EVIDENCE AND
METHODS LAB

TECH-JUSTICE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

ASSESSING CRIME IN NAGURU

Contents

Naguru covers an area

1,171 meters

Naguru

Naguru is a home to a resilient population grappling with the harsh reality of poverty

INTRODUCTION

Evidence and Methods Lab (EML), a civic tech initiative committed to social justice, transparency, and accountability, has undertaken a significant project on Tech Justice in Naguru Go-down 1, a community facing profound socio-economic challenges. Naguru covers an area of 1,171 meters and is a home to a resilient population grappling with the harsh reality of poverty, where even affording a single daily meal is a challenging task. However, beneath the surface of economic hardship, lies a more insidious problem of lack of awareness regarding social justice and crime.

BACKGROUND

Naguru, in Kampala, Uganda, is a unique area blending challenges and prosperity. The intersection of poverty, illiteracy, and crime has created a complex web of injustice and inequality within Naguru.

Despite numerous studies on the subject, the community remains largely untouched by traditional interventions. It is within this context that this project was created, aiming to leverage technology as a solution for positive change in Naguru's lower community. Naguru's economic struggles have given rise to an environment where basic needs are a luxury for many. Despite economic struggles, there are posh houses and upscale hotels.

Naguru's diverse community, rich and less affluent, weaves a complex yet cohesive story. It reflects the reality that communities, like Naguru, have both tough times and moments of success. The area's challenges present opportunities for positive change. Naguru encourages us to see beyond the surface, embracing the richness of its diverse community narrative.

The resulting cycle of poverty has become a breeding ground for crime, further deepening the roots of injustice. The residents, predominantly low-income individuals, grapple not only with financial challenges but also with a lack of awareness about their rights and the concept of social justice. Recognizing the need for a tailored approach, the project seeks to bridge the information gap and empower the residents in Naguru through community lead conversations on crime and participatory community-based solutions.

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CRIME STATISTICS ANALYSIS OF NAGURU GO-DOWN

Between December 2023 and February 2024, the Naguru community has experienced various criminal activities, revealing a complex interplay of social issues. This section aims at providing a comprehensive analysis of crime statistics, focusing on the types of offenses and statistics for arrests made.

Statistics on crime

The crime statistics for the specified period highlight a range of offenses that have impacted the Naguru community. The highest reported incidents include domestic violence with 72 cases, robbery with 69 cases and drug abuse with 58 cases. These figures underscore the diverse challenges faced by law enforcement and the community in ensuring public safety.
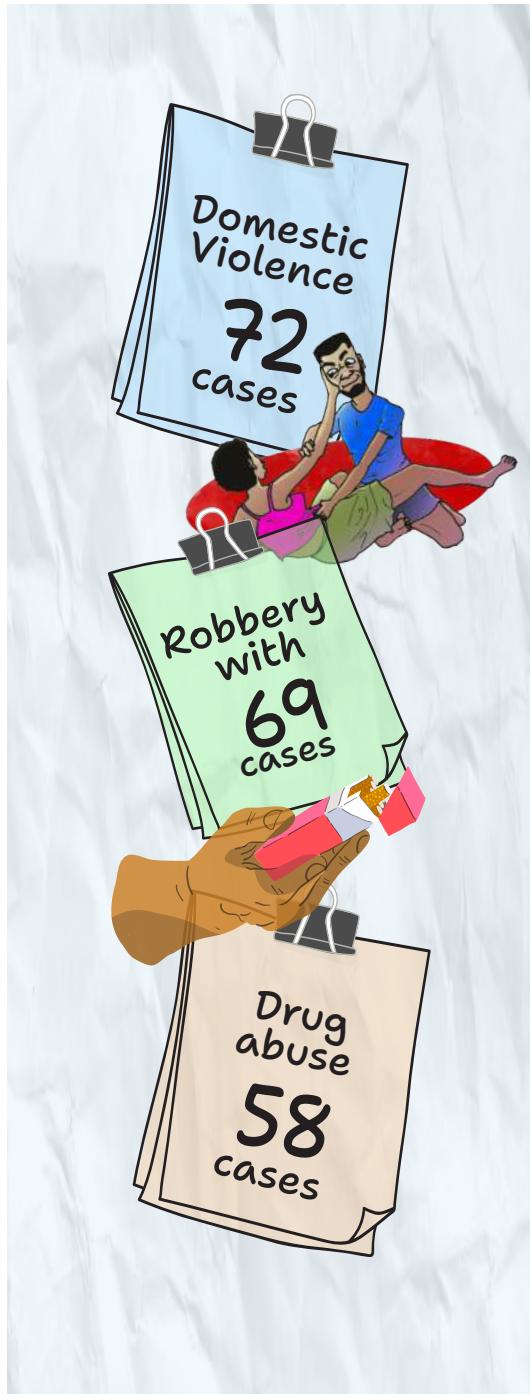
Arrests

