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Trends and Practices Paper

## Community Safety Partnerships by and with Indigenous Peoples

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## I Introduction

In the past 20 years, enormous energy and efforts have worked to document, raise awareness, and suggest ways to combat the numerous challenges facing Indigenous<sup>i</sup> peoples worldwide in relation to crime and victimisation (Hazlehurst, 1997, Homel, 1999, Blagg, 2000, McLaren, 2000, Singh & White, 2000, Doone, 2000, Memmot et al. 2001, Cunneen, 2001, La Prairie, 2002 Duffie & Rogers 2002, Capobianco & Shaw & Dubuc, 2003).

In many countries, Indigenous peoples continue to be over-represented in criminal justice systems as offenders, they suffer from high levels of economic and social disadvantage compared with non-indigenous counterparts, and similar social problems including high rates of suicide, accidents, illness, family violence, substance abuse, unemployment and low educational achievement. Rates of violence, spousal homicide, and child witnessing of spousal violence are often far higher among Indigenous than non-Indigenous populations. By no means are all of the risk factors identified encountered in every Indigenous community, nor do they characterize all Indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, the very broad range and nature of these risk factors requires them to be addressed across many fronts, and through multi-faceted interventions designed to target several factors at a time, using a variety of approaches.

Although much has been written about these challenges and the many injustices that have taken place as a result of colonization, assimilation policies, and discriminatory practices, much less has been written about the ‘solutions’ implemented ‘by’ and ‘with’ Indigenous individuals and organizations to prevent crime, including the challenges and opportunities for improvement to policy and practice within the community safety field.

A focus on solutions through partnerships in prevention is inspired by a larger shift and spirit which seems to be taking place in the last decade in relation to Indigenous people and more broadly in the development field. This is moving from a focus on disadvantage to one of well-being, from a focus on dependence to winning back autonomy and control, and from a focus on ‘lack’ to capability, progress, and resilience. Recognizing the dearth of information in this latter area, this paper aims to summarize some key global trends and developments with a focus on Indigenous populations, highlight some recent examples of **Indigenous communities in action** towards crime prevention, including some of the challenges of implementing effective prevention, and present some key learnings from the field to inform future action.

This paper notes some of the challenges of writing from an international context in reference to Indigenous populations and community safety. Most notably, these include: the lack of systematic and reliable data and the absence of research in many regions of the world on issues facing Indigenous communities, with a predominance of information coming from developed countries (Australia, Canada and New Zealand and the United States). Also the lack of constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples is a major issue, where immediate interventions may be required, and long term social development approaches to building safety, as outlined in this paper, may be far from the horizon.

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<sup>ii</sup> The term ‘Indigenous’ is considered generally to have widespread acceptance. While there is wide heterogeneity and linguistic diversity among Indigenous peoples, and there is no single definition of who they are, as an official definition of “Indigenous” has not been adopted by any UN-system body to date, for the purposes of this paper, we rely on a recent definition provided by the Inter-American Development Bank. It is a term that refers to peoples who meet the following three criteria: (i) they are descendants from populations inhabiting the country at the time of the conquest or colonization; (ii) irrespective of their legal status or current residence, they retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions and practices; and (iii) they recognize themselves as belonging to indigenous or pre-colonial cultures or peoples (IDB 2005, p.1).

## II. Recent Trends and Developments

Internationally there is now **wider recognition of Indigenous peoples and their culture** than in the recent past<sup>ii</sup>. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was established on July 28, 2000, by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and this reflects the increasing focus in many countries on the active involvement of Indigenous individuals, families, and communities in developing strategies and initiatives<sup>iii</sup> based on their own aspirations, and the importance of developing culturally appropriate consultation and participation mechanisms to work towards positive outcomes<sup>iv</sup>

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is a high level advisory body to the Economic and Social Council, with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. UNPFII meets annually for 10 day sessions. Past sessions have thematically focused on Indigenous Youth, Indigenous Women, and the first two Millenium Goals (MDGS). Recently, the Fifth Session of the Permanent Forum in May 2006 focused on the remaining six MDGs. ([www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/)).

Many countries have seen an increase in **migration of indigenous peoples to urban areas**. As a result of the dispossession and colonization of their ancestral lands, Indigenous peoples move to city centers in search of better educational and employment opportunities, and, in some countries, to escape military conflict or natural environmental disasters (IADB. 2006, SPFII & IOM, 2006). While determining an accurate portrait of urban Indigenous populations is quite difficult<sup>v</sup>, in some countries, the Census remains the most comprehensive data source available.

- According to Census figures in Australia (2001), 30% of the indigenous population live in major cities ([www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au)).
- According to Census figures in Canada (2001), almost one- half (49%) of the population who identified themselves as Aboriginal lived in urban areas ([www.statscan.com](http://www.statscan.com)).

*History reminds us that urban Aboriginal people do not arrive in cities like other migrants, national or international. Clearly, Aboriginal people moving to cities face some of the same challenges of other migrants- challenges associated with integrating into urban economies, interacting with diverse people from many origins, and finding appropriate housing and education.*

*Like other migrants, many Aboriginal people also retain close ties to their communities of origin. Unlike these other migrants, though, many Aboriginal people are traveling within their traditional territories. Many have expectations that their Aboriginal rights and identities will make a difference to the ways that they structure and live their lives in urban areas (Newhouse & Peters, 2003, p.6).*

<sup>ii</sup> See goals and action of the International Decade of World's Indigenous People (1995-2004), and the second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2014), The International Labour Organisation Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (ILO Convention No 169), adopted in 1989.

