that young people tend to victimize other people in their age group, those who are *isolated* or *excluded* may themselves turn to bullying others, or in some cases to offending eg. in order to survive on the street.⁶⁰ Levels of family violence among the young homeless are usually high and a major reason for leaving home. Those who are unemployed are also at greater risk of victimization and offending.

3.4 YOUNG OFFENDERS & YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

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

In Africa, detailed information on youth offending is lacking, with the absence of reliable databases in most countries, although countries such as Tanzania, Namibia and South Africa are beginning to collect information to map future trends. Nevertheless, there is evidence of increasing law-breaking among young people. Victimization surveys in several countries, as well as qualitative observations, suggest delinquency among young people (12-25 years) is increasing at a much higher rate than in the developed North. This includes in particular, violent behaviour, drug related offences, and gang activity.⁶¹

In Douala, Cameroon, for example, crime, violence and insecurity have increased in recent years, especially in informal settlements and difficult neighbourhoods.⁶² A major influence on young people has been the so-called Feyman, white collar criminals and corrupt officials who are able to get away with offending without prosecution, and have become a source of admiration and inspiration for the young.⁶³ In Dakar, Senegal, increases in petty theft, breaking and entering, the use of violence, threats and intimidation by young people have occurred through the 1990's. More generally, attacks on people in the street have included homicide, and violent or armed robberies which have increased insecurity and led to the increasing use of private security and protection.⁶⁴

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

Case Study Nairobi, Kenya.⁶⁵

In Nairobi, Kenya, recent surveys found that young children are left to take care of themselves in violence-torn communities that do not provide any support services. In an attempt to cope with these devastating circumstances, children in informal settlements often exhibit risky behaviours including substance abuse, gang membership, aggressive and violent actions against others, stealing and other criminal activities, or early pregnancy. Many of Nairobi's youth from poor families, but also some from middle and upper class families, are being drawn into these ways of life. High unemployment rates almost inevitably result in the formation of youth groups, which may develop into gangs, as a means of economic survival. Substance abuse, offers some escape, but almost inevitably leads to criminal behaviour since trafficking is controlled by gangs.

The main issue confronting most youth in Nairobi is a breakdown in the transmission of social values and norms which should take place through the family and the local community. This is reinforced by the often poor physical environment, inadequate or poorly distributed economic and

recreation opportunities in the city, and the lack of social supports. The breakdown of traditional sanctions to combat the culture of violence, enables the cycle of violence to continue. One of the direct consequences is the movement of youth onto the streets. The family and the school have ceased to operate as primary socialising agents, and many youth in Nairobi have opted for a life in street gangs or in social groups which are similar to 'gangs'. The street culture or gang has become the primary socialising agent and friendship support network.

3.4.1 YOUTH GANGS AND GROUPS

Gangs and groups of young people are found in most countries, engaging in delinquent or criminal behaviour. The great majority of members are male, although there is some increase in the small numbers of young women. Not all of these groups or gangs are dangerous, but they put their members at risk of law breaking. Their formation is often a reaction to exclusion and marginalization in society, and they serve to provide alternative legitimacy and support. They provide many benefits to their members, including acceptance, status, identity and social and recreational opportunities, as well as delinquency. In most cases they are a transition stage, young people do not belong forever. They include a wide variety of groups, ranging from loose social gangs or friendship groups – youths who hangout together, to more organized and structured gangs engaging in unlawful acts such as 'taxing', fighting rival groups, drug dealing or violent crime and intimidation. Such gangs often have a common style of dress, codes of conduct and language. Gangs of street children, on the other hand, are rather different, since their primary aim is survival, not crime.

There is little information on the extent of youth gang formation in Africa, although it is clearly problematic in many countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. Most current information in Nairobi, for example, is based on journalistic accounts, or limited anecdotal information.⁶⁶ Many youths in Nairobi lack support from their families or other institutions, making the transition out of the group or gang much more difficult. Often from overcrowded and poor homes, they seek opportunities to acquire money elsewhere. Crime is an obvious alternative. This has resulted in an increase in criminal gangs, whose specialization ranges from petty theft and drug trading, to violent crimes and the arms trade. The availability of guns at a relatively low cost has increased the propensity towards violent crimes. While youths had formerly been involved in petty theft, they are now more likely to be involved in serious offences such as hijacking vehicles, armed robbery and even murder.

Social and cultural norms for young girls, particularly amongst the poor, bind them much more closely to families and household work. Young boys on the other hand, experience a greater degree of freedom and in many instances youth groups in impoverished neighbourhoods offer security to young boys. Such groups are not gangs, although many have formal names. Some groups exhibit anti-social behaviour such as fighting, excessive drinking, sexual promiscuity, and drug abuse. In Nairobi, these groups use a unique language – sheng.

3.4.2 YOUTH VIOLENCE

Youth violence is a phenomenon in all countries, and increases in youth violence and have been of considerable concern over the past twenty years. Some of the increase in youth crime has resulted from changes in the way violent youth behaviour has been responded to, but in some countries, violent youth crime associated with drugs, guns and gangs increased to the mid 1990's.⁶⁷ More recently, there have been significant reductions in violent youth crime in developed countries, after years of increasing levels. Africa has been no exception to rising youth violence, but shows no sign that it is now decreasing. On the contrary, perhaps because of the increasing economic hardship and

recession experienced in many parts of the region, levels of youth violence appear to continue to increase. In Cape Town, youth gang activity is becoming more widespread, even in wealthy neighbourhoods. Recent incidents include the massacre of seven young boys in a massage parlour, prompting concern with the ability of gangs to 'control' public space at the expense of the community, local government or the police. Much of this violence involves boys rather than girls.

The majority of youth violent behaviour in a country usually involves minor property vandalism (more than two thirds), and in this respect, Africa is no different from other regions. Nevertheless, serious violence including robbery and car hijacking, as well as sexual assault have all increased. In Abidjan, for example, armed robbery by youths increased from 2% to 40% of youth offences between 1986 and 1995.⁶⁸ However, the situation varies from one country to another, and town to town. Resistance on the part of the victim is now more likely to result in violence. The most common car thefts are often at gunpoint, and any resistance is likely to be fatal in countries such as Kenya, Cameroon, South Africa, Ivory Coast and Nigeria.

A recent study found that 1 in 2 males who were serious, violent juvenile offenders were violently victimized compared with 1 in 10 of their non delinquent peers. Being victimized in turn may lead to victimizing others.
OJJDP Loeber et al., 2001

This is as a direct consequence of carrying fire arms, facilitated by the trafficking of small arms, and coupled with a need for self-assertion. Several studies in East and West Africa show that violent behaviour is often accompanied by drug taking. Violent behaviour is also commonly used by gang members to intimidate victims and rivals, and establish territory.

3.4.3 YOUTH IN INSTITUTIONS OR RETURNING TO THE COMMUNITY

Young people already in the justice system form a group at risk whose circumstances and needs require particular attention. Recent studies in Dar es Salaam, Nairobi and Douala, illustrate some of the characteristic problems confronting young people already involved in the justice system in African cities. A Tanzanian study of young offenders in custody, carried out within the framework of the Safer Cities municipal programme of Dar-es-Salaam, has highlighted some important characteristics of youth already in the justice system.⁶⁹ Half of all young offenders come from single parent families. Around a quarter of those interviewed have been victims of physical abuse in their families. The level of education of a large majority is very low: 20% have never been to school, and a very small number completed primary education. A fifth of them have had a family member who have been in trouble with the law. Drug use is common among these young people and their peers, and as a group they have a reputation for deviance and provocation. Most of their offending has been spontaneous rather than the result of planning.

The study also indicated that the required legal aid or representation to ensure that their rights are protected had been provided in less than a quarter of the cases. While in custody they are often victims of threats and abuse from fellow inmates, and even from the police. Detention limits of 24 hours were not respected in 20% of cases, while rehabilitation centres are very variable in terms of the accommodation and services they provide. Post-release support which would help them to be integrated back into their communities is almost non-

Kenya
As rates of violent crime climbed, reports of police corruption, harassment, use of excessive force, and unlawful confinement were routine...
Human Rights Watch World Report 2002: Kenya.

existent. In Kenya, a qualitative study in Nairobi found that the juvenile justice system was primarily criminalizing poverty, rather than prosecuting young offenders. Many of those placed in institutions were street children who had not broken criminal laws.⁷⁰

3.5 STREET CHILDREN

The behaviour of young people in many African cities often fluctuates between survival strategies and risk taking.⁷¹ Street children form the most tragic and extreme examples of social exclusion, and resultant risk behaviour. One of the fastest growing problems in Africa (as well as other places in the South), street children are those with disrupted or no family ties, who survive in urban areas on the streets.⁷² As the report *Street Children and Gangs in African Cities* outlines, they tend to be seen as a nuisance or a menace, and they are generally stigmatized, excluded and discriminated against.⁷³ They are subject to routine harassment, abuse and criminalization (see box below⁷⁴). In police custody they can similarly expect to be abused and mistreated, as a recent study of street children in Egypt outlines.⁷⁵ They include a number of different groups:

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

It is extremely difficult to estimate their numbers. In cities like Nairobi, with about three million inhabitants, the number of street children can range from 8,000 to 10,000⁷⁶. An estimated 10,000 live and work on the streets of South Africa.⁷⁷ Street children often live in slums, deserted or dilapidated areas of the city, have their own territories, and their gangs may specialize in crime – pick-pocketing, prostitution, or begging. They are themselves especially vulnerable to being victimized.

We didn't sleep at all last night. That's why we're sleeping now, during the day. Night is the most dangerous for us. The police come while we're sleeping and catch you off guard and hit you. They'll take you to Makadara court and then you'll be sent to remand [detention] for months. Last night there was a big roundup and we had to move so many times to avoid being caught. There was a large group of police in a big lorry, driving around, looking for kids.
Moses Mwangi, Nairobi, Kenya 1997

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

3.6 SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

Increasing drug use among youth was highlighted by the world report on drugs (UNDCP, 1997). The patterns of drug use by youth in developed countries are beginning

...if there is one chain of causality to monitor in coming years it is the one in which the process of urbanization leads to higher rates of unemployment in the cities, which itself exacerbates the social and economic pressures that underpin both the illicit supply and demand for drugs, all in an informal environment that state authorities are unable to penetrate, let alone effectively monitor.
UNDCP (1998).

to influence those elsewhere. There is evidence of the invasion of a drug-taking culture, a decrease in the age of the first drug use, and of the “normalisation” of drug taking in some African cities. Trends in drug production, consumption and trafficking across Africa, suggest that the implications for youth at risk are enormous, particularly given international trends towards more easily accessible and cheaper synthetic drugs.⁷⁸

A recent UNODCCP study found that in more than 80% of African countries studied, there was an increase in the percentage of cannabis smoking (bhang) in 1999, compared with levels in the 1990's⁷⁹. For most of sub-Saharan Africa, cannabis cultivation is the main form of drug production, and a growing income survival strategy. Widespread unemployment in urban areas is highly significant as a catalyst for illicit income generation: “the foundations for an ‘industry’ of illicit drug trading in African cities appear to be in place”⁸⁰. Moreover, in contexts of urban squalor, vulnerabilities to drug abuse are high, fuelled by social tensions created by over-crowding, lack of privacy, the high cost of housing, crime and violence. National surveys undertaken for the UNDCP suggest that those in lower income brackets make up a disproportionately large share of drug users.

