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# Community Policing Without Borders



## PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

(English version)

Community Policing



## GLOSSARY<sup>1</sup>

**Community policing:** a concept characterised by multiple and sometimes divergent definitions. In the framework of this project, community policing is defined as “a philosophy, a strategy, and an operational approach of policing based on a close cooperation between (local) law enforcement agencies and the community and aimed at pro-actively addressing conditions that give rise to concerns of both objective and subjective safety and that have a real or perceived impact on citizens’ everyday lives”.

**Discrimination:** any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedoms.<sup>2</sup> Discrimination can take many different forms, such as individual hate crimes to the institutional denial of privileges that do are granted to other groups. Discrimination can harm people's power and opportunities and leads to the oppression of the targeted group of people. The principle of non-discrimination is a fundamental principle of human rights guaranteed in all human rights instruments.

**Diversity:** a term referring to all the aspects in which people can differ. This means differences in the values, attitudes, cultural perspective, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, skills, knowledge and life experiences of each individual in any group of people.<sup>3</sup> . Such differences can be both visible and invisible. Visible differences in for example skin color or gender are often linked to diversity. Yet diversity also relates to less visible aspects, such as competencies, work styles, sexual orientation and illness or disability. Not only is a diverse workplace a better reflection of society, but organizations can benefit greatly from more diverse work environments. These include more innovation, increased flexibility, and better financial performance. A well-managed and culturally diverse team can look at the same problem with different perspectives, resulting in more creative solutions. When diversifying the workforce, it is important that employers keep in mind a number of preconditions so that diversity does not become a blockade. For example, it is important that diversity is seen in all layers of the organization, such as the top of the organization, middle management and executive staff, rather than being centered in one job layer. In promoting inflow and outflow, organizations must also take diversity into account. Above all, it is important that an employer is inclusive if the organization hires or wants to hire someone who is slightly different from the rest of the employees. Last but not least, it is important to look at the differences of someone’s identity through an intersectional lens (see below).

**Inclusion:** a concept diametrically opposed to social exclusion. Exclusion or social exclusion arises from the presence of structural exclusion mechanisms. They make proportional and equal participation in society impossible. With inclusion, on the other hand, society includes disadvantaged groups and includes them in all areas of life. Inclusion is about making the environment, system or structure accessible for all as to include everyone and is about the right to a proportional and equal participation in various life domains such as education, housing, health, welfare, leisure, employment, etc. Inclusion thus places the emphasis and responsibility not so much on the individual person or disadvantaged groups, so that everyone can participate, regardless of origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, faith or philosophy of life. Inclusion in the workplace ensures that whoever is hired belongs, regardless of the differences in, for example, attitudes and work styles that diversity causes. In fact, inclusion is about how the mix of differences is handled. An inclusive organization is one in which proportional and equal participation for all is possible. An inclusive workplace results in employees experiencing a sense of belonging and being able to reach their full potential. Last but not least, it is important to notice that inclusion goes beyond diversity: “Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.” (Verna Meyers).<sup>4</sup>

**Intersectionality:** a concept introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw that describes the phenomenon where an individual can have different factors of discrimination of privilege as a social identity. According to the European Institute for

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<sup>1</sup> This glossary uses official terms defined by IOM, the EU and other official institutions. It also contains input from project partner LEVL

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 18: Non- Discrimination (10 November 1989) para. 7 in UN Doc. HRI/GEN/1/ Rev.1, 26.

<sup>3</sup> <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1085>

<sup>4</sup> [2021 Inclusion Report: Diversity and Inclusion are not a Trend — Allyens](#)

Gender Equality this is an “analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination.”<sup>5</sup> The experience of a woman with a migration background in the police organization for example entails a different kind of discrimination than a white woman.

**Migrant:** an umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally defined, such as smuggled migrants; as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students.<sup>6</sup>

**Person with a migration background:** a person who has:

- a. migrated into Belgium; and/or
- b. previously had a non-Belgian nationality (outside the EU15); and/or
- c. at least one of their parents or grandparents had a non-Belgian nationality at birth (outside the EU15).<sup>7</sup>

**Police zone:** term referring to the 185 organisational units in which the Belgian local police is divided. This wording is equivalent to police unit/force in other countries.

**Positive action:** “measures to increase the participation of particular groups in certain spheres of economic, political or social activity, in which those groups are regarded as underrepresented”.<sup>8</sup> Positive action does not encompass differentiated, preferential treatment but rather contributes to creating a level playing field to encourage and promote the participation of people from underrepresented groups.

**Positive discrimination:** “a policy or a programme providing advantages for certain groups of people who are seen to have traditionally been discriminated against, with the aim of creating a more egalitarian society.”<sup>9</sup> This is a form of discrimination that favours someone by treating them differently (also known as “preferential treatment”). The lawfulness of positive discrimination depends on national legislation, which defines legitimate exceptions to the non-discrimination/equality principle.

**Racism:** any theory, doctrine, ideology, or sets of ideas that assert a causal link between the phenotypic or genotypic characteristics of individuals or groups and their intellectual, cultural, and personality traits, including the false concept of racial superiority.<sup>10</sup> In other words, racism views individuals and groups as unequal to one another because of their ethnicity or presumed race. White supremacy is inherent in this ideology, which considers race to be a biological (rather than a socially constructed) category. This so-called science of race theory has subsequently legitimised the enslavement and exploitation of indigenous and racialized peoples for centuries.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1263>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/glossary/person-migratory-background\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/glossary/person-migratory-background_en), applied to the Belgian context

<sup>8</sup> [https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/220-FRA\\_thematicpaper\\_positiveaction\\_ICMPD\\_en.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/220-FRA_thematicpaper_positiveaction_ICMPD_en.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/glossary/positive-discrimination\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/glossary/positive-discrimination_en)

<sup>10</sup> International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (adopted 21 December 1965, entered into force 4 January 1969) 660 UNTS 195, Art. 1(4).

## INTRODUCTION

Based on the input gathered from bilateral stakeholder meetings, the good practices reports, study visits, and several feedback moments with the project partners, recommendations have been drafted in the form of practical guidelines.

