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Berhanu Mengistu

Old Dominion University, bmengist@odu.edu

Wolfgang Pindur

Old Dominion University, wpindur@odu.edu

Marius Leibold

Stellenbosch University, ml@dsiwise.com

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CRIME AND COMMUNITY POLICING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Berhanu Mengistu

Old Dominion University

Wolfgang Pindur

Old Dominion University

Marius Leibold

Stellenbosch University

ABSTRACT

This analysis examines the concept of community policing in the context of new South African disposition. With the radical change in social order that accompanied the fall of apartheid, many aspects of South African administration are shifting focus to more community- and citizen-centered ideals. The article first analyzes the qualitative and quantitative nature of crime in South Africa in order to identify the practicality and possible effectiveness of community policing. With this in mind, the concept of community policing as philosophy and practical application is then addressed, citing modern examples of its use. The particulars of current South African culture and resources are then considered and compared with factors necessary to the effective use of community policing. In sum, the analysis reveals that South Africa's current infrastructure seems to be inadequate to the task of efficient community policing.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a nation in transition, attempting to cope with massive changes resulting from the demise of the apartheid system. The removal of apartheid has created high expectations among the majority of peoples of South Africa. In the area of national policing, there are optimistic expectations that there will be a removal of the oppressive control exerted by the old South African Police Force, and in its place will exist a new progressive paradigm of a partnership between the people and the government. The South African Police Force was initially focused as a state mechanism to ensure internal civil social order. The new focus has recently shifted from maintaining the social order to a more traditional police mission centered on crime detection, prevention and community service.

There is widespread doubt as to whether the police force will be able to successfully shift its focus and whether the police force has the necessary skills required for this change in mission (Schlemmer, 1995). The public view is that the police force is incapable of controlling crime, particularly violent crime. An increasingly garrison-like

African Social Science Review

mentality at all levels of the community has stimulated the government and the private sector into formulating policy recommendations and toward restoring personal and property security. Meanwhile, the private security industry has rapidly expanded and currently employs more people than the police force (Blecher, 1996).

Regardless of the policing model implemented, a new model incorporating community policing will be difficult to implement in the South African context. The Annual Plan of the South African Police Service for 1996/1997 reflects a two-fold strategy of crime prevention and combating existing criminality. A key component of this plan is the use of community policing, defined as a set of interconnecting policies and programs introduced with success in various cities in the United States and world-wide which establishes a collaborative partnership between the police and the citizens. Although the concept of community policing has had several successes worldwide, the authors raise the question whether this policing model is unconditionally exportable to the South African context. Theoretical views of crime and the change process affect the choice of organizational structures and methods for the successful introduction of community policing in South Africa. Given the escalating criminal violence, the enormity of political and social change, and the unlikely prospects of rapidly meeting the high economic expectations of the newly powerful majority, the key question is what organizational model is most conducive to managing continuous, structural social change? If the model chosen is indeed a community policing model, the next question is whether it will be effective in the South African context.

CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

Crime continues to be a very serious problem in the South African society. Rates of crime and violence remain extremely high, and only the category of public violence (rioting, unlawful assembly, etc.) has abated significantly since the new democracy began. Violent crime has stabilized at high levels. Commercial crime remains at a high and sustained level. Comparisons to relatively peaceful societies like Sweden, New Zealand, Canada and Denmark show South Africa to a violent place, with overall crime rates over double the world average. Even worse, South Africa may be the most murderous society on earth, with a murder rate of between 45 and 70 per 100,000, exceeding the rates of countries like Columbia, the Philippines and the Sudan (Schlemmer, 1995). Table 1 supports Schlemmer's perspective on the seriousness of South Africa's crime rate.

