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Neighbourhoods for All

Peer to Peer Learning on Safer Cities 2023-24
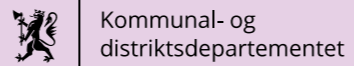
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Contents

Foreword

"Neighborhoods for All – a Global Peer Learning on Safer Cities" is a voluntary collaboration between UN-Habitat, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Habitat Norway, and VibeLab, aimed at promoting city-planning practices that enable the development of accessible and vibrant local communities in urban areas across the world. In the second half of 2023, these four partner organisations jointly organised what led to the series of five peer learning webinars.

The Safer Cities initiative connects to the 2030 Agenda, in particular, Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG11 - Sustainable cities and communities), and shows paths to implementing the UN System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements (2019).

The peer learning series has emphasised innovative practices that foster safe and dynamic neighbourhoods through co-production and inclusive processes. The aim has been to share knowledge, foster mutual learning, and promote integrated solutions to create secure, healthy, and inclusive cities.

Over the course of a year, the webinars have served as a platform for global knowledge exchange, where city representatives, civil society organisations, practitioners and other actors have shared a range of projects and strategies with urban safety as a cross-cutting issue. Along the way, we have all learned more about different experiences, challenges and successes in creating safer city environments.

From addressing the roles of government and civil society partnerships, to exploring community initiatives and innovative solutions for women's safety and youth engagement in the context of nighttime governance, it became clear that safety in urban contexts is deeply rooted in local leadership and collaboration with people in their neighbourhoods. Indeed, communities that are regarded as safe, inclusive and lively for all residents are crucial for human well-being and sustainable urban spaces.

As a voluntary collaboration among partner organisations, the peer learning process has also been an enriching lesson for all those involved, demonstrating the ability to raise awareness of a pressing urban agenda by harnessing the competencies, skills and networks of each partner. To this end, we are particularly grateful for all the contributions from the cities and organisations taking part in the webinars. We hope your practices and work can inspire other cities around the world.

In the following sections, readers of this report will be introduced to the Safer Cities initiative's background, read overviews of the webinars, and learn about the promising city practices presented. Based on the inputs from the cities and organisations, the final section is dedicated to a set of key lessons that can serve as starting points for cities to approach enhancing urban safety and well-being aspects in local communities and neighbourhoods.

...safety in urban contexts is deeply rooted in local leadership and collaboration with people in their neighbourhoods.

Background

Safety and well-being in cities

Today, cities face a range of challenges that can impact safety, including crime, traffic accidents, natural disasters, inequality, and environmental hazards. The severity of these issues can differ significantly based on factors such as geography, socioeconomic conditions, governance, infrastructure, and local policies. Despite their vulnerabilities, cities have repeatedly demonstrated resilience in rebuilding communities and neighbourhoods. To create safer and more inclusive cities, comprehensive planning and fostering inclusive governance are essential.

Cities with the necessary tools to develop city-wide safety programmes in partnership with civil society enable citizens to participate in the co-production of safety and security for all. By taking a proactive approach to preventing crime and violence, perceptions of safety are improved, expanding citizens' right to the city and their enjoyment of urban life and its amenities.

Three decades of urban safety practices and enhancing vibrant communities

Since its adoption in 2019, the UN System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements outline the necessary elements in technical cooperation and assistance to provide local authorities with a standard to respond to the challenges of urban safety and security, especially in conjunction with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.

The guidelines focus on reducing urban crime and violence, improving public safety, and enhancing the quality of life for all citizens, particularly vulnerable groups like women and children. Collaboration between governments, communities, and other stakeholders in urban planning, policing, and social services to create sustainable and secure urban environments is emphasised, as are data-driven approaches and participatory processes in decision-making.

Under the auspices of UN-Habitat, the Safer Cities Programme and the Global Network on Safer Cities have for almost three decades provided evidence of what works and what does not work at the municipal level with regards to the 'local governance of safety' and 'the co-production of security for all'. The goal of the programme and network has been to build and promote a participatory and inclusive vision of safety, tending to social cohesion and a better quality of life, with which all inhabitants can feel identified. Over the years, new concepts of multi-governance and cross-cutting approaches to urban safety and security have evolved in the Safer Cities programme and network.

Why global peer learning webinars?

Safety is a cross-cutting thematic area in the planning of our cities. Building safer cities for sustainable development requires collaboration among city planners, government officials, private enterprises, and local communities. This collaboration is essential to ensure that all voices are heard and that policies are implemented to meet the diverse needs of urban residents.

The peer learning webinars have involved open communication, active listening and problem-solving skills as part of their learning methodologies. Key objectives have been to involve cities in collaborative processes for safer neighbourhoods; to share best practices, policy recommendations and how obstacles were addressed; and to promote innovative solutions. The webinars have also emphasised the importance of documenting cities' successful safety and security measures. By focusing on areas such as women and girls' safety, nighttime governance, green spaces, cultural interventions, and climate adaptation, it has been observed that cities have effectively put strategies into practice through safety policies, civil society initiatives, and the use of innovative tools.

At the same time, it is essential to acknowledge that how safety and security are addressed varies from country to country. Safety and crime prevention in La Paz is not the same as in Berlin. The initiative's peer learning process, therefore, involved quite a few cities with established safety policies to consolidate effective practices and advance mutual learning.

The outreach strategy included leveraging partner networks and social media for promotion, while the monitoring strategy focuses on utilising the outcomes to advance the Safer Cities initiative and engage leading cities for broader knowledge sharing. This report also seeks to underscore the importance of documenting the process to ensure that the collected knowledge can be shared broadly and inform policymaking.

Key lessons for enhancing urban safety–at a glance

The UN Safer Cities Guidelines define safety as a state where people can live free from fear, intimidation, and violence in their urban environments. This includes both physical safety—protection from crime, accidents, and hazards—and psychological safety, ensuring that citizens feel secure in their neighbourhoods and public spaces. Safety under these guidelines encompasses not only crime prevention but also addressing broader social, economic, and environmental factors that contribute to insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and poor urban infrastructure. It recognises that inadequate urban development, local governance, and social and territorial exclusion can contribute to crime and violence. Therefore, the guidelines take a citywide, participatory approach to address the risk and prevention factors of insecurity in cities. The goal is to foster inclusive, resilient cities where all residents, regardless of gender, age, or background, can thrive.

Governance, in the UN Safer Cities Guidelines, emphasises inclusive, transparent, and accountable decision-making processes to enhance urban safety. It encourages collaboration among local governments, law enforcement agencies, civil society, private sector, and communities to jointly address safety challenges. Governance structures under the guidelines are designed to be responsive to the specific safety needs of each city, while promoting sustainable and long-term safety improvements. This approach emphasises the role of all urban inhabitants, regardless of their socioeconomic status, gender, race, ethnicity, or religion, in fully participating in the opportunities that cities offer, especially in planning and decision-making processes and the development and implementation of policies to ensure safety and security in cities.

These are the key lessons in a nutshell—in short, the synthesis of interactive dialogues, learnings and knowledge sharing from the webinars. Towards the end of this report, you can read more about each takeaway in detail, as exemplified by the participating cities and civil society organisations that have been part of this Safer Cities initiative. Key elements include:

Urban governance – whole-of-society approach

- Foster multi-stakeholder partnerships with the active participation of the local community in decision-making
- Build the organisational capacities and promote local leadership within the local community as a precondition for community participation
- Establish nighttime governance to collaboratively enhance safety and security during nighttime.
- Ensure sustainable partnerships through formal commitments
- Local governments are in a key position to promote urban safety and security
- Set up a dedicated office for urban safety work

Multisectoral and evidence-based strategies

- Adopt a comprehensive and cross-cutting approach
- Integrate safety and security policies into the city's urban policies
- Focus on the root causes of crime and violence
- Enhance data collection and analysis through participatory approaches and digital tools
- Adopt place-based initiatives within a city broad strategy

Inclusion of youth, women and vulnerable groups in decision-making

- Ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups
- Focus on youth engagement and leadership as agents of change
- Ensure a gender lens in urban safety policies and strategies
- Civil society organisations and NGOs can help integrate hard-to-reach groups

Expand knowledge sharing of urban safety issues and proven solutions

- Raise awareness of concrete problems
- Strengthen human capacities on safety issues at different levels
- Facilitate channels for the public to report incidents

The Safer Cities Peer Learning Webinars 2023-24

The webinars were hosted online and ran from October 2023 – 2024. The first was an online kick-off event, followed by four webinars. Each session emphasised identifying and engaging cities that already have established safer cities policies and programs, in order to consolidate the knowledge of what has worked, advance mutual learning, document successful practices and communicate the findings.