<sup>iii</sup> Some recent examples include: Strategy for Indigenous Development (2006) Inter-American Development Bank, the Indigenous Peoples Partnership Program (2003-2008), Canadian International Development Agency, Regional consultation on Indigenous Peoples and Indicators of Well-Being, co-organized by the UN Permanent Forum and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (March 2006), World Bank Indigenous People's Policy (2005)

<sup>iv</sup> See for example: Guidelines for engagement with indigenous peoples (UN Workshop, August 15, 2005, Engaging the marginalized- partnerships between indigenous peoples, governments and civil society, Brisbane, Australia), A Guide for Consultation with Maori (Ministry of Justice, New Zealand 1997).

<sup>v</sup> Some of the factors which can affect the count include the high mobility of Indigenous peoples from rural and reserve areas to cities- often moving back and forth, and changing patterns of Indigenous self-reporting. For example, discrimination and marginalization may force indigenous migrants to hide their identity.

- According to Census figures in New Zealand, although the majority of Māori live in urban areas with a population of 30,000 or more, they are more likely than the total New Zealand population to live in minor urban areas (those with a population of 1,000 to 9,999) ([www.stats.govt.nz/](http://www.stats.govt.nz/)).
- In Chile, the Mapuches are the largest and most organized group, comprising about 85 percent of the indigenous population. While the majority of Mapuches live on reservations, approximately a third live in urban areas ([www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/](http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/)).

Migration is a complex issue and there is an absence of research that looks at the impact migration has not only on Indigenous peoples in destination countries, but also on transit communities, and home communities (SPFF & IOM 2006). Despite this limitation, recent research in Canada suggests the need to identify the *specificities* within the larger urban Indigenous community such as geographic distribution, gender, the diversity of culture and language, links to rural and remote communities, and presence or lack of urban Indigenous organizations and institutions within cities to provide assistance and support in examining the well-being of Indigenous population in urban areas (Newhouse & Peters, 2003).

Furthermore, in some countries, the issue of **cross-border migration** can also be significant for Indigenous populations, sometimes resulting in arrest, abuse and deportation. Recent evidence suggests that cross-border movements are prevalent in Colombia, the Mekong region in Asia, and Africa (SPFII & IOM 2006, p.5).

Given these trends, it is important that future policy and practice recognize both the opportunities this presents to the social and economic development of cities, and tackle the challenges Indigenous peoples face in urban centers<sup>vi</sup>, in addition to those facing rural and remote communities (Hanslemann 2001, La Prairie 1994, Jaccoud & Brassard 2003).

Another important development is that in many regions of the world, Indigenous peoples are now **more involved as partners** with other levels of government, the private sector and civil society in project and program development (IDB 2005, Stavenhagen 2004, OJJDP 1999). Recent examples include Australia's Shared Responsibility Agreements (2004), strategies developed by the Inter-American Development Bank (2006), the World Bank, (2005), and regional consultations organized in collaboration between the UN Permanent Forum and the Australian government in 2005 on partnerships between indigenous peoples, governments and civil society, and with the Canadian government in 2006, on developing indicators for well-being. Partnership building with Indigenous peoples is also a major focus of the Program of Action of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People adopted by the General Assembly.

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<sup>vi</sup> These include: limited access to employment opportunities, discrimination, low incomes, lack of safe and affordable housing, greater school drop-outs, and lower academic achievement in comparison to local populations. Also, sometimes Indigenous migrants may have limited skills in those areas valued by host communities which makes them prone to marginalization (see SPFII & IOM, 2006).

In July 2006, the Inter-American Development Bank released its *Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples and Strategy for Indigenous Development IND Policy and Strategy*. It aims to enhance the Bank's contribution to the development of Indigenous peoples by supporting the region's national governments and Indigenous peoples in achieving the following objectives: 1) Support the development with identity of Indigenous peoples, including strengthening their capacities for governance and 2) Safeguard indigenous peoples and their rights against adverse impacts and exclusion in Bank funded development projects.

Some activities will aim to: improve the visibility and understanding of the challenges to indigenous development, in rural and urban context, develop socio-culturally appropriate solutions to increase the availability and quality of social services, particularly health and education for indigenous peoples, and provide support for the participation and leadership by, and protection of women, the elderly, youth and children ( IADB, 2006., p.7)

There is also a **move away from a deficit model**, to one which focuses on building on, and strengthening the capacities of Indigenous communities. This involves on the one hand, a very detailed analysis of the causal and protective factors and assets of Indigenous communities, but also a focus on strengthening leadership, capacity and skills of community members or groups who may not always have the necessary skills and experience to apply for funds, or implement, manage and evaluate projects.

Finally, **crime prevention<sup>vii</sup> strategies (national, regional and local) which are specifically geared to the needs and perspectives of Indigenous peoples** have also received greater recognition in recent years in countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States<sup>viii</sup>.

One of the main objectives of **Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy**, launched in 1998, is to assist communities in developing and implementing community-based solutions to problems that contribute to crime and victimization, particularly as they affect children, youth, women, elderly and First Nations, Metis and Inuit People. In 2003, A Policy on Crime Prevention through Social Development for Métis, Inuit and First Nations Communities On and Off Reserve was developed with national and provincial Aboriginal groups. To date, a variety of crime prevention initiatives continue to be supported by the NCPS in both urban and rural settings and in Northern and remote locations 'with' and 'for' Indigenous Peoples.

