USAID
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CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION FIELD GUIDE

UPDATED VERSION

APRIL 2021

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ACRONYMS AND TRANSLATIONS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
BAM	Becoming a Man
CAF	Conflict Assessment Framework
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
CDC	U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CPTED	Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
DARE	Drug Abuse Resistance Education
DO	Development Objective
ECD	Early Childhood Development
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILAPR	Latin America Institute of Restorative Practices
IMC	Instrumento de Medición de Comportamientos de Riesgo
IPC	Interpersonal communication
ITS	Interrupted Time Series
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LAPOP	Latin American Public Opinion Project
Mano Dura	An "iron-fisted" law enforcement approach
MDFT	Multi-dimensional family therapy
NSSI	Non-suicidal self-injury
Nini	Neither working nor attending school [*ni trabaja, ni estudia*]
OAS	Organization of American States
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives, USAID
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
POP	Problem-oriented policing
PPD-6	Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development
QDDR	U.S. Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review

SAF	Sector Assessment Framework
SBC	Social Behavioral Change
SBIRT	Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment
SBV	School-Based Violence
SES	Regional System of Standardized Indicators for Citizen Security and Violence Prevention
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SSYI	Safe and Successful Youth Initiative
STYL	Sustainable Transformation of Youth in Liberia
SUDs	Subjective Units of Distress Scale
SWPBIS	School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
TCO	Transnational Criminal Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
YSET	Youth Service Eligibility Tool

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have become the most violent region in the world. According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), six LAC countries (Honduras, Venezuela, Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica) are among the ten most violent countries in the world. UNODC's 2019 global study on homicide recognizes that homicide resulting from criminal activities accounts for more deaths than other types of violent conflict, including armed conflict. The study states that in 2017, the homicide rate in LAC) was, on average, 17.2 victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, much higher than the world average homicide rate of 6.1. With 13 percent of the global population, the LAC region accounts for 37 percent of total homicides in the world, up from 30 percent in 2014.[1] With these epidemic rates of homicides, citizen insecurity has become a key development issue and a matter of serious concern for citizens in the region.

These averages, however, are not evenly distributed across gender and age. Most homicides affect men, with a homicide rate of 31.2 per100,000 population, 10 times higher than the female homicide rate of 3.6 per 100,000 population. Young males are most vulnerable, with a homicide rate of 64 per100,000 population in 2017.[2] Homicides are also heavily concentrated in urban centers. In LAC, the cities of Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Guatemala City, Peten, San Jose, Caracas, Santiago, Port au Prince, Kingston, and Cali represent some of the highest rates in the world. Even within these urban centers, homicides are concentrated in specific neighborhoods.

The 2018 Latinobarómetro survey, a regional public opinion survey of 18 Latin American countries, of 2018 shows that on average, Latin American citizens rank crime and insecurity as the number-one problem, surpassing unemployment and the economy. Latin American citizens perceive that the most frequent and most dangerous forms of violence are violence in the streets, domestic and intrafamily violence, and gang violence.[3]

More than two-fifths of the citizens surveyed (40.3 percent) reported being afraid of becoming victims of violent crime.[4] Crime and violence take many forms—including domestic violence, extortion, theft, kidnapping, drug trafficking, and homicides. Due to the gravity of intentional homicide and the relative simplicity in estimating homicide rates as a measurement of violent death, intentional homicide rates have attracted the highest attention amongst public officials, journalists, scholars, and development practitioners. Yet, other types of violence affect citizens in LAC during their day-to-day activities.

For example, in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, citizens are more directly affected by extortion than by homicides. Although homicides are at epidemic levels, they are concentrated in a few hot spots. According to a study published in the newspaper *La Prensa* in Honduras, citizens of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala pay more than $651 million USD annually to criminal groups who threaten them with death and violence if they fail to pay extortion fees. Extortion is a lucrative source of income

[1] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Global Study on Homicide, 2019. Executive Summary. July 2019. Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet1.pdf
[2] Ibidem.p.19
[3] Ibidem.
[4] Latinobarómetro, 2018. Latinobarómetro Database (latinobarometro.org)

for gangs, and targets for extortion can include anyone from owners of small businesses or large enterprises to taxi and bus drivers.[5]

According to UN Women, Latin America and the Caribbean also have the highest rates of gender-based violence (GBV) in the world, with Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Peru, El Salvador, and Bolivia representing 81 percent of global cases. During the COVID lockdown, the situation worsened, particularly in Peru, Argentina, and Bolivia.[6]

After years of heavy-handed responses to crime and violence (an iron-fisted or *mano dura* approach), many governments in the LAC region have come to recognize that a punitive and reactive law enforcement response to crime and violence is insufficient and, ultimately, ineffective in reducing violent crime. Countries are beginning to incorporate a more comprehensive approach to citizen security that addresses the root factors of crime and violence and recognizes the role of prevention in contributing to crime and violence reduction. Specifically, prevention is a much more effective and sustainable approach that is also less expensive than reacting to criminal activity and violence, particularly when factoring in the costs of incarceration.

This Crime and Violence Prevention Field Guide ("Field Guide") is designed to support USAID officers and other practitioners in the LAC region who are working on citizen security and in other sectors in which crime and violence prevention can be mainstreamed. It provides a conceptual framework for understanding crime, violence, and prevention as part of broader citizen security systems; evidence-based information about effective interventions to prevent crime and violence; and practical advice and tools on how to design, implement, measure, and evaluate crime and violence prevention and citizen security projects. The guide incorporates the research findings of academic and development practitioners in an analysis of crime and violence in the region.

Democracy and governance specialists often lead citizen security–related programming, but cross-sectoral approaches are needed to address the multicausal drivers of and risk factors for crime and violence. While citizen insecurity negatively affects development, deeply rooted development problems—such as poor workforce development, limited employment opportunities, underperforming schools, poor family planning, and inadequate access to and quality of public health services—also drive crime and violence. Importantly, violence also affects health, education, justice, and workforce development. For example, violence in the schools, including bullying, affects children's educational performance. Wounded victims of violence also affect the performance of the health sector, putting additional stress on medical professionals and depleting scarce resources needed to provide other healthcare services. Furthermore, exposure to violence at a young age has many other health-related consequences, including physical and emotional health problems.[7]

This guide is an updated version of the Field Guide USAID's LAC Bureau first produced in 2016. The current document draws more extensively on examples from the LAC region and provides the most updated data on crime and violence available in 2021. The Field Guide is applicable to a wide range of contexts, however, and is intended for use by stakeholders working on crime, violence, and citizen security issues across the world. The overall objectives of the Field Guide are to offer an overview of the problem of crime and violence in the LAC region and describe the most important conceptual

[5] La Prensa, 2015. "'Imperios de la extorsión' están en Honduras y El Salvador." https://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/854572-410/imperios-de-la-extorsi%C3%B3n-est%C3%A1n-en-honduras-y-el-salvador

[6] https://reliefweb.int/report/world/surge-violence-against-girls-and-women-latin-america-and-caribbean

[7] Campie, P., Read, N., Mizrahi, Y., Hill, C., Shaw, E., & Molotsky, A. (2021). Multisector Resource Guide for Preventing Youth Violence in Latin America. USAID. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00XCV7.pdf

approaches and interventions that have been implemented to address the problem. This version was revised during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to significant increases of domestic and GBV violence across the LAC region, negatively affected the ability of government authorities to provide services and protect citizens, and allowed gangs and other criminal organizations in the region to find new opportunities for continuing to operate with impunity.

After years of designing and implementing activities to prevent crime and violence in LAC, scholars and practitioners know violence is preventable, but that requires evidence-informed interventions that identify the places, the risk factors, and the people that are most vulnerable to violence, as well as the design of adequate monitoring and evaluation systems to track and assess progress over time.

This Field Guide is organized into five sections:

- **Section 1** provides background information on crime and violence prevention, including an overview of the key crime, violence, and citizen security issues in the region, as well as why citizen security is of concern to USAID.
- **Section 2** describes the conceptual framework for crime and violence prevention and citizen security, including key concepts, definitions, and explanations of various conceptual approaches.
- **Section 3** presents an analysis of predominant risk and protective factors, particularly those related to crime and violence in LAC.
- **Section 4** provides an overview of the conceptual framework for mapping crime and violence prevention interventions.
- **Section 5** introduces key aspects of each of the four phases of violence prevention and intervention: design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The annexes at the back of this guide provide a longer discussion regarding the state of crime and violence in several LAC countries. The annexes include a table of risk and protective factors, a matrix of crime and violence prevention interventions, additional information on sources of data on crime and violence, examples of municipal crime and violence prevention programs, and a list of standardized indicators for citizen security and crime prevention. The annexes also include a bibliography and a list of useful resources for crime and violence prevention.

INTRODUCTION

USAID's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC Bureau) has long been at the forefront of addressing citizen security issues. In the 1980s, the LAC Bureau and its field missions developed some of USAID's first judicial reform programs. Today, citizen security-related issues have become central to USAID's work in many countries. Programs address a range of issues, from gang and drug trafficking-related crime in LAC to violent extremism, community stabilization, and core rule of law in post-conflict countries in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. Although USAID works on the full gamut of citizen security issues, from rule of law/security sector reform to community-based youth crime and violence prevention, this Field Guide focuses just on prevention - which is one component of a comprehensive citizen security program.

Citizen insecurity negatively affects development and at the same time is driven by underdevelopment. Poor workforce development, limited employment opportunities, underperforming schools, poor family planning, lack of adequate access to and quality of public health and social services, and weak justice systems can all contribute to crime and insecurity. Although democracy and governance specialists often lead citizen security programming, cross-sectoral approaches are needed to address multicausal drivers and risk factors for crime and violence, bringing in education, health, and economic growth, amongst others.[8] This is especially urgent considering that criminal activity is responsible for many more deaths and disabilities worldwide than armed conflict and terrorism.[9] Crime and violence also take a significant toll on the overall development of a country. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) estimates that the direct costs of crime and violence (largely medical care and the judicial and penal system) represent an average of 3.5 percent of GDP, with indirect costs (e.g., lost wages and psychological costs) raising this figure further.[10]

After years of heavy-handed responses to crime and violence—the iron-fisted or *mano dura* approach—many governments in the LAC region have recognized (even if only rhetorically) that a solely punitive and reactive law enforcement response to crime and violence is insufficient and, ultimately, ineffective in reducing violent crime. A more comprehensive approach to citizen security must include prevention efforts that address the factors that lead to crime and violence in the first place. This entails working not only with governments but also with civil society organizations, schools, the health sector, the business community, the most important communication outlets, and the academic community. Crime and violence prevention, as an important contribution to crime reduction, is a much more effective and sustainable approach that is—also—less expensive than reactive law enforcement and incarceration.

This Field Guide is designed to support USAID officers and other practitioners working on citizen security and violence prevention by providing a conceptual framework for understanding crime, violence, and prevention as part of broader citizen security systems; information about evidence-based

[8] Bowman, Brett, Matzopoulos, Richard, Butchart, Alexander and Mercy, James A. (2008) The impact of violence on development in low- to middle-income countries. International Journal of Injury Control and Safety Promotion,15:4,209-219 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23564120_The_impact_of_violence_on_development_in_low-_to_middle-income_countries

[9] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2019.

[10] Inter-American Development Bank, The Costs of Crime and Violence: New Evidence and Insights in Latin America and the Caribbean. 2017. https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/The-Costs-of-Crime-and-Violence-New-Evidence-and-Insights-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean.pdf

interventions to prevent crime and violence; and practical advice and tools on how to design, implement, measure, and evaluate projects that address crime and violence or citizen security.

USAID's LAC Bureau first produced this Field Guide in 2016 and the current 2021 version highlights many examples from the LAC region. Yet, most of the rigorous evidence on effective violence prevention interventions comes from developed countries, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom, and the impacts of the adaptations to LAC contexts are not fully understood or tested. Nonetheless, the strategies and suggestions included in this guide are applicable to a wide range of contexts and can be used by stakeholders working on crime and violence prevention across the world.

This Field Guide is organized into five sections:

- **Section 1** provides background information on crime and violence prevention, including an overview of the key citizen security issues in the region and why USAID is interested in addressing citizen security.
- **Section 2** describes the conceptual framework for crime and violence prevention, including key concepts, definitions, and explanations of various conceptual approaches.
- **Section 3** presents an analysis of predominant risk and protective factors, particularly those related to crime and violence in LAC.
- **Section 4** provides an overview of the conceptual framework and select crime and violence prevention interventions, with examples largely from the region.
- **Section 5** introduces key aspects of each of the four phases of violence prevention and intervention programs: design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The annexes included in this guide provide a longer discussion regarding the state of crime and violence in several LAC countries. The annexes include a matrix of crime and violence prevention interventions, additional information on sources of data on crime and violence, examples of municipal crime and violence prevention programs, and a list of standardized indicators for citizen security and crime prevention. The annexes also include a bibliography and a list of useful resources for crime and violence prevention.

- **Annex A** provides a list of risk and protective factors.
- **Annex B** provides a longer discussion on the state of crime and violence in a handful of LAC countries.
- **Annex C** presents a matrix of crime and violence prevention interventions disaggregated by level of intervention and risk level. The matrix also highlights those interventions for which there is evidence of effectiveness through rigorous evaluations.
- **Annex D** lists effective interventions (many of them implemented in LAC) at different levels of intervention.
- **Annex E** provides additional information on sources of crime and violence data.
- **Annex F** elaborates in greater detail the criteria that can be used to select a potential target area in program design.
- **Annex G** provides a list of examples of crime and violence prevention for municipalities.

- **Annex H** lists the standardized indicators for citizen security and crime prevention that the IDB has elaborated. Annex H also references a recently published USAID resource guide on how to align indicators with youth violence prevention interventions.
- **Annex I** provides a list of references.
- **Annex J** provides a list of useful resources on crime and violence prevention.
- **Annex K** provides an overview of lessons learned from the USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) Honduras program.

PART 1: BACKGROUND

1.1 OVERVIEW OF CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

OVERVIEW

LAC is the most violent region in the world, where organized crime plays a major role in the level of lethality. The LAC region represents 13 percent of the global population but accounts for an estimated 37 percent of the world's homicides. This percentage increased seven percentage points from 2014, when UNODC's global study on homicide estimated the LAC region accounted for 30 percent of the world's homicides. [11] According to this study, in 2017, the homicide rate in LAC was on average 17.2 victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, much higher than the world average homicide rate of 6.1 per 100,000 population.[12] The World Health Organization (WHO) calls a homicide rate over 10 per 100,000 population a violence epidemic.[13] With an average homicide rate of 17.2, Latin American and Caribbean homicides have achieved epidemic proportions, and citizen insecurity has become a key development issue and a matter of serious concern for citizens in the region. It is important to note that in developing countries in particular, homicide data is typically used as a proxy for violent crime because the data for homicides tend to be more complete and more reliable than for other types of crimes.

Organized Crime is a Worldwide Problem

A recent study on global homicides by the UNODC shows that, globally, organized crime causes many more deaths than armed conflicts and terrorism combined. UNODC estimates that organized crime is four times more deadly than violent conflict.

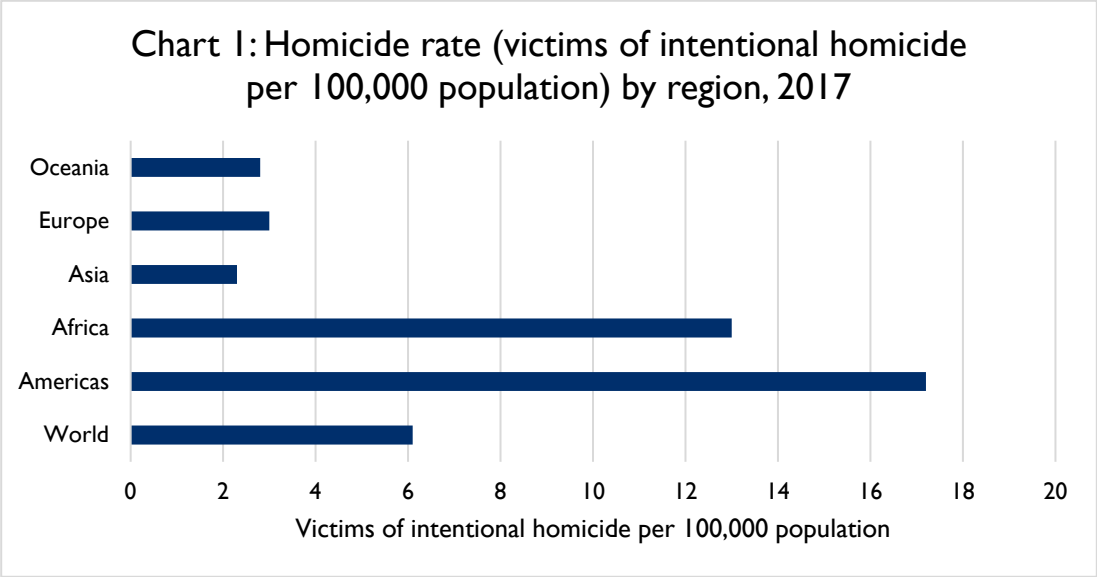
Most homicides in the LAC region affect men, with a homicide rate of 31.2 per 100,000 individuals, a rate 10 times higher than the female homicide rate of 3.6 per 100,000 individuals. Young males aged 15-29 are the most vulnerable population group, with a homicide rate of 64 per 100,000 individuals in 2017.[14] Young males in the LAC region are also more vulnerable to crime and violence than young males in other parts of the world. Similarly, firearms are involved far more often in homicides in LAC than in other parts of the world.[15] However, throughout the LAC region, violence against women is rising, and even while most homicide victims are men, the United Nations estimates that 1 in 3 women face violence during their lifetime. In 2019, 4,555 women in 15 countries throughout LAC were victims of femicide. Although Brazil and Mexico topped the list of LAC countries with highest numbers of femicides in 2019, the highest rates (number of femicides per 100,000 women) were in Honduras (6.2), El Salvador (3.3), the Dominican Republic (2.7) and Bolivia (2.1).[16]

[11] UNODC, Global Study on Homicide, 2013.
[12] UNODC, Global Study on Homicide, 2019. Executive Summary.
[13] World Bank, 2011.
[14] UNODC, Global Study on Homicide, 2019. Op. Cit.
[15] UNODC, Global Study on Homicide, 2019. Homicide Trends, Patterns, and Criminal Justice Response. Book 2. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet2.pdf
[16] See United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). 2019. Gender Equality Observatory, "Femicide or feminicide." https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/femicide-or-feminicide

Although crime and violence take many forms—domestic violence, extortion, theft, kidnapping, drug trafficking, and homicides—it is the homicide rate that attracts growing attention and concern among public officials, journalists, scholars, and development practitioners. While intentional homicide is undoubtedly a grave and highly consequential form of crime, citizens in Latin America and the Caribbean are widely affected by non-lethal shootings and other forms of crime and violence, such as extortion, threats, violent assaults, and domestic violence. Although a large number of incidents go unreported, they produce lifelong health consequences for victims while also feeding the fear and retaliation that attends persistent gun-related violence in a community.

Currently, limited data exist to assess the impact of these forms of violence on citizens' decisions to migrate to other regions or other countries, but anecdotal evidence suggests extortion and death threats motivate people to leave their home countries.

In 2017, LAC's homicide rate (17.2) was the highest in the world. See Chart 1.



Source: UNODC, *Global Study on Homicide 2019*.

