



The Nexus of South African Police Service and Community Policing Forums in dismantling the ‘Boko Haram’ gang in the Dan Village of Tzaneen Township, South Africa

Tinyiko David Ngoveni

Acting Chair of Department, lecturer, Department of Criminology and Security Science, University of South Africa

Email: ngovetd@unisa.ac.za

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Abstract

The Dan Village in Tzaneen, South African, just like other areas in South Africa is confronted with various heinous crimes, mostly perpetrated by the local gangs. Citizens are often robbed of their valuable belongings, terrorised and some killed in the process, this normally occurs in the early mornings and during the night when to-and-from work. Therefore, the objective of this study was to offer the nexus South African Police Service (SAPS) and Community Policing Forums (CPFs) in dismantling the ‘Boko Haram’ Gang in the identified study location. This qualitative study, was supported by exploratory research objective to purposively select Ten (10) participants and review suitable documentary studies on this subject. The key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were employed for data collections. The inductive Textual Content Analysis (TCA) was used to identify study themes and associated challenges during the data analysis process. This study established that the CPFs and SAPS members, including Dan Village native resident at large were concerned about ‘Boko Haram’ gang, this resulted in initiating crime-fighting patterns against this dangerous gang. The results further showed that since various crimes happened unexpectedly and affects them differently; the effective collaboration between the local SAPS and CPFs should be regarded as legitimate structures to play critical roles to dismantle the Boko Haram gang. This is expected to yield positive outcome for the control and prevention of criminal activities by the local gang.

Keywords: *Boko Haram Gang; Community Policing Forums; Dan Village of Tzaneen Township; Dismantling; South African Police Service; South Africa; The Nexus*

Introductory Comments

With the aim of change and effective strategy to fight crime, Robert Peel introduced a policing system for the London Metro Police force. This is the system that was introduced while taking into consideration the legal system, further, respecting the national sovereignty, restraint of procedural regularities, and making sure that the civil liberties is guaranteed (Govender, 2019:376). The impact of

the new system is emphasised by (Verma, 2005) indicating that due to new policing system, the London experienced a high positive outcome, resulting in crime being reduced in a short space of time. South Africa is a democratic country and one of its main priorities is to provide safety and security to all its citizens. Sections 205(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 stipulates the responsibilities of the SAPS, including that the police must prevent, combat, and investigate crime; maintain public order; protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property; and uphold and enforce the law (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996:19).

According to Govender (2019), South Africa, have been confronted with various dilemmas in relation to crime prevention since early 1990s. These dilemmas include citizens demand to ensure that there is increase in street policing, complaints about the continues violent crimes struggling individual's constitutional right to safe environment, and growth in private security provisioning to assist in fighting crime. The United Nation [UN] (2010) shares that in line with the statement herein, the 'Security Council Resolution 2185 of 2014' and the 'DPKO-DFS Policy on Police in Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Mission define Community-Orientated Policing' as the set of established strategies serving to encourage public collaboration with the police in their area of jurisdiction in prevention and managing crime as well as other aspects of security and order based on that community's specific needs. According to Potgieter, Wiatrowski, Roelofse (2016), as a process of transformation the style of policing, the SAPS decided to move away from its previous apartheid traditional operational system that was characterised by authoritarian policing to the new democratic system that operates within the framework of the Constitution, of 1996. The transformation was aimed in changing from police "force" that was dedicated to the apartheid enforcement to a more people orientated police "service" that will rely on crime fighting partnership (Matthews, 2000).

Therefore, community safety initiatives and prevention of crime is one of South Africa's main concerns and the establishment of, among others, the SAPS and CPFs, supports this. While it is known fact that the most known "Boko Haram" originate from Nigeria as the group that uses near daily violence targeting the 'Christians, Security and Police forces, the Media, Schools, Politicians, and Muslims' as they are perceived as collaborators, the attack that is focused in overthrowing the government to replace it with "Boko Haram" own philosophical regime that have faith in Islamic law (National Counter Terrorism, 2013), the purpose of this study was to determine the impact of collaboration in fighting nor mobilising against the 'Boko haram' gang that terrorised community members at Dan village, Tzaneen, Limpopo province, South Africa, their *Modus Operadi [Methods of Operations] (MO)* was directed at attacking victims in the early hours of the morning and during the night within the streets, churches, and funerals. As a recourse, the objective of this study was to explore the nexus of SAPS and CPFs in dismantling the 'Boko Haram' gang in the Dan Village of Tzaneen Township, South Africa, while taking into consideration the nature and extent of Boko Haram gang, the researcher reviewed historical and contemporary literature concerning gangs, collaboration between police and CPFs in Dan Village, Limpopo, South Africa, aided by the KIIs with the 10 selected participants.

