

## How to guide:

How to improve community safety and strengthen  
a joint working approach with the police:  
Introduce Community Safety Partnerships

## **What is the J4A ‘How to’ series?**

The guide is part of a series of products developed by J4A to communicate lessons learned from projects and pilots, to provide stakeholders with guidance on how to adapt and replicate the initiative in their own context.

## **Who is this ‘How to’ guide for?**

Influencers and decision makers in the justice sector (police, prisons, judiciary and civil society).

## **Reference tools**

Accompanying reference tools are available at [www.j4a-nigeria.org](http://www.j4a-nigeria.org) or by request from [info@j4a-nigeria.org](mailto:info@j4a-nigeria.org)

## The problem

- Police work in Nigeria is predominantly reactive.
- There is a need to increase the focus on preventing crime.
- There is a need to widen the focus of police activity to safety issues as well as crimes.
- Limited working with other partners and agencies with a loss of co-ordination to deal with social issues.
- Need to develop problem solving techniques.

## Background

The NPF style of policing in divisions is mainly to respond to reports of crime rather than patrol proactively to both prevent crime and understand public concerns and fears.

This is best addressed through forming Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and developing Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs). NPTs are the subject of a separate 'How to Guide'.

Currently the reports and concerns of the public are dealt with as isolated matters rather than approached in a connected way which would permit a joint or partnership approach to resolving or reducing systemic and ongoing community safety issues

**Community safety** is about delivering local solutions to local problems that have been identified by local people.

Community Safety is a process through which key organisations in a local government area (LGA) or other identified geographical area come together to work in partnership with each other and with the public, in order to achieve a safer living environment for all.

The successful implementation of a community safety scheme rests upon the following key principles:

- respecting the rights of citizens
- responding to public concerns about safety and feelings of safety
- recognising that local people often have the best understanding of local problems
- working in partnership with the community and all relevant organisations or groups to identify and address these problems
- recognising that working together and sharing resources is the most cost-effective means of resolving problems
- recognising that no single organisation working alone can solve problems affecting the whole community.

A successful community safety scheme will improve security and safety, increase citizens' feelings of safety and encourage community participation.

## What you can do

Introduce a Community Safety Partnership to ensure that the community, particularly women, the poor and the disadvantaged, has a voice in developing the plans and actions to be worked up to deal with community safety issues.

The synergy from this approach allows the partner groups to devise a joint way forward.

The police do not run or control the CSPs but the NPF would be a crucial member of the CSP. An added benefit to NPF participation will be to improve transparency and accountability for policing activities.

J4A has already worked with stakeholders in Lagos, Enugu, Minna and Federal Capital Territory to set up CSPs, and this guide provides further details on how a CSP can be created, replicated and what lessons have been learned in going through this process.

## What you can achieve

- reduction in crime and community concerns
- reduction in the fear of crime
- better identification of community safety issues
- provide representation for marginalised groups
- joint working to better resolve crime and community safety issues through a joined up approach which brings the different experience and skill sets of partners to be applied to problem areas
- improved trust and confidence in the police
- making the police more accountable to the public through this inter-agency approach.

## Community Safety Partnerships: Steps for implementation

There are several types and structures of CSPs. This guide sets out a generic model, which is suitable for most circumstances.

The key steps in developing a CSP are as follows:

1. A meeting of identified potential stakeholders should be arranged. This should include representatives of NGOs, CSOs and agencies both statutory and voluntary coming together to discuss and agree to form a partnership.
2. Appointment of office bearers such as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer
3. Set aims and objectives for the CSP and from this set up the CSP's Terms of Reference.
4. Explore possible funding streams to cover the costs of activities. These will include local government, CSOs and businesses. Consider opening a bank account and how money will be managed by the CSP. It is important to appreciate that funding 'in kind' e.g. skills, materials and printing that can be provided by partners is equally valuable.
5. Prepare and administer a Community Safety Audit (a questionnaire conducted within the community designed to find out the fears and concerns of communities). The purpose of a community safety audit is to:
  - Gather data about issues that affect citizens' safety and their feelings of safety. This may include data on road safety, crime and environmental threats and information on social issues.
  - Establish patterns and trends through analysis of the data.
  - Identify the underlying causes of threats to citizens safety and the reasons why citizens feel unsafe.
  - Identify the priority areas of work for the CSP but don't try to tackle all the problems at one time – start with the most important issues and it is a good idea to initially address issues that can be tackled in the short to medium term to encourage partners and communities that the CSP is actually working and achieving results.
- A community safety audit provides the basis for the activities of a CSP and helps it to direct its activities at those issues that are of greatest concern to the general public.
6. As an alternative to a Community Audit consider instead holding a Town Hall meeting
7. Form sub-groups or Action Groups to deal with specific CS issues identified in the Audit. For example, this could be young people using drugs or it could be a traffic congestion problem. Often such diverse matters are best dealt with in sub-groups where the members have a specialist knowledge or interest in such issues.
8. Draft an Action Plan of activities with named persons who will take responsibility to manage the relevant activities for each sub-group and have these approved by the full CSP – make sure the Action Plan is specific, measured, achievable, realistic and timed (SMART).
9. Have a Communications Plan – how the CSP will advertise their activities and explain what they are doing to the public – all communications with the CSP should be through one or two identified members of the CSP to ensure a common or corporate approach to dealing with enquiries, addressing issues and publicising activities.
10. Implement – carry out the activities set out in the Action Plan within a set timescale and measure success and progress.
11. Review activities and results then adjust and amend the Action Plans based on the impact to the specific CS issue.
12. A Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Handbook, which is also available on the Justice for All (J4A) website has been prepared and sets out all the necessary steps and activities to be undertaken to both set up and maintain a CSP. Visit our website ([www.j4a-nigeria.org](http://www.j4a-nigeria.org)) to get a copy.