In terms of LAC sub-regions, the homicide rate in Central America in 2017 was 25.9 per 100,000, in South America, 24.2 per 100,000, and in the Caribbean, 15.1 per 100,000.[17]

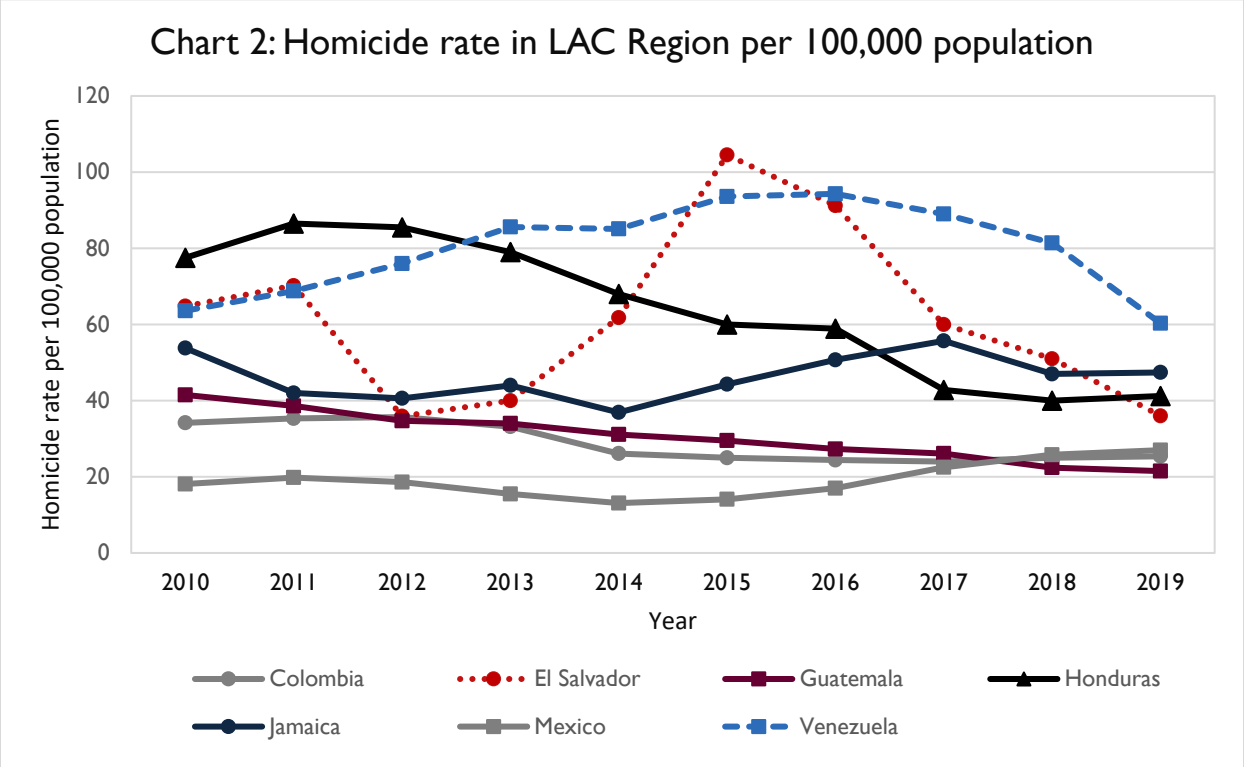
Furthermore, seven of the ten countries and 42 of the 50 cities with the world's highest homicide rates are in the LAC region. Latin America is home to the 16 cities with the highest homicide rates. It also is the only region in the world that witnessed an increase in lethal violence between 2000 and 2010. [18]

These aggregated figures hide significant differences both within the region and within individual countries. Across the region, homicides disproportionately affect males, with homicide rates eight to 11 times higher than the homicide rate for females.[19] In Central America, for example, the country with the highest homicide rate in 2017 was El Salvador with a rate of 62.1 per 100,000, while Nicaragua had a rate of 8.3. Similarly, in South America during the same year, Venezuela had a homicide rate of 89 per 100,000 while Chile had a rate of 3.5 per 100,000. In the Caribbean, Jamaica had a homicide rate

[17] Ibidem. P.11
[18] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2014.
[19] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2019. Book 2. P.17

55.7 per 100,000 in 2017, while the Dominican Republic had a rate of 14.9 per 100,000 during the same year.[20]

During the past ten years, homicide rates in most of the countries in the LAC region have decreased, especially in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela and Jamaica, some of the most violent countries in the Americas. In 2015, for example, the homicide rate in El Salvador reached 97 per 100,000, making it the deadliest country in the world. See Chart 2. (For a more detailed discussion, see Annex B.)



Source: Igarapé Institute Homicide Monitor, 2010-2016; Insight Crime for 2017-2019.

These national averages, however, obscure the clustering of homicides in particular cities or subregional areas, where local populations are more severely affected and where homicide rates remain excessively high. See the table below, extracted from UNODC's 2019 Global Study on Homicides, exemplifying homicide rates in some cities as compared to the national average in selected countries.

[20] Data reported in official sources and posted on InsightCrime. Clavel, T. 2018. "InSight Crime's 2017 Homicide Round-Up." https://insightcrime.org/news/analysis/2017-homicide-round-up/

Table 1: Homicide Rates of LAC Cities Compared to National Rates, 2019

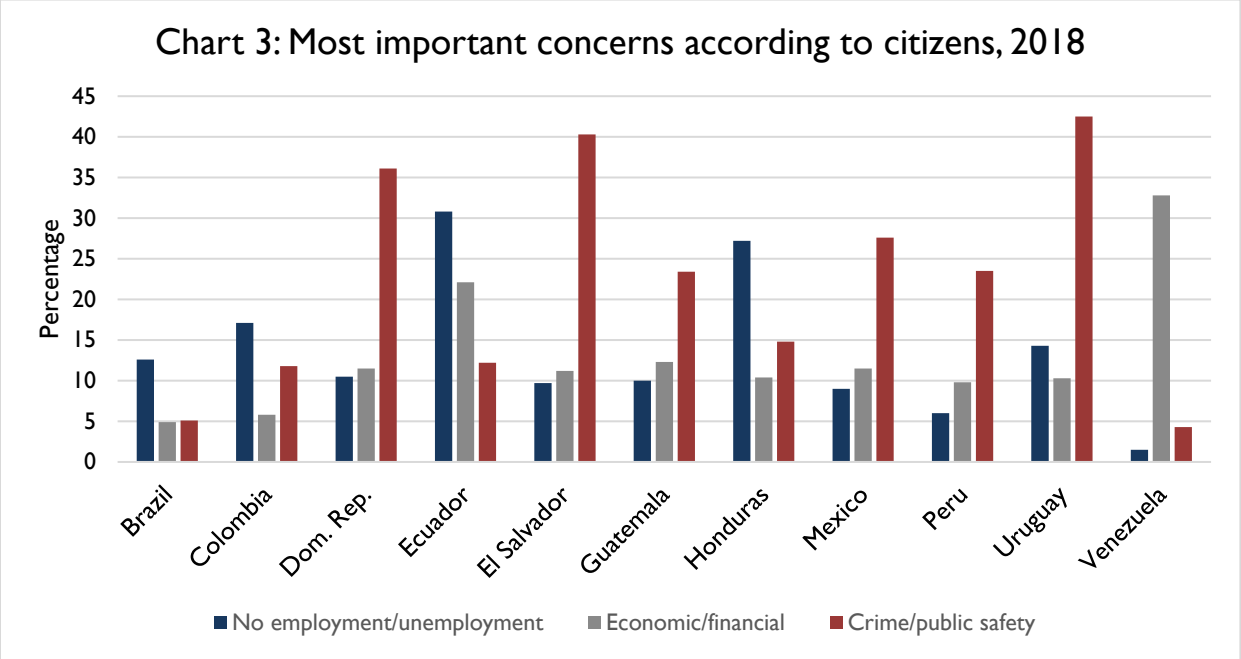
Country	City	National Homicide Rate (per 100,000 population)	City Homicide Rate (per 100,000 population)
Colombia	Cali	26	65
El Salvador	San Salvador	83	193
Honduras	La Ceiba	57	131
	San Pedro Sula		113
	Tegucigalpa		91
Jamaica	Kingston	47.4	54

UNODC Global Study on Homicides, 2019, Homicide trends, patterns and criminal justice response, p.51-52.

In 2015, according to Latinobarómetro, a public survey that measures perceptions of insecurity, Latin American citizens ranked crime and violence as their number-one concern, surpassing unemployment and the economy.[21] By 2018, insecurity and delinquency continued on average to rank higher than unemployment and "economic problems" as most important problems.[22] More than two-fifths of the citizens surveyed (40.3 percent) reported being afraid of becoming victims of violent crime.[23]

Yet, the 2018 survey reveals interesting differences across countries. The countries where citizens ranked crime and insecurity significantly higher than unemployment (two to three times) were El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru, Panama, and Uruguay. In contrast, in Honduras and Venezuela—two of the countries in the region with the highest rates of homicides in 2018—citizens ranked unemployment or economic problems as the most important problems (27 percent and 32.8 percent, respectively). See Chart 3.

[21] Latinobarómetro, 2015; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Global Study on Homicide 2011; Trends, Contexts, Data*, 2011, https://www.unodc.org/documents/congress/background-information/Crime_Statistics/Global_Study_on_Homicide_2011.pdf; UNODC, 2014.
[22] Latinobarómetro, 2018.
[23] Latinobarómetro, 2018.



Source: Latinobarómetro, 2018

TRENDS ACROSS LAC

Victimization rates are high and contribute to the perception of insecurity. Victimization rates are measured through opinion surveys, where people are asked if they have been victims of a crime during a particular time frame, generally the last 12 months. According to the AmericasBarometer Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) survey, in 2014, citizens in the Americas reported a victimization rate of 17 percent.[24] By 2019, the victimization rate increased throughout the LAC region to 24 percent.[25] Elevated victimization rates contribute to the high percentage of people who perceive their environment to be unsafe. This same survey showed that over 40 percent of respondents were afraid of crime and avoided walking through certain areas in their neighborhoods. Victimization rates are typically lower than the level of insecurity and fear, which only confirms that crime and violence has a larger and wider effect, even if it does not directly affect citizens. A victimization survey conducted in Mexico in 2018, for example, showed that 79.4 percent of respondents felt unsafe in their state, but only 28.3 percent had been victims of a crime.[26] While victimization rates typically provide the most accurate information concerning incidence of crime and violence, victimization studies are costly to undertake, as they require the application of household surveys. The COVID-19 pandemic presents additional challenges to household surveys.

Gangs are widely perceived as being a major source of violence in Central American countries. The definition of gangs and gang members is hotly debated, but typically, criminal behavior is

[24] LAPOP, The political culture of Democracy, 2014. P.16 https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2014/AB2014_Comparative_Report_English_V3_revised_011315_W.pdf 25 2019. "The Pulse of Democracy in the Americas: Results from 2019 Americas' Barometer Study." https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2018/AB2019_Release_DC_Final_10.15.19.pdf

[26] INEGI. Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública (ENVIPE) 2018 and 2019. Cited in UNODC, Crime Victimization Surveys. http://www.cdeunodc.inegi.org.mx/unodc/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ODS16_FINAL_en_rev.pdf

a defining factor of each. There are different types of gangs, running from informal and unstructured street gangs, local cliques that may or may not be related to more formal and organized gangs, and highly organized transnational gangs. In Central America, the terms *maras* and *pandillas* are often used interchangeably; however, when distinguished, *pandillas* tend to be localized, and *maras* implies a more sophisticated transnational structure.[27] Estimates of the number of gang members in Central America range widely from 10,000 to 300,000. Perhaps the most widely accepted number is the estimate provided by the UNODC, which estimated that there were roughly 54,000 gang members in 2012.[28] Gangs are particularly prevalent in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, where rival gangs Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and the 18th Street gang (B-18) operate.[29] The majority of active gang members are young and male.[30] Recent studies on gang membership and gang desistance reveal that in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, gangs recruit youth as young as eight years of age. The average age of joining gangs is 15 years old.[31] Estimates of the total proportion of contemporary regional violence attributable to gangs vary widely. Some experts estimate that gangs are responsible for roughly 10 percent of crime, but others blame gangs for as much as 60 percent, including mugging, theft, intimidation, rape, assault, murder, and drug dealing.

Although gangs are widely perceived as primary drivers of crime and violence in the region, ascertaining the role of gangs is extremely difficult. Where reliable information exists, it casts doubt on conclusions that gangs are responsible for the majority of homicides. A study by the UNODC in El Salvador and Guatemala in 2007, for example, found that gangs were responsible for only a small percent (between 5 and 8 percent) of the total number of homicides.[32] Similarly, 2006 police records in Guatemala attributed just 14 percent of homicides to gangs.[33] A recent study on El Salvador's citizen security situation provides evidence that police brutality, resulting from the *mano dura* approach, is responsible for a significant percentage of homicides in the country. During confrontations with police officers, suspected gang members make up most confrontational deaths: 88 percent in 2015, 96 percent in 2016, 93.5 percent in 2017, and 81.3 percent in 2018.[34]

Reliable data related to the role of gangs in the narcotics trade is virtually nonexistent, but gangs are assumed to have become increasingly involved over the past decade in trafficking and dealing illegal

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[27] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Gangs in Central America,* by Clare Ribando Seelke, RL34112 (February 20, 2014): 3 https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34112.pdf

[28] UNODC, *Transnational Organized Crime in Central America and the Caribbean: a Threat Assessment,* September 2012. Note: A top state department official recently estimated that there may be as many as 85,000 MS-13 and 18th Street gang members. See U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Gangs in Central America,* by Clare Ribando Seelke, RL34112 (February 20, 2014): 3.

[29] For a recent and comprehensive study on MS-13 gang, see Stephen Dudley, "MS-13: The Making of America's Most Notorious Gang." Hanover Square Press, 2020.

[30] In Central America, children as young as six or eight years old may be recruited into gangs. Many do not finish middle school, putting them in the "*Nini*" category of those who neither work nor attend school and are thus at risk of perpetuating and being victims of crime and violence.

[31] Cruz, José Miguel et al. 2020. "A study of gang disengagement in Guatemala." American Institutes for Research & Florida International University; Cruz, José Miguel et al. 2020. "A study of gang disengagement in Honduras." American Institutes for Research & Florida International University.

[32] UNODC, "Crime and Development in Central America. Caught in the Cross Fire." May 2007. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Central-america-study-en.pdf

[33] World Bank, "Crime and Violence in Central America. A Development Challenge." *Sustainable Development Department and Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit. Latin America and the Caribbean Region, 2011,* pp.15–16.

[34] Pamela Ruiz and Danielle Mackey, "El Salvador's Security Smoke Screens." NACLA Report on the Americas. Vol.52, Issue 4, 2020. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10714839.2021.1840169

drugs, particularly MS-13. It is believed that gangs serve as local security for cartels in Colombia and Mexico and carry out small-time street sales. Gangs do not appear to be involved in the large-scale movement of drugs, although some experts suggest that the leaders of local drug organizations are often former gang members. Findings in a few studies also suggest that drug trafficking has made gangs more violent.[35] As a result of concerns about the growing involvement of the MS-13 in illicit activities in the United States, the U.S. Treasury Department designated the MS-13 as a major transnational criminal organization (TCO) in October 2012.[36]

The rise of drug trafficking and TCOs has changed crime and violence patterns. The rise in crime and violence in LAC is, in part, the result of an increase in the international drug trade and changes in the control of trade routes. While the relationship between criminal gangs and drug trafficking organizations is complex, in Mexico, Jamaica, and Central America, drug trafficking is the single most influential contributing factor to increased levels of violence.[37] Much of this violence stems from issues related to the transport of cocaine from producer nations in Latin America to the consumer market in the United States. The drug trade contributes to the widespread availability and utilization of firearms, generates violence within and between drug cartels, and spurs further lawlessness by undermining criminal justice institutions. Controlling for other factors, areas with intense levels of drug trafficking have homicide rates 65 percent higher than other areas in the same Central American country.[38] Yet, the relationship between drug trafficking and violence is not necessarily direct. In areas where one trafficking organization manages to establish territorial control, violence may in fact decrease. Violence is associated with competition for drug trafficking routes amongst rival organizations and/or confrontations with the police or armed forces.[39]

Criminal data, and homicide data in particular, is incomplete in most of the LAC region. While most people suspect that either drug trafficking organizations or gangs are responsible for the majority of the homicides, incomplete police records make it impossible to draw conclusions about the motives or actors behind the majority of homicides. In Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras—the three most violent countries in Central America—police records list "unknown" as the motivation behind the majority of homicides, and 95 percent of homicide cases remain unsolved. A preliminary study of 2012 through 2014 police records in Guatemala reports that police officers reported the motivation behind 60 to 70 percent of homicide cases to be either unknown or personal revenge.[40] It is estimated that more than 25 percent of homicides in the Americas are related to organized crime or the activities of criminal gangs, compared to roughly 5 percent of homicides in Asia and Europe.[41] Without more robust evidence on the motivations behind cases of criminal violence, it becomes even more challenging to design adequate and effective prevention plans.

Available data show that the LAC region has high incidences of non-lethal violence. Homicide is often used as a proxy for violent crime because the data for homicides tend to be more complete and more reliable than for other types of crimes. It is important to note that many LAC countries also have high rates of robbery, rape, extortion, and kidnapping. Data from El Salvador, for example, show that extortion accounted for 9.8 percent of all crimes in 2012, and homicides accounted

[35] World Bank, 2011.
[36] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 2014.
[37] World Bank, 2011.
[38] Ibidem.
[39] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2019. Book 2. Op.cit. p.27
[40] See Insight Crime at http://www.insightcrime.org/.
[41] World Bank, 2011.

for another 8.5 percent.[42] El Salvador is one of the few Central American countries for which reliable data on extortion exists. In a cross-country comparison of domestic violence undertaken by the WHO, 29 to 69 percent of women in LAC countries reported that they had been a victim of physical or sexual violence.[43] Importantly, for every homicide, a recent study conducted by the Anahuac University in Mexico estimates that there are two rapes, two disabling injuries, five extortions, 17 physical injuries, 30 hospitalizations, and 300 medical care consultations, concentrated among youth.[44] These are grossly underreported incidents, but they leave a traumatic and long lasting effects on their victims.

Lethal violence disproportionately affects young males in Latin America and the Caribbean. The homicide rate among young people is more than double the rate of the general population, approximately 70 per 100,000 youth.[45] From 1996 to 2009, 35 percent of all victims of homicide in Latin America and the Caribbean were between 10 and 25 years of age, and the vast majority were males.[46] The latest UNODC study on global violence reports that in 2017, the homicide rate for males in the LAC region was 31.2 per 100,000 population, almost double the average homicide rate of 17.2. The homicide rate for females was significantly lower: 3.6 per 100,000 population. In South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, the disparity between male and female homicide rates is the largest in the world, where male homicide rates are 8 to 11 times the female rates. In Central America, for example, the sub-region with the highest homicide rate in the Americas, the male homicide rate in 2017 was 45 per 100,000 population, while the female homicide rate was 5.1 per 100,000.[47]

A similar disparity exists in terms of the victims' age group. Young men, between the ages of 15 and 29, face the largest risk of homicide. Globally, the homicide rate for males ages 15 to 29 is 16.6 per 100,000, while the homicide rate for females in the same age group is 2.5 per 100,000. In the Americas, the homicide rate of male victims ages 15 to 29 was 65 per 100,000 in 2017, while the homicide rate of female victims in the same age group was 5 per 100,000.[48]

The disparities between male and female homicide rates, however, should not obscure the seriousness of the increasing cases of GBV throughout the LAC region, including femicides—defined as the killing of a woman because of her gender.[49] Although homicide rates for women are indeed lower when compared with men, women and girls face the largest rates of intimate/family violence. According to UNODC, globally, 82 percent of intimate partner homicide victims are women.[50]

In the LAC region, most cases of GBV are not reported. In most countries, a combination of economic and psychological dependence, fear of reprisals, and distrust of the justice system deter women from reporting domestic violence to the police.

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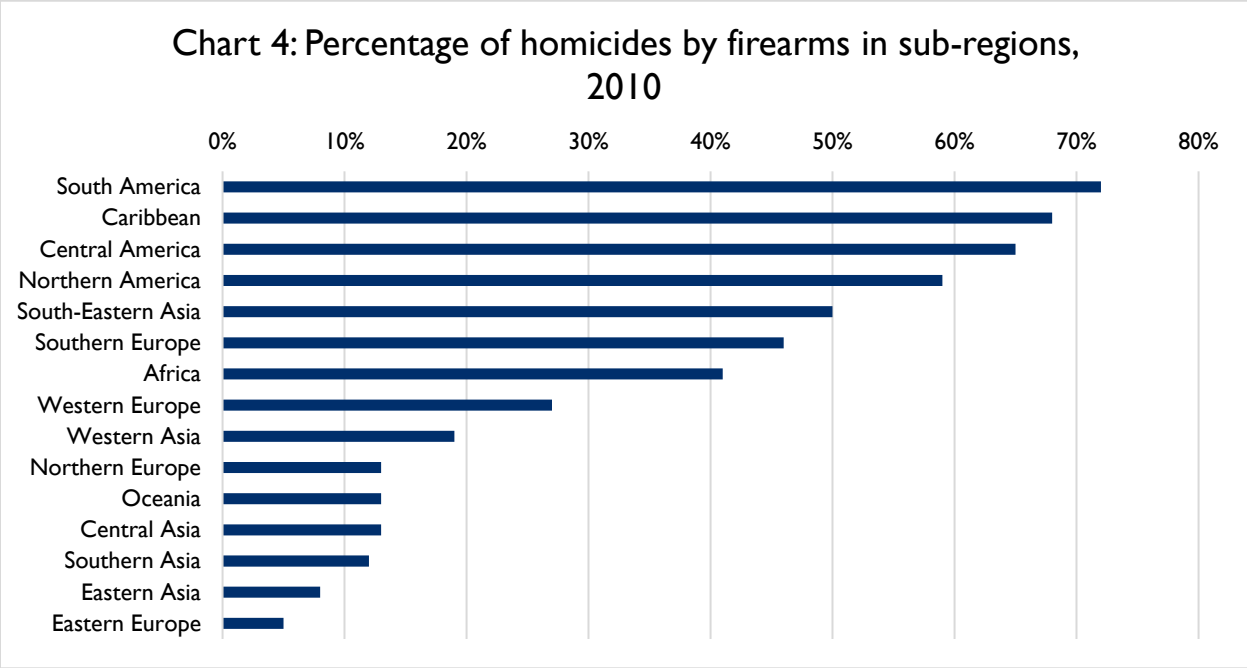
[42] Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina, "Public Security Index Central America: Consta Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama," October 2013.
[43] Claudia García-Moreno, et al., *WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses*, World Health Organization, 2005.
[44] Campie, P., Read, N., Mizrahi, Y., Hill, C., Shaw, E., & Molotsky, A. (2021). Multisector Resource Guide for Preventing Youth Violence in Latin America, pp. 28-51, "Stopping Youth Violence in Latin America: A Guide for the Health Sector." USAID. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00XCV7.pdf
[45] Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2009. Definitions of youth vary across international institutions and countries; the United Nations defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years old.
[46] United Nations Development Programme, "Regional Human Development Report 2013-2014: Citizen Security with a Human Face, Evidence and Proposals for Latin America," 2013.
[47] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2019. Book 2. P.61
[48] Ibidem. P.63
[49] ACUNS 2013.
[50] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides. Executive Summary. 2019. Op. Cit. P. 15.