In South African, a study of licit and illicit drug use found that substance use amongst youth was increasing. Alcohol was the most popular substance, especially among males, but there was an ‘over-representation’ of females among users of prescription drugs. The use of illicit drugs was especially high and increasing in urban areas, but particularly in overcrowded informal settlement areas.

Some of the direct consequences of the increase in drug use in Africa are increases in illegal trafficking, recruitment of dealers, gang involvement, corruption, crime, and the criminalization of young people living in the poorest and most marginalized areas.

3.7 SEXUALLY EXPLOITED

Sexual activity usually begins in adolescence but there are often cultural variations. While there is little systematic information, wide variations appear to exist across cultures and countries within Africa. Early marriage is common in a number of African countries – eg. in Niger 76% of girls are married by 18 years.⁸¹ In a number of countries the degree of independence accorded to women probably affects both their vulnerability to sexual exploitation, and their own sexual behaviour. In general, young people are more likely to be victims of sexual exploitation than aggressors, except in situations of social conflict such as during and after civil wars, or as a consequence of the trafficking of children by parents because of poverty. Overall, girls tend to be more vulnerable to sexual exploitation than boys.

The sexual exploitation of children and adolescents is often causally linked to subsequent sexual activities such as prostitution, although there are many other causal factors. What is clear is that both sexual exploitation and sexual activities place young people, especially girls and young women, at very high risk of future criminalization, disease and social exclusion. STD infections such as herpes or syphilis, for example, put young women at increased risk of HIV/AIDS. Among sexually active youth in sub-Saharan Africa some 10 to 20% are infected with gonorrhoea. The physical immaturity of younger women, and women's lower status in society may contribute to disproportionate HIV infection rates. Women's lower status prevents them from having full control of their sexual relationships. Studies of women's first sexual experience show that over half of young women in Malawi, and over 20% of young women in Nigeria, experienced forced sexual intercourse.

3.7.1 SEXUAL ASSAULT

Some qualitative observation suggests that the sexual abuse of women and children takes place more often within families than outside them. Nevertheless, girls and young women experience high levels of sexual abuse inside and outside the home in many countries in Africa. In South Africa, surveys of rape and sexual assault estimate that 55,000 women over the age of 16 were rape victims in 1997. And a 1996 study found that 40% of rape victims were under the age of 18.⁸² Almost half the rapes occurred in the home, and only 24% were by strangers. Harassment, sexual abuse and rape are a particular problem for young girls in school.⁸³ Recent reports of increases in sexual assault of children are associated with myths about HIV and AIDS.⁸⁴ In Nairobi, rates of gang rape are very high – around 20% of sexual abuse cases.⁸⁵

One study found that 30% of rape cases in South Africa among 15-19 year-olds involved a school teacher.
Human Rights Watch 2001

In Botswana, a recent study on rape and sexual assault showed an increasing incidence of rape and sexually related crimes. Based on police reported incidents, there was a 18% increase in rape or attempted rape, and a 65% increase in reported sexual offences against girls under 16 years between 1996 and 1998.⁸⁶

3.7.2 SEX-TRADE AND TRAFFICKING

Young girls living poor and marginal lives are especially at risk of commercial exploitation by the sex trade, as well as through international trafficking. Among young women and girls, three types of commercial sex have been identified. The most common is a form of survival practised by young single mothers to ensure a minimum income. The second includes professional sex workers who chose commercial sex as their career. Thirdly, and mostly commonly observed in West Africa, is commercial sex practised by young middle class women to finance their daily needs or education. In South and East Africa, the phenomenon of young school girls having ‘sugar daddy’ relationships in exchange for gifts and money is tolerated by the community, and helps to explain their much higher rates of HIV infection compared with boys. This activity ceases at marriage and does not appear to be stigmatised by society, sometimes receiving support from a brother, friend or fiancé. All such activities place them at risk of HIV/AIDS in the context of the pandemic in Africa. In Abidjan, an estimated 70% of adolescent sex workers are HIV positive.⁸⁷

Whether child trafficking is regarded as a child labour issues, an illegal migration issue, or a juvenile justice issue, there is...a tendency to overlook the underlying economic and cultural factors behind trafficking, thereby placing the trafficked child somewhere in a vast pool of ‘social deviance’. There is little perception that trafficking is first and foremost, a violation of human rights..
UNICEF (2002:7)

More generally, the trafficking of children and young people in Africa has remained unrecognized nationally and internationally until recent years.⁸⁸ Apart from exploitation and health risks, children who are trafficked are likely to be criminalized. Studies of trafficking in West and Central Africa countries including Cote d'Ivoire and Gabon, indicate that they are usually seen as young offenders to be detained in police stations, rather than victims in need of care and protection.⁸⁹ Countries have differing perceptions of the problem, in some cases regarding it as an issue of child labour, in others of illegal migration.

3.8 HIV/AIDS AFFECTED CHILDREN

3.8.1 LIVING WITH HIV /AIDS

African youth face fast growing rates of infection with HIV and other sexually transmitted disease (STDs). Experts estimate that half a million African youth, ages 15 to 24, will die from AIDS by the year 2005. In African countries with long, severe epidemics, half of all infected people acquire HIV before their 25th birthday and die by the time they turn 35.⁹⁰ In 1997 in Zimbabwe, half of all 15-year-old males could expect to die before age 50 compared to 15 percent in 1983. Between 1983 and 1997, 15-year-old females' risk of death prior to age 40 quadrupled from 11 to over 40 percent.

The situation for young women is even worse, since they are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. Half of all HIV infections world wide occur in women in Africa. In seven of 11 studies in Africa, at least one woman in five, ages 20 to 25, was HIV infected and most HIV-infected young women will not live to age 30. In one city in South Africa, six out of 10 women, ages 20 to 25, were HIV infected; among youth in their early 20's, women's infection rates were three times higher than men's. In Malawi, HIV incidence in teenage women is 6% compared to less than 1% in women over age 35. In Kenya, nearly one teenage woman in four is living with HIV, compared to one teenage male in 25⁹¹.

Girls are very vulnerable
Adolescent girls are at the very highest risk of getting infected. The pattern is especially clear in Sub Saharan Africa...The danger of infection is highest among the poorest and least powerful.
UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS*

Sexual health attitudes and behaviours amongst youth also greatly affect their risk of infection and in sub-Saharan Africa, a culture of silence surrounds most reproductive health issues. This is not unique to Africa, and such attitudes also prevail in other regions of the world, however the enormity of the situation is not the same elsewhere. Many Africans feel unable to discuss sexuality across gender and age barriers. Health service workers and many African parents and adults are uncomfortable talking about sexuality with their children, and in many instances they lack accurate sexual health knowledge. Even where condoms are available, as is the case in South Africa, many African adults are reluctant to provide to sexually active adolescents.

3.8.2 ORPHANS

UNICEF reports that 13.2 million children world wide have been orphaned by the AIDS pandemic, and 95% of them are living in Africa.⁹² In sub-Saharan Africa nearly eight million children, ages 14 and under, had been orphaned by AIDS by the end of 1997. By 2010, Southern Africa is expected to have 5.5 million maternal or double orphans, of which 86% will be orphaned by AIDS.⁹³

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

The increase in youth-headed households has in many parts of Africa been staggering. In many villages in the Great Lakes Region, conflict and HIV/AIDS has resulted in the majority of households being headed by youth, often younger than 18 years of age. AIDS orphans are among the most vulnerable members of society. They are more likely to be malnourished, to be denied

education, susceptible to illness and sexual exploitation, and subject to the shame, fear and rejection surrounding the disease.

3.9 WAR AFFECTED CHILDREN

3.9.1 CHILD SOLDIERS

Adolescents have become 'principal' participants in most of Africa's wars during the latter years of the 20th Century.⁹⁴ Combatants in civil wars have become increasingly youthful. It was estimated that the number of youths under 18 years taking part in armed conflicts in Africa in 2000 was 120,000.⁹⁵ Some of those children were as young as seven or eight. In the most tragic cases, such as Sierra Leone, up to a third of recruited minors were girls.⁹⁶ There are reports of girls under the age of 18 in government forces, paramilitaries/militias and/or armed opposition groups in 39 out of 83 countries between 1990 and 2000⁹⁷.

This phenomenon currently affects at least ten African countries. Some children are recruited from cities or rural areas as volunteers, but several tens of thousands have been forced to join armies or rebel combat groups. In addition, numbers of demobilized soldiers of adult age had been recruited as youths. In Mozambique, for example, 27% of demobilized soldiers were recruited before the age of 18 years.

In Africa's remaining wars, many 'rebel' militias or movements are comprised almost entirely of adolescents and pre-adolescents. Government Forces have also recruited adolescents. Given that over half of Africa's population is under the age of 18 years, it is perhaps not surprising that there has been a proliferation of child soldiers.⁹⁸ Moreover, life in the army often offers the only alternative to a subsistence survival way of life. The promise of training and a sustained livelihood is a powerful lure in regions where poverty and population pressures overwhelm education and jobs.⁹⁹

Children who are dislocated from their family and social networks are easily transformed into fearsome and uncompromising soldiers....Once secured, they are more readily moulded into unquestioning fighters. Within the military ranks, young adolescents often develop the sort of loyalty towards their 'superiors' that, they would towards elder family members in a 'normal society'.
Stavrou et al (2000).

If one factor can be singled out as being the catalyst for the exponential increase in the use of child soldiers, it has been the proliferation of small arms in military conflicts throughout the world. Africa has been flooded by redundant, cheap but efficient weapons, often traded illegally by migrant refugees from civil war. Current estimates place the number of light arms in Africa at 100 million.¹⁰⁰

This has considerably changed patterns of youth (and adult) crime in African countries, enabling arms to be obtained easily and cheaply. Armed thefts and robberies by groups of 5 to 15 in Kenya (robberies, car jackings), Cameroon (highway robbers, robberies), Ivory Coast (armed robberies) and South Africa (armed robberies, robberies with violence, assassinations) are all examples in which youth are recruited.

Child soldiers are especially vulnerable to serious physical, psychological and sexual violence.¹⁰¹ An increased focus on the role of girls in armed forces has uncovered a pandemic of sexual violence. Interventions in conflict areas face the additional challenge of chaotic environments and fragmented societies where the people facing the greatest risks are often mobile, including refugees, displaced

people, wounded and disabled. The only tragic certainty in this complex picture is that children and youth will once again bear disproportionately the burden of surviving in violently reconfigured societies, depleted of services such as health and education and weakened in social fabric. Orphans and child-headed households may be deprived of the opportunity to learn from their elders the peacetime values that build social cohesion and ultimately, identity and a sense of one's place in the community: the foundations on which peaceful societies must be rebuilt.

IV THE WAY FORWARD: COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL STRATEGIES

4.1 THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON CITIES AND YOUTH AT RISK

4.1.1 INCREASING FEAR, INSECURITY AND LAWLESSNESS

The cumulative impact of these cross-cutting problems on African cities, and on the growing numbers of youth affected by them, is enormous. With the breakdown of the family, schools, and traditional neighbourhood and community supports, it includes a continuing increase in crime, increased fear and insecurity among citizens, the stigmatization and demonization of youth, the development of ghettos and areas of lawlessness where there is a total breakdown of social controls, and an increasing resort to deterrent and criminal justice responses, as well as vigilantism and private security.

