Neighborhoods

Issue 8 – June 2017

HIGHLIGHTS

Drugs have been cited as second biggest problem in communities as opposed to unemployment as seen in previous QoLs

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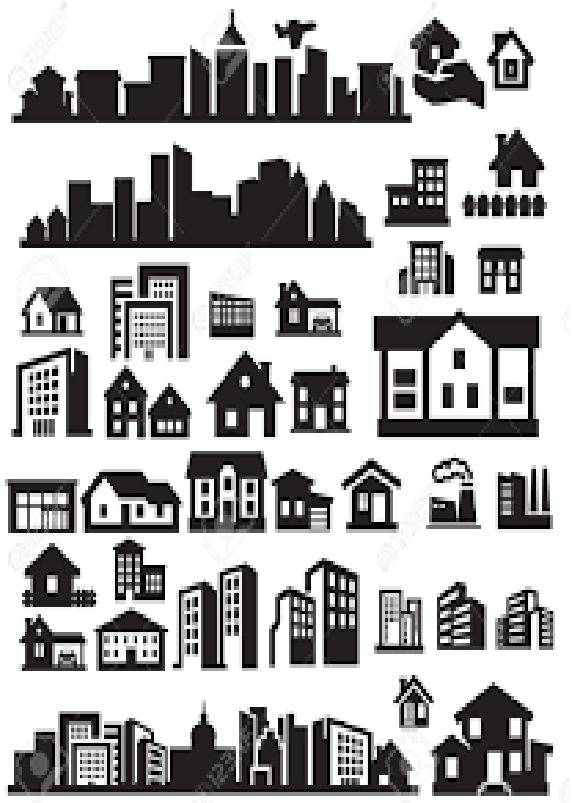

Are residents of Johannesburg satisfied with the neighbourhoods in which they live? The question is important because responses reflect a variety of dimensions of residents' everyday lives and circumstances.

Satisfaction with neighbourhoods

According to the 2015 Quality of Life (QoL) survey satisfaction rates are generally high. As seen in **Figure 1**, 71% of respondents said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their neighbourhood, whereas 16% said that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Respondents in relatively affluent areas, especially those dominated by estate or cluster housing, such as Bryanston and Sunninghill, overwhelmingly say they are satisfied with their neighbourhood.

- Township areas have mixed levels of satisfaction, and some are surprisingly high. In Soweto, for example, 72% of respondents are satisfied with their neighbourhood.

- Areas that reported low levels of satisfaction include parts of Boksburg, Bekkersdal, and some sparsely populated peripheral wards.
- There are some stark contrasts, for example between Alexandra, Tembisa and Diepsloot and affluent areas adjacent to them. Satisfaction with neighbourhood also varies according to the type of dwelling a respondent lives in.

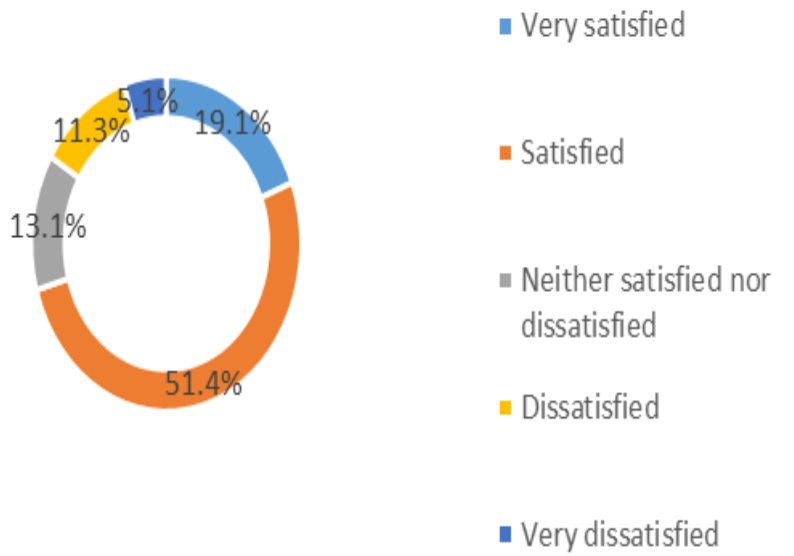

Figure 1: Levels of satisfaction with the area or neighbourhood where respondents live

Improvement or deterioration in neighbourhood

Figure 2 highlights that nearly a third (31%) of respondents believe that there has been an improvement in their area or community in the past year. The results differ by municipality.

