

# U20 Submission: Digital Innovations to Combat Crime and Drug Abuse in the City of Johannesburg

## Overview:

The City of Johannesburg faces a growing crisis of crime and drug abuse, particularly affecting youth, vulnerable communities, and economic development. To address this challenge, we propose the implementation of smart digital innovations that combine technology, community involvement, and data-driven decision-making.

## Key Digital Innovations:

### AI-Powered Smart Surveillance:

Install CCTV with facial recognition, license plate detection & real-time alerts. Link feeds to a central City Crime Command Centre for instant monitoring and response.

### "Jozi Watch" Crime Alert App:

A mobile platform for anonymous tip-offs, panic button use, and nearby police station alerts. Enables community participation in crime prevention and response.

### Data-Driven Policing:

Use predictive analytics to identify crime hotspots. Optimize SAPS and JMPD patrols through real-time crime mapping.

### Digital Rehabilitation & Skills Platforms:

Provide virtual therapy, online counselling, and skills training for drug users. Support reintegration through access to local opportunities and mentorship.

### Smart IoT Street Infrastructure:

Deploy smart poles with CCTV, Wi-Fi, emergency buttons & gunshot detection sensors. Improve visibility and safety in public spaces, particularly informal settlements.

### Blockchain for Drug Supply Monitoring:

Track pharmaceutical distribution securely to prevent illegal reselling of medication. Promote transparency in supply chains via partnerships with health departments.

### Youth Digital Empowerment Hub:

Launch a gamified learning and engagement app with points-based rewards. Offer digital literacy, anti-drug awareness, and access to city-funded bursaries.

## Strategic Recommendations:

- Form a Digital Safety Task Force under the Mayor's Office.
- Integrate smart safety tools in all township development and urban renewal programs.

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- Promote public-private partnerships with tech firms, universities, and NGOs.
- Develop clear data privacy and ethics policies to protect citizens.

### **Conclusion:**

Johannesburg has the potential to lead Africa as a smart and safe city. By integrating digital technologies into public safety and health strategies, the city can combat crime and drugs more effectively - while empowering communities and restoring public trust.

"Digital innovation is not just about technology - it's about creating a safer, smarter, and more inclusive Johannesburg."