

6 March 2018

English only

**Commission on Crime Prevention
and Criminal Justice****Twenty-seventh session**

Vienna, 14–18 May 2018

Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

**Use and application of United Nations standards
and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice****UNODC Input for United Nations System-wide Guidelines
on Safer Cities****Note by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime***Summary*

In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ which calls for the promotion of peaceful, safe and inclusive societies and cities (Goals 11 and 16), and following the adoption of the New Urban Agenda,² UNODC supports Member States to introduce crime prevention practices that effectively address risk factors of crime at all levels. In response to General Assembly resolution 68/188, which, inter alia, requested UNODC to provide substantive contributions to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) with regard to efforts to complement the development of United Nations guidelines on safer cities, taking into consideration the Guidelines for Cooperation and Technical Assistance in the Field of Urban Crime Prevention and the Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime, the Office developed a set of recommendations, presented in this report, which were shared with the Executive Director of UN-Habitat in January 2018. The report stresses the need for crime prevention action that is cross-sectoral and multi-level, and builds on the deliberations from an expert meeting on Urban Crime, Good Governance and Sustainable Development, held from 31 May to 2 June 2017 at the United Nations headquarters in New York, and co-organized by UNODC, UN-Habitat, the Habitat III Secretariat and the Government of Canada.

* E/CN.15/2018/1.

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

² General Assembly resolution 71/256*.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Recommendations	3
A. Complementarity	4
B. Responsibilities and leadership	4
Links between local and transnational organized crime	5
C. Approaches	6
1. Developmental and social crime prevention	6
2. Locally based crime prevention	7
3. Situational prevention	7
4. Tertiary crime prevention (Prevention of recidivism)	8
D. Cooperation and partnerships	8
E. Sustainability and accountability	8
F. Knowledge base	9
G. Human rights, rule of law and a culture of lawfulness	10
H. Tailor-made interventions for at-risk groups	11
I. Youth crime prevention	11
J. Community-oriented justice	12
1. Community-oriented policing	12
2. Access to justice	13
3. Provision of legal aid	13
4. Protection and treatment of victims	14
III. The way forward	14

I. Introduction

1. An integrated approach to urban crime prevention and, more broadly, to sustainable development and urbanization, requires cities and national authorities to ensure effective governance in urban areas, foster resilience of local communities and develop outreach strategies to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of society. City administrations are well-placed to building resilience to crime and violence of their citizens given their understanding of local challenges and opportunities. Building resilience requires innovative thinking about who may be able to contribute to changing behaviour and bolstering the intervention capacities of communities. In this regard, the development of United Nations System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities is a welcome and timely initiative, especially in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.³ With the 2030 Agenda, the reduction of crime and violence (Goal 16) and the creation of safe, inclusive and resilient cities (Goal 11) are at the heart of global efforts to promote sustainable development. At the same time, the New Urban Agenda that was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in October 2016⁴ creates a clear connection between urbanization and development, including a focus on safety and security of city residents.

2. In response to General Assembly resolution 68/188, this document provides substantive contributions to the development of United Nations System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities, a process led by UN-Habitat,⁵ with a view to ensure that these Guidelines will complement existing international standards and norms on crime prevention.⁶ More specifically, and with reference to the aforementioned resolution, as well as the mandate of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Office's contribution put forward as recommendations in this report, highlight components of effective crime prevention that national and local authorities may wish to consider as part of their efforts to enhance safety and security in cities and urban areas. Given that urban crime prevention action is required at various levels of government, UNODC recommends that the Guidelines indicate clearly whether initiatives are to be taken at the national, subnational or local/city level, or at a combination of these levels.

3. This document also reflects the deliberations that took place during an expert meeting held from 31 May to 2 June 2017 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This meeting was organized by UNODC in cooperation with UN-Habitat, the Habitat III Secretariat and the Government of Canada, and attended by experts from the United Nations system, governmental and non-government institutions and academia.

II. Recommendations

4. Further to the above, the following set of recommendations divided in ten key areas may guide and inform the drafting of the United Nations System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities. This list does not aim to be exhaustive, and can be expanded if required.

³ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 71/256*.

⁵ See resolution 24/6 adopted at the 24th Session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council, on 15th of April of 2013.

⁶ Including the 1995 Guidelines for Cooperation and Technical Assistance in the Field of Urban Crime Prevention (Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/99, annex) and the 2002 Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime (Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13, annex).