Firearms play a pivotal role in the severity of violence in LAC. According to the 2012 Organization of American States (OAS) Report on Citizen Security in the Americas, 78 percent of homicides in Central America, 83 percent in South America, and 68 percent in the Caribbean are committed with firearms.[51] South America, the Caribbean, and Central America also rank highest among sub-regions in terms of percentage of homicides committed by firearms (see Chart 4). The most recent available data suggests the use of firearms continues to be prevalent in the LAC region, accounting for 54 percent of total homicide victims.[52] As we discuss below, a large portion of firearms-related homicides are perpetrated by government actors, namely, the military and the police.



Source: UNODC, Global Study on Homicide 2011.

Violence against women is both "organized," as in cases of human trafficking and/or sexual exploitation, and "disorganized," as in domestic violence. Although many Latin American and Caribbean countries have passed laws against domestic violence, most cases go unreported due to victims' fear of retribution by the perpetrator and/or distrust of the police. In some Latin American and Caribbean countries, domestic violence is generally accepted; opinion surveys demonstrate that people feel the use of physical violence against women and children is often justified. In a 2014 LAPOP study on the political culture of democracy in Guatemala and in the Americas, 24.5 percent of women reported physical violence by male partners, 54 percent of men expressed favorable attitudes about the use of physical violence toward their wives for not maintaining the house, and 58 percent of men had a positive view of physical violence toward their wives for disloyalty—the highest number anywhere in Latin America. Significantly, similar percentages of women believe that men have the right to use physical violence against them for disloyalty.[53] Although lethal violence is less prevalent among women, femicides have increased in the region, and other non-lethal forms of violence remain prevalent.

[51] Organization of American States, *Report on Citizen Security in the Americas,* 2012.
[52] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2011.
[53] LAPOP, 2014, 187.

Crime is concentrated in a small number of places and is generated by a small number of individuals.[54] Even in the most violent countries (Honduras, El Salvador, Venezuela, and Jamaica), crime is distributed unevenly. Crime tends to be concentrated in particular neighborhoods, often referred to as "hotspots." In addition, a very small number of individuals commit the majority of crimes, particularly homicides.[55] Even in highly violent communities, the vast majority of citizens are not violent. According to several studies, around 0.5 percent of the population are responsible for 75 percent of homicides in a particular community.[56] There is growing consensus among citizen security and crime prevention analysts that understanding the criminal dynamics at the neighborhood level is essential for combatting and preventing crime.[57]

The weakness of justice institutions leads to a high rate of impunity. One of the most serious problems in many LAC countries is the fact that most crimes are uninvestigated, and most criminals remain unprosecuted. In Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, impunity for violent crime is estimated at 95 percent.[58] Citizens often do not report crime because they have little confidence in the justice system. Public opinion surveys show that trust in the courts and justice system has dropped to its lowest level over the past decade. In the 2016/17 AmericasBarometer LAPOP survey, for instance, the majority of citizens reported that they did not trust the justice system to punish those guilty of crimes. Less than 20 percent of citizens are confident in the justice system.[59] A 2010 AmericasBarometer survey found that more than 60 percent of survey respondents in Argentina, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Venezuela believed local police forces were involved in crime.[60] The latest results of the Latinobarómetro survey show that confidence in the police remains low in Latin America, with 63.9 percent of all respondents saying they have little to no trust in the police force.[61]

Police and judicial reform is needed urgently both to reduce impunity and to address deeper issues involving justice, corruption, and human rights abuses. Addressing impunity may be particularly valuable in reducing economically motivated crime and illegal migration.

1.2 WHY IS USAID CONCERNED ABOUT CRIME AND VIOLENCE?

The right to life, liberty, and security of person is a basic human right recognized by the United Nations 1948 Declaration of Human Rights. The spread of crime and violence in the LAC region undermines these rights and challenges one of the state's most essential responsibilities: namely, to protect its citizens. A lack of basic citizen security undermines economic development and erodes the legitimacy of weakly rooted democratic institutions.

U.S. foreign policy and USAID have a duty to protect human rights and promote democratic governance. The U.S. development strategy seeks to strengthen democratic political systems and broad-

[54] Braga, 2015.
[55] Kennedy, 2011.
[56] Muggah, R. Fixing Fragile Cities: Solutions for Urban Violence and Poverty. Foreign Affairs. 2015, Jan.15.
[57] Sherman, 2012.
[58] OAS, 2014.
[59] LAPOP, 2016/17. "The Political Culture of Democracy in the Americas, 2016/17: A Comparative Study of Democracy and Governance," p, 74. https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2016/AB2016-17_Comparative_Report_English_V2_FINAL_090117_W.pdf
[60] José Miguel Cruz, "Police Misconduct and Democracy in Latin America," *Americas Barometer Insights* 33, 2010, http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/I0833en.pdf.
[61] Latinobarómetro, 2018.

based economic growth in the Americas. Serious insecurity undermines actors at many levels of government and contributes to doubts about the validity of the democratic model. In an environment of insecurity and epidemic levels of lethal violence, it can be tempting to support a return to authoritarian rule—even military rule—with little regard for protecting civil rights. A rigorous study of survey research in several Latin American and Caribbean countries demonstrated that victimization and high perception of violence have a negative impact on democratic support.[62] In a public opinion poll of citizens in the six countries of Central America, more than half of adults (53 percent) said that a military coup would be justified if crime levels are high.[63] While the same survey has not been implemented in recent years, results from the latest AmericasBarometer survey shows that citizens' support for democracy has been declining since 2008, reaching its lowest levels in 2018/2019. Tolerance for dissolving Congress is rising. The countries with the lowest support for democracy in 2018/19 were Honduras, Guatemala, Bolivia, Peru, and Jamaica.[64]

The lack of proper security puts at risk the past decade's achievements in poverty reduction, health, education, workforce development, gender equality, and environmental protection. Moreover, larger investments in law enforcement and crime and violence prevention are needed, draining resources from other development priorities.

In societies with high levels of insecurity, citizens tend to support harsh, potentially repressive measures to address criminal violence. Opinion polls show that a large number of Latin Americans and Caribbeans support tough laws and hardline enforcement approaches (*mano dura*) to combat crime and violence.[65] In areas where the police force is weak and not professionalized, the military has been engaged to fight crime. This punitive, hardline approach has led to human rights violations in several countries. It also has been shown to be ineffective in reducing crime rates. On the contrary, between 2000 and 2005 in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, the use of *mano dura* approaches against criminal gangs intensified levels of violence.[66] Yet, despite this evidence, the punitive approach continues to be popular in Central America. A 2017 survey in El Salvador, for example, showed that 40 percent of citizens approved the use of torture against criminal groups, and 34.6 percent approved of extra-judicial executions.[67]

In addition to promoting regional stability and security, reducing transnational organized crime is firmly in the national interest of the United States. The rapid rise in lawlessness and violence in recent years is related to illegal drug trafficking and related transnational crimes, including arms trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, and migrant smuggling. The destination for many of the drugs and other criminal activity is the United States. Moreover, recent studies show that citizen insecurity and fear of violence are significant drivers of illegal migration to the United States.[68] Border crossing by

[62] Miguel Carreras, "The Impact of Criminal Violence on Regime Legitimacy in Latin America." Latin American Research Review, Vol. 48, No. 3, 2013.
[63] World Bank, 2011. See also Orlando J. Pérez, "Democratic Legitimacy and Public Insecurity: Crime and Democracy in El Salvador and Guatemala." *Political Science Quarterly* (Winter 2003/2004): 118, 4; ProQuest: 627.
[64] LAPOP, "The Pulse of Democracy in the Americas." Op. Cit.
[65] José Miguel Cruz, "The impact of violent crime on the political culture of Latin America: The special case of Central America," in M. Seligson, *Challenges to Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evidence from the Americas Barometer 2006-2007*, Nashville: Vanderbilt University, 2008.
[66] UNODC 2013, 13. In the United States, too, there is evidence that simply putting more uniformed officers on the street does not reduce crime. Officers must be properly assigned to detect and prevent crime, which requires sophisticated approaches to detecting crime patterns and allocating police resources accordingly (Felson, 1994).
[67] Pamela Cruz and Danielle Mackey, Op.Cit. p.415. https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rnac20
[68] Michael Clemens, "Violence, Development, and Migration Waves: Evidence from Central American Child Migrant Apprehensions - Working Paper 459." Center for Global Development. July, 2017.

undocumented individuals—with or without the help of smugglers—puts migrants at extreme risk and exacerbates the problems the United States faces in trying to enforce its immigration laws.

Countries that are unable to address crime and violence become poor candidates for domestic and foreign investment, which hurts their potential for economic growth and job creation and may in fact undermine whatever economic stability exists. Weak and poorly performing government institutions, often accompanied by high levels of corruption, are a common denominator.

PART 2: CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES FOR UNDERSTANDING CRIME AND VIOLENCE

2.1 DEFINITION OF CITIZEN SECURITY

Citizen security refers to the "right of citizens to live free from all forms of violence and crime in times of peace."[69] In the LAC region, the concept of citizen security first gained prominence during the 1990s, when LAC countries were transitioning to and consolidating democracy.

The term exists within the broader frameworks of human development and human security, but *citizen security* has a narrower definition. Whereas human security focuses on a broad range of threats—including public health threats, natural disasters, food insecurity, political violence, and others—citizen security focuses primarily on freedom from crime and violence, including violent conflict.

USAID's Working Definition of Citizen Security

Citizen security is the protection of core basic rights, including the right to life, respect for the physical integrity and material of the person, and the right to a dignified life. It focuses on the welfare of people and posits that the provision of public safety is an essential requirement for human development.

The concept of citizen security exists within the broader frameworks of human development and human security. Where human security focuses on a broad range of threats that could affect people, including public health threats, natural disasters, food insecurity, political violence, and others, citizen security is a more narrowly defined area, or subtype, that concerns itself with threats to the integrity of person and property from criminal and/or violent acts.

The improvement of citizen security depends on building effective, responsive, and accountable institutions and forms of coexistence that can protect and safeguard human rights while ensuring the physical and material integrity of individuals.

Citizen security is a concept separate but not mutually exclusive from that of national security, which focuses on the integrity of an entire country, including its citizens and its institutions.

Citizen security is embedded within a democratic framework. It is thus different from *public security,* which usually refers exclusively to law and order and can function outside of a democratic environment. Authoritarian states often emphasize order and law enforcement, but they refuse to accept limits on the state's actions. **The operating principle underlying citizen security is the rule of law**—the norms and customs that regulate both private and state behaviors to achieve what might be called "social cohesion," which is more than just the absence of violence. In that sense, citizen security is a

[69] Inter-American Development Bank, "Citizen Security in Latin American and the Caribbean: The IDB's Comparative Advantage," 2013.

positive condition in both the public and private realms. It incorporates social justice. It also contributes to development by establishing and protecting peace and stability.

Citizen security is based on rights and should proceed from the notion that the rights of citizens to life and property are protected by a state and institutions that legitimately exercise governance authority, not unchecked or arbitrary power. The OAS and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights endorse this approach, which is commonly understood throughout the region.[70]

Citizen security entails a broad range of goals beyond reducing rates of crime and violence. It encompasses a comprehensive and cross-sectoral strategy that includes improving the quality of life of the population; community engagement in crime and violence prevention; accessible, responsive, and effective justice that includes prosecution, incarceration, and rehabilitation of offenders; quality education based on values of peaceful coexistence; the rule of law; tolerance; and social cohesion.

USAID's definition of citizen security follows the definition provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its landmark 2013 report on citizen security in the Americas and is similar to those of the other major donors working in the region.[71] It also adheres to the UN Human Rights declaration. In the World Bank's 2011 World Development Report, for example, citizen security is defined as "freedom from physical violence and freedom from the fear of violence. Applied to the lives of *all* members of a society (whether nationals of the country or otherwise), it encompasses security at home, in the workplace, and in political, social, and economic interactions with the state and other members of society,"[72]

CRIME AND VIOLENCE

The terms *crime* and *violence* are sometimes used interchangeably, but they describe different concepts. *Crime* refers to any action that violates criminal law and may or may not involve violence. White-collar crime, for instance, is typically not violent. Other crimes, such as extortion, may not be violent but may include the threat of violence. The definition of *violence* is intensely debated. This Field Guide uses the definition developed by the WHO, which defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."[73] Intentional homicide, a universally condemned form of violence, has become the most measurable and comparable method to studying violent deaths around the world.[74] Yet, it is important to acknowledge that not all homicides are reported in official files. The extent of undetected homicides remains unknown. In some LAC countries, undetected homicides are a persistent problem, moving some municipalities, universities, and even non-governmental organizations to establish "violence observatories" that collect and

UNODC considers three elements in its definition of "intentional homicide," or the unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury:

1. The killing of a person by another person (objective element)
2. The intent of the perpetrator to kill or seriously injure the victim (subjective element)
3. The unlawfulness of the killing (legal element)

UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2019. Homicide: extent, patterns, trends and criminal justice response.

[70] Ibidem.
[71] United Nations Development Programme, 2013.
[72] World Bank, 2011.
[73] World Health Organization, *World Report on Violence and Health*, 2002.
[74] UNODC, Global Study on Homicides, 2019. Executive Summary.

triangulate data on homicide and other violent crimes from different sources, including forensic medicine and incidents reported in the media.

While often overlooked, self-directed violence is also a rising concern in Latin America and the Caribbean, with estimates of suicide rates per 100,000 population particularly alarming in Guyana (30), Suriname (22), Uruguay (16), and El Salvador (13).[75] Data on non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) such as cutting and burning is extremely limited; however, it is perceived to be a rapidly increasing phenomenon, especially among young people. For example, the Mexican news program *Hora 21* mentions a NSSI prevalence of 15 percent between 12- and 18-year-olds, although source data is not indicated.

Similarly, not all violence is considered a crime. Although most Latin American and Caribbean countries have introduced laws against domestic violence, most cases are not reported to the police and, when they are, they rarely result in convictions. Domestic violence continues to be prevalent in the LAC region, with surveys from different countries estimating that between 10 and 50 percent of women are abused by their male partners.[76] Further, violence can take place at different societal levels and in different contexts: family, school, neighborhood, community, or society at large. Violence also takes many forms. It can be spontaneous, such as a street fight, or planned, such as an assassination. Violence can involve just one individual, consist of a conflict between two people, or involve a large group of people, such as a dispute among gangs. Violence sometimes is related to the pursuit of another illegal activity, like drug trafficking, but it may also be the result of the politicization of a social grievance, as in a violent social conflict.[77] Violence may be repeated frequently (as in domestic violence) or may be a unique event. It may occur over a long period of time or be over in an instant. Violence may be perpetrated illegally by the state, as in cases of police abuse or extrajudicial executions. Finally, violence may occur between family members, friends, neighbors, or other individuals who know each other, or it may be highly impersonal, between strangers who are completely unknown to one another.[78]

VICTIMIZATION AND FEAR OF CRIME

Studies on drivers of crime and violence tend to focus more on would-be perpetrators and less on victims. Yet, attention to victims of crime and violence should be an integral part of the discussion on citizen security and on approaches to prevent crime and violence. In countries with high rates of violence, a high number of residents are victims of interpersonal or collective violence. Violence not only leaves deep physical and psychological scars; there is also increased risk that victims will become perpetrators of violence in the future. Recent studies have demonstrated that trauma from being exposed to violence is a risk factor for criminal and violent behavior. Many violent offenders have been victims of violence, often of violence that occurred at home. Studies show that victims of domestic violence are more likely to perpetrate violence and become criminal offenders in the future. In a pioneering work, Tani Adams, a Guatemalan and American anthropologist, argued that trauma can lead to "chronic violence," a situation in which high levels of violence are sustained over time and become so routine that people begin to perceive violence as normal.[79] Chronic violence tends to desensitize

[75] World Health Organization, "Suicide in the World: Global Health Estimates." 2019 (survey data from 2016).
[76] Population Reference Bureau, "Domestic Violence: An Ongoing Threat to Women in Latin America and the Caribbean." 2001. https://www.prb.org/domesticviolenceanongoingthreattowomeninlatinamericaandthecaribbean/
[77] For a conceptual framework to analyze violent social conflict, please see USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) "Conflict Assessment Framework," Version 2.0. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnady739.pdf.
[78] For an interesting discussion, see Thomas Abt and Christopher Winship, 2016. "What Works" in Reducing Community Violence: A Meta-Review and Field Study for the Northern Triangle." USAID.
[79] For a definition of chronic violence, see Pearce, J.V. (2007). "Violence, Power and Participation: Building Citizenship in Contexts of Chronic Violence." *IDS Working Paper* 274, Brighton: IDS.

individuals to the effects and consequences of violence, creating a "gray zone" where the distinction between victim and perpetrator is blurred.[80]

Youth and women are disproportionately affected by all forms of crime and violence.[81] In LAC, youth violence is reaching epidemic proportions; **youth are not only the main perpetrators but are also the main victims of violence.** A study by the Pan American Health Organization concluded that violence against women and children is as much a citizen security issues as it is a public health issue. Domestic violence is of particular concern. In that study, 52.3 percent of women in Bolivia, 38.6 percent in Colombia, 27 percent in Nicaragua, 24.5 percent in Guatemala, 24.2 in El Salvador, and 17 percent in Jamaica, reported having been victims of domestic violence.[82]

In countries with high levels of crime and violence, the fear of crime often outweighs the risk of victimization. Perceptions of high levels of crime and violence may be fueled by sensationalized media coverage of highly violent incidents. Perceptions of insecurity change a person's behaviors and choices. Citizens may avoid walking on the street at night or taking public transportation. Perceptions of insecurity may also affect what jobs a person is willing to accept or to which school a family sends their children. Perceptions of insecurity also negatively affect citizens' confidence in and satisfaction with the government and make a person less likely to trust neighbors or engage in civic participation. Finally, employers often stigmatize citizens living in insecure and dangerous neighborhoods, fearing that hiring individuals from those places will result in delinquent or violent activity against their businesses.

In a recent study, five of every 10 LAC residents reported that security in their country has deteriorated. Up to 65 percent of respondents said that they avoided going out at night due to insecurity, and 13 percent reported that they felt they needed to move to another place because they feared becoming victims of a crime.[83] In Central America, one of the most violent regions of the LAC region, a survey conducted by LAPOP shows that 14.4 percent of respondents in El Salvador reported having been victimized by crime, but 42.5 percent felt unsafe. In Honduras, these percentages were 18.9 and 23.2 percent respectively, and in Guatemala, 20.8 and 31.5 percent.[84] These figures have remained relatively stable over the years. For example, in the most recent LAPOP survey in El Salvador and Guatemala in 2018, around 20 percent of citizens reported having been victims of crime, and more than 45 percent believed their neighborhoods to be unsafe.[85]

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[80] Tani Adams, "Chronic Violence and its Reproduction. Perverse Trends in Social Relations, Citizenship, and Democracy in the Americas." Woodrow Wilson Center, Papers on Citizen Security and Organized Crime, March 2012. See also her more recent work on the effects of traumatization resulting from experiencing violence in the home. "Chronic violence and non-conventional armed actors: a systemic approach." Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center, September 2014. https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Adams_NOREF_Chronic%20Violence_SEPT_NY%20FINAL.pdf.

