

**Guidelines for applicants to the
International Network of Safe Communities
and
Guidelines for maintaining membership in the
International Network of Safe Communities**

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Application, certifying and designation processes of International Network of Safe Communities

The first part of this document outlines steps that applicants take to join the International Network of Safe Communities, informally known as Safe Communities (SC). The document assumes that readers have a basic knowledge of the SC model, and understand the programme indicators. Before we address the specific details of joining the network, it is important to outline how we understand the process of developing “Safe Communities”.

We see designation not primarily as an endorsement of past and current achievements, but more as a staging point for communities to test and strengthen themselves for the long term pursuit of community safety. It is more a marathon than a sprint! The six Safe Community indicators are "signposts to safety". They are not the final destination, but they do point you in the right direction.

It is not credible to suggest a community can call itself “safe” after a two to five year program that results in a Safe Communities designation. It is extremely important that our processes and language are not drawn into the idea that designation is a sort of certification that implies (however indirectly) that by achieving designation as safe community it has miraculously become "safe" whereas prior to designation it was "unsafe".

We see community safety as a process and designation as a Safe Community as a staging point in this process. Designation is more about helping communities achieve a solid beginning than it is about acknowledging a community has arrived.

Once you have been designated as a Safe Community, there are additional requirements that your organisation must undertake, in order to remain a member in good standing. The second part of this document outlines these requirements. We look forward to welcoming you to the Network.



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Definition of terms

SPIP Safety Promotion/Injury Prevention

SC Safe Community (Community Safety Promotion)

CC Safe Community Certifying Centre

ASC Affiliate Safe Community Support Centre

CCCSP WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion

Applying for membership in the SC network

Designation is the beginning of the ongoing process of becoming a safe community. It is a staging point for your forthcoming achievements, acknowledgement of past activities and recognition of your future commitment to community safety.

Accordingly, the International Network of Safe Communities, through its Certifying Centres, will be most interested in observing how your community has progressed towards becoming a safe community, where you have come from, what you have achieved and your plans for the future.

By way of assistance, this document provides you with guidelines that indicate what your Certifying Centre is assessing, as you prepare for designation. However, these are only guidelines: they are not in themselves sufficient to achieve designation. Every community starts this process with its own strengths and weaknesses. We are looking for evidence that you have built on your natural strengths while addressing your weaknesses, and ultimately used the process to reduce injury and enhance safety in your community. It is not so much an issue of how you compare with other communities (e.g. by achieving set criteria) but how much you have progressed along the pathway of making your own community safe.

Designated International Safe Communities are demonstration sites. Inspire us with your strengths and show us how you have helped other communities along the pathway to designation and how you have shared important things you have learned about promoting safety in your community with other members of the network.

Things to remember throughout the process

- Application to become a member of the International Network of Safe Communities is a rigorous process. Communities must already have experience in conducting safety promotion and injury prevention activities before they are eligible for application, and must show evidence of ongoing cooperation and sustainability.
- Communities that are interested in the joining SC network arrive at the decision to apply for membership through a number of different methods. Some communities decide to work with already designated communities or Affiliate Safe Community Support Centres, which provide staff to support the applicants up until the time that the application is formally submitted. Other communities work more independently, or in contact with a Certifying Centre.
- Once a community has completed its application, however, it submits the required documents to a Certifying Centre of its choice, which will work with

the applicant from that point on, through a document review and a site visit, until the community is designated as a member of the SC network.

- Fees for the designation process are set by the Certifying Centres, and vary from centre to centre.

Safe Communities Indicators

The SC model is based upon a set of six indicators. These indicators ensure that SC activities are effective in promoting a better quality of life in the community. The indicators have been in use in the current form since 2001, when they replaced an earlier set of twelve indicators. The use of indicators as road-maps helps make sure that, internationally, SC organisations share common goals and activities.

New guidelines on meeting indicators

Beginning January, 2009 applicants to the SC network must demonstrate their capacity to meet a minimal set of activities for each indicator. The following section of this document will describe how SC applicants can meet each indicator.

Indicator 1. An infrastructure based on partnership and collaborations, governed by a cross-sectional group that is responsible for safety promotion in their community

Minimal criteria for indicator 1

A. Reference Groups

Applicants to the SC network are required to demonstrate that they have representation from a number of different community sectors within the SC programme. The applicant's reference group (also referred to as the board, governing body, steering committee, leadership group or community partners) must ensure that the SC programme is sustainable, and that the organisation will have a positive effect on local safety promotion and injury prevention activities, organisations, and policies.