These guidelines highlight what can be done, both in the short and long term, to:

1. Improve the police's human resources policy and processes;
2. Improve the existing complaint mechanisms; and
3. Improve community policing and reinforce trust.

The objective of these practical guidelines is to give hands-on ideas that can easily be put into practice by the project partners as pilot initiatives within the concerned police zones. To that end, the guidelines are accompanied by some inspiring examples and (oftentimes transversal) good practices, along with tips for success and important disclaimers.

This document focuses on the third pillar, i.e. community policing (CoP) and trust building between the police and the community, including in particular people with a migration background. While the focus lies with concrete initiatives and actions to be implemented in the short term, this document also provides some practical guidance on how to embed CoP at the institutional level in the long term. Depending on the specific experiences and needs of every police zone, the practical recommendations can be zoomed into as well as combined to address existing challenging within the thematic areas of the project. The lessons learned from the implementation of these guidelines will then be integrated into a thematic toolbox that will finetune the guidelines and give practical tools to other zones that were not involved in the current project.

## OVERVIEW

1. Ensure the presence, visibility and accessibility of community policing teams and officers
2. Develop a good understanding of both the area and the community, and target and adapt CoP activities based on the local context
3. Engage (with) communities
4. Create solid community partnerships
5. Endorse a participatory preventive problem-solving approach
6. Improve and strengthen mutual knowledge, understanding and trust between the police and the community, especially with marginalised groups
7. Invest in and improve the relationship with the youth
8. Build capacity and invest in training of (community) police officers
9. Ensure regular and transparent two-way communication and information-sharing
10. Ensure the sustainability of the community policing approach

## 1. ENSURE THE PRESENCE, VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF DEDICATED COMMUNITY POLICING TEAMS AND OFFICERS

### 1.1. Establish dedicated CoP teams and areas

- ✓ Appoint dedicated CoP officers and/or teams
- ✓ Assign CoP officers and/or teams on a long-term basis to fixed geographic areas
- ✓ Delineate work areas that reflect neighbourhood (geographical) as well as community (ethnographic) boundaries
- ✓ Divide the work area of each team into smaller areas permanently assigned to one designated CoP officer or (sub)team, to make CoP work more targeted and locally embedded



**Tips for success:** Criteria on how to distribute the CoP officers and how to determine the dimensions of their work areas should include:

- Density (rural vs urban)
- Analysis of the population typology: Composition by gender, age, ethnic origin, religion, income per capita and level of social inequality...
- (Estimated) degree of conflict in a given area
- Location of places of worship in the area
- Location of the district with respect to the city (concentric circles theory): proximity to or distance from the city centre and ease of access to the centre.

### 1.2. Ensure presence, visibility and accessibility, both physically and digitally

- ✓ Ensure visible, physical presence 'on the ground' by means of foot, mounted, and/or bicycle patrols rather than patrols by car
- ✓ Adopt an interactive patrol model that encourages conversation, questioning and interaction between the police, citizens, merchants, young people, passers-by, etc.
- ✓ Carry out programmed visits to merchants, non-formal leaders of the communities, meeting centres, worship centres, leisure centres, etc.



**N.B.:** Foot patrols are not enough: studies have shown that in order to be effective in reducing public disorder or improving public trust in the police, foot patrols need to be paired with community engagement and problem-solving approaches.



**Inspiration:** The Japanese 'koban' are small one- or two-storey buildings that serve as a base from which police officers can manage public security and patrol the streets of the neighbourhood. Local residents can also visit the koban to file complaints, report missing objects, renew licences and permits and resolve some simple bureaucratic issues.

- ✓ Set up substations/mini stations/mobile stations in certain neighbourhoods or at high-traffic contact points, such as in schools, community centres, transit hubs and shopping malls
- ✓ Designate liaison officers to reach out to and engage specific groups (ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ+ community, homeless people, etc.), bring the police closer to them and provide them with targeted, additional services (legal/administrative assistance and advice, monitoring of racist incidents, victim protection and support, etc.)



For more information on Liaison Officers, see Practical Guideline no. 6.3

- ✓ “Virtual community policing”: promote and facilitate access to police services by means of up-to-date technological means (telephone, Internet and social networks).
  - Create social media accounts for (virtual) community police officers, who can become the visible and accessible face of the police online, carrying out preventive work, fostering feelings of safety among Internet users, and acting as first responders in case of suspected criminal acts on the Internet.
  - Develop dedicated portals, applications and platforms that allow for two-way communication and information sharing between the police and the public on security-related matters. Allow citizens to use these tools to report local incidents, vandalism, drug-related problems, including by sharing a photograph or video. The police can use the same platform to inform the about their actions and progress on specific local issues.

## 2. DEVELOP A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF BOTH THE AREA AND THE COMMUNITY AND TARGET AND TAILOR ACTIVITIES BASED ON THE LOCAL CONTEXT

### 2.1. Undertake mapping exercises to better understand the context

Important elements to take into consideration include but are not limited to:

- What are the different communities that are present in a neighbourhood?
- Who are the key individuals within communities?
- Which places are (geographical) focal points for different communities (for example, shops, places of worship and transport hubs)?
- Which communities are currently engaged with the police locally and which are not?
- What are available community resources and what is the already existing community infrastructure?
- Who are the people and which are the groups and places with the greatest needs?
- What do different communities need from community policing?



**N.B.:** There is not just one community. The community is a complex entity. Moreover:

- Some groups identified by the police may not see themselves as ‘communities’ that can be mobilised for neighbourhood policing.
- Some groups may also be communities of interest rather than be connected by geography.

### 2.2. Select and prepare CoP officers adequately for their placement

- ✓ Ensure sufficient time is taken for CoP officers to understand how the community operates and for the community to get to know their CoP officer
- ✓ Compose diverse CoP teams, with sufficient experience and an appropriate gender balance
- ✓ Adapt the profile of CoP teams as to reflect the demographics of the community/area they serve
- ✓ Envisage introduction programmes and short-term placements/internships with local NGOs for new CoP officers.