[81] World Bank. 2014. *"Invisible Wounds": A Practitioner's Dialogue on Improving Development Outcomes through Psychosocial Support: Summary Report of May 6, 2014 Workshop*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/244362-1239390842422/6012763-1239905793229/Invisible-Wounds-Practitioner-Dialogue-Summary-Report-May6.pdf.

[82] Sarah Bott, et al. *Violence against Women in Latin American and the Caribbean: A Comparative Analysis of Population-Based Data from 12 Countries*, Pan American Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Washington, D.C., 2012.

[83] LAPOP-UNDP, 2012.

[84] LAPOP, 2014.

[85] LAPOP, 2018. "The Political Culture of Democracy in El Salvador and in the Americas, 2016/2017: A Comparative Study of Democracy and Governance."; LAPOP, 2019. "La cultura política de la democracia." Guatemala.

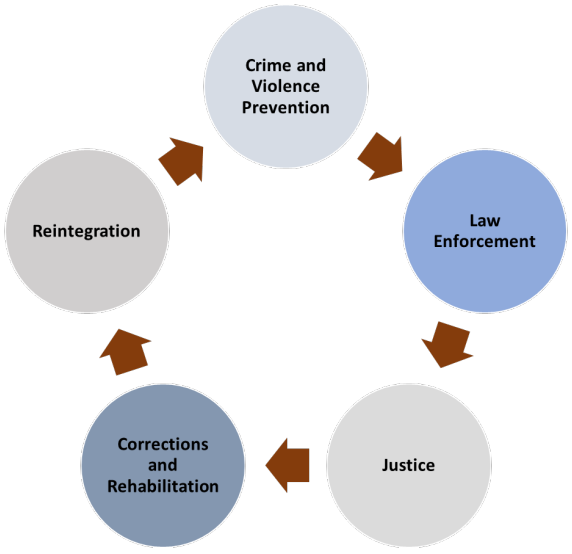
CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

There is little consensus regarding how to define crime and violence prevention or on the most appropriate indicators for measuring and evaluating progress of prevention efforts. Crime and violence prevention is often confused with crime reduction or suppression, with evaluation focused on the reduction in the number of homicides in a particular community. At the other extreme, crime and violence prevention is confused with general development goals such as poverty reduction, provision of public services, food security, and job creation. Crime and violence prevention becomes a ubiquitous term that can become difficult to measure, much less to evaluate. A more appropriate framework is to place crime and violence prevention between the narrower perspective of law enforcement and criminal justice and the wider definition of a general governance problem.

There is general consensus among scholars, psychologists, criminologists, and development practitioners that criminal and violent behavior is caused by a multiplicity of factors, ranging from individual psychological characteristics to broader social and environmental conditions. Crime and violence prevention efforts therefore require a multidisciplinary approach that actively engages a wide variety of actors and agencies.

Prevention, however, is only part of a broader citizen security strategy for combating, reducing, and mitigating crime and violence. As Figure 1 shows, crime and violence prevention efforts do not operate in a vacuum; they are part of a larger strategy that includes law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Yet, the cycle does not end with prosecuting and sanctioning those who commit violent offences. It also entails working with those who commit criminal offences to rehabilitate them and allow them to reintegrate back to society.

Figure 1. Strategies for combating and reducing violence and crime



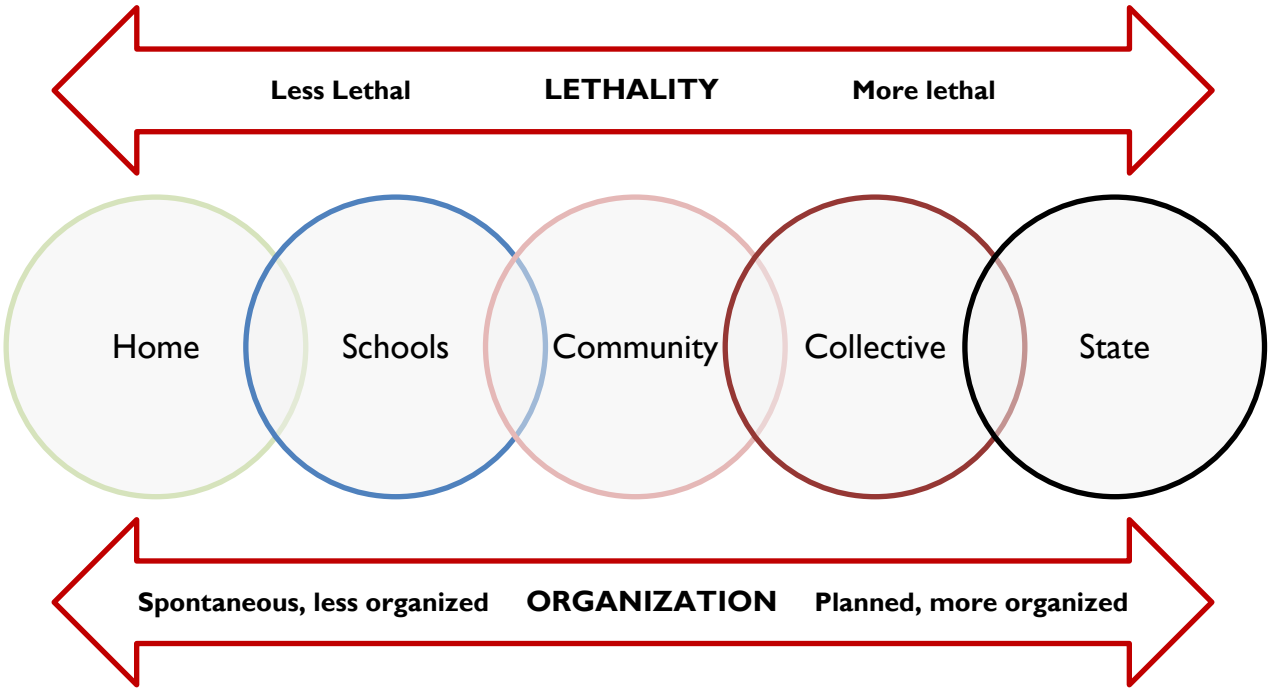
Crime and violence prevention consists of actions and interventions that seek to decrease or eliminate underlying **risk factors** that lead to violent and/or criminal behavior. Prevention also entails reinforcing the **protective factors**, such as community or religious networks, family structures that increase a community's resilience as it relates to crime and violence, or individual's emotional strength. Just as law enforcement is neither sufficient nor effective in preventing crime and violence without the engagement

of the rest of the community, so too crime and violence prevention efforts will be ineffective without the engagement of law enforcement and the criminal justice system.

TYPES OF VIOLENCE: THE VIOLENCE CONTINUUM

According to WHO, violence can be classified as interpersonal or collective, depending on the number of individuals involved in the violence and their extent of organization. Interpersonal violence occurs between individuals and is subdivided by family/intimate partner violence that takes place in the home and community violence. The latter takes place between individuals who may or may not know one another, like school violence, an attack by rival youth groups, an assault by strangers, violence related to property crimes, violence in the workplace, etc. Collective violence, on the other hand refers to violence committed by larger groups of individuals who are typically more organized and may have different motivations, including political grievances in cases of political conflict, wealth accumulation and exerting territorial control in cases of transnational organized crime, or winning political control in cases of wars or violence committed by the state against internal or external enemies.

Figure 2. The continuum of violence



Source: Elaborated from Abt and Winship, 2016.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES FOR ADDRESSING CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

As mentioned, crime and violence can take many forms. The approach used to understand crime and violence has critical implications for the articulation of the public policy that is implemented to address and resolve the problem. [86]

PUBLIC HEALTH PREVENTION APPROACH

The public health approach understands crime and violence as a public health problem that is based in a deep-rooted social and economic context where problems of social inequality, unemployment, and lack of prospects for positive youth development negatively affect youths' opportunities and options. In these contexts, other environmental factors, such as family dysfunction and negative or anti-social peers, can further influence an individuals' attitudes and behavior toward violence, increasing their level of risk. When these community and family contexts are coupled with individual factors, such as weak social controls, low self-esteem, problems with substance abuse, and other mental and emotional problems, individuals become exposed to higher levels of risk of violence.

As elaborated further below, identifying the risk factors that drive individuals or groups to engage in violent behavior is essential for framing policy responses focused on prevention, and not just on punishment. That is, the approach is premised on the **theory that violence can be prevented** to the extent the response adequately identifies the specific type of crime or violence affecting a community (e.g., intrafamily violence, school violence, gun violence, etc.), the population considered to be most at risk, and the main risk factors motivating their violent behavior.

The interventions can be all-encompassing social programs, such as improving access to and quality of public services; programs that target a specific causal factor, such as promoting alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms to solve social conflicts before they escalate to violence; or targeted interventions, such as providing remedial education classes for individuals who dropped out of school or offering drug rehabilitation services to individuals considered most at risk of criminal or violent behavior.

Public Health Methodology

The public health methodology, also called an epidemiological approach, focuses on the health of the entire population and uses a systematic, scientific method based on evidence for understanding, preventing, and treating violence and crime. This methodology considers violence and crime as a contagious disease that if left untreated spreads like any other disease. The public health methodology begins by asking questions such as: *Where does the violence problem begin? How could the initial violence have been prevented? Who is at risk of "contracting" the violence? How can it be kept from spreading further?*

To answer such questions, practitioners collect data. The data are used to further define the problem and identify the main risk and protective factors. Then, they develop and implement strategies based on their data analysis. Evaluation is used to test the effectiveness of the strategies used. Finally, if strategies are found to be effective, they are disseminated and implemented more broadly.

Source: Dahlberg LL, Mercy JA. History of violence as a public health issue. CDC.

AMA Virtual Mentor, February 2009. Volume 11, No. 2: 167-172.

[86] Joan Serra Hoffman, Lyndee Knox, and Robert Cohen, eds., *Beyond Suppression: Global Perspectives on Youth Violence*, Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011.

The public health approach lends itself to integrated, cross-sectoral crime and violence prevention interventions, where reduction of risk factors can be addressed by schools, the health sector, social services, the workplace, and the community. By using data to assess the existing risk factors individuals face in different domains, the public health approach can target those individuals at higher risk of violence, while at the same time engaging service providers from different sectors to address these risk factors by offering the most adequate treatments or programs.

CRIMINOLOGICAL PREVENTION APPROACH

While the public health approach focuses on the underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual (or a group of individuals) will engage in violent and/or criminal behavior, it does not explain the violent or criminal act itself. Risk factors increase the likelihood of violence, but they are not predictors of violent or delinquent behavior. In fact, studies have shown that most individuals who live in high-risk communities and are exposed to several risk factors do not end up committing violent acts.[87] For the potential for violence to turn into real violence, other elements are necessary. The criminological approach focuses on the key elements that must be in place for a criminal or violent act to take place[88]:

1. **A motivated offender**: a person who has an intrinsic (i.e. within themselves) desire to break the law or norms of accepted behavior.
2. **An opportunity**: a person, place, or object that is of interest to and accessible to a motivated offender.
3. **Lack of a capable guardian**: a person or persons who can control a motivated offender from acting on their desires. This may be informal (e.g., a parent) or formal (e.g., police) control.

To prevent crime, therefore, it is essential not only to reduce opportunities for violence, but also—and most critically—to work with motivated youth offenders on their abilities to self-regulate and control their emotions, as well as with their most immediate peers, who can prevent a motivated youth offender from engaging in a criminal or violent act. Young offenders, if adequately supported and treated, can effectively stop delinquent and violent behavior.

SITUATIONAL PREVENTION APPROACH

Crime and violence can be understood as a product of opportunistic conditions rather than a result of entrenched social or economic problems. This situational approach considers the physical and/or environmental characteristics of a particular place where crime or violence occurs.

From this perspective, crime and violence result from calculated, rational decisions in which the benefits outweigh the risks. One expert explains, "The commission of a crime requires not merely the existence of a motivated offender, but—as every detective story reader knows—it also requires the opportunity for crime."[89] The programmatic approaches that derive from this perspective entail the management and/or manipulation of the immediate environment to make crime more difficult and unattractive and to increase the risks of being caught. Situational prevention interventions are part of so-called "place-

[87] National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. 2001. Juvenile Crime, Juvenile Justice. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/9747.
[88] Gottfredson, M.R. & Hirschi, T. 1990. *A General Theory of Crime*. Stanford University Press.
[89] R. Clarke, *Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies*, second edition, New York: Harrow and Heston, 1997, 2.

based" interventions, meaning, interventions focusing on specific hot spots where the overall purpose is to reduce the opportunities for and increase the risks of committing a crime.

Examples include installing surveillance cameras in public places, cleaning and restoring public parks, improving street lighting, and controlling alcohol at festivals and events. A situational prevention methodology that has been used frequently in the LAC region is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). Sergio Fajardo, the mayor of Medellín, Colombia, has introduced one of the most successful and best-known situational prevention programs following CPTED methodology.[90]

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is based on the principle that the environment plays a key role in crime. CPTED recommends modifying the physical environment and incorporating preventive features in urban design and housing to decrease opportunities for crime and increase the likelihood of catching offenders. CPTED methodology has evolved. Today's second-generation methodology has five fundamental tenets:

1. **Natural control of access points:** The opportunity for crime is reduced by limiting the number of access points to a public space.
2. **Natural surveillance**: The design of windows in residential buildings and the lighting and design of public spaces should enhance the ability of residents to observe what is happening in their area.
3. **Maintenance**: Well-maintained public spaces are shown to attract fewer criminals.
4. **Territorial reinforcement**: The feelings of attachment that residents have for their neighborhood can be harnessed to inspire them to look after it.
5. **Community involvement:** Environmental interventions need to be grounded in the community to activate social control mechanisms.

Source: IDB, 2012; Alvarado and Abizanda, 2010.

LAW ENFORCEMENT PREVENTION APPROACH

If crime and violence are understood primarily as a law enforcement problem, the public policy approach will tend to focus on the use of the police to control and contain the problem. The implementation will rely predominantly on the juvenile and criminal justice systems. In some countries, the law enforcement approach has involved community policing strategies and problem-oriented policing (see Section 4 below). For the most part, however, the law enforcement approach has entailed using highly repressive measures with little community involvement. The principle behind this approach is that, regardless of its causes, delinquent, criminal, and violent behavior needs to be punished and that repression works as an effective deterrent of future criminal or violent behavior, so law enforcement serves an important preventive role. The goals of a policy focused on law enforcement as a prevention strategy are to increase the rate of arrests and convictions and to impose longer and harsher sentences on convicts. This hardline approach—known in some parts of LAC as *mano dura*—is one of the best known and most widely endorsed by government officials attempting to demonstrate swift and rapid responses to escalating rates of crime and violence. President Francisco Flores of El Salvador first articulated the *mano*

[90] For an interesting analysis of the case of Medellín, see Martin Dolan, "Respuestas Radicales: Arquitectos y Violencia en Medellín, Colombia." Masters' Thesis, School of Architecture, University of Oxford, Brookes, Oxford, England, https://www.academia.edu/18389163/Respuestas_Radicales_Arquitectos_y_Violencia_en_Medell%C3%ADn_Colombia.

dura approach in 2003. Other countries followed suit with different variants of the same approach.[91] In Guatemala, President Otto Perez Molina advocated for a hardline program with "a heart"—*Mano Dura, Cabeza y Corazón*—but priority was given to law enforcement measures. Yet, in country after country where *mano dura* was introduced, the overreliance on law enforcement measures has proved ineffective in reducing the rates of crime and violence, particularly homicides. On its own, a repressive law enforcement approach is insufficient in solving a violence epidemic. More important, *mano dura* has led to allegations of human rights violations and eroded confidence and trust in the justice system. Paradoxically, however, given the weakness of the justice system, the *mano dura* approach remains popular, particularly in Central American countries and amongst people who live in most violent areas.[92]

While the criminal justice system plays an important role in combating and reducing crime, the challenge is finding the right balance between law enforcement measures that focus on punishing criminal and violent behavior and preventive measures that focus on addressing the root causes of crime and violence, and reducing the situational opportunities for crime and violence. One intervention that relies heavily on law enforcement is "focused deterrence" (see text box below), an intervention that has proven to be effective in the United States, and that combines repression and preventive measures.

Without a doubt, law enforcement measures and effective judicial systems play an important role in combating crime and violence. In LAC, the weakness, inefficiency, and underfunding of justice systems coupled with endemic problems of corruption have led to high levels of impunity.

In the LAC region, police officers and prosecutors are largely perceived to be corrupt; judges are perceived to be inefficient, ill-trained, and underpaid. In many cases, judges have links to corrupt officials and drug traffickers.[93] USAID and the rest of the international donor community have responded by supporting judicial reform, juvenile justice reform, anti-corruption work, and building human capacity in the judicial and security sectors. International donors also have funded programs to provide training and technical assistance to police officers, prosecutors, public defenders, and judges.[94]

[91] Seelke, C. R. "Anti-gang efforts in Central America: Moving beyond Mano Dura? Miami: Center for Hemispheric Policy." 2007.

[92] See LAPOP surveys in different Central American countries. In El Salvador, for example, a public opinion survey in 2017 revealed that 33% of citizens believe crime should be confronted with harsher punitive measures. While the majority (more than 60%) of respondents said they believed prevention should be used rather than repression, the majority of those who supported prevention lived in safer communities. See LAPOP, 2018. "The Political Culture of Democracy in El Salvador and in the Americas, 2016/2017."

[93] For analysis of corruption in the justice system in Latin America, see: Jessica Walsh, "A Double-Edged Sword: Judicial Independence and Accountability in Latin America," International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, Thematic Paper, N. 5, April, 2016. See also Due Process of Law Foundation, "Controles y Descontroles de la Corrupción Judicial. Evaluación de la corrupción judicial y de los mecanismos para combatirla en Centroamérica y Panamá." 2007.

[94] For an interesting and critical assessment of international donor support for judicial reform in Latin America, see Luis Pásara, "International Support for Justice Reform in Latin America: Worthwhile or Worthless? Woodrow Wilson, September 2012.

Focused Deterrence

In the United States, David Kennedy, professor of criminal justice at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, designed a prevention intervention with a strong law enforcement component called "Focused Deterrence of Pulling Levers." These interventions involve using data and intelligence to identify specific groups of offenders within a community. Then law enforcement agencies, service providers and community representatives form a multi-sector task force to approach these offenders and their families. Law enforcement officials communicate directly and repeatedly with offending groups, informing them that they are under scrutiny, that their behavior (such as shootings) will trigger responses, and they can avoid such responses by changing their behavior. Much of this communication occurs during "forums," "notifications," or "call-ins"—a key feature of focused deterrence. During these meetings, the multisector task force engages with offending group members face-to-face, placing them on notice that their actions will have either positive or negative consequences, both for themselves individually for the entire group (Braga & Weisburd, 2012). Focused deterrence deters violent behavior by reaching out directly to offending individuals and groups, explicitly stating that violence will no longer be tolerated, and then backing that message with credible threats of enforcement and credible promises of assistance, i.e. "pulling every lever" to influence offender behavior (Abt and Winship, 2016). These interventions have been proven to be effective in reducing the rate of homicides in specific communities. Yet, the replicability in LAC remains questionable, and adaptations to date have not produced strong evidence on effectiveness. In addition to the distrust of law enforcement and the weakness of the criminal justice systems, LAC countries do not have sufficient data to support a focused deterrence approach nor do they have the adequate assistance to support those who decide to desist.

COMPREHENSIVE PREVENTION APPROACHES

Law enforcement, situational, and public health prevention approaches are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they can be used in tandem to address crime and violence. Prevention approaches are effective when there is an adequate assessment of the problem affecting a particular community, reliable evidence on who is most at risk and who is most vulnerable to victimization, what causes are driving the violence, and what resources exist at the local level to address the problem.

While law enforcement focuses on short-term repressive measures, public health approaches to prevention enable a long-term approach that addresses the root causes, not just the symptoms, of crime and violence. Situational prevention reduces opportunities for crime by improving the physical and environmental conditions of public places. In the LAC region, USAID has been a strong supporter of investing in situational, place-based, and community-based prevention interventions to contain and control crime and violence. In Guatemala and El Salvador, for example, USAID has taken an active role in supporting the development of national prevention policies and strategic plans and has encouraged governments to invest resources in prevention programs at both the local and national levels. In part, the focus on prevention counters the proclivity of many governments in the region to resort to costly repressive measures that are not sustainable in the long term. However, the emphasis on repression is also inconsistent with a longer-term commitment to promoting development and democracy. Addressing the main drivers of crime and violence is necessary not only to contain the violence epidemic, but also to establish the conditions for sustainable development and improved governance.