Each webinar focused on the following topics:

→ Kick-off webinar: Introducing the Neighbourhoods for All, Safer Cities Global Peer Learning Process (30 October 2023)

→ Webinar 1: Global Trends and Challenges on Safer and More Inclusive Cities (12 December 2023)

→ Webinar 2: Nighttime Governance – Ensuring Safe Cities for Women and Girls (6 March 2024)

→ Webinar 3: Inclusive Governance and the Role of Civil Society for Safer Cities (4 June 2024)

→ Webinar 4: Planning Safer Cities Led by Youth (15 October 2024)

Webinar 4

Kick-off webinar

→ Introduced the key partners of the Safer Cities initiative, situating the event in the context of Urban October 2023.

→ Highlighted the main challenges and lessons learnt to date on achieving Safer Cities through UN-Habitat's cities network.

→ The first keynote was held by Oscar Santiago Uribe Rocha, Executive Director of Medellín Resiliente Lab from Colombia, who showcased the Medellín Experience in implementing Safer Cities through a preventive-focussed and integrated approach.

→ The second keynote was presented by Lutz Leichsenring of VibeLab, and introduced the emerging city policy innovations related to nighttime governance.

→ The webinar concluded with Juma Assiago from UN-Habitat and Sara Hoeflich from UCLG, undergirding the structure of the peer learning process and methodologies.

Key highlights

- The conversation highlighted that achieving safety and security is critical to achieving "Cities for All" and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Safer City initiatives shall be tackled from a prevention, intersectoral and integrated approach tackling various themes, including inclusion, accessibility, diversity, urban planning, and public spaces. The presentations also reasserted the frontline role of local governments and civil society in building safer cities through innovative approaches.

- The case of Medellín underscored the significance of involving youth and vulnerable communities of informal settlements in co-creating a collective vision at the neighbourhood level. This involves promoting neighbourhood leadership, knowledge generation to understand the social conditions and underlying causes of violence and crime, and advocacy to raise awareness of these issues and their causes.

- VibeLab advocated for nighttime governance in our communities to create environments where people can enjoy the night without fear by fostering a sense of community belonging and shared responsibility. Important initiatives to foster nighttime governance and implement holistic safety policies include establishing nighttime offices and appointing 'night mayors'.

Webinar 1: Global Trends and Challenges on Safer and More Inclusive Cities

→ The first webinar following the Urban October kick-off consisted of keynotes and interactive sessions.

→ Two introductory keynotes emphasised the importance of raising awareness, training officials and decision-makers on proven solutions and guidelines, then promoting their implementation across cities and countries through sustained investment.

→ One practitioner from Norway focused on knowledge-based policing, and stressed the need to establish strategic leadership and partnerships with communities, to solve problems affecting community life and examine the root causes of crime.

→ The event's main activity was an interactive learning exercise using a Mural board, where four groups engaged in analysing typical conflict situations to spark qualitative discussion on crucial topics such as neighbourhoods, public space, youth/policing, mobility, gender equality and nighttime.

→ Each group compared their findings with case studies from diverse locations, including Medellín, Durban, Toronto, multiple cities in India, and Berlin.

Key highlights

• Interactive learning: the dynamic part of the session aimed to draw on real-world examples to harness actionable insights and strategies that could be applied to other situations.

• Group 1 discussed inequality and spatial segregation, attributing them to social, economic, and political factors such as lack of access to resources and economic opportunities, systemic racism, and privatisation. They emphasised the need for integrated and participatory approaches with a focus on economic inclusion through education. Additionally, they highlighted the potential of arts and sports programs to foster community cohesion and build community identity.

• Group 2 discussed degraded public spaces and identified causes such as lack of investment and inadequate planning without a gender or youth lens. They proposed solutions including utilising university resources, raising awareness, investing in infrastructure, providing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness, and setting improvement targets.

• Group 3 discussed reshaping the relationship between youth and society, engaging youth in the design of programs targeting crime prevention and promoting positive activities such as art and culture. The group also emphasised the importance of graffiti and public art as a means for young people to express their needs and demands.

• Group 4 focussed on mobility challenges for women, highlighting issues such as fragmented urban mobility, last and first-mile connectivity, and lack of gender perspective in mobility systems. The group proposed user-centred approaches, increasing women's participation in public services and leadership roles, integrating gender-sensitive safety audits, applying a "whole-of-journey-approach" and universal accessibility, and establishing mechanisms for women to safely and confidentially report harassment.

Webinar 2: Nighttime Governance – Ensuring Safe Cities for Women and Girls

→ This session focussed on creating safer cities for women and girls, especially during nighttime hours.

→ During the interactive part of the session, discussions delved into municipal safety policies, civil society initiatives, and innovative tools for nighttime safety and security, such as the safety audit tool for women.

→ The webinar showcased practices from Bristol, Nairobi, Banjul, Durban, and Edmonton, emphasising the need for nighttime governance to co-create safety.

→ A keynote presentation of the knowledge platform from Canadian Centre for Safer Communities, Canada's network on crime prevention also featured in the webinar.

Key highlights

- Nighttime governance is an emerging policy field in cities worldwide. It involves partnerships between public and private partners and must be approached as a comprehensive policy area. A key initiative to foster nighttime governance is to establish a nightlife office, club commission, and/or 'night mayor.'

- Safety policies should prevent crime and violence by addressing root causes. Safety audit tools for women help local governments to analyse crime and victimisation-related issues comprehensively and systematically to inform action planning.

- City cases underscore safety as a collective responsibility and as the outcome of comprehensive policies developed and implemented in partnership with the local community, considering the needs of women, children, and youth.

- Group discussions addressed the importance of urban governance and comprehensive planning, as well as digital security issues. While there was recognition among participants that it is advantageous to use technological tools, they cannot replace human involvement; individual citizens play a crucial role in safety.

- Other topics discussed include data management when using technological tools and safety in the digital age, as well as the need for a multi-stakeholder governance approach when developing public policies for safer cities.

- Moreover, the participants emphasised that planning of public spaces should extend beyond physical infrastructure and include various interventions within these spaces, and that place-based public policies for nighttime, specifically tailored to each context and responsive to gender-specific needs, is of great importance.

Question 1: does your city have a night mayor, club commission or a nightlife office?

A slim majority of respondents reported that their cities have a night mayor, club commission, or nightlife office.

13	10	1
Yes	No	I'm not sure

Question 2: How much did you know about nighttime governance before today's talk?

Most participants knew about nighttime governance or at least had heard about it.

6	8	11
Not at all	I've heard about it	I knew about this already
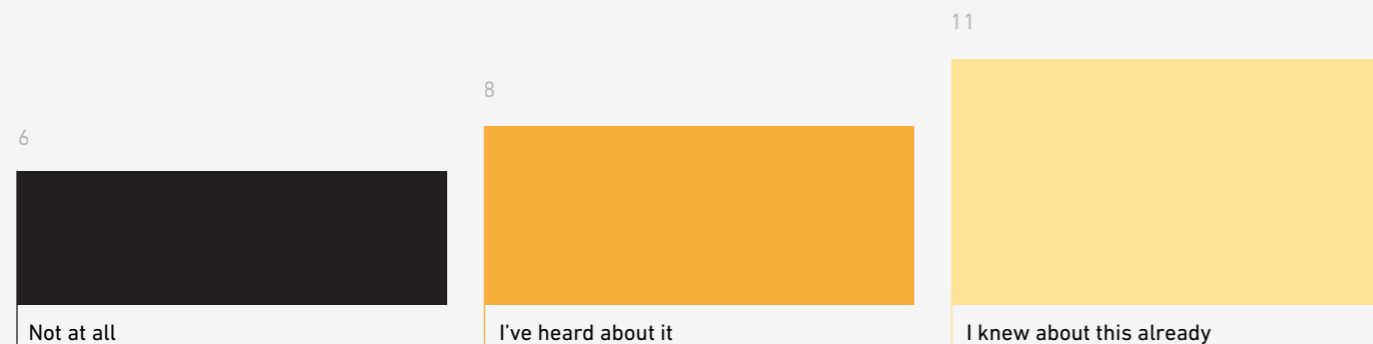
Question 3: Does your city have a plan or program for addressing women's safety?

Roughly half of the respondents' cities have a plan or program for addressing women's safety.