The breakdown of social controls means that many areas in African cities have become lawless, controlled by local gangs, dealers and racketeers, imposing their norms on the rest of the inhabitants. Together with increasing youth delinquency and crime, there are considerable increases in fear and insecurity. In Dar es Salaam, for example, where some 43% of residents surveyed have been burgled, 61% of residents feel unsafe in their *homes* after dark, and nearly two thirds in their neighbourhoods.¹⁰² Insecurity impacts on women in particular, the majority of those surveyed in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam viewed their homes as less safe than places outside, probably because of domestic abuse, but crime also seriously affects their use of urban space and city services.¹⁰³

Violent crime and delinquency threaten the quality of life of urban dwellers in Dar es Salaam. During the 1990's the annual crime increase ...was 8.1%... this diverts scarce resources from urban social development...it constitutes a serious impediment to the city's economic development.
Andersson & Stavrou (2000).

In Douala, Cameroon the reaction to increasing crime and violence has been apathy and resignation on the part of much of the population, but also resort to popular justice in high risk areas rather than calling the police, an increasing use of firearms, security fencing, private security guards and guard dogs, and among some groups increased pressures on local and national government to use tough and deterrent laws.¹⁰⁴ Gated communities around wealthy residential areas are now commonplace in many African cities, such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Nairobi, further increasing a sense of exclusion and the risk of invasion. In Dakar, Senegal, armed robberies and street attacks have fuelled the sense of insecurity in the city, and private protection and security has proliferated.¹⁰⁵

4.1.2 INCREASING STIGMATIZATION AND EXCLUSION

The impacts on youth at risk themselves are enormous. Their already marginal security and prospects for a safe and healthy future are minimized, they have a drastically reduced life-expectancy, almost no expectation of legitimate employment, and are further stigmatized, socially excluded and criminalized. They are aware of this exclusion and their inferior status from an early age, as the children in Canaansland squatter camp, in Johannesburg made clear. They were victimized and abused by outsiders: 'when people knew they were 'squatters' they were blamed for anything that went wrong in the area.'¹⁰⁶

Children are aware of the larger socio-political context. They develop a sense of social identity that is personally experienced as a hierarchy of social status, domination and power. These hierarchies are reflected in their neighbourhoods and are important in the development of personal identity. The children of Canaansland found themselves at the bottom of the social hierarchy, subject to prejudice, and relatively powerless.
Swart-Kruger 2002

Relationships and dialogue between generations are being broken down. Many youths are in permanent conflict with judicial systems which do not have the means to deal with them in a way which might enable their reintegration back into society. In particular, the youth population awaiting trial and sentence, or already imprisoned, is on the increase, without the necessary training and support services for their rehabilitation.¹⁰⁷

As surveys in Kenya and Tanzania have underlined,¹⁰⁸ all youth, regardless of their socio-economic background, reported feeling marginalised, neglected and ignored by society, especially by the government, which fails to provide them with education, employment and a future perspective. Furthermore, they feel that they are excluded from most decision-making organs, particularly on issues that touch their lives. It is not surprising, therefore, for youth to report feelings of hopelessness and disillusionment and a growing marginalisation from the society in which they live.

4.2 THE WAY FORWARD: COMPREHENSIVE POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES

We therefore appeal: To National Governments

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

Extract from the **Nelson Mandela Metropole Declaration**, June 2002.

Countries and cities face an enormous challenge from the growing numbers of disenfranchised youth at risk. Youth are the future for all cities, and the future leaders. In most cases there are no comprehensive child or youth policies for urban areas which recognize the seriousness of the threats to their survival and good health.

The way forward lies in recognising the size and nature of the problems, the underlying causes of the poverty and exclusion which place children and youth at risk. It lies in establishing good governance with comprehensive national and local policies. And it lies in realising the potential of the participation of youth themselves in developing good responses and solutions.

A final compelling reason for considering the situation of urban children lies in the fact that, despite the long term trend towards more urbanized societies, many governments in Africa...still lack a fully developed urban policy, despite...substantial differences between most rural and urban areas as regards the factors that pose the greatest threats to child survival.
UNICEF Innocenti Digest (2002)

In keeping with the UN Habitat campaign on good urban governance, the way forward lies in developing the 'inclusive city', based on the central principles of sustainability, subsidiarity (or decentralization), equity, efficiency, transparency and accountability, civic engagement and

citizenship and security.¹⁰⁹ In essence, what is required in relation to youth is for each country in Africa to:

- Develop a policy of good governance which addresses:
 - The need for legislation to protect human right as they relate to youth
 - A national strategy addressing youth and youth at risk
 - Decentralization (including fiscal autonomy in terms of the collection and allocation of funds)
 - The facilitation of partnerships between key local actors (such as law enforcement, criminal justice, schools, churches and mosques, and municipal governments and their departments)
 - The development of a policy of social inclusion which empowers youth.
- Provide a policy framework which facilitates the re-insertion or rehabilitation of specific categories of youth at risk.

Given the very complex and interrelated nature of the problems confronting millions of young people today in African cities, relying on traditional repressive and criminal justice responses to deal with youth at risk will not tackle the factors which have led to their misery, or the fears and insecurity of other citizens. Arresting street children, destroying and confiscating informal sector goods and property under arcane city regulations, excluding war or HIV affected children from protection, employment, education and care, criminalizing those addicted to drugs, are in the long run very costly responses to disorder and crime. They are likely to increase the alienation, desperation and violence of young people, and their vulnerability to further exploitation and disease.

National governments and local governments cannot expect to make any inroads into these problems unless they work together to facilitate much broader comprehensive preventive strategies. They have to work in partnerships to recreate and revive failing communities and help build their capacities and social capital, their ability to care for and nurture young people, and promote safe communities. This requires a strong national enabling framework, and increased powers on the ground at the local level. And it requires the burgeoning populations of young people to be full participants in the shaping of solutions and their future.

4.3 PARTICIPATION AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT MECHANISMS

In the context of this paper, **empowerment** refers to the circumstances and factors which enhance the development of citizenship and productiveness among young people as they move into adulthood. This includes personal, emotional, economic and social development. In building our cities for tomorrow, children and young people hold the key to change. They are tomorrow's community leaders. Ensuring that young people grow up feeling comfortable in, and positive about, the communities in which they live, is a key to intergenerational progress. Young people are a resource and source for learning with their creativity, innovation, playfulness, trust and open expression of emotion. Many of these attributes have been 'socialised out' of older generations. Without a sense of responsibility, citizenship and belonging to their communities, young people will carry the burden of poverty and disadvantage throughout their lives.

This is affirmed by Paragraph 13 of the Habitat Agenda which states that "the needs of children and youth, particularly with regard to their living environment, have to be taken fully into account. Special

attention needs to be paid to the participatory processes dealing with the shaping of cities, towns and neighbourhoods; this is in order to secure the living conditions of children and youth and to make use of their insight, creativity and thoughts.” It was also reaffirmed in the Declaration of the a conference on developing citizenship among youth in Africa which was held in June 2002 in Nelson Mandela Metropole, South Africa.¹¹⁰ Overall, what is needed is not just youth participation, but the adaptation of government structures at national and local levels, to protect and deliver human rights, and the rights of children and youth, including the right to participate. The following sections of this report are concerned with how these steps can be accomplished by national and local governments.

4.4 THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL STRATEGIES ON YOUTH

Many countries in Africa do not have national youth policies which would help to guide the actions of both national governments and local authorities. In many cases, youth policy at the national level remains uncoordinated and piecemeal, regardless of the quality of individual initiatives.

Cities and municipalities who want to develop youth initiatives have to rely on international protocols and conventions to guide the development of comprehensive and effective youth policies. While helpful, such international conventions may not provide sufficient guidance, nor be specifically tailored to the circumstances and needs of individual countries. There is a pressing need, therefore, for national governments to provide clear guidance by outlining a national policy on youth setting out strategic objectives and policies, and creating frameworks to support and encourage action at the local level. Such frameworks must reflect the specific social, economic and cultural realities of their countries. They need to be models of good governance which encourage participation from citizens and youth in particular, and emphasise the inclusion, rather than exclusion, of all groups in society. They need to build in accountability. This requires the systematic development of such youth strategies and policies in collaboration and consultation with all the stakeholders at the national and local level. National governments are urged to:

- Develop a comprehensive national youth policy
- Encourage full and representative youth participation, including those at risk, in its development and implementation
- Consult widely with all stakeholders
- Include strategies for youth at risk
- Ensure accountability

4.4.1 NATIONAL AND LOCAL YOUTH POLICIES

A national youth policy needs to provide an integrated and inclusive framework which recognises the rights of children and youth, and includes issues such as health, care, education, unemployment, leisure activities, family support, and participation as citizens. South Africa, for example, initiated its National Youth Policy in 1997. It is based on a set of essential principles and values and has a number of goals and objectives, including instilling in young women and men an awareness of, respect for and active commitment to their country, and recognising and promoting their participation and contribution.¹¹¹

- National Youth Policy South Africa: principles & values**
- Redressing imbalances
 - Gender inclusive
 - Empowering environment
 - Youth participation
 - Youth driven
 - Mainstreaming youth issues
 - Responsiveness
 - Cultural & spiritual diversity
 - Sustainable development
 - Rural emphasis
 - Transparency & accessibility

The South African youth policy also establishes priority target groups, including young women, unemployed youth and those out of school, youth living and working on the street, youth at risk, rural youth, disabled youth, and those with HIV/AIDS.

Integrated youth policies at the municipal level can build on and complement national strategies. One example from the North, is the youth policy of the municipality of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. This addresses the particular needs of youth at the local level, and augments youth policies at the national level. The policy is aimed at enhancing the relationships between youth care and broader youth policies; local education policies and local youth policies, youth and safety policies; and youth development and family support.¹¹²

One example of a youth empowerment mechanism is the coalition of youth councils developed in Kenya.

Case study: Municipal Youth Councils in Kenya

The *Kenya National Council of Youth For Habitat* is part of a larger coalition of youth organizations developed, with the technical support of UN Habitat, following the Istanbul Conference Habitat II. The Kenyan chapter has evolved into a society working in partnership with local governments, with the objective of establishing municipal youth structures which include the most vulnerable youth. At the national level the Council has been appointed by the Ministry of Local Government to a technical committee revising the Local Government Act, to make recommendations on youth decision-making structures at local level. Similarly, it has been appointed by the Ministry of Gender, Sports and Culture to assist with the development of a national youth policy. It has also established joint understandings with the local governments of Nairobi and Malindi, to assist with profiles of urban youth and the launch of junior councils with ward level structures. It is currently assisting with the development of a training programme for the two model youth councils together with UN Habitat and GTZ.¹¹³

Both national and local youth policies should:

- Provide a coherent framework integrating all government policies affecting young people
- Ensure inclusiveness of gender, ethnic and cultural minorities and at risk youth
- Set priority targets in consultation with stakeholders and young people
- Reflect the national and local realities of young peoples' lives
- Ensure the full participation of youth, including those at risk, in civic affairs.