Mogale City had the highest proportion of respondents indicating improvement over the last year, at 37%, followed by the three metropolitan municipalities, each with 32%.

Emfuleni had the lowest at 17%, followed by Randfontein at 20%. Lesedi had the highest proportion of respondents (25%) saying that their suburb or community had deteriorated in the last year, followed by Emfuleni at (20%).

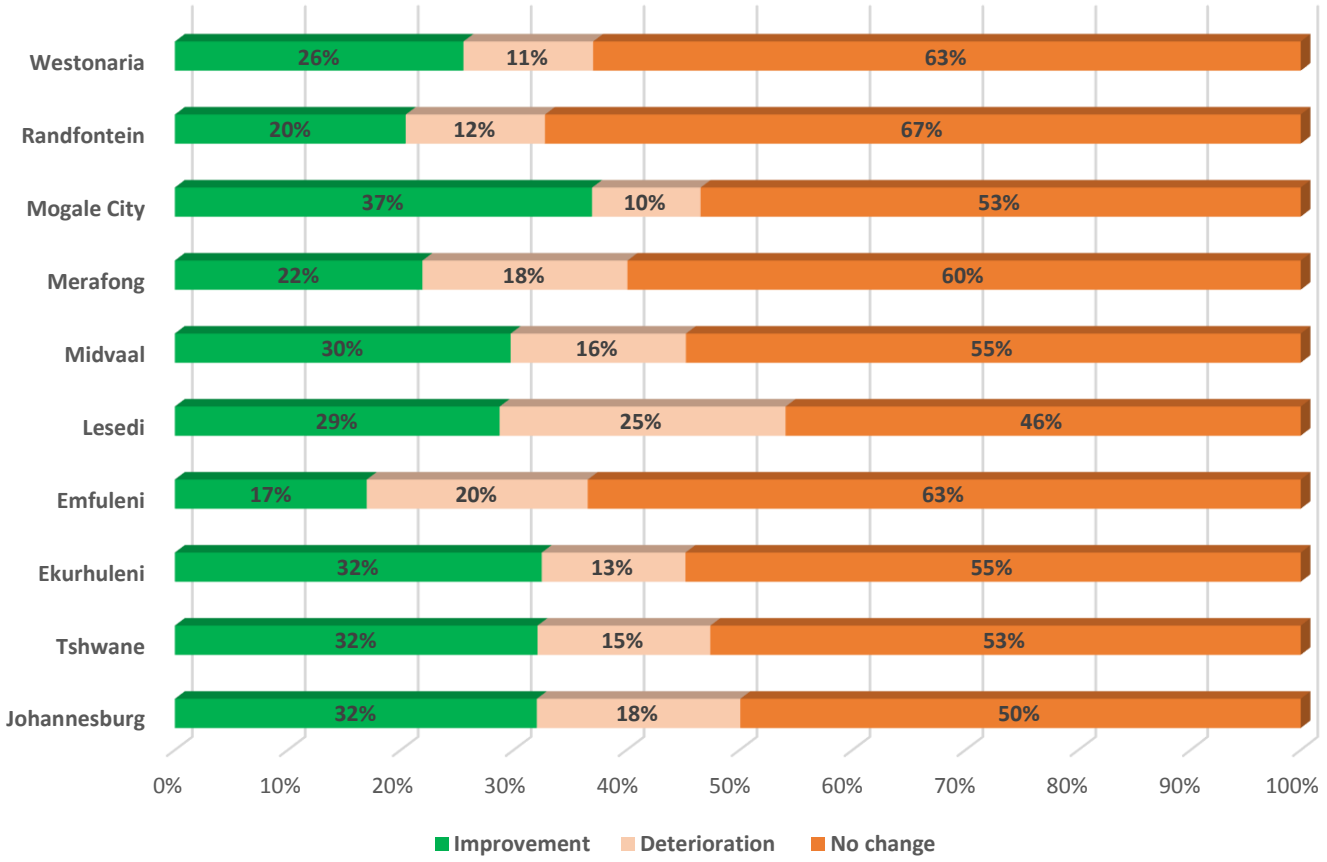

Figure 2 : Perceived improvement or deterioration in suburb/community in the last 12 months (by municipality)

Reasons for living in a suburb

Respondents were asked to identify the main reason that they live in the suburb in which they live **(Figure 3).** The most common response was ‘affordability’ (27%) followed by ‘always lived here’ (21%) and ‘easy to get to work’ (13%).

There are some interesting variations by population group. For example white respondents are least likely to say ‘always lived here’ (14%), but most likely to identify ‘quality of property’ (12%) and ‘security’ (5%) as the most important reason.

Neither social homogeneity nor diversity seemed to be primary motivations since relatively few respondents identified the most important reason as either ‘neighbours are similar to me’ (2%) or that the suburb was ‘interesting and diverse’(2%).