A. Complementarity

5. The United Nations standards and norms on crime prevention, including the 1990 Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency,⁷ the 1995 Guidelines for Cooperation and Technical Assistance in the Field of Urban Crime Prevention,⁸ and the 2002 Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime,⁹ provide strategic guidance to national authorities on approaches to preventing crime and victimization, in addition to prevention articles in the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC)¹⁰ and the Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).¹¹

6. As requested by Member States in General Assembly resolution 68/188, the Guidelines on Safer Cities should complement these standards by offering direction on the design and implementation of urban safety and crime prevention policies and programmes, and recommending action at national, subnational or local/city levels.

B. Responsibilities and leadership

7. The Guidelines should underline that government should play a leading role in developing effective and humane urban crime prevention strategies at all levels, including at the national, regional and local level. In line with good governance principles, the Guidelines will need to provide guidance on who can do what, and how involvement of different actors can be facilitated:

- Comprehensive urban crime prevention strategies should contain knowledge-based priorities and targets for the short, medium and long term, and ideally tie in with existing regional and national crime prevention strategies and action plans.
- Institutional frameworks for implementation and review of crime prevention strategies should be created and maintained at the various levels of government.
- The permanent central government body that is responsible for crime prevention should facilitate action at all levels of government, including at the city level and dedicate resources for urban crime prevention.
- Making use of digital technologies for crime prevention can be explored by cities in cooperation with national authorities, if paired with proper regulation, policy and technical investments in cybersecurity.
- Effective preventive action should take place as close as possible to the grassroots level. Communities should play an important part in identifying crime prevention priorities, in implementation and evaluation of urban crime prevention strategies, and in helping to identify a sustainable resource base. The Guidelines should be based on and, as appropriate, indicate proven good practices in this regard, for instance by providing examples in an annex or by creating an online library of good and promising practices that can be regularly updated.
- Cities and their communities are well placed to identify early warning signals related to criminal patterns of behaviour and developments, including violence radicalization, and to direct the efforts of relevant services within the criminal justice system and beyond.
- Making full and effective use of measures to prevent corruption at the local level, especially through implementing the relevant provisions of Chapter II of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

⁷ General Assembly resolution 45/112.

⁸ Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/99, annex.

⁹ Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13, annex.

¹⁰ General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000.

¹¹ General Assembly resolution 58/4 of 31 October 2003.

Links between local and transnational organized crime

8. The Guidelines should reflect that urban crime prevention strategies should be mindful of and, where appropriate, proactively address the interdependency between local crime, organized crime, and corruption that occurs at the national, regional and international levels. Indeed, transnational organized crime in many cases directly affects safety and security at the local level. In the Doha Declaration on “Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice into the Wider United Nations Agenda to Address Social and Economic Challenges and to Promote the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels, and Public Participation”,¹² Member States agreed to strive to “conduct further research on the links between urban crime and other manifestations of organized crime in some countries and regions, including crimes committed by gangs, as well as to exchange experiences in and information on effective crime prevention and criminal justice programmes and policies among Member States and with relevant international and regional organizations, in order to address through innovative approaches the impact of urban crime and gang-related violence on specific populations and places, fostering social inclusion and employment opportunities and aiming at facilitating social reintegration of adolescents and young adults” (para. 9(d)). In this regard, it is important to mention that, of the 169 targets that underpin the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, more than 12 per cent (23 targets in total) relate to mitigating organized crime.¹³

9. Another important challenge to address in terms of urban safety and security is corruption and the risks it poses to good governance. Corruption is a key governance challenge, affecting the ability of governments to provide services to citizens. It undermines security and is often used as an instrument by organized crime and terrorists to achieve their goals. Ineffective public institutions lead to further corruption as people will pay bribes in order to be certain of the outcome that they will receive. At the same time, corruption exacerbates the existing governance problems and makes the achievement of the policy goals set by governments difficult. Addressing corruption should be seen as an important prerequisite for more effective local governance and stronger local law enforcement; it is important that the local crime prevention strategies identify the risks of corruption and suggest measures to address these risks.