Methodology

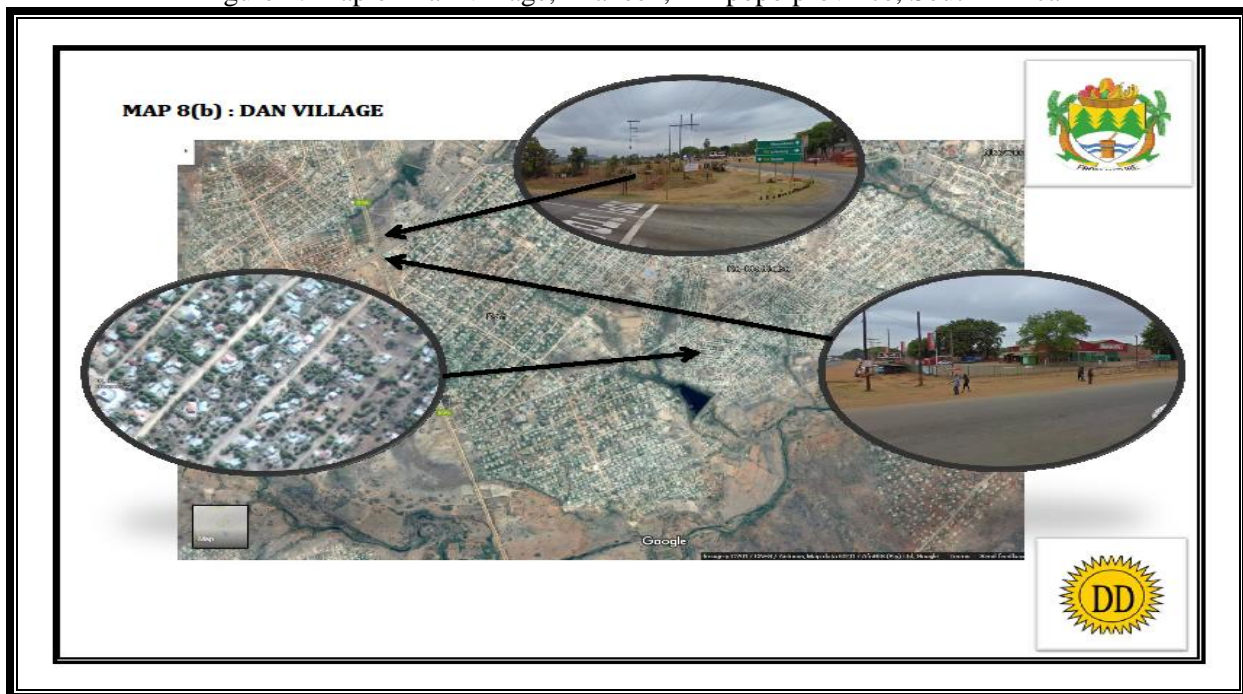
Study Locations Overview

Which conducting research studies on societal behaviour, Buthelezi (2010:49) highlights that any nation, just like South Africa, the researcher cannot accurately separate socio-economic activities from crime statistics and sources of crime. Based on that, it is of utmost importance to first study and discuss the geographical location, size, and population of the municipality, and the police stations together with basic socioeconomic indicators of the specific areas, as this information will provide a comprehensive and meaningful introduction of the research focus areas, as well as other information related to basic socioeconomic activities. Burger (2007:47) states that socioeconomic activities are among the contributing

factors of crime in South Africa, and it is the main role of both the SAPS and CPFs, in collaboration, to fight and prevent crime as enshrined in the Constitution and the SAPS Act, 1995.

According to the 'Info Tzaneen (2019),' Tzaneen is one of the Township under Mopani District, in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. This Township was established in 1919 during the apartheid regime. In order to minimise and fight poverty, the Greater Tzaneen Municipality, which accommodate Dan Village is demographically classified, to sustain its economy appointed an urban-econ economist development to review the economic development strategy within the municipality where sustainable economic projects were in line with both the municipality and government. The Greater Tzaneen Municipality Integrated Development Plan [IDP] (2020) highlights population by the 2011 census statistic at 390, 092. In relation to employment, the municipality shows slow pace in economic growth. Of the total population herein, 73482 people has been employed, 42537 unemployed, 114156 economically in-active. The map herein serves to indicate the geographical location of Dan Village, Tzaneen, Limpopo province, South Africa:

Figure 1: Map of Dan Village, Tzaneen, Limpopo province, South Africa



Source: Greater Tzaneen Municipality (2022)

This qualitative study was conducted with the aim of exploring the nexus of South African Police Service and Community Policing Forums in dismantling the 'Boko Haram' gang in the Dan Village of Tzaneen Township, South Africa. The exploratory research objective guided this study. The review of literature (Drawn from various news reports, peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, and other related information gathered by utilising Google Scholar and Research Gate) and gathering views from through the KIIs with the selected 10 participants were purposively staged (Maluleke, 2020; Mokwena & Maluleke, 2020; and Maluleke, Mphatheni & Nkosi, 2022).

For data analysis, the inductive TCA was adopted, solely depending on offering analysis and discussions of the collected data. The researcher translated and transcribed the voice-recorded interviews, then read and reread the interviews in their entirety, reflecting on the interviews as a whole. Then, the researcher summarised the interviews; keeping in mind that more than one theme might exist in a set of interviews. Once identified, the themes that appeared to be significant and concepts linking substantial

portions of the interviews were written down and typed accordingly (Morse & Field 1996:115). In analysing the reviewed contents, the researcher read the entire interview, identifying several topics. These topics then become primary categories or category labels. With too many categories, saturation is achieved slowly. Once the categories have ample data, the researcher may select to categorise this data into sub-categories of two or more (Morse & Field 1996:117). The main categories were developed. When each category is reasonably full and saturation is reached, that is, no new data emerges, then the researcher writes descriptive paragraphs, supported with the identified themes and challenges, this was done by identifying existing categories and looking for relationships between categories. The relationships in question were based on concurrence, antecedents or consequences of an initial category (Morse & Field 1996:117).

Preliminary Literature Review

Crime South African Perspectives

Although the local, SAPS operationally prevent crime(s) as mandated by the South African Constitution, 1996 and SAPS Act (No. 68 of 1995) to promote community safety, the Annual Crime Statistics over the years period starting from 2018-2022 financial years indicate an increase in crimes such as 'Murder, Assault with the intention to inflict Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH), Rape, Sexual offenses and Burglary at residential premises, amongst others. The recorded increases kept all members of the community, SAPS and National government in daily serious concern about vast crimes. The consulted SAPS report indicates that the South African crime rates is among the highest in the world and all South Africans citizens are affected by it regardless of their race or gender (Demombynes & Ozler, 2003). Although the patterns of crime have drastically changed, the society continuous experiencing crime always, and will probably remain similar further. Over the years, members of the society continuous experiencing various crime violent crimes. Members of the community always fought each other, stealing others' property, abuse alcohol and drugs influential to crime, engaged in antisocial behaviour and non-compliance. Members of the community, while walking within the streets and in public spaces, experiences various crimes such as robbery, burglary, theft of and from vehicles, drugs and alcohol abuse, prostitution, as well as other miscellaneous thefts and assaults arising from violent incidents (Edwards (2011).

The experiment by the Kansas City Preventive Patrol shows that general patrols, reactions and investigations by various crime prevention stakeholders does not guarantee citizens safety. Further, large number of police officials and vehicles is not the key in reducing crime but plays a role in displacing it (Kelling, Pate, Dieckman & Brown, 1974). The Minneapolis, in different with the system above, brought different system that was focusing on patrolling small, closely defined areas identified as the crime "hot spot". The outcome indicates that the "hot spot" focused approach by the police in patrols for specific period could play an impacting role in deterring crime. The experiment further indicates that there were lesser crime complaints reported from the identified 'hot spot' areas in line with the patrol durations (Sherman & Weisburd, 1995).