4.5 CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR DECENTRALISATION

Another prerequisite for the development of comprehensive youth policies and strategies which will enable the problems of youth at risk to be tackled effectively is decentralisation – both in terms of finance and powers. In many countries prevention and community safety policies lack a strong national and local framework. Even where there are national prevention policies, a major problem for efficient and effective prevention is the multitude of actors involved. Many forms of prevention may coexist, initiated by central governments, the police, local governments, civil society organisations, churches, local business associations, cultural and ethnic groups, schools etc., but they are uncoordinated. There is no framework which supports effective, planned action on the ground.

National governments are too distant to respond to the daily needs and realities of the population. Cities and local governments, on the other hand, are close to their citizens. It is possible for them to ensure that citizens have control over their own lives. To do so requires local governments to assume their leadership role in the management of socio-economic and social integration policies at the city level, especially in relation to urban security. One of the main instruments of social integration is the prevention of crime and the promotion of community safety.

To be able to fulfil this role effectively and efficiently, cities need both an *institutional framework* which gives them the kinds of power they need at the local level, as well as the *financial resources* to support well planned and strategic local prevention policies. This will enable them to be take on their role in promoting social inclusion and urban security. Only central government can grant this kind of power and a measure of fiscal autonomy. Thus some degree of decentralisation to the city level, accompanied by central government monitoring to ensure local and national accountability, are essential precursors for tackling the problems of youth at risk in Africa. National governments should:

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

4.6 INTEGRATING POLICIES

Some of the other major areas of national policy which have an impact on youth also need to be developed and modified in relation to comprehensive national youth and prevention policies. They include family policy, education, training and employment, and policing and the criminal justice system.

4.6.1 FAMILY POLICY

Since families are the primary institution responsible with the socialisation and education of children, their role in prevention is without question crucial. Support to families is one of the most important, successful and well-tested areas of prevention for reducing children and young people's risks of becoming involved in offending and victimization.¹¹⁴ The family is essential for infants, and remains important throughout their growth into childhood and adolescence. The state must establish a legal, social and institutional framework, which protects families, and allows them to play their key role.

Such a framework must take account of the different kinds of families which coexist today (nuclear, single parent or polygamous) and regardless of religious or ethnic background. This protective framework should be based on respect for the rights of the child, as well as the rights of women to autonomy and especially physical and psychological safety. A problem in many countries is women's inability to inherit property or land following divorce or death. This can reduce households to subsistence level. Strengthening women's access to information and advice is therefore an important area for development at the local level. Among other things, central government should provide a legal and financial framework for programmes which facilitate the creation of family support mechanisms by local communities. (For example, taking care of battered children, supporting the rehabilitation of street children, providing day nurseries for teenage-mothers, or legal assistance to

poor families etc.). Such programmes need to well evaluated and monitored to ensure that they meet their objectives. National governments need:

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

4.6.2 EDUCATION POLICY

Given that education is a major tool for socialization, for future employability, and for the development of responsible citizenship, governments need to develop clear educational policies which take account of the failures of current systems. Primary and secondary education needs to be made accessible to all youth, and training and curriculum policies must be revised to meet the current needs and life circumstances of youth in African cities. Specific provision needs to be made for youth at risk, to enable them to gain access to education and to limit their exclusion. This might include micro-credit projects providing loans for education as in the case of Togo (see box).¹¹⁵

Micro-credit project in Togo

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

The aim was to provide small loans to 50 women for income-generating activities, reducing the need to send children away to earn an income, and therefore, boosting the chance that children would go to school.

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

UNICEF (2002:16)

National governments need to:

- Facilitate the strengthening of educational provision and its accessibility
- Provide frameworks for the development of curricula and training programmes which reflect the realities of the lives of African children and youth, including the changing skills needed in the labour market
- Make specific provision for the education and training of marginalized youth at risk

4.6.3 TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Comprehensive training and employment generation policies for youth are centrally important at a time of high youth unemployment. Comprehensive strategies which combine the resources of government and non-government sectors across communities are a promising way of tackling the problems. One example of such a comprehensive approach is the city-wide strategy (City Development Strategy) used in Tunis, Tunisia, where 1 in 3 youth are currently unemployed.¹¹⁶ A youth survey in Malindi Kenya identified lack of access to finance and skills for business development as major problems. Private banks were unwilling to provide credit or loans to young people with no collateral.¹¹⁷

A Zambian lesson:

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

A Tanzanian lesson:

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

Andersson and Stavrou (2001: 76).

However, many programmes which show promise, are unlikely to be instrumental in assisting youth at risk, given the multiplicity of their disadvantages. For example, programmes which aim to rehabilitate or re-insert excluded youth into the job market, have a very limited impact on such

vulnerable groups, and little chance of success in reducing violence and delinquency. Youth at risk are often not capable of taking up immediate employment, and if they do, they have little chance of maintaining it. Such employment or training programmes need to be preceded and accompanied by cultural and social policies for them to have any chance of being effective. Reinsertion requires a measure of re-education and support. National governments should:

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

4.6.4 CORRUPTION, POLICING AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

The fight against corruption is one of the essential aspects of any good governance policy and a prerequisite for strengthening institutions. It is this policy, which ensures that any decentralisation of power is appropriately conducted, and that reform of the police or criminal justice system is feasible and credible. Anti-corruption policy has an impact on the entire population, but especially on youth. They need to believe, at the least at a minimum level, that the police and justice system are fair and just, if they are to be expected to abide by laws and policies. Anti-corruption policy requires institutions to be well structured legally, and capable of identifying and sanctioning corrupt behaviour at all levels of government.

The police and the courts are two facets of the criminal justice system which can play a significant role in the rehabilitation and (re)insertion of youth at risk. They regularly deal with street children, young drug addicts or dealers, and youth in conflict with the law. Their decisions and interventions can play a major role in increasing or diminishing the marginalisation of these young people. Youth trust in the State institutions will also depend on the credibility of the criminal justice system, while their trust in the police depends on how they are dealt with on a day to day basis. A non-effective justice system encourages forms of vigilante justice, examples of mob justice affect several African countries.

Apart from major changes, there is considerable scope for the development of small-scale initiatives which can contribute to changing attitudes and behaviours. The recruitment of youth police assistants under the supervision of the police and local authorities, helps to bring young people and the police closer together, for example. This has been demonstrated by a project which gives jobs to unemployed youth at risk as "Parking Guards" in the cities of Durban and Johannesburg.

Only the State can give legitimacy to major changes, through an appropriate framework. Reforming **the police** appears to be one of the most urgent tasks. Several States have already initiated reforms to adapt to the expansion of petty crime, violence and youth involvement in deviant behaviour. Their main characteristics include:

- A professional police force, which not only respects human rights, but is guided by clear, coherent and strategic plans. It is oriented towards problem-solving, based on careful analysis of problems and their causes, rather than just reacting to events or public opinion.
- Working in close collaboration with local partnerships and coalitions, and accountable to civil society and the municipal authority.
- They may include specialised police officers who work in partnership with local services and resources on rehabilitation and reinsertion initiatives, working closely with local residents in assessing problems, and developing solutions.

A broader and more effective **youth justice system** would include one focused on reconciliation and rehabilitation, rather than repression. The inclusion of interventions which are based on traditional African values and practices, where they still exist, and principles of restorative justice would help to reduce the exclusion of youth at risk. For example, victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, sentencing circles or community forums could all be utilised. Restorative justice also supports family and community involvement in the process of sanctioning, often uses alternative sanctions which contribute to the community, or are part of the longer-term process of re-education of young people. As the *Nelson Mandela Metropole Declaration* affirms, criminal justice systems must take account of the needs of youth at risk and promote¹¹⁸:

- Principles of restorative justice
- Alternatives to institutionalization
- Sensitization and integrated multi-sectoral training programmes
- Youth courts
- Free legal and other assistance
- Affirm the important role of families, schools and communities
- Use diversion programmes including mentoring, cultural and educational

Many of these principles are contained in the impending South Africa *Child Justice Bill* which is framed around a restorative justice paradigm.¹¹⁹

4.7 SPECIFIC POLICIES TARGETING YOUTH AT RISK

Overall, national governments need to recognise the scale of the problems for all groups of youth at risk: those in conflict with the law, those already in the youth justice system, those returning to the community, street children, substance abusers, those at risk of or involved in sexual abuse and exploitation, especially young women and girls, war affected children and those with HIV/AIDS. Each group has both *general* and *specific* types of needs, and governments need to develop specific policies and strategies to target those needs.

For **young offenders and youth in conflict with the law**, there are some important ways to prevent further stigmatization, exclusion and the escalation of offending behaviour as outlined above. These include:

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

Such strategies and policies should include both those which focus on prevention, and those which support the **rehabilitation, or (re)insertion of young people** at risk back into families and communities, and productive meaningful lives. In South African, for example, an national integrated strategy to address youth violence in schools recognizes the interrelated nature of the problems, and provides a good framework for partnership intervention at the local level.¹²⁰ For **street children**, there is a need for national governments to reform current policies to recognize and safeguard their rights, develop programmes which provide assistance and shelter, and monitor police practices and conditions of children in custody.¹²¹

The One-Stop Youth Justice Centre in South Africa provides an example of the kind of multi-disciplinary partnership at the local level tackling youth justice issues which national governments can encourage and enable.

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

Located at Nelson Mandela Metropole, a town of about 1 million inhabitants in South Africa, the centre is supervised by a magistrate and an NGO, under the direction of the Ministry of Social Welfare. It provides an integral series of services and re-education and rehabilitation programmes, including restorative justice-based programmes, for young people in conflict with the law. The Centre aims to avoid the incarceration of youths as far as possible. As a "One Stop Centre" it groups together all administrative, judicial, police, social and educational services necessary in cases of youth arrest and prosecution. Individual cases are dealt with through a multi-disciplinary team, including criminal justice, social services, concerned NGOs, and the youths and their families, as well as their community. Sanctions include community service and education. More than 200 minors go through the Centre every month.

Over a period of five years the Centre has developed practices and tools that can be used in other cities or countries. It provided alternatives to incarceration for 70% of youths in conflict with the law who pass through the Centre. Together with lodging centres, it is implementing specialised programmes for education and rehabilitation for the more serious cases, in order to avoid the permanent stigmatisation associated with youth institutionization. The Centre provides multidisciplinary training programmes for different services in the region involved in helping or monitoring youth in conflict with the law. Its Responsible Life programme aims to train youths to be responsible by developing their self-esteem and capacities to participate in decision-making and problem solving. The management training programme on child victims is designed for parents, teachers and instructors. The drug addiction education programme targets young drug addicts, to develop their personal capacities.¹²²

Recent international protocols on **child trafficking** have been accompanied by the development of some national policies in African countries. In West Africa, a recent study by UNICEF highlights problems and developments in eight countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, Nigeria and Togo.¹²³ National Plans of Action have been developed or are under development in Burkino Faso, Cameroon and Cote d'Ivoire. Awareness-raising campaigns, education programmes, and boarder monitoring have all begun to impact the issue in these countries, but there is clear need for stronger legal frameworks at the national level, and inter-country agreements. Policies of repatriation also need to be reviewed.

The Mali National Plan to Combate Child Trafficking includes:

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

See UNICEF (2002:10)

National and local governments must also jointly intervene on the issue of **child labour** internally. National governments need to develop legislation on child labour, but its implementation can only be

achieved at a local level. Exploitation takes place in local communities and forms part of the local economy, especially in the informal sector.