Crime and Community Policing in South Africa

TABLE 1. Comparison of Crime Rates per 100,000

Country*	Murder	Rape	Grievous assault	Theft	Fraud	Total number of offences
South Africa	53,4	99,7	497,1	2 887,8	141,8	4 934,4
Belgium	31,4	89,9	3 332,9	27 548,4	4 439,7	58 330,9
Canada	5,2	na	769,1	4 855,3	352,9	10 351,6
Honduras	63,6	2,0	165,0	102,5	Na	353,0
Namibia	72,4	44,4	657,8	1 377,3	142,0	3 358,8
New Zealand	3,9	34,7	546,3	7 483,6	759,9	13 853,6
Swaziland	88,1	89,3	589,1	2 614,4	37,5	4 853,1
USA	9,0	39,2	430,2	4 896,1	Na	5 374,4
Zimbabwe	5,0	23,7	193,6	537,5	48,9	2 160,5

* Statistics show only selected countries obtained from Interpol data, which reflected statistics for 90 countries in 1994.

** The accuracy of crime figures elsewhere in Africa is in some instances highly questionable, as in the cases of Rwanda, Angola, Burkina Faso and Mozambique, which are or have been ravaged by wars, or where the necessary infrastructure for keeping proper records does not exist.

Source: CIMS, 1997

In the black communities, the murder rate may be as much as 20 times higher than in the white suburbs (Contreras, 1995). Active media coverage of crimes directed against individuals, such as car hijackings, add to public fears and perceptions of ineffective policing. Crime was the biggest campaign issue in the November 1995 local elections (Builta, 1996). In a 1995 survey, the percentage of respondents rating the number one problem in South Africa was a dramatic 46 percent for crime, followed by 18 percent for unemployment, 4 percent for housing, and 2 percent for poor education (NEDCOR Project, 1996).

Current crime statistics show that the ratio of crime per 100,000 population has either decreased or stabilized since 1994 (See Table 2). Only the incidence of rape has increased. This increase could be due to an increase in the number of rapes and/or to changes in South African society that makes it more likely that rape will be reported.

TABLE 2. Violent Crime Ratio per 100,000 of the Population

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997
Murder	66.6	64.6	61.1	56.9
Attempted Murder	67.8	64.3	67.5	65.1
Robbery with aggravating Circumstances	210.8	194.1	159.2	161.3
Rape	105.3	115.2	119.5	120.6
Assault (serious)	521.9	535.8	545.6	542.4
Common Assault	481.0	497.3	486.2	466.8

Source: CIMC Quarterly Crime Report 1/98 found at: http://www.saps.co.za/8_crimeinfo/198/ tablw1.htm

High crime is also affecting productivity and the economy in the business sector. The incidence of crime in the business context is three times higher than in the personal or domestic sphere, with the dominant form of crime being truck and van hijacking, a violent act distinguished from simple theft by the threat of harm to drivers. Crime dominates the decisions of small businesses regarding investment and expansion: 20 percent of small businesses had not invested more in 1995 due to fear of crime (NEDCOR Project, 1996).

In addition to high crime rates, another significant problem is the poor outcomes of the criminal justice system in terms of the low rates of arrest and conviction. For each 1000 crimes, only 450 are reported, 230 solved, and 100 prosecuted, yielding 77 convictions with 36 offenders actually imprisoned (NEDCOR Project, 1996). Given public perception, actual rates of both personal/domestic and business crimes, and a weak system of criminal justice, South Africa has significant problems to address to restore the safety and security of its citizens.

KEY REASONS FOR HIGH CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

When viewing growth of crime and prevention strategy in South Africa, there are unique and complicating factors that exist. South African history is dominated by colonialism, racism, apartheid, and repressive labor policies. The economy was built on systematically enforced racial division in every sphere of society, including official segregation in education, health care, welfare, transportation and employment. One need only compare the black townships, which lack even basic infrastructure, to prosperous, well-resourced white suburbs to realize the breadth of the inequality extant in South African society (African National Congress, 1994).