In addition, the **First Nations Policing and Crime Prevention program** is a component of the Crime Prevention and Public Safety Initiative (CPPSI), an expansion of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention. Administered by the Aboriginal Policing Directorate (APD), the First Nations Policing and Crime Prevention program supports First Nations police services and organizations in encouraging safer, healthier and more sustainable communities through crime prevention initiatives that address local crime and victimization issues.

Crime prevention can take many forms, but strategies which focus on social development, and recognize the cross-cutting nature of the causes of crime and victimization, have much potential for developing the capacities of individuals and communities to tackle those causes.

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<sup>vii</sup> The terms crime prevention and community safety are used interchangeably throughout this paper. Some authors have argued that the term crime prevention may not be the appropriate term to use as the word 'Crime' may be associated to structures or agencies associated with crime control and reduction. Community Safety may be a more appropriate term as it reflects a more holistic approach to improving outcomes for communities.

<sup>viii</sup> For a description of strategies and approaches see for example: Cunneen, C. (2001) *The Impact of Crime Prevention on Aboriginal Communities*. Institute of Criminology, University of Sydney, NSW: AJAC

Given the severity of the problems facing Indigenous populations, the arguments for building programs which are cross-cutting and ‘whole of government’ are even greater.

### III. Community Safety and Indigenous Peoples

ICPC’s recent review of policy and practice in Indigenous peoples and community safety<sup>ix</sup> suggests that looking at crime prevention initiatives per se provides too narrow a focus. Many of these initiatives can be found in the areas of health, community development and Indigenous community development, and urban renewal. To look for outcomes solely in terms of crime reduction is far too restrictive. Similarly, looking only at projects which are described as crime prevention will miss the huge contributions of joint initiatives which will also strengthen community safety and have crime prevention outcomes (Capobianco et al. 2003, p. 6)

Therefore, many of the initiatives identified in this paper take a much broader approach which recognize the multiplicity of causal factors and the need for a really integrated and participatory approach. They also illustrate the four main themes previously discussed in ICPC’s review of crime prevention approaches and initiatives among Indigenous Peoples in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the US, in terms of ways to address the problems. They are: **community involvement, self determination and empowerment, and restorative justice** (See Capobianco et al. 2003). These themes are not mutually exclusive, and they are characteristic of the **holistic approach** taken, which sees crime prevention as dependent upon improving the overall quality of life in Indigenous communities

The appropriateness, failures and shortcomings of conventional Western justice systems among Indigenous populations has led to the recent intense interest in restorative justice. In particular, this relates to models which are seen to be based on traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, notably family group conferencing, which was developed in New Zealand to respond to the need for more appropriate responses to offending by Maori youth, and sentencing circles and healing circles developed in Canada. **Restorative justice** practices are now being increasingly promoted by governments and used in Indigenous communities, in Australia, Canada and New Zealand, although not without dispute.

In addition to criminal justice system responses, there are a number of initiatives which harness the skills, expertise and creativity of Indigenous individuals, families and communities through **strategic approaches** that address the social, economic and political factors in order to reduce the risk of crime and victimization, and a number of these are highlighted in the next section.

### IV. Indigenous Communities in Action towards Crime Prevention: Recent Practices

There are a number of community safety programs designed by, with, and for Indigenous peoples, and are broadly classified here into three main groups: 1) social and economic measures (eg: Mentoring; Employment Training; Culture and Recreational Programs; Youth Organizations/Centres), 2) policing and justice (Night Patrols, Aboriginal Justice Groups/Youth Justice Group, Aboriginal Community Policing, Restorative Justice Practices) and 3) capacity building (leadership development). Many of the practices illustrated in this section have shown to be successful, while others are newly emerging and promising.

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<sup>ix</sup> See Capobianco, L., Shaw, M., Dubuc, S. (2003). Crime Prevention and Indigenous Communities: Current International Strategies and Programmes. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime.

## Social and Economic Measures

There is strong support internationally for holistic, social development approaches to crime prevention. This approach to crime prevention recognizes the complex social, economic, and cultural processes which contribute to crime and victimization. It focuses on reducing risk factors including: poor living conditions, poverty and unemployment, poor parenting, school drop out, and substance abuse by strengthening the range of personal, social, health and economic factors which protect families, children and young people from becoming involved in crime and victimization.

### **Outdoor Classroom Gwich'in Tribal Council's Culture Based Crime Prevention Project Northwest Territories, Canada**

**Context:** Over the past decade, the Gwich'in people have been working on settling their land claim, achieving economic stability and establishing self-government. Meanwhile, Gwich'in communities face high rates of violent crime, sexual assault, family violence and child sexual assault. The sense of hopelessness among young people – demonstrated by sporadic school attendance, school leaving and involvement in arson, theft and mischief – is a serious concern.

**Description:** The Outdoor Classroom Gwich'in Tribal Council's Culture Based Crime Prevention Project in Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories received funding under Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy from 1999-2004. It is a school-based program that uses an outdoor camp, breakfast program and in-school program. With the involvement of elders, life skills training and traditional learning, the project targeted specific risk factors linked to anti-social behaviours, including difficulties in school, leaving school early and negative peer pressure. The project's major strength was its emphasis on culture-based crime prevention programming. The project was culturally relevant and encompassed Gwich'in traditions, values and customs. The Outdoor Classroom project was well accepted by the Gwich'in community, and elements of the project are continuing past Strategy funding -- including the Outdoor Classroom at TI'oondih, the Morning Program and the Social Skills Program.