We recognise that in some organisations, the driving force behind the work is not elected officials or local governments per se. Still, government representation is necessary where it is available, to ensure that there is policy support for community safety promotion programs.

Reference groups should seek representation from all community, government and non government organizations that have a vested interest in community safety.

Typically representatives would be recruited from the following groups:

1. The political unit responsible for local government- for example, in many countries, this is the mayor.
2. The government organization responsible for public safety within the community. (In most countries, this will be the local police unit. In other countries a national (or international) police force will have a local presence, and a representative should be recruited from this group.)
3. The local health care system where injury issues are addressed- specifically, there must be at least one representative from a hospital or

public health unit that serves the local community. (In many locations, there will be more than one hospital that serves the area- applicants must provide evidence that they have partnered with the majority of the hospitals in the area in safety activities.)

4. The local emergency response services and-or fire service.

5. The local government organization responsible for traffic safety.

Other sectors that may be represented on reference groups may include:

6. Private Sector Partners ;

7. Sport and Recreational Associations;

8. Public and Private schools and other educational partners that can assist as valuable programme delivery partners, including post-secondary institutions;

9. Seniors Associations;

10. Red Cross or equivalent;

11. Community based intentional injury prevention partners (women's shelters, neighbourhood watch etc); and,

12. Service clubs.

Communities are defined in many different ways: sometimes geographically, sometimes politically. Sometimes communities unite around a shared interest or a shared history. If the sectors listed above are not relevant to your community, demonstrate to us that you have attempted to engage all those people and organizations that can reasonably assist you.

B. Task Force Groups

The second most important organisational trait of a Safe Community program is the existence of task force groups doing the actual work in the community. Task force groups, also known as working groups, are based on intersectoral co-operation. (There are of course huge differences in organisations depending on whether a community has 5 000 inhabitants or 500 000.)

Task force groups work on specific safety promotion and injury prevention (SPIP) areas. Some of them may very well rise from existing groups or structures but must know their new role as a partner in something bigger than just their sector. Many older Safe Communities groups and those in larger populations have at least six task force groups.

Examples of the most common areas for task force groups:

1. Traffic safety
2. Home safety
3. Work safety
4. Sports safety
5. School safety
6. Safety in public places
7. Safety for children
8. Safety for elderly
9. Crime and Violence prevention
10. Suicide prevention
11. Injury surveillance

What if some of these areas are not being addressed in your programme?

We are fully aware that more important than the exact number of working groups are the areas or sectors of the community that are covered, to result in effective safety promotion and injury prevention programmes for high-risk groups. If you don't have a huge number of task force groups this is understandable, depending on your population base. Your application should clearly demonstrate how your groups address injury risks in your area.

Most communities have reluctant partners that are hard or impossible to engage despite a community's best efforts. This should not be seen as a fatal flaw in their program. If one sector is unwilling to engage in the process the reference group must ultimately move on without them and hope that they come on board at a later date. This is after all not their fault. Forcing them to remain stranded and waste excessive energy engaging a reluctant partner leaves them stuck in the past rather than moving forward to the future.

How do we document our ability to meet Indicator One?

Your application will contain full descriptions on both your Reference Group, and your Task Force Groups: who is a member of each group, and what sectors they represent: how the different groups work, and their long term goals. What successful programmes have been sponsored by your organisation?

Indicator 2. Long-term, sustainable programs covering both genders and all ages, environments, and situations

Minimal criteria for indicator 2

Applicants to the SC network will meet criteria two through activities that address issues of safety for both males and females, through activities that address safety for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults. Examples of effective programmes might include:

1. Transport Safety.
2. Home and Leisure Safety. At least one activity should target fall prevention for at-risk groups, in particular, for older adults.
3. Children's Safety.
4. Elderly Safety.
5. Occupational Safety.
6. Intentional injury prevention.
7. Suicide Prevention.
8. Disaster Preparedness and Response.

Safe Community organisations should address multiple safety promotion and injury prevention activities.

What are the programme parameters for SPIP activities that are sponsored by the local SC network?

SC applicants are encouraged to develop, and participate in, community-based

activities that target the injury diagnoses and external causes of injuries outlined above.

