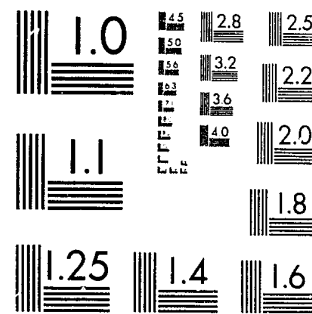


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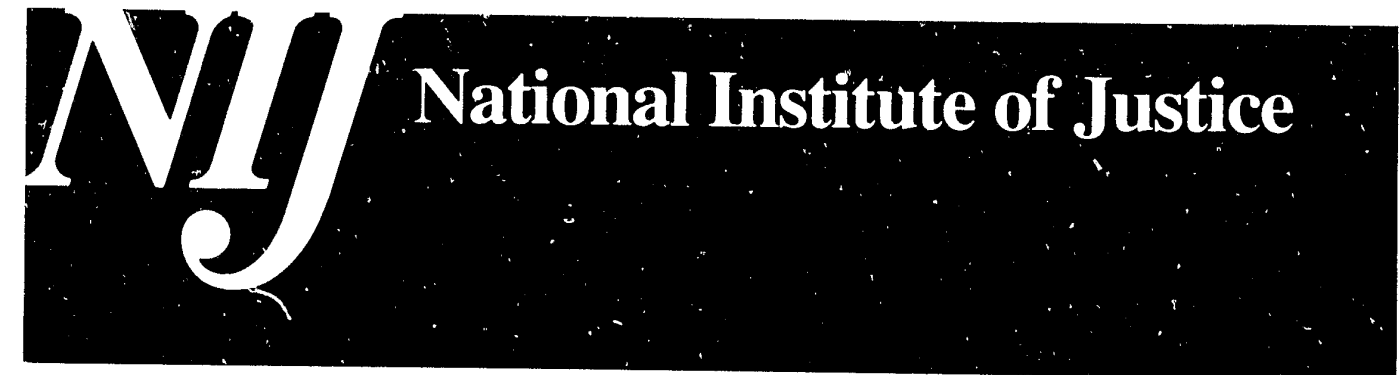
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Evaluation of the Urban Crime Prevention Program

Executive Summary

93568

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James K. Stewart
Director

Evaluation of the Urban Crime Prevention Program Executive Summary

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ABSTRACT

The Urban Crime Prevention Program (UCPP), sponsored jointly by ACTION and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, was designed to combat urban crime through the establishment of 85 innovative neighborhood-based crime prevention projects across nine cities for a period of 18 months. The main goals of UCPP were to increase the participation of citizens in innovative neighborhood crime prevention efforts, to bolster the capabilities of neighborhood groups, and to forge working partnerships between these groups and related agencies and institutions. The two-year evaluation focused on four principal types of crime prevention projects -- property crime prevention, victim/witness services, arson prevention, and dispute settlement.

The most effective crime prevention approaches, as measured by the UCPP goals, were the property crime and arson prevention projects, primarily because they were based on the organization of citizens through neighborhood groups. These projects were generally successful in gaining citizen involvement, bolstering their capabilities in crime prevention, and establishing working partnerships with other agencies. However, many of the UCPP projects had difficulty with the more complex approaches, particularly if the project was located in a deteriorated neighborhood. In an overall sense, it was concluded that the general neighborhood orientation of UCPP, combined with the establishment of working partnerships with other agencies, offers promise for combatting urban crime.

It is recommended that (1) community crime prevention programs emphasize the organizing of citizens as the basic strategy, (2) strong working partnerships be established between neighborhood-based crime prevention efforts and relevant criminal justice agencies, (3) neighborhood crime prevention groups receive substantial training and technical assistance, and that (4) neighborhood-based crime prevention strategies receive the continued attention and support of officials concerned with urban crime. A series of research recommendations are also presented.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The evaluation of the Urban Crime Prevention Program owes much to many people in Washington, D.C., and in the nine participating cities across the nation.

Several people at the National Institute of Justice, LEAA, and ACTION helped to guide and monitor the research. Dr. Richard Rau of the National Institute of Justice deserves special thanks. Dr. Rau took over the monitorship of the evaluation at the critical juncture when the evaluation was at its midpoint and LEAA was winding down. Largely through his professionalism and clear vision of the purpose and practices of evaluation research, the project was successfully completed on schedule without disruption. Ron Steger, who monitored the project from his post at LEAA before Dr. Rau, was also very supportive and helpful through the first year of project activity. Melvin Beetle, Director of ACTION's Evaluation Office, was our chief liaison at ACTION. Mr. Beetle's support, integrity, and his highly cooperative relationship with Dr. Rau contributed significantly to the success of this inter-agency effort.

In each of the nine cities which served as sites for the 85 Urban Crime Prevention projects there were many people who assisted us in myriad ways. The nine grantees always provided a cordial welcome to project staff and were generous with their time and materials. We are especially grateful to Grace Fisher of the Citizens Committee of New York and Bonnie Kruger of the Community Chest, the grantee directors in New York City and Cincinnati, where the intensive studies were conducted. The directors and staff of the individual UCPP projects not only gave freely of their time for interviews, but also completed the routine data forms which served as the basis for our process study. Finally, we wish to thank the numerous officials in each city who took time from their busy schedules to provide us with helpful data and perspectives on UCPP activities.

Royer F. Cook, Principal Investigator
Janice A. Roehl, Project Director

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PRECIS OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of the evaluation of the Urban Crime Prevention Program are summarized as follows:

- In an overall sense, the general neighborhood orientation of the Urban Crime Prevention Program combined with the development of working partnerships with criminal justice agencies offers promise for combating urban crime.
- The most effective crime prevention strategies -- as measured by the UCPP criteria of involving citizens, strengthening neighborhoods, and building working partnerships -- were those based on organizing residents to address problems of crime or arson -- the neighborhood watch approach.
- The effectiveness of the crime prevention projects was related to the nature of the neighborhood in which they were operating. It was considerably more difficult to promote significant citizen involvement in low-income, deteriorated neighborhoods than in those which were relatively stable.
- Training and technical assistance were critical to project success, particularly among the more inexperienced neighborhood groups and those attempting to implement the more complex crime prevention strategies. Substantially more technical assistance was needed than was offered in the Urban Crime Prevention Program.
- Strong cooperative working relationships with relevant criminal justice agencies were important determinants of project success.

The following recommendations are based on the results of the evaluation:

- Community crime prevention programs should emphasize the organizing of citizens -- the neighborhood watch concept -- as the basic, beginning strategy for crime prevention.
- Strong working partnerships should be established between neighborhood-based crime prevention efforts and relevant criminal justice agencies.
- Abundant training and technical assistance should be supplied to crime prevention groups in timely fashion.
- Neighborhood-based crime prevention strategies should receive the continued attention and support of officials concerned with urban crime.

A. INTRODUCTION

The Urban Crime Prevention Program was initiated by ACTION and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in 1980, to combat urban crime through community action. In nine cities, neighborhood organizations implemented innovative crime prevention strategies emphasizing citizen involvement, working partnerships with public and private groups, and strengthening the capacity of the neighborhood groups. An evaluation of the UCPP was conducted by the Institute for Social Analysis; this report summarizes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of that research.

