



PRESS RELEASE

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Hanover Park is widely considered to be one of the communities in Cape Town most affected by gang-violence. Consequently the City of Cape Town and range of civil society and community organisations have been searching for solutions to reduce and prevent this type of violence. In this regard, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) (City of Cape Town) and the Safety and Violence Initiative (SaVI) (University of Cape Town) organised a full-day seminar on 8 November 2012 at the University of Cape Town to discuss youth programmes and lower-risk lifestyle support programmes that could reduce and prevent violence in Hanover Park. The seminar brought together representatives from community groups and structures as well as non-governmental organisations in Hanover Park, city and provincial government officials, representatives from SAPS and academics.

The seminar follows on from the completion of VPUU's recent baseline survey in Hanover Park and the recent introduction of the Cure Violence model in this area. Central to this model are 'violence interrupters', namely trained individuals who intervene in crises, mediate disputes between individuals, and intercede on group disputes to prevent violence. The Cure Violence model has been devised by the Department of Public Health at the University of Illinois in the USA, and seeks to address short- and long-term crime prevention in the context to gang related killings. The Cure Violence model has reportedly reduced violence in "every [Chicago] neighbourhood it operates in by up to 34 per cent...[and] successfully cut retaliatory homicides by 100 per cent." For more information on the Cure Violence model see: <http://cureviolence.org>.

During the seminar there was a vibrant discussion between community members, city and provincial government officials, as well as academics about creative solutions to respond to gang violence in Hanover Park. Community members and community-based organisations provided participants with a nuanced and intricate analysis of violence-related issues in the area. VPUU and provincial government officials emphasised their intension to work closely with community groups and structures in the implementation of violence reduction and prevention measures. Academics offered insights into various models and approaches to violence reduction and prevention that had been used in other contexts. The Cure Violence Model was extensively discussed and debated, with some participants expressing support, while some others were concerned about the applicability of such a model for Hanover Park given the political, socio-economic and historical complexities of the area. The seminar concluded with agreement by participants that in order for violence reduction and prevention to be more effectively pursued on the Cape Flats partnerships and networks between communities, city and provincial government officials, as well as academics need to be established and maintained.

About VPUU

VPUU implements an integrative strategy combining:

- Situational Crime Prevention - changing the fractured built environment into integrated human settlements;
- Social Crime Prevention - transforming the harmful social culture of the past into a caring culture that rejects violence, limits opportunities for offenders, and supports victims;
- Institutional Crime Prevention - supporting local organisations to take ownership of spaces and supporting the City to start integrated planning, budgeting, and the implementation of projects. So-called Safe Node Areas are envisaged in Harare, Kuyasa, and Site C. The VPUU programme is concurrently being expanded to include Manenberg, Hanover Park, Nyanga and Gugulethu.

From the VPUU perspective, implementing the CeaseFire approach in Hanover Park forms part of a comprehensive approach that is based on community participation, and includes situational crime prevention (urban design, buildings, lighting, landscaping) and institutional crime prevention (managing, and maintenance of public facilities, leadership development, economic development). Social Crime Prevention within VPUU looks to work on three themes:

- Longer term crime prevention;
- Community cohesion-building; and
- Protection and support for victims of crime or violence.

This overview and these themes come from an intervention model that was developed in the set-up phase of VPUU in Khayelitsha, and is based on best practice and successful interventions from around the world.

During Phase 3 of VPUU the social preparation including the establishment of a local VPUU Project Committee, a Community Issues Workshop, Baseline Survey and the development of a Community Action Plan will be completed. Hanover Park is the first area in which City of Cape Town staff members will take the lead during the implementation with specific task based support from the VPUU/ AHT-SUN team. The Community Action Plan will identify relevant built interventions and social crime prevention will work to develop an integrated team with existing, new and local providers, so as to align services to the Community Action Plan. VPUU will provide the relevant experience from Khayelitsha as background. The CeaseFire project aims to reduce gang related shootings within Hanover Park.

About SaVI

SaVI was established at the University of Cape Town in April 2011 as a key university imperative through the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Fund. SaVI facilitates debate, research and interventions across the university on understanding and responding to violence as well as promoting safety. SaVI brings together scholars from various UCT entities. The vision of SaVI is to work towards a safe South Africa, where freedom and safety are the norm, rather than the exception. Its mission is to establish research collaboration that will contribute to promoting safety, reducing violence; and to raise awareness about these issues within South Africa.

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