10. With this in mind, city administrations, in close cooperation and coordination with regional and national authorities, civil society and communities themselves, as appropriate, should endeavour to:

- Analyse and address links between local crime problems and transnational organized crime.
- Reduce existing and future opportunities for organized crime groups to participate in lawful markets with the proceeds of crime, through appropriate legislative, administrative or other measures.
- Identify opportunities taken by organized criminal groups to misuse tender procedures conducted by public authorities and of subsidies and licences granted by public authorities for commercial activities and analyse cases where such misuse has happened.
- Support and strengthen key community structures so that they can make cities and neighbourhoods more resilient and reduce the opportunities for organized crime groups to undermine society and the rule of law.

¹² As adopted at the high-level segment of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Doha in April 2015, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/174.

¹³ Global Initiative. 2015. “Measuring and Monitoring Transnational Organized Crime within the framework of Sustainable Development for the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Goals, Targets and Indicators, Organized Crime: A cross-cutting threat to sustainable development”, available at <http://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/global-initiative-organized-crime-as-a-cross-cutting-threat-to-development-january-2015.pdf>.

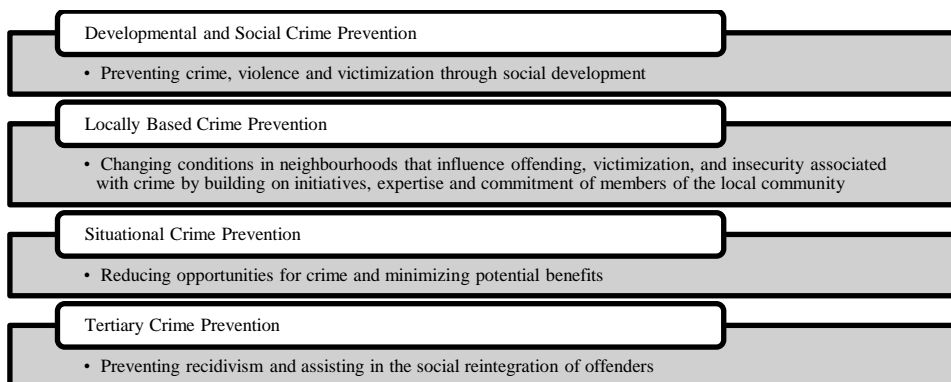
- In connection with the previous point, develop measures to prevent the misuse by organized criminal groups of tender procedures conducted by public authorities and of subsidies and licences granted by public authorities for commercial activity; and in particular, develop measures promoting transparency, competition and objectivity in decision-making in procurement, as required by article 9 of UNCAC.
- Consider measures and strategies to strengthen urban resilience against violent extremism and terrorism.
- Consider the adoption of any necessary measures to allow for the social reuse — at the local level — of confiscated proceeds of crime derived from the activities of (transnational) organized groups. This approach can foster a positive attitude to strategies aimed at tackling crime, in particular by fostering a culture of legality, helping to prevent criminal activities and supporting economic and social development at the local level.
- Advance measures to curb corruption by improving reliability, quality and accessibility of local and national public services.
- Regularly identify the risks of corruption at local level and put in place, where appropriate in cooperation with the civil society, effective measures to address these risks, including by developing and implementing coherent public institutional integrity, transparency and accountability standards.
- Strengthen the integrity of the local administration, by promoting measures such as merit-based appointment and career development for officials, measures to effectively prevent and manage conflicts of interest and measures aimed at strengthening financial management.
- Promote transparency and participation of society in the work of the local governments and in particular in the development, implementation and monitoring of the local crime prevention strategies.

C. Approaches

11. Urban crime prevention efforts need to be multi-faceted to be effective, and the Guidelines should build on best practice to address relevant risk factors of crime and victimization at all levels (i.e. at the individual, family, community, city, region and national level) by using a mix of approaches.

Figure

Approaches to urban crime prevention, United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime, article 6



1. Developmental and social crime prevention

- Promoting welfare and health development and combating all forms of social deprivation, including through activities that redress marginalization and

exclusion; and by promoting protective factors through non-stigmatizing social and economic development programmes and initiatives.

- Promoting communal values and respect for fundamental human rights.
- Fostering education, skills training, public awareness and tolerance, while respecting cultural identities.
- Promoting positive conflict resolution, civic responsibility and social mediation procedures.
- Preventing substance abuse and offering treatment or rehabilitation to drug users.
- Promoting early intervention in a child's development aimed to change individual, family or school risk factors.