Crime and Community Policing in South Africa

Income distribution in South Africa is racially distorted and ranks as one of the most unequal in the world. Even in the economic heart of the country, Gauteng Province, unemployment is at 46 percent among blacks. One thousand rural people per month migrate to the cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria, only to become squatters (Buita, 1996). The economy has been able to absorb only five percent of the estimated 300,000 per year entering the job market. Estimates of the GNP growth required for such assimilation are 56 percent annually, about double the current rate (Central Intelligence Agency, 1995; Liebenberg, 1996). The apartheid-based marginalization of black youth and the slow growth of the job market have led to increases in numbers of youth "at-risk" for criminal behavior (Interdepartmental Strategy Team, 1995).

Apart from the general political, social, and economic conditions in South Africa, the authors see three dominant specific factors for the state of high crime: 1) illegitimacy of prior regimes, 2) multiple police forces, and 3) a mismatch of national police strategies with community policing which is designed to focus on local neighborhood-based conditions.

Reason #1 - Illegitimacy of prior regimes. Apartheid and the campaign for democratization by the African National Congress (African National Congress, 1994) created unique tensions and violence. To enforce apartheid, the Security Police, a unit within the South African Police Force, conducted anti-ANC covert operations and created a paramilitary "Third Force" (after the National Defense Force and the Police Force) with the Inkatha Freedom Party, specifically to conduct terror campaigns against black activists. The police force was viewed by the majority of the citizens as the first line of defense for the apartheid regime rather than providing service to the community. The terror included violent political crimes and routine disinformation, known to and condoned by senior generals in the police, some of whom were discovered to have participated in the planning of public violence against ANC members (Brummer & Koch, 1994) and other resistance groups. Rooting out the remnants of this Third Force and other covert groups is a significant problem (African National Congress, 1994). While the police participation in anti-black violence and political intimidation has been estimated at only about 7 percent of the police force, and that almost exclusively in the Security component (Brummer & Koch, 1994), the pervasiveness of the involvement has created an atmosphere of distrust and anti-police animus nation-wide. Given that even the "legal" authorities disobeyed the law, the final result is that ignoring the law has become the norm in South Africa.

The legitimization of violence associated with political causes and the view of violence as an acceptable means of resolving social, political and domestic conflicts have also given rise to a culture of violence in South Africa, aggravated and perhaps caused by the South African history of authoritarian, oppressive application of police force to maintain the apartheid system against the majority black population (Interdepartmental Strategy Team, 1995). Overlaying these violent tensions is the struggle of the new democracy to bring about what Nelson Mandela has called a "profound transformation at all levels of government and society" (Government of South Africa, RDP White Paper, 1996, Preamble). In essence South Africa is in the midst of total nation building, but, unfortunately, the means

African Social Science Review

to the new state may include continued violence, lawlessness, and social upheaval.

The pervasiveness of organized crime is also reflected in the atmosphere of lawlessness in South Africa. Given a weak social infrastructure, poverty, lack of trust, and other conditions, organized crime has found a strong foothold with conditions favorable for continued expansion. The strength of and expansion of organized crime poses a threat and a challenge to the law and order of South Africa, but unfortunately it has become part of the recognizable landscape of lawlessness, often supported by corrupt or inept components of the law enforcement infrastructure.

The people of South Africa have been terrorized from all directions, public and private, with violence and lawlessness. This has created a fortress mentality, where private security guards and systems are required to establish even the hope of a safe and secure personal environment, explaining the mushrooming growth of private security service providers. This history of both terrorism and fortress mentality have also become the norm, and trying to change these attitudes also poses a formidable challenge to new law enforcement initiatives. With people being totally unfamiliar with how to live in a society of free movement and inconspicuous police presence, it will take a lot of time and building of trust to establish new habit patterns.

Reason #2 - Multiple police forces. The South African Police Force has a difficult challenge in trying to unite the historically divided "police forces." The original mission of the national police force, as noted earlier, was to protect the state and preserve order, not to necessarily protect the citizens. The national police force was traditionally the state's "first line of defense." The transition to a philosophy where the citizen is the client, rather than the state, will take some time, and the result is an organization that has divided loyalties and conflicting missions.

