CHAPTER 5
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
5.1 Introduction

This Urban Centre Case Study discusses youth crime and violence in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG). The research team conducted focus groups discussions and number of interviews in Port Moresby with young people, government actors and civil society organizations, which provided the main basis for the findings. Additionally, a desk review of available reports and statistics was conducted. Finally, this case study includes a set of specific national recommendations for consideration by policy-makers, as well as community stakeholders and the donor community.

The National Youth Policy of Papua New Guinea 2007-2017 defines youth as individuals aged between 12 and 25. In recognition of ‘older’ youth, it also welcomes individuals older than 25 years to participate in youth programming. In the justice system, a juvenile is legally defined as an individual between seven and 17 years old inclusively. Culturally however, the age of youth depends on roles, health and involvement in community life. This actually has significant policy and development implications because it has meant that adults (predominately older men) claim to be youth in an attempt to represent young people in power structures and activities. This can be an obstacle for young people’s voices to be heard and for adequate gender perspectives to be taken into consideration in decision-making forums.

In Port Moresby; a city that faces substantial challenges due to the highest rates of crime, illiteracy and poverty in the Pacific, young people are exposed to a number of risk and resilience factors. The risk factors that increase the likelihood of involvement of young people in crime and violence include: unemployment and lack of other meaningful activity; low literacy rates and poor quality/relevancy of education; frequent exposure to violence in the home and immediate community; the breakdown of extended family structure; tension between rural traditions and urban lifestyles; existence of raskol gangs; availability of mood altering substances; and pervasive poverty.

Despite this setting most young people are not involved in crime and violence and are eager for an opportunity to contribute positively to their communities. Government has developed youth and justice policies and supporting structures but is struggling to implement them effectively. Police and correctional service institutions in particular need to improve the treatment and handling of young offenders by actually putting in to practice the well-developed protocols already in existence.

5.2 National Context

PNG has the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) in the Pacific region, ranking 148 out of 182 countries worldwide. Port Moresby is generally thought to have higher per capita income.
income levels than the national average although the most recent data is only from 1996. In 2009, the second MDG Report for PNG found that the country has not been able to meet any global MDG targets, although there was improvement in some goals such as reducing infant mortality. In 2003 the government developed its own Medium Term Development Strategy 2005-2010 targets, however, most of these have also not been met due to the lack of data to measure progress.

PNG’s economy is one of the fastest growing in the region. Economic growth was seven percent in 2010 and GDP is predicted to be eight and a half percent in 2011. The 2011 budget, at USD 3.5 billion, has record development funding allocations for education, health and infrastructure. The Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) project construction will be the mainstay of economic growth in the short-term, but exporting will not begin until 2015. A Sovereign Wealth Fund Working Group has been established to manage the financial ‘windfall’ to the Government and there are high hopes it could be used to address long-standing development issues. However, there is a correspondingly large risk of major conflict if disrupted or not managed well. The LNG Project has also raised unrealistic expectations of employment amongst young people.

Education levels in PNG are the lowest in the region. Nationally, the adult literacy rate is 60 percent. 29 percent of young people between the ages of 12 and 25 currently attend educational institutions. In Port Moresby, the situation is marginally better than the national average (Figure 5.1). Only seven percent of youth in Port Moresby have never attended school, while nationally one third of children have never attended school. Low enrolment rates are due to lack of infrastructure, insufficient personnel and inability of families to pay school fees.

PNG ratified CEDAW in 1995. However, it is ranked 124 out of 136 countries listed on the UNDP’s gender development index meaning that women have few rights and little recourse to justice. The rate of violence against women (see Section 5.3) is amongst the highest in the world. Adding to this is the rapidly growing number of HIV cases. Nationally it is thought that about half of all new HIV cases are young people, who are vulnerable to the infection, face barriers to treatment services, and are disproportionately affected when they lose family and community members to the virus.

PNG has one of the most ethnically diverse populations with over 800 indigenous languages and a wide range of cultures in its population of approximately 6.2 million people. The traditional land owners in the Port Moresby area are the Motu-Koita, who make up approximately 30,000 of the city’s population. The rest of Port Moresby’s population comes from around the country, creating a diversity of cultures and traditions. Population estimates that include the 100-plus informal settlements located mainly on the city fringe range up to 500,000 people. Due to urban migration the population is growing at 3.6 percent annually compared to the national average of 2.6 percent. There is a greater percentage of youth

133 ADB 2011.
135 Oxfam Australia 2010.
136 Renkin and Hughes 2006.
138 CIA 2011.
139 Sullivan, Warkia, Kee and Huriangare 2010:15.
140 UN-ESCAP and DHABITAT 2009:65.
aged between 15 and 29 years old in Port Moresby (35 percent) compared to the national average (29 percent) (Figure 5.2). In total, approximately 70 percent of the population in Port Moresby is under 29 years of age.142

During consultations, young representatives of the Motu-Koita people expressed their perception that there is tension between the Motu-Koita people and the new “settlers” over unauthorized settlements on traditional Motu-Koita land and over the perceived gradual displacement of Motu-Koita people out of the education system and civil service by other ethnic groups residing in Port Moresby.143 That said there are many mixed ethnic groups living in relative peace in the same communities and some inter-ethnic marriages.

5.3 Young People as Victims and Perpetrators

Whilst some young people are involved in crime and violence there is massive potential for youth to contribute to economic, social and cultural development. However, certain challenges prevent youth in accessing adequate support and services to empower them to engage meaningfully in civic and political participation. This can result in youth perpetrating crimes such as assault, theft, rape and murder. It can also lead to the victimization of young people both inside and outside of their homes.

