

How to guide:

The Executive Leadership Development
Programme for the Voluntary Policing Sector

What is the J4A ‘How to’ series?

The guide is part of a series of products developed by J4A to communicate lessons learned from projects and pilots, to provide stakeholders with guidance on how to adapt and replicate the initiative in their own context.

Who is this ‘How to’ guide for?

Influencers and decision makers in the justice sector (police, prisons, judiciary and civil society).

Reference tools

Accompanying reference tools are available at www.j4a-nigeria.org or by request from info@j4a-nigeria.org

The problem

- Poor organisational management within the Voluntary Policing Sector (VPS). The recruitment procedures of many VPS groups are not well documented. Nor are they rigorous enough to prevent the recruitment of high- risk individuals.
- Many VPS groups operate in a rather *ad hoc* manner reacting to requests rather than providing structured and focused services to the community.
- Poor financial management leading to lack of trust by community members and unwillingness to render financial support to VPS groups.
- Lack of standardised and structured training in aspects such as human rights, conflict management, dealing with the particular needs of women and children and crime prevention.
- Operational plans (e.g. patrol routes, timings or rosters) are prepared with little or no notice and members have little guidance on what to do in a given situation (such as being called to the scene of a crime) relying instead on their instincts. This often leads to destruction of evidence at crime scenes or the escape of the perpetrator.
- Selective and discriminatory response to call for help from some members of the community based on religion, ethnicity, social status, sex etc.
- Involvement of VPS members in the perpetration of harmful traditional practices against women and girls and tolerance for acts of domestic violence.
- Illegal use of force and firearms by VPS groups.
- VPS groups assuming the role of police in the community.

Background

The pivotal role that VPS groups play in addressing the safety and security needs of poor communities is well documented and for many Nigerians, especially the poor, VPS groups are pre-eminent and in some cases the only groups they feel able to go to for their safety and security needs.

Bearing in mind the reliance of many citizens especially the poor on the VPS for their daily safety and security needs, the shortcomings of VPS groups need to be taken into consideration, and their capacity developed. This is very important in the area of service delivery and organisational management. It is only a well-trained, properly structured and managed VPS group that can effectively render service to its community members.

VPS groups need to understand that in policing their communities, they must do so within the law and as such a suspect is innocent until proven guilty and must not be tortured. They must respect human rights; help manage conflict so that it does not escalate; better manage their groups; and handle crime scenes with a lot of caution.

The **Executive Leadership Development Programme** (ELDP) is designed to strengthen the capacity of VPS groups to deliver the services that citizens need and want with due regard for the law; and enhance their organisational and management capacity.

The ELDP has the potential of making the following **impact**:

- Bring about significant changes in the thinking and conduct of VPS groups in communities they serve.
- Increased confidence in VPS groups and trust that they will behave appropriately by responding to the safety and security needs of all members of the community.
- Better-organised and managed VPS groups with laid down procedures for recruitment, code of conduct, discipline, leadership and financial management.
- Increased desire and commitment by various stakeholders to partner with and support the operations of VPS groups.
- Early crime detection and warning signs of security threats in the community and planned early intervention.

What you can do

Introduce the Executive Development Leadership Programme (EDLP) in the state/local government/ community to ensure that VPS members are trained for the job they are expected to carry out.

The ELDP can be delivered in two ways. It can be a full time course of four (4) modules delivered over an eight (8) day period by the oversight ministry for state VPS executives. Or, secondly, as Step-Down Training by delivering the 4 modules, over a two (2) days period by local government and community level.

The ELDP can be either a refresher course for already serving VPS officials; or when recruiting new VPS officials.

This guide provides further details on how to organize the ELDP. The Guide sets out the content of the training; the trainers; the agenda; and how to replicate.

What you can achieve

- Trained VPS operatives complementing the work of the police in providing security.
- Decreased report of VPS operatives engaged in extra judicial activities, and use of brute force.
- Early detection of safety and security challenges in the community through intelligence gathering.
- Better managed VPS groups where accountability and responsiveness are the keys words.
- Improved relationship between the police/VPS and members of the community because of improved service delivery.
- Better protection of crime scenes resulting in police being able to resolve crimes in the community.

Executive Development Leadership Programme

Key Principles

- Commitment of the local and state governments to build the capacity of their VPS groups.
- Leadership of the VPS and their commitment to promote community peace and security.
- Commitment to learn which will bring about change in thoughts and attitude.
- Delivery of the training in the language spoken and understood by VPS members.
- Respect for human rights including the rights of women and children.
- Embracing democratic values.

Cost Implications

Organizing an ELDP for VPS has some cost implications, some of which can be avoided, if donations are sought from different sources. For example, the cost of the venue can be avoided if done in the Local Government Area (LGA) hall or community hall. Other costs to consider: lunch and/or refreshments (since participants will be there the whole day), writing materials (pen and paper), and honorariums for the trainers. Also, depending on where the VPS members are coming from, some transportation budget may be needed.

Steps for Implementation

1. Developing a list of VPS officials to be trained.
2. Identifying the venue for the training and fixing a date.
3. Identifying/contacting the trainers (including the local community policing officer in the division) who must be able to train in the local language of the community if need be. Trainers can be sought from the Justice for All Nigeria Programme, the CLEEN Foundation, and other local organisations.
4. Put together writing materials needed for the training such as papers, pens, markers, etc.
5. Draw up a training agenda. Samples are available in the reference tools.
6. Consider certificates for the participants as a motivation and incentive tool.

Lessons Learned

Lesson 1:

Developing an annual training schedule for VPS officials is good practice.

Lesson 2:

Training for VPS members at the point of inception is good practice that will ensure that members start off on a good note.

Lesson 3:

Training for those members already engaged will improve their service delivery and by so doing enhance good working relationships with the police.

Lesson 4:

Training on Basic Policing Skills and Crime Scene Management enhances effective and timely intelligence gathering on the part of VPS, and better management of crime scenes.

Lesson 5:

What seemed impossible to the VPS officials in terms of being active participants in preventing and responding to crime in close collaboration with the police suddenly becomes achievable due to the training.

Lesson 6:

With improved service delivery comes more trust in the VPS by community members and the local police.

Improvements

A successful ELDP can improve VPS service delivery and management. It can also lead to improved coordination and working with the NPF.

Evaluation

A number of tools have been introduced to assist the NPF to evaluate success, including household surveys to ascertain public satisfaction and exit surveys for those citizens who have cause to come to the police station. Furthermore, the training can be evaluated by asking participants for their views. Additional evaluations can be undertaken by administering questions/ feedback mechanisms to the community or to police officers in contact with the VPS.



Contact

The Justice for All (J4A) Programme is funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and managed by the British Council.

+234 (0) 709 812 1548–9
info@j4a-nigeria.org
www.j4a-nigeria.org

All images © Nick Cavanagh
© 2015 Justice for All Nigeria

With the
support of