How does a community document its ability to meet Indicator Two?

Your application will contain programme descriptions and evaluation information, if available outlining the activities you have conducted.

Indicator 3. Programs that target high-risk groups and environments, and programs that promote safety for vulnerable groups

Minimal criteria for indicator 3

Safe Communities organisations plan and implement activities that promote safety and prevent injuries to the most vulnerable groups in their communities. In particular, the organisations aim to provide services to groups with higher-than-average injury rates, compared to community averages. High-risk groups may include:

- Indigenous peoples;
- Low-income groups;
- Minority groups within the community, including workplaces;
- Those at risk for intentional injuries, including victims of crime and self-harm, and teenagers and young adults;
- Older people;
- Children;
- Women;
- People with mental illnesses, developmental delays or other disabilities;
- People participating in Sports and Recreation settings;
- Homeless populations;
- People at risk for injuries from natural disasters; and,
- People living or working near high risk environments (for example, a particular road or intersection, a water hazard, etc.)

How do we document our ability to meet Indicator Three?

Safe Communities applicants are asked to document the particular at-risk groups in their community, through analysis of existing injury surveillance data or through other means. You are also asked to provide short descriptions of activities and programmes that target safety promotion and or injury prevention for the high-risk groups in your community.

Indicator 4. Programs that document the frequency and causes of injuries

While the heart of Safe Communities is its activities, reduction of injuries requires that each member community has access to data that document the number of injuries occurring in their areas. Injuries can be categorized by their outcomes (broken bones, brain injuries, etc.) or by their external causes (falls, intentional violence, etc.). As of

January 2009, ICECI (WHO) is the preferred system to classify the external causes of injuries (see <http://www.rivm.nl/who-fic/ICECIeng.htm>). Many still use the WHO International Classification of Diseases, Revision 10, Chapters 19 and 20 to classify injury outcomes. The ICD 10 can be found at <http://www.who.int/classifications/apps/icd/icd10online/>. (If necessary we even in some cases accept ICD 9 based injury data, when a country has not moved on to the ICD 10 system.)

The responsibility for producing accurate injury surveillance data usually lies with government. If that responsibility is not recognised it is of utmost importance for Safe Communities to lobby for such surveillance.

Minimal criteria for indicator 4

SC applicants are not expected to have a dedicated data analysis section operating on a full time basis. However, applicants are required, at a minimum, to:

1. Review, on a regular basis, local injury surveillance data. If injury surveillance data is not available on an annual basis, please note in your application, and describe what data sources you do have, and how often you will be able to review data. If sufficient information is not achieved household surveys are often used to complement other information.
2. Use data to prioritize the development and delivery of activities addressing the most frequent injuries in the community
3. While it is not required, we urge applicants to maintain an ongoing partnership with an individual or organisation that can provide epidemiological analysis of injury patterns to the SC applicant if possible.

One of the most cost-effective methods of obtaining data is through household surveys. One survey may serve a purpose for a long time for priorities of actions. Asking about occurring injuries the last two weeks and their causes and where they occurred is usually sufficient for data gathering purposes. Injury-related hospital stays during the last year is a good set of complementary data for analysis.

How does a community document its ability to meet Indicator Four?

Provide a description of the data systems you use to help develop your network's programmes and activities.

Indicator 5. Evaluation measures to assess their programs, processes and the effects of change

Programme evaluation allows SC members to measure the impact of their actions within their communities. Good evaluation begins with good planning. If you set clear and measurable goals and objectives when you begin your program it is much easier to measure whether or not you have achieved them.

Minimal criteria for indicator 5

SC organisations need measurable organisational goals to help guide their activities. Activities should also have specific goals, which should be measurable. Organisations can obtain pre-activity and post-activity information about behaviour change, for example. Organisations should measure how many people attend or benefit from specific activities, and organisations should be able to measure their programmes' impact on overall community safety status.

Minimal criteria for SC applicants for this criterion include

- Development and ongoing use of programme goals to reduce injuries and promote safety within the community.
- Development and ongoing use of activity goals for specific SPIP actions, which accurately measure the impacts of these activities.

A partnership with an individual or organisation that can provide evaluation support to the organisation is highly recommended- many times local universities or colleges are involved.

How does a community document its ability to meet Indicator Five?