Common Crimes

Although Port Moresby only accounts for six percent of the population of PNG, it accounts for 30 percent of all crime.144 The negative impact on the economy is massive with the government estimating that nine percent of business revenues are lost to crime.145 Much of this crime is committed by young people, often involving physical violence. The most common crimes committed by young people were burglary, petty crimes, assault, carjacking, drug related, violence, rape and vandalism (Figure 5.3). A series of studies between 2004

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142 UN-HABITAT 2004a; Blank 2008.
143 Nou 2010.
144 Sourced from confidential international security community in PNG.
145 Department of National Planning and Monitoring 2010.
and 2007 in Port Moresby revealed the following alarming results:

- Youth aged between 19 and 29 are the most active age group in crime;
- Over one third of young people admitted to having committed criminal offences;
- Almost one quarter of respondents had taken part in burglary, one in five in petty crimes, 146 19 percent in carjacking, and 18 percent in assault;
- One in ten male respondents had participated in rape and four percent in a murder;
- 15 percent of respondents were involved in organized crime trading drugs and/or weapons;
- Almost half of all crimes involved a high level of violence;
- One in ten young people belong to a gang, with ten percent of gang members being female;
- Less than half of the perpetrators were arrested for their crimes;
- 61 percent of households reported being a victim of crime in the last year and 46 percent were victims of multiple crimes;
- 22 percent of young people reported being physically abused and 16 percent sexually abused, and;
- Unlike in other Pacific nations many crimes of theft and burglary involve assault as well. 147

In discussion groups women were reported to engage in crime, however, they most often play a more supportive role such as assisting with planning crimes, harbouring criminals and aiding raskols. They were also said to act less in groups and more as individuals in crimes such as petty theft. Men were thought to be more physically violent and more likely to use a weapon when committing crimes. Motivations for involvement in crime differed according to stakeholders consulted. Young men were seen to be most likely seeking recognition from peers and/or the community as a ‘hero’. They also were more likely to see crime as a pathway  

146 Petty crimes refer to crimes such as bag snatching, vandalism, intoxication, pickpocketing, and shoplifting.
147 UN-HABITAT 2004a; UN-HABITAT 2004b; Boamah and Stanley 2007.
to fame and fortune among peers. Women were more likely to be involved to meet personal and family needs, although men also felt some pressure to be the ‘bread winner’ of the family.

On an individual basis, both sexes were also identified as becoming involved in physical fights, especially when intoxicated, although women usually fought over problems arising from intimate relationships, while men fought over issues such as insults, property disputes and claims of authority. Lastly, both men and women were reported to be involved in substance abuse as users, smugglers, dealers and producers, especially homebrew and marijuana.

**Group Violence**

Inter-group fights in Port Moresby manifest mainly in the form of tribal or ethnic group fights, *raskol* gang fights and inter-school fights. It was reported by civil society and government officials that tribal fighting perpetuates a culture of violence in Port Moresby, as it is seen that fighting is a traditional way to resolve conflict. Unfortunately the traditional dispute resolution mechanisms that are still often used to prevent or resolve conflict between tribes in rural areas before fighting erupts are not applicable in urban centres due to the breakdown of tribal structures and leadership.

Tribal structures have largely been lost in the process of urbanization. Young people who have grown up Port Moresby generally do not regard themselves as members of tribes. However, their identity is still tied strongly to their broader ethnic group at the regional and sub-regional level. In this setting, individuals willingly support those people with whom they feel an affiliation for or *wantoks*. Group fights in Port Moresby are based on broader affiliations of ethnicity or language rather than tribe as they would be in rural settings. The *wantok* system is undoubtedly a valuable social safety net, whereby *wantoks* in need are supported by other members of the family and community. However, the *wantok* system is reportedly subject to abuse by people taking advantage of this resource. Some young people admitted that due to the *wantok* system there was no strong motivation to get a job as they could live off relatives. Moreover, it was stated by participants that the *wantok* system is seen to be contributing to the harboring of criminals, due to the strong obligation to protect that person from the law even if he/she is a known criminal. Revenge crimes were also reported to be a negative aspect of the *wantok* system. For example, if a *wantok* is murdered, the other members of the *wantok* group are expected to exact revenge on the assailant without regard for the law. If the actual assailant cannot be found, then a revenge killing on a member of the murderer’s *wantok* group might be carried out.

Violent inter-school fights between certain schools representing different ethnic groups in Port Moresby were also reported in the feedback workshop by a range of participants.

*Raskol* gangs are a feature of the criminal landscape in Port Moresby and are mainly composed of young people, in particular young men. According to *raskols* themselves and other participants, motivations to join are to secure an income, be recognized, gain status, find companionship, obtain protection, and to assert power and control. *Raskol* gangs were

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149 In rural areas people from the same ethnic group or region such as the Central Highlands will fight against each other. There are no other large ethnic group to fight against. However, in urban areas, due to lack of individuals from the same tribe, people tend to associate with people tend to associate with others from the same broader region. Some stakeholders reported that in urban areas tensions exist between these broad regional or ethnic groups.

150 Wantok comes from the common language in Papua New Guinea, Tok Pisin, and means ‘same language’ (wan means same and tok=language or talk). A *wantok* is therefore an individual or group of people who speaks one’s language or share similar interests and cultures. The system is based on the concept of reciprocity and mutual relationships, a sense of community and a common identity. From Stella 2004.
reported as providing an alternative identity for youth based on their new urban settlement. During consultations, the researchers heard countless stories from young people who stated that they had “fallen in with the wrong crowd”, but that crowd had provided a form of companionship.

The leaders are generally older youth or adults that have come up through the ranks or have managed to establish their own gang. In the settlements some gang members are viewed as robin-hood-type heroes. Young children look up to them due to their power, influence and relative access to money. Some members are desperate to find other sources of income and leave the gang whilst others are career criminals who view raskolism as their way of life.