11	4	8
Yes	No	I'm not sure
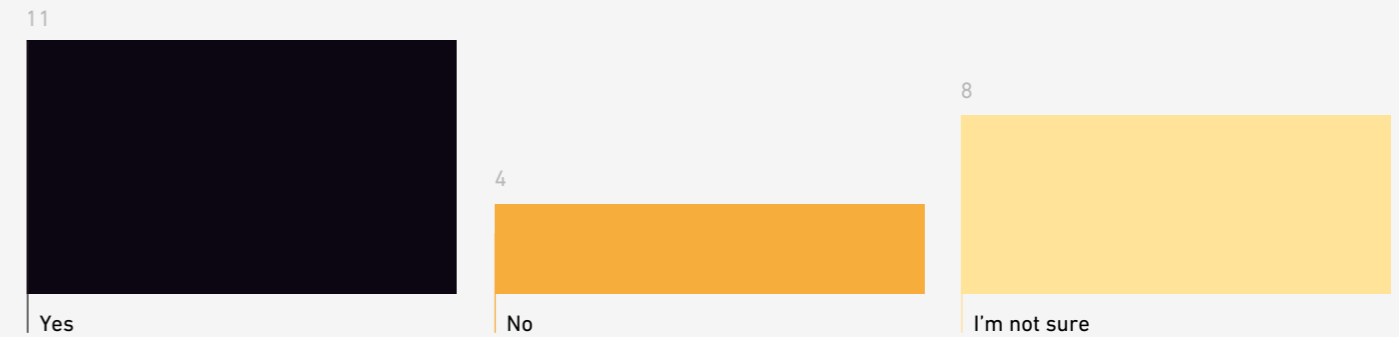
Question 4: Identify the biggest barriers to addressing women's safety and inclusive life at night.

The biggest barriers to women's safety and inclusive life at night were determined to be changing policymakers' mindsets, changing public mindsets and more trusted paths to report incidents.

1st	Changing policymakers' mindsets
2nd	Changing public mindsets
3rd	More trusted paths to report incidents
4th	Improved legal frameworks
5th	Access to funding
6th	Access to trauma-informed and mental health resources
7th	Something else; I'll write in the chat
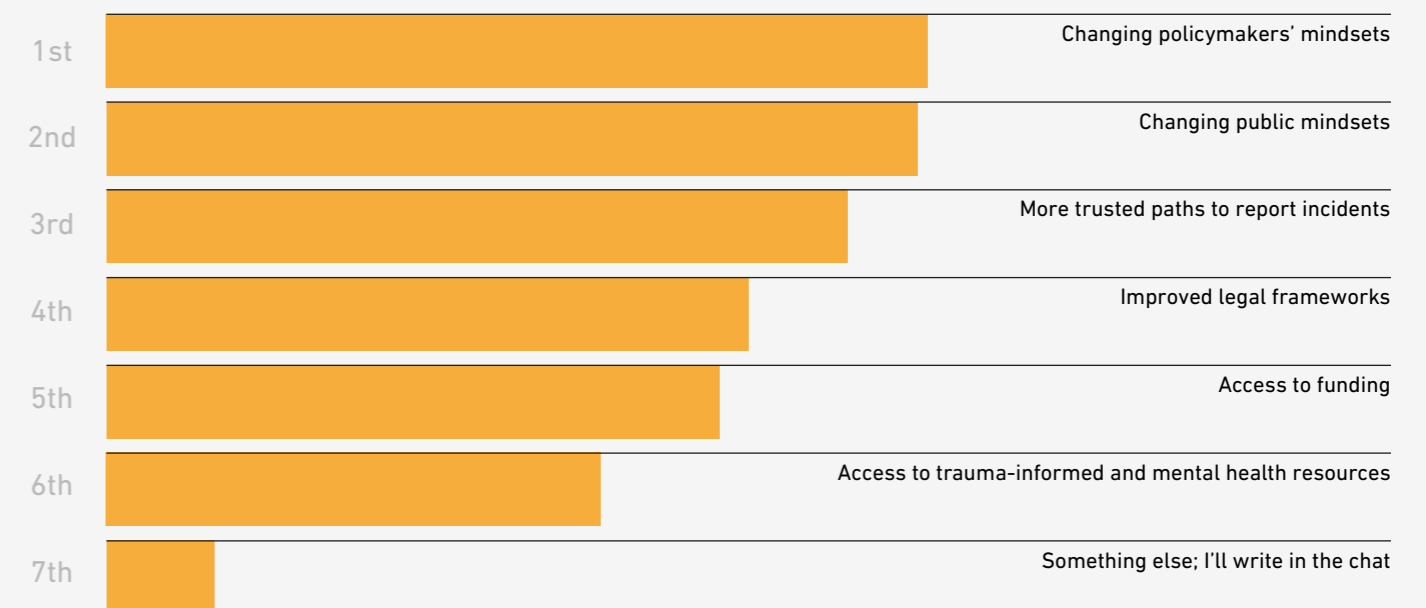
Question 5: Describe women's safety in your city.

Participants described women's safety in their city as *precarious*, *work in progress*, result of *shared responsibility, inexistent.*

problematic in families

fluid moving   shared responsibility

active participation   most vulnerable   unknown

low standards   individual   fair

getting there   work in progress   relatively safe

improving   taboo

variable   reactive   seriously undocumented

blame   precarious

not safe   Inexistent   women empowerment

more Innovation needed   lack of systems

self-managed   Ideal not yet achieved   varying stafity

needs better direction   political good will

hidden unsafe   none

Question 6: Describe life at night in your city.

Life at night was described as *vibrant, insecure, growing, masculine, diverse, lacking, recovering.*

community centred

not so active   ever watched

diminshing   creative

lacking   recovering   vibrant In some sections

expensive   exciting but could be Imp   quite safe

active   improving

scary   growing   iconic   diverse

lively   vibrant   risk

cbd busy   masculine

mundane   stressed   varies   global

not much   insecure

desired in residential   fun   culturally significant

inclusive   alcohol focused

small   areas around cbd conflict

sometimes not safe   a little safe

getting worse

What is nighttime governance, and why does it matter to safety?

It is impossible to fully address the challenges of urban safety without specifically addressing the night. Nighttime raises its own set of safety and equity issues, such as the unique needs of night workers, access to services and mobility, access to public, community and cultural space, and even simply feeling safe in one's own city and neighbourhood.

Cities must be planned for the night—but rarely are. It is essential that local decision-makers recognise how urban spaces and practices change at night and plan accordingly. Too often, nighttime urbanism is missing from discussions on sustainable urban futures. To develop inclusive, equitable approaches to economic development and participation, and to ensure the right to the city, *we must consider the night.*

Progressive nighttime policies strive to create environments where people can enjoy the night without fear by fostering a sense of community, belonging and shared responsibility. Good nighttime governance results from collaborative efforts among communities, businesses, and authorities. Inclusion of all community members, particularly women and marginalised groups, is paramount in city-wide safety strategies. As a result, communities enhance their cultural richness, boost their economies, and make streets safer.

In many cities, this new focus on the night is increasingly represented by nighttime governance structures, which first emerged in European cities in the early 2000s. Now, roughly 100 cities have some type of night mayor, nightlife commission, or nighttime office. Whether municipal or non-governmental, these entities serve as liaisons, champions, and "translators" between various stakeholders to support life at night.

Some innovative initiatives in the field of nighttime governance include:

- **Night 'host' or 'guardian' programmes** train staff who are present in busy areas of the city to help maintain a hospitable, safe and orderly atmosphere at night. Examples include the 'square hosts' in Amsterdam's Rembrandtplein, Paris' Pierrots de la Nuit, or Nachtschicht ('night shift') mediation team in Mannheim.
- The **Awareness-Akademie,** founded by the Berlin Club Commission, actively works to prevent violence and exclusion in the nightlife scene through trainings, workshops, resources and peer consultation for clubs, collectives and festivals.
- **Bristol Nights** has implemented a Women's Safety Night Charter, disseminating it through public campaigns, public art, and free trainings for safety "champions" and nightlife establishments' front-of-house staff (read more in the next section: **Case 2: Bristol**).

Nighttime governance involves public-private partnership and should be seen as a comprehensive policy area encompassing topics such as diversity and inclusion, placemaking, economic development, transport, health and prevention, sustainability, mobility, and more.

Amsterdam Square Hosts

Webinar 3: Inclusive Governance and the Role of Civil Society for Safer Cities

→ This webinar focused on the role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and their efforts to implement activities, programmes, and practices in urban communities that promote safer cities through co-creation.