In relation to **war-affected children**, governments need to recognize them as a specific group of children and youth at risk. This has not always been the case. National governments have not always wanted to recognize the participation of children as fighters, and have ignored them in the distribution of benefits. Such children and youth have both general and specific needs, ranging from reintegration with families, to education and training (see box). National and local governments similarly need to work intervene jointly to develop strategies and programmes meeting their needs.

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

Needs of War Affected Children

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

Mark Malan (2000).

At the national level, therefore, governments should:

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

V THE WAY FORWARD: COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL STRATEGIES

We therefore appeal: To Local Governments

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

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

5.1 NEED FOR A LOCAL POLICIES ON YOUTH AND PREVENTION

Like national governments, cities and municipalities must recognize the underlying problems of poverty and exclusion which place young people at risk. They need to support and protect the rights of children and young people. In South Africa, the city of Johannesburg has been the first major urban centre to agree to implement the Convention of the Rights of the Child (see box).

At the municipal level there is also a clear need for local government to establish policies on youth and on prevention. As suggested in previous sections, local authorities should set out clear policy guidelines for youth services across the range of municipal services. They should establish inventories of existing programmes and services along with stakeholders, including youth themselves, which will enable them to identify weaknesses in provision and specific needs. Some of the ways in which local government can build in the prevention of criminality among young people are outlined in a resource book developed by CSVR in South Africa as part of its City Safety Project.¹²⁴

The potential for action by urban governments on children's rights and for children to participate in and contribute to the decisions that affect their life has led to the development of **the Child Friendly Cities movement**.....the unifying principle is that a city is considered friendly when it is able to assure the rights of children...By 2001, 182 cities had joined the movement....

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

UNICEF Innocenti (2002 :16)

The empowerment of youth through their participation in local government can be facilitated by the creation of Junior Councils of elected youth leaders, for example, such as those created in Malindi,

Kenya (see below). These enable youth leaders to take a full part in decision-making and foster responsible citizenship.

Local *prevention policies* focused on youth need to be reflected in, and supported by, national youth policies. It is beyond the capacity of national governments to assess the extent and causes of local crime and delinquency, to identify the main problems affecting a particular city or neighbourhood, or to have a clear notion of high risk areas and risky situations. It is also beyond the capacity, and perhaps even the interest, of national governments to develop and organise partnerships, coalitions and action between local government and local stakeholders such as the police, members of civil society, community organisations or business groups.

City of Aberdeen Youth Strategy, Scotland

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

Local prevention policy allows action to be shaped and targeted to specific problems, neighbourhoods and localities. This is something which national government or national police services can never do. Local prevention strategies involve not only geographic areas or physical neighbourhoods, but also social accessibility, and the ability to provide services on a human, even personal, level. It is clear, however, that such work can only be done at the local level within a legal framework *supported by* central government. This is important, for example, in terms of collaboration between municipal authorities and the police or judiciary. It also depends on the decentralization of powers which will increase fiscal resources and flexibility at the local level.

Three other major requirements for successful local prevention policy are the promotion of a multi-lateral or cross-cutting approach to problems at the local level, the development of a permanent support mechanism within the municipality, and the use of partnerships across all sectors of local society.

5.2 PROMOTING A CROSS-CUTTING APPROACH

Good local prevention policy involves all the different departments of a municipality. Since the problems and causes of youth at risk and urban security issues are multi-dimensional and overlapping, prevention requires a cross-cutting approach which involves and engages with the policies and energies of different municipal departments. In fact the culture of prevention *starts* when the heads of departments, such as transport, infrastructure, housing, recreation, social services, education, health etc., can begin to recognise their potential contributions, and work to integrate their policies, rather than working in isolation from each other. It is these key municipal leaders who help to establish an overall strategy for the city or municipality, and develop actions plans in close collaboration with local stakeholders. Their work can also be facilitated by practical and expert exchanges between cities or countries.

5.3 PERMANENT COORDINATION AND SUPPORT MECHANISMS

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

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

5.4 WORKING IN MULTIPLE PARTNERSHIPS

Local authorities cannot be responsible for every aspect of community safety and prevention on their own, nor are they always the most qualified to do so, so one of their major roles is to co-ordinate the activities of partnerships within and outside local government. Partnerships enable a wide range of different knowledge, skills and expertise to be shared, as well as encouraging creative solutions to particular problems and issues.

The partnerships in a local prevention strategy include all the principal actors in the city or municipality whose work impinges on youth and security issues. At the programme implementation stage, each priority action may involve a different set of partners. Thus substance abuse prevention work may include health officials, drug counsellors, teachers, police, prosecutors, judges, and community organisations specialising in drug rehabilitation, for example. Programmes to address school violence may include parent associations, student organisations, teachers, education administrators, social mediators, and local businesses. For every problem there will be an appropriate partnership, and the permanent support team helps to guide and co-ordinate partnership activity.

5.5 DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A LOCAL PREVENTION PLAN

Thus, there are three essential stages for the development of local prevention strategies:

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

The first stage – the *community safety diagnosis* - helps to identify the location, neighbourhoods, groups and individuals involved in or affected by specific problems and risky behaviours. It includes victimization surveys of local residents, to help assess their experience of crime and delinquency, their sense of insecurity, as well as their views on what could be done to reduce such problems. Such an analysis helps to identify the range of problems and their causes, enables the most effective or

practical interventions to be selected, and identifies how the city's resources can be used. It results in the development of an agreed *plan of action* with identified priorities in which all partners are involved. The *implementation* of the action plan with specific local partners must be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that the goals and objectives of the action plan are being met.

5.6 YOUTH – THE ESSENTIAL LOCAL PARTNERS

Within this framework for establishing a local prevention capacity and strategy, young people are the essential partners for working on issues of youth at risk at the local level. Currently, this rarely occurs. In Malindi, Kenya, for example, a youth survey found that only 7% of youth had any involvement with the municipal council, and this was mainly in terms of HIV/AIDS and environmental awareness.¹²⁵ Forty percent of those surveyed also identified the lack of a safe and enabling environment as a major constraint for youth, as well as the poor infrastructure, and police and council employee harassment.

Youth associations must be involved in the identification of the local problems and priorities that concern them. This can be done in very creative ways, as the recent *Growing Up in Cities* projects have demonstrated with young children in cities in eight countries.¹²⁶ The creation and use of public space, and policies concerning the use of social, cultural, sports and recreational facilities by young people need to be discussed with them, and with youth leaders and organizations.

Major Components of Effective Programmes for Child and Youth Participants
Training in authentic participation and different methods to achieve it
Listening to young people and their families
Systematic research qualitative as well as quantitative.....
Networking to create alliances of people at local, municipal and national levels.....
Lobbying to keep children's right to participate a salient political issue.
 From Chawla (2002:233)

Policies which aim to improve relations between young people and the police require young people themselves to be involved in their development. One American city, for example, requires candidates for the police to be interviewed by a panel of young people elected by their peers. Responses to typical youth activities such as graffiti are more likely to be successful if there is a dialogue between those young people themselves and the municipality. A number of cities have channelled such activity into creative and educational ventures including the creation of public murals.

Seeking the views of and advice from youth people at the community level, and such practices as participatory budgeting, are models of good dialogue and participation. Breaking down the traditional approach of developing policies *for* youth, rather than *with* and *by* them, is essential. It is a prerequisite for halting the disaffection of young people from their society, and for renewing or implanting a sense of civic responsibility and pride. A long term community safety strategy will not be effective without the organised participation of youth, as recognised active partners, at the local level.

Case Study: Malindi City Youth Consultation Process¹²⁷

The town of Malindi is situated on the Kenyan coast, 120km north of Mombasa. The municipality covers an area of 677 sq. km and has a population of approximately 140,000. The economy of Malindi relies almost entirely on tourism and its associated industries. The tourist industry has brought considerable foreign investment to the town but demands a high level of infrastructure and service provision from the municipality. It is also an industry highly sensitive to regional disturbances and events. Malindi is currently experiencing an overall drop in the number of

annual visitors, and tourist facilities are under utilized. The town gained municipal status in 1981 and has 12 elected and 4 nominated councillors. In August 2001, the Municipal Council of Malindi and the Kenyan National Council of Youth for Habitat signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* to work together to mobilise youth potential in the development of Malindi. The agreement enshrined the following principles:

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

A *Malindi Youth Consultative Committee* (MYCC) was launched on 28th September 2002, Malindi Youth Day, by the Mayor and the Municipal Council. This launch brought together a number of stakeholders, including the private sector, to discuss issues affecting youth. The launch also allowed youth to showcase activities they were undertaking at the ward level, and (sponsored by USAID) cash awards were given for the best three wards. The MYCC is composed of an elected youth representative from each of the 12 wards in Malindi. The MYCC Executive Committee consists of the Junior Mayor, 2 Vice Chairmen, a Secretary and a Treasurer, elected internally from MYCC. A Steering Committee consisting of business people, municipal officials, central government representatives, religious leaders, community leaders and MYCC was created to provide guidance to the youth and city consultation process. The Steering Committee meets on a monthly basis (co-sponsored by Ufadhiri, a local NGO).

A youth survey was carried out by youth researchers in each ward (trained and supported by the NGO ITDG). The youth survey reached 3000 youth through questionnaire interviews, and a further 1000 through focus groups discussions, transect walks, and livelihood mapping exercises. The survey showed that youth had very little understanding of the municipal decision-making process and limited participation. The overall problem facing them was unemployment and lack of marketable skills (77%), constrained by a poor and unsafe enabling environment. They mentioned lack of access to credit, and continued harassment by police and municipal officials, and a lack of information on opportunities. The youth identified the need to create a space for their views as crucial to boosting their low self confidence, and banishing apathy and criminal temptation. A summary Plan of Action was developed through a consultative process, and focused on capacity building both within the MYCC, and the Municipal Council of Malindi. This will enable the MYCC and their members to understand the role and responsibilities of the Municipal Council better, before outlining their Work Plan. It will also serve to sensitise new councillors and municipal officials (following elections at the end of 2002) to the MYCC and its objectives and aims. Capacity building sessions for the Steering Committee were also outlined to help define their role following the effective creation of MYCC. Recommendations in the youth Work Plan include the MYCC:

- developing a youth information centre and youth network, possibly with a newsletter;
- developing an MYCC website;
- making inputs to the Municipal Council budgeting process;
- being a key stakeholder in the development of the Municipal Strategic Plan;

- investigating the creation of a Youth Bank or Youth Entrepreneur Loans.

The Municipality's support was further consolidated through the launch of the MYCC Secretariat. The Municipality provided office space and desks in the council buildings for the Secretariat. The Deputy Town Clerk handed over the key to the Junior Mayoress of Malindi, and ITDG presented two computers and a printer, as well as stationary. In 2003 it is expected that the MYCC Secretariat will become fully operational and involved in council policy and decision-making processes on issues affecting youth.

5.7 ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY

In African cities, the local neighbourhood community plays an essential role in prevention. In the first place, it is part of the traditional African socializing and supporting structure, even if it is less powerful today, and secondly, it offers a more efficient and effective approach to prevention and the rehabilitation of youth than resort to specialised institutions such as the courts. The challenge is to revive the spirit and practice of many African communities who used to take on the responsibility for their entire human environment, not leave this to the individual families. A community is constructed, not given automatically.