Most raskols use homemade firearms, machetes and knives, but they are becoming increasingly sophisticated with some using machine guns and high calibre automatic weapons. In many instances the police are simply out-gunned. In 2004, nearly ten percent of youth reported that they had their own gun. The gangs are usually neighbourhood-based rather than ethnically based, and have grown out of the settlements at the periphery of Port Moresby.

Although initially involved in petty crimes, robberies and burglaries, raskol gangs have gradually become more sophisticated. They are involved in bank robberies, assassinations, political thuggery and the international drug and weapons trade. They increasingly have links to politicians, big business and international crime networks. 10 percent of respondents in the UN-HABITAT survey also identified politicians/authorities/law enforcers as “the criminals in Port Moresby.”

Fights between rival raskol gangs over access to and control of resources, as well as fights over perceived insults, have reportedly decreased over the last five years as gangs have

151 UN-HABITAT 2004b.
152 Ibid.
In-Focus 5.1: Short Term Crime to Get Out of Long Term Crime

During the course of consultations the researchers came across a number of instances whereby individuals had purposely used crime in the short term with the deliberate aim of getting out of a long-term cycle of crime.

In a focus group discussion with university graduates and young government workers, one participant admitted that he had paid for his university education through a secret life of crime. As a high school graduate he was considered to be highly educated and became the brains for robberies for a raskol gang. His role was to pick targets and plan strategies. Through this criminal activity he was able to pay his fees, support his family and land a good job with the government thereby enabling to get out of crime as a source of income.

In another case raskols were able to find stable employment as public servants through crime. During informal discussions with several government employees it was found that they had formerly been raskols and were involved in political thuggery for an election candidate. When their candidate won the election, in a show of blatant nepotism, the raskols were given employment as civil servants. Once employed the former raskols ceased their criminal behaviour. That said the government employees were doubtful that they would be able to keep their positions if the politician lost the next election because the new winner would most likely bring in his own raskols. Then what they would do remains an unknown.

Increasingly cooperated to fight against a perceived common enemy; the police.

Although a minority, women also play various supporting roles in raskol gangs. This includes keeping watch, logistics (such as organizing food and alcohol), planning, and selling stolen property. They often become involved in gangs as girlfriends of male members but once a member they become more susceptible to abuse and exploitation by gang members or security sector personnel. Wives and other relatives of gang members can be targeted victims of physical and sexual violence by rival gangs.

A more recent phenomenon is the widespread emergence of ‘cult groups’ or just ‘cults’ in high schools in PNG, especially in Port Moresby. Cults generally form in or around school areas and are made up of young people. They include both young men and women, although it is perceived by participants that men outnumber women. Although there are a variety of cults, they commonly worship evil spirits and pursue supernatural activities such as alleged changing of appearance, invisibility, laying curses, psychically obtaining exam answers, magically seducing women, and wondrously obtaining goods and money. Cult groups often have traditions whereby nicknames are passed on to new students from school leavers. Some of the more extreme cults exhibit violent and negative behaviours such as animal sacrifices, initiation beatings, bullying, and drug and alcohol abuse. Arson, rape, sexual favours and assault are also part of the initiation proceedings of some cults. An example of this occurred in August 2010 when a student was tied up and beaten to death as part of a cult ritual. Peer pressure to join cults is strong. Some respondents said that the positive benefits of joining a cult were a feeling of belonging, group support, and connections for future employment with former cult leaders. Several young people consulted characterized youth in cults as “good boys doing bad things”, and talked openly about getting “caught up” in peer pressure although most expressed a fear of cults.

Domestic and Sexual Violence Crime

In 1996, the PNG Law Reform Commission reported that 75 percent of women and children experience family violence, one of the highest rates in the world. A more recent survey in 2004 by UN-HABITAT found that in Port Moresby 48 percent of youth households experience physical abuse, 28 percent emotional abuse, and 14 percent sexual abuse. Moreover, half of married women are subject to actual or threatened violence by their husbands demanding sex. The cycle of violence is entrenched in PNG, with 69 percent of women reporting they witnessed their mothers being beaten by their fathers. Domestic violence mainly against women including rape and sexual violence within families is widespread. Recent data is

153 “Wipe out those evil school cults!” 2010
154 From interviews and focus group discussions. and Drawi, J. 2008.
156 UN-HABITAT 2004a.
limited, partly due to under-reporting and partly due to the failure of police and health institutions to record incidents of violence when they are reported. Communities view violence that occurs within households as a private matter, not to be interfered with.  

Exposure to violence in the home and immediate environment is a daily occurrence for a number of young men and young women. In the 2004 UN-HABITAT *Youth and Crime Survey*, young people reported the following:

- 39 percent witness physical violence between family members at least once a week;
- 29 percent are beaten at least once a week by a male relative;
- 18 percent are beaten at least once a week by a female relative;
- 51 percent experience physical punishment as a form of punishment;
- 44 percent acknowledged that relatives have been arrested for violent crime including assault, murder and rape;
- 16 percent have been forced to have sex, with one in five of them forced to engage in sex with a family member; and,
- Almost one percent were forced to have sex to obtain good grades in school.

Sexual violence outside the home is also widespread. According to one study, 60 percent of men reported participating in at least one gang rape. A government report also noted that 30 percent of the girls and women in an urban settlement had been victims of sexual violence. Most perpetrators of rape know their victims, who are mainly young women and girls. The Government recognizes the high risk of rape, gang rape and other forms of violent sexual assault that young women are subject to, and the fact that this occurs severely limits their rights to freedom, assembly and equal participation in social, economic and political life. Only a small fraction of cases of sexual violence are reported to the police and of these, follow up action by police is often not taken. Rape by young men against boys and young men was also reported, however, there is limited information about the issue.

