



Western Cape
Government

Agriculture

FOR YOU



**Rural Safety Evaluation
Research Report | March 2025**

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Abbreviations

AGA	Associated Group Analysis
CPF	Community Policing Forum
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
FW	Farm Watch
JOCS	Joint Operations Centres
NHW	Neighbourhood Watch
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCTA	Organised Crime Threat Assessment
POCS	Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety
SAPS	South African Police Service
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TOC	Theory of Change
WCDoA	Western Cape Department of Agriculture

Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Rural Safety	<i>It means all safety and security issues that affect non-urban communities, which deal with human, property and food protection, as well as security. (RSS: 201).</i>
Crime and Violence	Crime refers to an act, behaviour, activity, event or omission defined in law. Violence is defined in broad developmental terms by the World Health Organisation as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.”
Crime Prevention	The United Nations Guidelines for Prevention of Crime define it as “comprising strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring and their potentially harmful effects on individuals and societies, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes.”

TERM	DEFINITION
Farm	An area of land and its infrastructure used for agricultural pursuits (including the keeping of livestock or wild animals), as well as ecotourism and conservation purposes. The definition also includes cattle posts, rural villages/communal areas, where subsistence farming takes place and game farms.
Farms	According to Statistics SA, commercial farms cover extensive areas. The land is cultivated, and the fields are usually quite large. Farm boundaries are typically easily distinguished in a photo; they are generally clear fence lines or the edges of fields, roads, or rivers. The fields are often cultivated with various crops, varying from season to season and area to area.
Informal Settlement	According to Statistics SA, informal settlements or squatter camps occur on land that has not been surveyed or proclaimed as residential, and the structures are usually informal. They are typically found on the outskirts of towns, in pockets of 'infill' inside towns, or along railways and roads.
Rural Area	<p>An area which on the whole or partially meets with one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An area which is not urbanised, in other words located outside the build-up cities or towns; - An area, that typically consists of land, which is devoted to agriculture, whether commercial or subsistence farming; - A district or municipal area with a population of less than 150 000; - An area which lacks infrastructure or infrastructure development, such as tarred roads, public transport, adequate sanitation and electricity, built-up areas, communication networks; or - An area which encompasses large settlements/villages, which depend on migratory labour and remittance from outside for their survival.

TERM	DEFINITION
Rural Areas	According to the approved National Spatial Development Framework (2022), rural areas are areas outside cities and towns. In most cases, economic activities in these areas are intrinsically tied to natural resource use and beneficiation and consist of agriculture, fishing, forestry, nature conservation, eco-tourism and mining.
Rural Development	According to the National Spatial Development Framework, rural development is a planned intervention that aims to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in rural areas.
Rural Development Sector Plans	According to the Integrated Rural Sector Strategy 2023, RDSPs are envisaged as sector plans within the IDPs. They are expected to be integrated with existing national, provincial, and municipal plans (district and local), processes, and priorities.
Rural Police Station	<p>A police station/service point will be serving a rural area if the area on the whole or apart thereof, meets with the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an area which is not urbanised, in other words located outside big cities or towns; - an area which typically consists of land which is devoted to agriculture, whether commercial or subsistence; - an area which lacks infrastructure or infrastructure development, such as tarred roads, public transport, adequate sanitation and electricity, built up areas or communication networks; - an area which encompasses large settlements, which depend on migratory labour and remittance for their survival, and - an area with a population of less than 150 000.
Safety	The National Development Plan states that safety should be measured by the extent to which society's most vulnerable groups feel safe from crime and violence and the conditions that breed it. Safety refers principally to the state of an area and is determined based on the real and perceived risk of victimisation.

TERM	DEFINITION
Urban Settlement	According to Statistics SA, a formal urban settlement is structured and organised. Land parcels make up a formal and permanent structure. A local council or district council controls development in these areas, and services such as water, electricity and refuse removal are all provided, and roads are formally planned and maintained by the council. This category includes townships and suburbs.

RURAL SAFETY: Means all safety and security issues that affect non-urban communities, which deal with human, property and food protection, as well as security. (RSS: 2011).

Key Pillars of Rural Safety

The strategy will enable the Department to:

1. Effective Capacity Building & Resource Allocation
2. Community Engagement & Participatory
3. Infrastructure Development & Technological Innovation
4. Socio-Economic Development & Crime Prevention
5. Inter-Agency Collaboration & Governance
6. Agriculture Sector Safety & Security
7. Environment Risk Management & Disaster Preparedness
8. Monitoring and evaluation



Executive Summary

Introduction and Background

Rural safety is a complex issue encompassing various aspects of rural communities' security and well-being. While often perceived as peaceful, rural areas face unique safety challenges compared to urban environments, extending beyond crime to include personal, environmental, and community safety, as well as access to emergency services and psychological well-being. The importance of agriculture in economic development, job creation, and poverty alleviation is globally acknowledged, making the safety of all stakeholders within the agricultural value chain crucial for addressing rural poverty, promoting sustainable food security, and driving local economic development.

Key Findings from the literature

- **Complex Safety Landscape:** Rural safety extends beyond traditional crime prevention, encompassing personal, environmental, and community safety, as well as access to emergency services and psychological well-being.
- **Socio-economic Drivers:** Poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, and lack of economic opportunities significantly contribute to safety challenges in rural areas.
- **Unique Crime Patterns:** While some crime types are similar to urban areas, rural areas face challenges such as farm attacks, livestock theft, and wildlife crime.
- **Organised Crime:** There's growing concern about organised criminal activities in rural areas, including drug trafficking, illegal mining, and human trafficking.
- **Infrastructure Challenges:** Inadequate road infrastructure, limited access to services, and poor communication networks hinder effective safety responses.
- **Community Initiatives:** Community-based safety structures like Community Policing Forums (CPFs), Neighborhood Watches (NHWs), and Farm Watches (FWs) play a crucial role but face resource constraints.
- **Uneven Intervention Effectiveness:** The effectiveness of current rural safety interventions varies significantly across different regions of the WC.

Key Findings from the Stakeholder Engagements

Stakeholder perceptions of rural safety revealed it as a complex issue encompassing various challenges and concerns. Crime and violence emerged as prominent themes, with

environmental and geographic factors significantly shaping perceptions. Substance abuse was widely recognised as a major contributor to safety concerns. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of effective communication, connectivity, infrastructure, and emergency services. Community involvement was seen as crucial, with farm watches, neighbourhood watches, and community policing forums frequently mentioned as important initiatives.

The effectiveness of rural safety intervention strategies showed significant variation across different regions. While the Technical Committee provided a moderate rating, regional assessments varied dramatically. Community-based safety structures like CPFs, NHWs, and FWs generally received higher effectiveness ratings than other interventions, indicating that locally driven, community-based approaches are perceived as more effective in addressing rural safety concerns.

A SWOT analysis revealed strengths such as strong community-based initiatives, high levels of personal safety perception, and good partnerships and cooperation. Weaknesses included resource constraints, an ineffective justice system, poor healthcare and emergency services, and inadequate infrastructure. Opportunities identified included improved technology implementation, enhanced stakeholder engagement, and the development of youth programs. Threats encompass persistent crime issues, environmental hazards, substance abuse, and socio-economic challenges.

Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive, multi-sectoral rural safety policy addressing crime and non-crime safety factors.
- Strengthen law enforcement capacity in rural areas through increased resources, training, and specialised rural policing units.
- Implement technology-driven crime prevention and response solutions, such as CCTV systems and digital reporting platforms.
- Address socio-economic drivers through targeted economic development initiatives and youth employment programs.
- Enhance support services for victims of crime, particularly for domestic and gender-based violence in rural areas.
- Improve rural infrastructure, including roads, lighting, and telecommunications.
- Strengthen and expand community policing forums and farm watch programs.
- Develop a centralised database for rural safety information to facilitate sharing and coordinated responses.
- Implement regular, comprehensive surveys on rural crime and safety perceptions.

- Foster cross-sector collaboration and coordination in addressing rural safety challenges.

Conclusion

Addressing rural safety in the WC requires a holistic, collaborative approach that tackles immediate security concerns while addressing underlying socio-economic factors. By implementing the recommendations outlined in this report and following the proposed Theory of Change, the WC can work towards creating safer, more prosperous rural communities. Ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of strategies will be crucial to ensure long-term success in improving rural safety.

1. Introduction and Background

Rural safety is a complex issue encompassing various aspects of rural communities' security and well-being. While often perceived as peaceful, rural areas face unique safety challenges compared to urban environments. These challenges extend beyond crime to include personal safety, environmental safety, community safety, access to emergency services, and psychological and emotional well-being.

In recent decades, researchers have shown increasing interest in rural safety issues. A systematic review by Abraham and Ceccato (2022) of the English-language literature from 1980 to 2020 highlighted the diversity of rural contexts globally and the need for context-specific approaches.

The importance of agriculture in stimulating economic development, job creation, and poverty alleviation is globally acknowledged. As key drivers of food security and the economy, agricultural producers and workers deserve protection. The safety of all stakeholders within the agricultural value chain is crucial for addressing rural poverty, promoting sustainable food security, and driving local economic development.

In 2020, the Department elevated Rural Safety to a Ministerial Priority. It was subsequently institutionalised and formally approved by HOD Dr. Mogale Sebopetsa (17 August 2022) as a performance outcome indicator in the Annual Performance Plan for Programme 8: Rural Development. The Department now leads the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Rural Safety, chaired by Minister Dr. Ivan Meyer, and the Technical Committee on Rural Safety, chaired by Deputy Director General Darryl Jacobs.

The National Rural Safety Strategy aims to promote guidelines and ensure safety within the rural environment. The WC Safety Plan adopts evidence-led strategies to respond to the Provincial Safety Plan's Vision Inspired Priorities focused on "safe and cohesive communities." This plan tasks the WC Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) with rolling out a comprehensive rural safety strategy, necessitating an extensive evaluation and drafting process.

Rural safety has become a priority in South Africa, particularly in the WC, due to its significant impact on the agricultural sector and rural communities. The WCDoA has recognised the need to address these issues, even though it falls outside their traditional mandate.

1.1. Objective of the study

The WC DOA aims to develop a rural safety strategy to provide direction and guidelines to create safety and security in the rural environment to ensure a better life for all. Based on the department's mandate, the evaluation should validate current interventions, identify emerging rural safety needs, and provide alternative guidance on key programmatic features to be considered when dispensing the services, given the roles and responsibilities conferred to provinces by the Constitution.

Through its interventions, the Department endeavours to create an enabling environment for the agriculture sector to realise the following outcomes:

- Contribute towards addressing systemic issues driving crime in rural areas;
- Drive the reduction of crime in farming areas;
- Enabling functional safety and security structures in the farming community;
- Instituting a holistic approach to rural safety;
- Ensure an overall improved and protected agricultural environment.

1.2. Methodology

The approach and methodology have been focused on five key evaluation questions:

- What are the drivers of crime in rural areas?
- How effective are the Rural Safety Intervention strategies currently implemented?
- With the Rural Safety Baseline as the point of departure, what has been the impact of the various rural safety interventions?
- What would be the most appropriate TOC to improve rural safety over the next five years?
- Based on the TOC, what would be the most appropriate Provincial Rural Safety Strategy to be implemented in the WC?

The methodology aimed to meet the stated research objectives by employing a mixed methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques to provide a comprehensive assessment.

2. Drivers of Crime in Rural Areas

The drivers of crime in rural areas are complex and deeply rooted in various socio-economic factors. According to the literature, poverty and unemployment are significant risk factors,

particularly in rural WC communities. High unemployment rates, especially among youth, create conditions of economic deprivation that can drive individuals towards criminal activities for survival or income generation. This economic instability is often closely linked to substance abuse, another major contributor to crime and violence in rural areas, according to literature. The relationship between poverty, unemployment, and substance abuse creates a vicious cycle that perpetuates criminal behaviour.

The literature states that the legacy of apartheid-era spatial planning has resulted in ongoing inequality and underdevelopment in many rural areas. This spatial inequality manifests in poor infrastructure, limited access to services, and scarce economic opportunities, further exacerbating the conditions that breed crime. Additionally, rural areas face significant challenges related to inadequate policing and criminal justice responses. Insufficient policing resources, large distances between farms and police stations, poor coordination between stakeholders, and low reporting rates due to lack of confidence in the system all contribute to an unchecked environment where crime can flourish.

The literature further expresses how social and family factors are crucial in driving rural crime. The breakdown of family structures, lack of positive role models, exposure to domestic violence, harsh parenting practices, association with delinquent peers, and family history of criminality all contribute to increased crime risk. Migration patterns, both international immigration and internal migration, have been identified as contributing factors to crime in rural areas, potentially increasing competition for limited jobs and straining social cohesion. Furthermore, the fragmentation of rural communities and lack of social cohesion create conditions with little collective action against crime, making it easier for criminal activities to take root and spread.

When examining the relationship between urban and farming areas regarding crime in rural areas, it becomes evident that while there are similarities, rural crime has distinct characteristics according to the literature. Crime in rural farming communities is not fundamentally different from crime in urban areas, with incidents like farm attacks often resulting in robbery, assault, and even murder categories of crime most prominent in rural-urban areas. However, rural crime becomes more distinct when closely examined. Farm-specific crimes like farm attacks and livestock theft have a tremendous economic impact on commercial farmers, their families, and farm workers. Other distinctive rural crimes include theft of indigenous plant species, poaching, and theft of farming equipment.

The nature of rural areas, characterised by low population density and poor surveillance, creates unique crime opportunities that may not exist in urban settings. This is particularly true in places such as forests and farms. Reporting and policing dynamics also differ between

urban and rural areas. Rural areas often have lower crime reporting rates due to factors like long distances from police stations, cultural factors, perceived lack of anonymity, and lack of confidence in police effectiveness. In contrast, urban areas generally have a higher propensity to report crime and better police presence.

Organised crime has become a significant concern in rural areas, manifesting in various forms. Livestock theft has evolved from small-scale theft for personal consumption to larger-scale operations conducted by organised crime syndicates, with the economic impact rising substantially over the years. Drug trafficking networks are increasingly exploiting rural areas for production and as trafficking routes, taking advantage of the physical privacy, lower detection rates, and limited police presence these areas offer.

Wildlife crime, particularly poaching and illegal trade in wildlife products, involves sophisticated criminal networks operating in rural areas. While not all farm attacks are linked to organised crime, evidence suggests that some incidents involve elements of organised criminal activity, including sophisticated planning, targeted theft, and cross-border elements.

As internet connectivity expands to more remote areas, rural communities become more vulnerable to cybercrime, including online scams, fraud, and data theft. Human trafficking is also a concern, with organised crime syndicates exploiting the isolation of rural communities to traffic individuals for various exploitative purposes.

3. Insights into Rural Safety Challenges and Interventions

Various studies and literature reveal several key insights into rural safety challenges and interventions:

1. **Defining Rural Safety:** Rural safety encompasses a broad range of issues beyond crime, including personal safety, environmental safety, community safety, access to emergency services, and psychological well-being. Rural areas' unique geographical, social, and economic characteristics create distinct safety challenges.
2. **Socio-economic Drivers of Crime:**
 - Poverty and unemployment, particularly among youth, are significant risk factors for crime in rural areas.
 - Substance abuse, especially alcohol and drug-related issues, is a significant contributor to crime and violence.

-
- The legacy of apartheid-era spatial planning has resulted in ongoing inequality and underdevelopment in many rural areas.
- 3. Crime Patterns:**
- While some crime types are similar to urban areas, rural areas face challenges such as farm attacks, livestock theft, and wildlife crime.
 - Organized crime is increasingly prevalent in rural areas, manifesting in various forms, including drug trafficking, illegal mining, and human trafficking.
 - Underreporting of crime is a significant issue in rural areas due to factors such as isolation, lack of trust in law enforcement, and social stigma.
- 4. Law Enforcement Challenges:**
- Rural areas often face inadequate policing resources, with understaffed and under-resourced police stations.
 - Large distances and poor infrastructure lead to slow response times for emergency services.
 - There's often poor coordination between police, farmers, and rural communities.
- 5. Community-Based Interventions:**
- Community policing forums, neighbourhood watches, and farm watch programs have shown promise in improving rural safety.
 - These initiatives can enhance community cohesion and improve relationships between residents and law enforcement.
- 6. Non-Crime Safety Factors:**
- Occupational hazards in agriculture pose significant safety risks.
 - Road safety is a major concern due to poor infrastructure and limited emergency services.
 - Environmental hazards such as floods and wildfires threaten rural communities.
 - Limited access to healthcare services impacts overall community safety and well-being.
- 7. Technology and Innovation:**
- There's growing potential for technology-driven solutions in rural safety, including drones, CCTV systems, and mobile reporting apps.
 - However, limited telecommunications infrastructure in rural areas can hinder the implementation of such solutions.
- 8. International Best Practices:**
- Various countries have implemented rural safety strategies, focusing on community engagement, improved infrastructure, and targeted law enforcement initiatives.
 - Successful interventions often involve multi-stakeholder collaboration and address immediate safety concerns and underlying socio-economic factors.

9. Policy and Governance:

- Effective rural safety strategies require coordinated efforts across multiple government departments and levels.
- There's a need for rural-specific policies that address the unique challenges of these areas.

10. Data and Research Gaps:

- There's a lack of comprehensive, up-to-date data on rural crime and safety in many areas.
- More research is needed on the effectiveness of various rural safety interventions in South Africa.

4. Stakeholder Engagements

Stakeholder engagements were facilitated through focus group discussions to ensure that rich, in-depth data was gathered. The stakeholder consultation process is often designed around a mass meeting of community members in a hall with presenters on the podium. This approach is not conducive to constructive debate and proper input for decision-making purposes. The traditional public participation process does not elevate the needs of the voiceless end users or beneficiaries in communities to the level of decision-makers. The abuse and often disruption of such meetings by opposing political parties and/or pressure groups speak to the inadequacy of such meetings for the purposes it was designed. Therefore, stakeholder input was gathered through focus group sessions per a pre-designed discussion map designed through an accepted and recognised scientific methodology.

4.1.1. Stakeholder Perception of Rural Safety

Based on the Associated Group Analysis (AGA) results across the WC regions, stakeholders perceive rural safety as a complex issue encompassing various challenges and concerns. Crime and violence emerge as prominent themes, with stakeholders consistently mentioning issues such as farm attacks, stock theft, and domestic violence. Environmental and geographic factors also significantly shape perceptions of rural safety, with flooding, fires, and the challenges of remote areas frequently cited. Substance abuse, particularly drug and alcohol-related issues, is widely recognised as a major contributor to safety concerns in rural communities.

Stakeholders consistently emphasised the importance of effective communication and connectivity in ensuring rural safety. Robust communication networks and systems are essential

for coordinating responses to safety threats and emergencies. Infrastructure and emergency services are also key concerns, with stakeholders highlighting inadequate road conditions, insufficient police stations in remote areas, and limited access to healthcare facilities as significant challenges to rural safety.

Community involvement is widely recognised as a crucial component of rural safety, with farm watches, neighbourhood watches, and community policing forums frequently mentioned as important initiatives. However, there is also a perception that rural safety issues are often misunderstood or overlooked by those unfamiliar with the rural context, potentially impacting policymaking and resource allocation.

Socio-economic factors contribute to rural safety challenges, including unemployment, poverty, and housing issues. The employment of undocumented foreign nationals on farms is also a recurring concern, with stakeholders noting the complex dynamics this introduces to rural communities and safety efforts.

Overall, the AGA results reveal that stakeholders in the WC view rural safety as an interconnected system of social, economic, environmental, and infrastructural factors that require a comprehensive and collaborative approach to address effectively.

4.1.2. Services, facilities or actions needed in rural areas to promote rural safety

The comprehensive priority list for rural safety in the Western Cape has been developed using a sophisticated methodology that combines stakeholder input with frequency of mention. This approach ensures that both the perceived importance and the widespread recognition of issues are factored into the final prioritisation.

The calculation process involved two key components: the Priority and Frequency scores. The Priority score was derived from the difference between the Importance and Satisfaction ratings provided by stakeholders. This score reflects the gap between how critical an issue is perceived to be and how well it is currently being addressed. The Frequency score, on the other hand, represents how often a particular issue was mentioned across various stakeholder engagements. To make these scores comparable, the Frequency was normalized by dividing each value by the maximum Frequency (17) and then multiplying by 11, aligning it with the scale of the Priority score.

The final weighted average score was calculated by giving equal weight (50%) to both the Priority score and the normalised Frequency score. This balanced approach ensures that issues that are both critically important and widely recognised receive the highest priority.

Based on this methodology, the top priority for rural safety in the Western Cape is Law Enforcement Resources, with a weighted average score of 9.2. Stakeholders consistently emphasised the critical need for improved policing capabilities in rural areas. They cited understaffing, lack of vehicles, and inadequate equipment as significant hindrances to effective law enforcement. One stakeholder from Swellendam noted, "We have vast areas to cover with minimal resources. Sometimes, we can't respond to calls because all our vehicles are already out on other cases." This high priority reflects the fundamental role that visible and responsive policing plays in ensuring rural safety.

The second highest priority is Healthcare and Emergency Services, scoring 6.5. This reflects the unique challenges rural communities face in accessing timely medical care and emergency response. A community member from Vredendal shared, "Sometimes we wait hours for an ambulance to arrive. In emergencies, those hours can mean the difference between life and death." The high ranking of this issue underscores the interconnectedness of healthcare access and overall community safety.

Rural Infrastructure and Transport rank third with a score of 5.9. Stakeholders frequently mentioned poor road conditions and a lack of public transportation as significant barriers to safety. A stakeholder from the Central Karoo explained, "When roads are impassable, it's not just inconvenient—it prevents police and emergency services from reaching us quickly." This priority highlights how basic infrastructure is crucial in facilitating safety and security in rural areas.

Implementation and Prioritisation, along with Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation, score 5.6, tying for the fourth highest priority. The high ranking of implementation issues reflects frustration with the gap between policy and practice. As one CPF member from Mosselbay said, "We have good strategies on paper, but they often fall apart in execution." The equal prioritisation of substance abuse issues indicates a growing recognition of the link between addiction and rural crime rates.

Police stations and satellite offices, also scoring 5.6, round out the top five. This priority reflects the desire for increased police presence and accessibility in remote areas. A community leader from Suurbrak emphasised, "Having a visible police presence, even if it's just a small satellite office, makes a huge difference in deterring crime and making people feel safe."

This prioritised list provides a clear roadmap for addressing rural safety concerns in the Western Cape. It balances immediate needs for improved law enforcement with longer-term investments in healthcare, infrastructure, and social services. By addressing these priorities, stakeholders believe significant strides can be made in enhancing the safety and security of rural communities across the province.

Figure 1: Top Rural Safety Priorities

Need	Importance	Satisfaction	Priority	Frequency	Normalised Frequency	Weighted Average
Law Enforcement Resources	10.5	3.1	7.5	17	11.000	9.2
Healthcare and Emergency Services	10.7	2.3	8.4	7	4.529	6.5
Rural Infrastructure and Transport	10.5	2.5	8.0	6	3.882	5.9
Implementation and Prioritisation	11.0	1.0	10.0	2	1.294	5.6
Substance abuse and rehabilitation	11.0	1.0	10.0	2	1.294	5.6
Police Stations and satellite offices	10.5	1.2	9.3	3	1.941	5.6
Justice System	10.9	1.9	9.0	3	1.941	5.5
Red Tape	11.0	1.0	10.0	1	0.647	5.3
Technology and Surveillance	10.7	2.3	8.4	2	1.294	4.9
Management of Foreign Nationals	10.6	2.3	8.3	2	1.294	4.8
Community Safety Structures Support	10.1	3.9	6.2	5	3.235	4.7
Housing	10.8	2.3	8.4	1	0.647	4.5
Focusing on petty crimes (Stock theft, cable theft)	10.4	3.4	7.1	3	1.941	4.5
Connectivity	10.4	4.6	5.9	4	2.588	4.2
School Education (safety in schools, attendance and agriculture education)	9.9	4.0	5.9	4	2.588	4.2
Support from the National Government	11.0	3.3	7.7	1	0.647	4.2
Stakeholder Collaboration and Accountability	10.9	6.4	4.6	5	3.235	3.9
Training and Education for Framers and Farmworkers	10.3	3.5	6.8	1	0.647	3.7
Recreation and Food Security	9.8	4.6	5.2	3	1.941	3.6
Vulnerable Population Care Facilities	8.5	2.7	5.8	2	1.294	3.6
Specialised Units (K9 Unit)	8.0	2.4	5.7	2	1.294	3.5
Water safety	9.6	3.3	6.3	1	0.647	3.5
Self-Empowerment of Stakeholders	10.6	5.2	5.4	1	0.647	3.0

5. Effectiveness of Rural Safety Interventions

The effectiveness of rural safety intervention strategies currently implemented in the WC shows significant variation across regions and between the Technical Committee. This variation underscores the complexity of implementing uniform strategies across diverse rural contexts.

A wide range of perceptions were observed when examining the effectiveness of current rural safety intervention strategies. The Technical Committee provided a moderate rating of 4.5 out of 11, suggesting room for improvement. However, regional assessments varied dramatically. The Garden Route stakeholders rated the effectiveness much higher at 8.2, indicating a positive perception of current strategies in that area. In contrast, the West Coast and Central Karoo regions gave lower ratings of 3.8 and 4.2, respectively, suggesting that current strategies are perceived as less effective in these areas. The Overberg region fell in between with a rating of 6.8.

This disparity in ratings could be attributed to several factors:

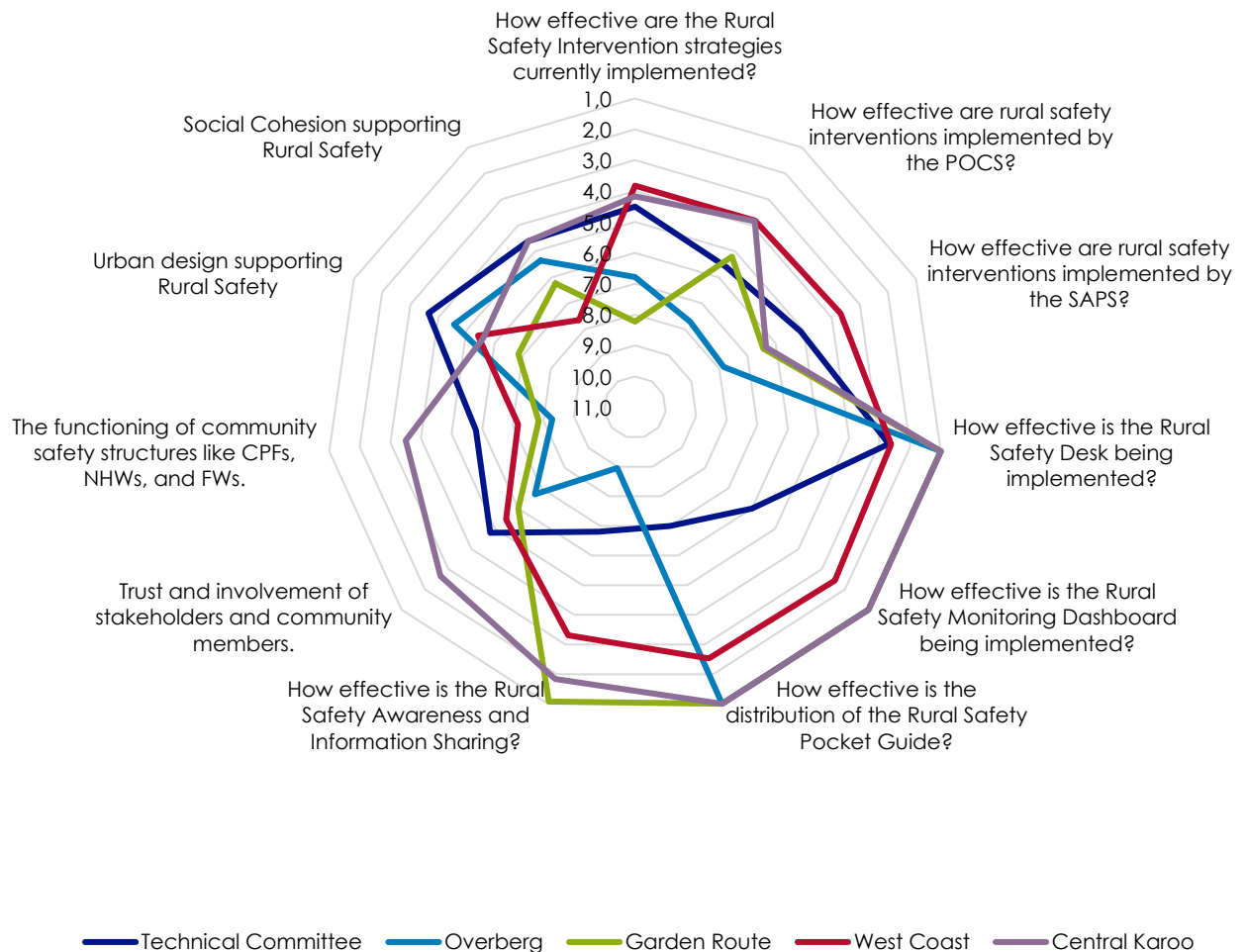
- Local context: Strategies' effectiveness may vary depending on each region's challenges and resources.
- Implementation differences: There might be variations in how strategies are implemented across different areas.
- Communication gaps: The lower ratings in some regions could indicate a lack of awareness or understanding of the implemented strategies.
- Resource allocation: Differences in available resources across regions could impact the effectiveness of strategy implementation.

The effectiveness of interventions implemented by the POCS and SAPS also showed variation but generally aligned with the overall strategy effectiveness ratings for each region. This suggests a correlation between the perceived effectiveness of these key institutions and the overall rural safety strategies.

Notably, there are significant discrepancies in the perceived effectiveness of specific interventions such as the Rural Safety Desk, the Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard, and the Rural Safety Pocket Guide distribution. While the Technical Committee gave moderate to good ratings for these (2.7, 6.0, and 7.0, respectively), stakeholders in most regions gave extremely low ratings, often 1.0 or close to it. This stark contrast suggests a significant gap

between the intended impact of these interventions and their actual effectiveness or visibility on the ground.

Figure 2: Effectiveness of Rural Safety Interventions



Community-based safety structures like CPFs, NHWs, and FWs generally received higher effectiveness ratings across most regions than other interventions. This indicates that locally driven, community-based approaches are perceived as more effective in addressing rural safety concerns.

The effectiveness of current rural safety intervention strategies in the WC appears to be moderate at best, with significant room for improvement. While some regions, notably the Garden Route, perceive the strategies as quite effective, others, like the West Coast and Central Karoo, see them as largely ineffective. The wide disparity in ratings across regions and

between the Technical Committee and local stakeholders suggests that the strategies are not uniformly effective or well-implemented across the province.

The data indicates that while there are pockets of success, significant gaps exist in the implementation, awareness, or relevance of specific interventions in many areas. Community-based approaches seem to be more consistently effective across regions. There's a clear need to bridge the gap between the Technical Committee's perceptions and the on-the-ground realities experienced by local stakeholders.

6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Strong community-based initiatives: Across regions, there's evidence of active Community Policing Forums (CPFs), Neighborhood Watches (NHWs), and Farm Watches (FWs).
- High level of personal safety perception: Most regions reported relatively high scores for personal safety, indicating that individuals generally feel secure in their immediate environments.
- Good partnerships and cooperation: Several regions noted effective collaboration between various stakeholders in rural safety efforts.
- Effective communication networks: WhatsApp groups and other local communication channels were highlighted as a strength in some areas.
- Strong social cohesion: Social cohesion significantly contributed to rural safety, particularly in regions like the West Coast.
- Pockets of excellence: The Technical Committee noted "pockets of excellence" in rural safety initiatives.

Weaknesses:

- Resource constraints: Across all regions, there were consistent reports of inadequate resources for SAPS, including manpower, vehicles, and equipment.
- Ineffective justice system: Multiple regions highlighted concerns about the leniency of the justice system and its inability to deter repeat offenders.
- Poor healthcare and emergency services: Most regions reported low satisfaction with healthcare and emergency services in rural areas.
- Inadequate infrastructure: Poor road conditions, lack of street lighting, and insufficient police stations in remote areas were commonly reported.

- Lack of recreational facilities: Most regions noted a significant lack of recreational facilities and activities, especially for youth.
- Poor implementation of specific interventions: The Rural Safety Desk, Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard, and Rural Safety Pocket Guide were consistently rated ineffective across regions.
- Communication gaps: Despite some strengths in local communication, there were reports of poor communication between different stakeholders and levels of government.