Nevertheless, developing community solutions should not be seen as easy. It cannot be assumed that mechanisms for community participation will automatically result in concrete and practical solutions to the problems of community safety and youth at risk. Such romanticism about the community does not take into account the heterogeneous nature of the neighbourhoods which characterise African cities today. The interests of residents are often in conflict with each other, as well as representing a diverse range of norms and values. Therefore, it is important to construct local community coalitions around clear and common prevention interests.

While situational prevention measures such as patrols or street lighting may be developed at the neighbourhood level to protect people and property,¹²⁸ residents are most likely to develop a real sense of community control and commitment if they are involved in the development and implementation of social prevention measures. Developing community-based programmes for youth in conflict with the law, projects to support victims of domestic violence, single mothers living in poverty, drug addicts and alcoholics, or those with long-term illnesses, are important targets for prevention programmes. Providing education or training for local youth at risk, or supporting locally-based mediation and conflict resolution initiatives are examples of such projects. In the INANDA project in Durban, South Africa, for example, prevention in the neighbourhood community is supported and reinforced by the work of a local mediation team who defuse conflict situations, devise solutions, and provide support to individuals or families in critical situations (see below). This has helped to transform the entire local community's sense of responsibility for local problems, while taking account of different cultural practices and attitudes.

One example, from Dar es Salaam, is a ward-level community programme designed to promote safety and security, and encourage employment and participation among poor unemployed youth.

Case Study: Ilala Municipality Youth Initiatives: Sungusungu and Poultry Farming, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania¹²⁹

This project provides work to the members of the Sungusungu group (community night-watch), a group of 97 unemployed and poor youth who are engaged in providing night time security in the

Kitunda ward of the municipality of Ilala. Kitunda is one of 22 wards in the municipality of Ilala, and has a population of 10,000, living in unplanned settlements with little infrastructure or social services. About 90% of the total population have no formal employment, and subsist through petty trading and agriculture. The high levels of unemployment have led to increasing insecurity and crime, including theft, robbery and drug abuse.

The "Sungusungus" were established by the community, and receive militia training (mgambo) provided by retired army officers resident in Kitunda ward. Membership is voluntary and helps to strengthen community cohesion, safety and citizenship, and increase community awareness of crime prevention. However, it is very difficult for them to remain members on a long-term basis, since in most cases they need to engage in survival activities. Income generation activity has, therefore, been initiated with the Sungungu group. A further goal of the project is to keep the youths active and involved.

The poultry project provides employment opportunities and generates income for a number of youths, helping to alleviate poverty. Kitunda ward is known for its poultry farming, thus the skills are within the area. There is a good market for both eggs and chickens throughout the entire area of Dar es Salaam. In fact, demand is greater than supply. Other activities provide income to the group are vegetable growing and carpentry. Some of the income generated will be invested back into the project to support further development of activities including carpentry, tailoring and poultry. The creation of more jobs over time will help to build the sustainability of the Sungungu and their security work. The direct beneficiaries are the 97 Sungungu, as well as their families. The indirect beneficiaries are the community of Kitunda since crime is being reduced through the night watch provided by the Sungungu members.

5.8 PROGRAMMES TARGETING SPECIFIC RISK GROUPS

Local governments, like national governments, need to develop targeted policies and programmes to meet the needs of specific groups of youth at risk, but also to integrate this work with longer term plans for families and children, and with work on domestic violence. As the Executive Director of UNICEF Carol Bellamy has argued: "the investment in services and support for children in their early years has an estimated return as high as seven to one. With 130 million children born each year, this presents an enormous opportunity for social development."

Reducing social exclusion and the risks of serious and long-term crime and violence among youth at the local level means intervening early in the life cycle. It means implanting social prevention programmes at the community level which target *families and young children*. Programmes which provide support to families with small children and early childhood (0-3 years), are crucial since these are essential formative years for growth. A second important target for local policy is *domestic violence*. Apart from the impact of such violence on women and children, it also affects children and young people emotionally, and may teach them to assume that conflict can only be resolved by violence.

5.8.1 YOUNG OFFENDERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE RETURNING TO THE COMMUNITY

Developing community-based alternatives to imprisonment as sanctions for the law-breaking behaviour of youths, and developing restorative justice programmes should become a goal for local

prevention policy. A number of examples of community programmes which target young offenders, youth at risk or their families, or those returning to the community, have been developed in African cities. The INANDA project in Durban, South Africa, uses a local mediation team who defuse conflict situations and provide support to individuals or families in critical situations.

CASE STUDY: THE INANDA FAMILY PROTECTION PROGRAMME IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA¹³⁰

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

Family protection is extended to the *community* through what is called the "ubuntu" culture (my personality depends on you). In this sense, the community is considered to be an extended family. The programme works through a partnership of neighbourhood leaders, families, schools, police and grass-roots organisations. By adopting its members' perspective and listening to them, the community is able to identify vulnerable families and youths and to put them in touch with the project. It is able to handle different types of problem effectively, whether sexual and physical abuse, mental illness, drug abuse and those released from institutions. The project collaborates with other specialised professional organisations in relation to specific problems.

In terms of **youth gang** intervention programmes, providing employment opportunities for gang members seems to have been successful in South Africa.¹³¹ For **youth violence prevention**, a number of promising school violence prevention projects have been developed in African cities. In South Africa, *Tiisa Thuto* is an effective school-based crime prevention project which aims to reduce crime levels. It works through a partnership with parents, teachers, the South Africa Police Service and the Departments of Safety and Liaison, and Education, an NGO Business Against Crime and other local NGOs.¹³² In KwaZulu Natal, the Independent Project Trust, an NGO, working with municipal police and schools, has been able to reduce levels of violence in pilot schools in Durban.

Case Study: School Violence Reduction, IPT project Durban, South Africa¹³³

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

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

about neighbouring ethnic schools had been reduced, and antagonism between the police and schools significantly reduced.

5.8.2 STREET CHILDREN: A LOCAL PARTNERSHIP REHABILITATION POLICY

While short-term assistance (eg. shelter, food) is sometime provided by NGO's, dealing with the problem of street children requires a major initiative on the part of local authorities, and not one which involves prosecution or punishment. Poverty, squatter settlements and slum conditions all contribute to the problem. Better housing, education, health conditions, support for families, will all help *to prevent their entry* into the life. Working directly with street children by developing *alternative protection* (shelter, food, clothing, education, health, alcohol or drug treatment, counselling and friendship) will help them *get off the street* and reintegrated into neighbourhoods and family life. Some of the needs of girls and boys will be different – since girls are more likely to be sexually exploited or active, and their health risks may be greater. Both approaches require good national policies, local city plans and protocols, partnerships with businesses and organizations, advocacy and education to sensitize the public, and the children themselves need to be involved. In Nairobi, Kenya, under the new government and City Council a major project is underway to deal with the problems presented by street children in the city.¹³⁴

The social integration of street children falls within the mandate of local authorities which requires them to seek to integrate all their citizens. Some Guidelines for local authority action are already in existence.¹³⁵ It is important to create a series of progressive approaches for their social reintegration, beginning with a thorough diagnosis of the local problem of street children since there will be considerable variation from city to city. This should include: the approximate numbers of such children; their main characteristics (ages, locations, activities etc.); the existing provision of services catering to their needs (health, schools, NGOs, churches, mosques etc), and their quality; and their scope for expansion of services, particularly the willingness of community organizations to form part of an integrated service.

Once such an analysis has been conducted, an action plan can be established.

The very complexity of the task of integrating street children back into society requires partnerships between important stakeholders, such as the criminal justice system, social services, churches, schools, neighbourhood leaders, philanthropic organisations, hospitals or clinics that treat them, specialised NGOs, and the private sector. The role of the local authority is to provide dynamic leadership and co-ordination, as well as support action through a process of decentralization of authority. The local authority co-ordination must ensure:

- The establishment of partnerships in which *all* partners are represented, including youth
- The assigning of clear responsibilities to each of the partners
- The existence of accessible youth centres in the most frequented areas (ie., where the children are – most often this is the city centre)

A new dawn for street families

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

East African Standard February 10th 2002

Unduga (an NGO dealing with street children in Nairobi, Kenya) has struggled to promote youth activities, mainly in the areas of sports and recreation. In Mathare slum village, there are established youth groups in boxing, football, taw kwan do and table tennis...

UMG (2000: 67)

- The development on an integrated series of services capable of meeting the needs of street children at different stages of their reintegration
- The establishment of an evaluation process for the strategy
- Awareness campaigns to raise residents' understanding of the need for rehabilitation
- Ensure that local authorities undertake tasks which the partners cannot, for example, setting up accessible technical training schools.

Experience in all regions has shown that reintegrating a child back into their family of origin is rarely possible, and that the process has to be progressive and voluntary to be successful. In some African societies it is possible to reintegrate street children back into their extended family. The most common approach has been through centres which provide substitute families, bringing together groups of street children who want to be integrated back into society. Under the guidance of older peers they have access to a range of support, training and education services provided by specialised instructors. A number of such programmes exist in Africa and other regions. In Dakar, Senegal for example, instructors assume responsibility for the re-education of youths, and serve as guarantors for their apprenticeship.

CASE STUDY: MUNICIPAL INSTRUCTORS BYPASS STIGMATISATION IN DAKAR

Youth at risk in Dakar are often excluded and stigmatised, especially by traders or informal workshop owners who would be best placed to help them enter the job market. Many of these youths would like to benefit from school or technical training and internships which would facilitate their reintegration. The municipality of Dakar, in partnership with specialist NGOs, uses local instructors who provide the youths with access to training or internships. They act as sureties for the youths with micro-entrepreneurs in the informal sector, who take them on as apprentices.¹³⁶

Other promising approaches include neighbourhood programmes in the micro-enterprise informal sector, which provide paid training and opportunities (eg. in the Tanzanian city of Mwanza), and local family placements for a day or two a month.

In countries such as Kenya, the major problem is breaking away from the emotional ties of the gang or group. One response is to work to reintegrate the group itself. Volunteers from the community or families from which the street children come, develop friendly relationships with them, a local community resource centre offers food, clothing, informal education, medical care and counselling. The centre is able to direct children to special training programmes run by NGOs.¹³⁷

5.8.3 ALCOHOL AND DRUG PREVENTION

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

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

- Keeping in touch with the police and specialised bodies

- Communicating with local residents regularly
- Mobilising funds for campaigns and treatment
- Evaluating campaigns and rehabilitation projects
- Protecting neighbourhood from drug traffickers
- Referring drug abusers to support organizations
- Creating on-going support systems after rehabilitation for
- Working with drinking establishments to enforce standards for minors
- Facilitating mediation in the neighbourhood and schools.

5.8.4 SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, WAR AFFECTED CHILDREN

Action to tackle the sexual exploitation of children and young people needs to take place on the ground, apart from at national or international levels. Local authorities in a number of West African countries such as Benin have developed networks of local village committees which work to raise awareness about trafficking and child labour, report cases of sexual abuse, planned placement and trafficking, and monitor the reintegration of children when they are returned to their communities.¹³⁸ Such an approaches could be adapted to urban neighbourhoods as part of local government youth plans.