2. Locally based crime prevention

- Adapting crime prevention strategies to the local context targeting in particular those urban areas/neighbourhoods where the risks of becoming involved in crime or being victimized are particularly high.
- Promote community resilience by engaging citizens and community structures in changing the conditions in neighbourhoods that influence offending, victimization and the insecurity that results from crime by building on their initiatives, expertise and commitment, for instance through competitive grants schemes open to a wide variety of community organizations including local government organizations.
- Ensuring that there are sufficient public spaces, such as parks, libraries, community centres, sports facilities, etc. that are attractive, safe, and accessible to all.
- Empowering communities to respond to disadvantage by promoting social cohesion through targeted interventions.
- Develop mechanisms of active participation of children and families in decision-making processes.

3. Situational prevention

- Promoting initiatives that aim to prevent crime through environmental design to reduce opportunities for crime.
- Promoting urban development and regeneration to improve housing and urban design, transport and road safety, and the use of public space, all of which can influence opportunities for crime and victimization, encourage inclusion, and enhance a sense of security.
- Promoting access for all, to all parts of the city and the public services it offers.
- Installing technical measures in public places such as proper street light; responsible use of CCTV; special, well-lit parking spaces; installation of visible alarms or other means that reduce opportunity for crime and the reward that it may bring.
- Promoting the responsible use of artificial intelligence and data analytics in support of pro-active and problem-oriented policing.
- Raising awareness among citizens and companies to use technology that reduce the opportunity for crime and harden potential targets.
- Raising awareness among e.g. police and other public servants to identify signs of illicit activities in the communities and how to act upon them.
- Reducing provocation that may be conducive to crime, for instance by discouraging imitation by promptly repairing acts of vandalism or by

minimizing the risk for disputes e.g. by segregating rival fans at major sports events.

4. Tertiary crime prevention (Prevention of recidivism)

- Offering socio-educational support within the framework of the sentence, in prison and as preparation for release from prison.
- Diversification of methods of treatment and of measures taken according to the nature and seriousness of the cases (diversionary schemes, mediation, a specialized system for children, etc.) adapted to the local context.
- Priority access of offenders on probation or on parole to services, including drug treatment, psychological counselling and behavioural therapy.
- Swift, certain and short response to violations of probation and parole.
- Promoting restorative justice for children at all stages of the criminal proceedings.
- Adopting measures to prevent and respond to violence against children in places of detention.
- Facilitating an active role to the community in the rehabilitation of offenders after the sentence has been served, in form for instance of aid and socio-educational support or family support.
- Provide treatment and care for people with drug use disorders in contact with the criminal justice system as alternatives to conviction or punishment.

D. Cooperation and partnerships

12. The Guidelines should acknowledge the roles of key actors for urban crime prevention at the local level, including:

- Police, the courts, public prosecutors and probation services, with a focus on coordination and cooperation between national and local level.
- Social workers and education, housing and health workers.
- Urban planners and bodies responsible for public transportation.
- Academia and research institutions.
- The community at large, including elected officials, associations including professional, cultural or religious associations, volunteers, parents, victims organizations.
- The private sector, including enterprises, banks, small and medium businesses.
- The media, including social media.

13. Successful urban crime prevention should be based on a multi-agency approach with centres or focal points for urban crime prevention established at city level.

14. City-level authorities should establish crime prevention networks at the local level, and coordinate their activities with networks at higher levels (regional, national and international) with a view to exchange promising practices, identify elements of their transferability and make such knowledge available to their own communities and others who may benefit from it.

E. Sustainability and accountability

15. Urban crime prevention, just like crime prevention in general, requires adequate resources, including in terms of funding and human resources, so that it can build the necessary structures to ensure that activities are sustainable and effective. The

Guidelines should encourage local government actors other persons involved in urban crime prevention to:

- Undertake short- and longer-term evaluation of prevention initiatives to rigorously test what works, where it works, and why.
- Undertake cost-benefit analyses on a regular basis.
- Assess the extent to which action results in a reduction of crime and victimization, the seriousness of crimes occurring, and fear of crime.
- Systematically assess the outcomes and unintended consequences, both positive and negative, of action, such as any decrease in crime rates or the stigmatization of individuals and/or communities.

16. Any urban crime prevention strategy should establish clear accountability for funding, implementation and evaluation and for achievement of planned results.