A total of 326 arrests were made during this period, revealing a significant gender disparity. Males constituted the majority of arrests, accounting for 87% (283 individuals), while females comprised the remaining 13% (43 individuals). This gender disproportion in arrest rates may warrant further investigation into the underlying factors contributing to the differential involvement of men and women in criminal activities within the Naguru community.

Males constituted the majority of arrests, accounting for **87%** while **females** comprised the remaining **13%**
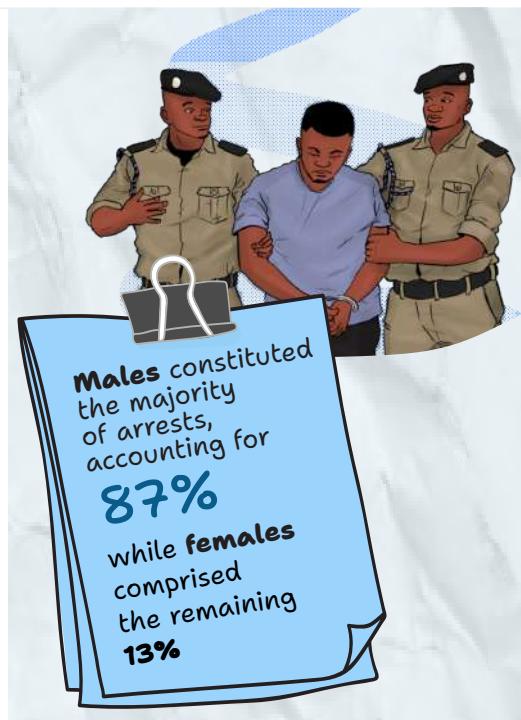
CRIME OFFENSES IN NAGURU

Attempted Murders 03%

Assault 04%

others 03%

Rape 04%

Domestic Violence 22%

Robbery 09%

Drug Abuse 18%

Defilement 10%

Aggravated Robbery 13%

Theft 14%
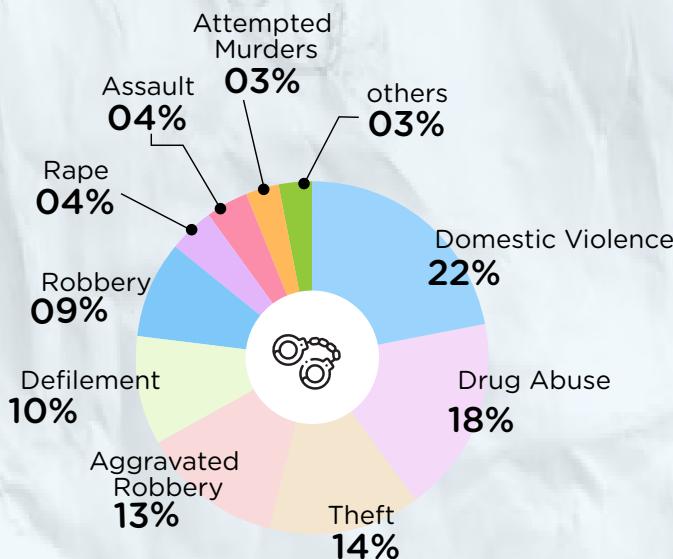
Age Analysis

Examining the age groups of those involved in criminal activities sheds light on the demographic composition of offenders. Children aged 0 to 14 years accounted for 19% of the arrests, totaling to 62 individuals.