Attach copies of your evaluation reports for activities conducted by your organisation to your application. List community partners who have assisted with setting up evaluation strategies, and-or analysing programme-generated evaluation data.

Indicator 6. Ongoing participation in national and international Safe Communities networks

Our network is an international one. Safe Communities should provide evidence that they will contribute to the overall network, through ongoing participation in the larger network's activities. Communities contribute to international development of the network not only by sending representatives to meetings, but also through other forms of partnership, such as electronic communication, publishing articles in international journals, hosting visits from individuals from international Safe Communities and working with other applicant communities outside one's national boundaries, to share programme ideas.

Minimal criteria for indicator 6

Applicants to the SC network are expected to have participated in at least one national or regional SC-related event or safety promotion or injury reduction related training events. Safety related activities events with international participation) before they are eligible to join the network. A regional event is an event that features participation by countries within the applicant's continent, as defined by WHO and the United Nations Applicable events include:

- Local or regional SC-related conferences, and-or

- Shared SPIP activities with a partner organisation outside your national boundaries.

Before or during the designation event international participation must be a feature of the applicant's programme. Applicants must also commit to sending representatives to attend at least one international SC function within three years of being accepted into the network. This function must involve one event where parties have crossed their national boundaries to participate. In addition, once every ten years, SC members must commit to attending a SC conference, held outside their national borders. SC conferences are held on an annual basis.

All SC network members are encouraged to apply to host an international conference or a seminar. Applicants may also consider hosting a travelling seminar, attached to another conference or large event; bids for each conference are solicited annually, by announcement in the Safe Communities newsletter. Applicants are expected to contact CCCSP when they want to organise conferences or travelling seminars for coordination and endorsement purposes, and for permission to use the SC logo as well. (Please visit http://www.phs.ki.se/csp/who_conferences_en.htm for more information.)

How does a community document its ability to meet Indicator Six?

In your application package, send a brief description of your organisation's activities to participate in international networking. What meetings or events were attended? Who attended? What resulted from those meetings?

A brief overview of the process for joining the International Safe Communities Network

If your organisation meets the criteria discussed in this document, you are ready to apply for SC membership. This process involves a series of steps, partnering with SC Centres, as your group demonstrates its capacity.

1. Find the right partner, and then submit a letter of interest

Community organisations that decide to pursue membership will approach an SC partner organisation, either a CC or an ASC, and submit a letter asking for assistance in joining the network. See the list of participating Centres in the appendices.

2. CCCSP is notified

Once a letter with the mayor's endorsement, is received by the partner organisation, the applicant community's application is considered pending. The CCCSP is notified, and the community is listed as a potential member in CCCSP files and on the Safe Communities website.

3. Clock starts ticking!

With the receipt of the letter of intent from the community to its organisational partner, a clock starts ticking for the applicant community. The community normally has 12 months from that point, to complete the application process, and states in its letter that it agrees to these terms.

4. The Paper Review Process

The CC will acknowledge that it has received the applicant's documents. A Peer review process to review the application will then begin. The CC has six weeks to review documents, in partnership with its peer reviewers. By the deadline, applicants will receive a written report from the CC's peer reviewers, which will state if the community is ready for a site visit, or if more information is needed in order to finish reviewing the documents. Normally, the community will have six weeks to respond to a request for more information. If, after a second review, the applicant community and its CC partner do not agree on a community's readiness, CCCSP will referee. In the event that a community is asked to revise its application, new copies must be sent to the CC. If the community is not at that point, the community has an option to withdraw its application and re-apply later, or work with the CC to bring its organisation or application into compliance with SC standards.

5. The Site Visit

Visitors must meet the members of the reference group and the political leadership of the community, and should be able to view activities in progress. Visitors will want to meet some of the members of the Task Force groups. Visitors should be given the opportunity to speak with community members who have participated in, or benefited from, organisation activities as well as to see demonstration activities on the field.

6. Feedback on site from Site Visit Team

The site visit team will meet with the applicant's representatives before they leave, and inform applicants that they will either recommend that the CC approve your membership application, or they will recommend that the CC delay approval. If a membership application is delayed, because of site visit concerns, the Site Visit team will describe these concerns before they leave. They will then submit a report, discussing the concerns in more detail, and outlining recommendations that the community should take before the application is recommended for approval. The site

visit team will tell applicants if they can provide written proof of addressing shortfalls, or if another site visit is required. Normally, a deadline of six weeks is desirable, so that communities and site visitors do not lose momentum in this process. CCCSP reserves the right to resolve disagreements.