**Outcomes:** Some outcomes of the Outdoor Classroom include: a 20% difference in monthly school attendance rates between the intervention and comparison schools. Teachers from the intervention site reported that 75% of students who performed below the average grade level in the standard classroom, outperformed their peers when being taught in the outdoor classroom in the development of cultural skills.

**Challenges:** While the implementation of the project started off well, participation rates decreased towards the end of the project. Changes in project administration and the role of the project advisory group appeared to have played a significant role in this change.

The strength of the original model -- in terms of project proposal, goals and objectives, support from the community and hard work and dedication from individuals -- held the project together through difficult times and a high rate of staff turnover.

**Key Learnings:** Some of these include:

- The use of a collaborative approach for social development projects encourages community ownership, the best use of limited resources and expertise, and is particularly important for developing culturally appropriate interventions;
- A project advisory group that is strong and that remains in place until the project's completion is vital to ensuring project continuity and integration;

- The program's model needs to be evidence-based, consistent with local/regional practices and beliefs, practical, user-friendly and integrated within an existing setting, such as a school or community program;
- Trust-building with key partner groups and stakeholders is very important to the evaluation.
- It is important to educate school staff and resource persons about evaluation and research strategies -- including data collection, type of evaluation design, basics of statistical analyses and consent procedures.

**Contact**

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National Crime Prevention Centre  
Tel: 1-877-302-6272

**Northcote Child and Youth Development Project  
Auckland, New Zealand**

**Context:** Several demographic changes have occurred in the Northcott area of Auckland New Zealand. Thirty-two percent of the population in the Northcote is under the age of 25 years. Of the 2,895 families in Northcote, one in four families with children are sole parent families. One third of the 1,362 children and young people in the area are being raised in one parent households. The most common ethnic groups in Northcote are New Zealand European, followed by Chinese, Māori, Tongan, Korean and Samoan<sup>x</sup>. Refugee families have also settled in Northcote over recent years. Some have come from social, political and economic systems which are vastly different from those in New Zealand and many have experienced years of trauma and hardship prior to their arrival. Many new settlers, particularly elderly immigrants, wives and mothers, who do not go out to work, feel socially isolated. This isolation is compounded for those migrants with minimal or no English, and by a lack of public transport in Northcote. In March 2003 to March 2005, 326 children and young people in the Northcote area came into contact with the Youth Aid section of Police. A total of 834 offences<sup>xi</sup> were recorded.

**Description:** The Northcote Child and Youth Development Project (2003-2006) is a collaborative project to support children and young people in the Northcote community on Auckland's North Shore, New Zealand. The Project forms part of Auckland's Sustainable Cities Program.-A regional partnership with the New Zealand-Sustainable Development Program of Action.

The project aims to improve social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes for children and young people by improving services and support with a focus on: learning what works best at community level, looking at the needs of children at different stages of development, using research and best practice to inform future decisions, increasing the participation of children and young people in decisions that affect them.

The North Shore City Council, the Ministry of Social Development, and Housing New Zealand Corporation's Community Renewal Project are working together in partnership with the Northcote community and a wide range of government and community agencies on this project.

<sup>x</sup> This is based on numbers reported in the Census 2001, New Zealand Bureau of Statistics.

<sup>xi</sup> As reported in the Statistical Profile, these offences include: shop lifting, burglary, disorderly behaviour, willful damage, assault (and related offences), drug related offences, and trespass.

Activities to date include: the hiring of a Youth Facilitator, the development of the Northcote Youth Project Development (NYPD) group, the development of a Statistical Profile for Northcote, local services mapping, a range of meetings and workshops with government agencies and community members to identify key themes for children and youth including environment and safety, and housing quality among others, and a Photovoice research initiative and engagement with local schools to investigate further ways to engage young people.

In addition, local stakeholders have been involved in the development of *the Safer Northcote Project* involving the Police, HCNZ, NSCC and other community members. This is a short-term project focused on reducing crime, cleaning up the Cadness reserve and organising a celebration in Northcote Central.

**Outcomes:** Recent evidence<sup>xii</sup> suggests: an increase in confidence and leadership skills of NYPD members; support for efforts to address local issues; and the development of templates that can be used in other areas.

**Challenges:**

The need to improve coordination between services in Northcot. Many organisations were unaware of what other groups were doing.

The extent to which government agencies are able to shape their core business to meet the needs and aspirations of local communities is still to be tested.

The need to ensure that the community reference group and the youth leadership components of the project represent the diverse sections of the Northcote community.

The need to acknowledge that Maori are Treaty partners and not just one interest group amongst others

Language barriers may prevent the involvement of new migrants in project processes and activities.

The time it might take for positive outcomes to eventuate:

**Key Learnings:**

The importance of sharing information across geographical and organisational boundaries.

The effectiveness of whole of government approaches can be greatly influenced by the willingness of key individuals and agencies to share information openly.

The importance of creating opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds and cultures to interact with each other and share common experiences.

The need for specific tools to support whole of government approaches such as appropriate technology and the ability to share information in a meaningful way.

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New Zealand

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<sup>xii</sup> See Greenaway, S., Conway, K., & Kawai, H. (2005). Formative Evaluation of the Northcote Child and Youth Development Project – Quarterly Progress Report Two. New Zealand. See Jensen, V., Kaiwai, H., Greenaway, S., Conway, K. (2005) Northcote Child and Youth Development Project . A Literature Review: Effective Youth Development Practice, Sustainable and Collaborative Approaches and Participatory Action Research Methods.