→ The aim was to increase knowledge of inclusive practices implemented by CSOs in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia.

Key highlights

- The discussion emphasised the critical role of CSOs in reaching marginalised and vulnerable groups in society and building bridges with local governments. Trust and building trust with local communities is a precursor for capacity building and for successful partnerships.

- In Lima, the NGO *INCAFAM* led an initiative to promote peace and human security in a post-conflict community by empowering young people as catalysts of peace.

- In Oslo, the organisation "Neighbourhood Mothers" fosters strong, supportive bonds with women from minority backgrounds and assists them in accessing essential services.

- Also in Oslo, the Akerselva Paddling Club is dedicated to engaging and empowering youth from low-income areas in local activities while also strengthening the safety of the public spaces around the river bank.

- In Cairo, innovative pilot projects have been implemented to transform urban spaces into women-friendly cities by prioritising safety, inclusivity, and accessibility.

- In Nairobi, the NGO DreamTown supports youth-led grassroots organisations in three informal and underserved riverine neighbourhoods to implement local interventions to rehabilitate the ecological systems.

Mentimeter assessment

Question 1: What type of organisation do you work for?

Participants came from the private sector, local or global Civil Society Organisations, Academia or Government.

2	2	6	2	3
Local CSO	Global CSO	Local, regional, national government	Academia	Private sector
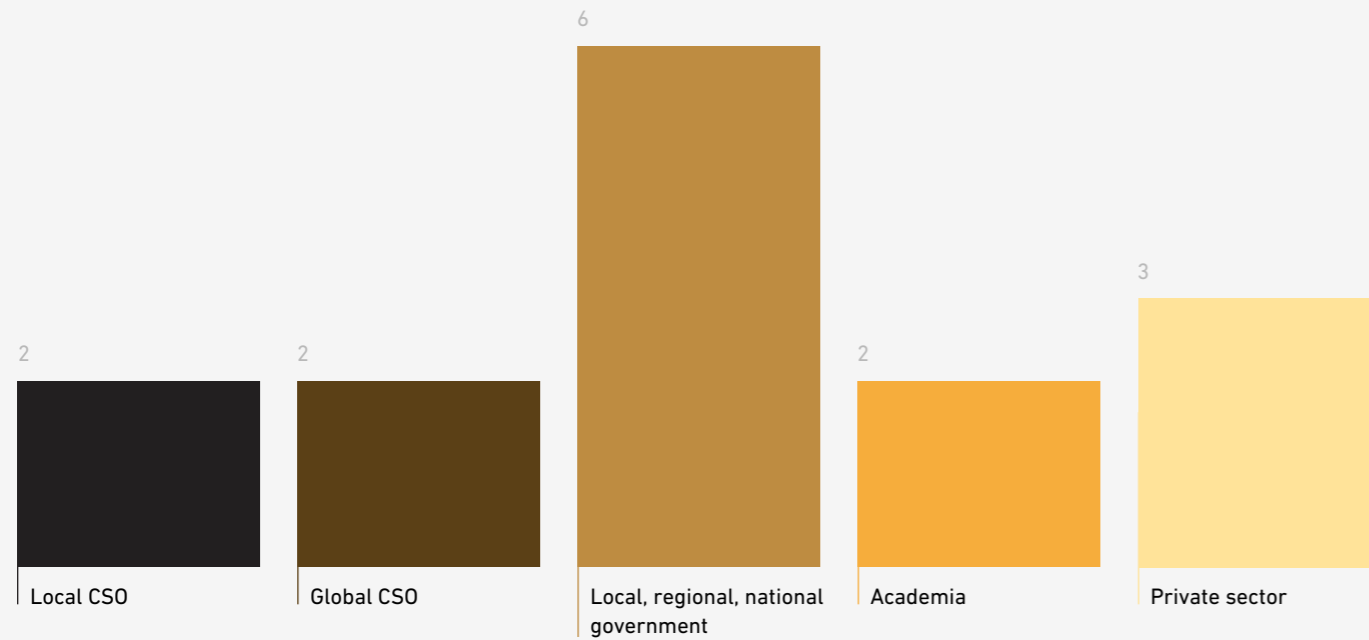
Question 2: What are the key safety needs citizens have from CSOs?

CSOs can cater to the specific needs of vulnerable groups, and support the education of young adults.

2 — Coordinate social services between citizens

0 — Facilitate access to social and emergency contacts (network)

9 — Support the most vulnerable and marginalized

2 — Self-organized security and nightwatching

7 — Support education of young adults and preventing violence

Question 3: Express a personal feeling related to a safe city.

Safe cities are *accessible, friendly, vibrant, safe, inclusive, secure, thriving, walkable.*

local enterprises
green public spaces   awareness protocols
accessibility
important   safe mobility
expansive   planificar   empty streets
inclusive   belonging   friends
walkable   free
cc   equality   parks
growth   thriving city   vital   safe political space
dd   hope
dark spots   relaxed   freedom
comfortable   ee
trust   rinviting   sense of security
minimize harassment
at ease   social services need

Question 4: What are the most important characteristics of safer cities?

To participants, the most important characteristics of a safer city are social cohesion and social justice.
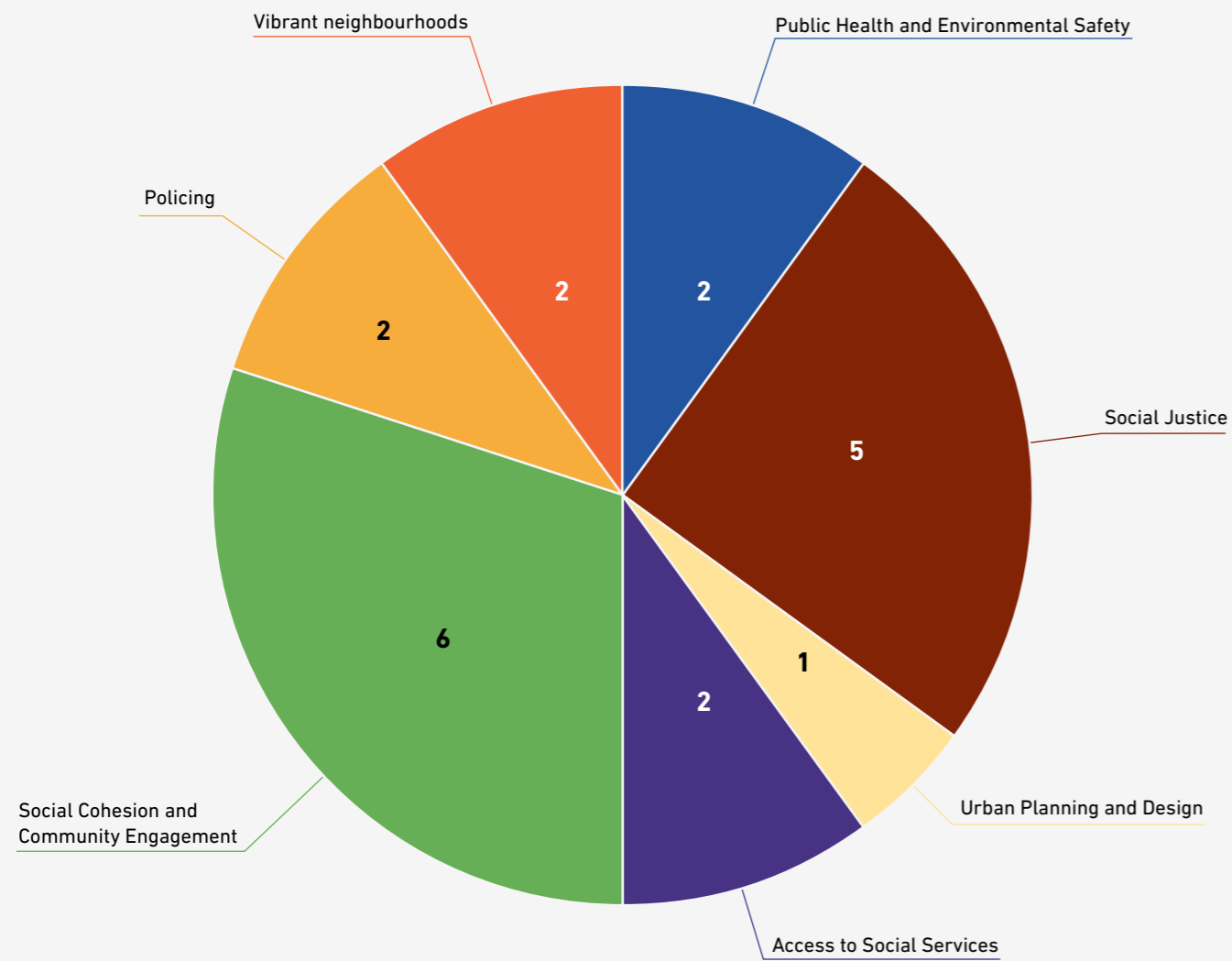
Webinar 4: Planning Safer Cities Led by Youth

→ The fourth and final Safer Cities webinar took place as an hybrid and bilingual event in Oslo. It was organised in collaboration with the Norwegian Housing and Planning Association.

