

## TANZANIA

### SAFER CITIES PROGRAMME IN DAR ES SALAAM

*The Safety Audit illustrates how community participation can identify clear strategies in tackling crime in a neighbourhood and in creating the feeling of a safer environment.*

Safer Dar es Salaam in Tanzania was initiated in March 1997 with assistance from UNCHS (Habitat) and technical support from the International Centre for Prevention of Crime (ICPC) in Canada under the umbrella support of UNDP. The initiative aims at co-ordinating and strengthening local institutional crime prevention capacities, changing attitudes to law and order, and in enhancing youth employment through skills training and cultural activities. The initiative uses bottom up and gender aware approaches to mobilise community and local resources in establishing city based crime prevention.



The project aims at drawing resources and skills from a variety of key stakeholders and actors such as government ministries and departments, local governments, NGOs, CBOs religious and training institutions, mass media, educational centres, women's groups, neighbourhood watch groups, ward and sub-ward leaders and most importantly, the communities themselves. An example of the type of project being implemented under the Safer Cities umbrella is the Safety Audit for Women. Manzese Ward is among the first areas to initiate and implement crime prevention initiatives through a partnership approach. The exercise started through

Sungusungu, or community security group. A safety audit is a process that brings women and men together to walk through the physical environment, evaluate the impact, identify ways to increase safety and to organise implementation. Women belong to the most vulnerable groups, consequently, if a place feels safe to a woman, then it feels safe to everyone.

Safer Cities worked with Manzese women through the ward leadership to conduct a safety audit for women in two specific areas. A two-day discussion accompanied with fieldwork was done with a group of women who have lived in the area for more than five years, most of them living in family owned houses. Guided by a map, the women led the Safer Cities team and the ward officers into the area through narrow streets, paths, open spaces and unfinished buildings and expressed their feelings of fear or incidents of crime at each point.

The recommendations put forward by the women recognised that even though the area was unplanned and little could be done in terms of urban design, effort could be put into upgrading the whole settlement. The women's suggestions were divided into actions that could be taken at the municipal level and at the local or community level. The former included improving accessibility and circulation by demolishing the buildings that have encroached/blocked the roads; providing at least minimum street-lighting; and tighter regulations on night clubs and bars.

At the local/community level, actions included better lighting for householders; opening up closed paths for security reasons; strengthening security groups for better performance; and banning encroachment on road reserves. Similarly, local owners of semi-finished buildings were persuaded to finish their construction (if they could not afford to do so, the local authority would be allowed to auction them), and it was decided that tribunals should be established at the ward level by traditional leaders to deal with petty crimes against women.

Communities, such as Manzese, have observed a remarkable decrease in crime within their areas. The audit demonstrates that women had a clear idea of the action to be taken to improve safety in their area.



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