7. Designation

The designation ceremony is normally held within six months of a site visit, given time to make program changes. Upon a community's designation, they will now receive communication from the CCCSP. A letter welcoming the community into the network will be sent from Dr. Leif Svanström, director of CCCSP. In addition, new members will be acknowledged in the monthly Safe Communities newsletter and will also be acknowledged at the next international Safe Communities conference.

Membership in the network is an important step in the development of a local organisation, but we remind you, now, as we did in the beginning of this document, that community safety is a process and designation as a Safe Community as a staging point in this process. Designation is more about helping communities achieve a solid beginning than it is about acknowledging a community has arrived. The current members of the Network look forward to learning from your experiences, and sharing theirs. Welcome!

Guidelines for maintaining membership in the International Network of Safe Communities

The growth of our network has resulted in a need for some reorganisation- while most of the changes affect new applicants to the Safe Communities network, a reference group composed of members of SC Certifying Centres, Affiliate Support Centres and local SC programmes has also endorsed the following guidelines for current members of the Network.

1. Annual Reports

Beginning 2009, communities will be required to submit simple, one to two page annual reports to the CCCSP website and, when applicable, a copy to the certifying centre that is working with the community during its redesignation process. Communities will also be required to update their existing web pages, housed on the CCCSP server at Karolinska Institutet, on an annual basis.

2. After Five Years- the Redesignation process

Safe Communities that make their annual reports are considered members in good standing for five years. Those communities that do not submit annual reports are now required to submit applications for re-entry into the network, five years after their entry to the network.

Five years from the date of your organisation's original SC designation, SC organisations are asked to participate in a review process that will lead to their 'redesignation' status.

Safe Communities that make their annual reports are considered members in good standing for five years. Those communities that do not submit annual reports are now required to submit applications for re-entry into the network, five years after their entry to the network.

Five years from the date of your organisation's original SC designation, (or five year re-entry, if your organisation makes its yearly reports) SC organisations are asked to participate in a review process that will lead to their 'redesignation' status.

Paper review by CC

Communities are asked to select a Certifying Centre with which to conduct their five year review. The CC review team will conduct a paper review and a site visit. The Certifying Centre will send recommendations to applicant within two months. A rededication date and ceremony will be selected in partnership between CC and member community. The organisation's rededication date and updated organizational report are posted on the web within three weeks of receipt. Rededications are acknowledged via SC News articles, via conferences, and via a letter from Dr. Svanström.

If communities wish to redesignate within a shorter time frame, or would like an extension, in order to partner with other community events (a centennial celebration,

for example, or another holiday), it is certainly allowed! Simply work with the Certifying Centre of your choice, which will then in turn notify the CCCSP when your redesignation is approved.

The process will take effect in January 2009. All communities currently needing redesignation will be required to meet new guidelines unless they obtain redesignation during 2008.

3. Additional proposed changes

Statement on business models- fee charging, etc.

CCCSP is not able to set organisational policies for the ASCs and CCs regarding business models- these organisations are partners to the CCCSP, but CCCSP assumes no financial responsibility for the partner organisations. Decisions about business models, fee charging, and day to day running of the ASCs and CCs lies with the individual organisations.

CCCSP reserves the right to charge for services associated with seeking redesignation status, if applicants prefer to work directly with the Collaborating Centre.

Peer reviewers

The new SC membership processes rely on the judgement of peer reviewers, who work under the guidance of the appropriate centre. Peer reviewers who work with applicants that are seeking SC designations on the local-community level should meet the following criteria:

Before 2009

1. Have participated in at least two separate community SC designations, as a reference group member and-or ASC or CC volunteer.

After January 1, 2009

1. Have participated in at least two separate community SC designations, as a reference group member and-or CC volunteer, and
2. Have participated in a Certifier training, as outlined by CCCSP. Training is now organised by the Certifying Centres under the leadership of a representative from The WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion in Stockholm.

CCCSP reserves all rights

The WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotions reserves all rights associated with Affiliate Support Centres and Certifying Centres. That is, CCCSP reserves the right to work with individual communities and organisations that wish to join the network as local or national organisations.