In terms of utilising the annual statistics, annual reports and other methods in assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of policing, Govender (2019) indicates that although the annual statistics and annual reports system does not have scientific basis it serves as indicators of performance of members of police in crime prevention. Although statement by (Govender, 2019) further indicate that although statistics are important in analysing the crime, as well as particular group vulnerabilities and risk factors, it is critical to be aware that that decrease in number of crimes reported does not merely highlight a decrease in the number of crime incidents reported, the outcome in relation to the elimination will serve effectively in determining the impact of collaboration between SAPS and CPF in eliminating the Boko Haram gangsters, which terrorise Dan Village. The 2021/2022 crime statistics shows and increase in some

of the serious crimes that include murder and rape in Limpopo (Machaka, 2022). The following serves as statistics of the reported most prevalent crimes and the dominated crimes from 2018-2022 financial years, notably, the Third quarter SAPS statistics, reflecting October to December 2021-22 highlighted the Three (03) contact crimes and One (01) property-related crime as selected by this study as most prevalent crimes in the Ritavi Policing Area (RPA), from 2018-2022, as depicted in table 1 below:

Table 1: Prevalent selected crimes in the Ritavi Policing Area, 2018-2022

Crime categories	Reporting periods						Count Diff	% Change
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022			
Murder	3	9	3	2	7	5	250,0%	
Assault with the intention to inflict GBH	67	57	45	38	74	36	94,7%	
Rape	22	19	23	21	28	7	33,3%	
Sexual offenses	22	20	23	22	31	9	40,9%	
Burglary at residential premises	75	73	61	69	66	-3	-4,3%	

Source: SAPS crime statistics (2018-2022)

Moreover, the list of the dominated crimes during the recorded periods as Table 1 refers were as follows, during the same financial years:

Table 2: Serious crime risk at Ritavi police precinct

Years	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
National serious crime risk rank	316 / 1158	216 / 1158	247 / 1158	245 / 1158	309 / 1158
Provincial serious crime risk rank	64 / 104	52 / 104	57 / 104	54 / 104	55/104
Rankings	-Serious crime risk is 2.4% lower than 2017 -Serious crime risk is 57.2% below national average	-Serious crime risk is 18.8% lower than 2018 -Serious crime risk is 64.9% below national average	-Serious crime risk is 3% lower than 2019 -Serious crime risk is 56% below national average	-Serious crime risk is 2.3% higher than 2020 -Serious crime risk is 54.1% below national average	-Serious crime risk is 71.4% lower than 2021 so far -Serious crime risk is 51.2% below national average
Drivers for serious crime risk index in 2018	-Burglary at residential premises -Assault with the intent to inflict GBH	-Burglary at residential premises -Assault with the intent to inflict GBH	-Burglary at residential premises -All theft not mentioned elsewhere	-Burglary at residential premises -All theft not mentioned elsewhere	-Assault with the intent to inflict GBH -Burglary at residential premises

Source: News24 crime check (2022)

The noted disturbing statistics on Table 1 and 2 did not only concern the researcher, as it has also caught the attention of the media fraternity. Moreover, the manner in which the community members responded to crime place their life and future in danger as they happen to be perpetrators who were

considered as victims. Furthermore, Section 42 of the Criminal Procedure Act [CPA] (No. 51 of 1977) accords community members with the powers to arrest any person who they suspect of or found committing a crime. However, this foundational legislative framework does not give powers to the member of the community to assault, kill or induce self-incriminating evidence from the suspect. The researcher noted that the indicated behaviour is in contradiction with Section 35(1)(c) and 35 (5) of the Constitution, 1996, which uphold the fundamental rights of the suspect.

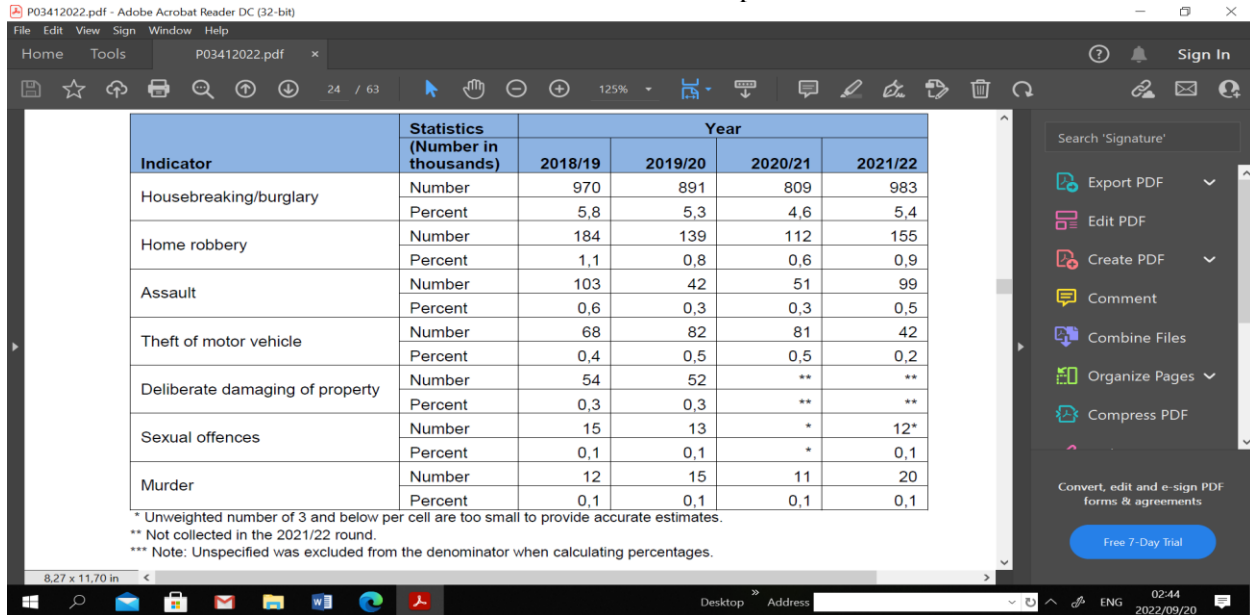
The cited Sections read together with Section 217 of the CPA, 1977, which determines the admissibility of a confession or admission. Effective strategies on addressing various crimes such as murder, assault with intent to Grievous Bodily Harm [GBH], rape and burglary at residential premises as this study refers calls for community involvement in providing detailed information and ways in which these crimes are committed and ways of prevention. Their experiences did enhance existing combative strategies to further help strengthening partnerships between the local SAPS and CPFs structures, while addressing that the crime was addressed swiftly. Malatji (2016) shares that the role of the community is to attend the community policing sub-forum meetings, to discuss action plans with the sector commander in order to deal with crime in the community; to participate in neighbourhood initiatives to safeguard the area in which they live, work and play; and to take ownership of the community policing and support in the enforcement of the law.