B. BACKGROUND

During the past 20 years the urban areas of our country have experienced a tremendous increase in reported crime. During that time, the rate of property crime in our large cities (populations above 500,000) has more than doubled, and the rate of violent crime has roughly tripled. In neighborhoods which were once tranquil and secure, residents are now afraid to walk the streets at night. People who once gave little thought to protection of home and property now find themselves wondering when the thieves will strike them. For while we are not all victims of crime, the incidence of criminal acts has risen to the point where most citizens feel vulnerable to crime. As though that were not enough, the effects of crime go beyond individual injury, violation and property loss to weaken the broader social fabric of the community. Crime can disrupt the routines of citizens in myriad, largely constricting ways, promoting isolation and alienation. And as crime rises in a neighborhood, it is often accompanied by a pattern of general decline and disinvestment. Property values decrease, businesses leave, homeownership families are replaced by more transient renters in a spiral of crime and neighborhood deterioration.

The response to this problem has taken several routes, chiefly in the form of attempts at improving the operations of the criminal justice system -- improved law enforcement practices, more efficient prosecution, changes in courts, correctional reform, etc. But there is scant evidence that these system-based responses to crime have had significant impact on the crime rates, and most observers agree that crime is primarily a function of social dynamics and economic conditions.

In recent years, cities have turned to community-based crime prevention strategies in the face of the growing recognition that crime and its control are closely linked to the social dynamics of our neighborhoods and communities. Increasingly, citizens and community groups have recognized the need to work collectively to fight crime in their neighborhoods.

The community crime prevention movement in general (and the Urban Crime Prevention Program in particular) has its roots in what DuBow and Emmons (1981) have labeled "the community hypothesis":

- (1) Neighborhood residents can be mobilized by community organizations to participate in collective crime prevention projects.
- (2) Involvement in these activities creates a stronger community because people will take greater responsibility for their own protection and local problems, and interactions among neighbors will be increased, both formally, through the activities of the crime prevention projects, and informally, as a byproduct of these activities.

- (3) A stronger sense of community and increased social interaction leads to more effective informal social control.
- (4) Aside from the direct effects of community crime prevention activities in reducing crime or the fear of crime, these activities may also reduce crime or the fear of crime by rebuilding local social control in the neighborhood.

C. THE URBAN CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM

In structure and objectives, the Urban Crime Prevention program was designed to promote community crime prevention through innovative prevention strategies, citizen involvement, working partnerships among neighborhood organizations and public and private agencies, and capacity building of neighborhood groups. National in scope, UCPP provided very modest amounts of funds (ranging from approximately \$7,500 to \$47,000) to neighborhood organizations located in low and moderate income areas of the community. The structural elements of the UCPP were carefully crafted to effect program goals. By relying heavily on voluntarism, citizen participation, and the development of coalitions with other groups and city agencies, grass-roots crime prevention activities would be conducted amid the general theme of neighborhood development and citizen control. Through innovative crime prevention approaches (dispute settlement, arson prevention, etc.) community residents would "reclaim" their neighborhoods from deterioration and crime. By combining modest funding, neighborhood control, and the building of solid linkages and coalitions, it was hoped that the community crime prevention projects would have a greater chance of surviving beyond the federally-supported demonstration period. In virtually all these respects, the Urban Crime Prevention Program stands in contrast to its more heavily funded predecessors, notably the Community Anti-Crime Program, Comprehensive Crime Prevention Program, Hartford's crime prevention through environmental design project, and the Seattle community crime prevention program.

At the initiation of the UCPP in 1980, the program structure at the national level included ACTION, the Office of Community Anti-Crime Programs within the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, the national evaluation team from the Institute for Social Analysis, and A.L. Nellum and Associates, the technical assistance contractor. In March 1982, as LEAA's program operations were phased out, programmatic responsibility was transferred to the Office of Justice Assistance, Research, and Statistics, while the ACTION staff remained actively involved throughout the funding period. The evaluation study was transferred to the evaluation division of the National Institute of Justice, to be monitored jointly by NIJ and ACTION's evaluation office.

Urban Crime Prevention Programs were implemented in nine cities selected by ACTION and LEAA through a systematic competitive process. In each city, the major elements of the UCPP were a grantee organization, Advisory Council, and project organizations. Each city received a grant for an 18-month period, from the beginning of 1981 through the middle of 1982. Structural information on each city is shown in Table 1.

Each grantee was required to be a private non-profit corporation with legal responsibility for administering the UCPP grant and the demonstrated capacity to work with both public agencies and neighborhood groups. The grantees administered the grants and overall programs, and were viewed as key factors in developing a set of working relationships between project organizations, municipal and county officials, criminal justice officials, and other public and private groups.

Table 1: UCPP Grantee Characteristics

Table 1: UCPP Grantee Characteristics							Projects								
							Project Models			Suggested Project Areas				Locally Initiated Projects	
City	Name of Grantee	Description of Organization	Grant Amount	Grantee Staff*	Range of project budgets (number of projects)	Average Project Budget	Property Crime Victims	V/M Services	Arson	CDS	Youth Unemployment	Youth/School Crime	Public Housing		Consumer Fraud
Boston	Justice Resource Institute	Independent research and development organization	\$250,000	Program Manager (2/3) Program Director (1/3)	\$32,518-36,120 (6)	\$34,451	1	2		1	1				1
Chicago	Citizen Information Service	Community education branch of the League of Women Voters	\$397,924	Program Director (FT) Bookkeeper-typist (FT)	\$30,256-45,685 (9)	\$38,384	5		1	1		1		1	
Cincinnati	Community Chest	United Way affiliate, human services organization	\$370,419	Program Director (FT)	\$ 7,613-43,622**(13)	\$24,759**	2	4		2	2	1	2		
Cleveland	Commission on Catholic Community Action	Social action arm of the Cleveland Catholic Diocese	\$450,600	Program Director (FT) Sub-Prgm. Director (PT) Org.-Trainer (1/2) Admin. Assistant (1/2)	\$22,688-46,470 (11)	\$35,139	5		3	1		1	1		
Houston	Houston Metropolitan Ministries	Ecumenical service organization	\$349,406	Prgm. Coordinator (1/3) Prgm. Administrator (FT) UCPP Volunteer (FT) Fiscal Director (PT)	\$30,605-44,268 (8)	\$34,831	2	2	2		2				
Little Rock	United Way	Human services organization	\$350,000	Prgm. Supervisor (PT) Program Director (FT) Prgm. Finance Officer (1/2) Prgm. Secretary (1/2)	\$14,090-38,255 (8)	\$35,369	3	2				1			2
Newark	Newark Coalition of Neighborhoods	Coalition of neighborhood organizations	\$424,936	Grantee Director (2/3) Program Monitor (FT) Secretary (FT) Bookkeeper (1/3)	\$28,845-38,535 (10)	\$35,346	8		1			1			
New York	Citizens Committee for New York City	Community service organization for neighborhood self-help	\$450,027	Supervisor (PT) Program Director (FT) Fiscal Officer (2/3) Secretary (1/2) Field Assistant (3/5)	\$ 7,678-42,749 (12)	\$29,741	2	3	3	1	1		1		1
Seattle	Neighborhood House	Umbrella service organization for public housing projects	\$419,975	Project Director (FT) Field Assistants (PT)	\$37,563-47,053 (8)	\$41,997	2	2		1	1		1		1
							30	15	10	7	7	5	1	1	5
							33	18	12	8	8	6	6	1	6
							62 (73%)		23 (27%)						

* Amounts of staff time devoted to UCPP are approximations. Part-time (PT) staff typically devoted less than 25% of their time to the UCPP.

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**Prior to closing of one project.