Opportunities:

- Improved technology implementation: There's potential to leverage technologies like CCTV cameras, drones, and enhanced communication systems (e.g., Starlink) for better rural safety.
- Enhanced stakeholder engagement: Many regions suggested improving collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders.
- Development of youth programs: Addressing the lack of youth activities could improve safety outcomes.
- Strengthening community safety structures: There's potential to empower further and resource community-based initiatives like CPFs, NHWs, and FWs.
- Improved urban design supporting rural safety: Some regions saw potential in applying urban design principles to enhance rural safety.
- Economic development through safety improvements: Some stakeholders suggested that improved safety could bring economic benefits, such as increased property values and employment opportunities.
- Alignment of strategies: There's an opportunity to better align rural safety strategies with existing SAPS and POCS strategies.

Threats:

- Persistent crime issues: Farm attacks, stock theft, and other rural crimes pose significant threats.
- Environmental hazards: Several regions face threats from natural disasters such as floods and fires.
- Substance abuse: Drug and alcohol abuse was consistently mentioned as a major threat to rural safety.
- Socio-economic challenges: Unemployment, poverty, and lack of opportunities, especially for youth, were seen as underlying threats to rural safety.
- Changing nature of agricultural land use: Some regions noted concerns about changing land use patterns affecting rural communities.

- Influx of undocumented foreign nationals: Several regions highlighted challenges related to the employment of undocumented foreign nationals in rural areas.
- Organised crime: There were concerns about organised crime groups moving from urban to rural areas.
- Isolation of remote areas: Some rural regions' vast distances and isolation pose ongoing safety and service delivery challenges.

7. Proposed Theory of Change

7.1. Pillars for Rural Safety

The rural safety strategy should address rural safety as an integrated day-to-day policing approach by creating a safe and secure rural environment in the WC.

Therefore, the strategy should be based on the following pillars:

Pillar 1: Effective Capacity Building & Resource Allocation

Goal: Build effective capacity and capability in rural areas to address safety challenges.

Pillar 2: Community Engagement & Participatory Safety

Goal: Mobilise the community to support and enhance safety and security in the rural environment.

Pillar 3: Infrastructure Development & Technological Innovation

Goal: Improve rural infrastructure and leverage technology to enhance safety measures.

Pillar 4: Socio-Economic Development & Crime Prevention

Goal: Address root causes of crime through targeted socio-economic interventions.

Pillar 5: Inter-Agency Collaboration & Governance

Goal: Ensure clear and responsive governance in rural areas that encourages rural safety.

Pillar 6: Agriculture Sector Safety & Security

Goal: Goal: Enhance safety and security specific to the agricultural sector.

Pillar 7: Environment Risk Management & Disaster Preparedness

Goal: Improve management of environmental safety risks and enhance disaster preparedness in rural areas.

Pillar 8: Monitoring and evaluation

Goal: Implement robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of rural safety initiatives.

A Theory of Change (TOC) describes the relationship between activities and outputs, the anticipated outcomes and impacts, and the assumptions involved. A TOC helps identify what impacts are most likely to be achieved during the timeline of an evaluation and identify resources required (human, financial, agencies) {DPME 2014:7}. The following Theory of Change is proposed for Rural Safety in the WC.

7.2. Problem Statement

The rural safety problem in the WC is complex and deeply rooted in socio-economic and geographical factors. It encompasses traditional crime issues such as farm attacks, livestock theft, and property crimes, as well as organised criminal activities, including drug trafficking, illegal mining, and wildlife crime. These security challenges are exacerbated by underlying socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and substance abuse, which create conditions conducive to criminal behaviour.

The problem is further compounded by inadequate policing and criminal justice responses, largely due to the vast geographical spread of rural areas and limited resources. Additionally, rural communities face unique environmental and occupational safety hazards related to agricultural activities, restricted access to essential services like healthcare and emergency response, and, in some cases, social fragmentation that undermines community cohesion. These issues negatively impact agricultural productivity, rural livelihoods, and social cohesion.

7.3. Long-term Goal

Achieve a measurable improvement in rural safety across the WC, characterised by reduced crime rates, increased community resilience, and enhanced trust between rural communities and law enforcement agencies.

7.4. Key Stakeholders

The following stakeholders will be essential in enhancing the implementation of rural safety interventions, as well as to ensure the establishment of a safe and secure rural environment:

Civilian Secretariat
WC Department of Agriculture
Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety
WC Department of Education
Disaster Management
Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI)
South African Police Service
South African National Defence Force (SANDF)
Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DARD&LR)
Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA)
Department of Employment and Labour
Department of Home Affairs
Department of Social Development (DSD)
Road Traffic Management Cooperation (RTMC)
Municipal Law Enforcement
National Prosecuting Authority (NPA)
Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)
Department of Health and Wellness
Department of Correctional Services
Organised agriculture and farmers' associations
Registered Labour Unions and Civil Rights Organisations
Community Policing Forums (CPFs)
Civil Society Organisations
Municipalities

7.5. Main assumptions and risks

Pillar	Assumption	Risk
Effective Capacity Building & Resource Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate resources can be allocated for capacity building - Trained personnel will be willing to work in rural areas - Improved capacity will directly translate to better rural safety outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget constraints limiting recruitment and training efforts - High turnover of trained personnel in rural areas - Difficulty in acquiring and maintaining physical resources in remote locations
Community Engagement & Participatory Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communities are willing to actively participate in safety initiatives - Local leaders will support and champion the programs - Communication channels between authorities and communities are functional - Community members have time and resources to participate - Different community groups can work together effectively - Rural communities are willing and able to participate in safety initiatives actively - Community involvement will lead to sustainable safety improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential for vigilantism if community involvement is not managed correctly - Conflicts between different stakeholders with varying interests - Volunteer fatigue and declining participation over time

Pillar	Assumption	Risk
Infrastructure Development & Technological Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved infrastructure will significantly enhance service delivery - Funding will be available for infrastructure development and maintenance - Better facilities will aid in victim support and community engagement - Technical expertise is available locally - Power supply and connectivity are reliable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High costs of infrastructure development in remote areas - Delays in construction and renovation projects - Challenges in staffing and maintaining new facilities - Infrastructure damage due to natural disasters or vandalism
Socio-Economic Development & Crime Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic opportunities created and sustained - Crime prevention strategies will be evidence-based - Social programs will reach target populations - Community support for rehabilitation programs - Economic growth will benefit all segments of society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic downturns affecting program sustainability - Resistance from criminal elements - Limited job market absorption capacity - Ineffective rehabilitation programs
Inter-Agency Collaboration & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agencies are willing to share information and resources - Clear protocols for collaboration exist - Political support for inter-agency initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureaucratic barriers to collaboration - Competing priorities between agencies - Political interference - Data sharing and privacy concerns

Pillar	Assumption	Risk
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compatible systems and processes across agencies - A shared understanding of objectives - Accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of coordination leading to duplication
Agriculture Sector Safety & Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmers will adopt new safety measures - Agri workers will report criminal activities - Weather patterns support agricultural activities - Supply chains are reliable - Access to agricultural inputs is consistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate change impacts on agriculture - Organised theft syndicates - Pest and disease outbreaks - Land use conflicts - Supply chain disruptions
Environment Risk Management & Disaster Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accurate risk assessment data is available - Communities understand environmental risks - Early warning systems are functional - Emergency response capacity exists - Environmental regulations are enforced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unexpected natural disasters - Limited resource availability for response - Climate change acceleration - Poor compliance with environmental regulations - Inadequate emergency response coordination
Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reliable data collection mechanisms can be established in rural areas - Stakeholders will be transparent and cooperative in reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulties in collecting accurate and timely data from remote areas - Potential for biased or incomplete reporting - Challenges in attributing changes in rural safety

Pillar	Assumption	Risk
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation findings will be effectively used to adjust and improve the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to specific strategy elements

7.6. Outcomes

- Reduced crime rates in rural areas
- Improved perception of safety among rural residents
- Enhanced community cohesion and social capital
- Increased economic opportunities in rural areas
- Improved access to essential services (health, education, justice)

7.7. Outputs

- Strengthened law enforcement capacity in rural areas
- Implemented community-based crime prevention initiatives
- Developed and maintained rural infrastructure
- Established effective inter-agency collaboration mechanisms
- Implemented youth engagement and empowerment programs

7.8. Activities

- Train and equip rural law enforcement personnel
- Establish and support community policing forums and farm watches
- Implement rural development projects (roads, lighting, telecommunications)
- Create multi-stakeholder rural safety committees
- Develop and implement youth-focused education and employment programs

7.9. Inputs

- Financial resources from the government and private sector
- Human resources (law enforcement, community leaders, social workers)
- Technical expertise in rural development and crime prevention
- Policy and legislative support
- Community participation and engagement

7.10. In Summary

To effectively implement this Theory of Change, various stakeholders must take responsibility for specific actions. The WC Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) should focus on implementing agricultural development programs to address rural poverty and unemployment while promoting farm safety initiatives and supporting farmer networks. The Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety is crucial in coordinating rural safety strategies across different agencies and supporting community policing forums and farm watch programs. The South African Police Service (SAPS) must increase rural policing capacity, improve response times, and implement specialised rural crime units and strategies.

The Theory of Change provides a strong framework for improving rural safety over the next five years. It acknowledges the complex nature of rural safety issues, proposes a complex approach to addressing these challenges, and outlines clear responsibilities for various stakeholders. The monitoring framework allows for ongoing assessment and adaptation of strategies, while the identified assumptions and risks provide a basis for contingency planning. Implementing this TOC would require sustained commitment, resource allocation, and collaboration among all involved parties to improve rural safety. Addressing the immediate safety concerns and the underlying socio-economic factors offers a holistic path towards creating safer, more resilient rural communities in the WC.

Annexures

Annexure A: Stakeholder Engagement Report

1. Introduction

Rural safety is a crucial aspect of community well-being and sustainable development. Ensuring the safety of people living in rural areas involves a multifaceted approach that considers various factors, including infrastructure, emergency services, community engagement, and environmental hazards. Evaluating rural safety and incorporating stakeholder inputs is vital for developing effective strategies and policies.

Stakeholder engagements were facilitated through focus group discussions to ensure that rich, in-depth data was gathered. The stakeholder consultation process is often designed around a mass meeting of community members in a hall with presenters on the podium. This approach is not conducive to constructive debate and proper input for decision-making purposes. The traditional public participation process does not elevate the needs of the voiceless end users or beneficiaries in communities to the level of decision-makers. The abuse and often disruption of such meetings by opposing political parties and/or pressure groups speak to the inadequacy of such meetings for the purposes it was designed. Therefore, stakeholder input was gathered through focus group sessions per a pre-designed discussion map designed through an accepted and recognised scientific methodology.

The methodology has three (3) components:

- The AGA
- The P-Index
- C-Index

1.1. Associated group analysis (AGA)

The AGA technique reflects the perceptual construct in people's minds when confronted with a specific theme/concept by ordering the free associations that are foremost in people's minds¹. This tool allows the stakeholders' active mental models to be reflected in order to

¹ Diaz-Guerrero & Szalay, 1991:22

understand better their perceptual reality related to (i) Rural Safety and (ii) Rural Safety Interventions.

1.2. The Priority Index (P-Index)

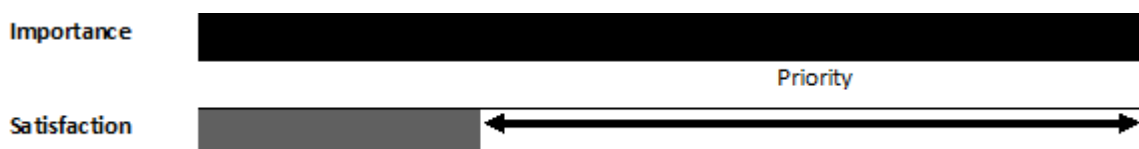
The P-Index was designed to prioritise the needs within communities or other target groups such as rural nodes. It is aimed at (i) determining the actual needs of the community at a given point in time, (ii) ranking them in order of importance, (iii) without being paternalistic, (iv) in such a way as to reflect the real differences in urgency between the needs represented by the various items.

The Priority Index(P-Index) provides the DOA with scientifically determined data on the actual needs prevalent among the various districts. The methodology is appropriate and user-friendly for illiterate, semi-literate, and highly educated individuals. In addition to allowing all the groups to participate as respondents, their opinions are all measured with equal validity. This is made possible using a measuring instrument known as the Schutte Scale, which also allows for ranking items without weighing one item against another. Furthermore, it also enables the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Efforts to determine the needs of communities are often based merely on the order of preference of respondents in terms of the perceived importance of the need. In practice, results obtained in this way have proved to cause more problems than they solve, particularly in lower-level socio-economic communities. Such communities usually have a pressing need for many things one may care to mention, so ranking needs in order of importance is problematic. The P-Index surmounts this problem by conflating respondents' perception of the **importance** of a given facility with their current level of **satisfaction** vis-à-vis that facility. As a result of this technique, a facility which respondents regard as very important while at the same time being quite satisfied with the current state of affairs will occupy a lower position on the P-Index than one sharing the same level of importance while being regarded as highly unsatisfactory.

Figure 3: High importance, low satisfaction: Priority High

High priority



Low priority

The P-Index information is presented as a graph ranging from the highest to the lowest priority, as discussed and measured in the various focus groups participating in the stakeholder engagement process. The highest score represents the highest priority.

The maximum possible score (highest need) results from the discrepancy between the important and satisfaction measurements with each issue raised in the focus group. Measured on a scale ranging from one (1) to 11, this allows for a maximum score of 10 ($11-1=10$), where the average importance is measured at 11, and average satisfaction is measured at one (1). If the P-Index yields a negative score, the average satisfaction with that particular issue is measured higher than the importance measurement of the same issue.

Each focus group generated its list of Rural Safety needs with underlying reasons, importance, and satisfaction measurements. A P-Index was combined to provide a single P-Index graph with the average P-Index calculated from the various groups where the same need originated. Therefore, the P-Index graph provides an overview of the Rural Safety needs in the WC area.

1.3. Community Index (C-Index)

The Community Index (C-Index) was specifically developed as a baseline graphical depiction of the current "state of satisfaction" with the basic building blocks that impact Rural Safety². It also serves as a baseline from which the success or failure of Rural Safety Interventions can be monitored. Without the C-Index as a baseline, progress or improvement of the quality of life in rural nodes would have no relative point of departure and will always be hard to prove.

The C-Index is robust enough not to be affected by irrelevant or lesser issues (odd outliers or spikes) but also sensitive enough to give a measured satisfaction perception of the reality regarding the basics that impact rural safety in the WC. The basic building blocks will be measured on a 10-point scale ranging from 1 (dissatisfied) to 11 (very satisfied).

The results obtained by conducting the C-Index are presented as a circular radar graph or community profile. To interpret the results on the community profile, one needs to note that

² As indicated by the comprehensive literature review

the scoring starts on the circumference (1) and ends in the centre (11). This means that the closer the element scores to the centre, the better the situation concerning the specific item and the further away from the centre, the bigger the problem.

The information reflected in the C-Index is vital for any sustainable development programme, as it serves as the monitoring tool with a baseline from which change in the target community could be monitored with future measurements as a result of any rural safety intervention programmes. High satisfaction scores also indicate the likely success of programme implementation as it represents community buy-in and willingness to participate in the implementation of community projects.

1.4. Focus Groups

The methodology was comprehensive, ensuring broad and inclusive participation across the WC. All identified stakeholder groups were systematically targeted, recognising the importance of diverse perspectives. Outreach efforts were geographically extensive, encompassing visits to every district in the province and engaging with stakeholders from all municipalities. Focus groups were conducted with key representatives from various stakeholder groups, including Agriculture WC, Neighborhood Watch (NHW), Farm Watch (FW), Law Enforcement (LE), Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs), Farm Workers, Community Policing Forums (CPF), rural nodes, Farmers/Agricultural Associations, Municipalities and SAPS. This diverse representation ensured that local concerns and insights from multiple stakeholders were fully incorporated into the engagement strategy.

2. Analysis and Results

The following presents the analysis and results from the following stakeholder groups and areas:

- Technical Committee
- Central Karoo District
- Garden Route
- Cape Metropole
- Overberg District
- West Coast District

2.1. Technical Committee

2.1.1. Associated group analysis

Based on the responses highlighted by stakeholders when asked about their associations with rural safety, several key themes and concerns were identified, including a lack of coordination and resources.

Technical committee stakeholders seem to perceive a lack of coordination and insufficient resources as significant challenges to rural safety. This could be related to inadequate coordination among agencies, organisations, or community groups involved in ensuring safety and a shortage of necessary resources, such as personnel, equipment, or funding. The responses highlight concerns related to farms and agricultural activities, specifically the occurrence of farm attacks or crimes targeting farms. This could indicate a perceived vulnerability or risk faced by rural communities engaged in agricultural activities.

Figure 4: Associations of the Technical Committee when they hear "Rural Safety."

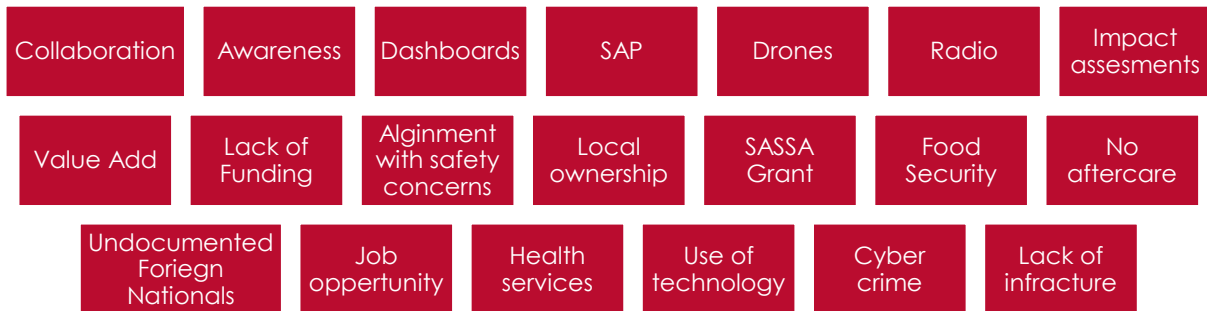


These responses pointed out challenges related to accessibility, the vast distances that need to be covered in rural areas, and the potential delays in response times for emergency services or law enforcement. These factors significantly impact the effectiveness of safety measures and response efforts in rural communities. Technical committee stakeholders associate rural safety with issues of crime and violence, suggesting a perception of heightened risks or occurrences of criminal activities and violent incidents in rural areas. These responses recognise the need for protective measures and security initiatives to enhance rural safety.

The responses touch upon socio-economic factors, such as illiteracy and a lack of opportunities, which could contribute to safety challenges or vulnerabilities in rural communities. The mention of "fear" suggests that stakeholders perceive a sense of insecurity or apprehension related to rural safety, which can have psychological and emotional impacts on individuals and communities.

Stakeholders reported a wide range of associations with "Public Safety Interventions". The main topics include collaboration, coordination, technology utilisation, impact assessment, value addition, local ownership and community involvement, addressing funding constraints, and considering socio-economic factors.

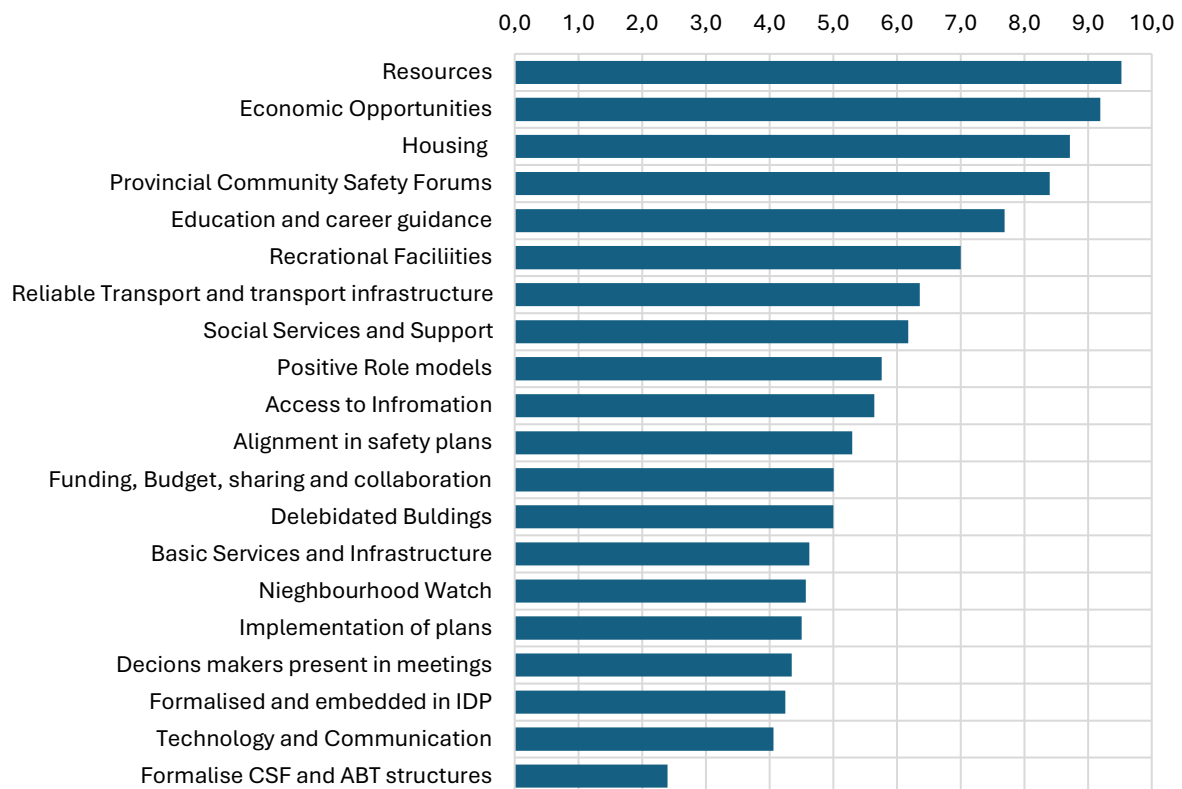
Figure 5: Associations of the Technical Committee when they hear "Rural Safety Interventions."



2.1.2. P-Index

The following graph shows the P-index for the stakeholders consulted during the technical committee on rural safety meeting.

Figure 6: Technical Committee on Rural Safety P-Index



The top five priority needs identified were Resources, Economic Opportunities, Housing, Provincial Community Safety Forums, and Education and career guidance. These needs have the highest scores, indicating a significant discrepancy between their importance and the current level of satisfaction from the stakeholders.

The focus groups' reasons shed light on the complex interplay of factors contributing to rural safety. Participants emphasised the importance of collaboration, resource sharing, and the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the effective implementation of safety plans and initiatives. Basic services and infrastructure improvements, such as streetlights, water, toilets, and electricity, were also identified as crucial safety triggers.

Moreover, the focus groups highlighted the need for social services, support centres, access to information, and awareness programs to help communities cope with and prevent crime. Economic opportunities, job creation, and support for the informal sector were seen as ways to accumulate wealth and engage individuals as part of the solution to the safety challenges faced by rural communities.

Education, career guidance, recreational facilities, and positive role models were also emphasised as key factors in keeping youth away from crime and enhancing their opportunities. Participants noted that the lack of positive role models in the communities often leads children to look up to criminals as examples to follow.

Furthermore, reliable transportation to schools and improved housing conditions were identified as important needs that directly impact the safety and well-being of rural communities, particularly children. Small, overcrowded houses were seen as contributing to social problems, such as teenage pregnancies and children being exposed to negative influences on the streets.

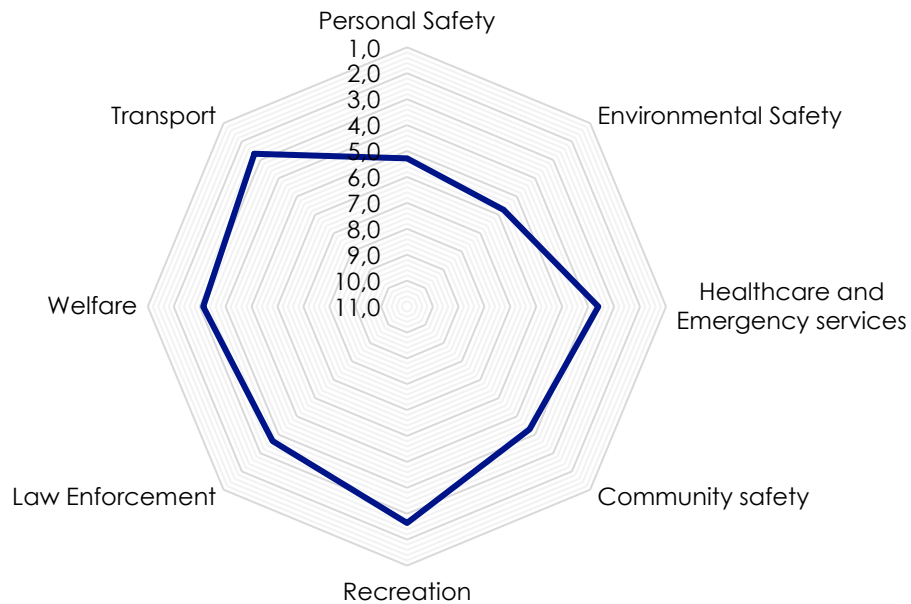
2.1.3. C-Index

Whereas the P-Index reflects the current, sometimes less obvious, basic needs, the Community Index (C-Index) was developed as a baseline graphical depiction of the current "state of satisfaction" with the most basic building blocks that make rural communities safe.

As only the satisfaction of these essential elements is measured (without generating any discussion regarding the reasons for the rating), the elements should be treated as clusters comprising the needs and reasons expressed in the P-Index. A measurement of six (6) is midway between satisfied and dissatisfied. A score of five (5) or less is associated with levels of dissatisfaction, with a measurement of one (1) on the periphery as highly dissatisfied.

The provided C-Index radar graph below depicts a concerning state of satisfaction across the eight building blocks of rural safety in the WC. The graph reveals that most aspects fall alarmingly far from the centre, indicating significant levels of dissatisfaction.

Figure 7: Technical Committee on Rural Safety C-Index profiles



The Recreation and Transport aspect is at the end of the graph, with ratings of 2.6 and 2.7, respectively, signifying extreme dissatisfaction. This critical issue demands immediate attention and intervention to address the pressing welfare needs of the rural population.

Other aspects, such as welfare (3.1), Healthcare and Emergency services (3.6), and Law Enforcement (3.7), also exhibit high levels of dissatisfaction. This indicates that rural communities face challenges in accessing adequate healthcare and emergency support, welfare services and law enforcement, necessitating focused efforts to bridge these gaps.

While slightly better positioned than the aspects mentioned above, community safety services still fall within the dissatisfaction range with a score of 4.3. The remaining elements, including Personal and Environmental Safety, hover close to the midway point with satisfaction ratings over 5.0.

2.1.4. Effectiveness of Rural Safety Interventions

The radar graph below illustrates the technical committee stakeholders' perspective on the effectiveness of various rural safety interventions in the WC, which were evaluated using the

C-Index method. A score of 11 indicates high effectiveness, while a score of 1 suggests low effectiveness.

According to the stakeholders, the most effective intervention is the Distribution of the Rural Safety Pocket Guide, which received a score of 7.0. This indicates that stakeholders believe the guide has been well-received and has positively contributed to rural safety efforts.

Rural Safety Awareness and Information Sharing is also considered effective, scoring 6.8. This highlights the stakeholders' recognition of the importance and success of communication and education campaigns in promoting rural safety. The Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard implementation received a score of 6.0, suggesting that stakeholders consider it moderately effective.

Technical committee stakeholders also acknowledge the importance of community safety structures like CPFs, Neighbourhood Watch (NHWs), and FWs, which received a score of 5.8. This indicates that these organisations play a crucial role in enhancing rural safety. The Rural Safety Baseline Study implementation received scores of 5.2. Stakeholders believe there is room for improvement in this area.

Trust and involvement of stakeholders and community members received a score of 4.9, emphasising the need for further engagement and collaboration with local communities to improve rural safety.

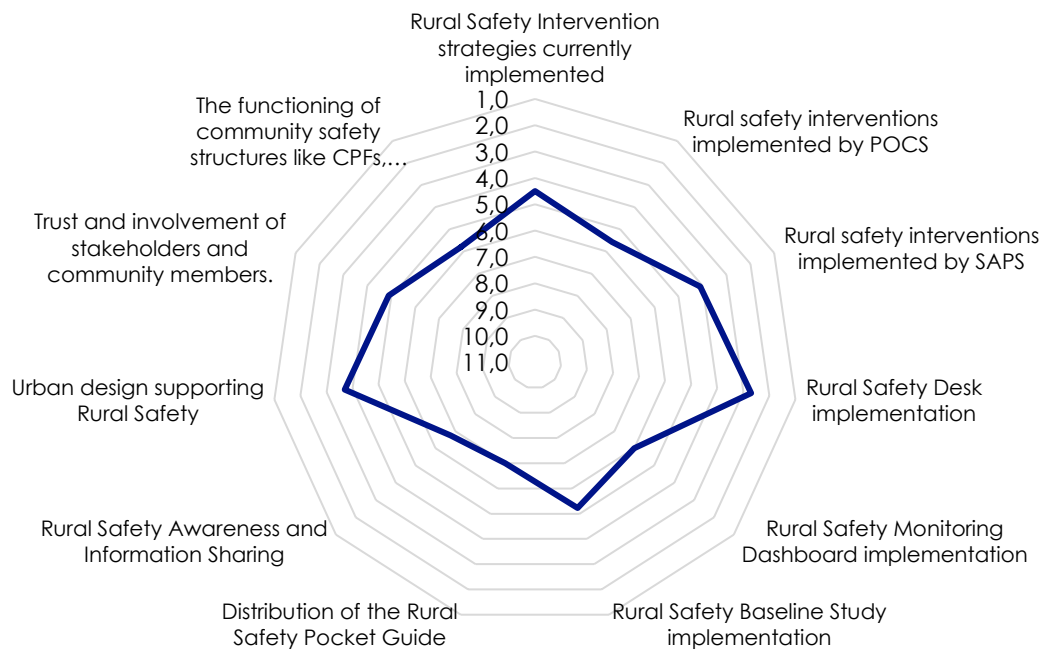
Stakeholders rated the effectiveness of the current Rural Safety Intervention strategies and rural safety interventions implemented by the SAPS and POCS at 4.5, 4.1 and 5.6, respectively. This suggests that stakeholders believe more effective and targeted interventions are necessary.

Urban design supporting Rural Safety received a low score of 3.7, indicating that stakeholders feel the integration of safety considerations in urban planning and design could be enhanced to support rural safety efforts better.

The Rural Safety Desk implementation received the lowest score of 2.7, revealing that stakeholders perceive a significant gap in its effectiveness. This highlights the need for reevaluation and improvement.

While stakeholders recognise the promise of some initiatives, such as the Rural Safety Pocket Guide and awareness campaigns, they believe there is considerable room for improvement across many areas of rural safety intervention in the WC.

Figure 8: Technical Committee – Rural Safety Interventions Effectiveness ratings



2.1.5. Additional Comments

High levels of poverty, unemployment, and income inequality in rural areas were noted to be creating an environment favourable to criminal activities, as individuals may resort to unlawful means to meet their basic needs or seek economic opportunities. The limited access to quality education and training opportunities in rural areas was further noted as a lead to employability, increasing the risk of involvement in criminal activities. The abuse of drugs and alcohol is often prevalent in rural areas due to limited recreational facilities and social support services, which can contribute to criminal behaviour. Family structures and community cohesion in rural areas led to increased criminal activities.

The stakeholders were asked to comment on the crime in urban and farming areas. The technical committee noted that the movement of people from urban areas to rural farming communities in search of employment or better living conditions could introduce urban-based criminal activities and gang-related activities to rural areas. The technical committee further noted that the lack of trauma counselling in rural areas causes a spike in crime cases.

The technical committee was further asked to note the nature and extent of organised crime in rural areas. The participants pointed out that the children are being used for crime in rural

areas due to the low sentences they receive. The participants stated that the underreporting of crime in rural areas causes more organised crimes and that one of the biggest problems in rural areas is human trafficking.

Figure 9 What are the drivers of crime in rural areas

Drugs
Lack of proper Infrastructure
Acohol Abuse
Culture of violece
Break-down of social Fabric
Lack of basic services
Unemployment
Inequility
Socio-Economic Conditions
Boredom
Poverty
School Drop outs
Child-headed households
Housing
Teenage Pregrancy
Regulations of Spaza Shops
Geographical Location
Lack of Education
Poor visibility of Police
Family Structures
Gangsterism

The stakeholders stated that rural areas were noted as attractive locations for illegal plant cultivations due to their remoteness and availability of land, with organised crime groups potentially involved in the production and distribution of illicit substances. Immigrant workers in the agricultural sector were noted to be vulnerable to human trafficking and labour exploitation, particularly in areas with limited law enforcement presence.