The Impact of Crime

South Africa is a democratic country and one of its main priorities is to provide safety and security to all its citizens. The Constitution of South Africa, 1996 stipulates the responsibilities of the SAPS, including that the police must prevent, combat, and investigate crime; maintain public order; protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property; and uphold and enforce the law (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Van Vuuren (1996) argues that crime thrives with an increase in the socioeconomic stimuli of crime. Crime has a negative impact on citizens human life. According to Ngoeni (2021), the increasing crime levels cause instability in society. South Africa, even after the entailing democracy, continues to experience high numbers of crime and it is widely believed that the high crime rate plays a role in restraining investment. Highlighting the importance of crime free zone, the Statistics South Africa [Stats SA] (2017) indicates that “a child’s laughter could simply be the most beautiful sound in the world and that children learn through play and further question the situation where such children’s opportunities to play are stifled by the reality of crime in their neighborhoods.”

The 2017 Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS) by Stats SA shows that one in 3 households do not go to open spaces or walk alone in parks, and one in 5 households do not allow their children to play on their own in the area they live. Crime, therefore, impacts negatively on children’s ability to laugh, play, learn and grow because to fear of crime, Stats SA (2017). The survey by Governance, Public Safety, and Justice (GPSJS) showcases that there is an increase in number of households that experienced house robbery and burglary in the five years preceding from 2,1 million in 2015/16 to 2,3 million in 2019/20 (Stats SA, 2017). Most South African citizens from various provinces and race respectively shows their concern about crime within their area of jurisdiction resulting in fear of walking or allowing their children in public space. The following stats per province herein indicate citizens who do not go to open spaces or walk alone in parks in the area they live because to high concern of crime within their area:

Table 3: Households views on crime impacts in South Africa



Indicator	Statistics (Number in thousands)	Year			
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Housebreaking/burglary	Number	970	891	809	983
	Percent	5,8	5,3	4,6	5,4
Home robbery	Number	184	139	112	155
	Percent	1,1	0,8	0,6	0,9
Assault	Number	103	42	51	99
	Percent	0,6	0,3	0,3	0,5
Theft of motor vehicle	Number	68	82	81	42
	Percent	0,4	0,5	0,5	0,2
Deliberate damaging of property	Number	54	52	**	**
	Percent	0,3	0,3	**	**
Sexual offences	Number	15	13	*	12*
	Percent	0,1	0,1	*	0,1
Murder	Number	12	15	11	20
	Percent	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1

* Unweighted number of 3 and below per cell are too small to provide accurate estimates.
 ** Not collected in the 2021/22 round.
 *** Note: Unspecified was excluded from the denominator when calculating percentages.

Source: Stats SA (2021/2022)

From Table 3 shows that 983 000 households in South Africa experienced housebreaking in the 2021/22 reference period. Approximately 155 000 households experienced home robbery, 42 000 experienced theft of a motor vehicle, and 99 000 experienced assault. Housebreaking and home robbery decreased between 2018/19 to 2020/21 and increased in 2021/22. However, the pattern changes for households that experienced assault. Assault levels decreased between 2018/19 and 2019/20 then increased in 2020/21 before increasing further in 2021/22. Theft of motor vehicle increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20, then slightly decreased in 2020/21 before decreasing further in 2021/22, with 42 000 households experiencing this type of crime. Murder levels have remained almost the same in the four periods, although they increased between 2020/21 (11 000) and 2021/22 (20 000). It is important to note that the sexual offences count in the sample was small, therefore it was not possible to calculate disaggregated estimates of acceptable quality (Stats SA, 2021/2022).

Summarily, the 'household crime levels in South Africa' provides that in 2021/22, an estimated 1,4 million incidences of housebreaking occurred, affecting 983 000 households in South Africa. The number of affected households represents 5,4% of all households in the country. Almost 60% (59,2%) of households that experienced housebreaking reported some or all incidences to the police. An estimated 205 000 incidences of home robberies occurred, affecting 155 000 households in 2021/22. The number of affected households represents 0,9% of all households in the country. About 66% of households that experienced home robbery reported some or all incidences to the police and in 2021/22, 42 000 households experienced the theft of motor vehicles in a total of 42 000 incidences. Less than 1% (0,2%) of all households in the country experienced theft of motor vehicles. About 57% (57,2%) of households that experienced theft of motor vehicles reported some or all incidences to the police, which is a 33,8 percentage point decrease compared to the previous year.

Correspondingly, on 'Individual crime levels in South Africa,' an estimated 1 331 000 incidences of theft of personal property occurred in 2021/22, affecting 1 105 000 individuals aged 16 years and older. The number of affected individuals represents 2,6% of the population. About 31% (30,8%) of individuals who experienced theft of personal property reported some or all incidences to the police. A total of 246 000 (0,6% of adults aged 16 and older) individuals experienced street robbery in a total of 295 000 incidences. About 34% (33,7%) of the victims reported some or all incidences to the police,

which is a 21,2 percentage point decrease compared to the previous year. A total of 376 000 (0,9% of adults aged 16 and older) individuals experienced consumer fraud in a total of 844 000 incidences. Results show that 44,2% of the victims reported some or all incidences to the police, which is a 2,9 percentage point increase compared to the previous year. The number individuals that experienced hijacking increased from 64 000 in 2020/21 to 134 000 in 2021/22. An estimated 137 000 hijackings occurred in 2021/22, affecting 134 000 (0,3%) persons aged 16 years and older. About 63% (62,9%) of the victims reported some or all incidences to the police (Stats SA, 2021/2022).