→ The focus of the event was to present the peer learning process to a local audience and bring these into discussion among Oslo-based practitioners.

→ The Urban October theme in 2024 on youth and their role in shaping our urban future was also highlighted throughout.

Key highlights

- The Safer Cities partners - Habitat Norway, UCLG and Vibelab kicked of the first half of the session with respective presentations. First the participants were given an overview of this summary report, and that it will be presented at the World Urban Forum in Cairo.

- Following this, Sara Hoeflich from UCLG talked about the ways in which the Mayor networks have worked with urban safety issues, especially related to care systems and UCLG's methodology on peer learning, drawing on an example from Bogotá's Care Block initiative to centralise key services for female caregivers, improving their well being and to reduce the time women dedicate to unpaid work.

- Drawing on several examples across the world, VibeLab's Diana Raiselis shed light on the '24 hour city 'and the ways in which cities that have deliberately worked with innovative safety practices and governance processes have experienced a shift in nighttime culture ranging from Amsterdam to Sydney, Bristol to Copenhagen.

- Mathare Social Justice Center was supposed to present, but will be featured retroactively. Their presentation focused on community-led transformation, which despite numerous challenges, including unlawful demolitions and extreme floods, have taken the initiative to reclaim their spaces and seen the neighbourhoods in Mathare experiencing profound change and enhanced resilience.

- Joakim Prytz Frivoll from the Oslo police district emphasised the importance of cooperation in creating safe cities. He pointed to the development of Torggata and Tøyen Torg in Oslo as examples of how urban development can promote informal social control, and underscored the importance of good analysis and planning with participatory activities and programming before construction starts in new areas. Frivoll also highlighted the need for more knowledge about where people feel safe and recommended the police handbook which lists 10 characteristics of unsafe areas.

- Ingrid Hove Viljoen from Rodeo Architects pointed out that a city planned for women becomes for everyone, while a city planned for everyone often becomes for men. She highlighted how public participation in the analysis phase, before planning and drawing, is key to developing safer places. In their work, strategies for active facades are also important, which can look different in various places and times of the day. 24-hour accessibility is not always the solution everywhere, as the example of the Botanic Garden in Oslo shows, closed urban spaces at night can actually provide increased sense of security. The operation and maintenance of urban spaces was also highlighted as crucial to ensuring clean and safe environments.

- Yassin Merabet, Mona Abdullah and Iman Shahzad from TØYEN SPORTSKLUBB + Tøyenakademiet showed how sports can be a tool for community safety and well-being. They referred to a socio-cultural site analysis from 2015 as an important knowledge base for the area regeneration (områdeløft) in Tøyen. Through a broad definition of sports - such as stickball, dance, chess and football - the sports club, which started as a citizens' initiative, has created safe meeting places for children and young people. The youth representatives underscored the desire among the local members to use their voices in urban development processes to create safe and thriving places for everyone in the neighborhood.

Promising City Practices

Case 1: Medellín

Oscar Santiago Uribe Rocha, Executive Director, Medellín Resiliente Lab, Medellín, Colombia

The case of Medellín highlighted the importance of involving youth and vulnerable communities in co-creating a collective vision at the neighbourhood level, fostering neighbourhood leadership, and gathering data to understand social conditions and underlying causes of violence and crime.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Medellín struggled with high crime rates and violence, which significantly affected the wellbeing of its residents, especially youth and women, and hindered local economic growth. However, over the past 30 years, the city has undergone a remarkable urban transformation that has successfully mitigated crime and insecurity. This transformation was kick-started by the city's youth and led to the creation of the Presidential Advisory Office for Medellín. The office worked closely with local communities to chart the city's future and determine the necessary actions for this transformation.

Key milestones in this journey included:
- The declaration of the city's state of emergency and setup of the Presidential Advisory Office for Medellín.
- Advocacy through the TV program "Uplift My Neighborhood" and the development of a citywide movement to understand crime and violence at the neighbourhood level.
- Development of evidence-based spatial analysis in partnership with UN-Habitat to comprehend social conditions and the underlying causes of violence and crime.
- Formulation of public policies on safety, security, social cohesion, urban social integration, and citizenship culture.
- Implementing targeted actions in informal settlements to build human capital and create opportunities for youth. This included projects related to housing, public spaces, cultural and educational facilities, sports facilities, and economic development centres. These efforts also encompassed initiatives to bring justice and the police closer to the community by establishing community houses of justice, community policing, and an academy to transform police into champions of human rights.

Lessons from this experience stress the importance of co-creating a collective vision at the neighbourhood level, identifying and fostering neighbourhood leadership, and involving all community stakeholders, particularly youth, in the process.

Medellin Resiliente Lab

Case 2: Bristol

Carly Heath, Night Time Economy Advisor, City of Bristol, UK

The City of Bristol has taken a holistic approach to prevent violence against women and girls at night by supporting champions from the local community and providing training on safety issues.

Bristol Nights is a project developed by Bristol City Council in collaboration with city partners and those within the nighttime community. Based on principles of the World Health Organization (WHO) "Respect Framework" and the "Women's Night Safety Charter" from the Greater London Authority, Bristol has developed its own Women's Night Safety Charter, with seven commitments for businesses active at night:

1. Appoint a champion to drive the commitment to zero tolerance for sexual harassment.
2. Use positive language in communication and display posters or notices about organisational safety values and consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
3. Support staff by creating channels to report unacceptable behaviour and fostering cultural change.
4. Create channels for the public to report unacceptable behaviour while using services or spaces at night.
5. Provide training to staff on safety issues and appropriate responses.
6. Train staff on information sharing and proper recording of details.
7. Audit and adapt spaces to promote a safe environment and reduce crime risks.

Challenges faced during charter implementation included Champions (an organisation's liaison) finding the Charter too complex. As a result, Bristol Nights divided the training into two parts. The first part focuses on practical and policy-level interventions for Champions, providing a space for discussion and networking. The second part concentrates on front-of-house training, emphasising appropriate responses and recording methods based on the individual's role, job, and venue. All training sessions are provided free of charge. The initiative also encountered issues with recording incidents, prompting a change from spreadsheets to encouraging venues to log incidents in a book and then mapping them in a hotspot map, allowing spaces and practices to be adapted based on incident data. Additionally, Bristol Nights has organised public campaigns, and even glow-in-the-dark murals in the city centre to raise awareness of the issue.

Bristol Nights

Case 3: Nairobi

Vivian Adungo, Focal point, Safer Nairobi Initiative, County of Nairobi, Kenya

The City of Nairobi is taking proactive steps to prevent violence through a well-researched action plan. This comprehensive strategy is executed by a dedicated office that effectively coordinates efforts across various departments and stakeholders.

The Safer Nairobi Initiative is a program developed in partnership with UN-Habitat since 2001 as part of the UN-Habitat Safer Cities Program. This initiative began by collecting data and understanding the root causes of crime in Nairobi. A crime diagnosis was developed following a Crime Victimisation Survey methodology, which formed a basis for basis for developing an integrated strategy. Additionally, the city established a Safer Nairobi Initiative Coordinating office to manage efforts between different departments and collaborate with other stakeholders.

The Nairobi Metropolitan Strategy aims to develop a 24-hour city and has identified specific neighbourhoods where this 24-hour economy can be achieved first. Nairobi City Council conducts safety audit night walks, leading to improvements in pedestrian areas and the lighting of city streets.

Key lessons learnt include the need to develop a nighttime policy, the necessity of changing public mindsets about women, the importance of considering women's safety when designing mobility and public transport, and the need to establish time-based street management systems to allow informal traders and public transport to coexist, especially at peak hours.