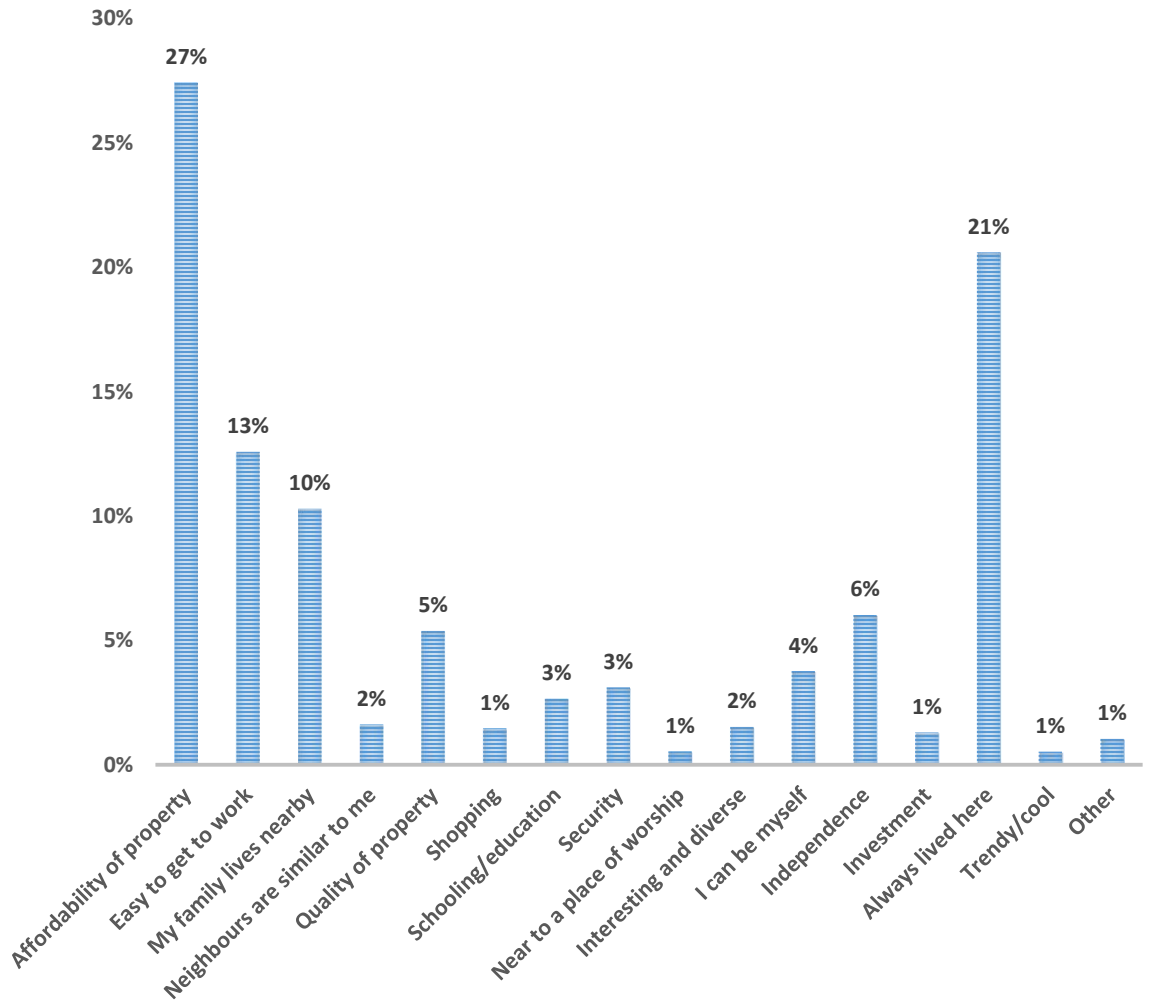

Figure 3: What is the most important reason why you live in your suburb?

Biggest problem in the community

Respondents were asked to name the biggest problem in their community **(Figure 4).** The most common response was ‘crime’, identified as the most important problem by 39% of the respondents. ‘Unemployment’ features prominently but no longer constitutes the second most commonly cited problem as it did in previous QoL surveys.

The second most commonly cited problem is now ‘drugs’, identified by 16% of the respondents (having risen from 5% in the 2009 and 2011 surveys). The 16% who identified ‘drugs’ do not include a further 3% who named ‘alcohol abuse’ as the biggest problem. Therefore nearly one fifth of the respondents said that substance abuse was the biggest problem facing their community.