PART 3: RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Designing effective crime and violence prevention strategies requires first and foremost an understanding of the drivers that lead individuals to engage in criminal or violent behavior. These factors range from broad historical and cultural factors to individual psychosocial conditions. It is also important to note that most people are not violent; violence usually is concentrated in a few so-called "hot spots" and is perpetrated by a small percentage of individuals, which reinforces the importance of targeted interventions.

There is extensive literature regarding the main drivers of crime and violence in the LAC region. The most comprehensive and widely used methodology is the socio-ecological classification. Using a public health lens, the socio-ecological classification helps to identify who is most at risk of being a victim or perpetrator of crime and highlights the multiple factors associated with crime and violence. For a summary of risk and protective factors prevalent in LAC, see Annex A.

3.1 RISK FACTORS

The public health methodology utilizes the socio-ecological model, which analyzes a variety of interrelated risk factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels (see Figure 3). The more risk factors present, and the more levels involved, the greater one's propensity is for engaging in crime and violence. An analysis of existing risk factors can help activity managers to target and prioritize those individuals and communities that are most at risk of crime and violence.

For programming purposes, it is important to understand that some risk factors are **static** (that is, unchangeable through treatment or correction; for example, an individual's family or criminal history), and others are **dynamic** (that is, aspects can be changed through programmatic interventions or over time). These factors include an individual's perceptions and attitudes towards violence, antisocial peer relationships, absence of family bonding, etc.

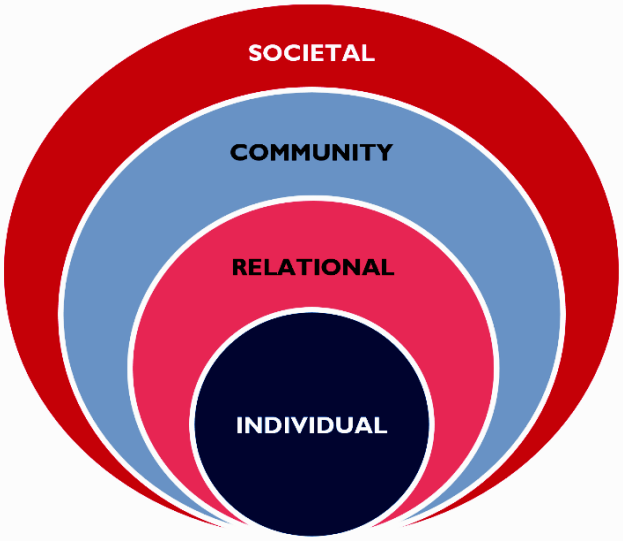
Furthermore, there is no causal relationship between risk factors and outcomes: risk factors neither cause violence nor make it inevitable. Rather, the risk factors influence the likelihood that individuals and communities will be involved with crime and/or violence. It is the presence of *multiple* risk factors, especially when those risk factors fall across multiple levels, that is most associated with crime and violence. Furthermore, as we know from research, youth considered at high risk of violence may never actually engage in violent behavior, and the majority of those who commit violent acts cease their violent behavior after one to three years.[95]

The relative weight or importance of individual risk factors—or specific combinations of risk factors—varies depending on the context. The lack of parental supervision because parents have emigrated, for

[95] Kara Williams, Lourdes Rivera, Robert Neighbours, and Vivian Reznik, "Youth Violence Prevention Comes of Age: Research, Training and Future Directions." In The Annual Review of Public Health, 2007:28. 10.1146/annurev.publhealth.28.021406.144111

example, may be a more relevant risk factor in Central America than in other countries, while multigenerational involvement in armed conflict may be more common elsewhere. Although the overall goal of crime and violence prevention interventions is to reduce the levels of violence, the most immediate objectives are to reduce risk levels and enhance protective factors so that individuals at risk of violence do not engage in violent or criminal behavior.

Figure 3. Socio-Ecological Model[96]



A Closer Look at Each Level of the SEM

Individual
Identifies biological and personal history factors—such as age, education, income, substance use, or history of abuse—that increase the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

Relationship
Examines close relationships that may increase the risk of experiencing violence as a victim or perpetrator. A person's closest social circle—peers, partners, and family members—influences their behavior and contributes to their range of experience.

Community
Explores the settings—such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods—in which social relationships occur and seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that are associated with risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

Societal
Looks at the broad societal factors—such as health, economic, educational, and social policies—that help create a climate in which violence is encouraged or inhibited and that help maintain economic or social inequalities among groups in society.

Source: US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

RISK FACTORS AT THE SOCIETAL LEVEL

At the outermost level of the socio-ecological risk model, societal risk factors that influence violence and crime include those that create an acceptable climate for violence, reduce inhibitions against violence, and create or sustain gaps between different segments of society or tensions between different groups or countries. These factors include a culture of violence, income inequality, urbanization, drug trafficking and organized crime, and a weak or ineffective criminal justice system.

Culture of violence. Many LAC countries have a *culture of violence,* defined as a "system of norms, values, and attitudes which enables, fosters, and legitimizes the use of violence in interpersonal relationships."[97] Examples include cultural norms that support the physical discipline of children, violence against women, and a husband's right to control his wife through any means. A culture of violence may also include economic and social policies that create or sustain gaps and tensions among groups of people, weak laws and policies related to violence, war and militarism, and institutional violence. These norms exist in various societal institutions, including schools and the home, which are the primary sources of socialization. As discussed above, in many Latin American and Caribbean countries, a large percentage of citizens justify the use of physical violence to manage children and wives.

[96] U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. The social-ecological model: A framework for violence prevention. Washington, DC: CDC. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/SEM_Framewrk-a.pdf
[97] Huezo, 2001; Martin-Baro, 1992

For instance, a recent LAPOP survey across 16 Latin American and Caribbean countries, found that roughly one of four individuals approves of or understands a man hitting his wife if she neglects household chores.[98]

Income inequality. Although no causal relationship has been identified between poverty and violence, income inequality has been shown to lead to higher rates of crime and violence,[99] most likely due to the fact that it is more difficult for "have nothings" to live with vast income disparities than in an environment of absolute poverty, where everyone has the same level of deprivation. Income inequality is often referred to as "structural violence," which is the macro-level political, economic, and social policy environments and long entrenched conditions of poverty and marginality where violence is more likely to occur. [100]

In Latin America and the Caribbean, this relative deprivation correlates with higher homicide rates. In particular, at-risk youth from poor households within unequal societies have a higher likelihood of engaging in criminal and violent behavior.[101] According to UNODC, countries with high levels of poverty and income inequality are afflicted by homicide rates almost four times higher than more equal societies. Put more simply, poor countries with high levels of income inequality are more likely to have high levels of violent crime.

Poverty. Although being raised in a well-to-do family does not guarantee that a young person will not become involved in criminal or violent behavior, it does reduce some of the risk factors. For example, poverty may cause one or both parents to work multiple jobs at low wages and be absent from the home for many hours each day, thereby reducing the influence of parents and weakening the family bonds that have been shown to be a strong protective factor. In some cases, parents may decide to migrate to other countries, often leaving their children behind with other relatives or friends. Coming from a poor household also may drive a young person to try to generate additional income via the illegal drug trade or other criminal activity. Furthermore, many poor families live in neighborhoods with drug sale points, meaning young people are surrounded by negative influences, another risk factor. It is not surprising that as of 2018, the largest proportion of unaccompanied minors coming illegally to the United States came from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, some of the poorest and most violent nations in Latin America.[102]

Rapid and uncontrolled urbanization. A study of the patterns of victimization in Latin America found that cities with rapid population growth had higher levels of violence than areas with more moderate growth.[103] Researchers concluded that this was a result of disorganization and poor urban

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[98] AmericasBarometer's Insights, 2015, http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/IO927en.pdf.
[99] World Bank, 2008.
[100] UNICEF. 2017. The Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/MCSDVAC_revised12072017.pdf
[101] World Bank, 2008.
[102] Wilson, Jill H. 2019. "Recent Migration to the United States from Central America: Frequently Asked Questions." Congressional Research Service. https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45489/4. *See also* Kandel and Seghetti, 2015. In 2014, the flow of unaccompanied minors trying to enter the United States illegally escalated to unprecedented numbers. According to a study by the Congressional Research Center, in 2011, the border patrol apprehended 16,067 unaccompanied children at the southern border, compared to more than 68,500 in 2014. More than three-quarters of the minors (77%) were from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. The World Bank estimates that Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador are among the poorest nations in Latin America, with 30 percent, 26 percent, and 17 percent of the population living on less than $2 a day, respectively.
[103] Alejandro Gaviria and Carmen Pages, "Patterns of Crime Victimization in Latin America," Inter-American Development Bank Working Paper No. 408, 1999.

planning. Research carried out in El Salvador, for example, showed that gangs grow in areas with urban crowding, a lack of public recreational facilities (particularly young people), and inadequate basic services. Residential crowding may drive children and teens from homes into the streets, which becomes the main source of socialization. This often results in the development of gangs.[104] Deteriorating public spaces also may be associated with gang presence and victimization.[105] Studies show that there are fewer gangs in communities with sports fields, community centers, and parks than in others.[106]

Drug trafficking and organized crime. Latin America and the Caribbean has remained an important drug transit region, especially for cocaine. Drugs and violence are linked in three main ways: (1) the altered state generated by drug use can produce a loss of control and violent behavior; (2) drug abuse generates physical and psychological dependence, which often leads to criminal involvement as a way of supporting an addiction; and (3) gang member participation in drug networks and organized crime.[107] "Drug hotspots," where the sale or transit of narcotics is high, have murder rates that are 111 percent higher than elsewhere.[108]

Although gangs and drugs are intricately linked in the minds of Central American law enforcement personnel, government officials, and the public, closer examination reveals a vastly more complex picture. According to the UNODC, there exist three different drug-involved groups in El Salvador: youth gang members (*pandilleros*), organized crime groups (*banderos*), and narcotics traffickers (*transeros*).[109] Some experts indicate that gangs serve as a local security apparatus for Mexican and Colombian cartels or as small-time informal street vendors, but they do not appear to be involved in wholesaling or the large-scale movement of drugs. Others emphasize that many of the leaders of local drug organizations are ex-gang members.[110] A recent study on gang desistance in Honduras and Guatemala revealed that of the two largest gangs in these countries, the MS-13 gang is more directly involved in drug trafficking than the Barrio-18 gang.[111]

Research suggests that involvement in drug trafficking has made gangs more violent in the last decade.[112] UNODC estimates that more than 25 percent of homicides in the Americas are related to organized crime and gang activity, compared to just 5 percent of homicides in the Asian and European countries for which data are available.[113] Although the complex relationship between gangs and drugs is not fully understood, it is clear that areas where there is a high volume of illegal drug trafficking and use and little

[104] M. Smut and JLE Miranda, "El fenómeno de las pandillas en El Salvador," San Salvador: UNICEF and FLACSO, 1998.
[105] Cruz and Santacruz, 2005.
[106] José Miguel Cruz, Marlon Carranza, and María Santacruz, "El Salvador. Espacios públicos, confianza interpersonal y pandillas," in *Maras y pandillas en Centroamérica. Pandillas y capital social. Volumen II*, San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2004.
[107] UNODC, Global Study on Homicide, 2019. Executive Summary.
[108] World Bank, 2011.
[109] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007.
[110] Dennis Rodgers, "Bismarckian transformations in contemporary Nicaragua: from gang member to drug dealer to legal entrepreneur." Paper presented to the University of Sussex Centre for Violence and Justice interdisciplinary seminar, Feb. 13, 2008.
[111] Cruz, et al. 2020. Gang disengagement studies in Guatemala and Honduras.
[112] Aguilar, 2006; International Human Rights Clinic, 2007; Dennis Rodgers, "Living in the shadow of death: Gangs, violence, and social order in urban Nicaragua, 1996-2002," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 38 (2), 2006, 27-92; Dennis Rodgers, "When vigilantes turn bad: Gangs, violence, and social change in urban Nicaragua," in D. Pratten and A. Sen (eds.), *Global Vigilantes*, London: Hurst, 2007.
[113] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011.

presence of law enforcement or state entities—the so-called "ungoverned spaces"—are at significantly higher risk of crime and violence because governance is informally controlled by criminal organizations.

Weak or ineffective criminal justice systems. The LAC region, particularly countries in Central America and the Caribbean, has high rates of incarceration, and incarceration rates are increasing. Experts say that roughly 60 percent of the prisons in the LAC region are overcrowded.[114] Prison overcrowding is not only a humanitarian problem, but also a roadblock to the potential rehabilitative power of effective corrections programming. According to the World Prison Brief, El Salvador is the country with the second largest incarcerated rates per 100,000 of the national population after the United States.[115]

To a large extent, prison overcrowding is the result of an excessive use of imprisonment, which in turn results from delays in trials, the lack of alternative sentencing systems, the inadequacy or nonexistence of pretrial services to evaluate the degree of danger posed by the offender and probability of flight, and the lack of protocols for determining when pretrial detention should be applied and how and when decisions on precautionary measures should be reviewed.[116] In some countries, the police have lost the trust of citizens; for instance, nearly half of Salvadorans and Hondurans and two-thirds of Guatemalans believe that the local police are involved in crime.[117] In many Latin American and Caribbean countries, a weak justice system encourages criminals to resort to violent means to settle disputes that could and should be settled in court. Weak and ineffective criminal justice systems also lead to high levels of impunity, which further erodes confidence and trust in government and more specifically in the police.

Corruption and poor quality of public services. Most Latin American and Caribbean countries, especially Central American countries, have pervasive and systemic problems of corruption. Government corruption contributes to poor public service provision, biased and compromised decision-making processes, and high levels of public distrust in government officials. Deficient service delivery contributes to poverty and income inequality, which further impede the ability of citizens in poor families to improve their quality of life. The 2020 Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index ranked Venezuela, Haiti, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala among the most corrupt countries in the world, with scores of 25/100 or lower.[118] With the partial exception of Nicaragua, countries with high levels of corruption also have high levels of violence, gangs, and drug trafficking problems. In poor areas that have limited opportunities for employment or economic advancement, illicit activities may offer an attractive and viable means of escaping poverty.

RISK FACTORS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

The next level of the socio-ecological model examines the community contexts in which social relationships are embedded—such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods—and identifies the characteristics that are associated with being victims or perpetrators of violence. Many examples of community-level risk factors are based on a dearth of social cohesion. These risk factors include low secondary-school enrollment rates, violence in schools, and the availability of firearms.

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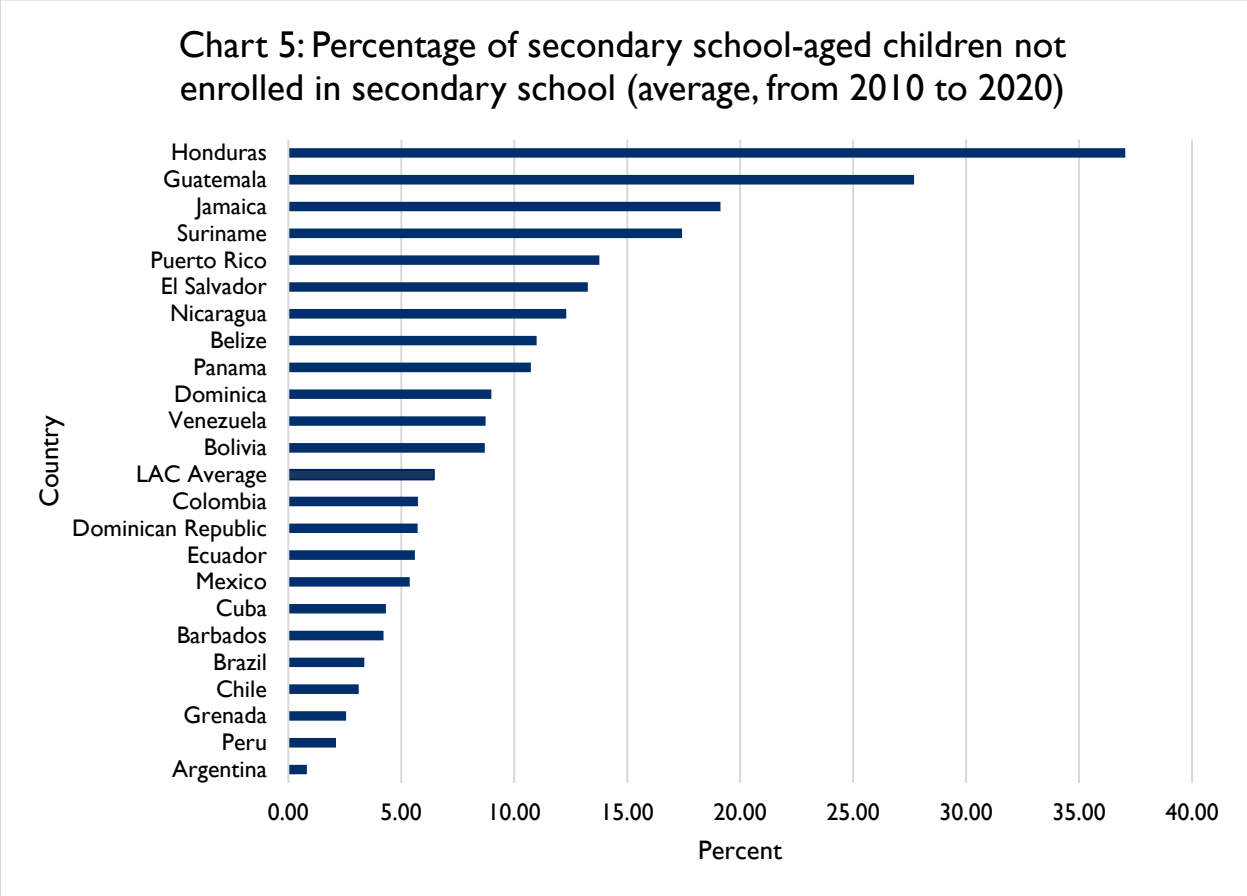
[114] Inter-American Development Bank, "Citizen Security: Conceptual Framework and Empirical Evidence," 2012.
[115] Statista, "Countries with the largest number of prisoners per 100,000 of the national population, as of June 2020." Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/262962/countries-with-the-most-prisoners-per-100-000-inhabitants/
[116] Inter-American Development Bank," Citizen Security: Conceptual Framework and Empirical Evidence," 2012.
[117] World Bank, 2011.
[118] Transparency International. "Corruption Perception Index 2020." https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl

Low secondary-school enrollment rates. Juvenile delinquency correlates with lower levels of education.[119] In addition to the loss of positive social influences from teachers and peers who have a more positive outlook on the future, for drop-outs, engaging in criminal behavior comes at a lower cost.[120] In addition, crime may become the only alternative for a young person without any marketable skills to earn an income. This is often a circular problem: some students may avoid school as if it becomes a place where they are targeted with violence (and or if traveling to/from school is unsafe), which then further decreases job opportunities.

Chart 5 provides an overview of the percentage of secondary school-age children who were *not* enrolled in secondary school for select LAC countries, compared to the LAC average. Although secondary school enrollment rates have increased significantly, there remains significant room for improvement, particularly in Guatemala (where fewer than 29 percent of eligible secondary-school students are enrolled in school), Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Ecuador—all of which have rates of over 50 percent.

Low school enrollment is not a sole determinant of delinquency, as shown by the statistics for Panama and Nicaragua, but non-enrollment in school constitutes an important risk factor. In fact, completing secondary school has proven one of the most important protective factors against risky youth behavior, including crime and violence.[121] A recent study on gangs and gang desistance in Honduras and Guatemala shows that gangs recruit young people as young as eight years old. Most of these children had already dropped out of school.[122] See Chart 5.

[119] G. Barker and M. Fontes, "Review and Analysis of International Experience with Programs Targeted on Youth at Risk," LASHC Paper Series No. 5, Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1996.
[120] Z. Eckstein and K. Wolpin, "Why Youths Drop Out of High School: The Impact of preferences, Opportunities, And Abilities," *Econometrica* 67 (6), 1999, 1295-1339.
[121] World Bank, "Supporting Youth at Risk: A Policy Toolkit for Middle Income Countries," 2008.
[122] Cruz, et al. 2020. Gang disengagement studies in Guatemala and Honduras.



Source: World Bank, 2020.