The committee members were asked to indicate the impact of the various rural safety interventions. The stakeholders noted that sustainability and radiality are essential. The technical committee further pointed out that the structures are moving too slowly regarding crime due to legal procedures. The technical committee noted the following as the key indicators which should be used to measure change in rural safety interventions:

The technical committee workshop workers were asked to discuss what appropriate TOC to improve rural safety over the next five years. The most appropriate causality argument stated by the stakeholders is the lack of educational opportunities, land ownership, and socio-economic situations. The stakeholders noted that the most suitable way of gathering information for measuring change is by increasing cooperation among organisations working

in silos. By further increasing intelligence spread, sustainability is more efficient for accountability checks. The stakeholder further noted that red tape timeframes need to change the technical committee.

Figure 10: What key indicators should be used to measure change in rural safety interventions?

Willingness of businesses to invest
Injury and case reduction
Reduction in crime reported
Successful convictions
Safety perception
Reduction of number of arrests
Quality of life
Decrease in the drivers of crime
Root cause in TOC and have interventions of each of them

2.1.6. SWOT

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pocket of excellence • Looking at other factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many open posts • Budget resources • Manpower • Empowerment of community • Engagement
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment • Sharing Knowledge • Empower NBW • Have a development plan for neighbourhood watch members to become leap officers. • Introducing a stipend to get more people involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not having a wholistic strategy

2.2. Overberg District

2.2.1. AGA

The stakeholders in Overberg District identified a wide range of issues that they associate with rural safety. These concerns can be grouped into several key themes:

Crime and Violence:

The rural nodes in the Overberg District face a diverse range of criminal activities that threaten rural safety, including property crimes such as stock theft and robberies, as well as violent crimes like farm attacks and gang-related activities. Of particular concern is the prevalence of interpersonal violence, including gender-based violence (GBV), child abuse, and elderly abuse. The mentions of child prostitution and trafficking in the Swellendam area highlight the vulnerability of minors in the region.

Environmental and Resource Crimes:

Environmental exploitation emerges as a significant concern across the district. Stakeholders reported issues such as illegal harvesting of flora, poaching of marine products, and general poaching activities.

Economic Factors and Social Issues:

Economic challenges underpin many of the district's safety concerns. Unemployment, poverty, and issues related to farm labour (including evictions and the importation of foreign workers) were highlighted. These economic pressures are closely linked to social issues such as substance abuse, which was noted as a problem affecting both adults and youth. The misuse of social grants was also mentioned, suggesting complex interactions between economic hardship and social behaviour.

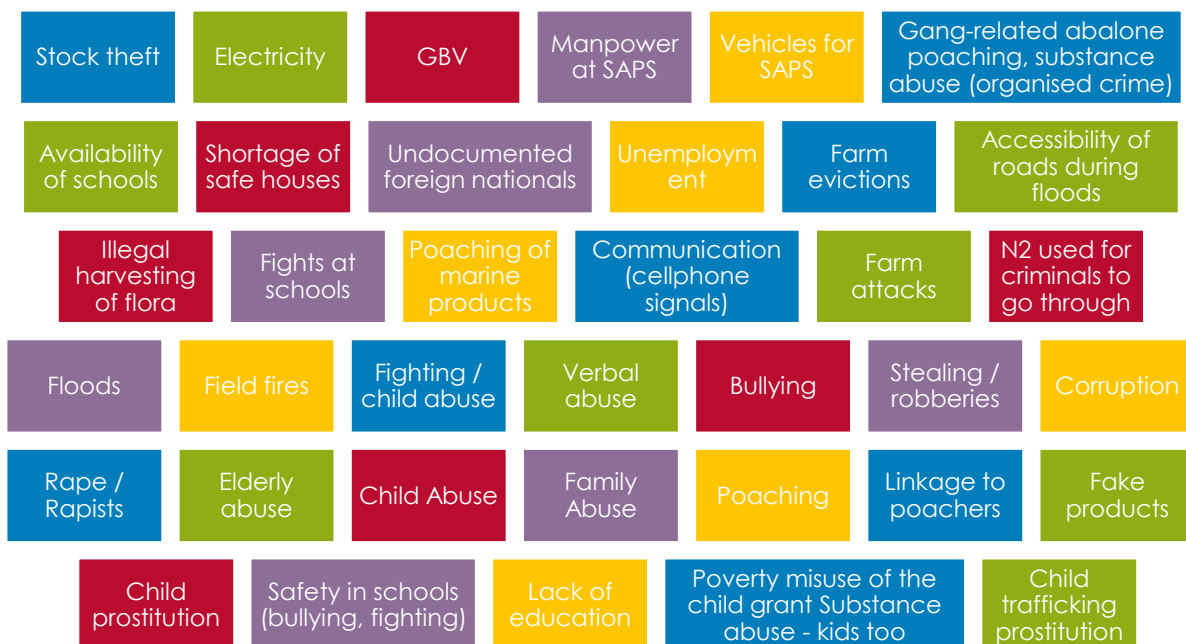
Infrastructure and Services:

Infrastructure-related safety concerns were prominent, particularly in the Bredasdorp area. These include vulnerabilities created by prolonged power cuts, poor road accessibility during floods, and weak communication networks. Such issues can isolate communities during emergencies and hinder effective response to safety threats. While these concerns were more explicitly stated in the Bredasdorp area, they likely affect the broader district to varying degrees.

Education and Youth:

Education emerged as a multifaceted concern in the context of rural safety. Issues range from the limited availability of schools (especially at the high school level) to safety within educational settings, with reports of bullying and fights. The mention of a general "lack of education" suggests that educational deficits are perceived as contributing to broader safety issues in the district.

Figure 11: Overberg District AGA responses – Rural Safety



Law Enforcement Capacity:

Concerns about law enforcement's capacity to address rural safety issues were evident. Stakeholders noted issues with police manpower and vehicle availability, indicating a perception that security forces might be under-resourced to tackle the range of safety challenges in the district effectively.

Population Dynamics:

The presence of undocumented foreign nationals was highlighted as a potential source of tension.

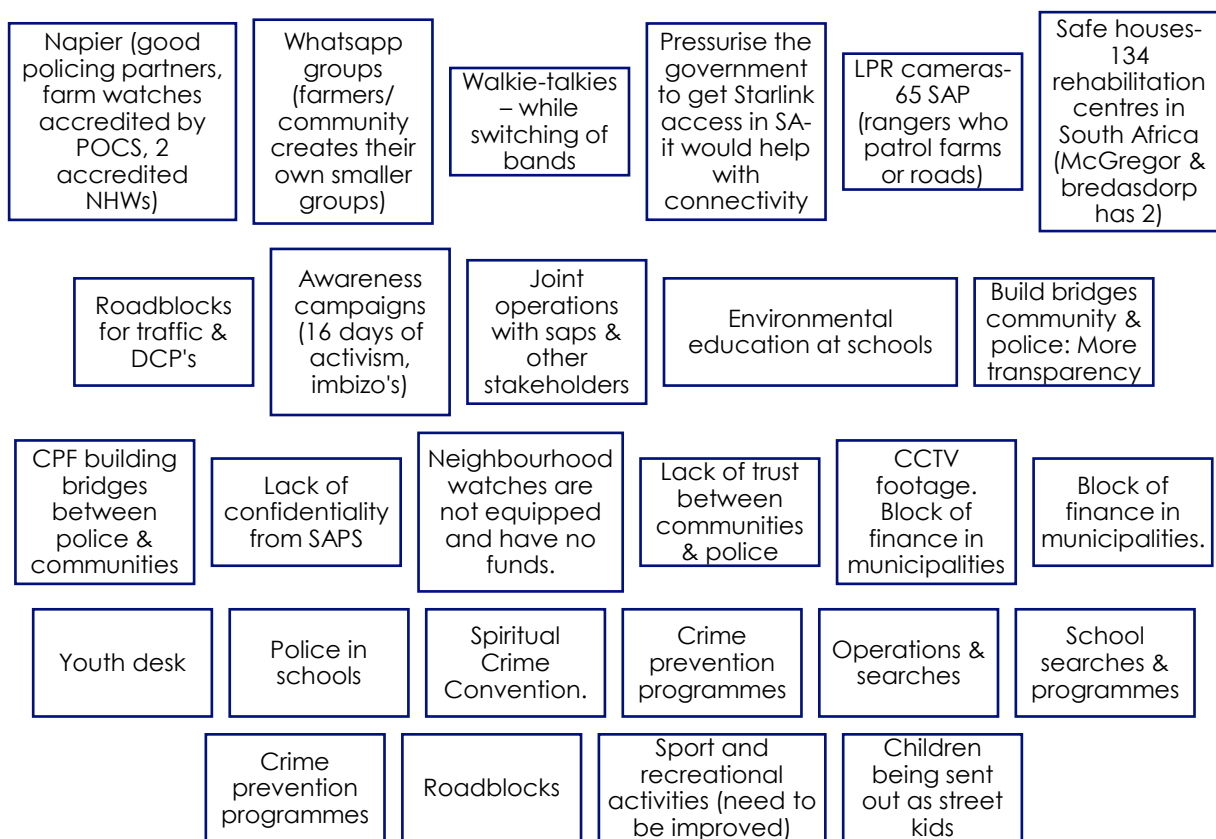
Corruption and Governance:

Corruption was explicitly mentioned as a safety concern, indicating that governance and institutional integrity issues are seen as relevant to rural safety in the district.

Environmental Hazards:

Natural disasters, including floods and field fires, were identified as safety concerns, highlighting the district's need for effective disaster management strategies.

Figure 12: Associations of the Overberg District Rural Safety Stakeholders when they hear "Rural Safety Interventions."



Stakeholder responses regarding rural safety interventions reveal various strategies and challenges in the Overberg District. Stakeholders emphasised improving community-police relations, with the Swellendam area focusing on "building bridges" through CPFs and the Bredasdorp area highlighting successful policing partnerships, particularly in Napier. However, challenges such as lack of trust and confidentiality concerns were noted.

Community-based safety initiatives, particularly neighbourhood watches, are prominent across the district. Stakeholders reported funding and equipment shortages for these initiatives

and mentioned accredited farm and neighbourhood watches and the use of WhatsApp groups for community coordination. The use of technology varies, with stakeholders in the Bredasdorp area reporting LPR cameras and walkie-talkies and efforts to improve connectivity. Stakeholders in the Swellendam area mention CCTV footage but note financial constraints in municipalities as a barrier to implementation.

Emphasis was placed on youth-focused interventions, including police presence in schools, youth desks, and environmental education. Swellendam stakeholders particularly note the need for improved sports and recreational activities. Crime prevention programs are also standard across the district, including operations, searches, roadblocks, and joint operations with SAPS and other stakeholders. Awareness campaigns were mentioned, such as 16 days of activism and imbizos.

Despite these various initiatives, effective interventions face several challenges. These include funding constraints, equipment shortages, trust issues with law enforcement, and infrastructure limitations, particularly in connectivity.

2.2.2. P-Index

The P-Index analysis for the Overberg District reveals a range of priority needs for improving rural safety. The highest priority needs identified were:

1. Police Stations in Remote Areas (9.5): This emerged as the highest priority need. The documents mention that areas like Aniston and Elim have been waiting for police stations for 20 years, highlighting the long-standing nature of this issue.
2. Management of Undocumented Foreign Nationals (9.1): Stakeholders expressed concerns about immigration control and its impact on rural safety. They noted that undocumented foreign nationals could cause xenophobic attacks, and there are concerns about farmers importing foreign nationals for cheaper labour.
3. Manpower (9.0): The need for increased personnel in law enforcement is critical. Rural safety stakeholders in the Bredasdorp area respondents mentioned having only 4 people on a shift, which becomes problematic when staff are sick or unavailable.
4. Vehicles (8.4): The lack of adequate transportation for law enforcement is a significant concern. In the Swellendam area, it was noted that current vehicles are not roadworthy enough to reach certain remote areas, and the 85km gravel road to Malgas takes a toll on tyres and vehicles.
5. Better equipment (8.0): There's a strong need for improved tools and resources for safety personnel. Respondents mentioned relying on private members for equipment like night vision gear, as SAPS systems are outdated.

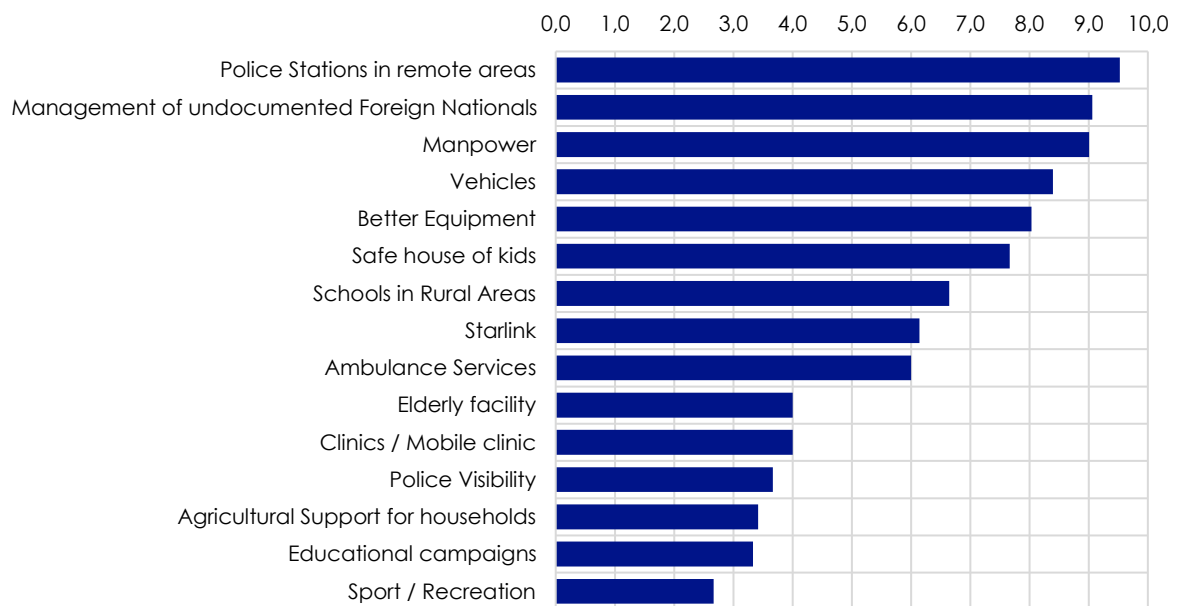
The P-Index results strongly emphasise improving essential law enforcement and emergency response infrastructure in rural areas of the Overberg District. The high priority given to police stations in remote areas, manpower, vehicles, and equipment suggests a perceived lack of adequate security presence and resources in these communities.

The prominence of needs related to vulnerable populations (children and the elderly) indicates a concern for social welfare as a component of rural safety. The inclusion of schools and educational campaigns in the priorities reflects an understanding of the role of education in long-term safety and development.

The relatively lower ranking of police visibility compared to other police-related needs suggests that stakeholders prioritise fundamental infrastructure and resources over increased patrols or presence alone.

The inclusion of Starlink (improved connectivity) in the medium-priority range highlights the growing importance of communication technology in rural safety strategies.

Figure 13: Overberg District P-Index

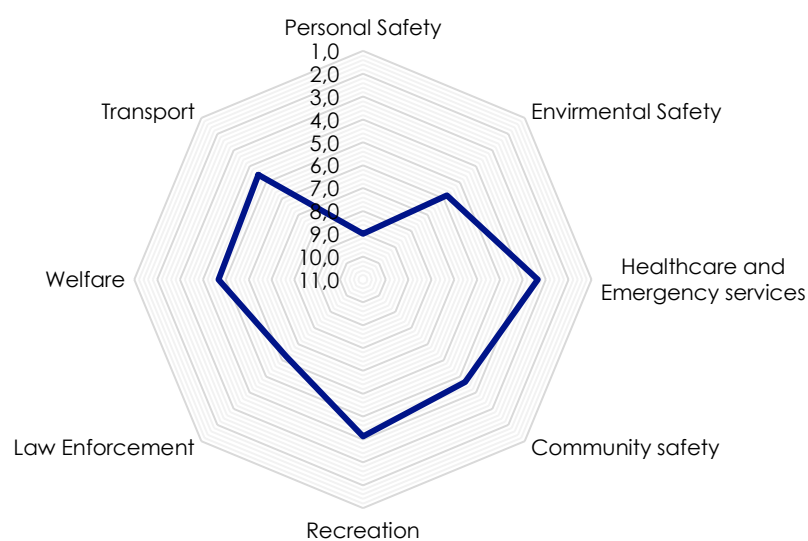


2.2.3. C-Index

The C-Index provides a baseline measure of satisfaction with key elements that impact rural safety in the Overberg District. Scores range from 1 (highly dissatisfied) to 11 (highly satisfied), with 6 being the midpoint between satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

- Healthcare and emergency services (3.0) emerge as the most critical area of dissatisfaction, highlighting the urgent need for improved medical infrastructure and response times. Issues were reported with ambulance services, with stakeholders in the Swellendam area notably mentioning only one ambulance for the entire region and slow response times.
- Transport, welfare, and recreation also show low satisfaction levels, indicating that basic services and quality of life issues are significant concerns for rural safety. Stakeholders scored transport satisfaction 4.4. This aligns with reported issues such as poor road conditions and limited public transport options in rural areas.
- Community and environmental safety scores suggest room for improvement in addressing crime and environmental hazards. This aligns with reported issues such as substance abuse, poaching, and various forms of crime mentioned. The stakeholders in the Bredasdorp area specifically cited concerns about floods and field fires, which may contribute to low ratings for environmental safety.
- While personal safety scores are relatively high, the discrepancy between this and other safety-related scores (like community safety) may indicate uneven safety experiences across the district or a disconnect between personal perceptions and broader community issues.
- Law enforcement satisfaction is moderate, possibly reflecting an appreciation for effort but recognition of resource constraints. While Swellendam noted that police are visible and willing, overall, the rural safety stakeholders in the Overberg district reported significant resource constraints in manpower, vehicles, and equipment.

Figure 14: Overberg District C-Index profiles



2.2.4. Effectiveness

Current Rural Safety Intervention Strategies:

The overall effectiveness of current rural safety intervention strategies is moderately positive, with an average score of 6.9 out of 11. This suggests that while some effective measures are in place, there is still significant room for improvement. Stakeholders recognise the efforts being made but also see opportunities for enhancement.

Interventions by the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety:

Interventions implemented by this department are viewed more favourably, scoring an average of 7.8. This higher score indicates that stakeholders generally approve of the department's efforts and find them relatively effective in addressing rural safety concerns.

SAPS Interventions:

SAPS interventions received a similar positive assessment, with an average score of 7.9. This suggests that despite resource constraints mentioned in the stakeholder feedback, the community generally well-regarded the police service's rural safety efforts.

Rural Safety Desk Implementation:

The effectiveness of the Rural Safety Desk implementation appears to be low or non-existent in the region. The Swellendam area reported that it is "Not well functioning," while Bredasdorp rural safety stakeholders' respondents were unaware of its implementation. This suggests a significant gap in this particular intervention's effectiveness or awareness.

Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard:

Like the Rural Safety Desk, the Monitoring Dashboard seems to have little to no presence or impact in the region. Stakeholders reported no awareness or implementation of this tool, suggesting another area that requires attention and improvement.

Distribution of the Rural Safety Pocket Guide:

The effectiveness of the Rural Safety Pocket Guide distribution could not be adequately assessed as stakeholders reported no awareness or implementation of this resource. This indicates a potential gap in information dissemination or resource allocation.

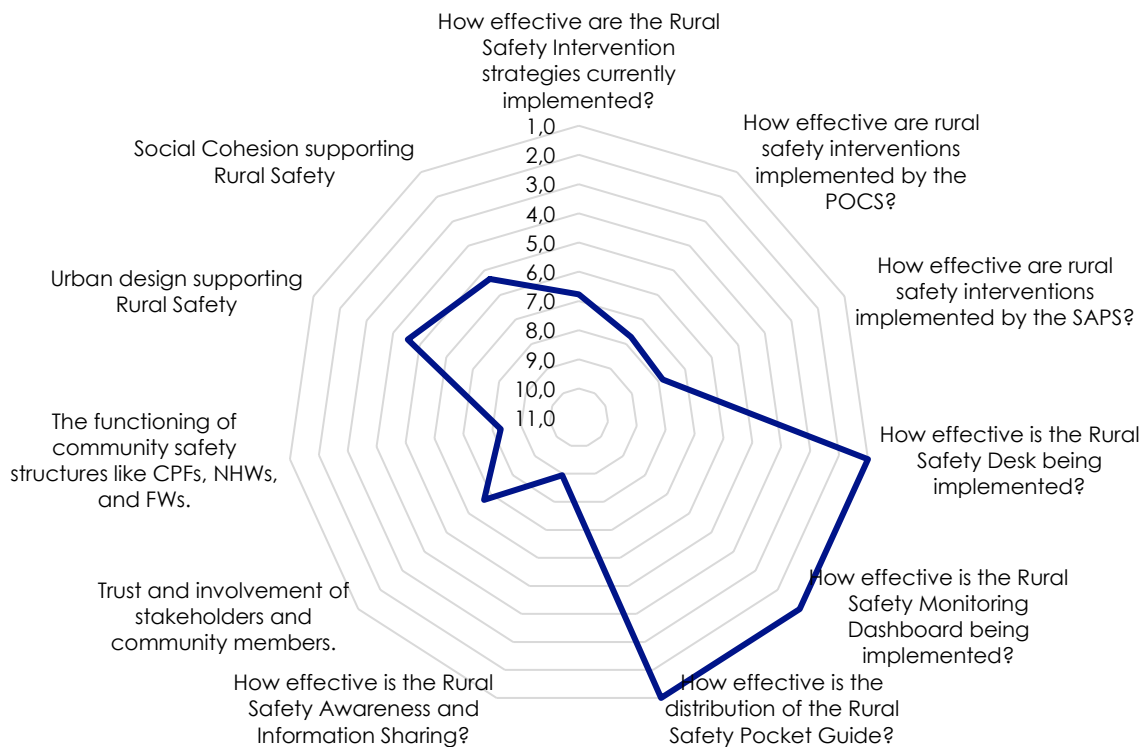
Rural Safety Awareness and Information Sharing:

This aspect received one of the highest effectiveness ratings, with an average score of 8.9. This high score suggests that efforts to raise awareness and share information about rural safety are well-received and considered effective by the community. Stakeholders scored rural safety awareness and information sharing in general from all applicable entities and not only that implemented by the Department of Agriculture.

Trust and Involvement of Stakeholders and Community Members:

The level of trust and involvement scored relatively low at 4.9. This indicates a significant disconnect between implementing safety interventions and the community's engagement with these efforts. Improving this aspect could be crucial for the overall success of rural safety initiatives.

Figure 15: Overberg District – Rural Safety Interventions Effectiveness ratings



Functioning of Community Safety Structures:

Community safety structures such as CPFs, NHWs, and FWs received a moderate effectiveness score 6.8. This suggests that while these structures function, their effectiveness and impact on rural safety can be improved.

Urban Design Supporting Rural Safety:

The effectiveness of urban design in supporting rural safety received a moderate score of 5.8. This indicates that while some aspects of urban planning contribute to safety, there is significant potential for improvement in how the built environment supports rural safety objectives.

Social Cohesion Supporting Rural Safety:

Social cohesion received a score of 6.3 as a factor supporting rural safety. This moderate score suggests that community bonds and social structures play a role in rural safety, but there is room for strengthening these connections to enhance safety outcomes.

2.2.5. Additional Comments

The rural safety stakeholders in the Overberg District provided valuable insights into how rural safety should be measured and improved. They emphasised the importance of using a combination of quantitative and qualitative metrics to assess the effectiveness of rural safety interventions. Key measures suggested include reduced crime statistics, increased perceptions of personal safety among residents, and greater community cohesion. Economic improvements, such as increased employment opportunities, were also seen as important indicators of rural safety progress. The effectiveness of safety structures like CPFs, NHWs, and Farm Watches was highlighted as a crucial measure, along with improvements in emergency response times and better resource allocation for rural safety initiatives.

To gather information on rural safety changes, stakeholders proposed various methods. These include community engagement through open area meetings, utilising local institutions such as churches, clinics, and shops as information points, and leveraging WhatsApp groups for ongoing communication. They also suggested monitoring social media, conducting regular surveys, and analysing annual stakeholder reports. Data analysis, including year-on-year comparisons of crime statistics and safety metrics, was seen as crucial. Qualitative research methods, such as focus groups and interviews, were recommended to provide deeper insights into community experiences and perceptions of safety.

The key objectives and outcomes identified for rural safety in the Overberg District focus on reducing overall crime rates and establishing good working relationships among various role players. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of raising awareness on critical issues such as gender-based violence and substance abuse. Improving resource allocation and dedicating specific staff to rural safety were seen as essential objectives. Enhanced technology utilisation for safety purposes and strengthening community-police relations were also highlighted as crucial outcomes to be achieved.

Stakeholders suggested several activities and deliverables to achieve these desired outcomes and objectives. These include implementing better-dedicated resources and staff for rural safety, utilising technology (particularly acquiring more CCTV cameras), and developing youth safety forums and Friday night youth clubs. Improving police engagement with community members and creating sustainable safety programs were also recommended. Sharing radio systems with neighbourhood and farm watches and supporting and skilling repeat offenders to reduce recidivism were seen as innovative approaches to enhancing rural safety.

The stakeholders identified several resource constraints impacting rural safety and proposed alleviating them. Key constraints include a lack of manpower in SAPS, insufficient and unsuitable vehicles for rural terrain, a shortage of safe houses and rehabilitation centres, poor communication infrastructure, and a lack of police stations in remote areas. To address these issues, suggestions included increasing SAPS manpower and providing better training, acquiring more suitable vehicles for rural areas, establishing additional safe houses and rehabilitation centres, and improving connectivity infrastructure, possibly through implementing Starlink. Building police stations in underserved areas and providing better equipment to law enforcement were also recommended.

A wide range of key role players in rural safety were identified, highlighting the need for a collaborative approach. These include SAPS, the Department of Home Affairs, Correctional Services, Social Development, Justice Services, and various community organisations such as ratepayers' associations and faith-based groups. Education departments, local businesses, ward committees, and School Governing Bodies (SGBs) were also seen as important stakeholders. The involvement of Community Policing Forums, Neighborhood Watches, Farm Watches, Cape Nature, and municipalities was emphasised, underscoring the multifaceted nature of rural safety.

Additional recommendations for a comprehensive rural safety strategy included considering the army's involvement in supporting rural safety efforts, addressing the overworking and underpayment of SAPS officers, and improving the accountability of legal professionals. Enhancing Early Childhood Development sectors and updating communities regularly on

safety were considered important long-term strategies. Stakeholders also called for stricter punishment for crimes, improved facilities for joint operations in specific areas, and addressing the perceived imbalance of rights between criminals and victims. Developing sustainable projects contributing to long-term safety and better coordination among safety stakeholders were emphasised as crucial elements of an effective rural safety strategy.

2.2.6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong community-based initiatives • Good partnerships and cooperation • Effective communication networks • Positive perception of personal safety • Successful awareness campaigns: • Diverse skills in CPFs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource constraints: manpower, vehicles, and equipment. • Lack of police stations in remote areas, poor road conditions, and insufficient healthcare facilities are major concerns. • Limited trust between communities and police • Insufficient safe houses and facilities for vulnerable groups • Poor emergency response capabilities, Particularly in healthcare • Underdeveloped recreational facilities • Weak social cohesion

Opportunities:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's potential to leverage technologies like CCTV cameras, Starlink for improved connectivity, and LPR (License Plate Recognition) cameras. • Enhanced stakeholder engagement • Youth engagement programs • Improved urban design: There's potential to enhance safety through better urban planning and infrastructure development. • Strengthening and expanding CPFs, NHWs, and FWs could improve community-based safety efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental hazards • Organised crime • Socio-economic challenges • Undocumented foreign nationals • Stock theft and farm attacks were mentioned as ongoing threats to rural safety. • Issues such as child abuse, child prostitution, and lack of educational opportunities pose threats to the safety and future of young people in the region. • Overcrowded justice system

Opportunities:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of sustainable projects 	

2.3. Central Karoo

2.3.1. AGA

When asked about rural safety, stakeholders in Central Karoo immediately associated it with three key concepts:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Execution

These associations suggest that the community views rural safety as a collective effort requiring coordinated action and effective implementation.

Regarding rural safety interventions, stakeholders identified:

- Control Room
- Roadblocks
- Prevention infrastructure

This indicates a focus on proactive measures and the importance of infrastructure in implementing safety strategies.

2.3.2. P-Index

Stock theft emerges as the highest priority concern for rural safety stakeholders in the Central Karoo. With an extremely high importance rating and very low satisfaction levels, it represents a critical issue that significantly impacts farmers' livelihoods in the region. Stakeholders reported that stock theft occurs monthly, often on small scales, and there's a perception that law enforcement doesn't take these incidents seriously enough, sometimes attributing the losses to wild animals.

Training in Neighbourhood Watches is the second highest priority. This indicates a strong community desire for active participation in rural safety efforts. The high importance placed on this training, coupled with low satisfaction scores, suggests that while community members are eager to contribute to safety initiatives, they feel underprepared or under-resourced to do so effectively.

Collaboration among stakeholders ranks as the third highest priority. This aligns with stakeholders' initial associations with rural safety, emphasising the importance of coordinated efforts.

Health care emerges as a crucial priority, reflecting the community's concern about inadequate medical facilities, staff, and equipment in rural areas. This priority underscores the integral role that accessible and quality healthcare plays in overall rural safety and well-being.

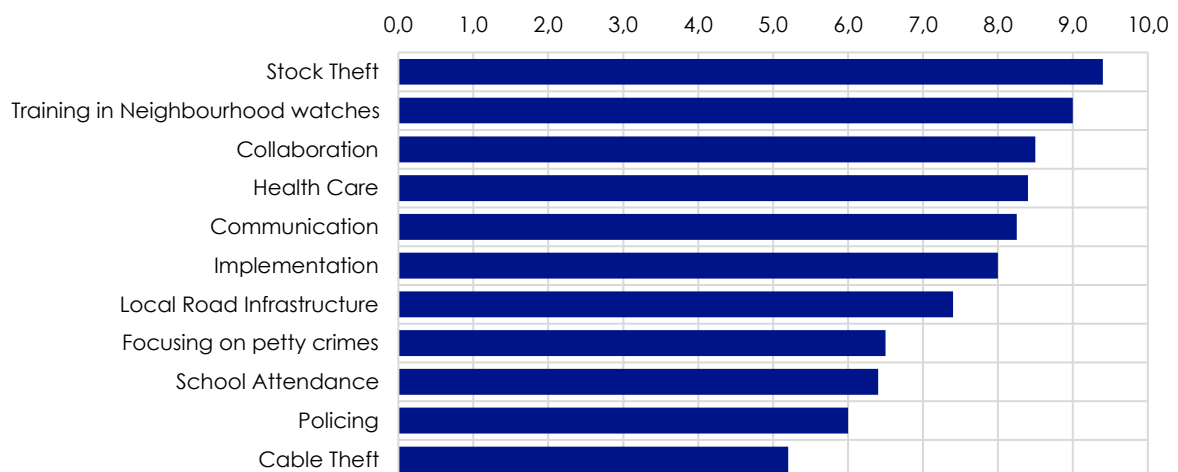
Communication follows closely in priority, reinforcing the theme of coordination and information sharing among community members and all stakeholders involved in rural safety.

Implementation of safety plans and initiatives is another top priority. Stakeholders expressed frustration that while plans are often made, they are not effectively put into action.

Local road infrastructure is a significant concern, particularly due to its impact on emergency services. Stakeholders noted that poor road conditions often prevent ambulances from accessing certain farms or areas, potentially compromising response times in critical situations.

Focusing on petty crimes, school attendance, and policing round out the top priorities. These elements reflect the community's desire for a comprehensive approach to rural safety that addresses day-to-day security concerns, emphasises education and youth engagement, and ensures adequate law enforcement resources and effectiveness.

Figure 16: Central Karoo P-Index



2.3.3. C-Index

The Community Index (C-Index) for the Central Karoo region provides a comprehensive view of residents' satisfaction with various aspects of rural life and safety.

Environmental Safety emerges as the highest-rated aspect, with an impressive score of 9.2. This suggests that residents feel very optimistic about the quality of their natural surroundings, indicating low environmental hazards or pollution levels.

Personal safety is closely followed by a score of 8.0. This high rating indicates that residents generally feel secure in their immediate personal environments despite other challenges. High environmental and personal safety scores provide a solid foundation for rural well-being.

Community Safety receives a moderate score of 6.8, positioning it in the middle range of satisfaction. This suggests that while there isn't an overwhelming sense of insecurity, there's room for improvement in addressing community-wide safety concerns.