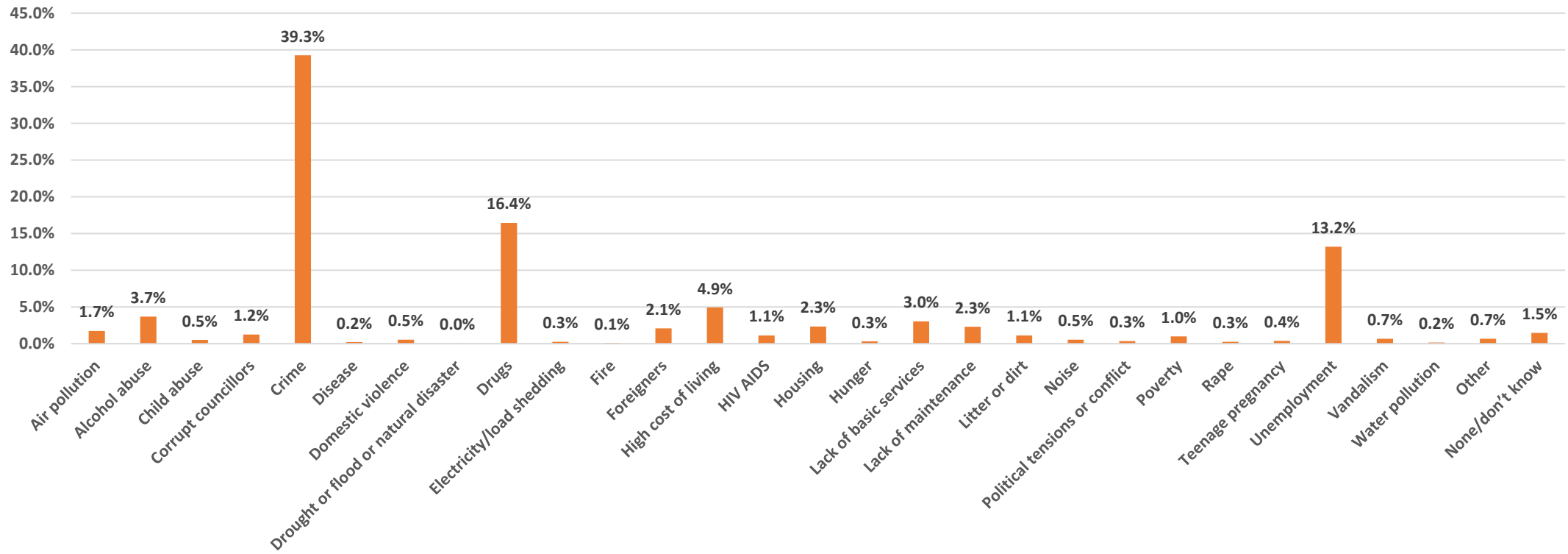

Figure 4: What is the biggest problem facing your community?

Biggest problem in the community

In another question, respondents were asked 'If there is a problem in the area where you live, who do you talk to first to sort it out?' **(Figure 5**). 