Internally, the national police force does not have strong cohesion and unity. Some black police feel alienated from their white superiors, and often the black police officers feel equally alienated from other black citizens. The racial and gender mix of the force is also a divisive factor, and the management structure is not racially or gender-representative of the population.

In South Africa there also exists a "third force" of paramilitary terrorists (previously mentioned). This is a covert arm of the old security police who are political opponents of the African National Conference who still conduct terror campaigns against the ANC and are still armed, active, and uncontrolled. Meanwhile, the ANC seems to have had two types of forces. On the one hand, there was a guerilla force who were well organized and controlled and are now effectively demobilized in the post-apartheid era. On the other hand, the ANC had informal township self-defense forces that were, in some cases, heavily armed and uncontrolled, and are now unaccounted for and believed to be bandits contributing to the national crime spree.

There is yet another component of South Africa's "police force." The so-called independent states of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei also have had their own police forces which are now supposed to be part of the integrated South African police

Crime and Community Policing in South Africa

force. This integration will be difficult to accomplish given the historical legacies of animosity.

Finally, the private security component in South Africa is a sizeable security force. Private security forces have 240,000 registered guards as compared to 141,000 police officers (Blecher, 1996). Private security forces pose many difficulties for the state that include regulation, supervision, training, involvement in unauthorized activities, and numerous other problematic issues. For example, private security firms are required by law to check fingerprints before they employ someone to serve in their organization. However, the government system that is in place is unable to enforce this law. Another problematic area lies in the fact that private security employers are abusing the loophole created for tax purposes where a private security firm does not have to register with the government if that firm employs less than 20 people. Preliminary research indicates that private firms are taking advantage of this loophole by hiring 19 people under several different employer's names, thus gaining a larger workforce.

Reason #3 - Mismatch of national strategies to local conditions. The national strategies offered by the South African government and the lack of community linkages suggest a mismatch of solution to problem. The May 1996 National Crime Prevention Strategy is a commendable attempt to strategically develop a plan for crime prevention, but unfortunately may be misapplied when failing to take into account local community circumstances. There is little evidence to suggest that a national strategy for crime prevention and resolution can be applied at the local level. The national role in this area is best seen as facilitating and supporting local initiatives rather than developing specific strategies for implementation. In fact, the continuation of national strategy development may ultimately harm the development of locally-based initiatives focusing on specific community concerns.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNITY POLICING

Community policing is a philosophy of police service delivery which recognizes that the maintenance of order and the prevention of crime, traffic, and social order problems are efforts shared by the police and the citizenry. The community and the police work in a partnership to identify and analyze problems and then develop and implement strategies to deal with them.

This philosophy of community policing is predicated on the belief that solving these problems requires police departments to develop a new relationship with the law-abiding people of the community, allowing them a greater voice in setting local priorities, and involving them in efforts to improve the overall quality of life in their neighborhoods. It shifts the focus of police work from handling random calls for assistance to problem solving (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990).

What does appear to be an effective use of police officers in crime prevention is a partnership program between police and the citizens of a community, based on trust, and

African Social Science Review

oriented toward community consensus on problem prioritization and solution. Such a partnership acts as a catalyst for connecting citizens to a wide range of governmental services. As a result, police are more in touch with the citizens, receive more citizen input, and respond better to citizen needs. Reduced fear of police encourages more frequent non-crisis communication and an increased opportunity for information sharing without the appearance of collaborating, a frequently cited barrier against citizen involvement in intelligence or evidence gathering against criminals.

Giving police an opportunity for regular contact with the citizenry removes the "us versus them" mentality. Officers know they will be challenged and held accountable for their actions in the neighborhood. They become less likely to engage in corrupt behavior and more likely to receive help if in difficulty (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1992). Resultant job enlargement is cited as a primary enhancement in police job satisfaction research (Radelet & Carter, 1994). Incorporation of citizens into police support groups may increase effectiveness of crime intelligence gathering and prevention (Philip, 1996).