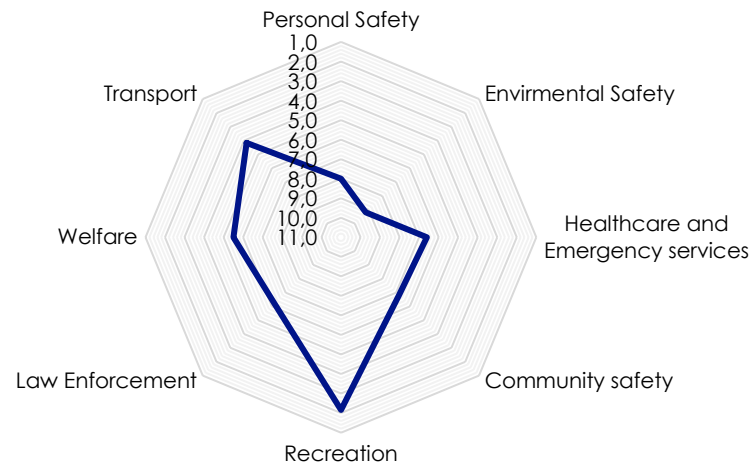
Healthcare and Emergency Services score 6.6, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction. While not critically low, this score suggests noticeable gaps in medical facilities, staffing, or emergency response capabilities that need attention.

Law Enforcement satisfaction is rated at 6.2, slightly lower than healthcare services. This score indicates that while police services are not perceived as failing, there's significant room for enhancement in their effectiveness and presence in the community.

Welfare services receive a score of 5.5, just above the scale's midpoint. This suggests that the region's social support systems and welfare programs are perceived as adequate but not particularly satisfactory, indicating a need for improvement.

Transport services score a low 4.2, highlighting this as a significant area of concern. This low satisfaction likely reflects issues with road infrastructure, public transportation options, or both, which can significantly impact daily life and emergency access in rural areas.

Recreation stands out as the lowest-rated aspect, with a very low score of 2.2. This extremely low satisfaction level underscores a critical lack of recreational facilities or activities in the area, which can have far-reaching effects on community well-being and youth engagement.



2.3.4. Effectiveness

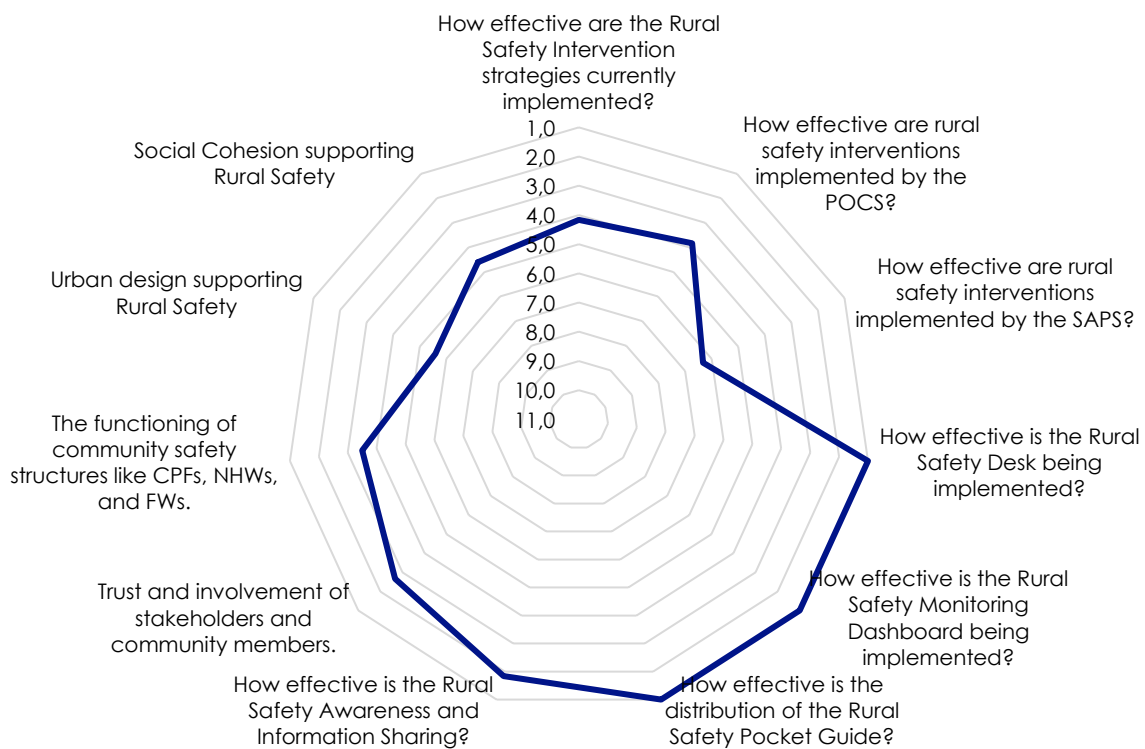
The SAPS interventions are perceived as the most effective, scoring 6.3 out of 11. This moderate score suggests that while SAPS efforts are recognised, there is still substantial room for improvement in their rural safety initiatives. Urban design, which supports rural safety, receives the second-highest score, at 5.6. This indicates that some aspects of the built environment contribute positively to safety, though enhancements could still be made to further support rural safety through urban planning and infrastructure. For urban design, stakeholders emphasised the importance of functional surveillance cameras, visible police presence, well-designed recreational facilities, adequate street lighting, and innovative solutions like drone surveillance. These elements aim to create a safer physical environment.

Social cohesion supporting rural safety scores 4.6, suggesting that community bonds and social structures play a moderate role in maintaining safety, but there's significant potential for improvement in this area. Stakeholders noted challenges such as drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, and unemployment. Stakeholders noted that the lack of healthy recreational activities undermines community bonds. They stressed the importance of recognition and collaboration in building stronger social ties.

Current rural safety intervention strategies score 4.2 overall, indicating that existing approaches are perceived as only somewhat effective. This points to a need for reassessment and refinement of current strategies. Interventions implemented by POCS score 3.8, slightly lower than overall strategies. This suggests that POCS initiatives, while recognised, are not seen as particularly impactful in the region.

The functioning of community safety structures scored 3.5. This low score indicates that these community-based initiatives are struggling to impact rural safety significantly. The trust and involvement of stakeholders and community members received a low score of 2.7, highlighting a critical gap in community engagement and confidence in rural safety efforts. Rural Safety Awareness and Information Sharing scores very low at 1.8, suggesting a severe lack of effective communication about safety initiatives and information in the community.

Figure 17: Effectiveness scores – Central Karoo District



The Rural Safety Desk, Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard, and distribution of the Rural Safety Pocket Guide all score a minimum of 1.0. These extremely low scores indicate that these specific interventions are unknown to the district's rural safety stakeholders.

2.3.5. SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAPS is very responsive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration amongst stakeholders
Opportunities:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication • Becoming a drone-oriented town for improved surveillance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not explicitly mentioned, but implied threats include stock theft, cable theft, and organised crime

2.3.6. Additional Comments

The stakeholders in Central Karoo provided valuable insights into various aspects of rural safety measurement, implementation, and improvement. Regarding how rural safety should be measured, the stakeholders emphasised the importance of effective communication and the flow of information. This suggests that quantitative crime statistics and qualitative information-sharing assessments among stakeholders and community members are crucial for accurately gauging rural safety levels.

The stakeholders proposed a multifaceted approach to gather information to measure rural safety change. They suggested conducting regular stakeholder engagements to obtain feedback from community members and key players. Additionally, they recommended using statistical data to track changes in crime rates and safety incidents. They stressed the value of "being on the ground," indicating that first-hand observations and experiences are vital in assessing rural safety. An innovative suggestion was to gain access to health data, which could provide insights into safety-related injuries or incidents that may not be captured in traditional crime statistics.

The primary objective identified by stakeholders was straightforward but crucial: ensuring that the community feels safe and does not suffer losses. This encompasses both the perception of safety and tangible outcomes regarding reduced crime and property loss. To achieve this objective, the stakeholders emphasised the importance of collaboration, stating that "Everyone works together" should be the key deliverable. This underscores the need for coordinated efforts among various agencies, community groups, and individuals to achieve rural safety goals.

Funding was identified as the leading resource constraint affecting rural safety initiatives. While specific solutions were not provided, this highlights the need for creative funding strategies and efficient use of available resources to address rural safety challenges effectively.

Regarding key role players in rural safety, the stakeholders emphasised that effective rural safety relies on every institution carrying out its mandate. This suggests a need for a clear

delineation of responsibilities and accountability among various agencies and community organisations involved in rural safety efforts.

Several innovative recommendations were provided for improving rural safety strategies. These include establishing the police station as an operations room with a centralised radio system to gather information from different channels, particularly for farm-related issues. The stakeholders also proposed implementing a drone-oriented approach to town surveillance, suggesting three drones could cover the entire town. They recommended creating a cell phone app for accessing drone footage, indicating a desire for community involvement in surveillance efforts. Infrastructure improvements were also mentioned, specifically the need for tar roads to limit damage to fruit and vehicles during transport. Additionally, the stakeholders called for more effective stakeholder meetings to improve coordination and information sharing.

It was also noted that the Department of Social Development is not fully functional in the area, suggesting a need for improved social services to support overall rural safety efforts.

2.4. Garden Route

2.4.1. AGA

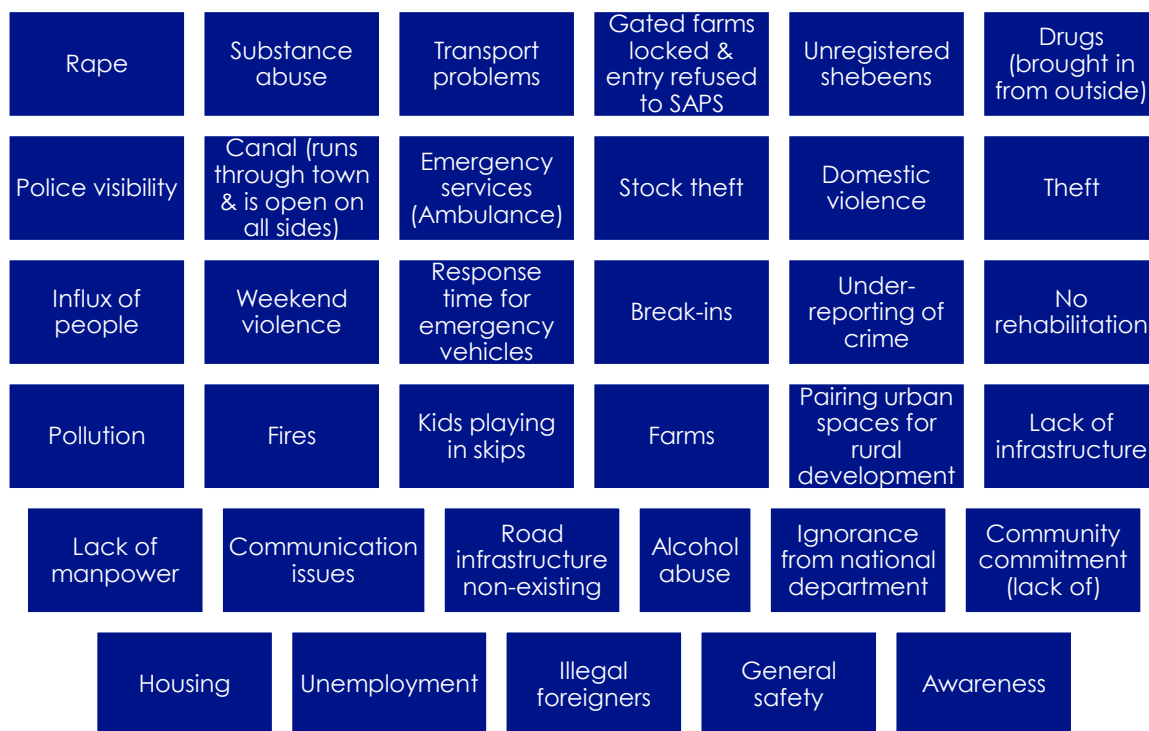
When considering rural safety, stakeholders in the region immediately associate it with a wide array of concerns, prominently featuring crime and violence. These include violent crimes such as rape and domestic violence, as well as property crimes like theft, break-ins, and stock theft. The prevalence of substance abuse, including both drugs and alcohol, is also a significant concern, with stakeholders noting the presence of unregistered shebeens as a contributing factor to safety issues.

Infrastructure and emergency services are critical elements in the stakeholders' perception of rural safety. Poor road conditions, inadequate emergency services (particularly ambulances), and a lack of police stations in remote areas are seen as significant challenges. Environmental hazards such as fires and open canals are also mentioned, highlighting the region's diverse nature of safety concerns.

Socio-economic factors play a substantial role in stakeholders' understanding of rural safety. Unemployment, housing issues, and the influx of people, including undocumented foreign nationals, are seen as contributing to safety challenges.

The associations prominently feature law enforcement challenges. Stakeholders expressed concerns about police visibility, understaffing, and resource constraints. The difficulty in accessing gated farms was noted as a challenge for law enforcement in rural areas. Community dynamics also feature in the perceptions, with stakeholders noting a lack of community commitment to safety, under-reporting of crime, and increased violence during weekends.

Figure 18: Garden Route AGA responses – Rural Safety



When considering rural safety interventions, stakeholders in the Garden Route associate them with various strategies and initiatives. Community-based programs such as Neighborhood Watches, Farm Watches, and Community Policing Forums are prominently mentioned, indicating a recognition of the importance of community involvement in safety efforts. Traditional law enforcement activities like patrols, roadblocks, and using K9 units are also associated with rural safety interventions.

Awareness and education campaigns, particularly those focused on substance abuse and general safety, are seen as essential interventions. Th

e mention of imbizos (community gatherings) suggests an appreciation for community engagement in safety discussions. Strategic planning is another association, with safety plans

and mobilisation plans being mentioned. However, there's also a concern about the need for better cohesion between different safety plans.

Interestingly, the associations with rural safety interventions also reveal a degree of scepticism and criticism. Some stakeholders used terms like "bullshit" and described interventions as "all talk, no play," indicating frustration with the perceived lack of effective implementation. Concerns about the duplication of strategies and a lack of proper planning were also expressed.

Technology and infrastructure are associated with interventions, including mentions of control rooms, prevention infrastructure, and radio communication systems. This suggests a recognition of technology's role in enhancing rural safety efforts.

Figure 19: AGA for rural safety stakeholders in the Garden Route when hearing "Rural Safety Interventions."



2.4.2. P-index

Three critical areas are at the top of the priority list, with a score of 10.0: Rehabilitation Centres, Rural Safety as a Priority, and the Justice System. The high ranking of rehabilitation centres indicates a pressing need for facilities to address substance abuse issues, which stakeholders identified as one of the biggest problems in rural areas. Stakeholders noted that there are currently no rehabilitation centres in the area, leaving a significant gap in addressing drug-related issues.

The equal prioritisation of rural safety suggests that stakeholders feel this issue is not receiving the attention it deserves from policymakers and authorities. They emphasised that rural safety

is often not a priority at the national level despite the significant challenges rural communities face.

The justice system's high ranking reflects concerns about the effectiveness of legal processes in addressing rural crime. Stakeholders expressed frustration with the lenient treatment of offenders and a lack of consequences for repeat offenders.

Ambulance services and Clinics follow closely with a score of 9.8, highlighting the critical importance of accessible healthcare in rural areas. Stakeholders reported that very few ambulances are often available to cover vast rural areas, leading to long response times. They also noted that some clinics are only open a few days a week, which is insufficient for growing rural populations.

CCTV Linked to JOCS (Joint Operations Centers) scores 9.7, emphasising the need for improved surveillance systems to enhance rural safety. While urban areas often have CCTV systems, stakeholders noted that rural areas lack this technology.

Police Stations/Satellite Offices and Housing score 8.5, indicating a significant need for increased law enforcement presence and improved living conditions in rural areas. Stakeholders mentioned areas like Herbertsdale, where a police station is needed, and noted that some existing satellite stations are not fully operational.

Transport for the community (7.6) follows, highlighting the importance of mobility for rural residents. Stakeholders noted insufficient transportation from farms and rural areas for people to access services and do shopping.

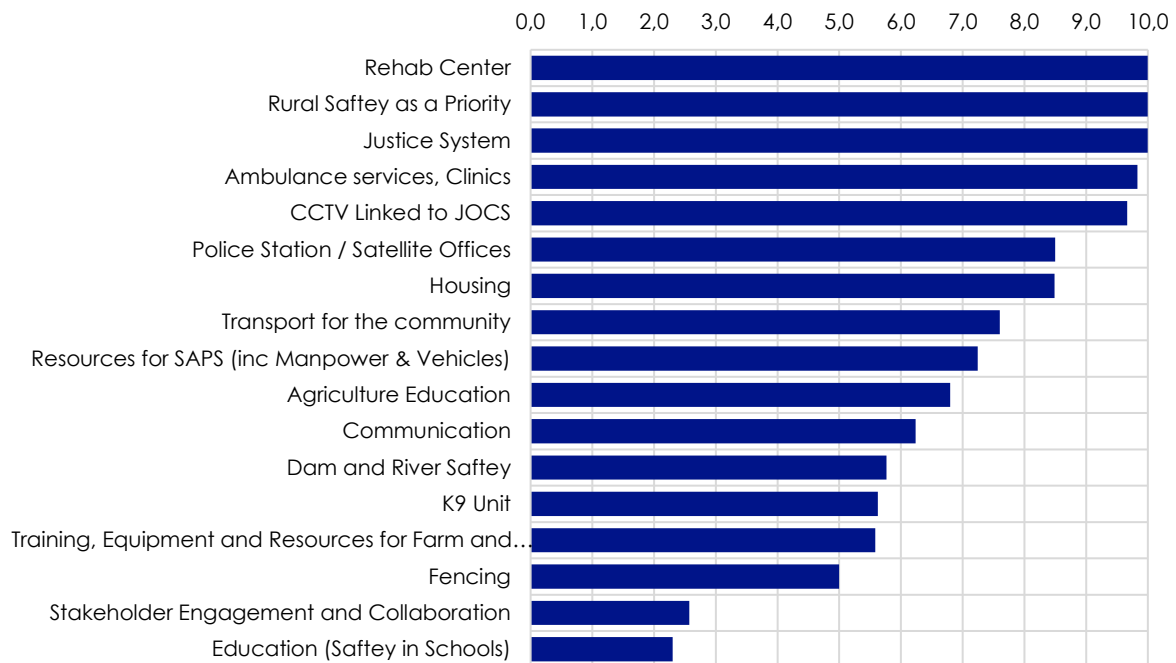
Resources for SAPS (including manpower and vehicles) score 7.2, reflecting the need for well-resourced police services. Stakeholders reported shortages in police personnel and vehicles suitable for rural terrain.

Agricultural Education scores 6.8, indicating recognition of education and skills development's role in rural safety and development. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of agricultural schools and the need for education on rights to prevent conflicts, especially pertaining to farm worker evictions.

Communication (6.2) and Dam and River Safety (5.8) follow, suggesting ongoing challenges in information sharing and environmental safety in rural areas.

K9 Units and Training, Equipment, and Resources for Farm and Neighbourhood Watch score 5.6. Stakeholders noted that while K9 units are valuable, there's a lack of trained handlers in some areas.

Figure 20: P-Index Garden Route



Fencing (5.0) is seen as a moderate priority, with stakeholders noting its role in preventing livestock theft and improving food security.

Notably, Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration (2.6) and Education (Safety in Schools) (2.3) receive the lowest priority scores. This doesn't necessarily mean these areas are unimportant, but rather that stakeholders might feel more satisfied with current efforts in these areas than other pressing needs.

2.4.3. C-index

Personal safety emerges as the highest-rated aspect, with a score of 6.6. While this score is just above the midpoint, it suggests that residents generally feel secure in their immediate personal environments. This relatively positive perception of personal safety is noteworthy, especially when contrasted with lower scores in other safety-related categories. It could indicate that while broader community issues exist, individuals feel relatively safe in their day-to-day lives.

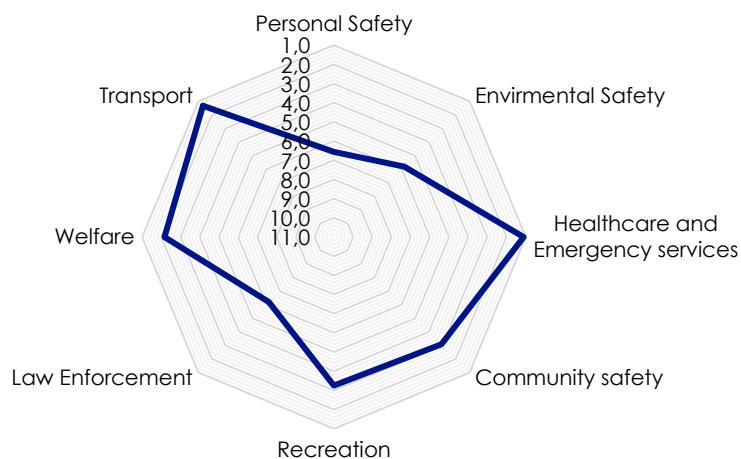
Law enforcement follows closely with a score of 6.2. This moderate satisfaction level aligns somewhat with the personal safety score, suggesting that while there is room for improvement,

residents recognise the efforts of local law enforcement. However, this score should be considered in the context of the high priority given to police resources and stations in the P-Index, indicating a further desire to enhance law enforcement capabilities.

Environmental safety receives a score of 5.8, slightly below the midpoint. This indicates a moderate level of concern regarding environmental hazards or pollution. Stakeholders mentioned issues such as dam and river safety, which could be contributing to this score.

Community safety scores are significantly lower at 3.1, contrasting personal safety perceptions. This low score suggests that while individuals might feel relatively safe personally, there are significant concerns about safety at the community level. This could reflect issues like substance abuse, break-ins, and other forms of crime that stakeholders mentioned as prevalent in the area.

Figure 21: C-Index – Garden Route



Recreation facilities receive a low score of 3.3, highlighting a significant area of dissatisfaction. This aligns with stakeholder comments about the lack of activities for youth in rural areas, which they linked to increased safety risks.

Healthcare and emergency services receive an alarmingly low score of 1.1, indicating a critical area of dissatisfaction. This extremely low score corroborates stakeholder reports of insufficient ambulance services, long response times, and inadequate clinic hours in rural areas. It underscores the urgent need to improve healthcare infrastructure and emergency response capabilities.

Welfare services score a very low 2.2, suggesting significant dissatisfaction with social support systems in rural areas. This could reflect concerns about unemployment, poverty, and lack of social services that stakeholders mentioned.

2.4.4. Effectiveness

The overall effectiveness of current Rural Safety Intervention strategies was rated relatively high at 8.2. This score suggests that existing strategies are generally perceived as effective, indicating that many of the current approaches to rural safety are making a positive impact. This positive perception aligns with stakeholder comments about regular community safety forums and daily patrols covering farm and rural areas. Rural safety stakeholders in the Garden Route based their score on all the interventions they observed from multiple regional stakeholders to address rural safety.

Interventions implemented by the SAPS received a moderate score of 6.4. This rating suggests that while SAPS efforts are recognised, significant room for improvement remains. Stakeholders noted close collaboration with SAPS and the use of technologies like the NAVIC system for tracking suspicious vehicles, which may contribute to this moderately positive rating.

The POCS interventions score slightly lower at 5.2. This indicates that their efforts, while noted, are not seen as particularly effective in addressing rural safety concerns. Some stakeholders mentioned they were unaware of POCS interventions, which might explain the lower score.

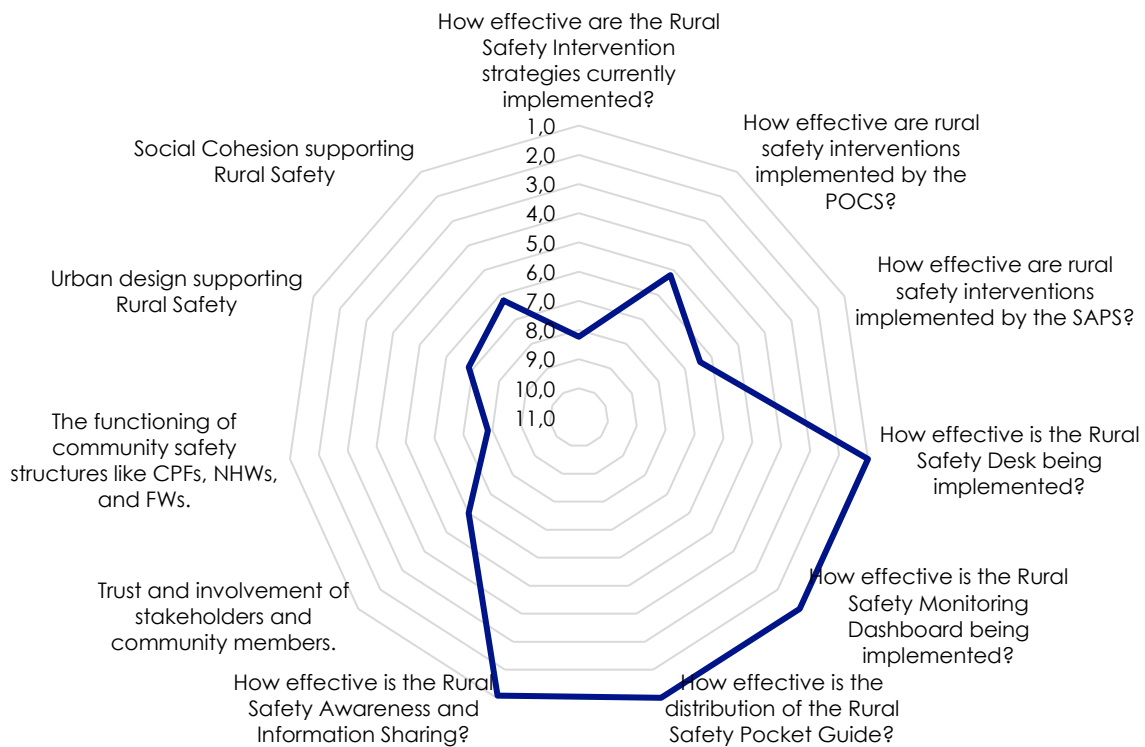
The trust and involvement of stakeholders and community members receive a score of 6.0, suggesting a moderate level of engagement and confidence in the safety initiatives. This aligns with stakeholder comments about the need for community buy-in and collaboration to ensure safety.

The functioning of community safety structures like Community Policing Forums (CPFs), Neighborhood Watches (NHWs), and Farm Watches (FWs) receives a relatively high score of 7.9. This is one of the more positive ratings, indicating that these community-based structures are seen as effective contributors to rural safety. Stakeholders frequently mentioned these structures as important components of rural safety efforts.

Urban design supporting Rural Safety scores 6.8, suggesting some recognition of the role of environmental design in safety but also room for improvement. Some stakeholders mentioned specific interventions, such as increased lighting and clearing tall grass in high-crime areas, which may contribute to this moderately positive score.

Social Cohesion supporting Rural Safety receives a score of 6.2. This suggests that community bonds and social structures are seen as moderate contributors to rural safety, aligning with stakeholder emphasis on community involvement and partnerships.

Figure 22: Effectiveness of Rural Safety Interventions – Garden Route



Notably, several specific interventions receive very low scores of 1.0 or 1.1. These include the Rural Safety Desk, the Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard, the Rural Safety Pocket Guide distribution, and Rural Safety Awareness and Information Sharing. These extremely low scores indicate that these initiatives are either utterly unknown to stakeholders or are perceived as entirely ineffective. Many stakeholders reported never having heard of these specific interventions, which explains the minimal scores.

2.4.5. Additional Comments

Stakeholders in the Garden Route district provided valuable insights into how rural safety should be measured and improved. According to stakeholders, measuring rural safety success should involve a combination of quantitative and qualitative metrics. They emphasised the importance of tracking reductions in crime statistics as a primary indicator of improvement. However, they also stressed the need to consider qualitative factors such as increased perceptions of personal safety among residents and greater community cohesion. This multifaceted approach to measurement recognises that rural safety is not just about crime reduction but also about fostering a sense of security and well-being within communities.

Economic improvements were also highlighted as essential indicators of rural safety progress. Stakeholders suggested that increased employment opportunities could indicate improved safety conditions, recognising the interconnection between economic stability and community safety. Additionally, they proposed monitoring the growth of recreational activities in rural areas, understanding that positive community engagement can play a crucial role in enhancing overall safety.

To gather information on rural safety changes, stakeholders proposed various methods. They suggested leveraging existing community structures and communication channels, such as churches, clinics, and local shops, as information points. WhatsApp groups were mentioned as an effective tool for real-time information sharing. Stakeholders also recommended conducting door-to-door campaigns and distributing posters and pamphlets to ensure widespread dissemination of safety information and collection of community feedback.

Key objectives identified for rural safety in the Garden Route focused on improving communication, reducing crime rates, and establishing good working relationships among various role players. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of raising community awareness on critical issues such as gender-based violence and substance abuse. They also stressed the need for improved working conditions and resources for all safety stakeholders, including SAPS, CPFs, NHWs, and FWs.

To achieve these objectives, stakeholders proposed several activities and deliverables. These included implementing community-wide WhatsApp groups, increasing patrols by law enforcement and community watch groups, and implementing CCTV systems linked to joint operations centres (JOCS). They also suggested conducting substance abuse awareness campaigns and organising regular meetings between SAPS, CPFs, NHWs, and community members to strengthen community-police partnerships.

Resource constraints were identified as a significant challenge in addressing rural safety. Stakeholders pointed out shortages in funding, human resources (especially in police and healthcare services), vehicles for police and emergency services, and infrastructure such as police stations, clinics, and rehabilitation centres. To address these issues, they suggested increasing government funding, exploring public-private partnerships, and improving urban planning to create more inclusive economic hubs and better integrate rural areas.

The stakeholders identified many key role players in rural safety, highlighting the need for a collaborative approach. These included various government departments such as SAPS, the Department of Correctional Services, and the Department of Social Development, as well as community organisations like K9 Units, law enforcement agencies, and NHWs.

Additional recommendations for a comprehensive rural safety strategy included adopting a practical, hands-on approach to implementation. Stakeholders expressed a desire for the department to launch the strategy framework with all stakeholders present to explain how it will be implemented. They also emphasised the need to improve the living conditions of farm workers, inform farmers about worker security of tenure, and ensure that the strategy caters to underprivileged communities, not just commercial farmers.

2.4.6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong community-based initiatives (CPFs, NHWs, FWs) • Good partnerships between stakeholders • Effective communication networks (e.g., WhatsApp groups) • Dedicated and committed safety personnel • Relatively high satisfaction with personal safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource constraints (manpower, vehicles, equipment) • Inadequate infrastructure in remote areas • Ineffective justice system • Lack of rehabilitation centres • Poor healthcare and emergency services • Inadequate recreational facilities
Opportunities:	Threats:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved technology implementation (CCTV, drones) • Enhanced stakeholder engagement • Development of youth programs • Strengthening of community safety structures • Potential for improved urban design supporting rural safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance abuse • Unemployment and poverty • Environmental hazards (fires, floods) • Changing nature of agricultural land use • Repeat offenders and ineffective prosecution • Influx of undocumented foreign nationals
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2.5. West Coast

2.5.1. AGA

The AGA for the West Coast region reveals a complex and multifaceted perception of rural safety and related interventions. When considering rural safety, stakeholders in the region associate it with a wide range of concerns and elements that reflect the unique challenges of their rural environment.

Environmental and geographic factors were prominently featured in the stakeholders' perceptions of rural safety. The mention of "flooding" and "remote areas" highlights the unique challenges posed by the region's geography and climate.

Crime and violence emerge as significant concerns in the context of rural safety. Stakeholders identify various criminal activities, including farm attacks, stock theft, cable theft, and violence against farmworkers. The specific mention of "contact crimes" indicates a concern for direct, often violent, criminal encounters.

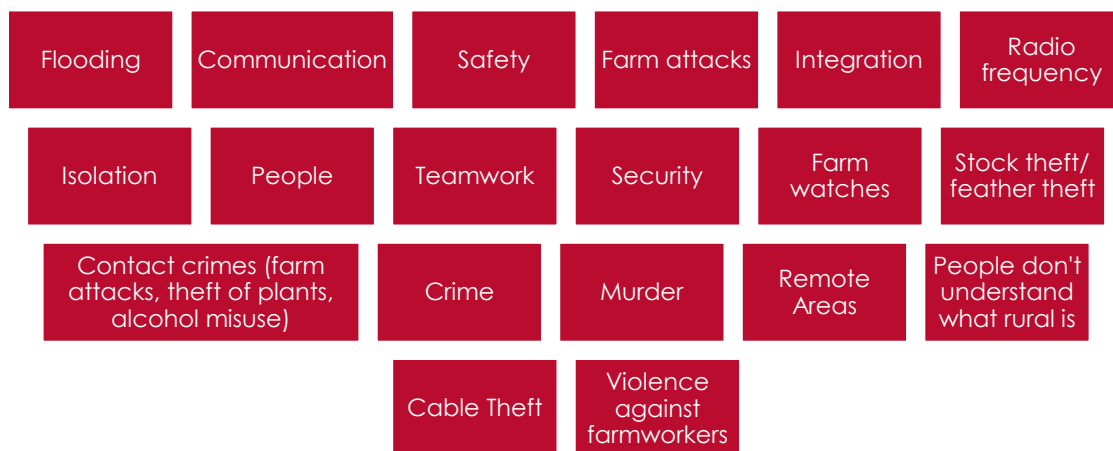
Communication and connectivity were also recurring themes in the stakeholders' associations with rural safety. The repeated mentions of "communication" and "radio frequency" underscore the critical role of effective communication systems in rural safety. This likely relates to emergency response capabilities and day-to-day coordination among safety stakeholders. The emphasis on communication highlights rural areas' unique challenges in maintaining reliable and effective communication networks, which are crucial for safety and emergency response.