#### Good practices in the spotlight:

- Stage d’immersion, Canada: In Longueuil, Quebec, new police officers take part in a unique five-week internship during which they are immersed in various communities in order to encourage encounters and exchanges, and thus better understand the realities experienced by those they serve.
- [Culturele wasstraat](#) (“Cultural car wash”), Netherlands: two-week introductory programme (including social orientations/apprenticeships) for every new police officer in the Schilderswijk, one of The Hague’s neighbourhoods.

### 2.3. Target methodologies, activities and partnerships based on the mapping

- ✓ Use the results of the community mapping to inform the tailoring of engagement and outreach methods, based on the specific potential barriers for each group/community
- ✓ Involve target groups in the development of methodologies and activities, in order to gauge and manage expectation and ensure ownership
- ✓ Avoid going for “easy alliances” only (with those who are easy to reach and influence and already trust the police)
- ✓ Choose the most appropriate intervention level (subarea, district, neighbourhood, municipality) based on the nature of the issues/needs
- ✓ Make use of community resources and infrastructure
- ✓ Keep international problems out of local initiatives and interventions and keep the focus on the local level.



**N.B.:** Care is required when implementing highly targeted forms of policing to ensure they do not have a negative effect on the public's perceptions of police fairness.

## 3. ENGAGE (WITH) COMMUNITIES

Community engagement is the process of reaching out to citizens and communities and activating their interest and participation in policing. This can range from providing information and reassurance, to empowering them to identify and implement solutions to local problems and influence strategic priorities and decisions.<sup>11</sup> Community engagement in the broad sense can be either passive or active (e.g. consultation only vs. joint problem analysis and problem-solving; participation in meetings vs. active role in security projects), participation can either be direct or indirect (i.e. through community representatives), and involvement can be ad hoc or periodic. In the framework of this publication, the connotation of the term is limited to **community outreach, stimulating interaction and creating connections with the community**, as to differentiate it from the broader, more structural ‘community partnership’ (for which refer to Practical Guideline no. 4).

### 3.1. Conduct pro-active and diversified outreach to establish positive relationships with the community

- ✓ Conduct interactive foot patrols (cf. above)
- ✓ Organise neighbourhood/district meetings
- ✓ Organise community events: these are an opportunity to connect with community members and dispel fears they may have about the police.



**N.B.:** District meetings, on their own, are insufficient to effect change → Make use of less traditional and more proactive methods of engagement that are designed to reach a broad cross section of the community.

#### Success factors of community events:



- Organise events with low/non-existing barriers to participation
- Choose locations which are easily accessible
- Schedule community events often/on a regular basis
- Announce events through different channels, including social media platforms, and if possible in multiple languages
- Send targeted invites

<sup>11</sup> [https://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Community\\_engagement\\_lessons.pdf](https://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Community_engagement_lessons.pdf)



- ✓ Experiment and carry out alternative, pro-active outreach, such as door knocking and street briefings



**Good practice in the spotlight:** [Street briefings](#), West Yorkshire Police, United Kingdom

Twice a day, senior police officers brief CoP officers in public places, such as parks, community centres, and commercial thoroughfares, before they go on patrol. Members of the public can listen and are invited to join in and highlight local issues and concerns.

- ✓ Work with multilingual officers, city agencies, or civil society to expand outreach and translate and develop outreach materials (e.g., flyers, brochures) in languages commonly spoken in the area and/or in a language comprehensible for the specific target group(s).
- ✓ Maximise the potential of digital tools (social media, apps...)



For more information on digital communication and tools, see Practical Guideline no. 9

### 3.2. Maximise the resources and networks of both the police and the community to expand outreach

- ✓ Designate dedicated liaison officers to reach out to specific groups/communities (ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ+ community, homeless people, ...)
- ✓ Reach out to established community leaders (e.g. faith leaders) who can vouch for the good faith of the police department and establish a privileged channel for communication and outreach.
- ✓ Partner with cultural institutions, diaspora associations, local business owners, advocacy groups/civil society organisations, and other community organisations to obtain important connections to members of the different communities and maximise outreach.



**N.B.:** Orientate these outreach efforts towards the purposes of relationship and trust-building only, rather than intelligence gathering, in order to gain and preserve these communities' trust.



**Tip for success:** When outreach and engagement efforts originate from the police, people that are more critical of the police will be reluctant to respond. Better results in terms of a more diverse and widespread engagement and participation on the part of the community are more likely if these efforts and invitations comes from other, more trusted figures within the community

## 4. CREATE SOLID COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

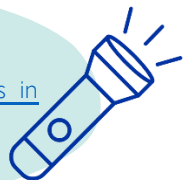
As a policing philosophy, community policing considers local security as the joint responsibility of both the police and the community ("security co-creation"). In that perspective, the police are merely one piece of the solution to security and public space issues, and long-term success relies on building successful and well-structured relationships with the community in the form of community security partnerships, thereby upscaling, formalising, and embedding community engagement (for which refer to the previous Practical Guideline).

### 4.1. Favour active over passive involvement

- ✓ Adopt a participatory approach throughout all phases (planning, implementation, evaluation)
- ✓ Engage the community in joint problem-solving exercises instead of consultations only
- ✓ Allow the community to play an active role in the implementation of local security projects, initiatives, activities instead of encouraging their participation in meetings only

**Good practices in the spotlight:**

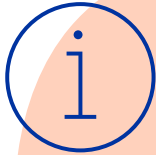
- Neighbourhood watch schemes
- Volunteering in policing (e.g. '[Citizens in Policing](#)' programme, United Kingdom)





#### 4.2. Formalise community engagement into well-defined and structured partnerships

- ✓ Move from personal ties towards formalised channels and networks that are embedded in the police structure and institutional memory. A first step is to map and log the police's connections and relations with community groups and members.



##### Information box:

##### What is a CoPmittee?

In the framework of the CoP project, each police zone will set up a CoPmittee, a concertation and consultation body composed by representatives of all relevant parties in the chosen neighbourhood/community (police, religious groups, youth workers, people with a migration background, youth workers, youth, etc.). The members will meet regularly to identify and guide common initiatives as well as to exchange concerns and problems identified within the community.

