

Example of presence and efficacy of inter-agency collaboration and cooperation as...

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Interagency Collaboration

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As the adage goes 'Unity is Strength,' so is the situation on the ground as far as crime detection and prevention are concerned. The notion of collaboration and cooperation by all the stakeholders in maintaining sanity, law and order in the affected areas has been very effective and efficient. These two concepts of collaboration and cooperation are well informed by the need to involve the very persons affected by the problem of insecurity and the menace of drug peddling and trafficking. These concepts, therefore, involve a scenario whereby several agencies come and work together towards accomplishing the same goal or objective. These departments include but not limited to the department of justice, the police department, correctional facilities, non-governmental organization and the members of the community.

The cooperation and collaboration have been instrumental in the target areas commonly referred to as 'hotspots.' The positive aspects of the collaborative initiative are numerous. This initiative has, for instance, created a trust and mutual understanding amongst all the stakeholders involved (Anthony & Cunneen, 2008). Members of the community have developed trust and confidence in the law enforcement agencies. This has, in turn, translated into efficiency when it comes to crime detection and prevention since the members of the community can report, signal or alert the police in time for them to apprehend and put in custody anybody suspected to commit a felony.

Through this collaboration initiative, the members of the affected or targeted

communities have embraced vigilance in curbing any criminal activities from being perpetrated in their neighborhoods. Additionally, all the stakeholders and, more so the members of the community, feel as that they are part and parcel of the whole initiative. This in turn works to boost their morale and hence efficiency and efficacy being the final products of the same. As aforementioned, unity equates strength. The collaboration and cooperation creates a pool of resources all channeled towards meeting the same goal and hence improves the final product which is to detect and prevent the perpetration of any criminal activity within the neighborhoods of a given community (Center for Substance Abuse Research, 2001).

At this juncture, we must appreciate the fact that all the stakeholders play different roles, but aimed at achieving the same final objective. However, I strongly believe that we can nevertheless try to arrange them in hierarchies from the most important ones to the very least partner playing the least role. In my honest opinion, I strongly think that the Citizens planning and Housing Association (CPHA) should be treated as the less essential partner in this initiative. The rationale informing my decision is a very simple one (Center for Substance Abuse Research, 2001).

The main problem affecting this community was not a housing problem but rather the vices of drug abuse and insecurity. People chose to vacate their homes due to the high levels of insecurity and the drug menace. The first and the main objective, therefore, entailed bringing back some level of decorum and sanity in the community and the problem of housing would be solved automatically (Hall & Winlow, 2012). Prioritizing housing problem to my opinion is, therefore, misplaced since the crux of the matter was

insecurity and drug peddling that resulted to the vacated homes and not the housing question. This, therefore, means that more energy and synergy should be directed to addressing the immediate cause of the problem rather than the peripheral matters such as the housing question manifested by the vacated houses and homes.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) could have played a very major role in this initiative. This is a special agency within the U. S Department of Justice with almost the same mandate and jurisdiction as the famous Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has the mandate of enforcing the Controlled Substances Act. This agency, therefore, could have scored highly in this initiative had they been involved as stakeholders. It is needless to point out how effective this agency has been in the eradication and fight against drug smuggling and the consumption thereof (Cole & Gertz, 2012). Some of the many tactics applied by this agency as it has been witnessed even in the Hollywood movies is the use of undercover agents who always assist in the apprehension of the masterminds of such drug cartels. This, however, is always a very risk affair to pull through. In a nutshell, therefore, we must appreciate the amount of input this agency could have played in the whole initiative of creating sanity by the eradicating drug menace in the target communities.

On the same breath, correctional facilities could have played a crucial role in this initiative. Here keen attention goes to the community corrections as opposed to incarnation. The community corrections include inter alia, parole and probation facilities. These two will be used effectively to provide

convicted persons with a humble and easy time to integrate back into the community (Hall & Winlow, 2012). Furthermore, these convicts may be very effective in carrying out certain roles pertaining community works such as general cleaning of public places such as hospitals, roads, and recreational facilities.

A culture of vigilance should also be incorporated and natured by the communities affected by the menace of drugs and insecurity. This may take the form of community policing to the end where the local members of the community form groups that will have the mandate of assisting the law enforcement agencies in apprehending the culprits. This can be very effective since the local members of the community know who these culprits are and even their hiding places (Center for Substance Abuse Research, 2001).

The non-criminal justice entity that could have enhanced the success of the initiative is drug treatment centers (Anthony & Cunneen, 2008). These could either be governmental organizations or non-governmental organizations that are mandated with the task of assisting the drug addicts to undergo rehabilitation and come out as useful members of the community. This entity is instrumental to the initiative since its main goal is to convert those persons once branded as rejects by the community into useful men and women and integrate them back into the community.

Additionally, legal aid should also be offered to the community members by the legal practitioners such as attorneys and students studying law as a profession. This will assist to emancipate the community members on their rights and increase their vigil levels as far as crime detection and prevention

are concerned. Legal aid will also assist in educating the community members on the dangers and sanctions involved with crimes and illegal drugs consequently making them shy away and shun from engaging in such activities. In addition, this will help change the attitude of the community members towards criminal or illegal activities. This right mindset towards criminal activities will in turn aid in bringing the spirit of working together with the relevant law enforcement agencies. All this will have the final goal of attaining peace and order within the community. In deed the restoration of sanity, this is the main goal of the initiative (Center for Substance Abuse Research, 2001). The youths are always vulnerable to committing crimes and being influenced into getting into the drugs. The community in conjunction with the non-governmental organization should come up with relevant programs aimed at engaging the youths with useful activities to keep them busy since an idle mind is the devil's workshop.

In conclusion, it is crystal clear from the foregoing, therefore, which matters pertaining insecurity and eradication of the drug abuse menace from our communities is not a one man show. It calls for a collective effort and team work. All the various stakeholders cutting across the department of justice, the courts, the law enforcement agencies, the correctional facilities, the non-governmental organizations and the members of the community play various and distinct roles, but all aimed at attaining the same final result of maintaining law, peace and order within the community. We should, therefore, not sit back and watch and expect things to be done by other people. Issues touching on Security and drug eradication in our communities are a call and task bestowed upon each and every one of us. There should be

no compromise or excuse whatsoever in this regard. We must always be vigilant and ever ready to eradicate these two vices- drugs and insecurity from our society. Change will always begin with you and me being part of the big team and hence the notion of collaboration and cooperation translating to the very fundamental unit of the community-Unity.

References

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