F. Knowledge base

17. The Guidelines should emphasize that urban crime prevention strategies, policies, programmes and initiatives should be based on a broad, multidisciplinary foundation of knowledge of crime, its multiple causes, and promising and proven practices to address crime in general, as well as specific forms of crime relevant in the urban context. Urban crime prevention should be, wherever possible, evidence-based and data-driven to aid decision-making, improve the quality of information obtained, ensure that interventions and outcomes are appropriate, and guide future and ongoing interventions.

18. Local governments, with support from stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society, academia, faith-based organizations, families and individuals, as appropriate, should work together to facilitate knowledge-based crime prevention, inter alia, by:

- Sharing knowledge, as appropriate, among, inter alia, researchers, policymakers, educators, practitioners from other relevant sectors and the wider community.
- Providing the information necessary for communities to address crime and its root causes, including by making use of (social) media.
- Support building a base of useful and practically applicable knowledge on crime prevention that is scientifically reliable and valid.
- Support the organization and synthesis of knowledge and identify gaps in the knowledge base;
- Apply this knowledge in replicating successful interventions, developing new initiatives and anticipate newly emerging crime problems and prevent opportunities.
- Establish quality data-systems to help manage crime prevention more cost effectively, including by conducting surveys of victimization and offending.
- Promoting the application of those data in particular with a view to reducing repeat victimization, persistent offending and areas with high levels of crime.

19. There is a range of innovative approaches that can inform a knowledge-based approach to urban crime prevention strategies, including for instance participatory local safety audits; observatories on crime trends, i.e. monitoring centres which collect and collate data and information; or victimization surveys. Other relevant measures include:

- A local diagnostic survey of crime phenomena, their characteristics, underlying factors, the form they take and their extent.

- The identification of all relevant actors that could take part in compiling the above-mentioned diagnostic survey with regard to both crime prevention and fighting crime, for example public institutions (national or local), local elected officials, the private sector (associations, enterprises), civil society, community representatives.
- The establishment, wherever appropriate, of consultation mechanisms promoting closer liaison, the exchange of information, joint work and the design of a coherent strategy.
- The elaboration of possible solutions to the problems identified in the local context.
- The development of integrated crime prevention plans that also pay attention to the link between local and transnational organized crime.

20. A knowledge-based approach can also be pursued through the exchange of information and experiences between cities addressing the challenge of urban crime; in the aforementioned Doha Declaration, Member States agreed on the necessity of efforts to “plan and implement comprehensive policies and programmes that foster socioeconomic development, with a focus on the prevention of crime, including urban crime, and violence, and to support other Member States in such endeavours, in particular through the exchange of experience and relevant information on policies and programmes that have been successful in reducing crime and violence through social policies” (para. 10(a)).¹⁴

G. Human rights, rule of law and the culture of lawfulness

21. Crime and violence, including in an urban context, emerges where there are ineffective and inaccessible criminal justice systems and a disregard for human rights and the rule of law. Indeed, in cities where the rule of law is weak, a structural context is created in which crime, violence and “criminal governance” can flourish. Moreover, a lack of service provision, including limited access to justice, inadequate governance and a weak rule of law can create a power vacuum that criminal groups fill by offering alternative forms of governance and generating an income, thus expanding their business.¹⁵ The Guidelines should acknowledge that urban crime prevention strategies should, as a matter of principle, be human rights-based, respect the rule of law, and promote a culture of lawfulness. When developing and implementing strategies, the following should be considered:

- Authorities, including at the city level, should adopt viable, trustworthy models of governance that engage with and serve the local community; and provide the necessary oversight and transparency that will prevent public institutions from being subverted by illicit interests.
- Appropriate and effective educational activities should be employed to reinforce respect for human rights and the rule of law.
- Crime prevention strategies should build on and seek to reinforce communal values that conform to human rights.
- Cities should proactively fight the culture of violence and intolerance and promote civic responsibility.
- In line with United Nations-wide requirements on gender-mainstreaming, urban crime prevention strategies should be mindful of their gender implications.

¹⁴ Declaration adopted at the high-level segment of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Doha from 12 to 19 April 2015, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/174.

¹⁵ UNODC, *Governing Safer Cities: Strategies for a Globalised World* (2016), p. 3 with further references. Available online at <https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/SaferCities.pdf>.

- Cities should be mindful of human rights considerations in the deployment of modern technology, including for example how certain new technology may infringe on rights to privacy.
- Urban regeneration should never violate the human rights of citizens and be mindful of the importance of social and cultural norms.