- ✓ Introduce formal structures/bodies to manage community security partnerships. This can take multiple forms and names: advisory boards, local security councils, security groups, dedicated citizens' academies, CoPmittees...
- ✓ Formulate standard operating procedures and define clear roles (terms of reference) for each party in order to promote efficiency and put in place accountability structures.
- ✓ Build partnerships on the principles of mutual accountability, respect and communication on an equal footing.
- ✓ Allow for flexibility and promote engagement by letting partners decide on the meetings' frequency and format, based on their availabilities and preferences

- ✓ Embed community engagement and partnerships at the institutional level



**Tip for success:** Establish security partnerships in the early, planning stages, meaning:

- Before policing activities and security projects start to be implemented
- In times of peace and calm in the community

#### 4.3. Curate the composition of the community security partnership

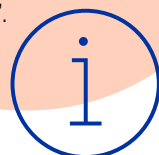
- ✓ Make sure the community security partnerships include representatives of all individuals, groups and organisations considered to be relevant in the area and to have an interest and/or a stake in local security:
  - the local police service
  - other local authorities/entities (including schools, health centres, municipal authorities concerned with waste management and public space, etc.)
  - residents
  - community organisations and associations (youth associations, businesses, religious centres, diaspora groups, etc.).
- ✓ Limit the size to 10/12 people to ensure manageability
- ✓ Ensure a balance between residents' representatives and institutional partners in the security partnership's membership
- ✓ Select community partners engaged in the security partnership with care. You can even think of holding selection interviews with all the mapped key figures in the community.

**Tip for success:** To ensure broad representativeness, ask the community for input on who *they* think is important to have sit at the table.



##### Information box: What is a partner?

Community partners should not only be prominent figures in the community with a certain support base. They also need to have a constructive and positive attitude and be willing to work with the police. This is what makes the difference between a "key figure" and an "ally".





**N.B.:** Ensure that all groups of the community are involved, including marginalized groups, vulnerable people, and others who may be hard to reach or hear. This includes being sensitive to divisions within communities and the use of appropriate tools of engagement for different groups.

#### 4.4. Invest in trust and long-term relationships with and among the community partnership's members

- ✓ Use the first meetings to get to know each other, exchange contact details, and create personal relationships, before you move on to discussing real security issues
- ✓ If possible/desirable, hold the first meeting without the police
- ✓ Require the police to come in civilian clothes or at least without weapons, in order to create a safe space
- ✓ Hold meetings in locations that are neutral, inclusive and easily accessible
- ✓ Keep meetings somehow informal/convivial. For instance, link them to a shared meal (preferably halal/kosher/vegetarian to make it more inclusive, depending on the partnership's membership)
- ✓ Make meetings periodic, regardless of incidents/emergencies
- ✓ Keep international problems out of local initiatives and interventions and keep the focus on the local level

#### Good practices in the spotlight:



- [“Bondgenoten”](#) (“Allies”), Netherlands: the ‘Allies’ group consists of a representative of the local police, a municipal administration official (e.g. the city councilor for security/inclusion, the integration focal point, etc.) and up to ten citizens. It congregates about every six weeks, regardless of incidents, and can be quickly brought together in the event of a (prospective) crisis in the area/municipality. These networks allow the police and key community figures to share information and concerns with one another and, when necessary, act on ‘alarm signals’.
- [Security groups](#), Lisbon: since 2009, the Lisbon Municipal Police has rolled out a comprehensive CoP model that embodies a participatory approach that spans from planning, through implementation, to evaluation. Lisbon’s CoP model stands out in that it is jointly planned and operated by a partnership between the police, local partners, and residents which is established in the form of a so-called “security group” in the early preparatory stages of the planning phase.

## 5. ENDORSE A PARTICIPATORY PREVENTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH

Community policing is about prevention rather than enforcement and repression. Problem solving (or problem-oriented policing) is one of the best-evidenced policing strategies: it has been shown to reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and police demand. Even in crime hot spots, problem solving has proven to be more effective at reducing crime than increased police presence.

### 5.1. General principles

- ✓ Use a structured problem-solving process to understand and tackle the root causes of local problems.
- ✓ Make the whole process community-led. The public’s involvement in identifying and defining local security problems/neighbourhood issues

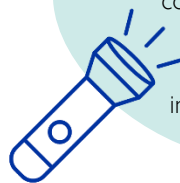
**Inspiration:** Check out the [SARA methodology](#) (Scan, Analyse, Respond, Assess), one of the most common frameworks in problem-solving policing.



- has been recognised as a key element of successful community policing programmes
- ✓ Employ a combination of mechanisms and methodologies to obtain a broader picture of the issues that need addressing and involve a wide number of voices in decision-making.
- ✓ Build (CoP) police officers' analytical capacity and problem-solving skills
- ✓ Provide sufficient resources and protect CoP officers' time for problem-solving and pro-active engagement from other tasks, such as administrative work (to be assigned to civilian staff) and response calls

### 5.2. Phase I: participatory problem identification

- ✓ Identify local problems with the community by asking them:
  - To indicate what locally affects how they think, feel and act in respect of their safety
  - To pinpoint problem locations and describe the nature of those issues
  - To rate how problematic issues in the local area are in their opinion and/or perception
- ✓ Use a wide variety of participatory methods, including but not limited to:
  - Neighbourhood security interviews and surveys
  - Focus groups
  - Meetings with specific communities
  - Mapping exercises or joint guided walks around a neighbourhood ("environmental visual audit")



#### Good practice in the spotlight:

The second step of Lisbon's unique CoP model after the establishment of security groups consists of a ['local security diagnostics' exercise](#).

From a methodological point of view, the diagnostics draws on a variety of sources and inputs, including previous studies, surveys, focus groups, interviews, meetings with specific communities, etc.