Furthermore, the ‘feelings of safety,’ reflect that about 81% (81,3%) of the population felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhood during the day while 36,0% felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhood during the night. Both figures decreased from 2020/21. Females in general felt safer walking alone in their neighbourhood than males during the day. Similarly, rural residents had a greater feeling of safety walking alone in their areas when it is dark than residents in urban areas. About 48% (47,7%) indicated that they have done something to protect themselves. About 30,4% of the population indicated that they only walk during safer hours and 28,8% indicated they have taken physical protection measures for their home as the main thing they have done to protect themselves against crime. Only 3,8% indicated they carry a weapon (Gun, knife, screwdriver, or blade) as the main thing they have done to protect themselves against crime (Stats SA, 2021/2022).

The Theoretical Definition of Gangs and Evolutions

In defining gangsterism, the 2009 survey by the ‘National Gang Threat’ found that one of the greatest impairments to the collection of accurate gang related data is the lack of consensus in the meaning of the term. The word “group” is one common denominator used across all the different definitions explained. The view explained on defining gangs is that gangs adopt an identity of group, thriving on committing high crime, and able to ground itself or becomes established in a community’s core areas such schools, churches, and political and economic venues (Magidi, Schenk & Erasmus, 2016). Other authors, Egley, Howeel and Major (2006) define gangs as organisation evolving around three or more individuals coming together to form partnership for a common purpose which identifies with and claim territory in the community and engages individually or collectively in violence and other criminal activities.

In relation to the evolutions of gangs, Hagerdon (2005) indicates that gangs are “significant world-wide phenomenon with millions of members and a voice of the marginalised by processes of globalisation”. The evolution of gangs does not originate in United States of America (USA) as some usually claim, but the London gangs were described long before their cousin of USA existed. The scuttlers comprises of female gangs may have existed in the Manchester in the 19th century. World-wide, the industrialisation and other relate processes contributed in the formation of gangs as most people were urbanising to cities. The following are well known long existing gangs, such as the Sierra Leone ‘Rarry boys’ that was formed young immigrants boys, the New Zealand (NZ) “Maori gangs, while the late Yasser Arafat, experienced the guerrilla tactics as a street gang leader in 1940s while in Cairo Egypt, the China “Triads gangs, the Hong Kong morphed gangs. South African as one of the third world countries experienced gangs, or skollies for most of the 20th century. The gangs were more popular in South African prisons [Correctional centres], Hagerdon (2005).

According to Morris (2019), during the time colonial rule consolidation that ended in the Union of South Africa in 1910, a violent enterprise was established by the group of bandits under the leadership of Mzuzephi Mathebula, nicknamed ‘*Nongoloza*.’ The group was targeting migrant workers, township dwellers and white labourer alike. The gang regard itself rebels working against government laws. The group, just like mist gangs, in order to strengthen its core, it established a strict military discipline, ideology, ritual, code and practices. Further, it is reported that *Nongoloza*, was able to use the colonial prison system to establish criminal network spanning the major centre of the country. *Nongoloza* took

advantage of the harsh conditions of the segregated townships and mining compounds around Johannesburg to recruits army that continues existing, though immensely grown, in South Africa's prisons and more recently. Residential perspective, Westbury, Cape Flats, and Northern Port Elizabeth are the well-known three provinces high gangs that is still existing and causing a violent crime even today. In the late 19th and early 20th century, as a result of political economy around Witwatersrand, we witnessed migrant workers and urban youths, known as "tsotsis" established groups.

The established criminal groups [Boko Haram included] were initiated to defend itself against the other and the state and further commit violent crime for their cartel gain. During the 1930s and 1940s Cape Town rural areas continued experiencing economic challenges leading migration to the main city and additional gangs such as '*plaas-jaopies*' evolution. By 1930s, the South Africa continued witnessing evolution of various groups such as the Amalaita, and the Americans, Msomis-the Alexander township legendary groups, '*AmaRashea*' (The Russians), '*Amajapane*' (The Japanese). The groups continue maintaining the aggressive culture to sustain its own existence and dominant. The urban youth gangs, to be unique from other gangs by adopted different dress, adopting unique communication language of some kind known as "Isicamto, Tsotsitaal and the Sabela and choosing different kind of labour.

Motives for Forming Part of Gangs

Sen (1999) is of a view that access to education, health care and employment provides opportunities for people to be agents of their own development and that of others). Weatherburn (2001), country such Australia became predisposed to crime because of high number of citizens or visitors independently find themselves deep rooted in crime. Jun Wu, Xiaochen Hu and Orrick (2021) identify pulls and pushes as the two factors that might result on someone to partake in gangs. Pull factors include reasons that "attract individuals to form part of the active gangs," while push factors are reasons that can compel such person to form part of active gang members. According to Mguzulwa and Gxubane (2019), various authors in their research findings have common understanding that poverty is one of the major pushing factors that leads many young people to join gangs, since gang members often come from impoverished socio-economic backgrounds. Jane (2018) concurs that one of the attractions of gangs for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds is the desire for access to financial and material resources for self-pleasure, particularly in a context of poverty, where such individual fundamental human needs are often not adequately met, or met at all and left with no good choice. Weatherburn (2001) provides that amongst economic and social disadvantages, add the high opportunity and incentives as predisposing factors to commit crime.

Mguzulwa and Gxubane (2019), further explain that the following contributing factors leading individual to partake in gangs activities: 'The safety and protection a gang can offer, the use of substance, appetite to partake in aggressive behaviour, and possession and use of weapon; and linked to these are common peer-group factors such as intimidation by peers to join, acceptance by peers, the loyalty and reward that comes with being part of the gang, control of turf, and a common enemy.' Xiaochen Hu and Orrick (2021) highlight that commonly identified pull factors are such things as opportunities 'to make money, gaining status, sometimes join gang for fun, and to fit in better with peers.'

Although gangs' activities might be similar by focusing on harassing members of the communities for such gangs own leisure, gangs can vary in terms of structure. Young people involved in gang violence fight to kill with pangas, knives and using their hands; they do not even know what caused the fights, and they do not care (Sefali, 2014). For example, "youth gangs operating in Khayelitsha are quite different from the gangs that are operating in Manenberg and Mitchells Plain in Cape Town. Gangs in Manenberg are often connected to organised crime and drugs, while the gangs in Khayelitsha are more about an identity, and their gang fights are about claiming their space and their identity within these communities" (The Khayelitsha Commission Report, 2014). Jun Wu, Xiaochen Hu and Orrick (2021) indicate that while youth may join gangs for various reasons, there are often negative consequences

associated with gang membership, including the disproportionate perpetration of criminal and delinquent behaviors further resulting on being on the wrong side of the law. In relation to the latter, Mguzulwa and Gxubane (2019) reveal that although the involvement in gangs produce the negative outcomes, such as incarceration, drug and alcohol use, injury and death that might hamper the daily lives and positive progress, the involvement may also serve as a protective influence and offer many benefits that are unmet in their homes, schools and neighborhoods to those who join them. Through participation on gangs the hierarchy of various human needs, as theorised by the 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs,' including survival, safety, security, protection, belonging, identity and good self-esteem can be achieved. Further, being member of the gang "serve as a protective factor for at-risk youth who might otherwise succumb to what might be perceived as more devastating outcomes such as continuing poverty and academic failure.