H. Tailor-made interventions for at-risk groups

22. Inequality can be a strong factor that elicits, produces or leads to crime. Organized crime in particular often preys upon families, children, and young people living in impoverished and disadvantaged communities and neighbourhoods. This includes, for instance, youth forced or recruited into organized drug trafficking or prostitution, or children trafficked for sexual exploitation or forced labour. Certain forms of crime and violence disproportionately affect women, such as rape, intimate partner homicide and other forms of gender-based violence.

23. Accordingly, the Guidelines should reflect that urban crime prevention strategies ought to include social and economic initiatives that aim at the inclusion of women, as well as minority or vulnerable populations, including children, youth and migrant populations, and foster their access to public benefits. City administrations, in close coordination with regional and national authorities, should also undertake measures aimed at protecting and empowering groups vulnerable to crime. Measures to prevent violence against women, children, the elderly or any other vulnerable group or group with specific needs that can be put in place in a local context and reflected in the Guidelines include:

- Develop written policies, procedures and guidelines to assist criminal justice officials to prevent, identify and deal with different manifestations of violence against women, children and the elderly, as well as assist and support victims in a manner that is gender-sensitive and responsive to victims' needs.
- Consider establishing, where possible, at city level, specialized units or personnel and specialized courts or dedicated court time and make available training for first responders to domestic and other forms of violence.
- In as far as hiring of criminal justice practitioners falls within the competence of urban authorities, establish and maintain a diverse work force at all levels, including in the justice sector, and consider, as appropriate, assigning appropriately trained women police officers to be first responders in cases of violence against women and children.
- Encourage the establishment of, or strengthen local volunteer organizations, including women's groups, who, as appropriate, cooperate with the criminal justice system at the local level.
- Proactively undertake measures aimed at ensuring the universal access of all groups to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces.
- Regularly conduct safety audits targeting as participants women, children, young persons, or victims of specific crimes.
- Implement programmes to prevent all forms of violence and the establishment of shelters for victims.

I. Youth crime prevention

24. Youth, and children, face many challenges that make them particularly vulnerable to crime, violence and victimization, including gang-related crime and violent extremism. Preventing youth crime requires an analysis of factors that can increase the risk of children and youth becoming perpetrators or victims. Causal factors relate to the individual, the family, the community and wider society that all

can place individuals at higher risk for crime, violence and victimization. Risk factors include, for example, behaviour problems, substance use, anxiety, insufficient parental involvement, violence in communities (such as gangs), poor social commitment and school performance, violence against children, including sexual violence, or lack of education and job opportunities.

25. An effective local crime prevention strategy should examine exposure to such risk factors to reduce the prospect of these problems occurring or reoccurring, and to seek the strengthening of protective factors. Hence, the Guidelines should outline key approaches to successful youth crime prevention including:

- The promotion of well-being of young people by taking social, economic, health and educational measures, including early interventions and parenting programmes, skills training and internship opportunities.
- Changing conditions in neighbourhoods that influence offending among youth, including through urban renewal.
- Prevention of recidivism by assisting in the social reintegration of children recognized as having infringed the penal law and young offenders by involving their community.
- Empowering youth and engaging them as agents of change, building on their enormous potential and making use of their energy and ideas for achieving positive change in society.
- Making use of innovative ways to reach out to at-risk youth, for example through sport, and support them in their development to achieve normative beliefs shift towards a culture of lawfulness and ultimately to make them more resilient to crime, violence and drug use.
- Projects to raise the awareness of youth about the negative effects of crime on themselves and their communities.

J. Community-oriented justice

26. An effective and proportionate justice system that proactively works in partnership with members of the urban community towards reducing crime and improving the sense of security within the community — community-oriented justice — is a cornerstone of effective urban crime prevention. Accordingly, the Guidelines should reflect the importance of community oriented justice including, inter alia:

1. Community-oriented policing

27. A police agency that introduces community-oriented policing has the potential to balance the more conventional reactive responses to violence and crime with proactive efforts that encompass early intervention, prevention, as well as treatment where needed. For law enforcement, community-oriented policing offers an information-gathering tool for better intelligence-led policing and more effective criminal investigations, and it improves the public image of the police. For communities it offers an opportunity for greater involvement and collaboration in policing their neighbourhoods; and it makes the police more accountable and responsive to local needs. Moreover, community-oriented policing can provide a useful tool to help prevent violent extremism by engaging the community on the issue of radicalization to violence and empowering them to become part of the solution.