### 5.3. Phase II: participatory solution development and implementation

- ✓ Based on the previous mapping of community problems, jointly agree on local priorities, by means of shortlisting, ranking, voting, etc.
- ✓ For each priority, brainstorm and agree on the desired outcome(s) and possible solutions
- ✓ Explore with the community how they could take greater responsibility in solving local problems
- ✓ Describe the actions to be undertaken and define the role and responsibilities of the different parties who will be actively involved in solving the issue
- ✓ Jointly decide on how much police and community resources should be allocated to different problems ("participatory budgeting exercise")
- ✓ Use tools that help to visualise and schematise the problem-solving approach (problem, actions, targets, roles, timeline, etc.)
- ✓ Inform communities on how they can be actively involved
- ✓ Actively involve communities in the implementation of solutions and security initiatives/projects
- ✓ Link up with other (municipal) agencies and services to refer non-policing matters to them for action
- ✓ Jointly monitor progress, evaluate outcomes and assess police performance. This could happen for instance in the framework of the regular meetings organised by security community partnerships.



**Inspiration:** Check out the [Integrated Security Management Matrix](#), developed in the Netherlands

## 6. IMPROVE AND STRENGTHEN MUTUAL KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND TRUST BETWEEN THE POLICE AND THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY WITH MARGINALISED GROUPS

Trust is a foundational element of CoP. However, lack of trust or even mistrust can often be found between law enforcement and the public, in particular amongst more marginalised and/or vulnerable groups. These include inter alia disadvantaged social strata, the youth, as well as migrant/non-native ethnic communities, and even more so individuals belonging to several of these categories.

Lack of trust or mistrust can be the result of two different factors: lack of (mutual) knowledge and understanding and/or negative encounters and experiences. Accordingly, the guiding principle for actions on this point is the following: **the more engagement initiatives, joint activities and positive contacts between the police and the community, the stronger the trust between the two.**

### 6.1. Get to know each other and develop personal relationships

- ✓ Promote and create regular occasions for casual conversations, relaxed interactions and encounters in informal settings between law enforcement and citizens outside of crisis situations
- ✓ Organise such encounters in neutral and accessible locations
- ✓ Participate in local events hosted by the community/community groups (e.g. Belgian pride, religious festivities, etc.)
- ✓ Depending on the needs and the local context, organise encounters open to all members in the community as well as some dedicated to specific groups, including in particular newcomers and migrant communities/individuals with a migration background



**Good practice in the spotlight:** [‘Coffee with a Cop’](#) brings police officers and community members together around a cup of coffee, with the idea of creating an informal space for casual conversations and relaxed interactions with the public outside of crisis situations. Coffee with a Cop events take place in person at neutral locations with a casual atmosphere (generally local restaurants/cafés). Meetings have no pre-set agenda so that community residents can just sit down with officers and ask questions or share what’s on their mind in informal and open discussions. Overall, this kind of casual one-on-one conversations help to put real faces and personalities on each side as well as to create a better understanding about issues that matter and build mutual trust.

### 6.2. Improve familiarity on a professional level with the role, tasks, and obligations of the police

- ✓ Organise events and activities to inform the population (or correct their misconceptions) about the role, tasks, and legal/procedural obligations of the police. This is likely to foster mutual understanding and address citizens’ perceptions of police misbehaviour.
- ✓ Provide citizens with legal information on their rights and obligations towards the police to empower them
- ✓ Train citizens, and particularly those who are likely or vulnerable to come in contact with the police, in the attitude they can take towards the police during an identity check/police stop
- ✓ Equip citizens with knowledge on the complaints procedures available to them

#### Good practices in the spotlight:

- [Simulation exercises with citizens](#), Canada
- ‘Know your rights’, [Controle Alt Delete](#), Netherlands



### 6.3. Invest in the relationships with specific target groups and more vulnerable/marginalised communities

- ✓ Train all police officers, and in particular CoP agents, in understanding and dealing with social complexity and different social groups, especially in urban contexts

- ✓ Establish privileged points of entry and liaison for specific, more vulnerable/marginalised communities in the form of liaison officers

#### Practical tips for the establishment of liaison officers:



- If feasible and relevant, appoint different liaison officers for different communities, depending on the size and composition of the police zone's population and conditional on resources
- If feasible and relevant, nominate liaison officers not only for specific ethnic communities, but also for other minorities and vulnerable groups, such as women, the LGBTIQ+ community, etc.
- Make sure liaison figures belong to, or have affinity with, the community of reference
- Provide liaison officers with special and targeted training, for them to effectively fulfil their (inter)mediation roles
- Use liaison officers not only to engage vulnerable/marginalised communities but also to bring the police closer to them and provide them with targeted, additional services (legal/administrative assistance and advice, monitoring of racist incidents, victim protection and support, etc.) and create trust relationships

#### Good practices in the spotlight:

- [Liaison officers for Roma and Sinti Communities](#), Slovakia
- [Ethnic Liaison Officers](#), Republic of Ireland



- ✓ Show empathy and interest in learning about the language of the local communities and in understanding their culture, religion and historical background
- ✓ Partner with local authorities and organisations to build relations with specific groups and in particular new immigrants through assisting them in matters of concern (lending rooms, providing information, or assisting with transportation, security or logistics for events).

**Good practice in the spotlight:** The [Intercultural TANDEM programme](#), Austria, consisted of various collective seminars and several informal, one-on-one activities between the tandems, pairing one police officer with a newcomer. Tandems allow the two parties to get to know each other better by doing casual activities together and exchanging on their lives and experiences.



✓ Invest time in linking to newcomers as well as to individuals and/or communities with a migration background more broadly, to support integration and to address cultural differences that may work to exacerbate the gaps in mutual knowledge and understanding and magnify the barriers to engagement with the police.

## 7. INVEST IN AND IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE YOUTH<sup>12</sup>

Young people in a socially vulnerable situation, youth work and the police are in many cases not an obvious combination. Young people experience a lot of frustration in their contact with the police. Young people are often poorly informed about their rights vis-à-vis the police and tend to underestimate the ways in which they can stand

<sup>12</sup> This section integrates the inputs received by the project partner Uit De Marge (Flemish Support Centre for youth policy and youth work with children and young people in a socially vulnerable situation). The section also considerably draws and builds on the 'Recommendation on Youth and Police' recently drafted by the Flemish Youth Council (see: <https://vlaamsejeugdraad.be/nl/adviezen/politie-jongeren-en-jeugdwerk>).

up for themselves in that framework. On the other hand, such encounters with the police too often produce situations that are undesirable from a children's rights perspective and/or given the age of the young people. Youth work is in turn a place where young can go to share and deal with these frustrations. Youth workers can thus take up a mediating and connecting role between the youth and the police, However, there is also a certain degree of mistrust between the two, which is often due to a lack of time and budgets, as well as to negative contacts and/or experiences. There is a lack of knowledge about each other's role, functioning, tasks and deontology, which does not always make the cooperation run smoothly and sometimes puts the youth worker in a difficult position, especially considering their proximity to the youth.