An Advisory Council was formed in each city by the grantee to assist in planning and conducting the local program. In addition to the Mayor (or his or her designee) and a representative from each project organization, members were from a wide variety of relevant private and public organizations in the city. The responsibilities of the Advisory Council were to include:

- (1) Providing policy and program guidance to the grantee;
- (2) Providing general oversight on matters of program implementation and maintenance, including involvement in the monitoring and evaluation processes of the grant and in the review of project organizations;
- (3) Providing, through its members, liaison with and access to public and private agencies whose assistance would be useful in carrying out the program's objectives;
- (4) Publicizing the grant in the broader community; and
- (5) Serving as a forum in which information can be exchanged; mutual interests defined, and cooperative relations established among members.

Project organizations were mostly neighborhood groups such as local community organizations, churches, business associations, tenant organizations, etc. The program guidelines required that at least 60% of the project organizations were to be in the form of the principal project models: (1) property crime victimization, (2) community dispute settlement, (3) arson prevention, and (4) victim/witness services. The remaining projects could be locally-initiated or in one of the suggested project areas of family violence, consumer fraud, unemployment and crime, public housing anti-crime, and school crime. The Urban Crime Prevention Program placed a special emphasis on the use of volunteers, stating that grantees and project organizations must involve volunteers in a variety of ways. In addition to recruiting part-time community volunteers, each project was to recruit a full-time, stipended volunteer similar in concept and operation to the VISTA program volunteers.

The nine cities received UCPP grant funds ranging from \$250,000 to \$450,600 to operate 18-month crime prevention programs. In turn, the nine grantee organizations administered 85 projects, which operated on contracts of \$7,613 to \$47,053.

Of the 85 projects funded, 73% offered the crime prevention activities of the four principal models. The most common project was the property crime victimization model, which comprised 35% of all the projects. Fifteen (18%) projects offered victim/witness services, ten (12%) focused on arson prevention, and seven (8%) offered dispute settlement alternatives. Eighteen of the 23 non-model projects were in the "suggested areas" of the UCPP crime prevention activities -- unemployment and crime, school or general juvenile crime, consumer fraud, and public housing anti-crime. Five projects were locally initiated; three aimed to prevent subway crime, auto theft, and crimes against the elderly. Two locally-initiated projects combined model elements -- one assisted the property crime victimization projects in nine neighborhoods and the other combined youth employment and property crime prevention strategies.

UCPP goals and objectives. The principal goals of the UCPP were to increase neighborhood participation and problem-solving capacity and to forge a working partnership among neighborhood groups, criminal justice agencies, and other public-private sector institutions in new community crime prevention efforts. The chief components of these broadly stated goals were innovative approach, neighborhood orientation, and partnership.

Specific objectives related to the goal of supporting innovative approaches were the following:

- a. Encourage projects that have not received significant emphasis in past federal funding.
- b. Promote projects that expand the focus of attention beyond the actual commission of a crime to include the social and economic factors that are directly associated with criminal activity.
- c. Generate activities that provide for adoption of project models, suggested project areas, and locally initiated projects that are consistent with the program's goals and objectives.

UCPP objectives related to the goal of neighborhood participation were the following:

- a. Decrease the fear of crime among residents.
- b. Increase a sense of responsibility for dealing with crime among residents.
- c. Increase residents' perceptions of the importance of neighborhood groups in crime prevention.
- d. Increase the number of neighborhood groups that work with a broad-based Advisory Council and are engaged in community crime prevention, including new or fledgling groups and those not previously involved.
- e. Increase the financial and managerial competence of neighborhood groups to conduct a funded crime prevention program.
- f. Increase the ongoing ability of neighborhood groups to define and analyze local crime problems, develop solutions, and implement projects designed to combat such problems.
- g. Increase the ability of neighborhood groups to work in partnership with other private and public sector organizations and agencies on crime prevention efforts.
- h. Achieve substantial volunteer participation by residents in UCPP funded projects.
- i. Create new roles for and effectively utilize the talents of volunteers in the operation of crime prevention programs.
- j. Increase cohesiveness among neighborhood residents through efforts directed at preventing criminal activity.

The third goal of the UCPP, to forge working partnerships, had the following specific objectives:

- a. Ensure the input of a wide range of expert advice, data, and support in the planning and implementation of neighborhood crime prevention projects.

- b. Assure the cooperation and support of urban government and other interests in carrying out intended crime prevention efforts.
- c. Avoid duplication or conflict of prevention activities among projects being developed in the UCPP and other urban crime prevention efforts.
- d. Set in motion a process of coalition building that, over a period of time, will define mutual interests and forge cooperative relationships for initiating future crime prevention projects.

D. THE UCPP EVALUATION

The evaluation of the Urban Crime Prevention Program consisted of a process study of all nine sites and an intensive study of two cities. It was designed to examine the effectiveness of the programs in all cities and assess intensively the processes of the four major models of crime prevention.

Early in the evaluation, the major program goals and objectives were identified and weighted by the key ACTION and LEAA administrators. The focus of the evaluation was determined by this weighting process and by a review of program goals and proposed activities, evaluation resources, and time constraints. The evaluation was predominantly process rather than impact oriented, i.e., largely devoted to a descriptive account of the projects' activities and progress on major objectives. Following from the program goals, the major areas of focus for the evaluation were:

- Crime prevention activities. The evaluation described the project processes of the four models of property crime victimization, arson prevention, victim/witness assistance, and community dispute settlement. We wanted to know if the projects actually engaged in the activities proposed, and if so, to what degree. The evaluation examined the form, processes, and problems of the models as implemented by diverse neighborhood groups in different neighborhoods.
- Citizen involvement. The projects were based on the notion that citizens would become involved in, and materially participate in the projects' activities. Citizen involvement was defined in terms of awareness, response, and active participation.
- Coalition building. A program goal was to develop working partnerships among the crime prevention projects, key city agencies (particularly the criminal justice system), and other public and private organizations. The type and strength of these linkages were assessed.
- Capacity building. Through UCPP, it was intended that neighborhood organizations would improve their capacity to fight crime specifically (e.g., learn the techniques of arson prevention) and strengthen their managerial and financial competence. The methods of capacity building and degree to which the projects' capabilities improved were examined.

The UCPP projects were not expected to reduce overall crime or create strong, unified neighborhoods within the time period of this experimental program, nor was the evaluation designed to assess these ultimate goals.

Methodology. The primary data collection procedures used for this essentially descriptive study were interviews with program staff, citizens, and agency

officials; on-site observations of project events and records; and ongoing reviews of monthly reports to the evaluation staff, quarterly reports to ACTION/LEAA, and materials developed by the projects.

At least three site visits were made to each city, plus two additional visits to New York and Cincinnati, the intensive study sites. During each visit, structured interviews were conducted with each project director in charge of one of the four model approaches and the grantee staff. Project materials and records were reviewed or collected, brief tours were made of the target neighborhoods, and project activities were attended and observed as much as possible.

Grantee directors were asked about program-wide issues, including grant development, project selection, Advisory Council role, developing linkages, the full-time volunteer, and training and technical assistance. A substantial portion of each interview was devoted to their perceptions of project activities, progress, obstacles, and capacity building. Project directors were interviewed regarding project activities, citizen involvement, developing linkages, training and technical assistance, and organizational capabilities. At the end of the grant period, the grantee directors rated their projects' current strength and improvement in capabilities, and project directors rated citizen involvement and agency response to their efforts.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 82 key agency officials during the final visits. The interviews covered the nature and extent of the contact between the project and agency, the official's understanding of the project's main activities, and the official's view of the relationship established and the effectiveness of the project.