5.4 Institutional Responses in Support of Youth

Violence and crime, including amongst young people, is one of the most debilitating challenges facing Port Moresby today. Addressing crime and violence is a key priority for both Government and development partners and there is still considerable work that needs to be done. Presently, the provision of services for young people by the government, civil society organizations and international actors is wide ranging and large compared to other urban centres in the region. However, due to the large youth population, demand far outstrips supply.

**Political Institutions’ Engagement with Youth**

PNG has the biggest Parliament in the region, with 109 national members of parliament. PNG also has Provincial Governments, which have key service delivery roles. Significantly, although CEDAW prioritizes women’s political participation,
both the legislative and executive branches of government are dominated by men. Since independence there have been only two female members of Parliament and currently there is only one woman in Parliament. Currently, there is a legislative bill pending in the legislature to reserve an additional 22 seats for women in the Parliament.\textsuperscript{165}

Since politics infiltrates all aspects of life in Port Moresby, it is essential that young people are more actively engaged in the development of their communities and are active in decision-making processes. Although legislatures are the foremost forums for discussing and addressing political issues, including youth issues, to date there has been only very limited engagement between legislators and young people. Most legislators are much older, and as noted, older men often dominate youth decision-making fora. For young women, this is even more disconcerting due to the lack of political voice which is exacerbated by sex adding to their already limited political voice. The need for more opportunities for dialogue between young people and decision makers is essential. In this context, it is interesting that to date there has been no consideration as to whether it would be useful to reserve any seats for young people in the national legislature.

The first National Youth Summit was held in 2006 and the first National Youth Parliament in 2007. These were both important opportunities for young people to display leadership and express their opinion at the national level. The National Youth Commission (see below for more detail) organized both events and a second Youth Parliament is planned for 2012, dependent on funding. Young people, civil society organizations and relevant government officials all felt that these events should be held more often to assist young people to build confidence, skills in advocacy and ensure their civic participation.

\textit{Government Youth Policies}

Youth are identified as a key strategic focus in the national Development Strategic Plan 2010-2030. The Plan recognizes the need for more responsible and caring parenting.
technical training, youth centres, sporting activities, and spiritual and social opportunities. The ambitious targets for 2030 include all school leavers having employment opportunities, secondary education for all and halving the rate of youth crime.\textsuperscript{166}

The current 2007-2017 National Youth Policy was developed through “extensive nation-wide consultations between young people, government agencies, community-based organizations and key stakeholders including international partners.”\textsuperscript{167} The Policy is comprehensive in that it spells out its vision, principles and values, key policy areas, rights and responsibilities and strategies. There are nine key policy areas, including a pillar on “law, order and justice.”

Table 5.1 Key Issues and Actions in National Youth Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issue</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving the quality of young peoples’ lives</td>
<td>Empower young people, especially in rural areas to mobilize their own resources for improved living standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessing integrated education</td>
<td>Improve access by young people through formal and non-formal education for skills development so as to enhance effective participation in economic and social development of their communities.</td>
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<td>Nurturing sustainable livelihoods</td>
<td>Mobilize resources for young people to support innovative youth-led enterprises and to engage young people in long-term natural resource management through economically and environmentally sustainable practices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting healthy lifestyles</td>
<td>Conduct life-skills training on HIV/AIDS, provide counselling through youth-friendly service centres, and encourage sports development by involving parents and community in the process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building stronger communities</td>
<td>Promote full participation of young people in decision making in their communities and protect them from exploitation and abuse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthening institutional capacity</td>
<td>Improve and strengthen the institutional capacity of the National Commission, Provincial, Districts and LLG Administrative Divisions and Sections responsible for youth development and other youth service providers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth and identities</td>
<td>Strengthen and nurture the interest of young people in their cultural, spiritual and social identity and raise their appreciation for traditions, customs and values as well as tolerance for ethnic diversities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research, information and data collection on youth</td>
<td>Improve the capacity of NYC to produce and analyze data to evaluate the progress of implementation of the Policy and disseminate information in the most efficient and appropriate means available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law, order and justice</td>
<td>Promote and maintain safety, security and peace in the communities.</td>
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The law, order and justice pillar has specific strategies to promote public safety including: encourage community based peer leadership and restorative justice programmes; educate

\textsuperscript{166} Department of National Planning and Monitoring 2010.
\textsuperscript{167} National Youth Commission of Papua New Guinea 2007:3.
young people on their rights against abuse and violence; strengthen community policing programmes; resource village court systems; introduce targeted programmes to exchange weapons for development initiatives; and, strengthen community-based corrections programmes. The indicator targets are generally realistic and include a ten percent reduction in law and order problems, ten percent reduction in youth in custody, and a ten percent reduction in re-offending by 2017.

**Youth Institutions and Key Organizations**

The National Youth Commission (NYC) under the Ministry of Community Development is the lead national body charged with youth development across the country. Its main tasks are to develop and implement the *National Youth Policy*, provide policy and technical advice to the Government, undertake research, and coordinate and monitor youth programmes. The NYC has been criticized by some stakeholders for its poor transition from policy development to implementation.

Implementation has been poor due to a lack of political will from government resulting in a lack of resources, as well as insufficient coordination and personnel capacity even when funding is available. As an example, the NYC has funding for the establishment of Youth Friendly Service Centres throughout the country, but to date only two have been established with a third under construction as of June 2010. For some other key proposed programmes, there is no budget available for implementation. Moreover, the Annual Work Plans and Action Plans of the NYC are not in-line with the *National Youth Policy*, and performance indicators are not always measurable and/or are partial outputs rather than outcomes or results for youth in their lives.¹⁶⁸

Port Moresby forms the National Capital District and is governed by the National Capital District Commission (NCDC). Youth activities at the city level are handled by the Youth Affairs Sub-section of the Community and Social Services Division within the NCDC. The office of Youth Affairs is staffed by a small team of youth officers. NCDC is the lead agency on a number of large youth projects such as the Urban Youth Employment Project (explained in Section 5.5) and Yumi Lukautim Mosbi.