### 7.1. Establish concertation structures and networks for and with the youth

- ✓ Set up a structural concertation at the local level to develop a youth-friendly policing and to improve the relationship between the police and youngsters
- ✓ Include both minors and youngsters above the legal age
- ✓ Involve all relevant local actors, which include not only the youth and the police, but also local youth councils, youth work and youth organisations, youth communal officials/youth services, and social workers from social centres
- ✓ Involve parents – either directly or in parallel ways – in order to expand the reach and sustainability of such concertation
- ✓ Use the established concertation structures as expertise and discussion networks to collect and exchange information and good practices on the relation between the police and the youth, including on the legitimate use of force, the use of handcuffs, conditions of detention, hearings, etc.
- ✓ Value and properly consider solutions and ideas proposed by the youth to avoid or ease situations of tension that would otherwise often escalate/lead to violence.



**Tip for success:** It is essential to look at the relationship with young people from a constructive, preventive and above all equal perspective.

### 7.2. Work on and with youth workers

- ✓ Establish structural exchanges and communication lines between police and youth workers, in order to avoid direct contact between the youth and the police if not necessary
- ✓ Provide youth workers with dedicated focal points/contact persons within the local police force.
- ✓ Build a relationship of trust with youth workers and stimulate positive co-operation between them and the police through training and projects:
  - Train (CoP) police officers and youth workers on their respective mandates, missions and deontological codes to foster understanding and willingness to collaborate
  - Co-create and co-manage trust-building initiatives targeting the youth
  - Organise regular meetings and exchanges (relaxing and sport activities, e.g. neighbourhood walks, football tournaments, trainings) between youth workers and different police teams of the local police force, including for instance the intervention team.
- ✓ Recognise and value the work and role of youth workers as bridge figures
- ✓ Capitalise and build on the already established relationships between youth workers and youngsters. For instance, organise activities through and with youth workers to inform youngsters about their rights and duties vis-à-vis the police

**N.B.:** As in the case of outreach to community leaders, it is important to ensure that the relationship with youth workers is not aimed at gathering (criminal) intelligence on the community and specifically the youth





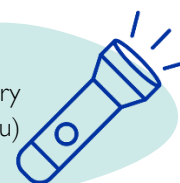
**Good practice in the spotlight:** In the framework of the [‘Zo Geflikt’ project](#), police officers of Ghent’s Police Zone and agents and youth workers from vzw Jong were brought together to talk about how to cooperate better in the interests of children and youngsters. Moreover, the project offers training for youth workers on how to play a positive and constructive role in building bridges between the police and the youth.

### 7.3. Promote punctual connecting initiatives and activities

- ✓ Create occasions that bring together children/youngsters and police officers from all teams in casual and relaxed settings to allow them to meet, get to know each other, and exchange on topics of mutual interest
- ✓ Organise such events and encounters in places where children/youngsters gather, including in particular schools, community centres, sport fields, youth clubs, etc.
- ✓ Examples of connecting initiatives and activities include but are not limited to:
  - Sport tournaments and/or trainings
  - Internships and cadette programmes
  - Open days
  - Neighbourhood walks
  - Interactive workshops
  - ...
- ✓ Participate if possible in civilian clothes and without carrying weapons

#### Good practices in the spotlight:

- [Boxing with the police](#), PZ Ghent
- ‘Mentoring’ programme in elementary schools ([BZPZ BruNo](#) & ZPZ PolBru)
- Cadette programme, ZPZ PolBru



### 7.4. Promote structured, planned and volunteer encounters between youth and police in the framework of long-term engagement trajectory

- ✓ Design long-term projects and trajectories that bring together a fixed group of children/youngsters and police officers in a series of structured and planned encounters
- ✓ Use workshop setting and theatre-based techniques, such as improvisation, trust games and role-playing to create an open and welcoming atmosphere, promote mutual trust and respect, and enable participants to share experiences and learn from each other
- ✓ Hold the encounters/workshops on a regular basis, ideally once a month over a year
- ✓ Compose a group of up to 25-30 people encompassing a balanced mix of police officers and young people
- ✓ Carefully select project participants on both sides, including through youth workers:
  - Ensure a diverse, balanced mix of young people that are more integrated in society and those that are the most marginalised and distrustful of authorities
  - Include youngsters that have visibility and influence in their community
  - Partner with youth workers to reach out to the most marginalised and distrustful of authorities while also ensuring their willingness to participate
  - Select police officers with different roles and tasks, without focusing on CoP officers only
  - Make sure to include – although still on a voluntary basis – officers who might be particularly sceptical and suspicious vis-à-vis the youth
  - Provide police officers with a preparatory training on the experiences of youngsters, to really understand their world
- ✓ Appoint a confidential advisor for each group (youngsters and police officers) to ensure smooth communication, circulate feedback, and anticipate possible tensions
- ✓ Make use of external experts to facilitate the workshops and create the conditions for a climate of trust



**N.B.:** Given the inevitable power relation between the youth and the police, it is recommended to keep a respective ratio of two youngsters per police officer.



- ✓ Set up a project's steering committee to oversee the design and implementation of the project. Make sure to include:
  - Representatives of the youth
  - Representatives of the police
  - Youth workers
  - External facilitators
- ✓ Prepare the trajectory and each encounter with care and in a participatory way. Make sure in particular to involve the youth and youth organisations from the very beginning, including in the design of the trajectory, and not only during implementation
- ✓ Incentivise serious and consistent engagement for the whole duration of the project
  - Introduce a charter of engagement, to be drafted jointly by all participants
  - Make the workshops somehow informal and convivial, always linking them to a fun activity or a shared meal
  - Envisage some form of reward and/or incentive at the end of the trajectory
- ✓ Think long term: if possible, have a local actor with the appropriate skills join the project as facilitator. This local actor can independently support similar projects afterwards.