Violence in schools. Access to education is one of the most important protective factors in the lives of at-risk youth, but the use of corporal punishment by teachers and violence among students can inadvertently contribute to violence and serve as a risk factor.[123] A poll of 1,000 middle and secondary school students in San Salvador found that approximately 15 percent are involved in at least one school fight in any given month, and almost 20 percent carry bats or sticks to school for self-defense.[124] According to a 2015 World Bank study, nearly 69 percent of high school students in Mexico reported experiencing some type of aggression or violence at school; in Brazil, 84 percent of students in 143 schools from six state capitals considered their schools violent, and 70 percent reported being victims of violence in school; and in Bogotá, Colombia, almost 30 percent of males and 17 percent of females have been in at least one fight in school.[125]

Availability of firearms. The widespread availability of firearms is a risk factor for crime and violence. When there are more firearms in circulation, those at risk of violence are better able to obtain a

[123] Campie, P., Read, N., Mizrahi, Y., Hill, C., Shaw, E., & Molotsky, A. (2021). Multisector Resource Guide for Preventing Youth Violence in Latin America, pp. 4-27, "Stopping Youth Violence in Latin America: A Guide for the Education Sector." USAID. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00XCV7.pdf

[124] United Nations Development Programme, "Indicadores sobre violencia en El Salvador," San Salvador: UNDP, 2002.

[125] Cunningham, W., McGinnis, L., Verdú, R. G., Tesliuc, C., & Verner, D. 2008. "Youth at risk in Latin America and the Caribbean: Understanding the causes, realizing the potential." Washington, D.C., DC: World Bank.

weapon. In Central America, there are estimated to be more than 3 million small firearms in circulation, and more than half are owned illegally.[126] Firearms are responsible for between 65 and 70 percent of all reported homicides in Central America.[127]

RISK FACTORS AT THE RELATIONSHIP LEVEL

The next level of the ecological model explores how proximal social relationships may increase the risk for victimization and perpetration of crime and violence. Peers, intimate partners, and family members all have the potential to shape an individual's behavior and range of experience. Risk factors at the relationship level include dysfunctional family environments and having friends or acquaintances who engage in anti-social behavior or who become gang members.

Dysfunctional family environment. A dysfunctional family environment includes violence, neglect, or abuse in the home, as well as abandonment by parents or other caregivers. Studies have shown exposure to violence in the home to be one of the most significant risk factors for violence; children who experience or observe violent behavior at home are more likely to engage in violent behavior themselves. This is problematic in Central America, where domestic violence is widespread. A study on Central American gangs found that "the clearest indication of future criminal violence by young male gang members is repeated abuse or mistreatment at home."[128] In her research on violence in the home, Tani Adams similarly found that "[t]raumatization in childhood in particular contributes to higher incidence of lifelong physical and mental illness and destructive behavior."[129]

Studies show that domestic violence significantly increases the likelihood that a child will be the perpetrator of violent acts later in life, including domestic and other types of violence.[130] In a study carried out by Save the Children, about one-third of gang members stated that they had been beaten or abused on a regular basis during their youth, some on a daily basis.[131]

Studies have also shown that youth who feel close to their families are about 10 percent less likely to engage in risk-taking behavior such as violence, smoking, alcohol and drug abuse, and risky sexual activity.[132] "Barrel children"—children with two parents who have migrated—are particularly at risk. The high number of Central American children without parental support is a fertile recruiting ground for gangs.

Antisocial peers. Studies show that young people who have relationships with peers who are gang members or who have criminal records are more likely than those without such relationships to join a

[126] An. Karp, "Estimated firearms distribution in 27 Latin America and Caribbean countries, 2007," unpublished background data, Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2008; Arias Foundation, *Legislaciones Centroamericanas: Análisis Comparativo*, Costa Rica: Fundación Arias para la Paz y el Progreso Humano, August 2005.
[127] Arias Foundation, 2005.
[128] M. Santacruz and A. Concha-Eastman, *Barrio Adentro: La Solidaridad Violenta de las Pandillas*, San Salvador: Instituto Universitario de Opinión Pública (IUDOP), 2001.
[129] Tani Adams, "Chronic Violence and its Reproduction: Perverse Trends in Social Relations, Citizenship, and Democracy in the Americas," Woodrow Wilson Center, Papers on Citizen Security and Organized Crime, March 2012.
[130] CDC. 2020. "Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)." https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html. See also M. Buvinic, A. Morrison, and M. Shifter, "Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Framework for Action," Technical Study, Sustainable Development Department, Inter-American Development Bank, 1999.
[131] Save the Children UK, 2002.
[132] Blum, "Adolescent Health in the Caribbean," unpublished paper, World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2002.

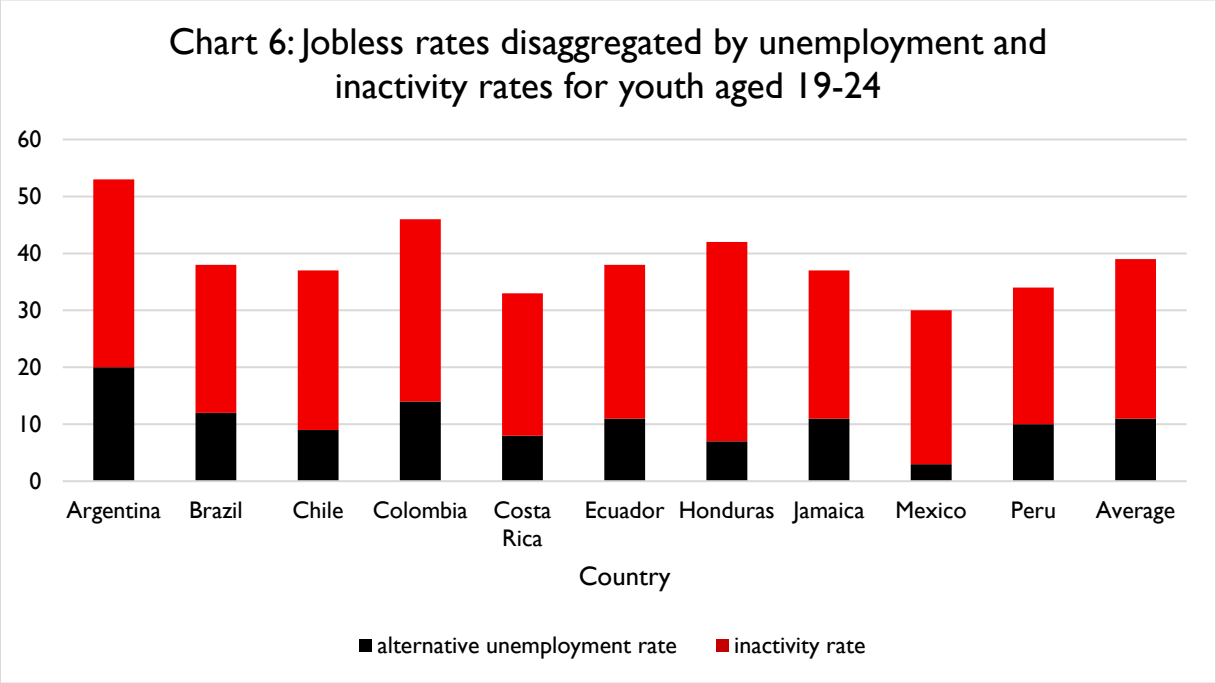
gang.[133] Gangs often offer solidarity, respect, and, sometimes, access to money.[134] In surveys in El Salvador and Honduras, incarcerated gang members reported joining gangs because they found in them a source of entertainment and an opportunity to spend time with their peers.[135]

RISK FACTORS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The innermost level of the socio-ecological model focuses on personal characteristics that make an individual more likely to be a victim or a perpetrator of crime or violence. Individual level risk factors typically include those factors related to the cognitive, physiological, and behavioral nature of the individual, many of which are determined during early childhood.[136] The individual risk factors most highly associated with violence in the LAC region are *biological/demographic* (age and gender, marginalization, and/or living in single-parent households where social bonding is weak or in families where parents neglect their children); *psychological/behavioral* (ability to regulate emotions, level of self-esteem, low intelligence, low educational achievement, early sexual initiation, and prior history of having engaged in or been a victim of aggression or abuse), and *environmental* (exposure to others' rage, being exposed to conflict or violence in the home, school desertion, and substance and alcohol abuse). Specific risk factors in the LAC region include lack of opportunities for engaging in prosocial activities, including unemployment and inactivity, alcohol abuse, lack of positive role models, early sexual initiation, and migration of parents and/or other caretakers.

Youth inactivity, or the so-called "*Ninis*." Studies have found a correlation between youth who are disengaged from educational institutions or the labor force with risky behavior, including crime and violence, substance abuse, and risky sexual activity.[137] For example, Honduras, one of the Central American countries with the highest rates of homicides in 2017, was also a country with the highest rates of "Ninis," with an estimated over 40 percent of youth, particularly males ages 15 to 24, who neither studied nor worked.[138] According to the World Bank, the inactivity rate for 19- to 24-year-olds in Latin American and Caribbean countries is much higher than the unemployment rate (see Chart 6). Youth who are inactive and are not adequately supervised by an adult have a higher probability of engaging in risky behavior, especially if they live in communities where gangs or other criminal organizations are present. These organizations often view inactive youth as an attractive pool of potential recruits. It is important to highlight, however, that while being inactive increases the risk of violence, being a *Nini* does not cause violence, and on its own, it may be a weak risk factor. Most *Ninis* do not engage in violence, but a large portion of the youth who do engage in violent behavior are *Ninis*.

[133] Smut and Miranda, 1998.
[134] Santacruz and Concha-Eastman, 2001.
[135] Cruz, et al. 2020. Gang disengagement studies in Guatemala and Honduras.
[136] Kara Williams, Lourdes Rivera, Robert Neighbours, and Vivian Reznik, Youth Violence Prevention Comes of Age: Research, Training and Future Directions. Annual Review of Public Health, Vol.28, 2007. 10.1146/annurev.publhealth.28.021406.144111
[137] Rafael de Hoyos, Halsey Rogers, and Miguel Székely, "Ninis en América Latina. 20 millones de jóvenes en busca de oportunidades." World Bank Group, 2016. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22349/K8423.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y
[138] Ariel Fiszbein and Sarah Stanton, "The Future of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean." InterAmerican Dialogue, 2018.



Source: Wendy Cunningham, Linda McGinnis, Rodrigo García Verdú, Cornelia Tesliuc, and Dorte Verner, Youth at Risk in Latin American and the Caribbean. Understanding the causes. Realizing the potential. The World Bank, 2008.

Substance use disorders. Alcohol abuse is a proven risk factor for being a victim or perpetrator of violence. Evidence shows that alcohol can increase the likelihood of violence in several ways. At the individual level, it reduces self-control and the ability to process information to assess risk. Alcohol also can increase impulsiveness, thereby increasing the likelihood that a person—especially a young person—will resort to violence. Lastly, alcohol is often involved in gang rituals, and high levels of alcohol use in the context of abusive relationships is one of the key risk factors for intimate partner violence.[139] Studies show that alcohol abuse is associated with violent behavior. According to the UNDP, for instance, prison surveys reveal a strong link between alcohol consumption and crime. According to a comparative survey of prison populations in several Latin American and Caribbean countries, more than 60 percent of people who had used alcohol or drugs before committing a crime had used alcohol.[140]

Lack of prosocial role models. The absence of positive role models at home and in the community can be a contributing factor to the decision to join a gang. In Central America—where many young people have been socially excluded from the educational system and the labor market and who live in homes with no parents or whose parents have poor parenting skills and in communities where a culture of violence is the norm—youth may view gangs as the best and only option for socialization and being supported and protected.[141] Gangs offer disaffected youth an opportunity to be part of a group, a sense of belonging, and a sense of purpose—all of which may not otherwise be available. Youth who feel abandoned by their parents or guardians and have no positive adult relationships with which they can identify are more vulnerable to turning their feelings of sadness and abandonment into anger or rage,

[139] World Bank, "Supporting Youth at Risk," 2008.
[140] United Nations Development Programme, 2013, 2.
[141] Cruz, 2007.

which in turn can result in criminal and violent acts, especially when they lack self-regulation and control mechanisms.

Risky sexual behavior. Risky sexual behavior, such as early sexual initiation, not practicing safe sex, or forced sexual initiation, poses costs to both the individual and society. These behaviors are associated with low self-control or regulation and usually are correlated with higher school dropout levels. In addition to the increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDs and/or sexually transmitted infections, risky sexual behavior can also lead to increased rates of adolescent pregnancy. Research shows that adolescent mothers have a higher risk than older mothers of raising their children in poverty, due largely to the lower earning potential of teen parents. Evidence also demonstrates that children of adolescent mothers have more health and behavioral problems, lower cognitive development, and lower school achievement.[142] Although teen pregnancy rates in Central America have decreased substantially in the last two decades, they still remain some of the highest in the LAC region, with more than 100 births per 100,000 women in the 15 to 19 age group. A study carried out in the Caribbean showed that early initiation of intercourse was predictive of weapon-related violence and gang involvement among boys and girls, as well as alcohol use and running away among girls.[143]

Gender, Crime, and Violence

Crime, violence, and their associated risk factors have different effects on males and females. Women and girls are more vulnerable to certain types of crime, such as domestic and/or gender-based violence, and sexual assault, and often bear the risks and disadvantages of teen pregnancy. Most gang members are male, but women and girls—especially in Central America—may play key roles and commit the same crimes as their male counterparts. Female gang members also may be subjected to sexual initiation rites, further compounding existing risk factors.

Donors' gender programming often focuses on increasing the rights of women and girls, their participation in education and the workforce, and their ability to plan their families. In Central America, gender programming must consider the special risk factors that boys and young men face that make them more prone to engaging in crime and violence. Young men are more at risk than women of being victimized by some violent crimes, including homicide, and generally are more likely to join gangs and commit crimes.

3.2 PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Central to the public health methodology in addressing crime and violence is the focus on *protective factors* that buffer individuals against the risks of becoming violent and increase their resilience when faced with violence or with the temptations of engaging in criminal and violent behavior. Like risk factors, protective factors exist at various levels. To date, protective factors have not been studied as extensively or rigorously as risk factors. In many cases, the protective factors are simply the opposite of the risk factors.

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[142] G. Ahn, "Teenage Childbearing and High School Completion: Accounting for Individual Heterogeneity," *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1994, 26; J. Grogger and S. Bronars, "The Socioeconomic Consequences of Teenage Childbearing: Findings from a Natural Experiment," *Family Planning Perspectives* 25 (4), 1993, 156-61; S.E. Hoffman, M. Foster, and F. Fustenberg, Jr. "Reevaluating the Cost of Child Bearing," *Demography* 30 (1), 1993, 1-13; Nord et al., 1992; Rangarajan, Kisker, and Maynard, 1992.

[143] S. Ohene, M. Ireland, and R. Blum, "The Clustering of Risk Behaviors among Caribbean Youth," *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 2005.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)[144] has identified a number of protective factors that are associated with lowering risk factors for youth violence:

Individual protective factors:

- Intolerance toward deviance
- High IQ
- High grade-point average (as an indicator of high academic achievement)
- Positive social orientation
- Highly developed social skills or competencies
- Highly developed skills for realistic planning

Family-based protective factors:

- Connectedness to family and/or other adults
- Ability to discuss problems with parents
- High parental expectations about school performance
- Frequent shared activities with parents
- Consistent presence of parent during at least one of the following times: waking and getting up in the morning, arriving home from school, at evening mealtime, or going to bed
- Involvement in social activities
- Parental or family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems; the provision of models of constructive coping

Peer and social protective factors:

- Strong, close, and positive relationships with teachers and classmates
- Commitment to school; an investment in school and in doing well at school
- Close relationships with non-deviant peers
- Membership in peer groups that do not condone antisocial behavior
- Involvement in prosocial activities
- Exposure to school environments characterized by supervision, clear rules for behavior, consistent negative reinforcement of aggression, and the engagement of parents and teachers

Community-level protective factors:

- The existence of churches and other places of worship
- Community cohesion and civic participation
- Positive relationships between residents and law enforcement

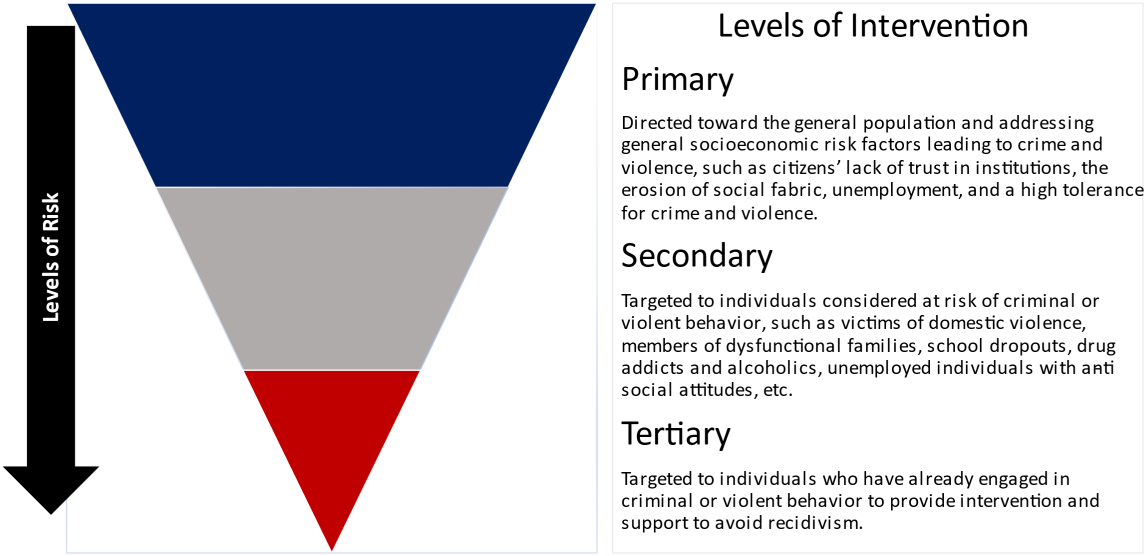
LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

The public health methodology of crime and violence prevention suggests programmatic interventions should follow a tiered prevention approach differentiated by risk levels. That is the most effective strategy for addressing specific needs of the individuals affected the most.

[144] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Risk and Protective Factors https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html

A graphic representation of this tiered approach is adapted from the health impact pyramid developed to combat the spread of contagious diseases.[145] This public health model, shown in Figure 4, graphically explains different levels of interventions according to the level of risk for violence. Moving up the pyramid, interventions involve larger numbers of people. Moving down the pyramid, interventions are designed to affect increasingly smaller numbers of individuals, who are most responsible for committing violence. At the bottom of the pyramid, interventions are designed for a subset of individuals who have already engaged in criminal and/or violent behavior. Although these interventions engage smaller numbers of people, they usually require significant professional services and resources, since they often entail a combination of counseling services, training, rehabilitation, and education.

Figure 4. Applying Public Health Methodology to Violence Prevention



Source: Adapted from Thomas Frieden, 2010, "A framework for public health action: the health Impact pyramid," *American Journal of Public Health.* 100(4): 590–595.

- **Primary prevention** targets the entire population and seeks to prevent violence before it occurs. It may include, for example, public education campaigns aimed at changing societal norms that tolerate violence. Interventions are not targeted for individuals considered at risk. For USAID programming, beneficiaries of these programs are typically focused on everyone living in a particular dangerous community. Evidence from around the world demonstrates that primary level interventions may be effective in increasing awareness and improving skills and knowledge, but in the absence of other more targeted interventions, they are not effective in reducing violent behavior—although when combined with secondary and tertiary interventions, they can have other important benefits for communities.[146] The most effective interventions for reducing violence are at the secondary and tertiary levels of intervention.

[145] Thomas Frieden. A Framework for Public Health Action: The Health Impact Pyramid. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2836340/

[146] For a meta-analysis of the evidence on violence prevention, see Abt and Winship, 2016 and Campie, Patricia et. al. 2018. "Evidence Mapping and Gap Analysis of Youth Violence Prevention Interventions." USAID, October 2018.

- **Secondary prevention** focuses on individuals or groups with several risk factors for crime and violence. These prevention efforts may focus on unemployed youth who have dropped out of school, for instance. Secondary interventions reach fewer individuals in a more targeted manner than primary prevention does. Secondary prevention requires identifying the population(s) at risk and targeting interventions to those segments of the population. One tool that has been used to this end in LAC is the Youth Service Eligibility Tool (YSET), adopted from the experience of addressing gang violence in Los Angeles, which uses survey information to identify at-risk youth and target interventions more strategically to these individuals. For example, in Honduras, a family-based intervention used an adaptation of the YSET tool, the *Instrumento de Medición de Comportamientos* (IMC), to identify youth living in at-risk family environments. Other targeting mechanisms include identifying students who are failing in or are frequently absent from school to receive specialized attention within the educational environment. Individuals with substance use disorders are another common target audience. Examples of secondary prevention interventions include programs for youth leadership, remedial education, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, anger management programs, and parental and family support programs.
- **Tertiary prevention** is targeted at those individuals who have already engaged in criminal or violent behavior and may also include victims of violence. Individuals who are incarcerated or on probation and youth in juvenile detention facilities are the focus for these interventions. In highly developed countries, a variety of risk assessment tools have been used to assess the level of risk of these individuals and design a tailored intervention to address their specific needs.[147] Rehabilitation services can be provided to individuals who committed a crime but are not incarcerated. The purpose of tertiary prevention interventions is to prevent individuals from reoffending through rehabilitation, which may include skills trainings and psychological counseling. Tertiary prevention reaches fewer people than either primary or secondary prevention and requires the most specialized rehabilitation and therapeutic services. Possible approaches include individual cognitive behavioral therapy, life skills training, and reentry programs for those individuals who come out of prison.