Yumi Lukautim Mosbi (YLM) or ‘You and Me Looking After Port Moresby’ is a multi-faceted, multi-agency programme that tackles urban safety and crime prevention.¹⁶⁹ Managed by the Urban Safety Unit within the NCDC, YLM is overseen by a steering committee comprised of relevant government agencies, faith-based organizations, and private-sector members. It is funded by the Government of PNG and AusAID. YLM started in 2005 and has grown in scale and developed organically since then. Its four main themes are:

- **Community Engagement** – community-sponsored engagement in crime prevention;
- **Reintegration and Skills Development** – skills development and on-the-job-training for youth who support positive change in communities;
- **Sports and Youth Engagement** – sports aimed at grass roots community level to develop community pride;

¹⁶⁸ Blank 2008:32-33. Also focus group discussions and individual interviews.

¹⁶⁹ “You and Me Looking After Port Moresby” is taken from the YLM website at www.yumilukautimmosbi.org.pg. Other translations such as “Lets Care for Port Moresby” are also sometimes used.

YLM recognizes that crime hampers development in Port Moresby and that urban safety is also the responsibility of communities. It emphasizes employment and activities for young people and developing pride in one’s community. YLM has become a network of partnerships with each stakeholder adding their own special value to the project. For example, a security company offers free response and evacuation for women in domestic violence situations. Also safe spaces have been created for women and children in supermarkets, government offices and companies, where they can find refuge from threats and violence. YLM describes itself as being “community first” and a “catalyst for change” that provides an entry point for other stakeholders to contribute. In 2008, NCDC won the highly coveted United Nations Habitat certificate of excellence of urban safety, crime prevention and youth in recognition of its work on the YLM programme.

Peace Foundation Melanesia has a successful Community Justice Training programme that promotes community-based conflict resolution, mediation and restorative justice using Melanesian customary law for empowerment. It is secular and has carried out most of its work in Bougainville and Port Moresby. The customary approach emphasizes that mediation must be available to the community and that the extended family is liable for restitution and parole duties for the offender. Peace Foundation Melanesia use a three-pronged approach, namely, consensus, win-win mediation and customary law.

Sacred Heart Brothers is a faith-based organization that works closely with Community Based Corrections (CBC) in the management of Hohola Remand Centre. Notably, the Hohola Remand Centre was one of only two correctional facilities in PNG recognized by the UN Rapporteur as implementing international best practice. CBC usually provides funding to Sacred Heart on a contractual three-year basis, but payment is often delayed. Hohola provides vocational training in an adult learning environment. Approximately one quarter of the students have a criminal history. Of the 80 young people who graduated in 2009, approximately 20 have reportedly found regular employment.

City Mission is another faith-based organization working in this area. It runs a range of programmes for juvenile offenders and at-risk youth. Twenty minutes out of Port Moresby at Miigeda it runs the New Life Skills Training Centre, which accommodates around 140 young men, most of whom have been in conflict with the law, are not attending any educational facility, and/or do not have stable homes. All of the young men staying at the Centre are expected to take part in daily spiritual activities and work. Vocational and on-the-job training are provided in agriculture, animal husbandry, carpentry, painting, welding, building, mechanics, cooking, hospitality and screen printing. Some of the young men staying at the Centre do outside work and receive a wage, which assists in paying for board at the centre. Stay at the centre is voluntary, however, some young men stay up to two years. City Mission tries to find jobs for the most promising students with a number of prominent success stories. Several former trainees have stayed on as staff at the Centre and now provide peer mentoring to their fellow young men. The facilities were built by the young men attending the centre as part of their training.

170 Special Rapporteur on Torture 2010.
Justice Institutions and Policies

There are a very wide range of actors, policies and laws of relevance to the juvenile justice sector as it impacts on young people in Port Moresby. An obvious result of this breadth of institutions is the imperative need for coordination to ensure better impact.

The juvenile justice system is based on several acts of legislation. The Juvenile Courts Act of 1991 (adopted in 2003), spells out procedures for the establishment, powers and functions of juvenile courts; procedures for the arrest of juveniles; proceedings for juvenile courts; and requirement for juvenile institutions. The 2006 Prosecution Policy from the Office of the Public Prosecutor also has a section on juvenile prosecution. Both documents adequately deal with handling juveniles in conflict with the law, however, proper implementation is an issue.

The relationship between the RPNGC and young people is adversarial despite some recent efforts by the government to bridge the gap. The police are the first point of contact for young offenders and currently most young people regard the police as highly corrupt and abusive. Severe police brutality toward juveniles is well documented. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture carried out a mission to PNG in May 2010 and found that “there is no doubt that police beatings often reached the level of torture, as defined in the UN Conventions against Torture” and there is a “complete disrespect for the presumption of innocence” by police.

The RPNGC has a number of special policies and protocols for dealing with juveniles involved in crime and violence. The ‘Police Juvenile Justice Policy and Protocols: Securing a Safer Community in Partnership’, developed in partnership with UNICEF in 2006 spells out protocols for arrest and detention of juveniles, encourages diversion programs, and refers to relevant international conventions. In line with the justice policy, 85 percent of non-violent juvenile offenders are diverted with only the most serious offenders going to prison. Diversion options include warning, counselling, mediation, community work, bail, and restorative justice programmes.