**Good practices in the spotlight:** In the '[Casablanca project](#)' carried out in a difficult neighbourhood in Leuven, Belgium, youngsters with a Moroccan ethnic background that consistently engage throughout the year-long trajectory are rewarded with the participation in an exchange with a youth association in Casablanca working with a local orphanage.



**Inspiration:**

The [Second Wave methodology](#) brings the youth and the police together in a year-long trajectory setting to create mutual trust and respect, share experiences and enable participants to learn from each other.

The trajectory consists of workshops that deploy theatre-based strategies, such as improvisation, trust games and role-playing, in order to question the stereotypes and prejudices of police officers about young people and vice versa and eventually reinforce mutual trust.



**Success factors:** For both punctual/short-term and structural/long-term projects that aim at connecting the youth and the police, there are two fundamental prerequisites:

- Institutional support and leadership,
- Adequate financing



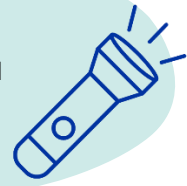
**7.5. Appoint dedicated youth brigades/officers within the police corps**

- ✓ Establish youth brigades/officers to liaise and interact with the youth. Youth brigades/officers constitute a new professional profile that acts as a bridging figure that knows both the world of young people and that of the police and thus can enter into a dialogue with both groups. They are communicatively strong and resilient. In practice, they are privileged contact points that:
  - Are easily accessible for the youth if they need to refer a problem
  - Pro-actively reach out to and interact with young people in the neighbourhood to build trust and prevent/identify problems
- ✓ Provide youth brigades/officers with specialised training in children's rights, the social and lived environment of young people (particularly in urban context), non-violent communication, youth language, etc.

- ✓ Deploy youth brigades and/or officers as mediators between the youth and other more repressive police services (e.g. intervention teams)

#### Good practices in the spotlight:

- [Youth inspectors](#), PZ Ghent
- Youth brigades, PZ Antwerp and [Mechelen-Willebroek](#)



### 7.6. Action points at the police organisational level

- ✓ Make neighbourhood officers more accessible by freeing them from other tasks (including administrative work), so that they can focus on community work
- ✓ Leave the neighbourhood police stations open in the evening and over weekends, i.e. precisely at times when young people are out
- ✓ Ensure protected time (a fixed number of duty hours per month) for each police officer to:
  - establish and entertain positive contacts with youth workers
  - establish and entertain positive contacts with youngsters
- ✓ Introduce specific continuous training for all police officers, and in particular neighborhood officers (the 'daily face' of the police for most youths) on social complexity and youth matters, including fundamental rights, children's rights, anti-discrimination legislation, child and youth psychology, communication with young people and the psycho-social aspects of youth
- ✓ Establish a specific protocol for the questioning, transfer and search of young people which ensures discretion, the respect and dignity of the young person, and adopt questioning at the police station as a last resort measure only, if strictly inevitable
- ✓ Develop and promote an approach/action framework for police checks based on dialogue, whereby officers first enter into a conversation to explain the reasons behind the check, instead of just carrying it out without further guidance.
- ✓ Educate both the youth and the police to mutual respect
- ✓ Elaborate jointly with youth work shared and/or complementary visions on 'prevention' and 'minors'. From a shared vision, clear action frameworks can then be developed for prevention and dealing with incidents, interventions or facts involving minors (as perpetrator and/or victim).

## 8. BUILD CAPACITY AND INVEST IN TRAINING OF (COMMUNITY) POLICE OFFICERS

### 8.1. Enhance both basic and continuous police training with knowledge and skills relevant for community policing

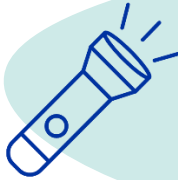
- ✓ Expand CoP modules in basic police training, now limited to four hours
- ✓ Invest in the development of analytical capacity and problem-solving skills, including for instance hot spot mapping, network analysis, the SARA methodology and other problem-solving tools
- ✓ Stimulate the development of new, relevant skills such as community engagement, non-violent communication, intercultural competences, (conflict) mediation, critical thinking, principles of procedural justice, etc. Training on this skillset can have a positive impact not only on officers' attitudes and behaviour, but also improve public perceptions of police legitimacy
- ✓ Integrate training into routine practice (practice-based learning), which is likely to have more of an impact than traditional classroom training on behaviour
- ✓ Combine formal and informal training to ensure that CoP officers both acquire the relevant skills and develop their own knowledge of their placement area
- ✓ Renew training repeatedly throughout working life

### 8.2. Tailor/adapt CoP-specific training to local circumstances and communities

- ✓ Set up an introduction and training programme for incoming CoP officers
- ✓ Adapt the training curriculum to each specific neighbourhood
- ✓ Combine theoretical sessions with practical components, such as study walks in the neighbourhood and exchanges with community stakeholders
- ✓ Involve local partners/civil society in the CoP trainings

- ✓ Educate officers on the different cultures present in the community in question. This could be done in partnership with community associations and non-profit organisations that are related with specific (ethnic) groups
- ✓ For placements in urban contexts, make sure to include specific social orientation modules on the complex reality of a (big) city, with due attention to topics such as unemployment, poverty, racism and discrimination, etc.
- ✓ Provide training on the world of young people and youth culture (e.g. youth/street language)

#### Good practice in the spotlight:



In Lisbon's unique CoP model, the [CoP training curriculum](#):

- varies across neighbourhoods
- is prepared based on all the inputs gathered during the local security diagnostics exercise
- combines theoretical sessions with practical components such as study walks in the neighbourhood and exchanges with community stakeholders
- is given in cooperation with local partners/civil society

## 9. ENSURE REGULAR AND TRANSPARENT TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION-SHARING

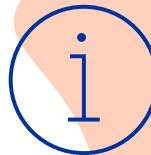
### 9.1. General principles

- ✓ Make sure information-sharing and communication between the police and the population is transparent and bidirectional. This means that:
  - The population can easily reach out to the police to share concerns, report incidents and crimes, etc.
  - The police reach out to the community to inform them about police activities
- ✓ Make sure information-sharing and communication is regular and timely, and not limited to moments of emergency and tension
- ✓ Make sure community policing information is clear and concise, locally relevant and easily identifiable as coming from the police
- ✓ Use pro-active, alternative communication methods: beyond beat meetings, use street briefings, door knocking, surveys, social media, and online tools
- ✓ Wherever applicable and within reasonable limits, develop and distribute communication material/content in the main languages spoken within the community and/or in English, to maximise outreach.