28. The Guidelines should therefore reflect the need for effective community-oriented and decentralized policing and include a number of concrete measures such as:

- Develop policing approaches that involve local communities and support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to pro-actively

address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues and fear of crime.

- Promote the setting up of consultative forums that include representatives from the community (e.g. neighbourhood associations, faith-based organizations, tenant councils, local businesses) as well as local government agencies, schools and social service providers.
- Stimulate collaboration and regular communication between the police agency and local government officials to ensure the provision of effective assistance to community police efforts, including the provision of social and health-related services.

2. Access to justice

29. Citizens living in cities are highly likely to experience crime at some point in time. However, crime victims and witnesses often choose not to report crime because they lack trust in the criminal justice system. Crime victims and witnesses may also fail to come forward because they encounter difficulties in understanding and navigating the criminal justice system, be it due to language barriers, illiteracy or insufficient knowledge of their legal rights, or because of cultural barriers. A trustworthy, fair, and transparent criminal justice system is also important from an offender perspective in that it reduces rates of recidivism. Politicians and authorities with responsibilities in governing cities need to develop effective strategies to counter these problems affecting access to justice.

30. The Guidelines may wish to elaborate on measures that can improve access to justice at the local level, including:

- Educating judicial and legal officers about how best to effectively engage with communities and about their responsibilities towards communities and community members.
- Educating citizens on how to exercise their rights, and what support is available to them, for instance regarding free legal advice or legal aid for those who cannot afford to pay for legal services.
- Development of policies and strategies on access to justice at the local level with community input and participation, as appropriate, including by civil society, victims groups and advocacy groups.

3. Provision of legal aid

31. Increasing public and community participation in legal aid is an important strategy for facilitating access to justice, including in densely populated urban settings where crime rates not only may be higher as compared to rural areas, but where there are also much more potential beneficiaries due to the sheer size of the population that can be affected by crime and violence. Where legal needs are not met, the risk for (re)victimisation is enhanced, and a lack of legal awareness and services may even fuel crime. A functioning legal aid system can help significantly to reduce the length of time suspects are held in police stations or pre-trial detention; decrease the number of wrongful convictions, prison overcrowding and congestion in the courts; and reduce rates of re-offending by supporting offenders in their efforts to reintegrate in the community. It can also contribute to prevention by increasing awareness of the law. The following approaches and initiatives can strengthen access to legal aid at the local level:

- City administrations should support an effective legal aid system for those who cannot afford to pay for a lawyer or if the interests of justice so require, for instance by establishing legal aid centres in cities and towns, or specific at-risk neighbourhoods.

- Local governments should recognize and encourage the contribution of local lawyers' associations, universities, civil society and other groups and institutions to providing legal aid.
- With a view to extending the reach of legal aid, local governments should engage with and encourage, as appropriate, community-based groups providing different types of legal services, such as legal advice, assistance and representation, legal empowerment and education, access to legal information and other services, and, as appropriate, establish public-private and other forms of partnerships.

4. Protection and treatment of victims

32. Proper support and protect individuals who fall victim to crime is key to a fair and effective justice system. It requires:

- Include support for victims as an element into urban crime prevention strategies.
- Introducing systems of victim assistance and one-stop services for victims, including immediate assistance following a crime, appropriate legal advice, longer-term physical and psychological assistance and practical assistance during proceedings to help victims understand, participate and to reduce their distress.
- Establish a protective, supportive and non-bureaucratic atmosphere, where victims can report to police, whether this is at police stations, health facilities, or specially designated locations (i.e. one-stop centres).
- Development of locally appropriate strategies to ensure the protection from intimidation, retaliation and further harm by the accused or suspected as well as from harm during criminal investigations and court proceedings.
- Adopting a child-sensitive approach to dealt with child victims and witnesses.

III. The way forward

33. UNODC underlines its full commitment to continue collaborating closely with all relevant stakeholders, including UN-Habitat and other relevant United Nations Agencies, regional organizations, Member States, city administrations and civil society towards the finalization of the United Nations System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities. UNODC stands ready to promote the Guidelines in the context of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Kyoto/Japan, 2020), for which UNODC acts as Secretariat, and that has as its main theme "Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda". In addition, UNODC looks forward to supporting the successful implementation of the urban crime prevention aspects of the Guidelines, once adopted, through tailor-made, evidence-based technical assistance.