The youth aged 15 to 24 years represented the largest portion, constituting 41% of arrests with 134 individuals. Adults aged 25 to 64 years comprised 38% of arrests, totaling 124 individuals, while the elderly aged 65 and above years accounted for a minimal 2%, with 7 individuals.

19%
0-14 YEARS

41%
15-24 YEARS

38%
25-64 YEARS

2% 64 YEARS
& ABOVE

The **youth aged 15 to 24 years** represented the largest portion of arrests at

134 individuals.

compared to adults aged **64 years and above at only**

07 individuals.

Fig 1: The illustrator creating a visual summary of the engagement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Objectives

The community engagement aimed at the following:

To raise awareness & empower the residents in Naguru community on how to combat crime legally.

To allow participants actively identify various crimes and offenses within their community, providing valuable insights into the local challenges.

To explore the root causes of crime in Naguru as a significant part of the engagement, aiming to understand the factors contributing to criminal activities.

To determine effective solutions, ensuring that proposed actions align with the specific needs and dynamics of the community.

Fig 2: The youth officer introducing his team to the participants

Project starting point

In line with the project activity, the project leader and the legal officer paid a courtesy visit to **Mr. Oliot Michael**, a community development officer at Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) which is one of the main institutions supporting this project. As a way to formalize the relationship between Evidence and Methods Lab and various stakeholders including the **Mayor, Town Clerk, Resident City Commissioner, Community Development Officer, Local Council Chairperson, OC Criminal Investigations Department, Chairperson Youth Council, Youth Officer, District Internal Security Officer, Secretary Gender, Probation Officer, Ward Administrator, and In-charge of the Naguru Remand Home,** a concept note and letter of introduction detailing the scope and nature of the project was shared. This laid a foundation for the working relationship for all the stakeholders involved in creating a pathway to the main aspect of the project—the community engagement.

Guided by insights gained from the various stakeholders, the EML team selected an appropriate date for the community engagement and initiated the planning process. The mobilization of community members and local leaders for the event was done with support from the KCCA youth council team and the community councilor.

STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement meeting took place on February 13, 2024, at Naguru Katali Primary School in Naguru, Nakawa division coordinated by the EML team representatives comprising of the project leader, legal officer and the illustrator. The event commenced at 10 am, with participants arriving on time **(see figure 3).** The KCCA youth council team joined at 10:30 am. The gathering included 88 community members, with youth aged between 17 to 35years as the majority participants, the elderly aged between 50 to 60 years, seven local leaders, and a moderator, with a ratio of 55% to 45% female and male participants respectively. This diverse representation fostered an environment conducive for open interaction.

The engagement began with formal introductions of participants and leaders as the illustrator set up his art equipment for visualization of the engagement **(see figure 4),** followed by an insightful presentation on crime. The moderator delineated the concept of crime and its various manifestations. Participants were actively engaged, sharing their knowledge of different forms of crime prevalent in the community. Notably, drug abuse and domestic violence emerged as significant concerns. Additional crimes mentioned included theft, robbery, defilement, assault, and rape. These responses from the participants served as a foundation for the subsequent focus group discussion, a critical phase in the community engagement process.

Fig 3: participants arriving and being guided through the registration process.

The community engagement included

88 members

start time: 10:30 am

Age Group.

17 to 35 Years

50 to 60 Years

Ratio.

55% male

45% female

Fig 4: EML legal officer introducing the session to the participants.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The discussion questions were prominently displayed on a blackboard, serving as focal points for the community engagement. Participants were randomly allocated into four groups ensuring equal representation for the different age groups present and equal distribution of males and females, each assigned a specific question related to crime in their community **(see figure 5).**

Fig. 5: The participants being introduced to the Focus Group Discussion.

The participants, after careful selection of group leaders, were equipped with manila papers to document their responses **(see figure6).**

Allocating 15 minutes for group discussions, the ensuing insights provided valuable perspectives on the status of crime within the community.