**Chiannou/Tiknagin Aboriginal Head Start Programme (AHS)**  
**(Programme d'aide préscolaire aux Autochtones)**  
**Val D'Or, Quebec**

**Description:** The Val D'Or Native Friendship Centre in Quebec is a non-profit community organization that aims to inform and assist Indigenous peoples living in urban areas. With over 30 years of experience, the Friendship Centre provides programs in support of community, economic and social development. In particular, the Center sponsors the Chiannou/Tiknagin Aboriginal Head Start Programme (AHS)<sup>xiii</sup> in collaboration with the Senneterre Native Friendship Centre

AHS is an early intervention strategy funded nationally by Health Canada aimed at meeting the needs of young Aboriginal children living in urban areas or in large northern communities. It is a broad program designed to respond to the child's spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical needs. The project includes:

- Intervention with fathers
- An educational program for the 0-2 year-olds, 2-3 year-olds, and the 4 year-olds
- Transportation service
- The "Nobody's Perfect" program
- A lunch program for the children
- Cultural, social and sports activities for families
- Information, prevention and awareness sessions for parents
- The employment of a family services worker and psycho-educator
- A parents support program
- Documentation such as pamphlets, videotapes, magazines, etc.
- Respite service
- Home visit program

**Outcomes:** While a local evaluation of this program is not available, other local project evaluations and ad hoc community reporting of AHS program sites across Canada suggest major gains in all areas of children's development and improved parenting skills in parents. A National Impact Evaluation of AHS is currently underway in Canada.

**Contact**

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<sup>xiii</sup> Aboriginal Head Start is a national early intervention program, initially piloted in 1996, for First Nations, Inuit and Metis children living in urban and northern communities in Canada. Each project provides programming in the following areas: Culture and Language, Education and School Readiness, Health Promotion, Nutrition, Social Support and Parental Involvement.

What is clear is that the task of preventing crime and ensuring community safety is not a one-time affair, but requires continual application, adaptation and innovation. For good community intervention, projects need to be sustainable in the sense that they can develop beyond the life of initial pilot or demonstration funding, but to do so they also need to be sustained, with continuing support from governments and partners.

### Policing and Justice

The overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system, in particular the disproportionate number of Indigenous children and young people in the juvenile justice system and in detention centers, and in some instances the overrepresentation of Indigenous women in custody, continues to be a serious problem in many countries. This can be reduced in part through strategic partnerships aimed at reducing the levels of social and economic disadvantage experienced by Indigenous people, and by improving the ways the criminal justice system<sup>xiv</sup> treats Indigenous people, including its role in helping to reduce recidivism.

#### **Boys From the Bush Program Cape York, Australia**

**Description:** The Boys From the Bush Program is a socio-economic program for at-risk Indigenous youth (aged 12-20) in Cape York and the Torres Strait, Australia that uses business enterprises as the means of tackling several risk factors including unemployment, previous offending, and drug and alcohol abuse. The program operates in partnership with the Community Justice Groups under the auspices of the Cape York Land Council and Cape York Partnerships. Local indigenous youths are referred to the diversionary program by the local community Justice Committee, the Courts or their families, usually after offending or engaging in potentially self destructive behaviours.

Boys from the Bush is developed around a viable commercial enterprise which can range from the harvesting, distillation and sale of eucalyptus and melaleuca oils, fishing or harvesting marine resources or the catching and sale of mud crabs.

The main objectives of the program are to:

- create a safe, supportive environment for young people to develop and enjoy their lives - without doing harm to themselves and others ;
- provide knowledge and skills relevant to living and working on Cape York Peninsula and the Torres Strait ;
- provide local Cape York Community Justice groups and the Courts with an effective intervention program and an effective alternative to remand in detention and custodial sentences;
- develop greater confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline, self-reliance, respect for themselves and others and their property; reduce boredom, anxiety and depression; and
- improve physical health and fitness; promote an understanding and respect of the natural environment.

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<sup>xiv</sup> This includes all aspects of the CJS -from policing, to sentencing, to imprisonment, to post-release services.

Each community program typically includes 12-15 youths (male and female) who enter the program voluntarily, for a period of 6-12 months. There is an option that if the young person wishes they may remain in the program and work towards a supervisory position.

Funding and commercial support provided by a range of philanthropic, corporate and government bodies such as Cape York Partnerships, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships. Department of Family Services, Mission Australia, Westpac Foundation, Myer Foundation, the Bodyshop and Cairns Plan and Printing.

**Outcomes:** Some of the regional groups established as early as 1998 reveal lower rates of recidivism and court appearances. Group members, Parents, Elders and service providers have reported that a number of young people from the groups have reduced or ceased their drug and alcohol intake (including petrol and aerosol sniffing), reduced or ceased their suicidal thoughts and behaviour, and reduced or ceased their physical and verbal abuse towards people, including police, teachers and parents

**Contact:**

Boys From The Bush Program

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**Lighthouses Project  
Manitoba, Canada**

**Context:** Aboriginal youth in Canada continue to be overrepresented in a number of risk factors associated with crime and victimization. According to Canada's Census data (2001), there were 14,400 Aboriginal youths aged 15-19 in the province of Manitoba of which 4,940 resided in the City of Winnipeg. Data also revealed that almost half of single parents aged 15-19 years of age in Winnipeg were Aboriginal. The Department of Justice Canada conducted a one-day snapshot of Aboriginal youth in custody across Canada during 2000, almost three quarters (73%) of the Aboriginal youth in custody in Manitoba were First Nations/North American Aboriginal, while 27% were Métis<sup>xv</sup>

**Description:** The Lighthouses project is part of Manitoba Department of Justice's Neighbourhoods Alive! revitalization initiative. It supports recreational, pro-social, and educational activities developed by, and for, Manitoban youth. Lighthouses uses community facilities, such as schools and recreation centres, to provide after-hours venues for sports, arts, music and other activities identified and organized by local youth themselves.