39% said they would call the 'police' while a further 11% said they would use 'private security'. 14% of the residents could not identify anyone they would approach.

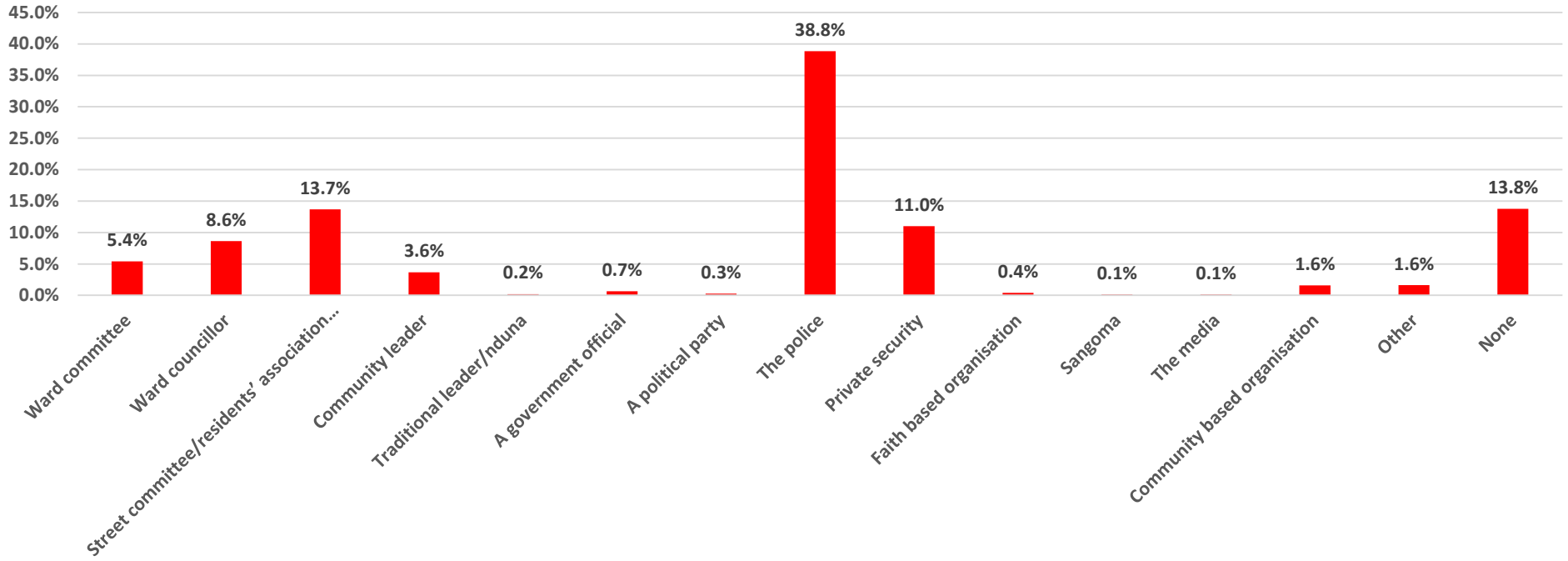

Figure 5: If there is a problem in the area where you live, who do you talk to first to sort it out?

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