Although some of the approaches of secondary and tertiary prevention strategies are the same, individuals who qualify for secondary prevention should not be treated alongside those who are eligible for tertiary prevention. Annex D provides a list of interventions proven to be effective in reducing violent behavior. Some interventions, for example, school-based programs, can be offered at different levels of intervention; that is, they provide differentiated services to school children depending on an assessment of their level of risk for violence.

[147] For an interesting review of existing tools used for screening and assisting youth at risk of offending, see Julie Savignac, "Tools to identify and assess the risk of offending amongst youth." National Crime Prevention Center, Canada. 2010.

PART 4: CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS

Activity managers[148] can begin to design a crime and violence prevention intervention by conducting an assessment and mapping the risk and protective factors at different levels of the socio-ecological model (at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels). Activity managers then need to identify the populations that will benefit from the activity and the risk factors that the activity will seek to address. That is, activity managers need to determine **who** are the expected beneficiaries (individuals considered to be at risk of violence, former youth offenders, families considered to be at risk of violence, students in school environments, all families in a community, women and children, everyone in the community, etc.) and **what** risk factors the activity seeks to address (for example, anti-social attitudes, lack of family bonding, etc.). Activity managers can then review the body of evidence on crime and violence prevention interventions; identify an existing intervention; assess whether it is suitable, needs to be adapted, or is unsuitable to meet the needs of the target population. A detailed analysis of the intervention, and careful planning as to revisions that may need to be made in accordance with the local context, is critical in determining **how** and **when** the activity should be introduced.

Much of the current knowledge of effective crime and violence approaches and interventions is from the United States and other developed countries. Rigorous evaluation of such interventions has been minimal in the LAC region, and research remains incipient. For example, a USAID study that reviewed 5,465 abstracts and selected 43 according to established eligibility criteria found none that were published in LAC.[149] A more recent evidence gap analysis on effective interventions to prevent lethal youth violence in the LAC region reviewed published systematic reviews, rapid evidence assessments, research syntheses, and a small number of unpublished individual studies that used experimental or quasi-experimental designs to identify existing evidence on effective interventions. The study identified 456 abstracts and selected 59 for further screening. Of these, 46 studies were included in the final review. The majority of these studies (65 percent) were conducted in high-income countries. Only 19.6 percent of studies presented research conducted in the LAC region. Close to half of the interventions entailed interventions at multiple levels, primary, secondary and tertiary prevention levels.[150]

The challenge with the lack of a solid, context-specific evidence base is that interventions that are effective in reducing criminal and violent behavior in the United States or other developed countries may not be equally effective in the LAC region. The adaptation process is important to ensuring interventions retain fidelity while being adjusted to respond to the local context in specific neighborhoods and communities, as well as the institutional and organizational infrastructure in each particular country.

There is a growing recognition of the importance of more precise evaluation data in LAC regarding violence prevention, and a growing body of global and research organizations are working to develop such data. Some examples include but are not limited to Arizona State University (e.g. impact evaluation of USAID's community-based crime and violence prevention approach in Latin America), Florida

[148] For the purposes of this guide, activity managers include USAID and implementing partner staff involved in citizen security-related programming.
[149] Abt and Winship, 2016.
[150] See Annex D, which lists the interventions included in that report and their level of intervention.

International University (e.g. LAC research and evaluations undertaken through the Center for the Administration of Justice and Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center), Vanderbilt University (e.g. Latin America Public Opinion Project, or "LAPOP"), and the Crime and Violence Initiative from the Poverty Action Lab. Notwithstanding these efforts, there remains a dearth of data in LAC, particularly as it relates to impact over time. However, there are a variety of activity typologies that have reported strong metrics, particularly regarding outputs and outcomes and that are referenced throughout this chapter of the report. In most cases, the presented examples are from the LAC region or other developing countries.

4.1 SELECT EXAMPLES OF PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS

As noted in previous sections, prevention interventions are typically classified into primary, secondary, and tertiary based on the degree of targeting (by analyzing risk and protective factors). The first two levels of prevention interventions, namely primary and secondary prevention, often use similar implementation methodologies but fall into one category or the other based on the degree of targeting. Tertiary prevention interventions, working with individuals who have already engaged in criminal or violent acts, often use distinct implementation methodologies and can be implemented in coordination with the criminal, juvenile, and civic justice systems. Tertiary prevention reaches fewer people than either primary or secondary prevention and requires the most specialized rehabilitation and therapeutic services.

The matrix in Annex C combines risk factors with levels of interventions to map examples of crime and violence prevention interventions that have proven to be effective—and less effective—in various countries. In this section, we briefly describe some of these interventions. It is important to note that many violence prevention interventions may involve multiple prevention levels. For example, a holistic school-based violence intervention may work with the overall student body (primary), with students with heightened risk factors (secondary), and with students who have already engaged in violent acts (tertiary). Children receive differentiated services or programs, depending on their levels of risk.

The cited interventions are not exhaustive, but are meant to emphasize the spectrum of possible solutions and with which populations they can be used. Moreover, one strategy on its own is unlikely to be sufficient to address crime and violence. On the contrary, effectively addressing the many causes and effects of crime and violence usually requires multiple and concurrent approaches.[151] For each intervention strategy, an example is given to ground the reader in specific experiences.

Early childhood development programs.[152] **[primary]** Early childhood development (ECD) programs are considered to be some of the most cost-effective and impactful prevention programs, with a strong evidence base (e.g., multiple randomized controlled trials with different populations).[153] Notwithstanding proven impact, ECD programs receive limited support, particularly in developing countries, as they do not respond to initial delinquent behavior but rather attempt to set the groundwork to prevent such behavior from manifesting. ECD approaches include basic nutrition; health care; interventions designed to stimulate children's mental, verbal, physical, and psychosocial skills; and

[151] Abt and Winship, 2016.
[152] Early childhood development refers to interventions that take place from birth until the age of five. Because many ECD programs are preschool programs that serve children between the ages of two and five, these two terms are often used interchangeably.
[153] World Health Organization, 2010. "Violence Prevention: The Evidence. Series of Briefings on Violence Prevention." Available at: https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/4th_milestones_meeting/evidence_briefings_all.pdf

Hogares Comunitarios de Bienestar Familiar (Colombia). Operating for decades and delivered by "community mothers," this is a large-scale childcare and nursery program with a nutrition component that has been proven to have an impact on school enrollment over time (an important protective factor for crime and violence), in addition to nutrition and growth. (Source: IDB, 2010.)

parenting skills training (see below). ECD programming is based on research that shows that most brain development occurs within the first five years of life and that brain stimulation during these early years greatly influences cognitive, linguistic, social, and psychological development later in life. Furthermore, ECD programs can help reduce exposure to violence in the home, proven to be one of many predictors of future violence. ECD interventions can take place at home, in community centers, or at preschools or other educational settings. Common interventions include health care and nutrition; cognitive, social, and emotional stimulation; and—most importantly—effective parenting training.[154]

Alternate Education Program – Grupo Ceiba in Guatemala: The program offers high school certification to students who have dropped out of schools. In their 30 years of existence, Grupo Ceiba has benefitted more than 100,000 youth in highly violent communities and its program is certified by the Ministry of Education. The program offers psychological assistance and conflict resolution skills. (Source: Grupo Ceiba, https://grupoceiba.org/web/)

School-equivalence programs [primary]. Encouraging the completion of school can help mitigate crime and violence in the short-term by providing youth, especially those at a high risk of becoming involved in violence, with a constructive activity that takes up most of their day and keeps them off the street. Over the longer term, such programs can build youth skills to enhance employability. S*econd-chance* or education equivalency programs can help students who are failing or who have dropped out of school complete their high school education. These programs may include literacy and comprehensive educational/job training programs that provide students with an opportunity to complete high school and enter tertiary education or the labor market. Education equivalency programs can help address supply-and-demand constraints that lead many young people worldwide to discontinue their education before they have acquired necessary basic skills needed to succeed at work or in life.

Media to prevent violence against women in Uganda: IPA, one of the leaders of global evidence generation, found that screenings of targeted BCC videos led to a 10% reduction in the proportion of households reporting violence against women. (Source: Green, Donald et al., 2018.)

Media campaigns [primary]. Anti-violence marketing campaigns may use mass media, as well as specialized communication techniques such as social behavioral change (SBC) and interpersonal communication (IPC). SBC combines commercial marketing and advertising techniques with messages that promote knowledge and reinforce healthy behaviors. IPC is a communications approach that engages a trained facilitator to change the behavior of a target population by addressing the underlying causes of risk and to increase skills and self-efficacy among this target group. All of these techniques are designed to provide young people with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves, increase their self-efficacy, and ultimately prevent them from engaging in risky behavior. National media campaigns also have been undertaken to facilitate a change in negative social norms, such as domestic violence and corporal punishment, or gender norms that contribute to gender-based or sexual violence. Media campaigns also can help teach effective parenting skills and show parents and others how to be positive role models.[155]

[154] Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), 2010. "The Promise of Early Childhood Development in Latin America and the Caribbean." Available at: https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/The-Promise-of-Early-Childhood-Development-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean.pdf

[155] World Bank, "Supporting Youth at Risk," 2008.

Situational prevention initiatives [primary]. Situational prevention interventions have been used in neighborhoods and places at high risk of violence. According to the theory of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), the likelihood of crime is related to the environment; thus, crime can be reduced by modifying the environment. CPTED encourages incorporating preventive features in urban design and housing to decrease opportunities for crime and increase risks for potential offenders (by making it harder to commit a crime and easier to detect and apprehend criminals). CPTED theory has been evolving. Today, there is a second-generation CPTED theory with five fundamental tenets: "(i) natural control of access points: the opportunity for crime is reduced by limiting the number of access points to a public space; (ii) natural surveillance: the appropriate design of windows in houses, the lighting and design of public spaces, should all enhance residents' capacity to observe activity going on in their area; (iii) maintenance: management plans to maintain the infrastructure of public spaces; (iv) territorial reinforcement: feelings of attachment that residents form towards their immediate neighborhood and that might be harnessed to inspire them to look after it; and (v) community involvement: participation of the community to activate social control mechanisms."[156] Notwithstanding the important impacts, improvements in physical spaces in and of itself is insufficient to reduce crime over the long term and must be combined with continued social interventions.

UN-Habitat Safer Cities: The UN-Habitat Safer Cities program has worked in 77 cities in 24 countries and is a comprehensive intervention at the city level that emphasizes partnerships (government, civil society, police, private sector, academia, etc.). In addition to the improvement of the physical environment, the program has also contributed to strengthening the social fabric, reducing inequality, and promoting local governance. (Source: UN-Habitat, 2015.)

Parenting (or guardian/caregiver) programs [primary, secondary]. Effective parenting typically provides children with four essentials: warmth, structure, autonomy support, and development support.[157] Parenting programs are often delivered during the prenatal period and can last throughout adolescence. Programs targeted to children in their very early years (zero to three years) focus primarily on the parent and may include parental education and support. One such program is home visitation programs, whereby a nurse or other professional provides training, counseling, and monitoring to at-risk families. The main goal is to promote healthy child development by providing parents with knowledge and changing their attitudes and/or behavior. Goals also may include preventing child abuse or neglect. Some programs seek to improve the lives of parents (and thus children) by providing job placement assistance and support to continue their education or delay pregnancy. Home visitation programs vary greatly in terms of the age of the participants and the duration and intensity of the services provided; evidence suggests that the earlier such programs are offered and the longer their duration, the greater the benefits. Programs targeting children three to five years of age usually include preschool- or community center-based programs run

Triple P Parenting: The Positive Parenting Program was established in early 2001 in Australia and since has been adapted in over 35 countries, including Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, and Chile. The program provides targeted skills trainings to diverse family contexts and risk factors ranging from universal awareness raising to intensive family therapy. The program has led to decreased rates of violence against children and child maltreatment (including coercive parenting), in addition to improvements in emotional and psychological development and child pro-social behavior. (Source: Penn State Prevention Research Center).

[156] N. Alvarado and B. Abizanda, "An Integrated Approach to Safety, Security, and Citizens' Coexistence," in E. Rojas, ed., *Building Cities: Neighborhood Upgrading and Urban Quality of Life*, Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Development Bank, Cities Alliance, and David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, Harvard University, 2010; Inter-American Development Bank, 2012.

[157] Pan American Health Organization, "Youth: Choices and Change. Promoting Healthy Behavior in Adolescents," Scientific and Technical Publication No. 594, Washington, D.C.: Pan American Health Organization, 2005.

by trained teachers in addition to the direct engagement of parents.[158] The LAC context presents unique challenges for parenting programs, as many children, particularly in violence-prone neighborhoods, do not have the benefit of a dual parent household and are being raised by grandparents or other caregivers (often related to immigration patterns). Parents and guardians often do not have the time or resources to participate in parenting programs and/or are resentful of scrutiny into this personal domain. Furthermore, power imbalances between men and women and the "*macho*" culture results in skewed ideas regarding gender roles of caregivers.

Gender-based violence (GBV) prevention programs [primary, secondary]. Gender-based violence, which includes sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), is violence directed at an individual based on biological sex, gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation; it is one of the most prevalent forms of violence and often normalized in cultural contexts. GBV is a common phenomenon throughout Latin America and the Caribbean with complex manifestations including intimate partner violence, violence against women and children, and attacks on LGBTQI+ communities. SGBV is frequently hidden within the household and notoriously underreported. GBV prevention programs often focus on support for victims (secondary prevention); however, there are important elements relevant to the society as a whole, particularly focusing on awareness raising and breaking down stereotypes and cultural norms. Whether in schools, places of worship, or broader community forms, efforts that focus on healthy relationships, tolerance and respect for others, reducing anger management, and breaking down traditional stereotypes are key, particularly among young men and women as they enter into longer term relationships. Schools and community groups can also help encourage violence prevention by challenging discriminatory policies, cultural norms, and attitudes that are accepting of or conducive to violence.

Positive Masculinities CEPREV (Nicaragua): A novel approach to GBV is work done directly with men and the Nicaraguan NGO CEPREV works with diverse community members (e.g., schools, journalists, health service providers, religious groups, etc.) to break down the traditional "macho" culture prevalent in the region through a variety of tools including broad behavioral change campaigns and trainings in addition to early interventions using established youth-friendly materials. Evaluated as a good practice by UNESCO, CEPAL, and the IDB, the interventions have led to reductions in both femicides and assaults against women. (Source: European Forum for Urban Safety, 2014.)

Victims support services target interventions of victims of a crime and/or their family members to transition from victim to survivor. There are a plethora of interventions including hot lines, advocacy services, courtroom support, medical advocacy, victims' shelters, security, restitution, and external referral services. Interventions oriented towards victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault services (typically women and children) have been the primary focus of victims' services programs in LAC over time. More recently, support has been provided for members of the LGBTQI+ community who are victims of GBV. The COVID-19 pandemic, and the subsequent increases in domestic violence, has highlighted the pervasiveness of what is being referred to as a "silent pandemic." Some interventions, for example restorative justice, provide support to victims while also engaging the offender.

Job training, including technical skills and life skills [primary, secondary, tertiary]. Many successful youth violence prevention programs seek to decrease opportunities for violence by engaging youth in educational or employment opportunities. Most interventions blend the more traditional technical skills training ("hard" skills) with life skills and other wraparound services ("soft" skills), thus providing the broad range of learnings necessary for success in the labor market, whether formal or informal. Technical skills training may include vocational training, apprenticeships, or second chance/education-equivalency programs that aim to build the technical knowledge and skills of young

[158] World Bank Early Child Development Web site: http://go.worldbank.org/AP9EZQVHD0.

people. Comprehensive multiservice training programs go beyond technical training to include developing a young person's skills as a worker and can include life skills, job search and placement assistance, self-employment services, and other support. Life skills fall into three basic categories: (1) social and interpersonal skills, such as communication, negotiation and refusal, assertiveness, cooperation, empathy, and effective work habits; (2) cognitive skills, such as problem solving, understanding causal relationships, decision making, critical thinking, respect for difference, tolerance, healthy lifestyle decisions, and self-evaluation; and (3) emotional coping skills, such as managing stress, conflict management, dealing with bullying, and managing feelings and moods.[159] Life skills training may address all or one of these categories or skills, and be delivered as a component of job training. Life skills training can be provided either as a standalone program at schools or as part of community development projects or youth leadership training programs.[160]

Entra21: With support from diverse donors such as the IDB and USAID, the Entra21 program blended technical employment skills with life skills, working with partners throughout 23 LAC countries. (Source: International Youth Foundation)

While skills training programs are more prevalent than comprehensive multiservice training programs, the latter have had more success, particularly in developing countries. Examples of these types of programs include *Jóvenes con Rumbo* in Mexico, *Entra21*, and the *Jov* Programs in Chile, Argentina, and Peru.[161]

Aulas en Paz (Colombia): The program combines a classroom-based curriculum (ethics) delivered by teachers with targeted interventions such as home visits and extracurricular programs delivered by pre-service teachers, volunteers, and NGOs. The program has been proven to reduce aggressive behavior by over 10%. (Source: Chaux, et al. in Prevention Science, 2017.)

School-based violence prevention (SBV) programs [primary, secondary, tertiary] Educational engagement is a protective factor to prevent youth from committing violence. For example, in the United Kingdom, a one-year increase in education reduced incarceration rates by 20 percent.[162] Programs that help reduce drop-out rates and promote cohesion in the educational system contribute to violence prevention and reduction. School-based violence prevention programs can serve all students within a school (primary prevention) or target at-risk youth who are failing in school or are absent frequently (secondary prevention) or even youth that have been suspended or expelled (tertiary prevention). There are many successful school-based violence prevention programs, but recent developments emphasize a "whole school" approach that typically includes identification of priorities of key school stakeholders, curriculum development, policy and procedure review, teacher training, and direct interventions with students. During the identification of priorities phase, the community identifies the main challenges (e.g., bullying, intimate partner violence, drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm, gang activity, etc.) and tailors interventions to these specific areas. In terms of direct interventions with students, some examples include:[163]

[159] Pan American Health Organization, "Life Skills Approach to Child and Adolescent Human Development," Washington, D.C.: Pan American Health Organization, 2001.
[160] A. Hahn, T. Leavitt, and S. Lanspery, "Toward a Toolkit Brief: The Importance of Life Skills Training to Assist Vulnerable Groups of Youth in the Latin America and Caribbean Region, October 2006.
[161] United States Agency for International Development, "Pillar IV Assessment of Crime Prevention Models in Mexico," Democracy International, 2014; World Bank, "Supporting Youth at Risk," 2008.
[162] Machin, S., O. Marie, and S. Vujić. 2011. "The crime reducing effect of education." *Economic Journal*, 121 (552): 463-484.
[163] World Bank, "School-Based Violence Prevention in Urban Communities of LAC. Practical Guide," 2011.

Afterschool and community-based free time programs. Afterschool programs typically are offered by schools or nongovernmental organizations and often seek to limit exposure and opportunities for risky behaviors. Many afterschool programs start immediately after classes end on normal school days. The orientation and content of afterschool programs vary widely. They may be delivered by certified teachers, youth workers, or adolescent leaders. Some afterschool programs focus on youth development, promoting positive development in one or several areas, such as affective relationships, self-expression, or creative expression.[164]

After School Clubs (El Salvador): Implemented by Glasswing International, the program offered clubs for students, where students could engage in ludic activities—sports, arts, leadership, and technology workshops. Activities were informed by CBT principles designed to improve awareness, reduce impulsive behavior, and increase self-control. The program had positive impact on students' grades and attitudes towards school; it also decreased attitudes towards violence and bad behavior at school. An evaluation demonstrated that the program reduced school absenteeism by 23 percent. (Source: World Bank, 2019.)