The main objectives of the Lighthouses project are to:

develop community-based programs that improve youth, police/Justice personnel and community partnerships, through the development of crime prevention and pro-social activities;

assist communities in working with youth to implement recreational programs that have been designed by youth for youth;

supplement activities with educational opportunities such as conflict resolution, peer mediation and life skills training.;

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<sup>xv</sup> See EAGLE'S EYE VIEW: An environmental scan of the Aboriginal community in Winnipeg. United Way Winnipeg. Available at: [www.unitedwaywinnipeg.mb.ca/pdf/eagles-eye-view-2k4.pdf](http://www.unitedwaywinnipeg.mb.ca/pdf/eagles-eye-view-2k4.pdf)

support and encourage further interagency cooperation in the planning, implementation and delivery of programs.

make use of schools, recreation centers and other existing community facilities after hours to implement activities; and

assist communities in accessing funding to implement programs.

Initiatives are funded jointly by the Provincial government and by alternative sources, especially through in-kind services. Lighthouses youth-led projects include anti-vandalism, clean space, safety and crime prevention initiatives.

Main partners involved in the Lighthouse program are youth, local communities, the RCMP, (or Municipal Police Services or the First Nation Police Services) and the Public Safety Branch of Manitoba Justice. Approximately twenty sites have been approved for Lighthouses funding, with current projects already operating in and around the cities of Winnipeg, Thompson, and Brandon.

**Outcomes:** In May 2003, the results of an independent formative evaluation of 20 sites in the Lighthouses program were released (note: 11 sites were designated as most at-risk, based on youth responses to questions that were designed to show at-risk indicators). The study found: a high participation rate among at-risk youth; that many meaningful services were being offered by Lighthouses programs to at-risk youth; that the majority of youth were involved in the planning process; and that these programs provided substantial cost-benefits. One of the recommendations following the evaluation included that care be taken to ensure that future program sites serve primarily at-risk youth since the aim of the Lighthouses Program is to prevent crime among youth. However this recommendation does not include removing funding from existing sites serving largely youth who may not be considered at risk.

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## Capacity Building

National and subregional governments, donor organizations, intermediaries, and the private sector can contribute to well planned crime prevention by helping to build and strengthen the capacity of Indigenous peoples and organizations.

Implementing and sustaining prevention strategies and programs require both sufficient investment in programs and resources beyond pilot initiatives. Helping to enhance and strengthen **leadership** skills and support can ensure sustainability of crime prevention in the long term.

#### Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous People- **Capacity building**

*There is a need for governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations and aid agencies to support efforts to build the capacity of indigenous communities, including in the area of human rights so that they may participate equally and meaningfully in the planning, design, negotiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programs and projects that affect them*

(United Nations Workshop- Engaging the marginalized – Partnerships between indigenous peoples, governments and civil society, 2005, p.5).

One of the key lessons learned in crime prevention over the years has been the importance of identifying a community champion. A community champion can contribute their leadership skills towards building safer communities.

Leadership involves gaining the confidence and trust of members in the community, ensuring a culturally supportive and safe environment for consultation and negotiation among residents, providing guidance and direction, and building ongoing networks among stakeholders to develop community capacity and sustain crime prevention measures in the long term.

While national or regional governments and Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations may provide assistance and support (tools, training, funding, etc.), it must be the Indigenous community itself which takes the lead in promoting and creating healthier and safer communities according to their own desires. Empowering individuals and communities is seen as a mechanism for increasing the capacities for successful self-determination.

There are a number of leadership initiatives designed ‘by’ and ‘with’ Indigenous individuals and organizations aimed at enhancing and strengthening the leadership capacities of Indigenous women and youth. Some approaches recognize the importance of healing<sup>xvi</sup> which needs to take place in relation to past hurt and injustice affecting their communities before passing on traditional knowledge and skills to future Indigenous leaders, and acknowledge different leadership styles.

*Indigenous ways of knowing understand the community holistically, with kin networks extending throughout the community (Cheers et al., , p.53).*

Some recent examples of Indigenous leadership programs include:

**Indigenous Women: Local Development and Leadership Building Saraguro, Ecuador**

**Description:** UNIFEM’s Indigenous Women: Local Development and Leadership Building Project<sup>xvii</sup> (2000-2002) in Saraguro, Ecuador aimed to gain a better understanding of the conditions that prevent Indigenous women from participating in the public sphere, construct leadership based on ethical, democratic, participatory, and gender and ethnic conscious values, and increase women and Indigenous organizations participation levels within the decision-making arenas. The project also aimed to develop strategies to integrate engendered leadership more fully into violence against women programs. UNIFEM worked with a broad range of partners including the Interprovincial Federation of Indigenous People of Saraguro (FIIS), Corporación Mujer a Mujer, Indigenous council women, several municipal departments and Casa de la Mujer.

**Outputs:** Some of the outputs of the program included: The development of Saraguro Indigenous Women’s Agenda For Action and the establishment of a Municipal commission on Gender. Also, twenty five Indigenous women leaders from different communities of the locality have become advocates for Indigenous and rural women’s rights. The president of the FIIS and the Corporación Mujer a Mujer have institutionalized a Leadership School for Indigenous Women Leaders of Saraguro, so as to make it a permanent part of the organization.