THE QUESTIONS ADDRESSED DURING THE GROUP DISCUSSIONS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

1 What is causing crimes in your community?

2 Why are crimes not reported to the authorities?

3 What can we do in order to reduce criminal activity in our communities?

4 How can the community be sensitized on crime?

Fig. 6: Participants discussing the questions in groups.
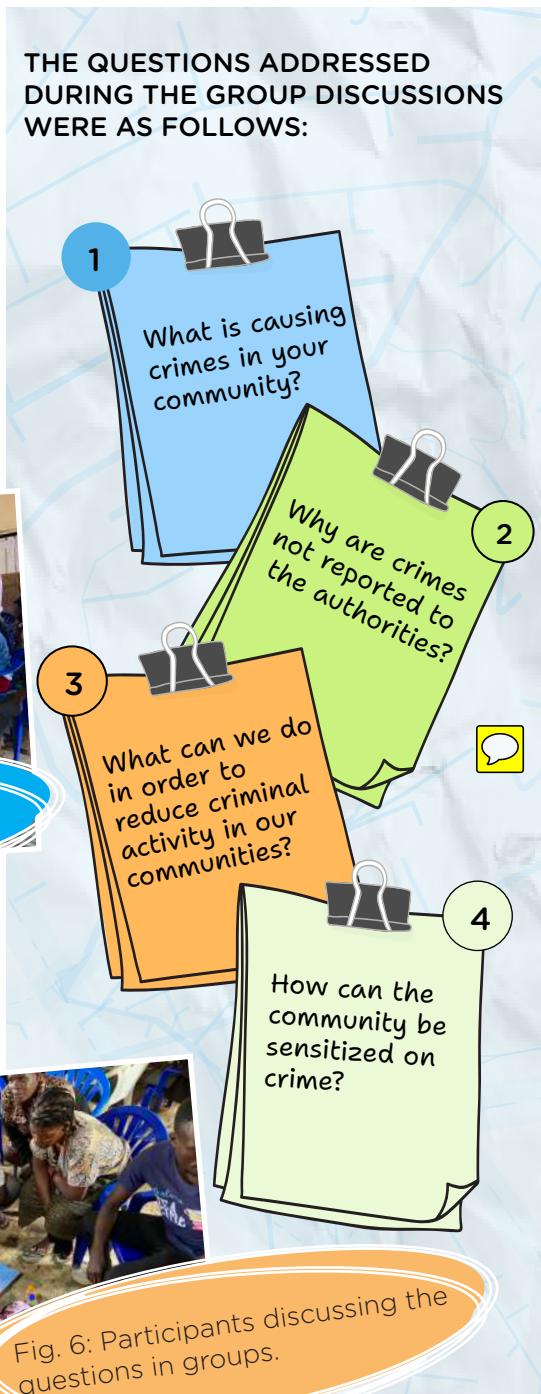
Presentation of Group discussion

Group 1's leader shared the outcomes of their discussion, revealing that unemployment, population increase, illiteracy, discrimination, ignorance, peer pressure, improper upbringing of children, drug influence, excessive authority, hunger, emotional stress, poverty and denial of sexual intercourse among couples were identified as significant contributors to crime in their community.