In the Fall 1982, telephone interviews with disputants (N=7) and victims (N=40) assisted by the dispute settlement and victim/witness projects were completed. The follow-up interviews were conducted to assess the citizens' satisfaction with the services.

From June 1981 through May 1982, the 62 model projects completed forms on a monthly basis which summarized their activities, and sent them to the evaluation staff. The Monthly Activity Summary forms were used to keep the evaluation staff informed of project activities and also covered citizen involvement, community outreach and education, publicity, and caseload characteristics of victim/witness and dispute settlement projects. Flyers, newsletters, meeting minutes, letters to agencies, and many other project materials were attached to the Monthly Activity Summary forms.

E. MAJOR FINDINGS

The major findings of the evaluation are summarized in this section. The areas covered are the activities of the project organizations, the degree of citizen involvement in their crime prevention activities, the type and strength of linkages developed with outside agencies, and capacity building of neighborhood groups.

Project activities. The most common approach of the property crime victimization projects was organizing and maintaining neighborhood watches, where the central activities involved the simple, straightforward strategies of residents looking out for each other's homes and observing neighborhood activities generally, marking valuable property (Operation Identification), and increasing home security. The number of watches organized by each project varied from a handful to 70, depending on the nature of the neighborhood, the staff's organizing

skills and techniques, and the project resources available. The property crime victimization model emphasized the issues of insurance availability in addition to property crime prevention efforts. Most of the projects tried to document insurance availability or unavailability in their target neighborhoods, but only the most experienced project organizations moved beyond documentation and education to working with insurance companies on perceived problems. Other crime prevention activities of the property crime projects (often carried out by neighborhood watch participants) included negotiating with police and other city agencies for specific services, neighborhood clean-up, youth-related activities, and community education.

The predominant strategy of the arson prevention projects was to improve the safety and living conditions of buildings which appeared to be arson-prone. The building improvements -- enforcing safety codes, boarding up vacant structures, repair, clean-up, increasing security, etc. -- were achieved by residents and tenants' groups organized and trained by project staff to negotiate with landlords and appropriate city agencies. Several projects collected building data to identify arson-prone buildings for the prevention/intervention strategies, but only one project was engaged in developing a complete predictive system as part of an ongoing arson strategy.

Unlike the property crime victimization and arson prevention projects in which community organizing was a central crime prevention strategy, the victim/witness assistance and dispute settlement projects provided direct services to citizens in need. The majority of the victim/witness projects provided one-to-one assistance to the victims of crime; the primary services were counseling/crisis intervention, referrals for additional assistance, and victim advocacy (interceding on the victims' behalf with landlords, social service agencies, etc.). Projects serving the elderly and sexual assault victims reached a substantial number of people, but due to the lack of referrals, many projects provided meaningful services to only a handful of neighborhood residents. Court monitoring and advocacy work with the criminal justice system were also activities of two projects.

The community dispute settlement projects offered dispute resolution services -- typically conciliation, and less frequently, mediation -- to neighborhood residents. Substantial project time and effort was focused on community outreach and developing referral relationships with justice system agencies, other city and social service agencies, and community organizations. The caseloads of the projects were quite small, ranging from a couple to fewer than 100 cases for any one project; only a handful of mediation hearings were held.

Citizen involvement. The property crime victimization and arson prevention projects achieved substantial community involvement in their activities, specifically in the straightforward organizing of citizens into neighborhood watches and tenants groups. However, the extent to which citizens became involved in the projects varied considerably, depending partly on the skills and tactics of the organizers. Crime and arson were often addressed within the context of other neighborhood and building concerns; as an isolated issue, crime or arson seldom served as an effective organizing tactic. The organizing strategies also varied greatly, from one-shot, one-meeting efforts to a multi-meetings approach focused on training, education, and leadership development. Achieving substantial citizen involvement was most difficult in lower-income, more fragmented and deteriorating neighborhoods, particularly public housing and renters communities. The more complex and less tangible activities of the arson and property crime projects, such as documenting insurance unavailability and conducting arson research, did not attract much citizen involvement.

The victim/witness and dispute settlement projects experienced difficulties in achieving citizen involvement, with the exception of the victim/witness projects serving populations of special need. In the main, these projects had low caseloads, serving only a small segment of their neighborhoods. The citizens who did receive victim/witness or dispute settlement services were satisfied with the services and found them to be very helpful, as indicated by follow-up interviews. Although few citizens were recruited to serve as victim service providers, the dispute settlement projects had no problems in recruiting and training mediators. In spite of substantial effort in the areas of community education and outreach, the victim/witness and dispute settlement projects did not achieve an adequate level of community awareness and acceptance.

Developing linkages. The property crime and arson prevention projects also achieved considerable success in garnering the support and assistance of police and fire departments as appropriate, and in gaining cooperation from city agencies. The property crime projects developed cooperative relationships with the police departments, particularly the crime prevention units, and police officers often actively participated in project activities. Police officials, in general, held positive views about neighborhood watch programs; where negative views were present, they were usually related to resistance to community involvement in what was viewed as the police's realm or irritation at community demands.

The arson prevention projects established excellent working relationships with the fire and police departments and with many city agencies concerned with housing and buildings. These linkages were often mutually beneficial relationships, since the projects and the agencies shared the goal of improving building conditions and community involvement was viewed as a real asset. In general, city officials had highly positive views of the projects and believed they were instrumental in arson prevention.

The victim/witness assistance and dispute settlement projects had many difficulties in developing linkages for referrals, particularly in developing working relationships with criminal justice system agencies. Police departments served as passive sources of cases for the victim/witness projects, by simply allowing them access to recent crime information. Court officials and prosecutors were rarely involved. Agency officials had mixed views of victim/witness projects, recognizing the individual benefit of the services yet questioning whether such services should be community-based and viewing them as social services not related to crime prevention.

Official response to the community dispute settlement projects was moderate to low. In the few instances where referral relationships were developed, they were established after months of meetings and contacts with appropriate officials. The primary obstacle was that community-based dispute resolution lacked legitimacy in the eyes of justice system officials, who felt such services should be under court control and were concerned about confidentiality, enforcement, and professionalism issues.

In general, cooperative relationships were more easily developed by established projects with a well-known track record and experience in working with outside agencies. Effective relationships with appropriate agencies were also more easily developed when projects engaged in crime prevention strategies in which community involvement is generally recognized as needed and beneficial (e.g., neighborhood watches and improved building conditions for renters). Linkages for community-based services generally offered by prosecutor's offices (victim/witness assistance) and court systems (dispute resolution) were more difficult to develop.

Capacity building. A major goal of the UCPP was to increase the capacity of neighborhood groups in the areas of crime prevention and financial and managerial competence. The UCPP was designed to support both established groups with a track record of stability and success, and fledgling groups, many of which had no previous experience in crime prevention.

The 85 projects were sponsored by a wide variety of organizations, from very inexperienced groups to large, established, well-funded organizations. The resources and capabilities of the project organizations had a significant impact on the functioning and success of the projects. Most of the UCPP project organizations were grass-roots community groups representing local neighborhoods and citizens; these included community councils, block and tenant associations, and coalitions of neighborhood groups. A sizable number were neighborhood-based social service agencies, serving the needs of local community residents via Social Security, welfare, and similar government programs. Three projects were operated by city agencies, and several were sponsored by service organizations such as the YMCA.

Capacity building was critical for the newer, fledgling groups, who needed substantial assistance in managerial and financial areas as well as help in building skills and knowledge in areas specific to the crime prevention models. In the more established organizations, capacity building was primarily related to the crime prevention activities.