<sup>xvi</sup> See Archibald, L. (2006). Final Report of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation Volume III Promising Healing Practices in Aboriginal Communities. Canada: Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

<sup>xvii</sup> Summary of project is based on a Case study on Saraguro provided in Indigenous Women and the United Nations System, Good Practices and Lessons Learned (January 2006). Draft for Consultation. Compiled by: The Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

**Challenge:** A key challenge identified in the project was the ability to gain commitment and participation of high ranking senior council members. Despite an encouraging amount of openness from the city, the Indigenous council woman and several department heads were the only ones with consistent attendance. This was in part due to a political split within council, but also the prevailing conception that gender only refers to women.

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**Youth and Indigenous Leadership Activity  
Guatemala**

**Context:** Approximately 35% of Guatemala's population is between 15 and 29 years old and 11% are between 15 and 19 years old. Only 19% of youth are enrolled in high school and in some provinces 10% or less are enrolled. With a population doubling time of 19 years, the youth population is growing rapidly. The lack of opportunities for education, training and employment severely limits the life options that youth have and this is particularly acute among rural, Indigenous youth. Many young women and men migrate to cities and other countries in search of work and an increasing number fall into "easy earnings" in organized crime and gangs.

**Description:** USAID's specific target groups for youth and indigenous cross-cutting activities are youth between 10 and 25 years of age living in rural areas, marginal urban areas, and indigenous leaders. Indigenous is self-identified as pertaining to one of Guatemala's 24 indigenous ethnolinguistic groups.

As a way to address the need for youth and indigenous leadership in Guatemala, USAID has pooled resources across the three sector offices to fund a basic education and a higher education scholarship program for technical, university and post-graduate degree programs.

The USAID contributions are leveraged with the private sector: one from the corporate sector and one from participating universities or institutes. All academic scholarships will be accompanied by leadership and professional development support activities (e.g. English, ICT, and entrepreneurial skills). More information:

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USAID/Guatemala

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The **Portfolio Development and Indigenous Knowledge Development Project (2005-2006)** in Chile, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) aims to provide the Mapuche Nation with tools to plan the future of its community and to improve the living conditions of its people. The main goal of this project is to reduce poverty and address capacity building among the Mapuche Nation in Chile. It involves a collaborative relationship between the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) and the Mapuche Nation, along with government officials and business community leaders, knowledge, resources, and skills in the use of “prior learning assessment and recognition” (PLAR) to identify employability skills. ([www.fnti.net](http://www.fnti.net)).

In the US, the **National Youth Leadership Project (NIYLP)** is a national non-profit organization that has been serving Native American and other youth for 20 years and has developed nationally recognized programs in outdoor adventure, service-learning, leadership and peacemaking. Their programs are derived from Native elders and their wisdom and our programs are built around traditional Native values. Outdoor activities are used as metaphors for the challenges young people face as they find their way through the maze that the modern world presents. The skills youth learn from participation in NIYLP will help prepare them to be contributors and resources to their community, as opposed to merely recipients of services and consumers ([www.niylp.org/](http://www.niylp.org/))

The Provincial Aboriginal Youth Council of the **British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres** and the **Mayan Youth Movement**, Mojomayas, Guatemala received funding under the Indigenous Peoples Partnership Program, CIDA, Canada to encourage leadership development of Mayan youth. The goals of the project are to help to raise awareness among Mayan youth about models for youth leadership; provide youth with capacity building opportunities; strengthen the organizational structure of Mojomayas; and help Mayan youth participate at local, regional, and national levels to influence youth-related policies.

In New Zealand, several **Young Maori Leaders Conferences (YMLC)** have been held. In 2005, YMLC focused on new pattern changing approaches to social problems. Participants were offered collaborative leadership skills and a greater understanding of the inter-related parts of society.

In Victoria, Australia, the **Koori Community Leadership Program** was established by RMIT University in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association (VACSAL). Youth participate in training modules with Aboriginal elders, leaders and community organisations, to gain an insight into leadership issues and challenges at both the state and local level, as well as indigenous issues at the national level.

In sum, the practices and tools highlighted in this section emphasize the resilience, determination and leadership of many Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals and groups to strengthen protective factors in preventing crime and victimization, and improve the quality of life among the community, despite adversity. Yet, while these projects are encouraging, there are still many communities which lack skills and capabilities, authority and control over decision making, knowledge and information, strong networks with governments, private sector, and the wider community, and adequate resources (Cronin, 2003).

*If together we can build the capacity of Indigenous people to move from a position of impoverishment to one of prosperity; if together we can help Indigenous people to participate fully in the social, political and economic activities of our nation; and if, together, we can do all of this without compromising Indigenous cultures and identities – that will be cause for celebration*

(Higgins, 2005, p. 74).

These factors combined suggest an even greater need for technical assistance to assist both Indigenous communities, agencies and other partners in building safe and healthy communities.

## V. Conclusions: A Greater Role for Technical Assistance

There are a variety of institutions (Indigenous and Non- Indigenous organizations, NGOs, Foundations, etc.) within and across countries that are assisting Indigenous individuals and communities build healthier and safer communities.