Organizational models for community policing emphasize team concepts, networking, boundary loosening, multi-agency lines of communication and governmental support for and response to police requests for non-police related community issues. Central police control exists to provide training, to facilitate communications, to help secure resources and to coordinate special law enforcement activities, such as task forces against particular crime problems or rapid response teams (Radelet & Carter, 1994).

As an example, Miami, Florida, (USA) has formed Neighborhood Enhancement Teams (NETs) that give municipal government a presence in the neighborhoods and offer wide-ranging services, including neighborhood resource officers, public service aides, code inspectors for zoning, sanitation and public works, and job counselors dispersed to decentralized service centers across the city. Each NET organizes and supports crime watches, uses a citizen board to deal with nuisance complaints, including drug-related activity and prostitution, emphasizes code adherence and enforcement, works as a link to provide better city services and provides a structure, location and forum for resident complaints and concerns (Miami Citizens Have One-Stop Shopping, 1995).

A similar and equally impressive effort has been made in San Jose, California, (USA) where a highly visible multi agency approach is taken to solving community problems through "Project Crackdown." Resources are provided for law enforcement, recreation and youth programs, code enforcement, housing and other county, state and private agency activities, coordinated through local in-community facilities (Bullock, 1995).

Parallels to change-supportive organizational structure are apparent: networks, bottom-up problem solving, multi-skilled people at the point of interface with community or environment. Community policing requires a self-renewing organization, adaptability, and multilevel communications for learning and solving, not merely for receiving hierarchical direction; change models mirror these requirements. Creativity and innovation in design of community policing programs is evident in anecdotal examples; change models would predict this to occur. Finally, community policing principles effectively address all three

Crime and Community Policing in South Africa

dimensions of the change problem posited by Tichy: technical reorganization and resource allocation, political power sharing and local empowerment, and cultural recognition and affirmation in the community-based prioritization of policing efforts (Tichy, 1983).

As mentioned previously, the national crime prevention strategy will cause difficulties for the implementation of community policing. First, the community policing model has traditionally had the best fit on a local level, yet in South Africa it is being organized and managed via a national bureaucracy. Second, the national crime prevention strategy is attempting to shift the emphasis from a security issue to a social issue, yet there are inadequate resources to combat social problems, thus dooming the success of the program. Finally, the national strategy duly recognizes the "culture of violence" that exists in South Africa, yet the police service has yet failed to overcome the "culture of control" within the service. Until this culture is adequately changed, the community policing model will be mismatched to the organization applying it.

There are no viable community linkages to ensure the success of a community policing model in South Africa. There are few local police stations (compare Japan's 15,000 police stations to South Africa's 1,200 police stations) (Interdepartmental Strategy Team, 1996). The recruiting efforts for police are national in scope and focus. Also, the organization is functionally organized on a national level, creating a national hierarchy of "stovepipes" which will most likely not be responsive to local needs.

RESPONDING TO CRIME

Responses in South Africa to instability and crime have ranged from argument over statistical accuracy to vigilantism. Suburban whites have turned homes into garrisons, complete with vicious dogs, razor wire and armed guards summoned by "panic buttons" (Matloff, 1995). Common concerns resulting in a sense of general lawlessness include high numbers of firearms in society, growth of organized crime, increased white collar crime and attendant economic effects, increased gender violence, inter-group conflict, vehicle theft and hijacking, and corruption in the justice system (Interdepartmental Strategy Team, 1995).

The new democracy is struggling to overcome a racially-based, disproportionate distribution of criminal justice resources, which had concentrated on the criminalization of political protest and activity. Insufficient and ill-equipped crime detection and prevention personnel, outdated systems and fragmented departments contribute to a system that has been unable to cope with the demands created by the need to provide services to all the people since the 1994 National Unity Government took office (Interdepartmental Strategy Team, 1995).