The second group leader highlighted reasons why some crimes go unreported to authorities. These included the preference for resolving matters internally, fear of losing self-respect, especially in cases of domestic violence, intimidation by community members, concerns about costs, lack of knowledge about police and crime justice processes, the normalization of criminal activities in society to this he noted that "What the law considers crime is what makes us" "Crime has become normal" , absence of community leaders to guide residents, corruption and embezzlement, loss of hope and trust in authorities, defensive parents, and the perception that matters reported to the police often remain unresolved.
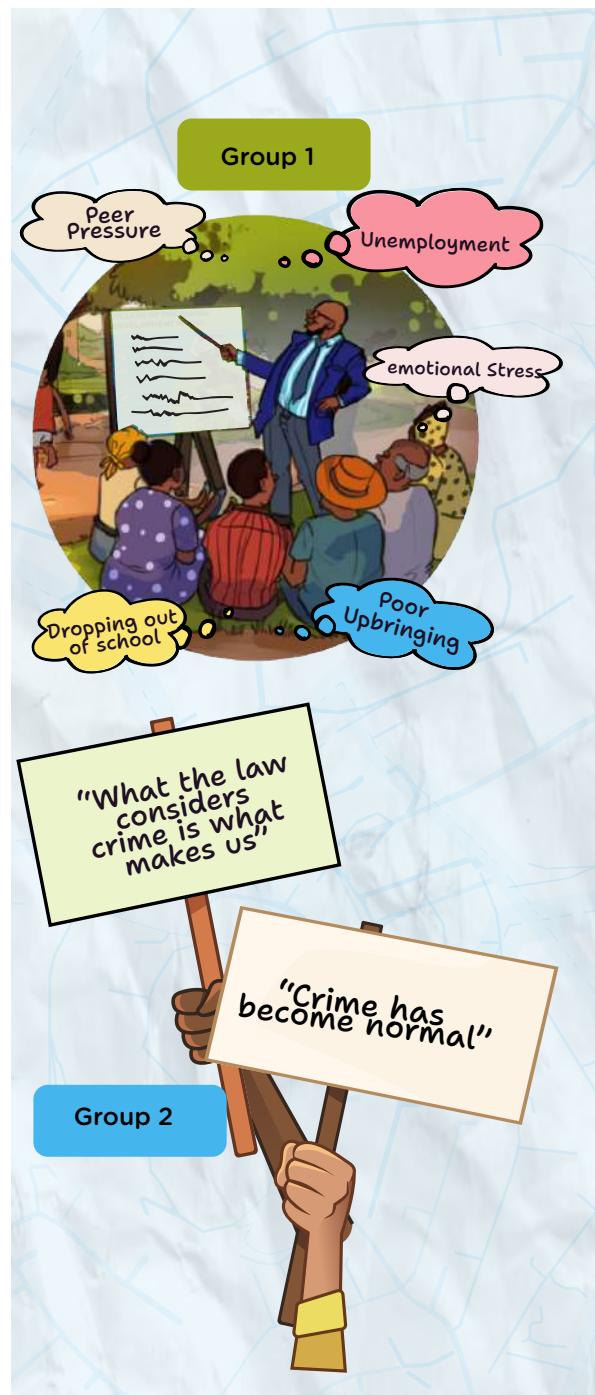
These insights underscore the multifaceted nature of the causes of crime and the complex dynamics influencing reporting behaviors within the community. They provide a foundation for developing targeted interventions addressing the identified challenges and fostering a safer and more informed community.

The third speaker emphasized proactive measures to reduce crime in the community. Recommendations included encouraging residents to report criminal activities promptly to the relevant authorities. Additionally, the establishment of community reinforcement through vigilante groups aimed at controlling crime was suggested. Embracing the "Nyumba Kumi" policy, a community-driven crime prevention strategy, and supporting initiatives such as joining Local Defense Units (LDU) and Community Defense Forces were identified as crucial steps. Furthermore, the speaker proposed addressing socio-economic challenges by promoting projects and job opportunities to mitigate unemployment and income disparities.

Engaging community members in sports activities to occupy their time constructively and fostering community policing practices were also highlighted as effective strategies to contribute to crime reduction. These comprehensive recommendations underscore a community-oriented approach to crime prevention, encompassing both social and security aspects.

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Fig 7:
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The final discussant provided insights into sensitizing the community on crime. He proposed several strategies, including victims sharing personal experiences, forming community groups for awareness, engaging community leaders to demand information and sensitization, emphasizing collective responsibility as everyone's duty to prevent criminal activities, advocating for education, asserting that "parents can learn from their educated children about crime", utilizing sports and gatherings as platforms to educate about the law, and promoting spiritual teachings to encourage people to reconnect with their faith.