This includes training and the exchange of expertise, comprehensive reports and guides to good and inspiring practice<sup>xviii</sup>, and culturally appropriate tools for partnership and problem diagnosis. Some examples are listed below:

- **Aboriginal Resource and Development Service Inc.** in Australia offers many services to assist in community development and education for Aboriginal communities. Their work includes community development initiatives, work and training, community education around health, economics, law and other subjects, language research and resource development and community services, research and advocacy.
- The **Telstra Foundation** in Australia, within its larger community development fund supports Indigenous community development projects<sup>xix</sup>. To date it has funded 69 projects aimed to benefit Indigenous children and young people.
- **American Indian<sup>xx</sup> Development Associates (AIDA)<sup>xxi</sup>** in the US delivers training and technical assistance to aid communities in developing culturally appropriate and effective ways of dealing with problems faced by Indian youth and their families. Technical assistance is delivered through onsite visits, telephone consultations, and regional training seminars. They have conducted seminars on comprehensive juvenile justice planning, development of community-based alternatives to incarceration, and training on qualitative data collection and analysis to obtain community perspectives on juvenile delinquency, violence and victimization. Recently, they released a Sustainability Toolkit for Indian Communities.
- **Seva Foundation** works with groups that promote and assist Indigenous women of Guatemala and Chiapas Mexico. Workshops on women's rights, domestic violence, micro-enterprise projects are designed to increase awareness, build self esteem and increase leadership skills among Indigenous women. Seva also provides resources and training under its broader Community Self Development<sup>xxii</sup> Program.

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<sup>xviii</sup> See Women & Safety Awards 2004 -Women and Cities International, Capobianco, Shaw & Dubuc (2003), ICPC, The Key to Safer Municipalities (2005)- Fondation Docteur Philippe Pinel with the technical assistance of ICPC, Compendium of Promising Crime Prevention Practices in Canada (2003) produced in partnership with NCPC Canada, Caledon Institute of Social Policy, and Cuneen 2001.

<sup>xix</sup> For a recent evaluation of 14 projects See Higgins, D. J. (Ed.) (2005), Indigenous Community Development Projects: Early Learnings Research Report, Vol. 2. Telstra Foundation, Melbourne. Available at: [www.aifs.org.au](http://www.aifs.org.au)

<sup>xx</sup> The term American Indian is often used to refer to the American Indian and Alaska Native population,

<sup>xxi</sup> See OJJDP (1999) Training and Technical Assistance for Indian Nation Juvenile Justice Systems. Fact Sheet. Available at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/fs99105.pdf>

<sup>xxii</sup> Self development is defined by Seva as a means by which community organizations define, direct, and oversees its projects with support and training.

- **Regina Indigenous Women Inc.** in Saskatoon, Canada is a relatively young organisation that seeks to build the capacity of the Aboriginal community in Regina and more specifically to develop understanding of Canada's Urban Aboriginal Strategy and to increase skills in proposal development.
- The **International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC)** established with Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the US, among other countries, a **virtual network** of researchers and practitioners working in the area related to Community Safety and Indigenous Peoples (CSIPNET) in 2004. The network aims to facilitate collaboration and exchange among Indigenous and non-indigenous policy makers, researchers, and practitioners working on issues relating to crime prevention and to advance international learning in the area of crime prevention, community safety and Indigenous communities.

However, it is equally important to develop the capacity of Governments (national, regional, local) and other partners to build more inclusive crime prevention policies and programs which appropriately and effectively meet the needs of Indigenous People, especially women, children, and youth. In addition to developing legal and policy frameworks and guidelines, and delivering services, this involves:

- Increasing the skills, knowledge and capabilities of all staff in actively engaging and working with Indigenous communities and organizations
- Ensuring that Indigenous knowledge is respected, valued and recognized in governance practices
- Involving Indigenous peoples in the gathering of data and information, analysis of problems and solutions and the design, and implementation and evaluation of initiatives
- Embedding their participation in ongoing decision-making in the city or neighbourhood level
- Providing opportunities to share good practice within and across countries that help inspire and build momentum among Indigenous and non Indigenous policymakers, practitioners, and civil society.

Furthermore, this paper has highlighted a number of community safety initiatives developed and implemented either by and/or with Indigenous peoples to strengthen protective factors among community members and the wider community, with the support of governments and technical assistance programs. The effectiveness of programs led and developed through the active participation of Indigenous peoples as demonstrated here and other recent good practice material in the field (Memmott et al 2006, Higgins 2005, Jamieson & Hart 2003, Cunneen 2001), re-emphasizes the need to support and promote community safety initiatives unique to indigenous peoples in order to improve their quality of life through their own leadership, and tailored to each community's unique socio-cultural situation and perspectives. However, much work remains to be done in developing indicators to measure the well-being of Indigenous peoples over time which can greatly assist governments in assessing whether programs and interventions within and across countries are achieving positive outcomes for Indigenous people.

Implicitly, the paper raises some questions for different readers to consider. For decision-makers, what is the identity of crime prevention policy within the contemporary landscape of cross cutting initiatives? Should the level of 'community readiness' be a key criteria for future funding programs? For Indigenous organizations and communities, how can prevention programs be more responsive to the perspectives of Indigenous Peoples? What are some of the obstacles in accessing support or program funding? To what degree is guidance from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals and organizations relevant, helpful, inspiring, or misplaced?

Finally, while the paper has provided a space to share good practice it is only one of the many mediums by which to share stories of forgiveness, hope, courage, vision, determination and success. Given the importance of the oral tradition among Indigenous peoples, perhaps face to face gatherings, story telling circles and online forums would provide additional learning and exchange opportunities within this area.

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