Safer Nairobi Initiative

Case 4: Durban

Nomusa Shembe, Senior Manager, Safer Cities Unit, eThekwini Municipality, Durban, South Africa

The City of Durban is committed to implementing cutting-edge crime prevention, urban safety policies and programs developed in collaboration with civil society organisations. The strategy places a priority on women's safety and underscores the shared responsibility of the entire community to ensure the wellbeing of women in the city.

Durban has implemented crime prevention and urban safety policies and programs for over 25 years. In 2019, the City conducted a Safety Audit to gather information on critical safety issues that require interventions. This audit informed the 5-year City Safety Strategy (2020-2025) adopted by the Council. The eThekwini City Safety Strategy, with the central theme "My city, my safety, my responsibility", prioritises women's safety and gender-based violence and emphasises that women and the entire community should take responsibility for women's safety in the city.

The City regularly audits women's safety in coordination with the neighbourhood level. Recently, the City partnered with SAFETIPIN to enable women to collect and disseminate safety-related information on a large scale through a set of map-based technological applications. The data obtained in this process allows the City to inform different delivery units, and for the Safer City Unit to take evidence-based action, implementing steps that enable women to access the city more freely than in the past. Additionally, addressing the fear factor at night is prioritised and has become a catalyst for economic transformation and improved city governance during nighttime. Policy measures and interventions are co-created with civil society organisations, departments within the city government, and the Safer City Unit.

Other initiatives undertaken by the City include:
- Establishment of the "Ward-Based Rapid Response Team" to address gender-based violence and fear using digital tools. digital tools.
- Transformation of Warwick Triangle to coexist as both economic and public transport nodes.
- Enhancement of the tourism value chain through the engagement of homeless people as Tourism Guards along the beachfront.
- Ongoing weekly conditional assessment of municipal infrastructure throughout the city to improve safety, particularly for women, through a programme called Operation Good Hope, which allows service delivery departments to respond swiftly to identified faults.
- An innovative programme of Tourism Ambassadors comprising unemployed youth has been initiated to ensure that most areas in the city are staffed day and night.

While women's safety is a priority in the city's transformative agenda, there is a recognition that the participation and the voice of men are critical in curbing gender-based violence in society. Efforts to empower men through conversations and dialogues are gaining momentum with initiatives such as "Isibaya Samadoda", where men empower each other on several issues.

Case 5: Edmonton

Jan Fox, Executive Director, REACH Edmonton Council for Safe Communities, Canada

The City of Edmonton collaborates with businesses, non-profit organisations, academic institutions, and the community to enhance safety and revitalise the Downtown area's local economy after the COVID pandemic.

REACH is an independent organisation dedicated to enhancing community safety and wellbeing by bringing together community service agencies, governments, individuals, and neighbourhoods. REACH does not provide direct services but coordinates initiatives with partners. The organisation's core belief is that crime and violence must involve and be solved within the community, utilising community-led ideas.

The "Downtown Revitalization" initiative aims to enhance safety and boost the local economy after the impact of the COVID pandemic on the downtown area, which led to the closure of businesses and impacted the perception of safety, especially for women. The city is developing a Nighttime Economy report to combat downtown decay, focusing on safe transportation and

creating safe, inclusive spaces for women. The Downtown Recovery Coalition, comprising businesses, non-profit organisations, and academic institutions, has been formed to explore ways to improve downtown vibrancy and promote innovation. This initiative marks a significant milestone in which various stakeholders have recognised that community safety is a collective responsibility.

Two other initiatives were highlighted: the 24/7 crisis diversion program enabling citizens to call 211 instead of emergency services to dispatch social workers to non-police-related issues and creating safer neighbourhoods through collaborative development of neighbourhood safety plans with local communities.

REACH Edmonton

Case 6: Banjul

Latirr Carr, Management & Engineering Consultant, Banjul Safe City Project, City of Banjul, The Gambia

The City of Banjul is taking a proactive stance with the Banjul Safe City Project, aiming to prioritise the safety of women and children through a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach. This innovative project involves enhancing public spaces for children and the environment while also implementing measures to combat gender-based violence.

The City of Banjul has seen a rise in crime against women and children, largely due to economic reasons. The project aims to empower women for financial self-sufficiency while protecting the environment, as much of the economy depends on tourism and fishing activities.

The project has three main components:
1. Aesthetic, which aims to develop a green, clean and vibrant city;
2. Technical, which involves crime prevention, in particular for gender-based violence, and the creation of safe spaces for children; and
3. Environmental, focusing on beach recovery, wetland protection, and waste management.

As part of this project, the Safe City Blueprint for Banjul was developed through a multistakeholder approach between the central government, international agencies, the private sector and local citizens.

The project has faced several challenges, such as difficulties in mobilising resources due to a lack of investment in safe city concepts and a shortage of local expertise. Moreover, the project needed to address climate change as a root cause for women losing economic independence, leading to an increase in gender-based violence. Early outcomes and lessons learned from the project emphasise the importance of involving local stakeholders from the initial stages, early resource mobilisation, and developing community project action groups.

Banjul Safe City Project

Case 7: Lima

Olenka Ochoa Berreteaga, FEMUM – Smart & Sustainable Cities G100, Lima, Peru

In Lima, the NGO INCAFAM led the "Young Defenders of People in Post-conflict City: San Juan de Lurigancho" project, an initiative to promote peace and human security in a post-conflict community in Lima, by empowering young people as catalysts of peace.

The project started in the 2000s and focused on 25 young individuals (both women and men) aged between 13 and 17 who were affected by the armed conflict in the San Juan de Lurigancho district, an area on the outskirts of Lima that was created by internal migration driven by armed violence. This neighbourhood was designated as a Red Zone due to the presence of terrorist groups and military operations during the conflict. After the conflict, the area saw the emergence of youth gangs and gang violence.

The project aimed to achieve human security by empowering young people to be catalysts for peace. It utilised an innovative approach to security and tackling youth violence, involving communities, the government, and social allies.

The project focused on six areas of intervention, including research and knowledge, education, quality recreation, cultural democratisation, organisation and management, and policy advocacy. Some of the project outcomes included:

- Co-creation of project design based on dialogues with young leaders and incorporating their demands and ideas.
- Advocacy and activities aimed at securing political support and improving municipal services.
- Generation of knowledge and visibility of the phenomenon of youth violence.
- Promotion of youth leadership and voices to make violence visible and contribute to local peace.
- Cultural activities to promote dignity and identity, such as photography workshops, cinema, and archaeology classes.
- Coordination with authorities and officials from the municipality, the police, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Ministry of Women.
- Providing training on protection, safety, and peace.

Key lessons learned include:
1. Community participation is crucial; the participation of women, men, vulnerable sectors and leaders greatly enriched the project and enhanced peer learning.
2. A gender perspective is essential to differentiate the risks faced by men and women.
3. Youth violence is influenced by a combination of social and economic factors.

Case 8: Oslo

Raisa Rehman, Chair, Neighbourhood Mothers, Oslo, Norway

The organisation "Neighbourhood Mothers" fosters strong, supportive bonds with women from minority backgrounds. Through the dedicated efforts of well-integrated migrant women, the organisation assists and empowers these women to access essential services and successfully integrate into Norwegian society.

This initiative is aimed at women from ethnic minority backgrounds and isolated women, as well as their families, to provide them with the support and knowledge they need to access opportunities, understand their rights and responsibilities, and ultimately integrate into Norwegian society.

The organisation has 60 volunteer neighbourhood mothers from 60 different countries. These women are resourceful volunteers, primarily from ethnic minority backgrounds, who are well-integrated in the country, speak Norwegian fluently, have a large network and the time and passion to help other women. Upon deciding to become neighbourhood mothers, these volunteers undergo training courses covering topics such as family, health, and society, coordinated by the municipality in close collaboration with Neighbourhood Mothers Norway.

The volunteers establish trusting relationships with women from minority backgrounds with limited social networks. This group is often difficult for the public sector to reach, but the volunteers can bridge the gap because they speak the same language, have extensive networks, and understand their culture. By engaging with these women in the local community, they create a strong foundation for conversation and can relate to the experience of coming to a new country and integrating into Norway. The organisation also organises activities in the local community, including training groups, discussion groups, and courses.

A new pilot project is being developed to address youth crime in downtown Oslo in collaboration with Oslo Municipality and the police. The goal is to establish a connection between public services and mothers to address youth school dropout, increase social participation, combat loneliness, and promote youth involvement in leisure activities.