Community involvement is recognised as a key component of rural safety. References to "farm watches," "teamwork," and "people" suggest an acknowledgement of the importance of

community participation in rural safety efforts. This indicates a grassroots approach to safety, where residents actively maintain security and respond to threats.

Interestingly, there's a note that "people don't understand what rural is," indicating a perceived gap between urban and rural perspectives on safety issues. This suggests that stakeholders feel that rural safety concerns and needs may be misunderstood or overlooked by those not familiar with the rural context, potentially impacting policymaking and resource allocation. Stakeholders noted that all strategy documents should clearly define rural and rural safety.

Figure 23: AGA West Coast – Rural Safety



Regarding rural safety interventions, the stakeholders' associations reveal a mix of strategic approaches and operational concerns. There's a strong emphasis on collaboration and coordination, including cooperation with police, coordinated responses, and structured approaches to safety interventions. This suggests a recognition that effective rural safety requires a well-organised, multi-stakeholder approach.

Resource constraints are highlighted in the context of interventions, with mentions of "availability of funds" and "resources (vehicles etc)." This underscores the perceived importance of adequate funding and equipment for effective interventions and may indicate shortfalls in these areas.

Communication challenges are also noted in the context of interventions, referencing "lack of communication." This suggests that improving communication is critical to enhancing rural safety, echoing the importance of communication in general safety perceptions.

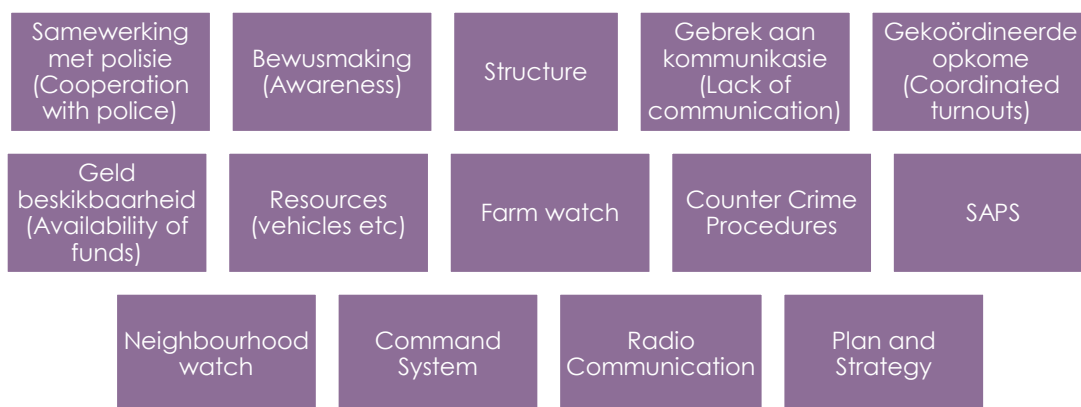
Community-based initiatives feature prominently in the intervention associations, with mentions of "farm watch" and "neighbourhood watch." This aligns with the community

involvement noted in the general safety perceptions and indicates a strong belief in the effectiveness of local, community-led safety efforts.

The mention of "plan and strategy" in the intervention context suggests an appreciation for well-thought-out, systematic approaches to rural safety. This indicates that stakeholders need comprehensive, strategic planning to address rural safety challenges.

Awareness and education were also highlighted, including "bewusmaking" (awareness), pointing to the perceived importance of informing and educating communities about safety issues and measures. This suggests a recognition that effective rural safety interventions must include efforts to build knowledge and capacity within the community.

Figure 24: AGA West Coast – Rural Safety Interventions



2.5.2. P-Index

The P-Index analysis for the West Coast region reveals a complex hierarchy of priorities for improving rural safety. The justice system is the highest priority, scoring 9.7 on the P-Index. Stakeholders expressed deep concerns about the effectiveness of the judicial process in addressing rural crime. They noted that the same crimes often recur without significant consequences for offenders, indicating a lack of deterrence. There's a perception that the justice system shows insufficient interest in rural cases, with offenders often receiving what stakeholders view as overly lenient punishments. A particularly troubling trend mentioned is the use of minors under 12 for criminal activities due to the lighter sentences they receive, highlighting a significant loophole in the current system.

SAPS resources rank second with a score of 9.0. Stakeholders emphasised the critical need for better resources to combat crime and ensure public safety. They pointed out that SAPS often lacks sufficient manpower, modern technology, and vehicles suitable for rural terrain. This

shortage of resources is seen as severely hampering law enforcement's ability to respond effectively to rural safety challenges.

The third highest priority is support from the national government, particularly in financial assistance, with a score of 8.6. While specific reasons weren't provided in the given context, this high ranking suggests a strong perception that national-level policies and funding allocations underserve rural areas.

The management of illegal foreign nationals ranks fourth with a score of 8.4. Stakeholders raised complex issues surrounding undocumented workers in rural areas. They noted that while farmers often protect these workers due to their productivity, there are concerns about criminal activities occurring after work hours. The difficulty in tracing undocumented individuals involved in crimes was highlighted as a significant challenge.

Accountability scores 8.3 on the P-Index. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of all parties involved in rural safety taking responsibility for their roles. This suggests a desire for more precise lines of responsibility and consequences for officials and community members to maintain rural safety.

Communication, with a score of 7.8, is seen as a critical area for improvement. Stakeholders reported difficulties contacting police stations, citing technical problems and poor signal coverage. They also noted inadequate information sharing between safety stakeholders, leading to fragmented responses to safety issues.

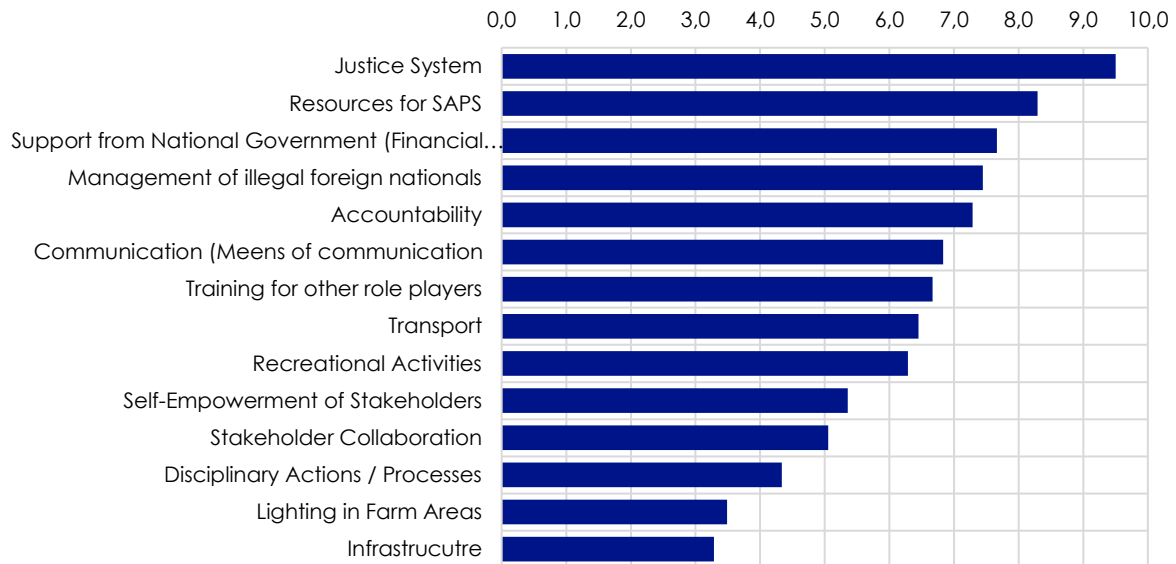
Training for other role players scores 7.7, reflecting a recognised need for capacity building. Stakeholders suggested that training should cover various aspects of safety management, including handling different situations, crime scene management, and effective communication protocols. They noted that the infrequency of major crimes in some areas leads to a loss of skills and readiness, suggesting a need for regular training and simulations.

Including recreational activities (scoring 7.4) in the P-Index is particularly noteworthy. Stakeholders highlighted the lack of activities for youth in farm areas, suggesting that this absence of positive engagement contributes to safety issues. This indicates an understanding that rural safety is not just about law enforcement but also about community development and youth engagement.

Issues like lighting in farm areas (5.1) and general infrastructure (4.5) are lower on the priority list but still significant. Stakeholders noted that many farms lack adequate lighting, making them vulnerable to nighttime criminal activities. While these physical infrastructure elements

are ranked lower, they are still considered essential components of a comprehensive rural safety strategy.

Figure 25: West Coast P-index



2.5.3. C-Index

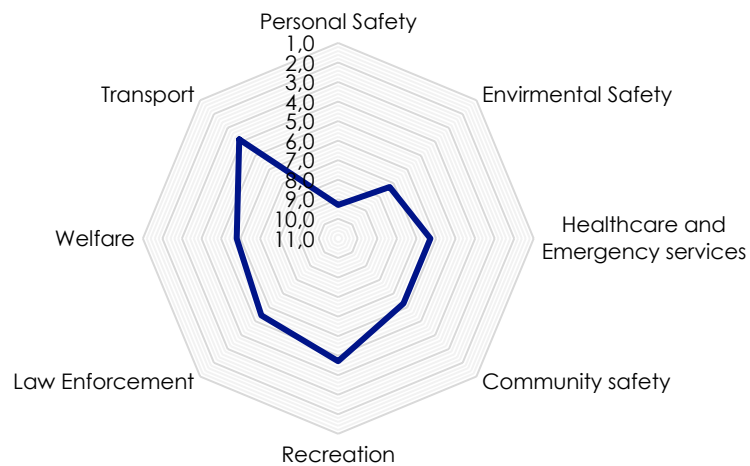
Personal safety emerges as the highest-rated aspect, with an impressive score of 9.3. This high rating suggests that residents generally feel secure in their immediate personal environments. Such a positive perception of personal safety is a significant strength for the region, indicating that individuals feel relatively safe in their day-to-day lives despite other challenges. This could be attributed to strong community bonds, effective local safety initiatives, or a low incidence of personal crimes.

Environmental safety receives a moderately high score of 7.3. This indicates a generally positive perception of the natural environment and regional management. Residents appear to feel relatively secure from environmental hazards, which is particularly notable given the mentions of flooding in the AGA responses. This score suggests that while there is room for improvement, current environmental safety measures and natural conditions are viewed favourably.

Healthcare and emergency services, along with community safety, both scored 6.3. This middling score indicates that while these services are not perceived as failing, there is significant room for enhancement. For healthcare and emergency services, this score might reflect challenges in accessibility or response times in rural areas. The same score for

community safety suggests that while residents don't feel overtly unsafe, they see notable areas for improvement in overall community security measures.

Figure 26: C-index – West Coast



Law enforcement receives a score of 5.4, slightly below the midpoint. This rating aligns with the high priority given to police resources in the P-Index. It suggests that while law enforcement efforts are recognised, there's a clear desire for improved policing services in rural areas. This could relate to issues like response times, the visibility of police, or the perceived effectiveness of law enforcement in addressing rural crime.

Welfare services score slightly higher at 5.8. This indicates that social support systems and welfare programs are perceived as inadequate. There may be challenges in accessing these services in rural areas or limitations in the types of support available.

Recreation scores a low 4.7, highlighting a significant area of dissatisfaction. This aligns with the concerns raised in the P-Index about the lack of activities for youth in rural areas. The low score underscores the need for more recreational facilities and programs, which could play a crucial role in community engagement and youth development.

Transport receives the lowest score of 3.8, indicating a critical area of dissatisfaction. This low rating likely reflects challenges with public transportation options, road conditions, or the difficulty of mobility in rural areas. Given the vast distances often involved in rural settings, this low score highlights a significant challenge for residents in accessing services, employment, and social opportunities.

2.5.4. Effectiveness

The overall effectiveness of current Rural Safety Intervention strategies is rated at 3.8, indicating a low level of perceived success. This score suggests that existing strategies are not meeting the expectations or needs of the rural communities. Similarly, interventions implemented by the POCs also receive a low score of 3.8, indicating that their efforts are not seen as particularly effective in addressing rural safety concerns.

Interventions implemented by the SAPS fare slightly worse, with a score of 3.7. This low rating aligns with the concerns about police resources highlighted in the P-Index. It suggests that despite the importance of SAPS in rural safety, their current interventions are not perceived as adequately addressing the safety needs of rural communities.

The Rural Safety Desk and the Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard receive even lower scores of 2.6 and 2.4, respectively. These particularly low ratings indicate a lack of awareness about these initiatives and significant shortcomings in the implementation and effectiveness. Similarly, the Rural Safety Pocket Guide distribution scores only 2.5, suggesting that this resource is either not widely distributed or stakeholders do not know about the intervention.

Rural Safety Awareness and information-sharing efforts score slightly higher at 3.3, but this is still a low rating, indicating substantial room for improvement in how safety information is communicated and shared within rural communities.

On a more positive note, the trust and involvement of stakeholders and community members receive a moderate score of 5.5. While this indicates room for improvement, it suggests a foundation of community engagement that could be built upon for more effective safety interventions.

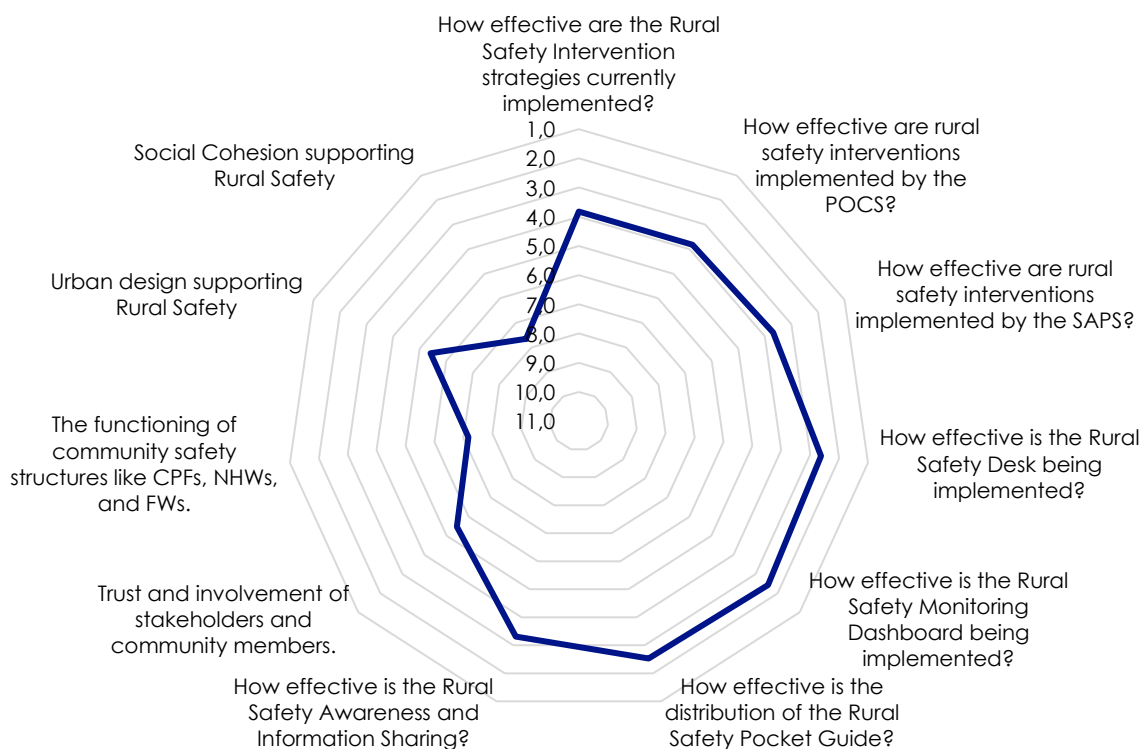
The functioning of community safety structures like CPFs, NHWs, and FWs receives a relatively high score of 7.2. This is one of the more positive ratings, indicating that these community-based structures are seen as relatively effective in contributing to rural safety. This aligns with the emphasis on community involvement noted in the AGA responses.

Urban design supporting Rural Safety scores a moderate 5.4, suggesting that while there is some recognition of the role of environmental design in safety, there is significant room for improvement in how urban planning principles are applied to enhance rural safety.

Interestingly, social cohesion supporting rural safety received the highest score of 7.6. This suggests that community bonds and social structures are significant contributors to rural safety,

aligning with the importance placed on community involvement in other aspects of the analysis. Rural safety stakeholders in the

Figure 27: Rural Safety Interventions Effectiveness – West Coast



2.5.5. Additional Comments

The stakeholders in the West Coast region provided valuable insights and recommendations for measuring and improving rural safety. Their comments reflect a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced in rural areas and offer practical suggestions for enhancing safety strategies.

Regarding measuring rural safety and the success of interventions, stakeholders emphasised the importance of quantitative and qualitative metrics. They suggested benchmarking crime statistics against previous data to track progress over time. This approach would allow for a clear, data-driven assessment of whether safety interventions reduce crime rates. However,

they also recognised that numbers alone don't tell the full story. Stakeholders proposed evaluating residents' overall perception of safety, acknowledging that feelings of security are as important as statistical improvements.

Interestingly, the stakeholders also suggested considering economic factors as indicators of safety improvements. They noted that increased property values in safer areas could be a tangible measure of improved safety conditions. This approach recognises the interconnection between safety and economic development. Additionally, they proposed monitoring economic development indicators such as employment rates, suggesting that improved safety conditions could lead to better economic opportunities and vice versa.

The stakeholders emphasised the importance of regular communication and assessment. They recommended conducting round table meetings to gather qualitative feedback from community members and stakeholders. This approach would ensure that the voices of those directly affected by rural safety issues are heard and considered in the evaluation process.

Stakeholders stressed the importance of comprehensive and inclusive data collection methods for measuring rural safety changes. They suggested using a centralised database to compile and analyse safety-related information from various sources. This centralised approach would allow for a more holistic view of rural safety trends and challenges.

An important point raised was the need to measure crime rates per head rather than per capita. This nuanced approach recognises the unique demographic characteristics of rural areas and ensures that crime statistics accurately reflect the reality on the ground. Stakeholders also emphasised the importance of encouraging the reporting of all crimes, recognising that underreporting can skew perceptions and responses to rural safety issues.

When discussing the key objectives and outcomes to be achieved, stakeholders focused on three main areas: growth, feeling safe, and creating a peaceful environment. These objectives highlight the multifaceted nature of rural safety, encompassing crime prevention, community well-being, and development.

To achieve these objectives, stakeholders recommended several activities and deliverables. They stressed the importance of engaging all stakeholders from top to bottom, ensuring that safety strategies are inclusive and reflective of diverse perspectives. Improving communication among stakeholders was seen as crucial, with an emphasis on moving beyond paperwork to practical implementation.

Stakeholders also suggested looking into the Sector Policing Strategy as a potential model for rural safety interventions. This approach could help tailor safety strategies to the specific needs of different rural sectors. Additionally, they recommended conducting more inceptions and educating people on appropriate building practices, recognising the role of infrastructure and urban planning in rural safety.

Resource constraints were identified as a significant challenge in addressing rural safety. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of adjusting resource allocation based on population growth in different areas. They also stressed the need to consider the ratio of protection services to population, ensuring that rural areas have adequate law enforcement coverage. To address accessibility issues, they suggested establishing more remote satellite stations in isolated areas.

In identifying key role players for rural safety, stakeholders provided a comprehensive list, including various government departments, community organisations, and service providers. Finally, stakeholders offered several recommendations for a Rural Safety Strategy. They emphasised the need for a clear definition of rural safety to ensure a shared understanding among all stakeholders. They suggested leveraging the experience of retired police officers to guide the implementation of the strategy in different areas. Importantly, they stressed the need for alignment with existing strategies, such as those of SAPS and POCS, to ensure a cohesive and coordinated approach to rural safety.

2.5.6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of personal safety perception • Strong community-based safety structures • High social cohesion supporting rural safety • Commitment and dedication of role players • Relatively good environmental safety perception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective justice system • Lack of resources for SAPS • Poor communication between stakeholders • Inadequate management of illegal foreign nationals • Low effectiveness of current rural safety intervention strategies • Poor transportation infrastructure • Lack of recreational facilities and activities

Opportunities:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for improved collaboration among stakeholders • Room for enhancement of community-based safety initiatives • Possibility of leveraging technology for better communication and monitoring • Potential for economic development through improved safety measures • Scope for better integration of urban design principles in rural safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent crime issues, including farm attacks and stock theft • Environmental challenges such as flooding • Isolation of remote areas • Potential increase in organised crime moving from urban to rural areas • Challenges posed by undocumented foreign nationals • Resource constraints impacting the implementation of safety measures

3. Findings

3.1.1. Stakeholder Perception of Rural Safety

Based on the Associated Group Analysis (AGA) results of WC regions, stakeholders perceive rural safety as a complex, multifaceted issue encompassing various challenges and concerns. Crime and violence emerge as prominent themes, with stakeholders consistently mentioning issues such as farm attacks, stock theft, and domestic violence. Environmental and geographic factors also significantly shape perceptions of rural safety, with flooding, fires, and the challenges of remote areas frequently cited. Substance abuse, particularly drug and alcohol-related issues, is widely recognised as a major contributor to safety concerns in rural communities.

Stakeholders consistently emphasise the critical importance of effective communication and connectivity in ensuring rural safety. Robust communication networks and systems are seen as essential for coordinating responses to safety threats and emergencies. Infrastructure and emergency services are also key concerns, with stakeholders highlighting inadequate road conditions, insufficient police stations in remote areas, and limited access to healthcare facilities as significant challenges to rural safety.

Community involvement is widely recognised as a crucial component of rural safety, with farm watches, neighbourhood watches, and community policing forums frequently mentioned as important initiatives. However, there is also a perception that rural safety issues are often misunderstood or overlooked by those unfamiliar with the rural context, potentially impacting policymaking and resource allocation.

Socioeconomic factors, including unemployment, poverty, and housing issues, contribute to rural safety challenges. The management of undocumented foreign nationals is also a recurring concern, with stakeholders noting the complex dynamics this introduces to rural communities and safety efforts.

Overall, the AGA results reveal that stakeholders in the WC view rural safety as an interconnected system of social, economic, environmental, and infrastructural factors that require a comprehensive and collaborative approach to address effectively.

3.1.2. Services, facilities or actions needed in rural areas to promote rural safety

The comprehensive priority list for rural safety in the Western Cape has been developed using a sophisticated methodology that combines stakeholder input with frequency of mention. This approach ensures that both the perceived importance and the widespread recognition of issues are factored into the final prioritisation.

The calculation process involved two key components: the Priority and Frequency scores. The Priority score was derived from the difference between the Importance and Satisfaction ratings provided by stakeholders. This score reflects the gap between how critical an issue is perceived to be and how well it is currently being addressed. The Frequency score, on the other hand, represents how often a particular issue was mentioned across various stakeholder engagements. To make these scores comparable, the Frequency was normalized by dividing each value by the maximum Frequency (17) and then multiplying by 11, aligning it with the scale of the Priority score.

The final weighted average score was calculated by giving equal weight (50%) to both the Priority score and the normalised Frequency score. This balanced approach ensures that issues that are both critically important and widely recognised receive the highest priority.

Based on this methodology, the top priority for rural safety in the Western Cape is Law Enforcement Resources, with a weighted average score of 9.2. Stakeholders consistently emphasised the critical need for improved policing capabilities in rural areas. They cited understaffing, lack of vehicles, and inadequate equipment as significant hindrances to effective law enforcement. One stakeholder from Swellendam noted, "We have vast areas to cover with minimal resources. Sometimes, we can't respond to calls because all our vehicles are already out on other cases." This high priority reflects the fundamental role that visible and responsive policing plays in ensuring rural safety.

The second highest priority is Healthcare and Emergency Services, scoring 6.5. This reflects the unique challenges rural communities face in accessing timely medical care and emergency response. A community member from Vredendal shared, "Sometimes we wait hours for an ambulance to arrive. In emergencies, those hours can mean the difference between life and death." The high ranking of this issue underscores the interconnectedness of healthcare access and overall community safety.

Rural Infrastructure and Transport rank third with a score of 5.9. Stakeholders frequently mentioned poor road conditions and a lack of public transportation as significant barriers to safety. A stakeholder from the Central Karoo explained, "When roads are impassable, it's not just inconvenient—it prevents police and emergency services from reaching us quickly." This priority highlights how basic infrastructure is crucial in facilitating safety and security in rural areas.

Implementation and Prioritisation, along with Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation, score 5.6, tying for the fourth highest priority. The high ranking of implementation issues reflects frustration with the gap between policy and practice. As one CPF member from Mosselbay said, "We have good strategies on paper, but they often fall apart in execution." The equal prioritisation of substance abuse issues indicates a growing recognition of the link between addiction and rural crime rates.

Police stations and satellite offices, also scoring 5.6, round out the top five. This priority reflects the desire for increased police presence and accessibility in remote areas. A community leader from Suurbraak emphasised, "Having a visible police presence, even if it's just a small satellite office, makes a huge difference in deterring crime and making people feel safe."

This prioritised list provides a clear roadmap for addressing rural safety concerns in the Western Cape. It balances immediate needs for improved law enforcement with longer-term investments in healthcare, infrastructure, and social services. By addressing these priorities, stakeholders believe significant strides can be made in enhancing the safety and security of rural communities across the province.

Figure 28: Top Rural Safety Priorities

Need	Importance	Satisfaction	Priority	Frequency	Normalised Frequency	Weighted Average
Law Enforcement Resources	10.5	3.1	7.5	17	11.000	9.2
Healthcare and Emergency Services	10.7	2.3	8.4	7	4.529	6.5
Rural Infrastructure and Transport	10.5	2.5	8.0	6	3.882	5.9

Need	Importance	Satisfaction	Priority	Frequency	Normalised Frequency	Weighted Average
Implementation and Prioritisation	11.0	1.0	10.0	2	1.294	5.6
Substance abuse and rehabilitation	11.0	1.0	10.0	2	1.294	5.6
Police Stations and satellite offices	10.5	1.2	9.3	3	1.941	5.6
Justice System	10.9	1.9	9.0	3	1.941	5.5
Red Tape	11.0	1.0	10.0	1	0.647	5.3
Technology and Surveillance	10.7	2.3	8.4	2	1.294	4.9
Management of Foreign Nationals	10.6	2.3	8.3	2	1.294	4.8
Community Safety Structures Support	10.1	3.9	6.2	5	3.235	4.7
Housing	10.8	2.3	8.4	1	0.647	4.5
Focusing on petty crimes (Stock theft, cable theft)	10.4	3.4	7.1	3	1.941	4.5
Connectivity	10.4	4.6	5.9	4	2.588	4.2
School Education (safety in schools, attendance and agriculture education)	9.9	4.0	5.9	4	2.588	4.2
Support from the National Government	11.0	3.3	7.7	1	0.647	4.2
Stakeholder Collaboration and Accountability	10.9	6.4	4.6	5	3.235	3.9
Training and Education for Framers and Farmworkers	10.3	3.5	6.8	1	0.647	3.7
Recreation and Food Security	9.8	4.6	5.2	3	1.941	3.6
Vulnerable Population Care Facilities	8.5	2.7	5.8	2	1.294	3.6
Specialised Units (K9 Unit)	8.0	2.4	5.7	2	1.294	3.5
Water safety	9.6	3.3	6.3	1	0.647	3.5
Self-Empowerment of Stakeholders	10.6	5.2	5.4	1	0.647	3.0

3.1.3. Effectiveness of Rural Safety Interventions

The effectiveness of rural safety intervention strategies currently implemented in the WC shows significant variation across regions and between the Technical Committee. This variation underscores the complexity of implementing uniform strategies across diverse rural contexts.

A wide range of perceptions were observed when examining the effectiveness of current rural safety intervention strategies. The Technical Committee provided a moderate rating of 4.5 out of 11, suggesting room for improvement. However, regional assessments varied dramatically. The Garden Route stakeholders rated the effectiveness much higher at 8.2, indicating a positive perception of current strategies in that area. In contrast, the West Coast and Central Karoo regions gave lower ratings of 3.8 and 4.2, respectively, suggesting that current strategies are perceived as less effective in these areas. The Overberg region fell in between with a rating of 6.8.

This disparity in ratings could be attributed to several factors:

- Local context: Strategies' effectiveness may vary depending on each region's challenges and resources.
- Implementation differences: There might be variations in how strategies are implemented across different areas.
- Communication gaps: The lower ratings in some regions could indicate a lack of awareness or understanding of the implemented strategies.
- Resource allocation: Differences in available resources across regions could impact the effectiveness of strategy implementation.

The effectiveness of interventions implemented by the POCS and SAPS also showed variation but generally aligned with the overall strategy effectiveness ratings for each region. This suggests a correlation between the perceived effectiveness of these key institutions and the overall rural safety strategies.

Notably, there are significant discrepancies in the perceived effectiveness of specific interventions such as the Rural Safety Desk, the Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard, and the Rural Safety Pocket Guide distribution. While the Technical Committee gave moderate to good ratings for these (2.7, 6.0, and 7.0, respectively), stakeholders in most regions gave extremely low ratings, often 1.0 or close to it. This stark contrast suggests a significant gap between the intended impact of these interventions and their actual effectiveness or visibility on the ground.

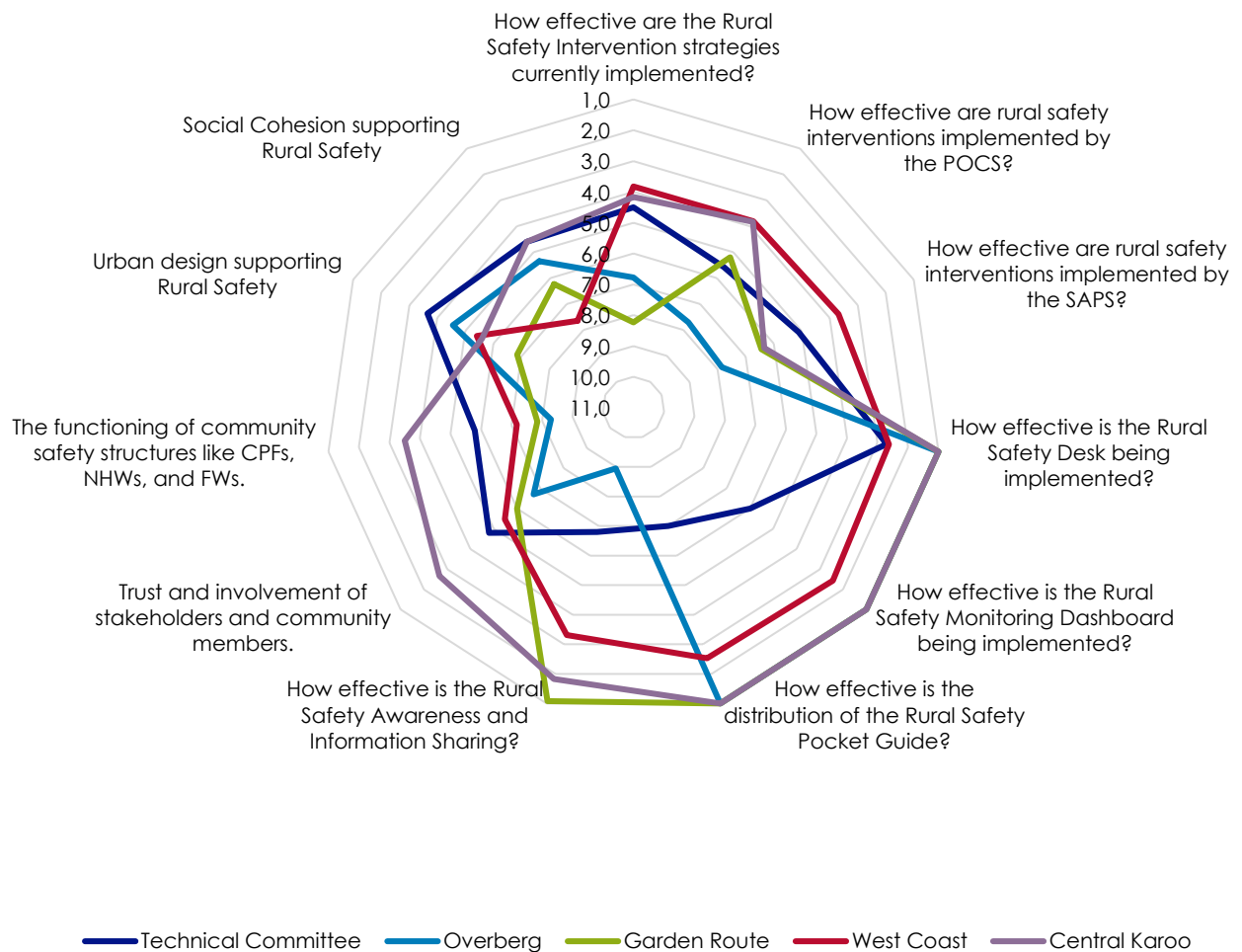
Community-based safety structures like CPFs, NHWs, and FWs generally received higher effectiveness ratings across most regions than other interventions. This indicates that locally driven, community-based approaches are perceived as more effective in addressing rural safety concerns.