The task of capacity building fell largely to the grantees; much of the technical assistance occurred on a one-to-one basis, although formal and informal training workshops were not infrequent. In many ways, the grantees played critical roles in the UCPP, assisting the project organizations in a multitude of ways (they were particularly instrumental in developing linkages among the projects and other organizations and city agencies), and serving as liaisons between them and other components of the UCPP. Grantee help and supervision generally worked best in situations where the grantee staff consisted of a full-time director with day-to-day responsibility for the projects, who in turn received assistance from an experienced senior staff person and had substantial resources (contacts, expertise, bookkeeping services, etc.) within the grantee organization to draw on.

Training and technical assistance was provided through the national contractor as well as by the grantees. In general, what was received was viewed as valuable and useful. There was also a near-universal opinion among the grantees that more technical assistance was needed in all areas, particularly in community organizing, the insurance model, and administration. The complexity of the models, skills needed for community organizing and developing linkages, federal reporting requirements, and the limited time (and sometimes skills) of project staff made training and technical assistance imperative.

With a few exceptions, the project organizations increased or strengthened their organizational capabilities through UCPP. All projects hired staff, initiated UCPP activities, and met federal reporting requirements. Crime prevention activities appear most apt to continue in the more established organizations -- particularly those in which community organizing and safety issues were priorities prior to UCPP and citizen groups with developed leadership are in place and likely to carry on community crime prevention. Continuation appears most likely among the property crime victimization and arson prevention projects, where the emphasis on organizing, training, and leadership has created block clubs and similar groups with the potential of continuing with only resident involvement. Continuation without substantial funding support appears less likely in the client service, case-oriented community dispute settlement and victim/witness projects.

Nearly every project recruited and supported a stipended volunteer, a local resident who participated in project activities on a full-time basis. In addition to contributing to individual growth and knowledge, the purpose of the local, stipended volunteer was to develop skills in the community to be used as the basis for future neighborhood crime prevention endeavors. As reported by the grantee directors, the individual personal growth of the volunteer was seen as the primary benefit of the concept, and secondarily, the benefits of additional personnel with their community knowledge and insight were realized. The drawbacks to the full-time volunteer component were primarily administrative. Problems were encountered in recruitment and retention, with performance, absenteeism, and turnover, causing ongoing difficulties for a number of projects.

The Advisory Councils of the UCPP grantees were to provide guidance, liaison with and access to public and private agencies, publicity, and a forum for information exchange. In reviewing their activities and the views of grantee and project directors, it was apparent that the Councils were not as effective as hoped, particularly in developing linkages and building coalitions. Their primary function was to provide information and assistance to the projects and grantee directors. Where Council members were helpful, assistance came mainly from a few key, active individuals outside of Council meetings.

F. DISCUSSION

1. Meeting Program Goals

It bears repeating that the rationale and the goals of the Urban Crime Prevention Program were distinctively different than those of most crime prevention programs; i.e., the UCPP projects were aimed at the broad underlying causes of crime -- if not entirely, to a greater degree than in previous crime prevention programs. And they would do so through the application of approaches which were largely innovative. Disputes would be resolved before they flared up in criminal violence or added another burdensome case to the backlog of the courts. Victims of crime would be assisted in ways that would promote citizen perceptions that they were part of a caring community and that they could make the system more responsive. By strengthening the bonds of neighbors, bringing residents together to promote the common security and foster a more livable environment, our urban neighborhoods would be better able to withstand the forces of disorder and decline. It was also recognized that neighborhood groups probably could not hope to accomplish these tasks alone; rather, that they should address them in partnership with other groups and agencies in the city, particularly public agencies, from the mayor's office to the police precinct station.

These broad purposes were captured in the UCPP goal statements under the headings of innovative approaches, neighborhood orientation, and working partnerships. Although the scope of an evaluation should not be confined by the bounds of the program's stated goals, particularly as findings are interpreted and discussed, it is fitting and fair that we begin with a general assessment of how well these goals were met.

Innovative approaches. UCPP certainly succeeded in establishing projects that were innovative in design. Indeed, with the inclusion of projects such as arson prevention, insurance unavailability, and dispute settlement, the UCPP projects represented the forefront of community crime prevention models. And UCPP provided the opportunity to test these innovations under a variety of conditions. But although this goal was clearly met, there were indications that some of the models were, in a sense, too innovative; i.e., they were of a complexity that often overwhelmed the neighborhood groups, many of whom had never so much as organized a

block watch. For example, in the property crime projects the insurance unavailability element was the most problematic; the block watch, a simple, less innovative approach, was very successful. The use of mediation to help resolve disputes is one of the most recent innovations in criminal justice, but dispute settlement projects, especially those that are not connected to the courts, find it notoriously difficult to attract a respectable caseload (Cook, Roehl, and Sheppard, 1980). And the most effective aspect of the arson prevention programs was the education-and-organizing element (which resembles the block watch approach); the establishment of innovative arson prediction systems was often baffling to the less experienced groups. In those instances where projects successfully implemented the more complex, innovative approaches, they had staffs with experience in crime prevention, frequently in the particular approach to be implemented.

Thus, although innovative approaches were established by UCPP, often (as in the case of insurance unavailability) they were established on paper, not by deed. And many projects which did achieve in making these approaches operational had difficulty developing them effectively. Still, much was learned about which type of innovative approach works (and does not work) in the hands of neighborhood organizations, and that too was a central purpose of this admittedly high-risk program.

Neighborhood orientation: Involving citizens and building the capacities of neighborhood groups. Through the efforts of the UCPP projects, thousands of citizens in numerous urban neighborhoods became involved in crime prevention efforts. Some people simply became aware of crime and ways to protect themselves from it; others became active participants as block watchers, mediators, etc. In the process, many citizens came to know their neighbors and, in so doing, took important steps toward strengthening -- in some cases, reclaiming -- their neighborhoods. Certainly, UCPP was effective in promoting citizen involvement, but the effectiveness of projects in this respect depended on (a) the nature of the activity, and (b) the characteristics of the neighborhood. Through the basic mechanism of block watches, the property crime projects were typically very successful in gaining the participation of scores of neighborhood residents. By means of similar organizing strategies, many arson prevention projects were also effective in drawing citizens into education and arson watches. But the other types of projects were less effective in involving citizens in their projects. Attempts to involve citizens in insurance unavailability research were usually met with a combination of boredom and confusion. And although citizens were eager to become mediators in dispute settlement projects -- a stimulating, somewhat prestigious role for a citizen -- they were remarkably reluctant to bring their disputes to the projects.

The level of citizen involvement in UCPP projects was also related to the characteristics of the neighborhood. There are indications that where neighborhoods were relatively stable and/or of moderate income, citizens were more likely to participate in project activities. It seems reasonable that in neighborhoods where a substantial proportion of residents have roots in the community, own their homes, feel some identification with the community, plan to stay in the neighborhood, etc. -- and have adequate social and economic resources -- they would be more willing to assist in efforts to protect and strengthen their neighborhood. On the other hand, in low-income, deteriorating neighborhoods where residents may feel less "ownership" of the community, it may be difficult to persuade someone to become involved in project work on a voluntary (unpaid) basis when he or she is worried about "putting food on the table."