The government, in May 1995, decided to develop the first National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). The resulting document stated that any successful crime prevention strategy must be information- and analysis-based, must contain multiple substrategies involving multiple agencies, both public and private, and must require the breaking down of the concept of crime into specifics that would allow crimes to be attacked

African Social Science Review

with specific strategies. The NCPS proposed four "pillars" of action to implement the overall strategy: strengthening the criminal justice system, designing crime resistant governmental systems (identity documents and vehicle registration system), creating educational crime prevention programs aimed at school-going youth, and strengthening South Africa's regional security. Community Policing was specifically recommended as a goal for South African Police Service (SAPS) restructuring (Interdepartmental Strategy Team, 1995).

To that end, the Government of National Unity's Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) recommended policing programs cutting across divisional and agency lines, including the establishment of Community Safety Centers (CSCs), accommodating representatives of multiple departments in current buildings such as police stations, clinics, day care centers and courthouses from where each could render services in a "one-stop," safe and secure environment. Future provisions of the plan include establishing satellite stations, where the different role players would be placed under one roof in decentralized service points. Nine pilot programs were begun in February, 1996 (Government of South Africa, The RDP, Safety and Disorder, 1996). At the time of writing, of the nine pilot programs implemented, data have only been collected for Johannesburg and Pretoria. The data have not been made available to the public yet.

A ten point police transformation program was launched in February, 1995. The plan included human resources management changes to accommodate police unionization and improve the work environment, proposed new basic and field training of a full year (up from six months) for recruits, and a service-wide training project, called "Ubuntu," to expose more than 146,000 police officers to the new policing philosophy of the SAPS (Government of South Africa, The South African Police Service, 1996). Recommendations to improve public service compensation were included in budget proposals (Liebenberg, 1996).

A private sector response, the NEDCOR Project, agreed with many of the proposals, while calling for additional tough treatment of criminals and a sense of urgency in implementation. The Project criticized the government policy as well-intentioned but not decisive. Also, NEDCOR Project analysis criticized the new South African Police Service organization for still being too centralized, arguing that crime prevention programs need to be implemented on a local scale. It recommended that specific responsibility be assigned to SAPS for motivating and assisting vigorous crime prevention programs at provincial, municipal and local levels, funded by the central government (NEDCOR Project, 1996).

In addition to NCPS recommendations for implementing community policing, NEDCOR called for short term emphases on specific crimes (hijacking and business-related crime), improvement of SAPS as a professional career option to reduce corruption, and training current SAPS staff to improve management skills (NEDCOR Project, 1996).

The opposition Democratic Party developed a Safety and Security Policy which also favored a single national police service, while urging the decentralization of policing powers to lower levels of government, allowing for community action and empowerment. One-stop, 24-hour metropolitan police service in every city, accountable to local government, would be formed to supplement SAPS. A Community Organized Crime Prevention Service (COPS)

Crime and Community Policing in South Africa

was recommended, whereby communities would decide for themselves the degree of policing required and make arrangements for the kind of policing that would suit them best (Democratic Party of South Africa, 1996).

By December, 1995, the former South African Police and 10 former "homeland" agencies had been combined into the single South African Police Service. The organization of the new police service has five centrally managed national divisions, designed along functional lines, only one of which is specifically mandated to interact with communities to develop priorities for service: the National Standards and Management Services Division. This division is designed as a policy making and consultative entity, and charged with implementing a government-approved Community Safety Plan advancing principles of crime prevention for national trends and local-level specifics. The division sets priorities for geographic areas of concentration, categories of crimes on which to focus, and partnership strategies with local civil authorities. A National Crime Investigation Division, a National Safety Services Division (which includes border patrol, public order, protective guard and emergency services), human resources and support services divisions complete the organization (Government of South Africa, SAPS Divisions, 1996).

Police search and seizure powers and emergency action powers were reduced. Military-style ranks were abolished (Government of South Africa, The South African Police Service, 1996). The police reserve has been de-emphasized and steps have been taken to make policing a more attractive professional career option.

As discussed earlier, a ten point police transformation program was launched in February, 1995, with a focus on human resources management changes and training (Government of South Africa, The South African Police Service, 1996). Anti-corruption measures included public service compensation budget proposals (Liebenberg, 1996). Funding for community policing programs has been allocated from the Reconstruction and Development Program fund (Government of South Africa, Ministry for Safety and Security, 1995).