#### Information box

Community policing information of interest includes, but is not limited to:

- CoP team contact details
- Neighbourhood priorities/issues and crime patterns
- Police activities/actions taken by the police to deal with these issues
- Police performance
- Crime prevention advice
- Citizens' rights
- Engagement possibilities for the public



### 9.2. Communicate via social media and digital tools

- ✓ Use social media to disseminate information and updates on individual cases and on police activities; ask for tips; make safety community announcements; and publicise events.
- ✓ Update police departments' pages and accounts regularly
- ✓ Use a language that is inclusive and that portrays the values of your police zone
- ✓ Make sure to provide quick responses to queries from the public

- ✓ Have dedicated professionals manage and moderate social media pages as to avoid and remove any form abusive and inappropriate content and/or hate speech and violence.
- ✓ Create police profiles on multiple digital social platforms and diversify and tailor-make the publicised content accordingly. This can help to reach different groups and communities, as user typologies vary across different social media.



#### Why social media/digital tools?

- Low-cost and versatile mechanisms for the police to engage with their communities for a wide range of purposes
- Large outreach (larger pool of citizens to connect to compared to face-to-face)
- Easy channel to reach youth
- Lower threshold to report concerns
- Can help show and promote a more human and personal image of the police

## 10. ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE COMMUNITY POLICING APPROACH

Community policing is often considered as the exclusive realm of neighbourhood officers only. In fact, however, CoP is a policing mindset and approach as well as an organisational construct which should be both locally adapted and structurally embedded across the entire police force. Accordingly, CoP officers' personal ties and connections with the community should be incorporated in the police's institutional memory and CoP initiatives and partnerships should be structurally institutionalised in order to isolate these from political will and maximise the reach and the sustainability of the envisaged impact.

### 10.1. Ensure continuity and quality

- ✓ Assign CoP officers to designated areas on a long-term basis in order to make sure the police better understand that specific community and in order to establish a trust relation between the two
- ✓ When a CoP officer is reassigned to another area, envisage a handover procedure between the outgoing and incoming officer
- ✓ Ensure protected time for handover in redeployment and recruitment strategies
- ✓ Provide (CoP) police agents with adequate mentoring and/or supervision
- ✓ Recognise the work of CoP officers and reward them (promotion) to increase commitment to neighbourhood policing

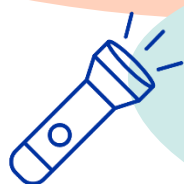


**N.B.:** it still might be desirable to also establish periodic mandatory rotations to avoid potential complicity or even connivance with neighbours and merchants in the area.

**Info box:** The handover should encompass at least the following:



- Sharing important contacts made in the community and the knowledge gained over their assignment period
- Mapping community priorities and crucial areas
- Informing the population



#### Good practice in the spotlight: [Manchester's handover protocol](#)

To ensure the transfer of community knowledge and connections between incoming and outgoing CoP officer, the Greater Manchester Police have developed a handover protocol entail three components: a community map, a briefing day, and a social media handover notification.

Manchester's handover protocol entail three components: a community map, a briefing day, and a social media handover notification.

## 10.2. Expand the reach of CoP initiatives / Maximise spill-over effects

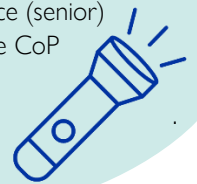
- ✓ Select participants to CoP initiatives carefully and with an eye on the long term
- ✓ Involve independent/neutral local actors with the necessary skills as to enable them to take the lead in similar projects in the future
- ✓ Establish a permanent dialogue and build sustainable relations with key allies and groups

## 10.3. Promote internal support/organisational buy-in

- ✓ Complement community participatory planning of security partnerships with police participatory planning
- ✓ Involve all branches of the police in community security partnerships and CoP initiatives
- ✓ Link CoP to the functioning of the entire police organisation, rather than limiting it to the responsibility of just one small unit of the police. In other words, promote the CoP philosophy across the whole police organisation and commit as an organisation to a preventive, problem-solving and cooperative approach
- ✓ Provide CoP training not only for CoP officers, but also for police leadership/management. This will promote a better understanding and appreciation of CoP within the organisation and stimulate internal buy-in and support.

**Good practice in the spotlight:** to ensure internal buy-in, Lisbon's CoP model complements bottom-up with [top-down participatory planning](#) by means of:

- Participation of senior police officers in the CoP trainings
- Strategic Planning Sessions, i.e. physical or digital meetings aimed at engaging Lisbon Municipal Police (senior) officers in thinking strategically about the CoP strategy and the profile of CoP agents



**Success factor:** An important success and sustainability factor for community policing is that of leadership, at all levels, starting from within the police organisation. CoP projects and models need to be carried by strongly committed focal points within all partner organisations while the management needs to be 'on board' and be willing to protect time and budget for the project.

## 10.4. Institutionalise security partnerships and CoP initiatives

- ✓ Involve all relevant (governmental/municipal) institutions, agencies and authorities other than the police in security initiatives and partnerships
- ✓ Provide such entities with the institutional mandate and sufficient budget to participate in security initiatives and be a partner to the police in a CoP approach.
- ✓ As a city, take up a coordinating role as an independent actor who stands above both the police and the community groups in security partnerships.
- ✓ Create an accompanying steering group with representatives from all relevant/concerned actors. The steering group takes care of the smooth running of the CoP initiative/project and can flexibly respond to issues that arise during implementation.
- ✓ Envisage joint training sessions for members of government agencies, the police and community members in order to educate government agencies' officials about CoP and their own role in cooperative problem-solving as well as to boost inter-institutional cooperation in that perspective
- ✓ Convince/lobby policymakers to equip the police with necessary resources, especially for community policing