Bydelsmødre

Case 9: Cairo

Azza Sirry, Director of Metropolis Training Institute for Africa and Middle East, Housing and Building National Research Centre, Cairo, Egypt

In Cairo, innovative pilot projects have been established to transform urban spaces to create women-friendly cities. These initiatives prioritise safety, inclusivity, and accessibility to address the everyday safety concerns and fears experienced by women. Creating a women-friendly city means making safety a top priority along women's daily routes.

Women and girls in Egypt face multiple challenges, such as limited economic opportunities, sexual harassment, violence, lack of access to information about their rights, and low education levels. One significant issue: to complete daily tasks, women often need to make multiple trips, on foot or by public transport, to unsafe places such as parking areas, bus or train stations. This may require them to be accompanied by a family member or seek approval for their journey, restricting their ability to participate in education, shopping, caregiving, or recreation. Additionally, various land uses and activities along their daily routes hinder women from reaching their destination. For instance, the proximity of coffee shops, tuk-tuk stations, or car repair shops to schools, nurseries, or marketplaces may affect women's safety and perception of safety.

Sirry discussed upgrading informal areas through collaborative planning and design to enhance walkability, foster mixed-use development, and create adequate public spaces and services.

Sirry discussed initiatives aimed at making urban areas safer for women, such as upgrading marketplaces to be safer for women as buyers or sellers, mapping the activities that prevent pedestrians, especially women, from using sidewalks, and collecting data on areas in Cairo where poverty is concentrated and where women feel unsafe. A project led by UN-Habitat identified problem areas and conducted interventions in three areas: physical changes to prevent crime and improve accessibility, institutional interventions such as community policing, and social interventions promoting community participation in mapping unsafe areas. All these initiatives are considered as pilot projects to provide evidence and knowledge for upscaling to other areas.

Housing and Building National Research Center

Case 10: Oslo

Patricia Kennie, Activity Lead, Akerselva Paddling Club, Oslo, Norway

Akerselva Paddling Club is dedicated to engaging and empowering youth from low-income areas in local activities while also strengthening the safety of the public spaces around the river bank.

Akerselva Paddling Club is a volunteer-run initiative to create a safe and inclusive inner-city paddle club in downtown Oslo. This non-profit organisation was established five years ago and specialises in kayaks. It is funded through lower membership fees, government grants, and income from kayak rentals and courses. The club is located in Grønland, a multicultural, low-income area with high crime rates, where many youths are recruited into gangs, and both kids and adults experience high rates of illness.

Kennie stressed that the club provides social support in an inclusive setting, preventing youth from getting involved in criminal activities and gangs. The club sponsors courses and tours for youth and collaborates with other sports clubs and schools in the area. On most Saturdays, they host events to introduce kayaking on the river, providing the local community with a healthy activity close to nature. Key challenges are crime and cleanliness.

Akerselva Paddle Club

Case 11. Nairobi & Mathare

Stine Kronsted Pedersen, Urban Design Lead for Dream Town & Vincent Mahugu, Lawyer and Climate Justice Advocate, Mathare Social Justice Center, Mathare, Nairobi, Kenya

The NGO Dream Town is supporting youth-led grassroots organisations in three informal and underserved riverine neighbourhoods to implement local interventions to rehabilitate the ecological systems. This includes Mathare Social Justice Centre (MSJC): a grassroots organisation initiated by young members of the community to promote social justice in Mathare.

The NGO Dream Town supports youth-led grassroots organisations in driving community-led urban transformations. Dream Town operates through partnerships and implements projects in Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Sierra Leone.

The organisation is supporting a community-led urban development initiative in Mathare, Korogocho and Dandora neighbourhoods in Nairobi. As Nairobi is rapidly urbanising, the riparian landscape is deteriorating, disproportionately affecting low-income and informal settlements. This initiative supports youth-led grassroots to implement climate change adaptation practices, develop public spaces, and conduct advocacy work for socio-spatial justice.

The initiative started with a focus on individual, youth-led grassroots groups that were transforming derelict spaces along the Nairobi rivers into green, public spaces for their communities. The groups consisted of young people looking for a way out of criminal activities. Key activities were centred around building the organisational capacities of the groups as well as co-design workshops for the creation of public spaces.

In Mathare, dumping grounds for waste in historically neglected areas prone to flooding have been reclaimed and turned into community assets. Residents are clearing riverbanks of debris and pollution, and in this way transforming areas into green spaces, and reclaiming dignity and hope. These parks are now becoming public places of recreation, activities and community bounding, fostering a sense of safety and ownership among the residents.

One of the significant impacts of these initiatives by MSCJ is the reduction of crime within the neighbourhood, as the initiative has given particularly youth an alternative to illegal activities. Another aspect of the transformation has also been organisation of youth-led tournaments, breaking down barriers and divisions along lines of gang affiliations and other social tensions. These collective actions bring about visible improvements that enhance the quality of life for the residents of the community, but also have ripple effects in other parts of Nairobi and beyond.

A central lesson was to understand the conflicting rationalities that exist between the youth groups and the authorities, but also within the groups themselves and the network. While the grassroots have formed networks amongst them, they do not form one coherent voice, and thus, their participation in conversations around urban policy must not be reduced to simplistic or reductive narratives.

Dreamtown

Peer Lessons Learned

1.

Urban governance – whole-of-society approach

1.1. Foster multi-stakeholder partnerships with the active participation of the local community in decision-making.

All initiatives presented in the webinars relied on the joint work of stakeholder coalitions in co-creating and implementing Safer Cities initiatives. Successful strategies for creating safer cities, reducing crime and violence, and alleviating the fear of crime are based on the active participation and collaboration of the entire society.

Inclusive safety and security strategies should involve a cultural shift, making everyone responsible for ensuring safety and security. This includes all levels of government, local communities, civil society organisations, academic institutions and the private sector working together to generate knowledge and take action to implement inclusive urban safety and security strategies.

The case of Edmonton highlights the importance of solving crime and violence within the community through community-led initiatives. This requires a cultural change where stakeholders acknowledge safety as a collective responsibility.

The City of Durban collaborates with civil society organisations to enhance women's safety by engaging the entire community. All sectors of society co-created and are implementing the City's Safety Strategy with the theme "My city, my safety, my responsibility".

1.2. Build organisational capacities and promote local leadership within the local community as a precondition for community participation.

Strengthening the capacities of local actors, fostering community leadership, and building trust are crucial prerequisites for engaging the community, especially vulnerable groups, in decision-making and partnerships with other stakeholders.

The experience of DreamTown and Medellín underscore the significance of building the capacities of civil society, in particular youth groups, and their organisational processes, to enable them to participate in discussions and influence strategies and action. It is paramount that the local communities are organised to have a voice and influence in arenas.

These cases also emphasise the need for the government to build trust and be accountable to the communities. Most local communities have minimal trust in governments, requiring a shift from a repressive to an inclusive approach and the effort to bring other sections of the government, such as justice and the police, closer to the community.

The case of Bristol demonstrates how supporting community champions through training and awareness-raising activities is an effective strategy to prevent nighttime violence. Additionally, it is critical to recognise that civil society does not form a coherent voice and thus it is essential to include the diversity of views and needs in the discussion.

1.3. Establish nighttime governance to collaboratively enhance safety and security during nighttime.

Nighttime governance is an emerging policy field in cities around the world. While cities are bustling with activity at night, they face unique challenges related to public safety.

Nighttime governance policies aim to create safe and inclusive environments, fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility. These experiences highlight the shift from repressive measures to collaborative safety efforts involving all stakeholders, including nightlife actors and venues.

Establishing an office of the nightlife, a club commission, and/or appointing a night mayor is a proven practice to enhance nighttime governance. The City of Bristol, through the organisation Bristol Nights, showcases the collaboration with city partners and people within the nighttime community.

1.4. Ensure sustainable partnerships through formal commitments.

In the case of Oslo, shared by a keynote speaker, the police implemented a community policing model based on building an equal partnership with the community. In this model, the community and the police work together to identify, prioritise and solve problems affecting community life. The case underscores how formalising a partnership between the government, the police and the local community can prevent violence and crime in the long term by enabling the sharing of information among agencies and coordinating actions.

1.5. Local governments are in a key position to promote urban safety and security.

Local governments play a crucial role in coordinating and implementing community-wide crime prevention and urban safety strategies. Local governments are the level of government closest to the local communities, and they can reach and understand the local context, coordinate the departments within the local government and establish connections with other relevant national and regional government agencies or departments.

Examples from Bristol, Nairobi, Durban, Banjul and Edmonton demonstrate how local governments can mobilise and bring together local stakeholders for inclusive urban governance and enhance community safety and wellbeing.