The literature on voluntarism shows that the motivation to volunteer is

related to socio-economic standing and education (Anderson and Moore, 1978), and two recent studies of community crime prevention have found citizen involvement to be positively correlated with resident income and neighborhood integration. DuBow and his associates found that where resident incomes are high, voluntary participation in crime prevention activity tends to be high, and vice-versa (DuBow and Emmons, 1979). Similarly, in the Skogan and Maxfield (1981) study of why individuals participate in crime prevention activities, they found that "the most consistent correlates of levels of participation in crime-focused groups are...neighborhood social and residential ties." Across several cities, their data showed that as these indices of neighborhood integration and cohesion rose, so did participation in crime prevention activities. In their national evaluation of LEAA's Comprehensive Crime Prevention Program, Crew and Perlman (1981) also identified the extent of neighborhood integration as a correlate of citizen involvement in crime prevention activities.

There also seemed little doubt that UCPP helped to build the capacities of neighborhoods and neighborhood groups to address crime problems. Organizations which had not previously organized block watches, collected police report data, or conducted home security checks came out of the demonstration period with such skills in hand. Unfortunately, many of the projects acquired these skills through a difficult trial-and-error experience. Often they were just becoming comfortable with their capabilities toward the end of the demonstration period. Although most project directors valued the technical assistance received, most of the grantee directors (overseeing the projects in each city) thought that more technical assistance was needed. And for fledgling, inexperienced groups engaging in the more complex crime prevention strategies, the lack of technical assistance was critical.

The capacities of the projects by the end of the demonstration period depended upon both the general experience and stability of the community organization and its experience in crime prevention. Those organizations which were stable and experienced at the outset typically reflected substantial capacity at the end. Most fledgling groups showed less capacity, but often displayed greater improvement -- from a zero baseline. The less established groups tended to have more difficulties than the experienced organizations, but it should be remembered that UCPP purposely awarded grants to less experienced groups for the purpose of improving their capacity.

In summary, the neighborhood orientation of UCPP displayed considerable success in gaining citizen involvement and building the capacities of neighborhoods and their resident organizations. At the same time, it must be recognized that such goals can be quickly scuttled -- or at least severely hamstrung -- by the nature of the neighborhood and the experience and skills of the neighborhood group.

Developing working partnerships. A central goal of the UCPP was to "forge new working partnerships" among neighborhood groups and key officials and organizations in the city, particularly criminal justice system officials. In many projects, effective working partnerships were developed, both at the neighborhood level and city-wide. The linkages that were established between the property crime projects and the police were especially numerous and apparently quite helpful. In addition, the arson projects typically had considerable success in gaining the working cooperation of several relevant agencies, including the fire departments and housing authorities. But many of the victim/witness and dispute settlement projects encountered sizable and continuing obstacles to the establishment of formal linkages with the criminal justice system, obstacles which severely hampered their effectiveness.

It was hoped that the Advisory Councils and the grantee staff in each city would provide the projects with entree to those agencies or the city government (especially the criminal justice system) whose cooperation was so critical to the success of the project. This entree was especially important for the victim/witness and dispute settlement projects, most of which relied upon the justice system to supply cases. But many grantees and projects had difficulty in establishing those linkages with the justice system, a weakness that had a significant negative impact on the caseloads of victim/witness and dispute settlement projects.

Where there were strong linkages between victim/witness and dispute settlement projects and local criminal justice agencies (e.g., in New York City), there had already existed a general acceptance on the part of the local criminal justice officials of the value and importance of these kinds of services, as evidenced by their support of such projects prior to UCPP. Where those linkages were more difficult to establish, the local criminal justice system did not display that level of acceptance.

Thus, with respect to its three major goal statements, UCPP displayed considerable success, but it was success of a highly qualified sort. Innovative projects were established across the nine cities, but many of them, particularly the most innovative, encountered serious operational problems. The neighborhood orientation of UCPP was an effective overall strategy, deserving of continued emphasis, yet many neighborhoods most in need of crime prevention were terribly resistant to citizen-based crime prevention. The discussion below addresses these and other issues.

2. Issues and Implications

Several issues of central importance to urban crime prevention have emerged from the findings of this evaluation, issues which have distinct implications for the future of community crime prevention. They are discussed below.

Citizen involvement as a function of the nature of the neighborhood. It has been noted that a problem which plagues community crime prevention approaches is that in deteriorating neighborhoods of low cohesion it is often difficult to generate citizen involvement -- the sine qua non of most community crime prevention. And it is in these neighborhoods where crime is most likely to be high. Thus, we are confronted with the dilemma that the neighborhoods which need crime prevention most are the ones most resistant to the implementation of prevention approaches. There are perhaps two implications of this finding. First, it underscores the importance of strengthening neighborhoods before any precipitous decline can take place. These transitional neighborhoods are not difficult to identify. There are many indicators of deterioration -- declining property values, commercial disinvestment (closing various retail establishments), an increase in the number of abandoned buildings, a decrease in home-owning families, an increase in arsons and suspicious fires -- and a rise in crime. In addition, there are some observable signs of a neighborhood's vulnerability to crime: rowdy teenagers gather at, and take over, street corners; properties begin to look in need of repair and paint; the passerby is affronted by incivilities -- foul language, bellicose inebriates, the din of portable stereos, and so forth. At some stage, the number of citizens who care about the neighborhood, who are willing to put in time and effort to stabilize and improve their community, drops below some critical mass. At that point the civil, law-abiding citizens are more likely to feel apathetic and fearful, that control of the streets is in other hands, and begin to retreat behind locked doors, choosing not to become involved (see Wilson and Kelling, 1982, for a description of this process). It seems that the propitious time (it is not a mere

moment; the typical time-span is probably on the order of some years) for gaining citizen involvement in crime prevention activities is that period when citizens have developed a good balance of concern and confidence -- serious concern that if something isn't done they will find themselves in a spiral of deterioration, mixed with an indignant confidence that they can defeat the forces of disorder.

With the recognition, however, that many neighborhoods which have suffered decline are in need of workable crime prevention efforts, we should begin to develop better ways to overcome the resistance of these neighborhoods to organized citizen crime prevention activities. In such neighborhoods, it probably requires a maximum effort -- experienced organizers, substantial technical assistance, and the continued support of official agencies, especially the police -- if neighborhood-based crime prevention is to succeed.

Type of crime prevention approach. The differential dynamics and effects of the various crime prevention approaches have implications for future urban crime prevention efforts. Across the several UCPP criteria (citizen involvement, capacity building, etc.) of effectiveness the arson prevention and property crime victimization projects (sans insurance unavailability) rather consistently performed better than the victim/witness and dispute settlement projects. In addition, these types of projects address the crime problem (i.e., arson and property crime) more directly, and are therefore more likely to have some demonstrable impact on crime itself.

There are several likely reasons for these differences in performance. First, and probably most important, these projects were based on the fairly simple but highly valued activity of bringing citizens together for the common purpose of improving the safety of the homes and streets of their neighborhood. Thus, they began with a strategy of organizing all the residents of a block or an apartment building to address a problem of potential concern to all. In contrast, victim/witness and dispute settlement projects focused on a much more circumscribed population and addressed matters which are of immediate interest only to victims and disputants themselves. Second, although both property crime and arson prevention projects developed relationships with, and were assisted by, city agencies, they were neither heavily dependent on the agencies nor did they require referral of cases. Consequently, these projects and the city agencies were mutually supportive; they had common goals to which each contributed without making heavy demands of one another. The victim/witness and dispute settlement projects were "client-oriented" services which depended on the city agencies (police and courts) for cases. The victim/witness projects encountered fewer obstacles in this respect than the dispute settlement projects because they typically required only passive referrals from the police (i.e., access to victim records).