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

The development of trauma clinics and support groups attached to local schools or neighbourhoods, to work with victims of sexual and gender-based violence, unaccompanied children and youths, or young refugees, are all examples of projects at the local level involving NGO's, police services and local authorities.¹³⁹ Overall, local authority plans need to take into account the specific and different needs and experiences of young women and young men in developing policy and projects in the municipality to deal with sexual exploitation.

Common components of a gender violence reduction programme include:
 Defining violence against women and understanding the range of gender-based violence.
 Changing attitudes of young people towards sexism and increasing awareness of the myths about gender violence.
 Identifying violence-related attitudes among youth.
 Learning non-violent relationship skills such as communication and dealing with anger.
 Identifying community resources for victims of gender violence, such as shelters, counselling services etc.
 Palmarv & Moat (2002:36)

5.8.5 CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH HIV/AIDS

The needs of children and youth who have contracted HIV/AIDS should form part of the specific local authority youth plan. The experience of the City of Msunduzi in South Africa provides some guidance on how to develop both prevention, and care and treatment programmes in the municipality.¹⁴⁰ Under the leadership of the Deputy Mayor, the city engaged all sectors of civil society in a city-wide consultation process, collected in-depth information and held a two-day workshop to develop strategies. These include:

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

Local government is undoubtedly the sphere of government closest to the people, and regardless of what National and Provincial/regional levels may be doing, our communities and local organizations expect us to take a leading role in addressing the AIDS epidemic.
 Dr Julie Dyer (2002)

The latter includes developing a co-ordinated response for children, with the municipality working closely with local children's NGO's, creating easier access for grants and birth certificates, making

their needs one of the five top priorities for the Council, with budgetary provision, and making council buildings available to NGO's working with child-headed households to assess and support their needs.

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

Case Study: The Mathare Youth Sports Association in Kenya

MYSA started in 1987 as a self-help youth sports and community service projects in the Mathare Valley, one of Africa's largest and poorest slums. Today, with over 9,000 youth between 9-18 years old on over 640 teams in 94 football leagues, MTSA is the largest youth sports and environmental cleanup organization in Africa. Since 1988, the teams carry out weekly slum cleanup projects as the huge piles of uncollected garbage and contaminated water in blocked drains are major causes of disease, disability and deaths.

The Mathare slums are also a high risk area for AIDS. Since 1994, over 126 young boys and girls received intensive training and have now reached over 25,000 youth with critical information on AIDS prevention. Under the Gender Partnership Project started in 1996, over 3,500 girls are now members members. Half the part-time staff are girls who earn enough on weekends to pay their own school fees. Under the Leadership Awards project MYSA also pays the school fees for over 50 top youth leaders.

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

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ANNEX

ANNEX I: NELSON MANDELA METROPOLE *DECLARATION* ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CITIZENSHIP AMONG YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

ANNEX II: PARTICIPANTS AT THE EXPERT MEETING IN ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT SEPTEMBER 2002

ANNEX III: THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON AFRICAN YOUTH

A recent summary article on HIV Aids and African youth provides the following information:¹⁴¹

African Youth Face Fast Growing Rates of Infection with HIV and Other STDs.

- Experts estimate that half a million African youth, ages 15 to 24, will die from AIDS by the year 2005. In African countries with long, severe epidemics, half of all infected people acquire HIV before their 25th birthday and die by the time they turn 35.
- The epidemic means that African youth face a bleak future. In 1997 in Zimbabwe, half of all 15-year-old males could expect to die before age 50 compared to 15 percent in 1983. Between 1983 and 1997, 15-year-old females' risk of death prior to age 40 quadrupled from 11 to over 40 percent.
- Infection with a sexually transmitted disease (STD), especially one that causes genital ulcers, such as herpes or syphilis, puts one at increased risk for HIV infection, and sexually active youth in sub-Saharan Africa are at high risk for STD infection. For example, 10 to 20 percent of the sexually active population of sub-Saharan Africa is infected with gonorrhea.

Young Women Are Disproportionately Affected by HIV/AIDS.

- Half of all HIV infections worldwide occur in women in Africa.
- In seven of 11 studies in Africa, at least one woman in five, ages 20 to 25, was HIV infected; most HIV-infected young women will not live to age 30. In one city in South Africa, six out of 10 women, ages 20 to 25, were HIV infected; among youth in their early 20's, women's rates were three times higher than men's. In Malawi, HIV incidence in teenage women is six percent compared to less than one percent in women over age 35.
- Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, HIV infection rates among teenage women are over five times higher than rates for teenage males. In Kenya, nearly one teenage woman in four is living with HIV, compared to one teenage male in 25.
- The physical immaturity of younger women and women's lower status in society may contribute to disproportionate HIV infection rates. Women's lower status may prevent them from having control of their sexual relationships. For example, studies on women's first sexual experience show that over half of young women in Malawi and over 20 percent of young women in Nigeria experienced forced sexual intercourse.

Inadequate Sexual Health Information and Limited Access to Health Care Are Obstacles to Lowering Adolescent HIV/STD Infection Rates.

- African adolescents cite lack of knowledge, inaccessibility, and safety concerns as primary reasons for not using contraception. For example, one study showed that less than 50 percent of youth in Madagascar and Nigeria know about contraception. Limited resources also make contraceptive use lower in Africa than in other world regions.

- Many African health services workers feel it is inappropriate to provide contraceptives to adolescents, often making it difficult or impossible for youth to obtain condoms and other contraception. For example, a study in Kenya found that three-fourths of family planning workers were unwilling to provide contraceptives to young women who had not given birth.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, only half of the population has easy access to health care. Africa has one-third as many nurses per capita as the rest of the world. Moreover, the current ratio of doctors is lower than one per 10,000 population; the world average is one per 800. Limited budgets, problems imposed by the HIV epidemic, and few health care providers mean that improving reproductive health services is a challenge for most sub-Saharan African countries.

Sexual Health Attitudes and Behaviors Greatly Affect Adolescents' Risk of Infection.

- In sub-Saharan Africa, as in other regions of the world, a culture of silence surrounds most reproductive health issues. Many adults are uncomfortable talking about sexuality with their children. Others lack accurate sexual health knowledge.
- Many Africans feel unable to discuss sexuality across perceived barriers of gender and age differences. Many Africans are also reluctant to provide sexually active adolescents with condoms.
- In several African countries, some people believe that men are biologically programmed to need sexual intercourse with more than one woman. Polygamy is a central, social institution that reinforces this belief. Moreover, some men believe that this "biologically programmed need" makes high-risk sex unavoidable.
- In some impoverished communities, high HIV infection rates may be partly explained by early sexual initiation, consensual or coerced. For example, in a survey of 1,600 urban Zambian youth, over 25 percent of 10-year-old children and 60 percent of 14-year-old youth reported already having sexual intercourse.
- One study of adolescents in 17 African countries showed that those with more education were far more likely to experience casual sex *and* to use condoms for casual sex when compared to less educated youth.
- In another study more adolescents know someone who has died of AIDS (28 percent) than know someone who is currently infected with HIV (13 percent).

Cultural, Social, and Economic Factors also Fuel the HIV Epidemic.

- Some faith traditions in Africa teach that AIDS is a shameful disease and a punishment for those who have been sexually promiscuous, and many adults are reluctant to admit to a disease that seems to imply promiscuity. One study showed three quarters of Nigerian Christian leaders believe that AIDS is a divine punishment.
- Poverty and HIV transmission are linked in a variety of ways. Poverty often leads to prostitution or to trading sexual favors for material goods. Young women may be especially vulnerable due to societal practices that deny them education and work opportunities. Poverty also leads to poor nutrition and a weakened immune system, making poor people more susceptible to tuberculosis and to STDs.
- The costs of providing treatment for people with AIDS drains resources from education, agriculture, and other domains important to gross national product. By 2005, AIDS treatment costs are expected to account for more than one third of Ethiopia's government health spending, more than half of Kenya's, and nearly two-thirds of Zimbabwe's.
- In sub-Saharan Africa nearly eight million children, ages 14 and under, had been orphaned by AIDS by the end of 1997. Many of these youth must drop out of school.

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- ¹ The conference Declaration can be found in Annex I. The Agenda, background paper and conference report can be accessed at www.welfare.gov.za/documents/
- ² A list of those who participated in the Expert Group Meeting can be found in Annex II
- ³ www.un.esa/socdev
- ⁴ See for example: Shaw, M. (2001). *Investing in Youth: International Approaches to Preventing Crime and Victimization*. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime.
- ⁵ See Shaw op cit., and Hawkins et al., (2000) *Predictors of Youth Violence*. Washington: OJJDP US Dept of Justice.
- ⁶ See UNICEF (2002). Poverty and Exclusion Among Urban Children. *Innocenti Digest* No. 10 Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.
- ⁷ Trends in urban crime prevention, *UNCJIN Crime and Justice Newsletter* 1994/5 Vol. 2 No. 2.
- ⁸ Mang - Yon Thega, Y, (2001). *Enquete sur la delinquance juvenile a Yaounde*. Nairobi: Report for UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme.
- ⁹ UNICRI
- ¹⁰ These are the definitions generally used by UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS and ILO, for example.
- ¹¹ This is normally taken to include populations of 150,000 or more, governed under city or municipal status with an elected mayor, although many Africa countries use a figure of 2,000 to distinguish between rural and urban settlements (UN Habitat (2001) *The State of the World's Cities 2001*).
- ¹² *Cities in a Globalizing World, Global Report on Human Settlement 2001*. Nairobi: UNHABITAT and Earthscan Publications
- ¹³ *Cities in a Globalizing World, Global report on Human Settlement 2001*. Nairobi: UNHABITAT and Earthscan Publications.
- ¹⁴ *In cities like Nairobi, Nouakchott, Lusaka and Kinshasa, the population increased sevenfold between 1950-1990*
- ¹⁵ *Cities in a Globalizing World. Global Report on Human Settlements 2001*. Nairobi: UNHABITAT and Earthscan Publications.
- ¹⁶ *The State of the World's Cities 2001*. (2001). Nairobi: UN Habitat.
- ¹⁷ *City Profile, Abidjan, BNETD-UMP, 1999*
- ¹⁸ *City Profile, Dakar, IAGU-UMP, 1999*
- ¹⁹ CARE/Tanzania (1998). *Dar-es-Salaam Urban Livelihood Security Assessment*. Summary Report. Dar-es-Salaam: CARE/Tanzania.
- ²⁰ UN Development Group. *Halving Extreme Poverty: An Action Strategy for the United Nations*. Final draft 10 November 1999.
- ²¹ UNICEF (2002). Poverty and Exclusion Among Urban Children. *Innocenti Digest* No. 10. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.
- ²² Alder, G. (1995). 'Tackling poverty in Nairobi's informal settlements: developing an institutional strategy. *Environment and Urbanization*, 7 (2) 85-107.
- ²³ *Community Based Solid Waste Management in Luanda's Musseques: a case study*. (1999). Development Workshop: Guelph.
- ²⁴ UNICEF (1997). *Nigeria. Profile of the Urban Local Governments of Ibadan*. Oyo State Government and UNICEF B Zonal Office, Ibadan.
- ²⁵ Beall, J., Crankshaw, O. & Parnell, S. (2002). *Social differentiation and urban governance in Greater Soweto: a case study of post-apartheid reconstruction*. Crisis States Working Paper No. 11. London: Development Research Centre. www.crisisstates.com
- ²⁶ Swart-Kruger, J. (2002). Children in a South Africa Squatter Camp Gain and Lose a Voice. In Chawla, L. (Ed.) *Growing up in an Urbanizing World*. Paris: UNESCO & Earthscan Publications.
- ²⁷ *WHO Global Database on Child Growth and Malnutrition*.
- ²⁸ UNICEF (2002). Poverty and Exclusion Among Urban Children. *Innocenti Digest* No. 10. Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.