Upon arrest in Port Moresby, except for the most serious of offences, youth are supposed to be brought to the Boroko Juvenile Reception Centre. Here specialist police officers assess...
the situation and decide on appropriate action. However, the Centre is being extremely underutilized. In 2008, it was found that only three percent of juveniles arrested were being brought to the Boroko Reception Centre.\textsuperscript{174} This shows a strong lack of awareness of protocols and/or compliance. There is also the Police Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit within the Community Policing Directorate of the RPNGC. The Unit suffers from lack of personnel and budget, depending heavily on UNICEF for support.\textsuperscript{175} Its activities include training on and monitoring of policy and protocol implementation; monitoring of conditions in detention facilities; conducting drug abuse programmes for young people and community representatives; and, liaising with juvenile court officers.

Following key reforms, the number of juvenile courts has increased to ten throughout the country.\textsuperscript{176} Overall, the number of young offenders subject to non-custodial penalties is increasing. As part of this trend, courts are increasingly referring young offenders to mediation and are conducting ongoing training of mediators for this purpose. CBC under the Department for Justice and the Attorney General works closely with the juvenile courts and is the primary institution for managing community-based orders, which mandates offender to do particular types of community service. CBC employs compensation and/or community work, often combined with probation. In 2008, 123 such cases were handled by CBC.\textsuperscript{177} Moreover, CBC employs juvenile court officers who defend juveniles accused of offences and provides probation and parole services for convicted juveniles.

Young offenders who are found guilty of serious crimes by the national courts are sent to juvenile correctional institutions run by the PNG Correctional Service.\textsuperscript{178} As of mid-June 2010, 17 male juveniles were staying at Bomana Correctional Institution just outside of Port Moresby for crimes such as rape, murder, serious assault, drug dealing and armed robbery. One was on death row for murder.\textsuperscript{179} Only one organization, the Young Women’s Christian Association, was running a regular rehabilitation programme for the juveniles in the facility.

Currently juvenile justice reforms are being pushed by the National Juvenile Justice Committee (NJJC) made up of different government agencies, UNICEF and NGOs. The role of the NJJC is to promote cooperation and contribute to the development of a comprehensive justice system for juveniles. Reform activities include increasing the number of juvenile courts, training juvenile court officers, supporting the Visiting Justice Scheme,\textsuperscript{180} promoting diversion of offenders away from incarceration, reviewing the juvenile related legislation, and undertaking awareness raising activities. Thirteen Provincial Juvenile Justice Working Groups have also been established. NJJC’s work is contributing to a decrease in the number of young people in detention and more being diverted to community based programmes. TheNJCC in its reports clearly recognizes the massive task that it is facing given the entrenched corruption, impunity and disregard for human rights. There are people in Port Moresby who are passionately dedicated to revolutionizing the juvenile law and justice system from policy to implementation; unfortunately they are still vastly outnumbered.

\textsuperscript{174} National Juvenile Justice Committee 2009:8.
\textsuperscript{175} Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary 2010:5.
\textsuperscript{176} Juvenile Courts as of 2008 are located in Port Moresby, Lae, Mt. Hagen, Kokopo, Goroka, Kundiawa, Wio, Yari, Kimbe and Buka.
\textsuperscript{177} National Juvenile Justice Committee 2009.
\textsuperscript{178} Youth charged with serious crimes are tried at national courts rather than juvenile courts.
\textsuperscript{179} Even though the death penalty still exists in PNG, the last execution was in 1954.
\textsuperscript{180} A scheme started in 2006 by the chief magistrate whereby judges can inspect and monitor detention facilities. The scheme has been successful to a degree in bringing the poor conditions to the attention of the government and wider public but not all judges are participating and the scheme is not regulated sufficiently. The obligation to implement the scheme is incorporated in to the duty statements of the judges.
5.5 Supporting Young People: Reducing Risk and Increasing Resilience

Young people in Port Moresby face a wide array of risk and resilience factors that coexist to create a context in which they are more or less likely to engage in crime and violence (see Figure 1.1). Despite this, young people in Port Moresby continue to move forward and show incredible resilience – it is this energy that needs to be harnessed to create safer and productive communities.

Growing the Employment Opportunities for Youth

Every year over 80,000 young people leave the school system and a mere 10,000 of them gain employment in the formal sector. In 2000, the overall unemployment rate in Port Moresby for men was 21.2 percent and 12.8 percent for women. Many are young, with over half of young men and one third of young women aged 15 to 24 years unemployed. The vast majority of those who are employed are in the informal sector plying jobs such as petty traders and labourers and living below or close to the poverty line due to low incomes.

Formal employment was frequently identified as a resilience factor against involvement in crime and violence. A number of people consulted also identified that informal sector employment can also be a strong resilience factor if more opportunities are provided and it is profitable enough. In this context the streets in central parts of Port Moresby are densely populated by unemployed young people. Poverty-driven early school dropout and lack of employment opportunities are two of the most important issues which are leaving young people at risk of becoming involved in crime and violence. Related to lack of gainful employment, some young people thought that men with families felt more pressure to provide for their family which led to an increased risk of committing crime, mainly burglary and robbery. A number of participants, including young people with criminal records, stated that they stole to survive out of desperation or for a particular purpose such as to pay for school fees. According to the 2004 UN-HABITAT survey, the main reason that young people, particularly young men joined raskol gangs was to get money to survive. Similarly, the three main reasons for committing crime were “to have money and food,” “for survival and fun” and “for survival and rebel against society.” Half of those who did commit crime felt no emotions in doing so because it was due to the need to survive.