The complexity of the particular approach -- the degree of sophistication and skill required to mount an effective effort -- also contributed to its overall effectiveness, but this attribute was more clearly a factor within models than among them. Thus, the simpler component of the property crime project, the block watch, worked better than the insurance unavailability component. In dispute settlement projects the establishment of the relatively straightforward mediation service was much less difficult than the outreach component, which required educating and changing some basic attitudes of the public.

This is not meant to suggest that victim/witness or dispute settlement efforts are unworthy of support; on the contrary, they serve important purposes. But it should be understood that they are not the most effective vehicles for rallying citizen support and participation, and that they will have difficulty fulfilling their mission without solid relationships with criminal justice agencies.

Two activities -- improving the physical appearance of the neighborhood and providing neighborhood youth with positive alternatives -- were frequently addressed by the property crime and arson prevention projects because they were major concerns of residents. These activities can be implemented by groups of committed citizens without the involvement of city agencies or substantial resources, yet they contribute to crime prevention and neighborhood revitalization by reducing the "signs of disorder" and giving residents and outsiders a sense that the neighborhood is cared for and protected. Neighborhood improvement and youth activities often evolve from block watches and similar residents' organizations and may be viewed by residents as natural and necessary components of community crime prevention.

Improving the crime prevention capacities of neighborhood organizations. What are the characteristics of the neighborhood group which should conduct crime prevention activities, and how can they be most efficiently assisted in performing these efforts? Generally, our findings showed that more established groups were more successful in launching and sustaining their crime prevention projects. Yet it is important to help bolster the capacities of fledgling groups as well. Fortunately, these goals are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In most neighborhoods, it is probably best to seek out the most qualified, experienced organization to conduct crime prevention, especially if the neighborhood has deteriorated considerably and/or the particular approach to be implemented is fairly complex. In neighborhoods of at least moderate stability where the crime prevention approach will not require inordinate levels of skill and experience, fledgling groups should be able to perform well -- especially if they are provided with ample training and technical assistance. And perhaps this is the critical point to be made with respect to capacity building: most groups need some training and technical assistance, and the need increases dramatically in inverse proportion to: (1) the experience of the group, (2) the in-house resources available to the group, (3) the stability of the neighborhood, and (4) the simplicity of the approach. As these conditions are found wanting, training and technical assistance should be correspondingly increased.

Linkages between neighborhood organizations and criminal justice agencies. As mentioned above, the establishment of supportive relationships between appropriate criminal justice agencies and neighborhood groups is critical to the success of victim/witness and particularly dispute settlement projects. It is also quite helpful to the other types of projects which make use of crime prevention police officers (for training, presentations, home security checks, etc.), and statistics from police and fire departments, and may influence department resource allocations. For example, one UCPP property crime project was successful in gaining additional police patrols of their neighborhood, and an arson prevention project persuaded the fire department to assign two additional fire marshals to inspect routinely buildings which they had identified as arson-prone. How are these relationships established, and what obstacles hinder them?

The establishment of supportive relationships in UCPP was a function of (1) the type of crime prevention approach (and, by extension, the type of assistance requested of the agency); (2) the stance of the city's criminal justice system, especially the police, with respect to community participation in crime prevention; and (3) the effectiveness of the project staff and the grantee in opening doors and making contacts. The first element (type of approach) has been discussed above. The influence of the stance of the city's criminal justice system toward the UCPP projects is illustrated by the contrasting situations in New York and Cincinnati. In New York, the criminal justice system -- police, courts, fire department -- viewed the UCPP project activities in a favorable light, as indicated by their responses in follow-up interviews and by their supportive actions

throughout the project period. Indeed, New York City has been a pioneer in the use of such crime prevention activities as victim/witness services, dispute settlement, and arson prevention -- well before UCPP appeared on the scene. It is not surprising, therefore, that the New York officials were supportive of UCPP projects. In contrast, the Cincinnati criminal justice system has a history of being more traditional and less receptive to innovation. Efforts like UCPP have been comparatively rare in Cincinnati. That kind of stance was evident in their relations with UCPP projects, i.e., they were typically distant and non-committal, at least at administrative levels.

The attitudes and actions of the grantee and project staffs also influenced the formation of these linkages. There were numerous instances where grantees (either staff or Advisory Council members) provided needed access to criminal justice agencies and officials. There were also many instances in which they failed to provide access and support. At the grantee level, it was not simply a case of what the staff did, e.g., who they contacted in what manner, but who they were. For example, in two cities the grantee directors, although well-known in the city and among criminal justice agencies, had largely negative reputations in the criminal justice community. The obvious lesson here is that in selecting grantee directors (or the equivalent), administrators of a crime prevention program should screen candidates very thoroughly to minimize the chances that they are not viewed antagonistically by the criminal justice community.

The actions of project staff also influenced the development of working partnerships. Although there were exceptions, it was generally found that the most effective stance was one in which the project staff was non-confrontational, expressed a sympathetic understanding of the department's burden, and asked (rather than demanded) assistance and cooperation.

Program structure. Many of the structural elements of UCPP were effective and should be considered for inclusion in future community crime prevention programs. The main structure of a central grantee overseeing several neighborhood-based projects and assisted by an advisory council generally worked well. Within this overall structure, certain elements should be revised. The advisory council should be a well-connected, smaller, more functional group convened mainly for the purpose of helping to build partnerships between the projects and city agencies. Either the number of projects should be smaller or the staff and resources of the central grantee made somewhat larger. Grantee administration and all that went with it -- training, technical assistance, monitoring, "hand-holding", etc. -- seemed to function better under a kind of dual directorship (exemplified by the Citizens Committee of New York) where a senior, experienced staff member serves in a part-time supervisory capacity over a full-time project director and a part-time assistant. At the project level, there were several problems with the full-time volunteer concept, primarily problems of recruitment, absenteeism, and turnover. At the same time, in many cases it served its intended purpose of developing skills within the community and providing a growth experience for a neighborhood resident. On balance, this seems an element best replaced by a part-time worker who is more easily recruited and supervised -- unless one places an extraordinary value on the volunteer experience itself.

The role of community crime prevention. In a broader sense, the results of this evaluation are viewed as generally supportive of community crime prevention, particularly when such efforts are neighborhood-based and are conducted in close working partnerships with local criminal justice agencies. We hasten to add, however, that this general assessment is based upon the application of the intermediate criteria -- citizen involvement, capacity building, etc. -- and not the long-term criterion of reduction in crime. The basic balance espoused by UCPP

is a promising one: citizens' groups taking responsibility for the quality and security of their neighborhoods, but doing so in close coordination with local criminal justice agencies.

In this regard, we take issue with Wilson and Kelling (1982), who stated:

Though citizens can do a great deal, the police are plainly the key to order-maintenance. For one thing, many communities...cannot do the job by themselves. For another, no citizen in a neighborhood, even an organized one, is likely to feel the sense of responsibility that wearing a badge confers.

Based upon the UCPP experience (and others in the literature) we would suggest that neighborhood residents are at least as important as the police -- perhaps more so -- in determining the level of order and civility in a neighborhood. And we have seen instances in which many citizens feel very responsible for the conditions in the neighborhood. Police clearly have a very important role in maintaining order in a community, but a single police officer cannot watch every home in a neighborhood, clean up vacant lots, repair broken windows, or regenerate the social bonds which hold a neighborhood together. These are the duties of citizens; community crime prevention efforts can be effective vehicles for the performance of such duties.

G. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The diversity, scope, and varied results of the Urban Crime Prevention Program preclude a simple label of "success" or "failure." If an urban crime prevention program were being developed today, it should, as we have suggested, retain many of the elements which characterized UCPP. By the same token, future programs should look substantially different from UCPP: it will not serve as an off-the-shelf master plan for urban crime prevention. But of course that was not the purpose of the program; it was designed as a vehicle to launch crime prevention activities through neighborhood groups in partnership with other organizations in the public and private sector. In an overall sense, UCPP exhibited considerable progress toward those goals, but the progress was quite uneven. Some projects succeeded admirably on virtually all fronts; others struggled painfully to realize the smallest accomplishments.

The central conclusions of the evaluation are stated below.

1. Conclusions

- The most effective crime prevention approaches as measured by the criteria used in this evaluation were those which were based on the organization of citizens to address problems of crime or arson -- the neighborhood watch approach.

According to the UCPP criteria -- involving citizens, strengthening neighborhoods, and building working partnerships -- the property crime and arson prevention projects were most successful, primarily because they were generally based on some version of the neighborhood watch concept. These projects typically attempted to reach as many citizens as possible in a neighborhood, block, or apartment building. In contrast, the victim/witness and dispute settlement projects dealt with a more circumscribed population (victims and disputants), addressed matters of interest only to that relatively small group of citizens, and were often dependent on the criminal justice system for their cases.

- The effectiveness of the crime prevention projects was related to the nature of the neighborhood in which it was operating.

It was considerably more difficult to promote significant citizen involvement -- the sine qua non of community crime prevention -- in low-income, deteriorated neighborhoods than in neighborhoods which were still relatively stable. Unfortunately, it is the deteriorated neighborhood, the area of low cohesion and high crime, which is in greatest need of crime prevention.

- Training and technical assistance were critical to project success, particularly among the inexperienced, small neighborhood groups.

Most of the projects considered the training and technical assistance highly valuable, but it was often insufficient, particularly for inexperienced groups which were attempting one of the more complex approaches; e.g., insurance unavailability issues.

- In an overall sense, the general neighborhood orientation of UCPP -- organizing and strengthening neighborhoods -- combined with the development of working partnerships offers promise for combatting urban crime.

Basing community crime prevention activities around organic social units -- neighborhoods, blocks and their indigenous groups -- helps to develop cohesiveness and promote resident responsibility and activity in ways that agencies, public or private, from outside the neighborhood are not likely to do. The formation of working partnerships with these agencies -- cooperative, mutually supportive relationships -- provides an effective vehicle for assisting neighborhoods and developing promising crime prevention activities.

- The more complex crime prevention approaches presented serious difficulties for many neighborhood groups.

The more complex approaches -- insurance unavailability strategies, dispute settlement, arson risk prediction -- were difficult for most neighborhood groups to master, particularly if the organization was relatively inexperienced in crime prevention. Considerably more training and technical assistance is typically required if neighborhood groups are to attempt these more difficult approaches.

- Strong linkages -- working partnerships -- with relevant criminal justice agencies were important determinants of project success.

The supportive relationships which property crime and arson prevention projects typically established with public agencies, chiefly police and fire departments, were very helpful. In contrast, most of the victim/witness and dispute settlement projects had difficulty establishing functional linkages with criminal justice agencies. Because many of these projects were dependent on the agencies for case referrals, their performance often suffered.

2. Recommendations

Based upon the results of this evaluation, the following recommendations are made:

- Community crime prevention programs should emphasize the organizing of citizens -- the neighborhood watch concept -- as the basic, beginning strategy for crime prevention.

The most important initial step in most community crime prevention activities is to gain the involvement of a critical mass of neighborhood residents, and the neighborhood watch/block watch approach is the most effective instrument for gaining citizen involvement. Consequently, community crime prevention programs should begin with this activity. After the block watch is underway, other approaches of particular interest and relevance to the neighborhood (e.g., victim/witness services) may be developed.

- Strong working partnerships should be established between neighborhood-based crime prevention efforts and relevant criminal justice agencies.

Supportive relationships with the criminal justice agencies are valuable to property crime and arson prevention projects, and critical to dispute settlement and victim/witness projects. Individuals responsible for planning and administrative functions should work to gain the commitment of these agencies before projects are established, and project staffs should take a cooperative, non-confrontational stance in cultivating such partnerships as operations begin.

- Abundant training and technical assistance should be supplied to crime prevention groups in timely fashion.

Neighborhood groups often require substantial training and technical assistance in order to perform crime prevention activities effectively. They need to understand the concepts they are dealing with, and to develop a variety of techniques and skills from organizing to mediation. The amount of training and technical assistance required will vary according to the group's experience, the nature of the neighborhood, and the complexity of the approaches to be implemented.

- Neighborhood-based crime prevention strategies deserve the continued attention and support of officials concerned with urban crime.

Neighborhood-based crime prevention projects which develop cooperative relationships with other relevant agencies, especially criminal justice agencies, can be efficient and effective vehicles for combatting neighborhood deterioration and crime. The UCPP projects showed that with the injection of modest amounts of funds, substantial and promising crime prevention activities can be launched and sustained. However, much was learned in the course of this evaluation about how such endeavors should, and should not be conducted. We strongly urge government officials to pay heed to those lessons before launching additional community crime prevention programs.

3. Research Recommendations

Although community crime prevention programs are being implemented at an increasing rate in cities across the nation, relatively little research has been conducted on the subject. We need to know more about how particular programmatic strategies affect crime and fear of crime. Among the topics requiring further investigation, we recommend the following:

- A multi-site impact evaluation of community crime prevention programs.

Using the knowledge gained in the course of this evaluation, a multi-site (at least three to four cities) community crime prevention program should be developed, supplemented by a comprehensive impact-oriented evaluation. Although there have been large national evaluations of previous federal community crime prevention programs, none has focused on crime and fear of crime as the central outcome criteria. The proposed evaluation research would enable us to assess rigorously the impact of various community crime prevention strategies; i.e., using before-after collection of data on crime and fear of crime, and employing control and experimental neighborhoods.

- Research on the relationship between neighborhood-based community crime prevention programs and criminal justice agencies.

Neighborhood-based crime prevention programs rely on the cooperation of criminal justice agencies for several types of assistance -- crime statistics, training, citizen input to police crime prevention strategies, referrals from prosecutors and judges to victim/witness and dispute settlement programs, etc. The UCPP experience showed that these relationships varied greatly from project to project and from city to city. We need to learn more about the determinants of those relationships and how they can be developed and improved.

- Research on methods for gaining citizen involvement in community crime prevention programs in deteriorated neighborhoods of low cohesion.

The UCPP projects had considerably more difficulties in getting citizens to participate in crime prevention activities in neighborhoods which were deteriorated (physically and socially) and cohesion among residents was low. It appears that special, intensive efforts are required to develop successful community crime prevention programs in these areas. Such efforts need to be developed and pilot-tested in a sample of these neighborhoods.

- Assessment of the comparative effects of community crime prevention strategies versus a general economic development strategy.

The relationship between a neighborhood's economic deterioration -- decreasing property values, loss of retail establishments, exodus of middle-income families, etc. -- and a rise in crime has often been noted (indeed, UCPP was based, to some degree, on a recognition of this relationship). In the long run, it is possible that general economic development strategies -- assisting business and industry, improving the housing stock, etc. -- may have a greater impact on neighborhood revitalization, crime, and fear of crime than crime prevention programs (although the strategies clearly are not mutually exclusive). It is an issue deserving of further attention and research.

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