CONCLUSION

On the positive side, community policing seems a good fit for a changing society. Organizing according to models for managing change allows police forces to decentralize, to focus on environmental needs and to conduct problem solving activities. Dealing with uncertainty and instability requires empowering those who best know the problems to devise the solutions - in the case of policing, the community partner. Information sharing and networking are primary tasks of each decentralized node of a change-oriented organization; the structure of community policing is based on the on-site police officer having access to cross-boundary information and services. The change organization creates a place for the individual, even in the midst of uncertainty, and so creates stakeholders with motivation for participation and improvement; community policing strives to build trust, enlist participation and further involve the citizens in the work of maintaining and enhancing their own social

African Social Science Review

environment. This approach, we believe, has the potential for instituting conflict-limiting structures such as shared goals, common objectives, and the opportunity to work together among former adversarial groups.

On the negative side, there are many prerequisite conditions necessary for community policing strategies to be effective. Community policing has worked well in places where the existing infrastructure and culture could support it. In South Africa, the authors do not feel that these conditions exist.

The South African context has too many detractors that need to be repaired before community policing can be successfully implemented. Resources must be added to meet the demand and improve the police/client ratio, and those resources must be correctly managed to establish a reputation of trust and confidence with the public. There must be a clear and rapid departure from the former methods and goals of the police, and it needs to be replaced with a customer focus. Each of the problems addressed (including illegitimacy of prior regimes, multiple police forces, and national/local mismatch) need to have focused and innovative solutions to change the baseline conditions. Even though it is not possible to change the violent and lawless history of previous regimes, it is still possible to correct the deficiencies and build a new trust. It is possible to take the multiple police forces that currently exist and mold them into a more credible and unified force. It is possible to devise a structure that is nationally managed and yet is responsive to local conditions. Given the right environmental conditions, community policing can eventually succeed in South Africa.

Policing in South Africa has undergone a radical change since 1994 in terms of organization and democratization. The shift has been from a militarized force, autocratic and bureaucratic, to a service, characterized by participation and problem solving. However, the South African response to the wide call for community policing appears to be more centralized than the model might suggest, with a national organization relying on local systems and governments for moral and physical support, but retaining fiscal, personnel management and policy management control. In fact, this centralized organization has been criticized by opposition leaders, who point out the local nature of crime and suggest that the national strategy needs to be more locally driven or be doomed to failure (Leon, 1995). Functionally organized headquarters elements may pledge coordination and cooperation, but compete internally for resources. That local authorities have never had their own police forces is surely a precedent for the design of the current program, and it is possible that creation of municipal police forces is in the future. However, the structure of the South African Police Service does suggest that the front line police officer will be less likely to answer to local civic authority than to the resource provider in central headquarters.

The goals of cross-boundary service provision and "one stop shopping" for social and judicial services may be achieved. The police officer in the local community may well become the trusted go-between. However, the functional organization of the national divisions in the SAPS argues for additional layers of bureaucracy and communications, even if each division disperses its operational forces to the same communities at the same time.

Crime and Community Policing in South Africa

Change and its uncertain environment allow organizations to innovate and to transform. The South African Government of National Unity has taken advantage of its change mandate to pursue those goals. Community policing has a promising future as a result of the wide acceptance of its principles, provided that a traditional, functional organizational structure allows full empowerment and decentralization of problem solving to the communities in need of restored order. Essentially South Africa has three choices. First, the country may decide to keep the existing nationally-based police system and to thereby continue a focus on traditional policing methods. Second, it can decentralize police services to the provincial level. Third, it could embrace community policing at the neighborhood level and develop citizen-police partnerships. This moves policing to the local government level. Only the adoption of this community policing model, supported by national funds given to individual communities, can significantly effect South Africa's serious crime problem.

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Crime and Community Policing in South Africa

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