In female-headed households the pressure to provide was thought to be even stronger, leading women to engage in sex work, theft and other crimes to provide for their children, which makes them more vulnerable to abuse. It was reported that young women often turned to transactional sex work out of desperation to survive. However, other stakeholders claimed that due to social breakdown and loss of values some young women carried out transactional sex as a way to buy sweets, cigarettes and other substances. Due to poverty and unemployment, young people lacked self-esteem and were pessimistic about the future. Reflecting this pessimism, almost 80 percent of youth in 2004 felt that people in Port Moresby were sadder than five years before that.

“I hope I can get a job there [LNG project]. I can be a driver or a security guard. I want to learn about maintenance or be a mechanic”

Young man

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183 UN-HABITAT 2004b.
184 Ibid.
Nearly all young people consulted, from those who were already successful and contributing to society, to those who were in prison - had bright dreams to become scientists, doctors, farmers, carpenters, traders, social workers, engineers, mechanics and more, but had no opportunity to follow this dream.

Responding to the imperative of providing young people with real employment opportunities, in 2010 NCDC with the support of the World Bank, began the USD 17.9 million five-year Urban Youth Employment Project (UYEP). UYEP focuses on disadvantaged youth between 16 and 25 years, who are currently not working or studying and have limited economic opportunities. It aims to address four key issues; poverty, employment, human capital development, and social stability. It does this through the provision of short-to-medium-term employment and training, including life-skills and counselling. Approximately 17,500 participants of the working age population in Port Moresby, will receive 40 hours of life skills training and placement on public works projects for two months maintaining and improving roadways. Four thousand participants will be selected for extra-pre-employment training for higher skills employment followed by five months of on-the-job training.185

Another project is Ginigoada, which translates as “Stand Strong” in the local Motu-Koita language. The Ginigoada Bisnis Development Foundation was established in 2002 to support disadvantaged populations to stand strong in their lives. It works in cooperation with Yumi Lukautim Mosbi (see Section 2.4) as the leading training provider and is managed from an office within the Chamber of Commerce. It provides micro-enterprise training and business development courses, links to micro-finance institutions, on-the-job training, work experience, and job referrals to create income generation opportunities for the disadvantaged populations, including many young people. Previously, it provided capital and in-kind support to some graduates of the training courses, but the goods were often sold and the cash used for other purposes. Formal job placement is usually successful, but there are only limited opportunities available. Currently, many graduates of Ginigoada are working in Port Moresby’s hotels and other hospitality enterprises, as well as large companies. Ginigoada has been successful; however it aims to develop new employment opportunities outside of large companies and enterprises so as to build and expand and create more opportunities.

Improving the Quality and Relevance of Education

There have been improvements across the board due to educational reforms implemented since 1995. That said ongoing low enrolment and retention rates in the formal school system lead to many young men and women being largely unemployable and contributes to their feeling of dissatisfaction toward society. Only 4,000 or three percent of students complete grade twelve of a total of 135,000 students that enrolled in grade one. This high rate of drop out was reported by participants to be primarily due to high school fees, lack of facilities and limited places. Only 24 percent of students who sit the grade ten exam can be accepted into grade eleven. More females are illiterate and have less schooling but these gender inequities are less apparent in the capital.186

185 World Bank 2010. UYEP is financed through a USD 15.8 million International Development Association (IDA) credit from the World Bank; USD 1.5 million funding from the Government of Papua New Guinea/NCDC; a USD 600,000 grant from the Republic of Korea; and a USD 40,000 grant from AusAID.
186 Blank 2008.
The focus of the formal education system is mainly academic with an aim to produce office workers. However, there are an increasing number of trade and vocational work training opportunities. There is little stigma attached to trade and vocational work in Port Moresby as most young people would prefer to have regular employment in any form. That said, most parents would prefer their children to be employed by the government or the private sector and young women stated that they are discouraged to study trades such as mechanics, carpentry and metal work.

There are a number of TVET facilities in Port Moresby, most notably the Australia Pacific Technical College, Port Moresby Technical College, Don Bosco, and the new PNG LNG Project Construction Training Centre. The orientation of TVET courses to meet the needs of the LNG project is a positive development for youth in Port Moresby. Some civil society organizations also support vocational education training. As an example, Sacred Heart Brothers (see Section 5.4) through their vocational centre provides training to 200 students, including 80 females, in automotive repair, welding, carpentry, and business studies. Tuition costs PGK 600 (USD 210) per year. Vocational courses are two years in duration and open to young men and women who have graduated from grades seven to ten. Religious instruction is provided to all students as part of the curriculum. There is also a six-week adult literacy course and substance abuse counselling is offered.

**Tackling Substance Abuse**

Alcohol and homebrew\(^{187}\) are readily available from road-side stalls and supermarkets in Port Moresby. Marijuana and other illegal substances are also readily available at markets and street corners. Recently glue and petrol sniffing have also become more popular. These substances are seen as the most common catalyst for crime and violence in Port Moresby. During consultations, a number of youth offenders stated that they were under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs at the time of offending. Law and Justice Sector officials substantiated this claim and also recognized that alcohol and drugs were often used by young people to increase bravado when committing crimes.

Having parents or wider family members who engaged in substance abuse was also regarded by young people and government officials as a risk factor. This was due to the resulting lack of proper supervision and guidance, as well as the increased likelihood of violent behaviour and the projection of a negative role-model. Both young men and women engaged in substance abuse in Port Moresby. However, stakeholders believed that men were more susceptible to perpetrating violence than women when under the influence of a substance, particularly alcohol.

**Opportunities for Meaningful Activity**

The risks resulting from wide-scale unemployment are exacerbated by the fact that young people have few avenues to engage in volunteer work, do meaningful recreation and/or gain access to land for agricultural activity. In Port Moresby, young people are also separated from cultural activities that are more ingrained in everyday life in rural areas.

