

Women doing it for their neighbourhoods

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SISTERS are doing it for themselves: cleaning up good and taking back their gang-ridden neighbourhoods on the Cape Flats.

Some 787 women have been recruited, trained, and deployed in Athlone, Hanover Park, Lotus River, Lavender Hill, Manenberg, Uitsig, Ravensmead, Ocean View and Macassar, to help the city clean up City-owned rental property.

Launched as a pilot project in July 2016, the women formed part of the City's social

development department's women in rental programme, said spokesperson Kaylee Simpson.

With a lot of elbow grease and hard work, the women are making their areas shine, as they go about helping the City find solutions to the many social and economic ills that beset their neighbourhoods.

Project facilitator Cornelia Finch said: "The first intake of women received six months intensive training and were upskilled in disaster risk management.

"They work closely with the

department of social development social workers who they help with identifying people who are abused or misuse drugs and alcohol, which leads to the people concerned getting help from the relevant services."

From involvement in walking bus initiatives in which children are walked to school to ensure safety, cleaning the homes of the elderly, helping at clinics, providing care-giving to the elderly the women were taking charge, Finch said.

"I've seen women who were so deeply depressed, stuck in

abusive relationships, being lifted up out of their circumstances because they have a purpose.

"They live in some of Cape Town's most notorious areas and they are cleaning it, removing graffiti, painting walls, digging and weeding in gardens, clearing dumpsites and sorting rubbish for recycling purposes."

The women are employed through the Expanded Public Works Programme and the City of Cape Town has already pumped R11 million into the project.



Women hard at work for the initiative that began last year.