- ²⁹ ECA (2002). *Youth & Employment in the ECA Region*. Economic Commission for Africa.
- ³⁰ ECA (2002). *Youth & Employment in the ECA Region*. Economic Commission for Africa.
- ³¹ *The ILO has good youth employment data for only 6 out of 53 African countries (Youth & Employment in the ECA Region. Alexandria, Egypt., 2002).*
- ³² ECA (2002). *Youth & Employment in the ECA Region*. Economic Commission for Africa.
- ³³ Ramsey, F. (2002). *City Development Strategies and Youth Employment Experiences from Africa*. Paper prepared for the Youth Employment Summit, Alexandria, Egypt, September 7-11th.
- ³⁴ O'Higgins, (2002). *Government Policy and Youth Unemployment*.
- ³⁵ UMP regional office for Africa, Malindi City Consultation reports 2002.
- ³⁶ ECA (2002). *Youth & Employment in the ECA Region*. Economic Commission for Africa.
- ³⁷ UNICEF (1998). Child Domestic Work. *Innocenti Digest* No. 5 Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.
- ³⁸ See for example *Sevede-Bardem, I p.58 on gender issues in Ouagadougou*.
- ³⁹ See for example, Swart-Kruger (2002) for an account of resident's pride in Cnaanland South Africa.
- ⁴⁰ Sankoré, P. (1995) *Accessibility to justice by the poor in Africa*.
- ⁴¹ Waters defines citizenship as "a set of normative expectations specifying the relationship between the nation-state and its individual members which procedurally establish the rights and obligations of members and set of practices by which these expectations are realised (cited in *Ndengwa, 1997* pg 186).
- ⁴² Save the Children Norway (2002). *Country Program Report 1998 – 2001 and Strategic Plan 2002 – 2005, Kampala*.
- ⁴³ This section draws primarily on the summary prepared by Jogunosimi, T. (2001) *The HIV/AIDS Pandemic among Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa*. The Facts. Washington DC: Advocates for Youth. See Annex III for a full version of the summary.
- ⁴⁴ *Idib*
- ⁴⁵ *Idib*
- ⁴⁶ *Idib*
- ⁴⁷ *The Machel Review, September 2000*.
- ⁴⁸ UNICEF (September 2001). *Abductions in Northern and South-western Uganda, 1986-2001*.
- ⁴⁹ *HIV/AIDS and Local Governance in Sub Saharan Africa, A UMP-ROA Occasional Paper 2002*
- ⁵⁰ UNICEF (1999) *Children Orphaned by AIDS*.
- ⁵¹ See *Jogunosimi op. cit (2001)*
- ⁵² See Shaw, M. (2001). *Investing in Youth: International Approaches to Preventing Crime and Victimization*. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime; Hawkins et al., (2000) *Predictors of Youth Violence*. Washington: OJJDP US Dept of Justice.
- ⁵³ *Youth Violence in Schools*. (1999). Joint Framework Document. Pretoria: Secretariate for Safety and Security.
- ⁵⁴ See Shaw op cit., and Hawkins et al., (2000) *Predictors of Youth Violence*. Washington: OJJDP US Dept of Justice.
- ⁵⁵ Sansfacon, D. & Welsh, B. (1999). *Crime Prevention Digest II: Comparative Analysis of Successful Community Safety*. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime.
- ⁵⁶ Shaw, M. (2001). *Investing in Youth: International Approaches to the Prevention of Crime and Victimization*. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime; Menard, S. (2002). Short and Long term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization. *Youth Violence Research Bulletin*. Washington: OJJDP, US Department of Justice.
- ⁵⁷ *Youth Violence in Schools*. (1999). Joint Framework Document. Pretoria: Secretariate for Safety and Security.
- ⁵⁸ *Crime in Dar es Salaam*. (2001). Robertshaw, Louw and Mtani. Nairobi: UNCHS & Institute of Security Studies.
- ⁵⁹ Menard, S. (2002). Short and Long term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization. *Youth Violence Research Bulletin*. Washington: OJJDP, US Department of Justice; Loeber, R., Kalb, L & Huizinger, D. (2001). Juvenile Delinquency and Serious Injury Victimization. Washington: OJJDP, US Department of Justice.
- ⁶⁰ For example, studies of the young homeless in Canada and Australia find they experience high levels of physical and sexual victimization from their peers, and are the least likely to report offences to the police or seek help for injuries. (See Shaw, 2001 op. cit).
- ⁶¹ For example, UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme has undertaken victimization surveys of youth and young offender profiles in Yaounde, Dakar, Douala, Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam.
- ⁶² M'Packo, M. (2000). *Violence, delinquance et insecurite a Douala*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. August.
- ⁶³ Mang - Yon Thega, Y, (2001). *Enquete sur la delinquance juvenile a Yaoundé*. Nairobi: Report for UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme.
- ⁶⁴ Trends in urban crime prevention, *UNCJIN Crime and Justice Newsletter* 1994/5 Vol. 2 No. 2.
- ⁶⁵ Assiagio et al., (2002) *Youth and Crime in Nairobi: Some Exploratory Issues*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. In this study young offenders were defined as those aged 14-25.
- ⁶⁶ See *Streetchildren and Gangs in African Cities*. (2000). UMP Working Paper Series 18. Nairobi: UN Habitat; and Stavrou, A. (2002). *Crime in Nairobi. Results of a Victims Survey*. Safer Cities Series #4. Nairobi: UN Habitat.

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- ⁶⁷ Shaw (2001) op. cit.
- ⁶⁸ [Sissoko in Jeunes.....](#)
- ⁶⁹ Andersson & Stavrou (2001) op. cit.
- ⁷⁰ Assiago et al., (2002) *Youth and Crime in Nairobi: Some Exploratory Issues*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. In this study young offenders were defined as those aged 14-25.
- ⁷¹ See *Streetchildren and Gangs in African Cities*. (2000). UMP Working Paper Series 18. Nairobi: UN Habitat.
- ⁷² UMP (2000). *Street Children and Gangs in African Cities*. Urban Management Programme. Nairobi: UN Habitat.
- ⁷³ *Idib*.
- ⁷⁴ From *Children's Rights. Street Children. Juvenile Injustice: Police abuse and detention of street children in Kenya*. (1997) Human Rights Watch www.hrw.org/children/street.htm quoted in UNICEF (2002) *Innocenti Digest* No. 10.
- ⁷⁵ Human Rights Watch (2003). *Charged With Being Children: Egyptian Police Abuse of Children in Need of Protection*. Vol. 15 (1). Human Rights Watch www.hrw.org/children/street.htm
- ⁷⁶ [Kenya Census](#). (2000)
- ⁷⁷ UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*.
- ⁷⁸ UNDCP (1998). *The Drug Nexus in Africa*. United Nations International Drug Control Programme.
- ⁷⁹ UNODCCP (2002). *Global illicit drug trends*.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid: 44*
- ⁸¹ UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*. UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*.
- ⁸² Bollen et al., 1999; South Africa, 2000.
- ⁸³ Human Rights Watch, 2001.
- ⁸⁴ These include myths that intercourse with a virgin will protect against HIV and AIDS.
- ⁸⁵ Ravetjijn, S. (2002). *Survivors Speak. A Snapshot Survey on Violence Against Women in Nairobi*. Safer Cities Series #3. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme.
- ⁸⁶ Botswana, 1999, 2001
- ⁸⁷ UNICEF (2002) *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunity in Crisis*.
- ⁸⁸ The adoption of the 2000 Palermo Protocol which supplemented the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime forms the most recent milestone in terms of international recognition of the problem.
- ⁸⁹ UNICEF (2002). *Child Trafficking in West Africa: Policy Responses*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.
- ⁹⁰ This section draws on the summary paper by *Jogunosimi (2001)*.
- ⁹¹ *Idib*
- ⁹² Children Orphaned By AIDS (1999) UNICEF, UNAIDS.
- ⁹³ Fourie, P. & Schoentech, M. (2001). Africa's new security threat. HIV/AIDS and human security in Southern Africa. *African Security Review*, 10 (4) 29-42.
- ⁹⁴ Young African men (and women) have always played prominent roles in defending their villages. The distinction between adolescence and adulthood has often been blurred and has largely been dictated by survival strategies. Amongst the Masai, Xhosa and Zulu, initiation ceremonies for male and females celebrating their transition to adulthood take place at the ages of 12 and 14. Hence, if an adolescent was capable of bearing arms, they were recruited as warriors.
- ⁹⁵ Malan, M. (2000) 'Disarming and demobilizing child soldiers: the underlying challenges'. *African Security Review* 9 (5/6).
- ⁹⁶ *Idib*.
- ⁹⁷ McKay, S. and D. Mazurana, (2000) "Girls in Militaries, Paramilitaries, and Armed Opposition Groups."
- ⁹⁸ Under international law, it is not illegal to recruit 15 year-old children for training as soldiers for active combative duty. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child signed in 1989 established that "childhood" ends at the age of 18 years. Although forbidding the death penalty for all children under 18, as well as setting a host of other standards for their protection, the UN sanctions the right of a 15 year-old to kill or be killed 'in the line of duty'. *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989*.
- ⁹⁹ Stavrou, S. and Stewart, R. Stavrou, A. (2000). *The re-integration of child soldiers and abductees: a case study of Palaro and Pabbo, Gulu district, Northern Uganda*. Paper presented at the International Conference on War-affected Children, Winnipeg, Canada.
- ¹⁰⁰ *ISS "Small arms proliferation in Africa" Newsletter. Dec, 1998*
- ¹⁰¹ An estimated 300,000 children are fighting in armed conflicts and 500,000 serving in armed forces or groups, and hundreds of millions are affected by sexual exploitation in some form. See: *Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (2001) Child Soldiers Global Report 2001, London:CSC; and ECPAT International 1999, respectively*.
- ¹⁰² Robertshaw et al., op cit.

- ¹⁰³ See Robertshaw et al., op cit and Ravestijn op cit. and Mtani, A. (2002). Safety Planning and Design The Women's Perspective the case of Manzese, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- ¹⁰⁴ M'Packo, M. (2000). *Violence, delinquance et insecurite a Douala*. Nairobi: UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme. August.
- ¹⁰⁵ Trends in Urban Crime Prevention. UNCJIN Crime and Justice Letter 1994/5 vol2 (2).
- ¹⁰⁶ Swart-Kruger, op. cit p.121.
- ¹⁰⁷ Andersson & Stavrou (2001).
- ¹⁰⁸ Andersson & Stavrou (2001); Stavrou (2002).
- ¹⁰⁹ *The Global Campaign on Urban Governance*. (2002). Concept Paper 2nd Edition. Nairobi: UN Habitat. See also Simone, A.M. (2002). *Principles and Realities of Urban Governance in Africa*. Nairobi: UN Habitat.
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