Despite this, during consultations a number of participants reported that many young people are involved in church activities and/or NGO projects, trainings, work for social causes or are employed without remuneration. These young men and women are more likely to be self-confident, clear in their goals and not engage in criminal violent behaviours. Moreover,

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\(^{187}\) Homemade alcohol made for own consumption or for sale cheaply on the streets.
they had a sense of responsibility, made decisions, felt they were developing positively on a personal level and positively contributing to their communities.

Church related activities were the most common form of participation. These activities included church youth groups, bible studies, social justice work, and spiritual development. Some had previously been involved in crime but were encouraged by the church and are now positive role models for other young people. Church-based organizations, such as City Mission and Sacred Heart Brothers, reported numerous success stories. Other young people that were active in trainings offered by NGOs, volunteer work or youth groups related to ethnicity (Motu-Koita Assembly Youth Representatives) or trade (Informal Sector Youth Association) or geographical area (Tatana-Araira Working Group) were also not generally involved in crime or violence. In many of these roles young people had responsibilities and were involved in decision making processes.

Other meaningful activities identified in consultations included sports and cultural activities such as dance, art and music. During consultations participants mentioned a number of limited public sports facilities in Port Moresby city; these included the basketball courts and a small field at Ella Beach. However, it was stated that these were not sufficient, especially in settlement areas on the outskirts of the city where many at-risk young people reside. Adding to sports, participants stated that cultural activities were regarded as a resilience factor because it builds a more concrete identity for young people. These activities often linked young people back to family lineage through traditional cultural practices.

A global programme run by Oxfam called the Oxfam International Youth Partnership (OYP) aims to create a network of young people who share a vision of a just world. OYP is a three-year program and it is in its third cycle. From March 2010, 15 young Papua New Guineans together with 300 other young men and women aged 18-25 from around the world joined the OYP network. The OYP programme focuses on building skills and facilitating networking. Members are given opportunities to network and form partnerships with other organizations and communities around the world to support them in their work.
Family Challenges

Urban migration was seen to be a source of stress for families on a number of fronts. Many of the young people and their parents are not born in Port Moresby. While the older generation still holds onto traditional values and customs from their rural areas, young people have grown up in a different environment and therefore have different views of life and sense of identity from their parents. This is causing tensions within families and alienating young people from family members. Urban migration is also breaking down the extended family and giving young people less access to trusted mentors. Usually, the immediate family migrates to the city centre cutting ties with extended relatives. In traditional communities members of the extended family as well as respected elders in the community played a mentoring role for young people. Youth often felt more comfortable going to trusted extended family members than parents for advice on sensitive topics. Extended family members and community members were also able to keep a watchful eye on the activities of young people in rural communities. A range of participants stated that without this guidance and monitoring, young people are more easily swayed by negative influences. Advice could come from parents, but other sources identified were; extended family members, community chiefs/elders, church leaders, sport coaches, teachers, and peers. In a number of interviews and focus group discussions, successful young people mentioned the strong influence that one or a number of people had on them in bringing them around from negative to positive behaviour.

During consultations, pressure to contribute to family income was also mentioned as a stressor. This is especially so in families where there is no adult income earner. In some, cases young people are encouraged to earn an income by any means, including crime. Earlier studies found that 70 percent of those who were pressured into committing offences stated that it was by the family who depended on them for their survival. At the same time, during consultations many interviewees identified strong and caring parenting and access to extended family members as the most important factors in youth playing a positive role in society. This parental or guardian support was seen by some participants to be more important than access to education and levels of wealth. A number of participants stated that even if a child has a good education and was relatively wealthy, if that child grew up in a broken and/or violent home with little guidance, the child would more than likely turn to crime later in life. Conversely, many believed that even if a child was from a poor family, if the parents and extended family members somehow found a way to give the child an adequate education, he or she would develop into a responsible person.

Corporal punishment by parents and guardians to make their children attend school or as punishment for misdemeanors was seen as acceptable to young participants in the study. They felt it demonstrated that their parents cared for them. This was despite the general acknowledgement that exposure to such violence was likely to increase the propensity to engage in violence later in life to solve problems and conflict.

Aspects of good parenting that were mentioned by both young people and adults included:
- Commitment to at least minimal formal education of children;
- Providing value-based education through example and/or introduction to systems of values such as the church;
- Willingness to work hard to support the family;

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188 UN-HABITAT 2004b.
• Providing an environment where children feel safe and secure;
• Ability to communicate with children;
• Spending time with children and showing an interest in their activities;
• Playing a mentoring role and introducing children to positive mentors and role models outside the immediate family;
• Using alternatives to violence to discipline children;
• Screening of peers and friends, and supervising the movements of children; and,
• Maintaining family unity by living together and being loyal to each other.

5.6 Conclusions and Recommendations

Given the social and economic challenges that Port Moresby youth face on a daily basis, the high rate of crime and violence is not surprising. While it is important to acknowledge that crime is a serious problem in Port Moresby, it is equally, if not more important to recognize that most youth are not involved in crime and desire better opportunities. This is evident in the well-developed government structures, active and passionate NGOs and faith-based organizations, and the willingness of youth themselves to embrace a better life. Please note that a number of the recommendations in the Pacific Overview and Regional Recommendations chapter are relevant to Port Moresby as well.

Recommendations

• Support the National Juvenile Justice Committee to expand their mandate and influence.
• Expand the YLM model as an example of good practice of cooperation between different sectors both in Port Moresby but also to other regions in Papua New Guinea. Taking the YLM model to other countries in the region, especially Melanesian countries, should also be explored.
• Establish Youth Resource Centres in key areas of Port Moresby for dissemination of advice and information, and to provide a venue for healthy activities.
• Review challenges in implementation of juvenile justice sector policy and procedures.
• Review opportunities for restorative justice community based correction programmes in Port Moresby.

References