The effectiveness of current rural safety intervention strategies in the WC appears to be moderate at best, with significant room for improvement. While some regions, notably the Garden Route, perceive the strategies as quite effective, others, like the West Coast and Central Karoo, see them as largely ineffective. The wide disparity in ratings across regions and between the Technical Committee and local stakeholders suggests that the strategies are not uniformly effective or well-implemented across the province.

The data indicates that while there are pockets of success, significant gaps exist in the implementation, awareness, or relevance of specific interventions in many areas. Community-based approaches seem to be more consistently effective across regions. There's a clear need

to bridge the gap between the Technical Committee's perceptions and the on-the-ground realities experienced by local stakeholders.

Figure 29: Effectiveness of Rural Safety Interventions



3.1.4. SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Strong community-based initiatives: Across regions, there's evidence of active Community Policing Forums (CPF), Neighborhood Watches (NHWs), and Farm Watches (FWs).
- High level of personal safety perception: Most regions reported relatively high scores for personal safety, indicating that individuals generally feel secure in their immediate environments.

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- Good partnerships and cooperation: Several regions noted effective collaboration between various stakeholders in rural safety efforts.
 - Effective communication networks: WhatsApp groups and other local communication channels were highlighted as a strength in some areas.
 - Strong social cohesion: Social cohesion was seen as a significant contributor to rural safety, particularly in regions like the West Coast.
 - Pockets of excellence: The Technical Committee noted "pockets of excellence" in rural safety initiatives.

Weaknesses:

- Resource constraints: Across all regions, there were consistent reports of inadequate resources for SAPS, including manpower, vehicles, and equipment.
- Ineffective justice system: Multiple regions highlighted concerns about the leniency of the justice system and its inability to deter repeat offenders.
- Poor healthcare and emergency services: Most regions reported low satisfaction with healthcare and emergency services in rural areas.
- Inadequate infrastructure: Poor road conditions, lack of street lighting, and insufficient police stations in remote areas were commonly reported.
- Lack of recreational facilities: Most regions noted a significant lack of recreational facilities and activities, especially for youth.
- Poor implementation of specific interventions: The Rural Safety Desk, Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard, and Rural Safety Pocket Guide were consistently rated ineffective across regions.
- Communication gaps: Despite some strengths in local communication, there were reports of poor communication between different stakeholders and levels of government.

Opportunities:

- Improved technology implementation: There's potential to leverage technologies like CCTV cameras, drones, and improved communication systems (e.g., Starlink) for better rural safety.
- Enhanced stakeholder engagement: Many regions suggested improving collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders.
- Development of youth programs: Addressing the lack of youth activities could improve safety outcomes.
- Strengthening community safety structures: There's potential to empower further and resource community-based initiatives like CPFs, NHWs, and FWs.

- Improved urban design supporting rural safety: Some regions saw potential in applying urban design principles to enhance rural safety.
- Economic development through safety improvements: Some stakeholders suggested that improved safety could bring economic benefits, such as increased property values and employment opportunities.
- Alignment of strategies: There's an opportunity to better align rural safety strategies with existing SAPS and POCS strategies.

Threats:

- Persistent crime issues: Farm attacks, stock theft, and other rural crimes pose significant threats.
- Environmental hazards: Several regions face threats from natural disasters such as floods and fires.
- Substance abuse: Drug and alcohol abuse was consistently mentioned as a major threat to rural safety.
- Socio-economic challenges: Unemployment, poverty, and lack of opportunities, especially for youth, were seen as underlying threats to rural safety.
- Changing nature of agricultural land use: Some regions noted concerns about changing land use patterns affecting rural communities.
- Influx of undocumented foreign nationals: Several regions highlighted challenges related to managing undocumented foreign nationals in rural areas.
- Organized crime: There were concerns about organized crime groups moving from urban to rural areas.
- Isolation of remote areas: The vast distances and isolation of some rural areas pose ongoing safety and service delivery challenges.

3.1.5. Recommendations for WC Rural Safety Strategy

Indicators that should be used to measure change in rural safety interventions:

- Reduction in crime statistics, particularly for rural-specific crimes like farm attacks and stock theft
- Improved response times for emergency services and law enforcement
- Increase in successful prosecutions and convictions for rural crimes
- Higher community satisfaction ratings with safety and security services
- Increased participation in community safety structures (CPFs, NHWs, FWs)
- Economic indicators such as rural property values and local business growth

-
- Reduction in substance abuse rates
 - Improved youth engagement in positive activities
 - Enhanced environmental safety measures (e.g., better flood and fire management)

Appropriate ways of gathering information for measuring change:

- Establish a centralised database for compiling and analysing safety-related information from various sources
- Conduct regular stakeholder surveys and focus groups to gather qualitative feedback
- Implement a standardised reporting system across all rural safety structures
- Utilize technology for real-time data collection (e.g., mobile apps for incident reporting)
- Leverage existing community networks (churches, clinics, local shops) as information points
- Conduct annual comprehensive rural safety audits
- Monitor social media and community WhatsApp groups for real-time insights
- Encourage and simplify the process for reporting all crimes, including minor incidents

Key role-players that should take responsibility for rural safety implementation:

- South African Police Service (SAPS)
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Community Safety
- Local municipalities
- Community Policing Forums (CPFs)
- Neighbourhood Watches (NHWs) and Farm Watches (FWs)
- Department of Justice
- Department of Social Development
- Local farmers and agricultural associations
- Rural community leaders and traditional authorities
- Private security companies operating in rural areas
- Emergency services (fire, ambulance)
- Department of Home Affairs (for issues related to undocumented foreign nationals)
- NGOs and faith-based organisations active in rural communities

Key outputs and outcomes to be achieved by the rural safety strategy:

- Reduced crime rates in rural areas, particularly for farm attacks and stock theft
- Improved emergency response times in rural areas
- Enhanced community cohesion and active participation in safety initiatives

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- Increased trust between rural communities and law enforcement
 - Better-resourced and more effective rural policing
 - Improved infrastructure supporting rural safety (roads, communication networks, lighting)
 - Successful rehabilitation and reintegration programs for offenders
 - Increased economic stability and growth in rural areas
 - Enhanced youth engagement and reduced substance abuse
 - Improved management of environmental safety risks

Resource constraints that hinder the implementation of rural safety interventions:

- Insufficient funding for rural safety initiatives
- Lack of suitable vehicles for rural terrain
- Shortage of trained personnel, especially in specialised areas like forensics
- Inadequate communication infrastructure in remote areas
- Limited access to modern technology and equipment for law enforcement
- Insufficient rehabilitation centres and safe houses in rural areas
- Lack of recreational facilities and youth programs
- Inadequate healthcare facilities and emergency services in remote areas

Other recommendations from stakeholders specific to the development of a rural safety strategy for the WC:

- Clearly define "rural" and "rural safety" to ensure a shared understanding among all stakeholders
- Leverage the experience of retired police officers to guide strategy implementation in different areas
- Ensure alignment with existing strategies (e.g., SAPS, POCS) for a cohesive approach
- Implement a practical, hands-on approach to strategy rollout involving all stakeholders
- Address the living conditions and rights of farm workers as part of the broader rural safety context
- Develop sustainable projects that contribute to long-term safety and economic development
- Improve the accountability of legal professionals and address perceived imbalances in the justice system
- Enhance Early Childhood Development sectors as a long-term strategy for community well-being
- Consider involving the army in supporting rural safety efforts in high-risk areas
- Implement stricter punishment for rural crimes to act as a deterrent

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- Develop specific strategies to address the unique challenges posed by undocumented foreign nationals in rural areas
 - Improve facilities for joint operations in specific high-risk rural areas
 - Ensure the strategy caters to all rural communities, not just commercial farming areas
 - Implement regular and transparent progress reporting on the strategy's implementation

4. Conclusion

The stakeholder engagement process across the WC has provided invaluable insights into the province's complex landscape of rural safety. Participants from various regions highlighted common challenges, including resource constraints, inadequate infrastructure, and the need for improved coordination among stakeholders. While there are pockets of excellence and strong community-based initiatives, the effectiveness of current rural safety interventions varies significantly across regions. The stakeholders' recommendations emphasise the importance of a holistic approach that addresses law enforcement, socio-economic factors, youth engagement, and environmental safety. Developing a comprehensive rural safety strategy for the WC should prioritise clear definitions, sustainable projects, and improved accountability while ensuring alignment with existing strategies and catering to the diverse needs of all rural communities. Addressing the identified priorities and leveraging the strengths of community involvement have significant potential to enhance rural safety and promote the overall well-being of rural residents in the WC.

Annexure B: Literature Review

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Rural safety is a complex and multifaceted issue encompassing various aspects of rural communities' security and well-being. While often perceived as peaceful and crime-free, rural areas face unique safety challenges compared to urban environments. These challenges extend beyond crime to include personal safety, environmental safety, community safety, access to emergency services, and psychological and emotional well-being.

In recent decades, researchers have shown increasing interest in crime and safety issues in rural areas. A systematic review by Abraham and Ceccato (2022) of the English-language literature on rural crime and safety from 1980 to 2020 highlighted the diversity of rural contexts globally and the need for context-specific approaches to address rural crime and safety challenges.

Rural safety has become a priority in South Africa (SA), particularly in the WC (WC), due to its significant impact on the agricultural sector and rural communities. The WC Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) has recognised the need to address rural safety issues, even though it falls outside their traditional mandate.

1.2. Objective of the Literature Review

The literature review aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of rural safety issues, with a particular focus on the WC context. The objectives of this review are to:

- Examine the existing legislative and policy frameworks relevant to rural safety.
- Analyse the nature and extent of crime in rural areas, including organised criminal activities.
- Identify socio-economic drivers and non-crime factors impacting rural safety.
- Explore various interventions and strategies implemented in South Africa and internationally to address rural safety challenges.
- Provide insights to inform the development of effective rural safety strategies for the WC.

The review draws on various sources, including academic literature, government reports, and case studies from multiple countries. By synthesising this information, the review aims to answer the following research questions:

- What are the drivers of crime in rural areas?
- What are the socio-economic factors leading to crime?
- What is the relationship between urban and farming areas pertaining to crime in rural areas?
- What is the nature and extent of organised crime in rural areas?
- What rural safety plans/strategies/measures have been implemented elsewhere?
- What other factors, apart from crime, threaten safety in rural areas?

2. Legislative Framework

Developing a rural safety strategy for the WCG must consider existing legislative and policy frameworks. The following legislations and policies are relevant to rural safety in South Africa.:

2.1. The Constitution of South Africa, 1996

As the nation's supreme law, the Constitution of South Africa sets the foundation for all laws and policies. Several aspects of the Constitution are particularly relevant to rural safety:

- Section 12(c) guarantees the right to freedom and security for all citizens, including those in rural areas.
- Section 9 upholds the principle of equality before the law, prohibiting unfair discrimination. This means that the rural safety strategy should focus on safety and ensure that all residents, regardless of their background, have equal access to justice.
- Section 34 guarantees everyone the right to access courts and tribunals, emphasising the need for improved access to justice in rural communities.
- The Constitution enshrines various socio-economic rights, such as the right to education, social security, and housing, which are crucial for addressing underlying challenges in rural areas.
- Chapter 3 provides for cooperative governance and intergovernmental relations, highlighting the need for collaboration between national, provincial, and local government entities in addressing rural safety.

2.2. The South African Police Service (SAPS) Act (Act No 68 of 1995)

The South African Police Service (SAPS) Act governs the operation of the Police Service and is central to addressing crime in rural areas:

- It outlines the mandate to prevent, combat, protect, and investigate crime in South Africa, including rural areas.
- The objectives include maintaining public order, protecting citizens, and preventing crime.
- The Act provides for establishing Community Policing Forums (CPF), which aim to promote community-police partnerships and enhance local rural safety initiatives.

2.3. National Disaster Management Act (NDMA) (Act No.57 of 2002)

While not explicitly focused on rural safety, the NDMA contains elements relevant to rural safety strategies:

- It provides a comprehensive policy for disaster risk reduction and mitigation. The WCG's rural safety strategy can include a provision that focuses on building the capacity of local authorities, emergency services, community members, and other relevant parties, equipping them with skills to respond to rural safety threats effectively.
- The Act includes capacity building and risk management provisions, which can be applied to rural safety contexts.
- It emphasises the importance of conducting risk assessments to identify existing hazards and vulnerabilities, which can guide the development of rural safety strategies.

The rural safety strategy must align with these constitutional principles and legislative frameworks to ensure it is comprehensive, inclusive, and cognizant of the rights and needs of rural communities. Furthermore, it must address implementation challenges, socio-economic factors, and resource constraints that impact the effectiveness of safety measures in rural areas.

By considering these legislative frameworks, the WC Government can develop a rural safety strategy that is not only legally compliant but also effectively addresses the unique challenges rural communities face.

3. Broader Strategic Imperatives

Developing a rural safety strategy for the WC must be aligned with broader national and provincial strategic imperatives. The following outlines key strategic documents and initiatives that provide context for rural safety efforts.

3.1. National Development Plan (NDP) 2030

Chapter 12 of the NDP specifically addresses rural safety, stipulating that the safety of rural and farming communities requires special attention. It outlines crime and safety risks in rural areas, such as the distance between rural areas and governmental resources and courts, the isolation of rural police stations and the fact that they are responsible for vast areas and lack of resources to attend to domestic violence and child protection issues, among other things. The NDP emphasises the need for greater coordination between stakeholders such as agricultural unions, farmers organisations, community policing forums and the South African Police Services. The rural safety strategy must align with the goals of the NDP and aim to address not only the roots of crime and rural safety concerns but also outline the approach that must be taken to address these in rural areas.

3.2. National Rural Safety Strategy (NRSS) 2019

The NRSS provides critical guidance for developing rural safety strategies. The NRSS has identified best practices and strategies that can be used to enhance rural safety. It also discusses risk assessment, resource allocation, and monitoring and evaluation, among other things, which are all key when developing a rural safety strategy for the WCG. The NRSS also cognates the need to adapt to the local context. Therefore, it can be utilised as a guide but must be tailored to the unique challenges, opportunities and overall WC context. By leveraging the NRSS, particularly the guidance and insights contained in it, the WCG can formulate a rural safety strategy that is comprehensive, locally relevant and evidence-based.

3.3. WC Department of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2020-2025

The WCG's Provincial Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 outlines the government's vision and strategic priorities for the province over the next five years. The 5-year Strategic Plan positions the WCDoA to respond to the key trends, unlock the agricultural sector's potential, and

contribute to safety, jobs, empowerment, spatial transformation and innovation in an integrated manner with all stakeholders.

The Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap to achieve its vision of a united, responsive and prosperous agricultural sector in harmony with nature through targeted programmes and partnerships. By focusing on the 5 key Vision Inspired Priorities and Outcomes and implementing a range of interventions across its programmes, the Department aims to grow the sector and improve the lives and livelihoods of farmers, agri-workers and communities across the province.

The WCG has implemented a Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in 16 rural nodes to create vibrant and sustainable rural communities. This program coordinates provincial departments and municipalities to deliver services in a coordinated way, implement economic, social and infrastructure projects to facilitate economic growth, improve food security, and provide skills training for unemployed people and Agri-workers in selected rural areas.

3.4. WC Government Safety Plan

The WCG Safety Plan aims to address the high levels of violent crime in the province. The plan has two main focus areas: enhancing law enforcement capacity and addressing the root causes of violence through prevention initiatives.

The Plan acknowledges that the Minister of Agriculture is responsible for rolling out a rural safety plan as one of the Safety Priorities. The Safety Plan takes a data-driven, evidence-based approach to deploying resources and implementing interventions. It emphasizes partnerships across government departments, communities, and the private sector. The plan outlines various Safety Priorities assigned to different provincial ministers, covering youth development, education, health, urban planning, and more.

A key element is deploying 3,000 additional law enforcement officers and 150 investigators to crime hotspots. On the prevention side, initiatives focus on early childhood development, youth programs, school safety, and addressing issues like substance abuse.

The plan will be overseen by a "Safety Cabinet" chaired by the Premier, with regular reporting on metrics to track progress. The document presents a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to improving safety in the WC, with rural safety included as one component of the broader strategy.

3.5. WC Community Safety Plans

These safety plans emphasise improving the visibility and responsiveness of law enforcement, addressing socio-economic factors contributing to crime, enhancing community participation, identifying priority areas and tasks, and developing a local crime prevention partnership, among other things. The plans can be included in the rural safety strategy to be developed for the WC Government, ensuring the safety and well-being of citizens in rural areas.

3.6. Integrated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy 2022

The Integrated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy (ICVPS) is the implementation mechanism for the 2016 White Paper on Safety and Security in South Africa. It provides a comprehensive approach and mechanism for implementing an integrated response to the prevention of crime and violence, a crucial precondition for increasing citizen's feelings of safety and building safer communities for improved social development and sustainable economic growth.

The ICVPS is significant because it takes cognisance of the fact that socio-economic contributors to the risks associated with crime and violence go far beyond the scope and mandate of the SAPS and include a multiplicity of risk factors, which must be adequately addressed in collaboration with all stakeholders. The objective of the ICVPS is to promote the implementation of an integrated, developmental, collaborative, knowledge and evidence-based approach to crime and violence in South Africa. Therefore, it is imperative that all the stakeholders, including communities, civil society organisations, business community, traditional leaders and public institutions in all spheres of government, are committed to achieving the objectives of the ICVPS because they are all needed to implement this strategy effectively.

The integrated approach acknowledges the need for complementary interventions to address a multiplicity of socio-economic factors contributing towards crime and violence by addressing inequality, poverty, and unemployment and improving education, health and social welfare. The impact of crime and violence risk factors on a person's life, including the individual, community, environmental, structural, cultural and social dimensions, hinders human and economic development.

3.7. National Disaster Management Framework, 2005

The National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) is a legal instrument specified by the Act to address the need for consistency across multiple interest groups by providing (as stipulated in section 7(1)) a 'coherent, transparent and inclusive policy on disaster management appropriate for the Republic as a whole'.

The NDMF acknowledges the diversity of risks and disasters that occur in southern Africa, and it prioritises developmental measures that aim to reduce the vulnerability of disaster-prone areas, communities, and households. It is drafted in line with international best practices and explicitly emphasises the disaster risk reduction concepts of disaster prevention and mitigation as the core principles providing guidance in risk management in South Africa. The NDMF also informs the subsequent development of provincial and municipal disaster management frameworks and plans.

The NDMF comprises four key performance areas (KPA) and three supportive enablers required to achieve the objectives set out in the KPAs. KPA 1 focuses on establishing necessary institutional arrangements for implementing disaster risk management within the national, provincial and municipal spheres of government. KP2 addresses the need for disaster risk assessment and monitoring to set priorities, guide risk reduction action and constantly monitor the effectiveness of efforts. KP3 introduces disaster risk management planning and implementation to inform approaches, plans, projects and programmes that are developmentally oriented and reduce disaster risks. KP4 provides implementation priorities that are concerned with disaster response, recovery, and rehabilitation.

Enabler 1 focuses on priorities related to establishing an integrated and comprehensive information management and communication system for disaster risk management. Enabler 2 addresses disaster risk management priorities in training, education, public awareness, and research, while Enabler 3 outlines the available mechanisms for funding disaster risk management in the Republic.

3.8. WC Disaster Management Framework

The WC Disaster Management Framework (WCDMF) is consistent with the requirements specified in the NDMF. It comprises four key performance areas (KPAs) and three supporting enablers necessary to achieve the objectives set out in the KPAs. The WCDMF's structure is similar to that of the NDMF, and the KPAs and three enablers serve the same purpose and have the same objectives as those found in the NDMF.

The WC official framework known as *Ikapa Elihlumayo* (i.e., the Growing Cape) explicitly prioritises building social and human capital and enhancing economic participation and growth to achieve benefits across different communities and sectors within the WC. The WCDMF seeks to add value to *Ikapa Elihlumayo* through its emphasis on vulnerability reduction in disaster-prone areas, communities and households, together with its focus on integrating disaster prevention and risk reduction efforts into ongoing development initiatives.

3.9. Integrated Rural Development Sector Strategy 2023

The Integrated Rural Development Sector Strategy (IRDSS) is an important strategy that builds its foundation and draws lessons, successes and weaknesses from previous strategies, frameworks, programmes and plans for rural development. It identifies the challenges in the implementation of the earlier strategies, taking forward the implementation of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme encompassing intergovernmental and sector interventions in the 44 districts and eight metros in a collaborated and coordinated effort through the District Development Model and Rural Development Sector Plans, mainly focusing on the key pillars enabling the rural economy.

The IRDSS aims to provide a guiding framework and principles for executing the government's vision, plans and budget-related development and revitalising the rural economy through the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme and Rural Development Sector plans. It aims to effectively utilise all funding instruments across all spheres of government to foster an integrated approach to revitalising rural areas, institutionalising rural development, and strengthening intergovernmental sector coordination through the District Development Model (One Plan) with clear monitoring and systems for reporting. The IRDSS aims to accelerate investment in and maintenance of critical infrastructure such as road, rail, port basic services, education, health, digital connectivity and human settlement infrastructure to revitalise rural economic development and facilitate industrialisation, production of agricultural products, Agro-processing, value chain management and access to markets. It supports integrated spatial planning, land use management, and economic integration.

3.10. Theory of Change

In 2019, WCDoA developed a theory of change (ToC) on rural safety and security in consultation with stakeholders. The ToC identified the following factors contributing to inadequate rural safety:

- Socio-economic conditions like poverty, unemployment, lack of services

- Tensions in farmer/farm worker relations and lack of conflict resolution skills
- Uncoordinated responses to crime and lack of information sharing between stakeholders
- Ineffective policing and criminal justice system leading to low conviction rates

The ToC identified a lack of data as a challenge to understanding rural crime. It proposed the following initiatives for WCDoA to implement or support:

- Conduct a baseline study on rural crime and the functioning of farm watches
- Facilitate establishment and accreditation of farm watches to improve coordination and information sharing
- Provide input on including Agri-workers in farm safety and security plans
- Promote farm worker participation in watch groups and safety planning
- Introduce a safety category to the Farm Worker of the Year competition to recognise their role
- Provide skills development to farmers and workers to strengthen relationships and safety
- Collaborate with districts to ensure alignment of rural safety plans
- Collaborate with municipalities on standardising safety technology guidelines to increase investment
- Create awareness of the need to verify farm worker backgrounds to prevent the hiring of illegal immigrants and those with criminal records.

Indicators were proposed to measure the implementation of these activities and outcomes, such as improved perceptions of safety, crime reporting rates, and information sharing between farmers and workers.

A theory of change workshop with stakeholders identified the following factors contributing to inadequate rural safety:

- Socio-economic conditions like poverty, unemployment, lack of services
- Tensions in farmer/farm worker relations and lack of conflict resolution
- Uncoordinated responses to crime and lack of information sharing
- Ineffective policing and criminal justice system

Proposed initiatives for WCDoA to implement or support include:

- Conducting a baseline study on rural crime and farm watches
- Facilitating establishment and accreditation of farm watches
- Providing input on including Agri-workers in farm safety plans
- Promoting farm worker participation in watch groups and safety planning
- Introducing a safety category to the Farm Worker of the Year competition
- Providing skills development to farmers and workers to strengthen relationships
- Collaborating with districts and municipalities on rural safety plans and technology

4. Crime in the WC

The WC faces significant challenges related to crime, gang violence, drug-related crime, and property crime. The government has made efforts to address these issues through various strategies, law enforcement initiatives, and community engagement programs.

In the 2022/23 financial year, SAPS recorded 308,370 crimes in the WC. Contact crimes increased by 10.4% compared to the previous year. Murder increased slightly by 0.1%, while attempted murder decreased by 4.5%. Robbery with aggravating circumstances increased by 16.3%. Property-related crimes increased by 7.8%, with theft out of motor vehicles seeing the most significant increase at 11.7%. Commercial crime increased significantly by 16.1%. There was a notable 10.2% increase in community-reported crime.

4.1. Policing Resources and Initiatives

The WC had 21,367 granted SAPS posts in 2020/21, with 19,505 actual employees, achieving a 91.28% filling rate. This improved from 90.91% the previous year but still falls short of the national 98% target. The police-to-population ratio in the WC was 1:378 in 2020/21, which is better than the national ratio of 1:413, but it varies widely between individual stations from 1:62 to 1:1,118. Many stations in high-crime areas have very high police-to-population ratios.

The shortage of detectives is a significant concern. As of March 2018, the WC had a shortfall of 16% or 584 detectives. Assessments have revealed that detective services are under-resourced, over-burdened and under-skilled. This impacts crime detection and conviction rates. SAPS also faces resource constraints in terms of vehicles and physical infrastructure at many stations. Response times are hindered by outdated technology and systems.

4.2. Law Enforcement Advancement Plan (LEAP)

LEAP is an initiative between the WC government and the City of Cape Town to fund, train and deploy additional law enforcement officers to crime hotspots. Launched in 2020, by early 2022, there were 1,116 LEAP officers deployed in 11 priority areas. From February 2020 to March 2021, LEAP confiscated 51 firearms and 384 rounds of ammunition, made 1,543 arrests, and searched over 5,000 houses and nearly 150,000 suspects. LEAP operates 24/7.

4.3. Key Policing Needs and Priorities

4.3.1. Professional Policing

- Address resource constraints: Revise theoretical human resource requirements, recruit and train more SAPS members, manage vehicle fleet better, upgrade stations
- Expand the reservist program, which has declined severely
- Improve SAPS basic training to be more practical and field-based
- Address abuse of sick leave by SAPS members
- Improve detective services through establishing a detective academy, advanced training, and achieving case docket and forensic lab targets.
- Tackle SAPS corruption through investigations and prosecutions
- Ensure proper handling of domestic violence cases by SAPS and reduce SAPS non-compliance with Domestic Violence Act

4.3.2. Priority crimes

- Drugs and illegal liquor outlets remain significant drivers of crime. A holistic, harm-reduction approach is needed along with intelligence-led enforcement.
- Gangsterism is rife and fuels violence. The anti-Gang unit must be capacitated, and a multi-stakeholder approach must be implemented.
- Murder remains the most serious concern. An evidence-based, area-targeted response by SAPS and other stakeholders is crucial.
- Illegal firearms are used in most serious violent crimes. SAPS must improve confiscations and investigations, regulate ammunition sales, and safely store/destroy recovered firearms.

4.3.3. Safer Spaces

- Public transport hubs and routes remain hotspots for crime. Integration between SAPS, PRASA, and traffic services is lacking. Formalising the taxi industry is needed.
- Informal settlements with inadequate road infrastructure hamper SAPS accessibility and response.
- Schools and public health facilities face serious security issues from burglaries and attacks on staff. Increased collaboration between SAPS, law enforcement, and government is required.
- Attacks on paramedics and Emergency Medical Services are increasing and need urgent interventions to safeguard staff.
- Spaza shops are frequent targets for business robberies, requiring better monitoring and security measures.

4.3.4. Greater Collaboration

A critical overarching priority is improved collaboration and integration between SAPS and other law enforcement agencies. This requires joint planning, intelligence sharing, technology integration and coordination to enable an evidence-based, hotspot approach to violence prevention.

4.4. District Level Crime

Four of the six districts in the WC experienced a decrease in murder during 2022/23. The Cape Winelands district saw a 6.6% decrease in murders to 368. The Central Karoo had the lowest number of murders at 18, an 18.2% decrease. The City of Cape Town, the largest district, saw murders increase slightly by 1.5% to 3,212, accounting for 78.1% of all murders in the province. In the Garden Route district, murders decreased by 5.2% to 201. The Overberg and West Coast districts saw murder increases of 11.8% and 11.6% respectively.

4.4.1. Cape Winelands

The Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM) comprises five municipalities: Stellenbosch, Drakenstein, Witzenberg, Breede Valley, and Langeberg. As of August 2022, the SAPS has reorganised the former Winelands and Worcester police clusters into a single Cape Winelands police district, aligned with the district municipal boundaries.

Crime Overview

In 2022/23, there were 368 murders in the Cape Winelands district, a decrease of 6.6% compared to the previous year. The district accounted for 8.9% of all murders in the WC. Drakenstein had the highest number of murders, followed by Breede Valley. Contact crimes increased by 9.9%, with assault GBH and common assault being the most prevalent. Property-related crime made up 19.7% of all crimes in the district.

4.4.2. Garden Route

The Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) comprises seven local municipalities: Bitou, George, Hessequa, Kannaland, Knysna, Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn. As of August 2022, the SAPS has reorganised the former Eden and Da Gamaskop police clusters into a single Garden Route police district aligned with the district municipal boundaries.

Crime Overview

In 2022/23, murders decreased by 5.2% in the Garden Route district compared to the previous year. The district accounted for 4.9% of all murders in the WC, with the most occurring in George (101) followed by Mossel Bay (43). Contact crimes increased overall by 5.3%, with assault GBH and common assault being the most prevalent. Property-related crimes increased by 3.7%, while theft of motor vehicles and motorcycles decreased slightly by 0.2%. Sexual offences decreased by 11.2%.

4.4.3. Central Karoo

The Central Karoo District Municipality (CKDM) comprises three local municipalities: Beaufort West, Laingsburg and Prince Albert. As of August 2022, the SAPS has reorganised the former Beaufort West police cluster into a single Central Karoo police district aligned with the district municipal boundaries.

Crime Overview

In 2022/23, murders decreased by 18.2% in the Central Karoo district compared to the previous year, from 22 to 18 murders. The district accounted for just 0.4% of all murders in the WC, the lowest share in the province. Beaufort West had the highest number of murders at 16, followed by Prince Albert with 2.

Contact crimes increased overall by 13.5%, with assault GBH and common assault being the most prevalent. Property-related crimes increased by 4.2%, making up 18.3% of all crimes in the district. Sexual offences saw a 19.3% decrease from 83 cases in 2021/22 to 67 in 2022/23.

4.4.4. Overberg

The Overberg District Municipality (ODM) consists of four municipalities: Theewaterskloof, Overstrand, Cape Agulhas and Swellendam. As of August 2022, the SAPS has reorganised the former Overberg police cluster into a single police district aligned with the district's municipal boundaries.

Crime Overview

In 2022/23, murders increased by 11.8% in the Overberg district compared to the previous year, from 152 to 170. The district accounted for 4.1% of all murders in the WC, with Theewaterskloof recording the highest number, followed by Overstrand. Contact crimes increased overall by 9.3%, with assault GBH and common assault being the most prevalent. Property-related crimes

comprised 19.6% of all crime in the district and decreased marginally by 0.2%. The theft of motor vehicles and motorcycles decreased by 0.1%.

4.4.5. West Coast

West Coast District Rural Safety Summit Report

The summit was held on October 3, 2022, in Saldanha Bay to provide feedback and focus on integrated technology and response to ensure safety and prevent violent crime in the West Coast District. It aimed to improve wellness and safety through integrated technology, integrated response from all operational responders, and identifying how the district will respond to incidents. The summit involved stakeholders from government, law enforcement, community safety structures, business, NGOs, and faith-based organisations.

The West Coast District Rural Safety Summit brought together diverse stakeholders to discuss challenges and propose integrated solutions leveraging technology, communication, collaboration and capacity building to improve rural safety responses and prevention. Implementing the recommendations will require cross-sector coordination and commitment.

5. WCDDoA Initiatives and Achievements

The WCDDoA has prioritised rural safety due to its impact on the agricultural sector. Despite not being a traditional mandate, WCDDoA has taken significant steps over the past five years to support rural safety and coordinate with other stakeholders.

From 2020/21 to 2023/24, WCDDoA implemented the following key initiatives to strengthen rural safety:

- Institutionalised rural safety as a Ministerial priority, approved by the Provincial Cabinet in 2020.
- Established a Rural Safety Desk to monitor and verify incidents of crime received by WCDDoA. Developed a linked Rural Safety Monitoring Dashboard to track hotspots and crime statistics and inform interventions.
- Established the inter-ministerial committee (IMC) and Technical Committee on Rural Safety to promote collaboration among stakeholders as part of the integrated approach to Rural Safety.
- The IMC receives progress reports from the Court Watch Briefing Unit regarding rural and farm attacks in the province. The Technical Rural Safety Committee conducts

engagements on rural safety, which are attended by district mayors, regional safety coordinators, organised agriculture, the Department of Community Safety, SAPS, and other relevant role players.