These suggestions underscore the importance of diverse approaches to raising awareness and fostering a sense of responsibility within the community to combat crime. During the community engagement, the leaders of each group presented their findings **(see figure 7),** offering valuable insights that were diligently recorded to shape the development of a comprehensive action plan. This participatory approach guarantees that the solutions and strategies formulated are firmly grounded in the community's input, thereby augmenting the project's overall effectiveness. The Focus Group Discussions served as a platform for a robust exchange of ideas and perspectives, fostering a collaborative environment where diverse viewpoints contributed to a more holistic understanding of the community's needs and challenges.

One of the group leaders giving a presentation.

OUTCOMES

To visually capture the essence of the discussion, an illustrator from EML unveiled three ideology art pieces that artistically represented the sentiments expressed by the community. **(see image 8)** These artistic representations of the discussions that arose during the community engagement not only served as a tangible reflection of the community's engagement but also signified a unified dedication to achieving the outlined project goals. In a symbolic gesture of collective commitment to the project's objectives, the presenters of the focus group discussions personally signed these art pieces.

Recognizing the significance of the art pieces in capturing the essence of their discussions, the community members expressed a collective desire for a larger art piece to be returned to them. This request aimed at having a meaningful remembrance of the event, symbolizing the enduring impact of their engagement in addressing community challenges and creating a sense of unity and commitment towards the project.


Drug Abuse

Domestic Violence

Child Abuse

Fig 8: Visual images created by the illustrator during the engagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The community members, recognizing the significance of the initial community engagement, expressed a desire for continuous initiatives. They specifically requested their leaders to liaise with the organization for an open court session, inviting lawyers and judicial officers to provide insightful teachings on crime and the judicial system in Uganda. This proactive effort reflects the community's commitment to enhancing legal awareness and empowering individuals, fostering a more informed and engaged citizenry. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of ongoing dialogues and collaborative efforts, urging leaders to involve external stakeholders in similar community engagements to address local issues and drive positive change.

WAY FORWARD

The results of the community engagement will serve as a compass for the EML team, steering them towards fieldwork that addresses the identified challenges and solutions. The artistic representations will become potent communication tools, fostering enhanced understanding and mobilization within the community. The next steps involve bringing an execution plan back to the community, focusing on the creation of innovative solutions such as gamified information on crime, tech-based crime reporting avenues, tech-based crime awareness and prevention solutions among other initiatives. This strategic approach aims to harness technology as a catalyst for positive change and community empowerment.
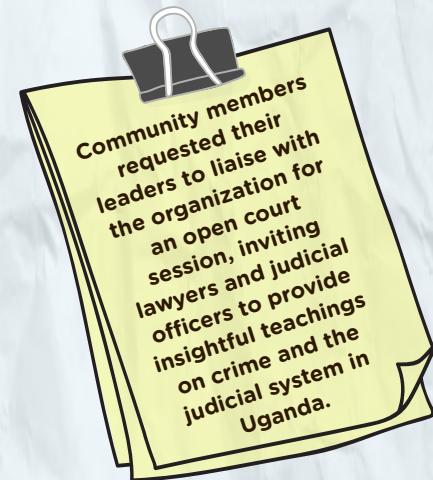
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Tech-based crime awareness & prevention solutions among other initiatives.

CONCLUSION

The community engagement in Naguru marks a significant milestone in the project, establishing the groundwork for a community-driven approach in combating crime and championing social justice. Through effective collaboration with local stakeholders, engaging discussions, and artistic representation, Evidence and Methods Lab showcases its unwavering commitment to fostering meaningful change through innovative civic tech initiatives. In its pursuit of social justice for Naguru, this project serves as a beacon of hope.

Leveraging technology strategically, it not only addresses immediate challenges but also endeavors to create a sustainable environment where residents are empowered to advocate for their rights.

Through collaborative efforts, community engagement, and innovative tech solutions, the project envisions a Naguru liberated from crime, paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future.

Through effective collaboration with local stakeholders, engaging discussions, & artistic representation, Evidence and Methods Lab showcases its unwavering commitment to fostering meaningful change through innovative civic tech initiatives.

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