Decentralisation of power, combined with the adequate allocation of resources at the local level, is paramount for effective prevention strategies.

1.6. Set up a dedicated office for urban safety work.

Cities with successful violence prevention strategies have established dedicated offices to coordinate action among government departments and collaborate with other stakeholders. This can be accomplished in different ways, such as creating a specific office for violence prevention embedded in the local government structure with an allocated budget and specific executive powers, as demonstrated by the Safer Nairobi Initiative Coordinating office in Nairobi. This office is capable of gathering and analysing data, planning, bringing proposals for safer cities to the political level, and setting targets for monitoring and evaluation. Alternatively, an independent organisation, such as REACH Edmonton, can bring together community services, agencies, the community and other local stakeholders to coordinate initiatives without directly providing services.

2.

Integrated and multisectoral strategy based on a sound evidence base

2.1. Adopt a comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach.

Most of the cases presented, including Durban, Nairobi and Medellín, have taken a multidisciplinary approach to tackling crime and violence.

The case of Medellín demonstrates how an integrated approach and targeted actions addressing root causes can halt violence and crime, build human capital and create opportunities for the youth. Interventions included projects related to housing, public spaces, cultural and educational facilities, sports facilities, and economic development centres.

Moreover, Nordic cities, as demonstrated by the recent research conducted by ww, prioritise prevention, safety and security and promote social inclusion in cities and neighbourhoods through a multisectoral approach and increased collaboration among different actors and levels of government.

2.2. Integrate safety and security policies into the City's urban policies.

Embracing a holistic approach means that urban safety and security strategies involve multiple city departments and levels of government, including areas such as urban spatial planning, infrastructure, housing, education, social development, and economic development. Both the City of Nairobi and Durban have established dedicated offices to coordinate the activities of the different government departments and agencies with regards to safety and security.

2.3. Focus on the root causes of crime and violence.

Safer Cities strategies must understand and tackle the root causes of crime. In Banjul, climate change was identified as a root cause for women losing economic independence, leading to an increase in gender-based violence. In Medellín, a key milestone included developing an evidence-based spatial analysis to understand the social conditions and the underlying causes of violence and crime. The City of Nairobi developed a crime diagnosis as the basis for developing an integrated strategy.

2.4. Enhance data collection and analysis through participatory approaches and the use of technology.

Proven prevention initiatives base their policies and strategies on comprehensive assessments developed with the active participation of local communities and the use of technology. Safety audit tools are used by local governments to comprehensively and systematically analyse crime and victimisation-related issues in their cities. This includes considering specific demographics and the incidence and profiles of victims and offenders across gender, age, ethnicity, culture, and socio-economic patterns to understand where crime and violence concentrate and their relation to other parameters, such as poverty.The cases of Medellín, Nairobi and Durban demonstrate that conducting city-wide audits from a neighbourhood perspective with a participatory approach is vital.

Technology can assist in gathering and analysing data. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) are widely used in territorial and urban planning and can be a valuable tool to analyse data and identify critical spatial areas which require priority interventions. In Cairo, a spatial analysis was undertaken to collect, categorise and analyse data on spatial inequality, in cooperation with government entities and civil society organisations. The analysis produced GIS maps to illustrate urban inequalities, identifying areas unsafe for women. The City of Durban has recently incorporated technology, specifically the SAFETIPIN app, in their routine audits of six neighbourhoods. This allows the City to gather data to inform the different delivery units and the Safer City Unit to take action based on evidence.

2.5. Adopt place-based initiatives within a city broad strategy.

Since every place and neighbourhood has specific risk factors, demographics, socio-economic conditions and stakeholders' capacities, safety and security strategies must be tailored to local contexts.

It is important that strategies focus on the entire city and avoid piece-meal neighbourhood safety and security interventions that can displace crime.

Medellín and Edmonton have successfully mitigated crime and insecurity by understanding the root causes of violence and crime in a specific area and co-creating a vision and strategy for the place with the participation of local communities.

Area-based regeneration approaches are also common in Nordic cities. These initiatives typically involve a range of measures to improve the built environment, public spaces, housing stock and engage the local population. These initiatives have a proven positive impact on the built environment and safety, but they present some limitations when addressing segregation.

3.1. Ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

All initiatives emphasise the importance of involving all community sectors, including vulnerable and minority groups, in decision-making to build inclusive and secure environments in cities and human settlements.

3.

Inclusion of youth, women and vulnerable groups in decision-making

3.2. Focus on youth engagement and leadership as agents of change.

The experiences in Nairobi, Lima, Durban and Medellín illustrate how engaging and supporting youth can effectively prevent violence. Youth can be a catalyst for change and play an important role in the co-production of safety and security in cities and human settlements, as outlined in the UN Safer Cities Guidelines.

In Medellín and Lima, engaging and empowering young people to raise awareness about violence and co-create the future of the neighbourhood was pivotal in reducing crime and violence.

The case of the NGO DreamTown in Nairobi acknowledges the importance of developing the capacities of youth groups, supporting their organisation and networking, and understanding that youth are not a homogenous group, but can have a diversity of views. These experiences underscore the need to reshape the relationship between young people and the authorities and engage them in designing programmes for youth crime prevention.

Additionally, experiences like the Oslo Akerselva Paddling Club and INCAFAM's work in Lima demonstrate how involving youth in positive activities like art, culture or sports can foster dignity and bolster their leadership and self-esteem while providing social support, deterring them from engaging in criminal activities.

3.3.   Ensure a gender lens in urban safety policies and strategies.

Safety and security strategies across different sectors must consider the specific needs and interests of women and girls. This includes considering women's safety concerns in the design of mobility and transport systems, as well as public spaces to ensure that women can move freely in the city.

Case studies of Cairo, Nairobi and Durban highlight the need for a change of mindset and for all community members to take responsibility for women's safety.

Durban City conducts regular audits focused on women's safety, and while women's safety is a priority in the City's transformative agenda, there is a recognition that the participation and the voice of men are critical in curbing gender-based violence in society.

3.4.   Civil society organisations and NGOs can help integrate hard-to-reach groups.

The examples of Akerselva Paddling Club and Neighbourhood Mothers in Oslo, and INCAFAM's work in Lima, demonstrate how Civil Society Organisations can help integrate vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups by establishing trusted relationships.

Nordregio

4.1. Raise awareness of concrete problems.

Proven safety initiatives underscore the need to raise awareness of crime and safety issues to gain support towards safety and security initiatives. For instance, Banjul City faced difficulties in resource mobilisation due to the reluctance to invest in safe city concepts.

The experiences of Lima and Medellín highlight the significance of advocacy work. In Lima, the NGO INCAFAM conducted a violence diagnosis in the San Juan de Lurigancho district and engaged in awareness-raising activities to secure political support and improve municipal services. In Medellín, advocacy efforts included a national

TV program called "Uplift My Neighbourhood" and the development of a city-wide movement to understand crime and violence at the neighbourhood level.

There are multiple ways to raise awareness, including through professional engagements, technical assistance, but also through the use of technology such as e-marketing. The Canadian Centre for Safer Communities (CCFSC) has launched an innovative online portal to encourage member engagement, teamwork, dynamic discussions, knowledge sharing, networking, collaboration, and a stronger sense of community.

4.

Expand knowledge sharing of urban safety issues and proven solutions

4.2. Strengthen human capacities on safety issues at different levels.

Training officials, decision-makers, technicians, local champions, staff at night venues and other local stakeholders on safety and security issues and proven solutions is crucial to promote cultural change, and secure resources and support for safety and security initiatives.

Lack of human capacities is a key constraint to implementing Safer City initiatives, such as Banjul's case. In Bristol, the organisation

Bristol Nights offers free training at different levels. On one side, the organisation trains local champions on practical and policy-level interventions and provides them a space for discussion and networking. On the other hand, another training set focuses on front-of-house training, emphasising appropriate responses and recording methods based on the individual's role, job, and venue.

4.3.   Facilitate channels for the public to report incidents.

Many incidents go unreported. Hence it is important to facilitate channels for the public to report incidents or unacceptable behaviour during the day and at night and to establish adequate response mechanisms.

Edmonton City has implemented a successful initiative, the 24/7 crisis diversion program, which allows citizens to reach out to social workers instead of emergency services for non-police-related issues.

The City of Bristol has trained front-of-the-house personnel at night venues on safety issues, appropriate responses and recording methods.

Durban has established a "Ward-Based Rapid Response Team" to address gender-based violence using digital tools.

REACH Edmonton

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