The Handbook includes guidance on committee work, Community Safety Audits and Action Plans. The main 'How to steps' are summarised in this Guide but full explanations and worked examples are contained in the CSP Handbook.

### Cost implications

A CSP will need some funding to carry out certain activities but organisations such as the NPF and other government-funded organisations will be required to carry out their statutory responsibilities without additional CSP funding.

Clearly some funding is required to prepare and administer audits, to advertise the work of the CSP and so forth. The CSP should consider funding and sponsorship from local businesses and organisations. However the partnership is not designed to be a fund raising forum but should be co-ordinating activities and working up innovative ways forward for resolving CS problems.

Remember that the human resources which can be supplied by partner organisations and communities can be as valuable as money.



## Lessons learned

1. Try to get a wide range of partners to join the CSP – statutory, police, CSOs, business community, local media, neighbourhood watch and so on.
2. The police should not chair the CSP
3. If possible appoint a Chair with good committee and leadership skills.
4. Hold a CSP meeting monthly and on a set date and time so that members can enter the date in their diary months in advance.
5. Ensure that the results of the CS Audit are analysed to identify the key community concerns for further action.
6. Do not underestimate the importance of some funding both for the running of the partnership in areas such as paying for accommodation, printing and other internal matters but also for paying for some of the activities such as public meetings and educational material and flyers. This is why the involvement of the business community is so important. It will often be possible to use a government building or community area to hold meetings and reduce costs.
7. Make sure you develop an action plan.
8. Be realistic about what can be achieved. Include actions that will help win the community's support.
9. Break the actions down to a series of small steps whenever possible.
10. Ensure that each action has a responsible person to both oversee and report on the activities and progress.
11. Do not be afraid to change the activities when it is clear that something is just not having the impact hoped for when writing the plan.
12. It is good to focus on both short-term and long-term goals. Achieving a quick result on a CS problem will motivate the partnership and provide a good news story to tell to the community.
13. The Communication Plan should be kept very practical – how to advertise the work of the CSP and identify suitable spokespersons – and make sure that any successes are communicated to the public.
14. Use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter is cheap and a quick way to advertise what the partnership is doing in real time.

## What improvements have Community Safety Partnerships brought about?

CSPs are now working in a number of States including FCT, Lagos, Minna, Enugu, Kaduna and Kano.

All have achieved better coordination of activities with the NPF and whilst almost by definition many of the community safety issues are longer term in nature there have been a number of significant resolutions to such issues. For example:

- Reduction in Indian hemp smoking in targeted areas
- Identification of authorised barrow boys in a market
- Improved environmental and hygiene in identified area
- Reduction of traffic congestion by designing out the problem
- Improved electricity supply in a village
- Working with repeat offenders
- Advice given to women in relation to personal safety specifically from sexual assaults
- More high visibility NPF patrols, surveillance and raids as a result of public concerns about area boys.

### 'Our motto is: Working to achieve a Safe and Secure Enugu State.'

Chris Ugwu, CSP Chair Enugu

'Issues of safety and security require a partnership in which all stakeholders should identify shared problems that affect the safety or feelings of safety of citizens. In that way, they can create long-term solutions to some of these problems by sharing resources and by working together to solve them.'

Chris Ugwu, CSP Chair Enugu



## How can Community Safety Partnerships be evaluated?

The J4A programme evaluates the success of CSPs in a variety of ways including Household surveys to ascertain public satisfaction.

Each CSP is making the public aware of their activities and have set targets that they hope to achieve within set time frames.

Robust measurements are being worked up to assess if community safety problems are resolved or reduced. These include better crime recording by the NPF to allow crime data to be analysed.

‘It is crucial to get the right people or organisations on the partnership with clear understanding of what each partner will contribute in terms of resources, expertise and so forth.’

ASP Elkana, Community Policing Team, Minna

‘I brief the partnership on crime and issues of concern to the community and then we find ways to impact on community safety issues in a joined up way.’

Corporal Uramah Chinedu, the Divisional Intelligence Officer at Central Police Station, Enugu

## Contact

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