Xiaochen Hu and Orrick (2021) classify this motive under a common push factors where there is a need for protection, especially the protection of the rival gangs. Decker & Van Winkle (1996,) growing up in the gang family might lead to the desire to follow the path. Concurring herein, Decker and Curry (2000) report that a similar pattern of six primary reasons for the youth to join gangs that involve to desire and leisure to meet girls, being together with friends in gang cartel, to feel important, having the power and ability to defend the neighborhood, having family members in a gang, and feeling bored and having nothing positive compelling to perform. Additionally, Weatherburn (2001) and Walden University Education (2022) outline the following key predisposing factors that might contribute to be part of the criminal gangs: 'Biological factors, family factors, influence of delinquent peers, truancy, school performance and intelligence, poverty and unemployment, abuse of substance, tolerance of crime by members of the community, continuous inequality, poverty and unemployment, poor informal social control within the community by the community, adverse childhood experiences, and negative social environment, amongst others.'

The 'Boko Haram and Masakhinya' Gang at Dan Village: Study Focus

South Africa, just like other countries in the world, experiences criminal activities that interfere and disrupt communities' life and their right to live freely. The 2016/2017 SAPS statistics show an increase in various serious crimes occurring place across the country. The community experiences different types of crime such as robbery, house breaking and theft, rape, and hijacking (Department of Police, 2017). South African communities in various provinces continues experiencing gang-related crimes and illegal activities. The 2014 report by Daily Maverick shows high increase of gang related murders by 86% The existence and impact of gangsterism is no longer the activities limited to minority people, or to the urbanized areas, but it turned to the criminal activities that evolved into accommodating various people from all psychosocial structures such as race, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and culture South Africa find itself in a situation where this culture of violence deeply entrenching (Magidi, Schenk & Erasmus, 2016).

By 2019-2022, especially since the emergence of 'Boko Haram' and *Masakhinya* groups, Dan village in Tzaneen, Limpopo Province were cited as notorious and well organised gangsterism groups. These Two (02) group was known to be terrorising the community for the few years, but the Boko Haram became the dominant and polluting the public space making it fearful to live or walk in. especially at night. The group comprised of thirteen man ranging from 19 to 33 years of age. It was notoriously whereby it was committing crimes during the day and night by robbing peoples in taverns, churches, and funerals their belongs such as cellphones and cash, even to harass them. The groups were also linked to other violent crimes such as murder and rape (Letaba Herald, 2019). Mncube and Steinman (2014) emphasise that gangs are no longer the criminal collaboration activity that is restricted mostly to the street corners, prison or poor societies, but are openly exists and take place within and affect members of the community and schools at large. The Boko Haram, Dan village, to ensure victim's submissive, they were using various dangerous life-threatening weapons such as firearms, knives supplemented by the consumption of alcohol.

Image 1: Weapons utilised by the gangs for commission of crimes



Source: Herald (2019)

The South African Police Service at “Ritavi Police Station” in Collaboration with the Local Community Policing Forums in the “Dan” Village

The collaboration between SAPS and members of the community can address the crime experienced by the community particularly in their jurisdictions as the two reside and assigned to monitor area ensuring everyone safety as required constitutionally (Ngoveni, Maluleke and Mabasa, 2022). The main objective of CPF is to combat crime, improve policing service delivery through support, establish connection between the police and the community and improve the safety and security for all law-abiding citizens of the area, Ngoveni (2021). Taking into consideration the nature of crime and its associated effects, in fighting and preventing the terrorist “Boko Haram”, the Institute of Security Studies (ISS) highlight the importance for the government to work together with members of the society in creating awareness campaigns that will establish community support for non-violence approach in shifting the mindset ideology of the perpetrators. It is critical for the government to see the members of the community as the mediators who understand the rise of the insurgency and what might lead the militant to lay down their arms, not to see communities as the victims to achieve their ideology. Members of the community together with their local leaders must also in the forefront bringing in communication strategies that will pursue environment where all stakeholders will peacefully engage for fruitful outcome (Mandi, 2020).

The community safety and prevention of crime is one of South Africa’s main concerns and the establishment of, among others, the SAPS and CPFs, supports this. The latter is a forum that coordinates police-community relations. The Constitution of South Africa, which is the supreme law of the country, emphasises the safety and security of South African citizens. Section 198 of the Constitution, 1996 postulates that national security must ensure that South African individuals live equally, peacefully, in harmony; free from fear; and able to seek a better life (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Since crime takes place in communities and is committed by certain members of the community, it is therefore of much importance that community members work together with the police in the prevention of crime. The need to have multiple role players in fighting crime led to, among others, the establishment of CPFs. The CPFs consist of community members, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Business Against Crime (BAC), Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs), youth organisations, women’s organisations, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), and other stakeholders [National, Provincial, and local spheres of government, including the traditional authorities, and parastatals] (Department of Community Safety and Liaison, 2011).

Infighting gangsterism in Cape Town, from 1990s both government and members of the community came with various several successful community initiatives were launched in this period to counter the growth of gangs in the townships (Van Wyk & Theron, 2005). Pre-1994, South African policing was reactionary in nature. The police were applying the quick in and out policing strategy without the existence of CPF nor any form of street policing as a warning to criminal activities (Minnaar, 2009). It is essential for the CPFs to serve as the foundation of the philosophy of community policing in South

Africa (Davis, Henderson & Merrick, 2003). Although it is the government's constitutional mandate to prevent crime through the Department of Police, it is essential for the community and other civil servant segments to play their respective roles in crime prevention. It has been emphasised that private citizens, community organisations, NGOs, the private sector, and the business community's collaboration with the police is key in the prevention of crime. All stakeholders are regarded as actors of civil society and they all need to be involved in all aspects of the development, planning, and implementation of crime-prevention policies.