- In 2020, the department commissioned a baseline study to determine the incidence of crime, the functioning of farm watches, and safety perceptions in rural areas. Based on the findings, a management improvement plan was developed.
- Developed and distributed a Rural Safety Pocket Guide and Brochure to create awareness. Held road safety awareness sessions in collaboration with the Department of Mobility.

5.1. Baseline Survey of Rural Crime in the WC (2020)

In 2020, WCDoA commissioned a representative survey of farmers, Agri-workers and farm watch organisations to establish a baseline on rural crime.

5.1.1. Functioning and Performance of Farm Watches

The baseline survey evaluated the role and effectiveness of farm watches in rural safety:

- ✚ The presence of farm watches varied by district, ranging from 70-75% of farmers reporting one in their area in most districts to only 14% in the Central Karoo.
- ✚ Farmers and Agri-workers gave mixed ratings of the performance of farm watches. Lack of resources and capacity were seen as key issues.
- ✚ Only 68% of farm watches reported compliance with the Community Safety Act, and 53% were registered with the Dept of Community Safety.
- ✚ Gaps were identified in farm watches' access to technology like security cameras, information sharing with SAPS, development of safety plans, and monitoring and evaluation processes.
- ✚ From 2018 to 2019, farm watches reported increased incidents across most crime categories.

The results indicate that while farm watches are a crucial part of the rural safety ecosystem, targeted interventions by government and agricultural stakeholders can substantially improve their functioning, capacity, and impact.

5.1.2. Perceptions of Policing and Criminal Justice

Negative perceptions of the police and criminal justice system in responding to rural crime were prevalent:

- ✦ According to victims, only 24% of perpetrators of attacks on farmers and 38% of those targeting Agri-workers were arrested in cases of farm attacks.
- ✦ Reasons for not reporting crimes to police included it being a "waste of time" and that "police could not do anything".
- ✦ Farmers and Agri-workers expressed dissatisfaction with police response to and investigation of various violent and property-related crimes.
- ✦ Farm watches engaged with SAPS to varying degrees but frequently reported issues with a lack of resources, responsiveness and communication.

Rebuilding trust between rural communities and law enforcement, enhancing police capacity and responsiveness, and improving collaboration will be essential to tackle rural crime more effectively.

The data paints a concerning picture of the scale and impact of crime on farming communities in the WC. However, WCDoA has taken constructive steps to prioritise rural safety as part of its mandate. The baseline survey provides crucial information to guide future initiatives. With focused implementation and monitoring, in partnership with other actors, meaningful improvements in rural safety are possible over the medium term.

6. Understanding Rural Crime and Safety

6.1. Defining Rural Areas

The main challenge when defining the term 'rural' lies in capturing the many different rural areas, ranging from remote farms far from urban settlements to commuter settlements on the fringe of large towns (Marshall and Johnson, 2005). According to Marshall and Johnson (2005), there are four dimensions of the meaning of rurality, namely: demographical (looking at population density and settlement size), economical (characterised by people living off the land), cultural (sets of attitudes, beliefs, values, knowledge systems and behavioural habits characterising the people living in rural areas) and social structural (refers to close-knit communities).

In SA, the term 'rural' often refers to farming communities centred on small villages and towns that serve rural areas that are usually sparsely populated and away from urban or semi-urban areas (Clack and Minnaar, 2018). Unlike rural areas, urban and semi-urban areas are often densely populated and have better facilities and enhanced opportunities for living and employment (Elis and Liu, 2018).

6.2. Dimensions of Rural Safety

Safety in rural areas encompasses various aspects, including personal safety, environmental safety, community safety, access to emergency services, and psychological and emotional safety. Ensuring the well-being and security of rural residents requires addressing these different dimensions. Several factors can threaten the safety of residents in rural areas, including remoteness and isolation, infrastructure challenges, environmental hazards, limited access to emergency services, lack of community resources, poverty and economic difficulties, and inadequate law enforcement presence (Department of Police, South Africa, 2018). Addressing these threats requires a comprehensive approach involving coordinated efforts between local authorities, community organisations, and residents.

Personal safety concerns in rural areas may involve protection from assaults, robberies, home invasions, or attacks by wild animals (Department of Police, South Africa, 2018.). Adequate law enforcement presence, neighbourhood watch programs, and access to emergency services are crucial for maintaining personal safety in these areas.

Environmental safety is also a significant consideration in rural contexts. This involves mitigating risks from natural disasters, managing access to clean water and sanitation, and ensuring the safety of agricultural activities (Bazaanah and Mothapo, 2023.). Addressing environmental hazards and maintaining adequate infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and buildings, are essential for ensuring the safety of rural residents.

Community safety, which refers to the overall well-being and security of the rural community as a whole, is another essential aspect (Department of Police, South Africa, 2018). Fostering social cohesion, trust among neighbours, and the community's ability to address safety concerns collectively can contribute to enhanced community safety in rural areas.

Access to emergency services, such as police, fire departments, and medical facilities, is critical for maintaining safety in rural communities (Department of Police, South Africa, 2018.). However, residents in these areas may face challenges regarding response times and the availability of specialised services, impacting their overall sense of safety.

Furthermore, psychological and emotional safety plays a role in the well-being of rural residents (Department of Police, South Africa, 2018). Addressing mental health concerns, promoting community engagement, and fostering a sense of belonging can contribute to rural residents' overall psychological and emotional safety.

Several studies have focused on specific types of rural crime, such as farm attacks and stock theft in South Africa (Clack and Minnaar, 2018) and personal and family safety concerns for rural social workers (Green et al., 2003). Women's fear of crime in rural areas has also been explored, with Little et al. (2005) finding that women's fear of crime is influenced by their perceptions of rural spaces and their experiences of gender-based violence.

Research has also examined the unique safety cultures and perceptions of safety in rural areas. Rakauskas et al. (2009) identified differences between rural and urban safety cultures, highlighting the need for tailored safety interventions in rural contexts. Hernan et al. (2014) explored patients' and carers' perceptions of safety in rural general practice, emphasising the importance of addressing safety concerns in healthcare settings.

6.3. Unique Challenges in Rural Settings

Rural areas face several unique safety challenges:

- Remoteness and isolation: Large distances between farms and police stations result in slow response times for emergency services.
- Infrastructure challenges: Poor road conditions, limited public transport, and inadequate telecommunications infrastructure.
- Limited access to services: Fewer healthcare facilities, mental health services, and social support resources.
- Occupational hazards: High risk of injuries in agricultural work due to machinery, chemicals, and animals.
- Environmental risks: Greater exposure to natural disasters, wildlife encounters, and agricultural chemical contamination.
- Economic instability: Rural economies often rely heavily on a single industry, making them vulnerable to economic shocks.
- Underreporting of crime: Due to factors such as close-knit community ties, fear of retaliation, and lack of trust in law enforcement.
- Unique crime patterns: Specific types of crime, such as livestock theft, farm attacks, and wildlife crime, are more prevalent in rural areas.

Understanding these dimensions and challenges is crucial for developing effective rural safety strategies that address the complex and multifaceted nature of safety in rural environments.

7. Rural vs Urban Crime

In SA and the world, the focus on crime has almost always been on urban rather than rural areas. Traditionally, rural areas were seen as peaceful and safer than urban areas. However, this may not be the case. The development and building of a distinct theory of crime in rural areas have been largely ignored and seen as the 'poor rural cousin' of mainstream criminology (Clack and Minnaar, 2018). Clack and Minnaar argue that researchers, scholars and academics alike have merely borrowed from criminology, victimology and policing of densely populated urban areas without examining the different and unique circumstances in rural areas. Analysing the relationship between urban-rural and farming rural areas pertaining to crime will enhance the understanding of the distinctive rural circumstances, not only in terms of population densities but also in the types of crime popular in such areas, victimisation variations and policing responses (Clack and Minnaar, 2018).

7.1. Similarities and Differences in Crime in Farming Areas and Urban-rural Areas

7.1.1. Types of Crime (Farming areas vs Urban-rural areas)

Coomber, Donnermeyer, McElrath and Scott (2014) highlight how criminologists and other social scientists often assume that the population density of people living in a particular area influences the types of crimes most likely to occur there and the crime rates. However, they believe it is essential to understand the similarities and differences in the expression of crime in urban and rural areas.

Clack and Minnaar (2018) argue that crime in rural farming communities is not too different from crime in urban areas. For instance, farm attacks often result in robbery, assault, and even murder, which are categories of crime most prominent in rural-urban areas (Clack and Minnaar, 2018). However, rural crime becomes more distinct when closely examined.

- Farm-specific crimes: Farm attacks and livestock theft have a tremendous economic impact on the livelihoods of commercial farmers, their families, and their farmworkers (Clack and Minnaar, 2018). Clack and Minnaar (2018) believe that these types of crimes (particularly stock theft) have a more significant impact on the daily survival of farm dwellers than urban dwellers, who might or might not be involved in the formal and informal economy. This is the case even when looking at other distinctive rural crimes like

theft of Indigenous plant species, poaching, and theft of farming equipment, which are all integral to the direct economic survival of rural residents (Clack and Minnaar, 2018).

- **Environmental Crimes:** Theft of Indigenous plant species, poaching, and wildlife crimes are more prevalent in rural areas. Unlike urban areas, rural areas experience environmental and wildlife crimes, including trading endangered plant and animal species and poaching (Marshall and Johnson, 2005). These crimes are harder to quantify due to the lack of accurate figures on domestic plant and wildlife populations.
- **Urban-based crimes:** The growth of urban-based crime has led to the formation of crime syndicates and gangs, creating markets and channels for disposing of stolen vehicles, firearms, and goods through rural avenues (Davids, 2004).

7.1.2. Crime Opportunities

Ceccato (2016) highlights that certain crime opportunities or targets may only be present in places such as forests and farms, characterised by low populations and poor surveillance, making certain crimes easier to commit in such areas. This, together with the long distance from police stations and cultural factors, also results in low crime reporting.

7.1.3. Reporting and Policing

Rural areas often have lower crime reporting rates due to:

- Long distances from police stations
- Cultural factors
- Perceived lack of anonymity
- Lack of confidence in police effectiveness

Ceccato (2016) notes that farmers tend to avoid reporting crime if the offence is not serious due to a perceived lack of anonymity in such areas. Pelser, Louw and Ntuli (2000) note a general lack of confidence in the police's ability to deal with crime and widespread dissatisfaction with the service provided by the police, which might affect the reporting rates in rural areas.

Urban areas generally have a higher propensity to report crime and better police presence.

7.2. Impact of Crime

7.2.1. Economic Impact

The impact of crime in rural areas, particularly farming communities, can be far-reaching:

- Farm attacks and livestock theft affect the direct economic survival of rural residents. Clack and Minnaar (2018) believe that these types of crimes (particularly stock theft) have a more significant impact on the daily survival of farm dwellers than urban dwellers, who might or might not be involved in the formal and informal economy.
- The closure of a farm due to crime affects gross annual business earnings, leaves farm communities behind, and renders Agri-workers unemployable and destitute. One of the distinctive features of rural crime is the actual costs to the economy when a farm ceases to exist due to the death or departure of a farmer. The impact goes beyond the loss of gross annual business earnings, as farm communities are often left behind, and Agri-workers and employees are left unemployable and destitute (Cilliers, 2017; Clack and Minnaar, 2018).
- Food security is uniquely affected by rural crime. This also affects food security, one of the unique consequences of crime in rural areas. The effects of crime on farms are far-reaching when compared to crime in rural-urban areas since the former tends to affect the livelihood of all those involved with the farmer and the community as a whole (Clack and Minnaar, 2018).

7.2.2. Victimization and Well-being

- Surveys indicate that rural dwellers tend to be victimised at similar rates to their urban counterparts (Pelser, Louw and Ntuli, 2000).
- The impact of victimisation may be more severe in rural areas due to the lack of access to social services like health, welfare, and policing. The reasons for this include a lack of access to social services like health, welfare and policing, which results in the poor rural dwellers being unable to deal with the impact of crime (Pelser, Louw and Ntuli, 2000).
- People in rural areas generally feel safer than those in urban areas despite potential vulnerabilities due to isolation and lack of protection. Ceccato (2016) found that people living in rural areas tend to feel safer than those in urban areas. People in urban areas feel less safe due to higher rates of victimisation in urban areas (Ceccato, 2016). However, Marshall and Johnson (2005) note that rural areas are often quiet, dark and relatively desolate, which are all factors that could contribute to a sense of vulnerability and unease.

7.3. Factors Influencing Rural and Urban Crime

- Poverty and unemployment: Growing rural poverty has created informal settlements around rural towns, which lack employment resources (Davids, 2004). In some areas, this has resulted in the emergence of gangs and even syndicates.

- Rural-urban migration: Exbrayat and Stephane (2024) argue that an inflow of migrants from rural to urban or semi-urban areas changes the composition of a population, especially along the economic dimension. This results in both negative and positive effects on crime.
- Lack of infrastructure and social services: Urban-rural and farming areas are often characterized by a lack of infrastructural services, like communication and transportation, making access to limited social services like police stations, health care and welfare particularly difficult (Pelser, Louw and Ntuli 2000).
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Easy access to firearms (in some areas)

7.4. Characteristics of Rural and Urban Offenders

Rural offenders often do not exhibit characteristics of a "definite criminal social type" (Clinard, 1944):

- Criminal behaviour often doesn't start early in life
- Limited knowledge of 'professional' urban criminal techniques
- Crime is not their sole means of livelihood
- Often, they don't see themselves as criminals

Clinard's (1944) study on rural criminal offenders reveals that farm offenders often do not exhibit the characteristics of a "definite criminal social type". This is ascribed to numerous facts, including that their criminal behaviour did not start early on in their lives, they often exhibit limited knowledge of the more 'professional' urban criminal techniques and modus operandi, their criminal activities were not their sole means of livelihood, and lastly, they do not see themselves as criminals because the crime committed mainly falls under property-related offences.

Urban offenders:

- May start offending at a younger age
- Often engage in more organised crime
- May rely on crime as a primary means of survival

Understanding the nuances of rural crime is crucial for developing effective rural safety strategies. While there are similarities between rural and urban crime, the unique characteristics of rural areas – including their geography, economy, and social structure – necessitate tailored approaches to crime prevention and law enforcement. As Clack and Minnaar (2018) argue, it's essential to develop a distinct theory of crime in rural areas rather than simply applying urban criminology concepts to rural settings.

8. Crime and Safety in Rural Areas

Rural safety has been the subject of extensive scholarly work in recent years. Several comprehensive studies have contributed significantly to our understanding of crime and safety in rural areas. Ceccato and Abraham (2022) published "Crime and Safety in the Rural: Lessons from Research," providing an overview of rural crime and safety issues from a global perspective. Ceccato (2016) authored a book on rural crime and community safety, comprehensively examining the topic.

Ceccato (2015) explored the nature of perceived safety in rural areas, highlighting the importance of considering subjective perceptions of safety in rural contexts. Ivan et al. (2001) focused on strategies to improve pedestrian safety in rural areas, addressing a specific aspect of rural safety. These works provide a solid academic foundation for understanding the complexities of rural safety issues.

8.1. Prevalence of Crime

Several studies have investigated the prevalence of crime in rural areas. Clack (2013) found that while crime rates in rural areas are generally lower than in urban areas, certain crimes, such as farm attacks and stock theft, are more common in rural settings. A report by the South African Police Service (SAPS, 2019) revealed that rural areas in the WC experienced a significant number of incidents related to drug trafficking, illegal firearms, and gang activities.

Key findings from the 2020 WCDoA baseline survey include:

- Over 50% of farmers and 22% of farm worker respondents were victims of crime from 2018-2019.
- Top crimes against farmers were theft of farm property/equipment (28%), burglary (12%), crop theft (8%), and livestock theft (8%).
- The top crimes against Agri-workers were burglary (16%), assault (12%), theft of farm infrastructure (7%) and robbery (7%).
- 17% of farmers and 27% of Agri-workers reported experiencing a farm attack.
- Both farmers and Agri-workers reported that fear of crime negatively impacted their quality of life.
- Due to crime, both farmers (estimated at R618 million over 2 years) and Agri-workers (R1.2 billion) incurred substantial financial losses.

The 2020 WCDoA baseline survey found certain rural areas to be crime hotspots, namely parts of the Cape Winelands, Overberg, southern West Coast and Garden Route districts. Theft of

various types of farm property was the most pervasive issue overall, while violent crimes during farm attacks were of grave concern.

8.2. Underreporting of Crime

Underreporting of crime is a significant issue in rural areas. Donnermeyer and DeKeseredy (2014) suggest that rural residents may be reluctant to report crimes due to close-knit community ties, fear of retaliation, and a lack of trust in law enforcement. Mphande (2020) found that in SA rural communities, victims of gender-based violence often face social stigma and pressure to remain silent, leading to underreporting of such crimes.

8.3. Organised Crime in Rural Areas

Organised crime, a complex and pervasive threat, presents significant challenges to national security and community well-being. Its increasing prevalence in rural SA and the WC areas is a cause for concern. While most research on organised crime has focused on urban contexts, it's crucial to recognise that rural areas face unique challenges in dealing with criminal networks and activities.

Several types of organised criminal activities have been documented in rural areas, including livestock theft, human trafficking, cybercrime, drug trafficking, illegal mining, wildlife crime and farm attacks.

8.3.1. Livestock Theft

Livestock theft is one of the most prevalent forms of organised crime in rural areas. Livestock has significantly evolved over the years. Livestock theft was primarily for survival or "postulating" (slaughter for personal consumption). However, there has been a noticeable shift towards larger-scale operations conducted by organised crime syndicates since the mid-2000s (Clack and Minnaar, 2022).

Clack and Minnaar (2018) note that livestock theft has been declared a priority crime in South Africa and represents the biggest economic crime impact on rural economies. They report that, on average, between 150,000 to 200,000 livestock are stolen annually in South Africa.

The economic impact of livestock theft is substantial. Clack and Minnaar (2018) provide detailed statistics showing that the value of stolen livestock rose from approximately R508 million in 2007/08 to over R1.2 billion in 2017/18. This represents a significant loss to farmers and

the rural economy. The impact of organised livestock theft extends beyond individual farmers to the broader agricultural sector, resulting in substantial economic losses for both commercial and subsistence farmers.

The modus operandi of livestock theft has evolved. Clack and Minnaar (2022) note that after the 2008 economic crisis, more 'organised' groups emerged that latched onto stock theft to enrich themselves quickly. These groups often employ sophisticated methods, including the use of large trucks rounding up entire herds of livestock from targeted farms at night and swiftly transporting stolen livestock and connections with illegal abattoirs. The ratio of livestock stolen per case has also increased over the years, indicating the involvement of crime syndicates rather than individual actors.

The phenomenon of organised crime in livestock theft in South Africa reflects the changing nature of criminal activities, with crime syndicates exploiting vulnerabilities in the agricultural sector for financial gain. The interconnection between local and transnational criminal networks further complicates efforts to combat this form of organised crime.

8.3.2. Drug Trafficking

Rural areas are increasingly being used for drug production and as trafficking routes. Rural areas provide drug producers with physical privacy, lower detection rates, and limited police presence compared to urban areas, making them attractive locations for drug operations (Clack and Minnaar, 2018). The WC, in particular, has seen an expansion of urban drug networks into rural areas. This trend is concerning as it not only brings organised crime into rural communities but also contributes to substance abuse issues in these areas. The WC Policing Needs and Priorities Report for 2020/21 identified that drug trade, abuse and related crimes have been consistent since 2013/4 in the province. By mid-2021, 47% of known drug houses are found in the rural areas of the WC, which equates to a total of 741 premises.

Drug trafficking in rural areas is a significant issue that involves organised crime networks exploiting the unique characteristics of rural areas for drug production and distribution. Clack and Minnaar (2018) mention that drug production and trafficking have become a significant issue in rural areas, particularly in more remote locations. The isolation of many rural areas makes them attractive for drug production, while their often poorly policed transport routes facilitate trafficking.

The presence of drugs, such as methamphetamine and marijuana, in rural places, impacts residents and poses challenges for law enforcement (Clack and Minnaar, 2022). Organised drug networks, both domestic and international, play a significant role in the transnational

production and distribution of drugs in rural areas. The lack of resources and limited access to services in rural areas contribute to the vulnerability of rural youth to drug consumption and addiction (Clack and Minnaar, 2018). Strategies to combat drug trafficking in rural areas include community-based efforts and interactive prevention measures aiming to address the root causes of substance abuse (NRCN, 2024). Despite efforts to disrupt drug markets in rural areas, the interconnectedness between rural crime and drug offences persists, highlighting the need for comprehensive approaches to tackle drug trafficking in rural communities.

8.3.3. Illegal Mining

Illegal mining in South Africa is deeply intertwined with organised crime, with criminal syndicates organising illegal miners and controlling the illicit flows of gold, diamonds, platinum group metals, and chrome ore (GI-TOC, 2022). Organised criminal groups have been involved in illegal mining operations, particularly in more remote rural areas. This criminal activity significantly disrupts the legitimate mining sector, with an estimated value of at least US\$1 billion worth of gold being stolen each year (GI-TOC, 2022). The illegal gold is often refined and sent to hubs like Dubai for further laundering, making it difficult to trace the criminal involvement. The remoteness and lack of security in many rural mining areas make them vulnerable targets for these criminal operations.

Furthermore, the lucrative nature of illegal mining attracts individuals willing to face its dangers, especially in the face of high formal unemployment rates (GI-TOC, 2022). The illegal mining sector has seen a change in the Constitution of illegal miners, with some sectors experiencing a shift in the types of individuals involved in illegal mining operations.

The scale of illegal mining in South Africa is substantial. The GI-TOC (2022) report estimated the cost of illegal mining to the South African economy around R7 billion annually (GI-TOC, 2022). Rural communities near illegal mining operations face increased crime rates, environmental degradation, and health risks associated with these unregulated activities. The complex nature of these operations, often involving local and international criminal networks, makes them particularly challenging to address through traditional law enforcement approaches.

8.3.4. Wildlife Crime

Wildlife crime, particularly poaching and trafficking, has also become a significant organised criminal activity in rural parts of South Africa, with a significant impact on conservation areas. Poaching and illegal trade in wildlife products, especially rhino horn, involves organised criminal networks operating in rural areas (Hübschle, 2016). Rhino poaching has been at the forefront of this issue, with organised crime networks targeting rhino horn. Between 2013 and

2017, over 1,000 rhinos were poached annually in South Africa (Hübschle and Faull, 2017). However, the problem extends beyond rhinos to other species, such as pangolins, cycads, abalone, and precious timbers.

Clack and Minnaar (2018) mention wildlife crime as a burgeoning rural crime category in the last two decades. The involvement of organised crime in wildlife poaching has led to more sophisticated and violent methods, posing significant challenges to conservation efforts. These crimes are perpetrated by sophisticated criminal networks that link local poachers to international trafficking routes and markets, often connecting wildlife crime to other forms of organised crime like drug trafficking.

The illegal wildlife trade is a lucrative business, estimated to be worth \$7-23 billion annually worldwide (Hübschle and Faull, 2017). In South Africa, it poses a significant threat to biodiversity, eco-tourism economies, and rural livelihoods tied to conservation. The corruption of local officials and law enforcement personnel often enables wildlife crime, making it even more challenging to combat. Rural community members, facing poverty and lack of economic opportunities, are frequently recruited as poachers, further complicating the social dynamics of these crimes.

8.3.5. Farm Attacks

Farm attacks and farm murders have been a significant concern in rural South Africa for decades, with ongoing debate about the nature, extent, and motivations behind these crimes. While not all farm attacks are linked to organised crime, there is evidence that some incidents involve elements of organised criminal activity. Farm attacks on farmers, farmworkers and their families often result in death and severe injury, besides theft, robbery and other violent acts. Clack and Minnaar (2018) note that this crime category has become highly politicised but remains a significant rural crime issue.

Clack and Minnaar (2018) noted that from 1991 to 2001, there were 6,122 farm attacks and 1,254 killings recorded jointly by the South African Agricultural Union and SAPS. However, they also highlight discrepancies in reporting and definition of farm attacks, which complicate the analysis of this crime category. From 1 January 2021 to July 2024, there were 24 farm murders in the WC. The breakdown is as follows:

- Cape Winelands: 10
- West Coast: 8
- Garden Route: 4
- Overberg: 1

- Cape Metro: 1

The WC accounted for 5,2% of farm murders in the country over the three years.

While many farm attacks are opportunistic crimes, there is evidence that organised criminal groups carry some out. Several aspects of farm attacks suggest possible links to organised crime:

- Sophisticated planning: Some attacks demonstrate a high level of organisation, including surveillance of targets, coordinated group actions, and use of specialised equipment (Hübschle, 2016).
- Targeted theft: Many attacks involve the theft of firearms, vehicles, and large amounts of cash, suggesting possible links to wider criminal networks (Clack and Minnaar, 2018).
- Cross-border elements: There have been cases of attackers crossing borders from neighbouring countries, indicating potential transnational criminal connections (Hübschle, 2016).
- Insider information: Some attacks appear to be based on insider knowledge about farm layouts, security systems, and cash-keeping practices, suggesting the possible involvement of criminal networks with local connections (Clack and Minnaar, 2018).
- Links to other crimes: In some cases, farm attacks have been associated with other organised criminal activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, and illegal mining (Hübschle, 2016).

While not all farm attacks are linked to organised crime, there is evidence that some incidents involve elements of organised criminal activity.

8.3.6. Cyber Crime

Cybercrime is any criminal activity that occurs online or targets digital systems through criminal attacks. There are two main types of cybercrime: cyber-enabled crimes, which enhance existing crimes like fraud and theft through technology, and cyber-dependent crimes, which are specific to the cybersphere and threaten data security and systems integrity (GI-TOC, 2022).

In South Africa, cybercrime is a growing concern, and various forms of cybercrime include phishing, credit card fraud, ransomware, and data breaches. This form of organised crime poses significant risks to individuals, businesses, and government entities, affecting financial stability, infrastructure, and national security (GI-TOC, 2022).

Cybercrime in rural South Africa has grown in recent years, facilitated by expanding internet connectivity to more remote areas. However, research on rural cybercrime remains limited. Some key aspects include:

- Limited cybersecurity awareness and infrastructure in rural areas can make residents and businesses more vulnerable to online scams, fraud, and data theft.
- Cybercriminals increasingly target agricultural businesses with attacks on farm management systems and machinery.
- Online platforms facilitate other rural crimes, such as livestock theft and wildlife trafficking.
- Rural youth are at risk of online exploitation and recruitment into criminal activities due to limited economic opportunities.

The South African Police Service has noted challenges in addressing cybercrime in rural areas, including a lack of specialised skills and resources in rural police stations (SAPS, 2019). There are also concerns about the under-reporting of cybercrime in rural communities.

8.3.7. Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a form of organised crime that poses a severe threat in South Africa. Organised crime syndicates are involved in trafficking individuals, especially women, men, and children, for various purposes such as labour exploitation, prostitution, and other criminal activities (Abraham and Ceccato, 2022). These syndicates operate domestically and internationally, facilitating victims' movement across borders and exploiting them for profit (Pienaar, 2014).

The trafficking of humans is a lucrative business for organised crime groups, generating significant revenue annually (Pienaar, 2014). In addition to human trafficking, these syndicates are also involved in other criminal activities, such as drug smuggling, arms trafficking, and money laundering. The interconnected nature of these crimes highlights the sophistication and pervasiveness of organised crime networks in South Africa (Pienaar, 2014).

Addressing human trafficking in rural areas is challenged by limited awareness, under-reporting, and lack of support services for victims in remote locations (van der Watt and Kruger, 2017).

There is a certain lack of knowledge and preparedness to tackle the issue in rural areas, with government officials and professionals being less aware and less likely to have received training in the subject (Abraham and Ceccato, 2022). The isolation of rural communities can make detection and intervention more difficult (Khanyile, 2018). While sex trafficking of women and children is the more well-known form of human trade, several studies focused on

trafficking to exploit labour, particularly within the farming industry (Abraham and Ceccato, 2022). Rural poverty and lack of economic opportunities make some community members vulnerable to trafficking. Trafficking networks exploit porous borders in rural areas for cross-border trafficking (Emser and Francis, 2017). Child trafficking is a particular concern in some rural areas, often linked to traditional practices (Warria, 2017).

8.4. Non-crime Factors Impacting Rural Safety

Rural areas face unique safety challenges compared to urban environments. While crime is often a primary concern, personal safety in these regions is also impacted by various other factors. These include injuries and accidents, particularly in the agricultural sector and on roads, which pose significant safety risks to rural populations. Communicable and non-communicable diseases contribute to the health burden in rural communities. Additionally, drowning incidents, especially among children, are a concern in areas with limited water safety awareness. These non-crime factors, alongside criminal activities, collectively threaten the safety and well-being of rural communities.

8.4.1. Injuries and Accidents

Occupational Injuries in Agriculture

Occupational health and safety in rural areas, particularly in the agricultural sector, has been a focus of research. Damalas et al. (2019) investigated drivers of personal safety among pesticide operators, while Hope et al. (1999) conducted a needs assessment for health and safety practices among farmers and other rural workers. These studies highlight rural workers' unique occupational risks and the need for targeted safety interventions in rural workplaces. A study by Buthelezi et al. (2019) found that Agri-workers in South Africa are exposed to various hazards, including machinery, chemicals, and animals, which can lead to injuries and accidents. With its significant agricultural sector, the WC has reported a high incidence of occupational injuries among Agri-workers (WC Department of Health, 2018).

Road Traffic Accidents

Rural areas often have poor road infrastructure and limited access to emergency services, which can contribute to the severity of road traffic accidents. Labuschagne et al. (2017) investigated road safety in rural South Africa. They found that factors such as speeding, alcohol consumption, and inadequate road maintenance contribute to the high number of accidents

in these areas. The WC Province has identified road safety as a key priority in its Rural Road Safety Strategy (WC Department of Transport and Public Works, 2019).

Drowning and Water Safety

Drowning is a significant cause of unintentional death in rural areas, particularly among children. A study by Donson and van Niekerk (2013) found that drowning rates in rural South Africa are higher than in urban areas, with children under the age of 15 being the most vulnerable. The WC has a high incidence of drowning incidents, especially along the coast and in rural farm dams (Lifesaving South Africa, 2019).

Lack of water safety education and awareness is a contributing factor to drowning incidents in rural areas. Pretorius and van Niekerk (2015) highlight the need for community-based water safety education programs in rural South Africa to prevent drowning incidents. The WC Government has partnered with organisations such as the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) to provide water safety education in rural schools and communities (NSRI, 2020).

8.4.2. Diseases and Health Risks

Communicable Diseases

Rural populations in South Africa face a higher burden of communicable diseases compared to urban areas. A study by Kapwata et al. (2018) found that rural communities in South Africa have a higher prevalence of tuberculosis (TB), HIV/AIDS, and other infectious diseases. Limited access to healthcare services and inadequate sanitation infrastructure contribute to the spread of these diseases in rural areas (Gaede and Versteeg, 2011).

Non-Communicable Diseases

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancers, are also prevalent in rural areas. Puoane et al. (2013) found that rural populations in South Africa have a high prevalence of risk factors for NCDs, including obesity, hypertension, and tobacco use. The WC Department of Health (2019) has implemented various initiatives to address NCDs in rural communities, such as the Chronic Disease Management Program.

8.4.3. Environmental Hazards

Rural areas are often more exposed and vulnerable to environmental hazards than urban areas. Natural disasters like floods, wildfires, droughts, and severe storms can pose significant

safety risks to rural communities (Cutter et al., 2016). Climate change is exacerbating these threats in many regions. Farrigan (2021) found that rural communities in the United States are experiencing more frequent and intense weather events linked to climate change, which strains local resources and infrastructure.

Agricultural activities in rural areas can also create environmental safety hazards. The use of pesticides and fertilizers can contaminate water supplies and pose health risks to residents (Damalas and Eleftherohorinos, 2011). Intensive livestock farming can lead to air and water pollution from animal waste (Burkholder et al., 2007). Environmental and wildlife crimes, such as illegally dumping hazardous waste or poaching, are also more prevalent in rural areas due to lower population density and reduced surveillance (Ceccato and Uittenbogaard, 2013).

Key drivers of environmental safety threats

- Geographic isolation and exposure to natural hazards.
- Reliance on natural resource-based economies.
- Limited infrastructure and resources to respond to disasters.
- Climate change impacts.
- Lower population density enabling environmental crimes.

Potential mitigation measures

- Improving disaster preparedness and early warning systems.
- Strengthening infrastructure resilience.
- Sustainable agricultural practices.
- Climate change adaptation planning.
- Enhanced environmental monitoring and enforcement.

8.4.4. Inadequate Infrastructure

Ageing and inadequate infrastructure is a significant safety concern in many rural communities. Roads, bridges, water systems, and other critical infrastructure in rural areas are often outdated and poorly maintained due to limited funding (Cromartie et al., 2020). This can lead to hazardous conditions and safety risks.

Rural roads tend to have higher fatality rates than urban roads, partly due to poor design and maintenance (Zwerling et al., 2005). Lack of sidewalks, street lighting, and safe pedestrian infrastructure also creates dangers. Ageing water systems in rural areas can lead to contamination and health risks (Allaire et al., 2018).

The South African Rural Safety Plan highlights how vast distances and poor road infrastructure in rural areas make it difficult for police to patrol and respond to safety incidents effectively. Limited telecommunications infrastructure also hinders emergency response capabilities.

Key drivers of infrastructure safety threats

- Limited local tax base and funding for maintenance or upgrades.
- Geographic isolation and higher per capita infrastructure costs.
- Outmigration and population loss in some rural areas.
- Ageing infrastructure reaching the end of the designed lifespan.

Potential mitigation measures

- Increased state/federal infrastructure funding for rural areas.
- Asset management and preventative maintenance programs.
- Innovative financing mechanisms for infrastructure projects.
- Regionalisation/sharing of infrastructure systems.
- Leveraging technology like drones for infrastructure monitoring.

8.4.5. Limited Access to Healthcare

Limited access to healthcare services is a significant safety threat in rural communities. Rural areas generally have fewer healthcare facilities and providers than urban areas (Douthit et al., 2015). This can delay treatment for injuries, illnesses and chronic conditions.

Emergency medical services in rural areas often have longer response times due to greater distances and limited resources (Grossman et al., 1997). Mental health services are particularly scarce in rural communities, which can increase risks related to untreated mental illness (Fortney et al., 2010).

Key drivers of rural healthcare access issues

- Geographic isolation and low population density.
- Difficulty recruiting/retaining healthcare workers.
Hospital closures and service reductions.
- Limited broadband for telehealth options.

Potential mitigation measures

- Incentives for rural healthcare providers
- Expanding telehealth and mobile health services.
- Regionalisation of speciality health services.
- Community paramedicine programs.
- Public-private partnerships to expand rural health services.

8.4.6. Economic Instability

Economic instability and poverty in rural areas can indirectly threaten safety by limiting basic needs and services resources. Rural economies that rely heavily on a single industry are vulnerable to economic shocks (Slack, 2010). The loss of major employers can devastate rural communities.

Poverty rates tend to be higher in rural areas than in urban areas in many countries (Weber and Miller, 2017). This limits household and community resources for safety-related expenditures. Economic stress is also associated with increased substance abuse and mental health issues that can create safety risks (Keyes et al., 2014).

Ceccato (2015) notes that economic changes in rural areas, such as the shift away from agricultural production, can disrupt social ties and increase socioeconomic instability. This may lead to conditions that enable crime and reduce community safety over time.

Key drivers of rural economic instability

- Reliance on natural resources or agricultural economies.
- Lack of economic diversification.
- Outmigration of young or skilled workers.
- Limited access to capital for businesses.

Potential mitigation measures

- Rural economic development and diversification initiatives.
- Workforce development and skills training programs.
- Expanding broadband access for remote work opportunities.
- Policies to support small businesses and entrepreneurship.
- Community-based economic resilience planning.

8.4.7. Perceived Safety

Perceptions of safety in rural areas are complex and do not always align with actual crime rates or other objective safety measures. Ceccato (2015) highlights that rural residents often report feeling safer overall than urban residents, which can mask safety concerns among certain groups or locations.

Factors influencing rural safety perceptions include:

- Lower population density reduces perceived risk.
- Strong social ties and familiarity in small communities.
- Isolation and lack of nearby assistance.
- Limited police presence and slower emergency response.
- Demographic changes are altering community dynamics.
- Media portrayals of rural crime and safety issues.

Improving perceptions of rural safety requires addressing both actual safety threats and psychological or social factors. Community-based approaches that foster social cohesion and collective efficacy can enhance feelings of security.

Rural communities face various safety threats beyond crime, including environmental hazards, infrastructure issues, healthcare limitations, and economic instability. These threats are often interrelated and stem from rural areas' unique geographic, demographic and economic characteristics. Addressing rural safety challenges requires coordinated efforts across multiple sectors and levels of government. Promising mitigation approaches focus on building community resilience, leveraging technology, and developing innovative rural-specific solutions.

9. Socio-economic Drivers of Rural Crime

Crime and violence pose significant challenges to rural communities in the WC. A complex interplay of socio-economic factors contributes to high crime rates and insecurity in these areas.

9.1. Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty and unemployment are recognised as significant crime risk factors in rural WC communities (WC Government, 2019). The lack of economic opportunities in many rural areas leads to high unemployment rates, especially among youth. This creates conditions of economic deprivation that can drive some individuals towards criminal activities for survival or income generation (Grote and Frank, 2016).

Ceccato (2016) found that rural communities with high levels of poverty and limited access to education and employment opportunities are more susceptible to crime. The Agricultural Sector has experienced job losses in the WC due to droughts and the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating economic insecurity in rural areas (WC DoA, 2021).

The WCG (2019) notes that unemployment directly leads to poverty for affected households, which in turn contributes to an array of social ills and criminal behaviour. The PNP reports further highlight the link between poverty, unemployment, and crime across rural districts:

- Central Karoo District identifies the lack of economic opportunities as a key factor contributing to crime. (Central Karoo District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24). Poverty was specifically mentioned as a significant social cohesion challenge, and the WC Government was recommended to ensure youth work opportunities to address this issue.
- Garden Route District emphasises the need for a "whole of government and whole of society approach to deal with socio-economic challenges". (Garden Route District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24 The district suggests using the Expanded Public Works Programme

(EPWP) to promote youth participation in community safety, addressing both unemployment and crime prevention.

- While not explicitly mentioning poverty, Cape Winelands District highlights the need for "student/youth programmes" to be prioritized. This indicates a focus on providing opportunities for young people who may otherwise be at risk of engaging in criminal activities (Cape Winelands District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- Overberg District lists poverty as a key social cohesion challenge and recommends that the WCG ensure youth work opportunities (Overberg District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).

These district-level insights underscore the pervasive nature of poverty and unemployment as drivers of crime across rural WC, highlighting the need for targeted economic development initiatives and youth employment programs as part of a comprehensive crime prevention strategy.

9.2. Substance Abuse

Alcohol and drug abuse are identified as significant contributors to crime and violence in rural areas of the WC (WC Government, 2019). Substance abuse is linked to poverty and unemployment, creating a vicious cycle. The WC Government (2019) states that alcohol abuse directly contributes to social ills within rural communities and can produce dysfunctional families, manifesting in criminal activities. The easy availability of alcohol in rural areas exacerbates this problem.

Peltzer et al. (2015) found that alcohol abuse in rural SA is associated with an increased risk of violence and crime victimisation. A report by the WC Government (2019) highlighted the link between substance abuse and gang activities in rural areas of the province.

The PNP reports consistently highlight substance abuse as a significant concern across rural districts:

- Cape Winelands District notes that "alcohol abuse directly contributes to social ills within rural communities" (Cape Winelands District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24). A recommendation was made for WC Liquor Authority (WCLA) inspectors to inspect liquor outlets to address this issue.
- Overberg District identifies alcohol abuse and illegal alcohol trading as key law enforcement challenges (Overberg District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24). Recommendations include standardised alcohol trading laws. SAPS conducts weekly alcohol operations with other law enforcement agencies in this district.

- Garden Route District emphasises the need for more integrated operations to confiscate drugs and arrest drug dealers (Garden Route District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24). The easy accessibility of drugs to young people and children is highlighted as a significant social cohesion challenge in this area.
- Central Karoo District identifies the availability of drugs and drug abuse by youth (primarily dagga and tik) as a key social cohesion challenge. A recommendation was made for the Department of Social Development (DSD) to design and implement a comprehensive drug prevention programme and prioritise a rehabilitation centre for the Central Karoo District (Central Karoo District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).

9.3. Spatial Inequality and Lack of Infrastructure

The legacy of apartheid-era spatial planning has resulted in ongoing inequality and underdevelopment in many rural areas of the WC (WC Government, 2019). This spatial inequality manifests in poor infrastructure, limited access to services, and poor economic opportunities in rural communities.

Rural areas often face challenges in terms of policing and infrastructure. Minnaar (2016) argues that rural police stations in SA are under-resourced and understaffed, leading to inadequate crime prevention and response. The vast distances and remote locations of rural communities also make it difficult for police to respond quickly to incidents. Inadequate infrastructure, such as poor road conditions and lack of streetlights, can contribute to safety risks (Salize et al., 2012).

The PNP reports reinforce these findings, with multiple districts highlighting infrastructure challenges:

- Central Karoo District noted issues with poor road infrastructure, which affected law enforcement response times. The lack of reliable public transport with adequate lighting was mentioned as an urban design challenge (Central Karoo District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- Garden Route District mentioned challenges in informal settlements, including poor road infrastructure, making it difficult for law enforcement to access crime scenes. Recommendations included municipalities developing roads, improving transport routes, and redesigning houses and infrastructure in these areas (Garden Route District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- Overberg District highlighted poor road infrastructure and lawlessness on roads as critical urban design challenges. Recommendations for municipalities included installing traffic

lights, erecting fly-over bridges for pedestrians, and providing road safety education (Overberg District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).

- While not explicitly mentioning infrastructure, Cape Winelands District noted "open spaces/ and public places" as an urban design challenge, suggesting issues with the built environment that might contribute to crime (Cape Winelands District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).

These district-level insights highlight how spatial inequality and inadequate infrastructure contribute to crime across rural WC. They emphasise the need for targeted investments in rural infrastructure, including roads, public transport, and community facilities, as part of a comprehensive approach to crime prevention.

9.4. Inadequate Policing and Criminal Justice Response

Rural areas in the WC face significant challenges related to inadequate policing and criminal justice responses (OABS Development, 2020). Key issues identified include:

- Insufficient policing resources and capacity in rural areas
- Large distances between farms and police stations result in slow response times
- Poor coordination between police, farmers, and rural communities
- Low reporting rates of rural crime due to a lack of confidence in police
- Weak criminal cases leading to low conviction rates

The baseline survey by OABS Development (2020) found that over 65% of farmers rated police services and the judiciary system poorly on crime prevention, case solving, and conviction securing. This undermined trust in the criminal justice system and created a perception that rural crime had limited consequences.

The PNP findings echoed these concerns across districts. The Cape Winelands District highlighted the "lack of relationship between law enforcement/Criminal Justice System agencies and communities" as a key issue (Cape Winelands District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24). The Central Karoo District mentioned insufficient SAPS human and physical resources as a significant challenge (Central Karoo District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24). The Overberg District noted the "distance between farms and police stations" as a specific service delivery challenge (Overberg District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).

9.5. Social and Family Factors

The literature highlights several social and family-level factors that increase the risk of crime and violence in rural WC communities (WC Government, 2019):

- Breakdown of family structures and absent fathers
- Lack of positive role models for youth
- Exposure to domestic violence as children
- Harsh or inconsistent parenting
- Association with delinquent peers
- Family history of criminality

These factors contribute to the intergenerational transmission of violence and criminal behaviour. Domestic and gender-based violence is a pervasive issue in rural communities. A study by Mpani and Nsibandé (2015) found that rural women in SA face high levels of intimate partner violence, often exacerbated by traditional gender norms and limited access to support services. Boonzaier and Gordon (2015) highlight the challenges faced by rural victims of domestic violence, including isolation, lack of transportation, and limited access to shelters and legal aid.

The PNP reports provide additional insights into social and family factors:

- Overberg District identified "lack of parenting skills: parent absenteeism/ poor parenting" as a key social cohesion issue. A recommendation was made to increase family and parental guidance programmes in all communities (Overberg District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- Cape Winelands District noted a "lack of parenting skills: Lack of effective care and guidance for children". Recommendations included strengthening multi-sectoral partnerships to address social issues and involving the Department of Social Development, religious organisations, and ward councillors (Cape Winelands District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- Garden Route District highlighted the need to develop strategies to support broken family structures (family strengthening programmes) and implement parental guidance programmes to prevent drug addiction, gangsterism, bullying, and school dropouts (Garden Route District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24)

9.6. Migration Patterns

Both international immigration and internal migration are identified as contributing factors to crime in rural WC areas (WC Government, 2019). The influx of migrants seeking economic opportunities and inadequate integration support increases competition for limited jobs and strains social cohesion in rural communities. However, the WC Government (2019) cautions that there is insufficient data to draw firm conclusions about the impact of migration on rural crime rates.

The PNP reports provide additional context on migration issues. The Overberg District identified the "influx of Agri-workers/seasonal workers and foreign nationals creating conflict in the community" as a social cohesion challenge (Overberg District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24). The Cape Winelands District mentioned "border control and management of illegal foreign nationals in the Province" as a law enforcement concern (Cape Winelands District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).

These insights from the PNP reports highlight the complex relationship between migration, social cohesion, and crime in the rural WC. It suggests a need for more comprehensive data collection and analysis on migration patterns and their impacts and targeted interventions to promote social integration and address potential conflicts arising from demographic changes.

9.7. Lack of Social Cohesion

The fragmentation of rural communities and lack of social cohesion are highlighted as underlying factors enabling crime (WC Government, 2019). Limited community engagement, weak social bonds between neighbours, and distrust between farmers and workers create conditions with little collective action against crime. Building more robust, cohesive rural communities is critical to improving safety and security.

The PNP reports reinforce the importance of social cohesion:

- Garden Route District emphasized the need to "activate Ward Councillors, Ward Committees and Community Development Workers to play an active role in developing their areas". Recommendations also included promoting and implementing community-based solutions to create a caring culture and support children and youth (Garden Route District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- Cape Winelands District recommended strengthening "multi-sectoral partnerships to address social issues". Suggestions also included encouraging NGOs to participate in social programmes (Cape Winelands District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- Overberg District identified a "lack of integration of services by government" as a social cohesion challenge. This suggested a need for more coordinated efforts to build community cohesion (Overberg District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).
- While not explicitly mentioning social cohesion, Central Karoo District recommended community-based interventions, such as street and ward committees conducting site visits to problematic areas. This indicated a recognition of the importance of community engagement in addressing crime (Central Karoo District PNP Report, 2022/23 - 2023/24).

Poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, spatial inequality, inadequate policing, social and family factors, migration patterns, and lack of social cohesion emerge as key challenges. The PNP reports from various rural districts corroborate these findings and provide additional local context and nuance.

Addressing rural crime in the WC will require holistic interventions that:

- Tackle root causes of poverty and unemployment, particularly among youth.
- Address substance abuse through both law enforcement and social interventions.
- Invest in rural infrastructure and address spatial inequalities.
- Strengthen policing and criminal justice responses in rural areas.
- Support families and provide positive opportunities for youth.
- Manage migration and promote social integration.
- Build social cohesion and community engagement.

Further research is needed to better understand the specific dynamics of rural crime in the WC context, particularly regarding the impacts of migration and the effectiveness of various intervention strategies. Additionally, there is a clear need for improved data collection and analysis to inform evidence-based policymaking and resource allocation.

Reducing crime in the rural WC will require a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach that addresses immediate safety concerns and underlying socio-economic factors. By building on the insights provided in this review and the district-level PNP reports, policymakers and community leaders can work towards creating safer, more prosperous rural communities in the WC.

9.8. Drivers of organised crime

Understanding the factors that drive organised crime in rural areas is crucial for developing effective prevention and response strategies. In South Africa and the WC, a complex interplay of social, economic, geographical, and historical factors contributes to the persistence and growth of organised criminal activities in rural settings. These drivers often differ from those in urban areas, reflecting rural communities' unique challenges and vulnerabilities.

- **Poverty and Economic Factors:** High levels of unemployment, limited economic prospects, and worsening economic conditions in many rural areas create vulnerabilities that make some residents susceptible to recruitment by criminal networks. Economic inequality exacerbates these issues, potentially driving marginalised individuals towards illegal activities (Hübschle, 2016; ENACT, 2023).

- **Inequality and Social Exclusion:** South Africa's high levels of inequality are reflected in who benefits from conservation and natural resources. This structural inequality can drive some marginalised individuals towards illegal activities (Hübschle and Faull, 2017).
- **Weak Governance and Institutions:** Ineffective rule of law, inadequate accountability mechanisms, and weak institutions make rural areas more susceptible to organised crime. Limited economic diversification in some rural areas can exacerbate these vulnerabilities (ENACT, 2023).
- **Corruption and State Capture:** Corruption among local officials, law enforcement, and even within conservation sectors facilitates organised criminal activities. State-embedded actors may protect criminal groups and facilitate illicit activities (Hübschle and Faull, 2017; ENACT, 2023).
- **Geographical Factors:** The remoteness of many rural areas and limited law enforcement resources create opportunities for criminal operations. Strategic locations as transit points for illicit goods also contribute to criminal activities (Clack and Minnaar, 2018; ENACT, 2023).
- **Porous Borders:** Poorly controlled borders, particularly in rural areas, facilitate cross-border criminal activities such as smuggling of wildlife products, drugs, and human trafficking (Emser and Francis, 2017).
- **High-Value Natural Resources:** The presence of valuable wildlife and mineral resources creates lucrative opportunities for criminal exploitation, driven by high international demand (Hübschle, 2016; ENACT, 2023).
- **Limited Community Engagement:** Exclusion or marginalisation of local communities from conservation efforts and benefits can drive some to participate in or support illegal activities (Hübschle and Faull, 2017).
- **Technological Advancements:** While bringing benefits, increased connectivity in rural areas has also facilitated certain forms of organised crime, including cybercrime and coordinating illegal activities (ENACT, 2023).
- **Global Demand for Illicit Goods:** International demand for items like rhino horn, illegal minerals, and drugs drives organised criminal activities in rural South Africa (Hübschle, 2016; ENACT, 2023).
- **Limited Law Enforcement Capacity:** Declining law enforcement capabilities and limited resources in rural areas hamper effective efforts to combat organised crime (ENACT, 2023).
- **Transnational Criminal Networks:** The increasing influence of foreign criminal actors and growing transnational connections of criminal networks, facilitated by online tools, impact rural areas (ENACT, 2023).

These drivers often interact and reinforce each other, creating complex environments where organised crime can thrive. Addressing these underlying factors is crucial for building effective resilience against organised crime (ENACT, 2023).

Organised crime in rural areas presents a complex and multifaceted challenge. The various forms of criminal activities, including livestock theft, drug trafficking, illegal mining, wildlife crime, farm attacks, cybercrime, and human trafficking, have significant economic, social, and environmental impacts on rural communities. A combination of factors such as poverty, inequality, weak governance, geographical isolation, and the presence of high-value natural resources drives these crimes.

The persistence and evolution of these criminal activities highlight the need for comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approaches to combat organised crime in rural areas. Effective strategies must address the underlying drivers, strengthen law enforcement capabilities, and engage local communities.

10. Rural Safety Interventions and Strategies

When developing a WC Rural Safety Strategy, it is essential to consider rural safety interventions being implemented globally and elsewhere in South Africa.

10.1. South Africa

In South Africa, numerous initiatives and programs have been implemented to promote rural safety, addressing various aspects of security and well-being in rural communities. These interventions are designed to tackle the unique challenges faced by rural areas in the country.

South Africa has implemented the National Rural Safety Strategy, which focuses on combating crime in rural areas through community policing and improved law enforcement coordination (South African Police Service, 2021). The country also has a Comprehensive Rural Development Programme that indirectly addresses safety through economic development and infrastructure improvement (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, South Africa, 2022).

10.1.1. Crime Prevention and Law Enforcement

The National Rural Safety Strategy, implemented by the South African Police Service (SAPS), is a comprehensive approach to addressing rural crime. This strategy focuses on improving coordination between law enforcement, rural communities, and other stakeholders (South African Police Service, 2019). Additionally, the Rural Safety Priority Committee has been established to oversee the implementation of rural safety plans at provincial and local levels (Department of Police, 2021). Community policing forums and farm watches are critical to rural

crime prevention efforts, fostering collaboration between residents and law enforcement (Clack and Minnaar, 2018).

10.1.2. Community Policing and Neighbourhood Watches

Community policing and neighbourhood watch programs, implemented in rural areas to improve safety, have shown promising results. Gould et al. (2012) found that these initiatives in rural South Africa have successfully reduced crime and improved relationships between police and communities. The WC Department of Community Safety (2019) has supported the establishment of rural neighbourhood watches and provided training to members, further bolstering the success of these programs.

10.1.3. Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation

Addressing socio-economic challenges is crucial for improving rural safety. The National Rural Safety Strategy (South African Police Service, 2019) emphasises the importance of rural development initiatives, such as job creation and skills training, in reducing crime. The WC Department of Agriculture (2021) has implemented various programs to support rural communities, including agricultural skills development and agri-processing initiatives.

10.1.4. Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Preventing and treating substance abuse is essential for promoting rural safety. Morojele et al. (2016) highlight the need for culturally appropriate substance abuse prevention and treatment programs in rural South African communities. The WC Government (2019) has launched several initiatives to combat substance abuse in rural areas, including awareness campaigns and increased access to treatment services.

10.1.5. Support for Victims of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

Recognising the particular vulnerability of women in rural areas, the Victim Empowerment Programme has specific initiatives for rural communities, providing support services for victims of gender-based violence (Department of Social Development, 2021).

These initiatives demonstrate South Africa's multifaceted approach to promoting rural safety. While challenges remain, these programs reflect ongoing efforts to address the complex safety needs of rural communities in the country. Continued evaluation and adaptation of these initiatives will be crucial to enhance their effectiveness in improving rural safety.

Providing support for victims of domestic and gender-based violence is crucial in rural areas. Mpani and Nsibande (2015) recommend increasing rural victims' access to shelters, legal aid, and counselling services. The WC Department of Social Development (2019) has established victim support centres in rural areas and provides training to community members to identify and assist victims of abuse.

10.1.6. Agricultural Safety Programs

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has implemented several programs to enhance safety in the agricultural sector. The Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) includes components on farm safety and security (Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, 2020). AgriSA, a federation of agricultural organisations, also runs various initiatives to promote farm safety, including training programs and awareness campaigns (AgriSA, 2022).

Metelerkamp et al. (2019) recommend implementing comprehensive agricultural safety programs that include training, hazard identification, and the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE). The WC Department of Agriculture (2018) has launched initiatives such as the Farm Worker Development Program to promote occupational health and safety in the agricultural sector.

10.1.7. Road Safety Interventions

The Rural Roads Asset Management System (RRAMS) is a national initiative to improve the management and maintenance of rural road infrastructure, which is crucial for safety (Department of Transport, 2021). In terms of road safety, the Arrive Alive campaign has specific rural components, addressing issues such as animal crossings and poor road conditions in rural areas (Arrive Alive, 2023).

Addressing road safety in rural areas requires a multi-faceted approach. The WC Rural Road Safety Strategy (WC Department of Transport and Public Works, 2019) outlines interventions such as improving road infrastructure, increasing law enforcement, and conducting road safety awareness campaigns. Mutemeri and Muzenda (2018) also emphasise the importance of community involvement in road safety initiatives in rural areas.

10.1.8. Strengthening Rural Healthcare Systems

The National Health Insurance (NHI) program aims to improve healthcare access in rural areas by increasing the availability of medical facilities and personnel (Department of Health, 2022).

The Rural Health Advocacy Project improves rural healthcare through policy advocacy and support for rural healthcare workers (Rural Health Advocacy Project, 2023).

Improving access to healthcare services and strengthening healthcare systems in rural areas are essential for addressing communicable and non-communicable diseases. Gaede and Versteeg (2011) recommend increasing the number of healthcare facilities, improving healthcare worker training, and implementing community-based health promotion programs in rural areas. The WC Department of Health (2019) has established community health centres and mobile clinics to bring healthcare services closer to rural populations.

10.1.9. Water Safety Programs

While primarily focused on removing invasive alien plants, the Working for Water program contributes to rural safety by reducing fire risks and improving water security in rural areas (Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, 2021). The LandCare programme promotes sustainable land management practices in rural areas, indirectly contributing to environmental safety (Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, 2021).

Preventing drowning incidents in rural areas requires a combination of water safety education, provision of safe swimming facilities, and community engagement. Pretorius and van Niekerk (2015) suggest implementing school-based water safety education programs and training rural community members in water rescue and resuscitation skills. The WC Government has collaborated with organisations such as the NSRI to provide water safety training and equipment in rural areas (NSRI, 2020).

10.1.10. Technology and Communication

The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies has implemented the SA Connect program to improve broadband connectivity in rural areas, enhancing communication capabilities crucial for safety (Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, 2022).

10.1.11. Community Resilience:

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) takes a holistic approach to rural development, including components on safety and security (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, 2020). The Community Work Programme provides job opportunities in rural areas, indirectly contributing to safety by reducing economic vulnerability (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2022).

10.2. International Perspective

Various initiatives and programs have been implemented internationally to promote rural safety across different countries and geographical areas, including developing and emerging economies and African nations. These interventions address rural communities' unique challenges and aim to enhance overall safety and well-being.

10.2.1. United States:

In the United States, several programs focus on rural safety. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) runs the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing Program, which conducts research and outreach to improve worker safety in these sectors (NIOSH, 2022). The Rural Law Enforcement Technology Institute provides training and resources to rural law enforcement agencies to enhance their technological capabilities in crime prevention and investigation (RLETI, 2021).

10.2.2. United Kingdom

In the UK, the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN) supports various programs to tackle rural crime, including farm theft and wildlife crime (NRCN, 2023). The Rural Crime Team, a specialised police unit, addresses rural-specific crime issues across different regions (National Police Chiefs' Council, 2022).

10.2.3. Australia

Australia has implemented several initiatives to address rural safety. The Royal Flying Doctor Service provides emergency and primary health care services to remote rural areas (RFDS, 2023). The Rural Crime Prevention Team works closely with local communities to address rural-specific crime issues (NSW Police Force, 2022).

10.2.4. India

In India, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) program focuses on improving rural road infrastructure and safety (Ministry of Rural Development, India, 2022). The National Rural Health Mission aims to improve healthcare access and quality in rural areas (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India, 2023).

10.2.5. Brazil

Brazil has implemented the National Program for Strengthening Family Agriculture (PRONAF), which includes components on rural safety and infrastructure improvement (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply, Brazil, 2023). The country also has a rural environmental registration program (CAR) that indirectly contributes to rural safety by promoting sustainable land use (Brazilian Forest Service, 2023).

10.2.6. China

China's "Building a New Socialist Countryside" program includes initiatives to improve rural infrastructure, healthcare, and safety (National Development and Reform Commission, China, 2022). The country has also implemented a rural revitalisation strategy that includes safety components (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, China, 2023).

10.2.7. Nigeria

Nigeria has implemented the Rural Access and Mobility Project (RAMP), which aims to improve rural road infrastructure and enhance safety in rural areas (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria, 2023). The country also has a National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services program that includes components on farm safety (NAERLS, 2022).

10.2.8. Kenya

Kenya has implemented the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project, which includes improving rural infrastructure and safety (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives, Kenya, 2023). The country also has a Community Policing Initiative that focuses on enhancing safety in rural areas (National Police Service, Kenya, 2022).

10.2.9. Ethiopia

Ethiopia has implemented the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), which, while primarily focused on food security, also contributes to rural safety through community development projects (Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia, 2023). The country also has a Rural Electrification Program that indirectly enhances safety by improving lighting and communication in rural areas (Ethiopian Electric Utility, 2022).

10.2.10. Global Initiatives

Several international organisations implement global programs that contribute to rural safety. The World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility provides funding and technical assistance for rural road safety improvements in developing countries (World Bank, 2023). The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) implements global disaster risk reduction programs in rural areas, focusing on agricultural communities (FAO, 2023). The World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health includes specific provisions for improving healthcare workforce distribution in rural areas (WHO, 2022).

These initiatives demonstrate the diverse approaches to promoting rural safety worldwide, including in developing and emerging economies and African countries. While the specific programs vary based on local contexts and needs, there is a common emphasis on improving infrastructure, enhancing law enforcement capabilities, promoting community involvement, and addressing the unique challenges of rural environments.

11. Recommendations for Improving Rural Safety

The recommendations below are derived from the comprehensive literature review on rural safety issues. These suggestions reflect the collective insights, findings, and best practices identified in various academic studies, government reports, and case studies from SA and international contexts. While not exhaustive, these recommendations represent key themes and strategies that emerged consistently across the reviewed literature as potential approaches to improving rural safety in the WC.

11.1. Policy Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive, multi-sectoral rural safety policy addressing crime and non-crime safety factors.
- Integrate rural safety considerations into broader development policies, including economic development, education, and health policies.
- Implement policies to address socio-economic drivers of crime, such as poverty and unemployment, focusing on youth employment initiatives.
- Strengthen policies on substance abuse prevention and treatment in rural areas.

- Develop policies to improve infrastructure in rural areas, including roads, lighting, and telecommunications.

11.2. Operational Strategies

- Enhance law enforcement capacity in rural areas through increased resources, training, and specialised rural policing units.
- Implement technology-driven crime prevention and response solutions, such as CCTV systems and digital reporting platforms.
- Technology can be used to share crucial information, monitor crime hotspots and remote areas, track criminals, etc.
- Improve emergency response systems and times in rural areas.
- Develop and implement strategies to address specific rural crimes, such as livestock theft and farm attacks.
- Strengthen cross-border cooperation to address transnational organised crime affecting rural areas.

11.3. Strengthening Local Law Enforcement

- Strengthening local law enforcement capacity is crucial to improving district safety and crime prevention.
- One of the ways to do this is through the establishment of K-9 units.
- K-9 units were established in Swartland and Overstrand municipalities and significantly contributed to improved safety and crime prevention in their respective districts.
- When evaluating the implementation of the K-9 units in these districts, the WC government discovered that the intervention was successful and should be considered for expansion or further rollout to other municipalities or districts.
- It was discovered that even though both models are effective (i.e., dog leasing and owning), the dog ownership model is better, in which the concerned municipality is responsible for all ownership, training, and kenneling needs of the unit.
- Despite some challenges, it was recommended that aspects of the best practice models from Swartland and Overstrand be used as lessons for the way forward, and the recommendations provided in the evaluation should be addressed in an improvement plan before expansion or further rollout.
- The k-9 unit increased in the number of arrests and the value of confiscated items and cash. The collaboration with SAPS and other stakeholders played a crucial role in the success of the units. Perhaps this could be explored in rural areas, particularly crime hotspots.

11.4. Community Engagement Approaches

- Strengthen and expand community policing forums and farm watch programs.
- Implement community-based crime prevention initiatives that involve residents in safety planning and implementation.
- Develop programs to improve social cohesion and build trust among community groups.
- Implement youth engagement programs to prevent crime and substance abuse.
- Enhance support services for victims of crime, particularly for domestic and gender-based violence in rural areas.

11.5. Research and Data Collection Needs

- Conduct regular, comprehensive surveys on rural crime and safety perceptions.
- Improve data collection and analysis on rural crime trends and patterns.
- Invest in research on the effectiveness of various rural safety interventions.
- Study the impact of socio-economic factors on rural crime to inform evidence-based policies.
- Develop a centralised database for rural safety information to facilitate sharing and coordinated responses.

12. Conclusion

Rural areas in the WC face unique safety concerns that extend far beyond traditional notions of crime prevention. These regions' distinct geographical, social, and economic characteristics create challenges that require carefully crafted strategies. These strategies must address immediate safety concerns and tackle the underlying socio-economic factors contributing to rural communities' vulnerability and insecurity.

The findings underscore the importance of collaborative efforts in enhancing rural safety. It is evident that no single agency or approach can adequately address the diverse range of issues at play. Instead, a coordinated effort involving law enforcement, community organisations, local government, and provincial departments is essential. This collaborative approach should be underpinned by a deep understanding of local contexts and a commitment to community engagement.

Moving forward, it is crucial to recognise that improving rural safety is not just about reducing crime rates. It is about creating resilient communities that can effectively respond to a wide range of safety challenges. This requires investment in both physical infrastructure and human

capital. It involves empowering local communities with the tools, knowledge, and resources they need to take an active role in their own safety and well-being.

The path to enhanced rural safety in the WC will require sustained commitment, innovative thinking, and adaptability. As the landscape of rural safety continues to evolve, so too must strategies and approaches. By building on the insights gained from this review and focusing on evidence-based, community-centred solutions, the WC can work towards a future where rural communities are safer, more prosperous, and more resilient.

Ultimately, the goal of improving rural safety extends beyond the immediate concerns of crime prevention. It is about fostering environments where rural communities can thrive, where economic opportunities are accessible, and where residents feel secure and empowered. By prioritising rural safety and adopting a comprehensive approach to addressing its challenges, the WC has the opportunity to set a new standard for rural development and community well-being.

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