The identified stakeholders, applies their experiences and innovative responses, together, further offer in-depth knowledge and creative insights to problems identified in their community. Communities should play an important role in identifying crime-prevention priorities through CPFs in implementation, evaluation, and assisting with identifying a sustainable resource base United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] (2010). The main purpose of CPFs is not to replace the duties of the police or for CPF members to work as police members, but to join forces with the SAPS so that they can fight crime together and improve service delivery. The CPFs were established as members of the public who work actively with the SAPS to solve crime problems in their area, and not as complaint forums. The CPFs must therefore operate in terms of the legislation that regulates their functioning (Department of Community Safety and Liaison, 2011). The Anglo-Saxon (600 to 1066) introduced the collective responsibility system where every community member was expected to monitor the behaviour of other member or group within their area of jurisdiction (Van Heerden, 1982). The first South African Interim Constitution Act (No. 2000 of 1993) took into consideration the formalisation of the establishment of community policing forum within all the police stations (Tessendorf, 1996).

The SAPS Act, 1995 governs the local SAPS in crime prevention activities and ensuring public safety is the one that made a formal provision of collaboration between the police and the community needs about policing. In terms of the Interim Constitution, 1993, the CPFs had to be established to serve the basic two principles as follows: police democratisation, and control of crime in a much-needed effective manner (Malatji, 2016). In 1997, South African government, with the aim of enforcing collaboration between police and members of the community, implemented community policing philosophy the objectives focused on service orientation, partnership, empowerment, problem solving and accountability (Govender, 2019). According to Minnaar (2006), the statements by the politicians even on issues of crime has a significant effect. Irrespective of whether such statements is true, achievable, real value or accurate, such statements always become on news headlines, so, any promise in dealing with crime increases the public hopes and expectations to witness victory against crime. In 2008, the then president of South Africa call for strong inventing of street policing to take over from criminals roaming ruling the street hampering community safety (Minnaar, 2009).

Furthermore, in the 2017 during the State of the Nation Address, by the former South African President [Zuma] promised the community that the fight against crime is an apex priority and that visible policing will increase, building on the successful pattern of deployments utilised during the Safer Festive Season Campaign. He also urged the public to work with the police to ensure safer communities. Let us hope that these initiatives will realise the National Development Plan (NDP), 2030 vision of a South Africa where everyone is safe and feels safe (Stats SA, 2017). The policy framework and guidelines relating to community policing were established in 2001 and focused mainly on the collaboration between the SAPS and the members of the community in crime prevention. The policy and guidelines serve to encourage members of the community to actively participate in developing strategies for crime prevention. The policy and guidelines further serve as a reference tool to be followed to develop a new partnership and reviewing existing arrangements (Mabunda, 2014:21). While focusing violence in schools, associated with gangsterism, Mncube and Harber (2013) maintain that even though violence in various structures is a global problem, all stakeholders must try to ensure that all public space remain safe to promote effective socilaising environment. According to the Department of Police (2022) as part of joint operation known as '*OkaeMoloao*' loosely translated as '*where is the rule of law*' 400 suspects were

arrested in one weekend, outcome applauded by the Provincial Commissioner of Police in the Gauteng Province, indicating the importance and existence of the CPFs and other stakeholders in partnering with the police in the fight against crime. Many police stations in South Africa established CPFs to strengthen the needed collaboration as depicted in Table 4:

Table 4: Police stations and functional CPFs across South Africa

Province	Number of police stations	Number of functional CPFs
Limpopo	102	99
Gauteng	142	142
KwaZulu-Natal	184	184
Eastern Cape	196	195
Free State	110	110
Mpumalanga	87	87
North West	82	81
Northern Cape	91	89
Western Cape	150	150
Total	1 144	1 137

Source: Republic of South Africa (2020)

According to Govender (2019), the extent in which the CPFs plays in crime prevention in many police stations is not that clear, the Herald (2019), indicate that, large number of men in collaboration with the SAPS from the Ritavi Police Station took a decision to introduce and apply street policing through the CPFs in fighting the gangs that were tormenting and killing innocent members of the community. The group was starting at 20h00 during the week and 21h00 on weekends. During the crime fighting campaign, the established community policing structure managed to arrest six members of the Boko Haram and hand to the SAPS. In support of the established CPFs, the SAPS equipped the established CPFs with various necessary crime combating equipments such as reflectors jackets and torches, to name the 02.

Image 2: The South African Police Service and Community Policing Forums members



Source: Herald (2019)

The collaboration between the citizens (CPF) and the provincial detectives, crime intelligence and ministry of police led to the arrest, and conviction of the thirteen members of the notorious “Boko Haram” gang for three years terrorising residents in Dan Village and surrounding areas, under the Ritavi police station. The collaboration was further emphasised by the visit of the then commissioner of police honorable Bheki Cele (Herald, 2019) The gang were convicted for contravening the Rioters Assemblies Act and murder and sentenced by the Polokwane High Court were arrested, to effective six- and ten-years imprisonment respectively for violent crimes (Herald, 2019). The collaboration above is affirmed in the South African White Paper in Safety and Security, 1998, stipulating the need from all stakeholders; members of the community, civil society, NGOs, and private sectors to collaborate in violence and crime prevention for safety purpose (Govender, 2019).

Policy and Regulations in Relation to Police, Community Members' Partnership

The policy framework and guidelines relating to community policing was established in 2001 focusing mainly on the collaboration between SAPS and the members of the community thru CPFs in crime prevention. The policy and guidelines herein serve to encourage members of the community to actively participate in all developing strategies met for crime prevention. The policy and guidelines further serve as a reference tool to be followed to set up new partnership and/ or reviewing the existing arrangements. In the context of collaboration between SAPS and members of the community the policy and guidelines are available to make sure that:

- SAPS and its representative on the collaboration are aware and clear about the purpose and expected results.
- SAPS' own objectives and priorities are adhered and achieved accordingly.
- For positive outcome, all resources are utilised in a best effective manner.
- Both members have a clear mandate and accountable for the expected outcomes.
- Collaboration between SAPS and community members activity outcomes are monitored and reviewed for clarity purposes further.
- Risks for the SAPS, and for the collaboration are used and agreed on collaboration between SAPS and CPFs members are properly authorised and empowered, and that their legal status understood, to make sure that effective crime prevention is emphasized as per the set plan (Mabunda, 2014).

Study Findings and Discussions: The Identifications of Study Themes and Challenges

Stemming from the reviewed literature studies on this subject and the conducted KIIs. The following study themes and challenges are presented as the study findings:

- **Gangs Origin**, this study managed to discover the origin of gangs dates back 19th century and various countries, such as the USA, NZ) China, Sierra Leone, including the establishment of the Boko Haram gang in the Dan Village of South Africa. This is embroiled by gangs that is still existing even to today in the identified study location and the surrounding communities.
- **The Motive to Participant in Gangs**, this study discovered that individuals partake in gangs for some reasons. Other individuals get attracted while other compelled to gang participation. The main purpose of gangs and its main purpose that is more amongst the following: dominant, self-leisure, access to money and protection, fight against government laws especially within their area of jurisdiction. In line with the research topic, the motive herein can be concurred. The Gangs in the Dan Village, Limpopo Province, South Africa were motivated by accesses to money and other appliances to support their individual leisure.
- **The Associated Effects of Gangs**, this study provided that gangs and its motive have a serious negative impact to members of the community. Gangs terrorise and kill the community. Most citizens showed their fear of crime resulting in them minimising the presence in public spaces. The crime statistics shows that the local SAPS are challenged by Boko Haram gangs and the community at large experiencing difficulties to curtail this culture. The Boko Haram, Dan village, Limpopo province South Africa had a serious effects to the law enforcement authorities and community members, often resulting in other members of the community losing their belongs, such as cellphones, money and other valuable items. The worse scenario was the loss of lives as a result. The impact resulting in both members of police, CPFs and high-ranking government officials acknowledge the negative impact and stand together against the gangs.
- **The Collaboration between SAPS and CPFs**, since crime takes place within the community and committed by members of the community, the study highlighted the importance of togetherness between members of police and community through CPFs in crime prevention. The CPFs'

structures were established to emphasise the need for police and members of community in crime prevention. Various authors concurred on the need for integration by various stakeholders in fighting crime to promote safety. The collaboration between members of police and community through CPFs has a positive impact in crime prevention. The collaboration between members of police and CPFs; case study of Dan Village, Limpopo province, South Africa serve as a proof of successful crime prevention strategy. The collaboration between members of police and CPFs played a critical role in the legitimate elimination of the existence of the 'Boko Haram' leading to effective sentence of the gang members.

Positively, Three (03) Men have been handed combined jail terms of 384 years in connection with a two-month crime spree in Polokwane. The Men in question allegedly identified themselves as members of the Boko Haram gang. The Limpopo High Court found Ndou Lukase Rembuluwani, 29; Ndou Ben, 29; and Khoza Ngobeni Small, 28, guilty in connection with 25 cases which were committed in the Seshego and Westenburg [RPA included] policing areas in September and October 2017. The Trio was among the group of criminals who were calling themselves 'Boko Haram,' terrorising communities around the said areas by committing serious crimes, including 'murder, attempted murder, possession of unlicensed firearms and ammunition, house breaking with the intention to rob, robbery with aggravating circumstances, malicious damage to property, theft and house robberies (McCain, 2022).'

McCain (022) went on to highlights that the sentenced offenders were also convicted for contravening immigration laws for being in the country illegally. Among their victims were players from the Magesi Football Club who were robbed at gunpoint of their cellphones, soccer kit, shoes and clothes at the team's clubhouse on 18 October 2017. Police arrested the men after an attempted robbery on 19 October 2017 in which an accomplice was shot dead, allegedly by the victim. The next day, the investigating officer received a tip-off from a hospital. According to the information, the suspects sent their girlfriends to go to the hospital and check if their accomplice was brought in. The police immediately activated a snap operation consisting of detectives and Public Order Policing (POP) members. On arrival, they found the suspects' girlfriends, who led the police to Seshego, where the suspects were hiding. The three men were arrested, and police recovered some of the stolen property. The court ultimately sentenced the three accused to an effective 128 years' imprisonment each (McCain, 2022).

Conclusions and Recommendations

In *conclusions*, everyone knows and agrees that crime does not discriminate, and its impact is unbearable always, therefore, it is undeniable that various stake holders partnership in crime prevention as per the community policing philosophy supplemented by the establishment of the CPFs becomes a living strategy. The researcher concludes by indicating that police alone, taking into consideration its ration versus the population will not effectively manage and win in crime prevention. Members of the public must be encouraged to take charge in crime prevention. This can be achieved through the existence of partnership between police and members of the community through the legitimate CPFs. The existence of CPFs is very critical and must be prioritised and compulsory supported always for the positive outcome in crime prevention. The existence and contribution of police and members of the community partnership must not be hidden. The contribution by the partnership between police and members of the community through CPFs in all various stations must be clearly acknowledged in all platforms. All members of the community must be taught and well informed of the importance of the CPFs to address the negative view on it and to receive the desired support continuously. The ministry of police and other structures must be on aboard in supporting the CPFs for the positive outcome in the area of their jurisdiction and country at large.

For *recommendations*, the failure by police in dealing with gangs such as the 'Boko Haram' will results in these criminal structures spreading and gaining stronghold. Since gangs is one of the serious

treats to the community, economy and country at large, therefore, it is critical that all stakeholder come on board to prevent and eliminate the illegal structure in taking place further. The evolution of any gangs must be crashed on its first impression. The main cause of gangs and its motive must be proactively identified, attended and rooted out. The community policing supplemented by the relationship between police and members of the community through the establishment of the CPFs must be prioritised and considerably emphasised.

Taking into consideration the South African population versus the police ration, the establishment of CPFs and effective utilisation must be in the forefront of every police station. The existence of CPFs and its priority must be in the ministry of police and government at large main agenda and prioritised without any compromise. The impact of CPFs as crime fighting partner must be acknowledged and publicized even within the police crime statistics report. Although CPFs is a volunteer participation, since it is established in line with the constitution and SAPS Act, it is of utmost important that its existence be highly energised through the provision of necessary equipments and support that is deemed necessary. To address some community members negative view on CPFs and to receive the desired support continuously, all members of the community, through various platforms such as radios, and Televisions (TVs) must be taught and well informed of the importance of the CPFs.

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