Many afterschool programs focus on arts, culture, sports, and recreation. Such programs, common around the world, are particularly useful in highly conflictive neighborhoods as they can introduce foundational violence prevention elements, such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Several studies suggest that at-risk youth who participate in after-school artistic activities are more likely to participate in other school activities, be on time, and have better academic results. Studies also suggest that arts programs may help young people learn to express their anger appropriately and communicate more effectively. Comparative studies show that young people in arts programs participated less in criminal behavior, had higher self-esteem, were more self-sufficient, and showed greater resistance to negative peer pressure. Other recreational programs delivered in school, after school, or in the wider community have played an important role in violence prevention, not simply in keeping youth occupied and out of trouble.[165] When programs consciously integrate relevant topics such as tolerance, peaceful conflict resolution, and emotional self-regulation, the recreational activity becomes a platform for in-depth socio-emotional development which in turns becomes an important risk factor in the prevention of violence.

Community and problem-oriented policing [secondary].[166] Security institutions have a strong mandate to both prevent and reduce crime and violence. Strategies that help bring together the police and community, typically referred to as community policing (or preventative policing), result in police being more responsive and accountable to local communities, enhancing trust between citizens and law enforcement entities, increasing the probability that citizens will report crime, and reducing police corruption and abuse. The strategy responds to three basic issues that may be contributing factors in crime or violence: (1) citizens' lack of satisfaction with police services; (2) the ineffectiveness of traditional patrol and investigation in reducing crime; and (3) low police morale, particularly among foot patrols due to the low importance of patrols.[167] International research on the impact of community policing on crime rates offers mixed results. Successful community policing programs can revitalize

[164] Afterschool programs also include daycare centers with programs specifically designed for the care and well-being of school-aged children before and after school, on weekends, and during vacation periods. In most places, these are subject to state and/or municipal licensing requirements with regard to physical facilities, staffing, etc.
[165] Sampson, Alice and Maria Rita Vilella. 2013. "Fight for Peace Academies in Rio and London – assessing their progress and impact." Fight for Peace and University of East London, July 2013.
[166] Another innovative policing program shown to help reduce violence and crime is **problem-oriented policing** (POP), which is a strategy of community policing whereby the community and police work together to analyze and prioritize community problems and develop customized responses.
[167] Fruhling, 1998.

police forces, increase citizens' perception of safety, and enhance the image of the police.[168] However, in more challenging contexts, the local context is key. For example, in Mexico City, community policing efforts found that the clientelism, political factionalism, and police corruption have not led to either improved accountability or legitimacy.[169]

New Police Academy – Honduras: According to CUNY Professor Mark Ungar, community policing "usually has been unsuccessful because the police don't want it" and see it as a form of diminishing their power and role. He does, however, cite the case of Honduras as a model showing some success. A new police academy was established, in which the full curriculum is based on community-oriented policing. All serving officers who had not graduated from the academy were re-trained in community-oriented policing.

Problem-oriented policing (POP) is a sub-strategy of community policing that deals with clusters of similar incidents, such as crime or disorder. POP is a wide category based on the idea that effective crime prevention is linked to the ability of the police to identify patterns so they can deal with the underlying causes. The interventions that fall into this category can be divided into two groups: some focus on particular places, and others focus on specific crimes (such as homicide or robbery) or offenders.[170] POP methodology comprises four stages: (1) scan, in which users gather information about the incidents; (2) analyze the information to establish hypotheses of causes; (3) respond, or deliver police work to tackle the causes that have been identified; and (4) assess, monitor and evaluate results from the intervention for feedback. POP methodologies are backed by evidence and are most effective in places in dealing with concrete issues such as alcohol, firearms, or prostitution.

Substance abuse programs [secondary, tertiary]. Drug and alcohol abuse are significant risk factors for crime and violence and are pervasive in Latin America and the Caribbean, affecting physical and mental health, relationships, educational attainment, and employment prospects, amongst others. Specialized long-term care is necessary for the most severe cases in which substance abuse becomes a chronic and long-lasting condition, but it can be very resource intensive, thus presenting a particular challenge in under-resourced countries in LAC. However, it is also recognized that among substance abuse users, there are those who can benefit from short-duration interventions. In addition to programs delivered at the community level or through the health system, drug treatment in prison has been shown to significantly decrease recidivism.[171]

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT): SBIRT is a comprehensive and integrated approach to the delivery of early intervention and treatment services for persons with substance use disorders and those at risk. Services include a prompt evaluation, followed by a brief intervention (15 to 30 minutes long) during three or four sessions. Several meta-analyses show that SBIRT contributes to a significant decrease in alcohol consumption with a sustained impact for up to one year. In LAC, SBIRT implementation and research is concentrated in Brazil and Mexico and show mostly positive results. (Source: Ronzani, TM et al., 2019; and Kaner, E. et al., 2013.)

Family therapy [secondary, tertiary]. As children continue to grow, there is a shift to family-based interventions, involving the full family unit, critically, the primary caregiver(s) and the child(ren). These programs often are part of a broader multiservice prevention program for at-risk youth and their families. By targeting families of older children with elevated risk factors, or who exhibit initial delinquent behavior, this type of holistic intervention is individually tailored and thus may vary both in terms of

[168] World Health Organization, "Youth Violence and Alcohol Fact Sheet," Geneva: World Health Organization, 2003; World Bank, "Supporting Youth at Risk," 2008; Ronald D. Hunter and Thomas Barker, *Police-Community Relations and the Administration of Justice*, 8th ed., New York: Prentice Hall, 2011.
[169] https://www.jstor.org/stable/25676405?seq=1
[170] Alonso and Pousadela, 2011.
[171] Inter-American Development Bank, 2012.

Proponte Más: Implemented in Honduras, the program provided counselling to at risk youth and their families, using a tested risk assessment tool. Participant families displayed improved family cohesion and communication and reductions individual risk factors (e.g., impulsive risk taking). (Source: Arizona State University, 2020.)

design and content. Most programs aim to empower parents by giving them the skills and resources they need to raise teenagers to be productive members of society and to empower teens to cope with family, peer, school, and neighborhood problems. These programs also focus on changing maladaptive or dysfunctional patterns of family interaction and communication, including negative parenting behavior, which is one of the primary risk factors for youth violence.

Mentoring and juvenile recidivism (Source: Office of Justice Programs' National Criminal Justice Reference Service). A 2017 study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Justice found that the quality of the mentoring program (measured through the development of a specific tool - the Evidenced-Based Correction Program Checklist – Mentoring (CPC-M) had an impact on recidivism. Youth who participated in activities, developed prosocial relationships with adults.

Mentoring programs for at-risk youth [secondary, tertiary]. Mentoring programs consist of training an adult to develop trusting relationships that provide support and guidance to a young person, including youth at risk of criminal or violent behavior and are a popular intervention in LAC. Mentoring programs are often a formal or informal part of youth development programs. The most common type of mentoring program is one-to-one, community-based mentoring, but programs may also provide group mentoring in which one mentor is trained to work with several young people; team mentoring in which more than one person works with the same young person; online mentoring in which at-risk youth are matched with a mentor online; and peer mentoring in which adolescents mentor younger children. Some programs are based at a school, hospital, community center, or other site. Mentors are usually volunteers recruited from businesses, schools, and other community settings.[172] The impacts of mentoring programs are mixed, although evidence exists to show that programming that matches male youth with male mentors who have a professional background and require shorter meetings has had the most impact.[173]

Gang Violence Prevention [secondary, tertiary]: Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, and particularly Central America, gang violence is widespread, and schools can become recruiting grounds for gang members (and also for "girlfriends" that are often coerced into affiliating with a gang), as well as an operating space controlled by gangs. Many of the strategies used to prevent youth from joining gangs are the same as those used to prevent crime and violence more generally, such as strengthening family ties, keeping youth in school, training for parents to manage disruptive behaviors, and working with youth to enhance interpersonal and life skills. The USAID outreach center model, for example, has led to the establishment of over 250 community centers throughout Central America that offer safe spaces for youth, provide affordable after-school programs, and engage the broader community. For the most part, the centers are situated in high-risk communities with a strong gang presence, whereby migration has been one of the key responses to the lack of safety and safe spaces. While the outreach model itself has strong evidence of positive youth outcomes, it is unclear as to the impact on gang membership, per se. Programs that specifically target gang membership focus on the sense of belonging offered by the gangs. The U.S. Department of Justice notes that, "youth join gangs for protection, enjoyment, respect, money, or because a friend is in a gang."[174]

[172] L. Foster, "Effectiveness of Mentor Programs, Review of the Literature from 1995-2000," Sacramento, CA: California Research Bureau, 2001.
[173] https://pure.uva.nl/ws/files/52287310/Raposa2019_Article_TheEffectsOfYouthMentoringProg.pdf; https://www.air.org/resource/mentoring-children-incarcerated-parents-synthesis-research-and-september-2013-listening
[174] https://youth.gov/feature-article/gang-prevention-overview-research-and-programs

Gang re-entry – Homeboy Industries: As noted, most gang prevention programs follow similar strategies to youth violence prevention programming. However, there are organizations that take on the much more challenging task of working with ex-gang members on re-entry programs. One such program, Homeboy Industries, started in Los Angeles but now working in 20 countries worldwide, including all three Northern Triangle countries, focuses on the provision of therapeutic communities that offer job skills training, cost-free programs and services, and social enterprise employment. (Source: https://homeboyindustries.org/)

Drug use prevention programs may be effective in reducing drug and alcohol abuse, drug trafficking, and ultimately gang involvement. Programs sponsored by schools, law enforcement, and/or other sectors of the community may focus on preventing the formation of gangs and/or promoting their disbanding by means of conflict mediation and processes of reconciliation. Community workshops on crime prevention and promoting agreed-upon strategies for youth to leave gangs without endangering their own safety, may help reduce the level of gang activity. Finally, any initiatives that encourage the constructive use of leisure time can make gang involvement less attractive. Sports, environmental, recreational, and community and cultural activities (painting, puppet shows, arts festivals, mural painting, theater, circus, dance, and environmental productions) help engage young people of all ages in positive pursuits. Community volunteer work and technical training (such as electricity, computers, carpentry, or cooking) may provide young people with marketable skills.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy [secondary, tertiary]. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a therapeutic approach that can be used to treat a range of harmful beliefs and behaviors, including depression, anger, and impulsivity. CBT generally involves a mix of cognitive skills training, anger management, and supplementary components related to social skills, moral development, and relapse prevention for offenders. CBT attempts to change the distorted thinking and behavior of criminal and juvenile offenders (tertiary interventions) or at-risk youth (secondary interventions), including self-justificatory thinking, misinterpretation of social cues, displacement of blame, deficient moral reasoning, and schemas of dominance and entitlement, among others. CBT assumes that such deficits are changeable rather than inherent and works to correct them using a set of structured techniques, including cognitive skills training, anger management, and various supplementary components related to social skills, moral development, and relapse prevention. Although these interventions require significant resources, individual or group therapy sessions provided by a psychologist, social worker, or even a trained community member, they have shown to have an important impact in changing attitudes and behaviors of at-risk youth and juvenile offenders. CBT tends to be used as part of secondary (and tertiary) prevention programming.

Becoming a Man (BAM): CBT is at the core of the Becoming a Man project, first introduced in Chicago and with a strong evidence base regarding its impact. After being highlighted in various USAID studies, it has since been adapted in various regions of LAC. (Source: University of Chicago Crime Lab, 2016.)

Rehabilitation and reinsertion programs for youth in conflict with the law [tertiary]. In the United States, there are examples of successful interventions to reduce serious violence (particularly gun violence) among urban youth. One initiative that has been evaluated is the **Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI),** a multifaceted, community-based strategy that combines public health and public safety approaches to reduce violence. The core components of SSYI include (1) **identification** of young men with highest risk of involvement in firearms violence; (2) **outreach** workers to directly engage with young people and act as brokers for services; (3) **assessment** of client's needs to create individual service plans; (4) **case management** services specific to each client; (5) **mental health and behavioral health** services, including trauma treatment and cognitive behavioral therapy, among other

practices; (6) **education** services; and (7) **workforce development** that provides soft and hard skills training.[175]

In the LAC region, most juvenile justice systems offer limited therapeutic and rehabilitation programs for youth in conflict with the law. Problems related to insufficient funding levels, absence of adequately trained staff, and a pervasive punitive approach towards criminal and violent behavior explain in large part the absence of ADR interventions to solve minor cases of juvenile delinquency and the dearth of rehabilitation and social reintegration services for juvenile offenders. In most cases, these services are offered by civil society or religious organizations that have access to juvenile detention facilities. Some organizations also work with youth who, although not detained, remain under supervision by the juvenile justice system. In addition to CBT, these organizations also offer educational and job skills training, health care services, and family support programs.

Juvenile diversion in Mexico: *Fundación Reintegra* and *Renace a*re both established Mexican NGOs working with youth in conflict with the law and focus on providing holistic services to youth that have been sentenced to non-custodial measures, as well as youth that have been referred by the juvenile justice system prior to sentencing. Youth are provided with legal support and integral reinsertion programs (e.g., educational programs, life skills and vocational training, recreational and cultural activities, and physical and mental health services). Over 96 percent of *Reintegra*'s youth successfully return to their communities, while Renace reports significant improvement in terms of reduced risks related to delinquency, drug/alcohol usage, and impulsivity. (Source: USAID, 2018.)

Violence interruption programs [tertiary]. Violence interruption applies the same three techniques used to reverse the outbreak of an epidemic disease, namely, interrupting transmission, reducing risk, and providing treatment. A description of a violence interruption model is provided below, based on the Cure Violence Program (formerly Ceasefire). This model violence interruption program began in the United States and has been replicated internationally, including in LAC.

- *Detect and interrupt potentially violent actions.* Trained violence interrupters and outreach workers prevent shootings by identifying and mediating potentially lethal conflicts in the community. Whenever a shooting happens, for instance, trained workers meet with victims, their friends and family, and others connected to the event in the community and at the hospital. The focus is to cool emotions and prevent retaliation.
- *Identify and treat highest risk.* Trained, culturally appropriate outreach workers work with the highest-risk individuals to address the issues that make them likely to commit violence. Workers meet these individuals where they are, talk to them about the high costs and serious consequences of violence, and help them obtain the social services they need, such as job training or drug treatment.
- *Mobilize the community to change norms.* Workers engage community leaders, residents, local business owners, faith leaders, service providers, and the individuals at high risk of engaging in violent behavior to convey the message that violence should not be viewed as normal but as a behavior that can be changed. When a shooting occurs, for instance, workers organize a response where community members voice their objection to the shooting and to violence in general.

[175] Campie, P. E., Read, N. W., Fronius, T., Siwach, G., Kamto, K., Guckenburg, S., Briggs, O., . . . Petrosino, A. (2020). Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI) evaluation: 2018–19 final programmatic report. Boston, MA: Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/SSYI-Evaluation-Final-Programmatic-Report-June-2020rev.pdf

Drug courts [tertiary]. Drug courts are therapeutic specialty courts that divert drug-related offenses from traditional prosecution. They focus on treating Subjective Units of Distress Scale (SUDs) with evidence-based treatments, routine drug testing, and supportive team-based monitoring using weekly meetings that involve the judge, the prosecutor, the defense, the treatment provider, probation, and the participant. Drug courts use a system of graduated rewards and sanctions to help substance abusers attain and maintain a drug-free life. Drug courts offer an alternative to incarceration, which may not only help address prison overcrowding, but also prevent nonviolent offenders from more deeply involved in crime by other inmates. A systematic review of 55 tests of drug courts found that diversion or referral to special drug courts reduced repeat offenses by about one-third more than more conventional procedures.[176] The strongest effects result from using the drug court as a pretrial diversion, which is also more cost-effective than conventional justice procedures.[177] [178]

Restorative justice [tertiary]. Restorative justice is typically a facilitated process between victims and perpetrators that can be used as a diversion from formal proceedings, but also as a therapeutic process in offender treatment programs. The restorative process engages the offender and victim(s) in face-to-face meetings, whereby the offender is encouraged to accept responsibility for having harmed the victim. A restorative justice conference usually is conducted in three phases: first, the offender speaks to accept responsibility; then, others explain how they were affected; and finally, the group collectively decides what they will do to "make this better and prevent it from happening again."[179] By prioritizing the needs of victims and holding offenders accountable, restorative justice focuses on repairing harm and restoring relationships. Restorative justice interventions have also been conducted in school-settings, particularly around bullying and GBV.

The Latin America Institute of Restorative Practices (ILAPR): ILAPR has trained over 1,000 individuals in seven Latin American countries on restorative justice practices. In Peru, for example the selected professionals who work with adult and youth offenders (in non-punitive alternative justice programs) have noted that the restorative "circle" meetings have helped offenders become more conscious of their actions and the impacts on others, leading to reductions in recidivism. (Source: Wachtel, 2011.)

Restorative justice has been tested both as an *alternative* to and as a *supplement* to prosecution. It has also been used for both adults and juveniles, for violent and property crimes, and for offenders in prison, as well as those serving sanctions in the community.[180] In addition to being cost-effective, restorative justice may help avoid overdependence on incarceration for offenders who commit minor crimes and who could serve alternative sentences. To date, however, there is not sufficient evidence on the effectiveness of restorative justice programs for reducing violence incidents.

WHAT DOES NOT PREVENT CRIME AND VIOLENCE

As the matrix in Annex C illustrates, evaluation of crime and violence prevention programs has shown some to be ineffective or even counterproductive. One of the most ineffective approaches is the use of "scare tactics." In the Scared Straight Program, for instance, prison inmates describe the harsh and unpleasant conditions of jail or prison to delinquent or at-risk youth in a secure setting. The program was encouraged and used throughout the United States until a 2007 study demonstrated a link between the exposure to the Scared Straight Program and delinquency.[181] The U.S. Department of Justice

[176] Wilson and Davis 2006.
[177] Inter-American Development Bank, 2012.
[178] Sherman et al. 2002; Inter-American Development Bank, 2012.
[179] Robert Wolf, 2012.
[180] Inter-American Development Bank, 2012.
[181] Petrosino and Lavenberg, 2007.

discourages the use of this program or programs that use similar scare tactics.[182] Another U.S.-based program that has been found to be ineffective is Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) in which police officers educated students about the dangers of illegal drug use. In a controlled trial, DARE was found to have no effect on marijuana use and to promote alcohol use among school-aged children.[183]

In Latin America and the Caribbean, *mano dura* and other iron-fisted approaches have been shown to be among the least effective policy options.[184] Although the goal of *mano dura* is to get offenders off the streets by incarcerating them for longer periods of time, evaluations show an increase in criminal behavior over time in places where *mano dura* has been implemented.

There are particularly serious issues to be considered with incarcerating young and first-time offenders. Evaluations carried out in the United States compared adult correctional institutions to those designed for young people. Evaluations show that young people (15 to 21) in adult correctional institutions are eight times more likely to commit suicide, five times more likely to be sexually assaulted, twice as likely to be beaten by staff, and 50 percent more likely to be attacked by a weapon than those in institutions for young people. In addition, recidivism rates are higher among the adult prison populations.[185] Regardless of whether young people are in juvenile or adult prisons, incarceration is highly correlated with future criminal behavior—even more so than factors such as gang affiliation, weapons possession, or family dysfunction.[186] Research also reveals that juvenile confinement reduces the chances that troubled youth will make a nonviolent transition to adulthood. Incarcerated youth achieve less academically and are employed more sporadically than peers who have committed the same offense and were sentenced to programs that focused on drug treatment, individual counseling, or community service.[187]

In a 2016 study of crime and violence prevention programs in the United States that have been subjected to rigorous evaluations, Thomas Abt and Christopher Winship conclude that ineffective interventions share several elements:[188]

- **Generality.** Some approaches lack appropriate targeting strategies and may end up both helping those who do not need it and punishing those who do not deserve it.
- **Reactivity.** Punishing violence after the fact is necessary but not sufficient. It is important to prevent crime and violence *before* it happens.

[182] See https://www.ncjrs.gov/html/ojjdp/news_at_glance/234084/topstory.html for additional information.
[183] Zili Sloboda, et al., "The Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention Study: A Randomized Trial of a Universal Substance Abuse Prevention Program," *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 102, 2009, 1-10.
[184] World Bank, "Crime, Violence and Economic Development in Brazil: Elements for Effective Public Policy," Report No. 36525, Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2006.
[185] D. Bishop, "Juvenile Offenders in the Adult Criminal Justice System," in M. Tonry, ed., *Youth Violence, Crime and Justice: A Review of Research*, vol. 27, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000, 81-168; D. Bishop and C. Frazier, "The Consequences of Waiver," in J. Fagan and F.E. Zimring, eds., *The Changing Borders of Juvenile Justice: Transfer of Adolescents to the Criminal Court*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000, 227-276; U.S. Surgeon General, *Youth Violence: A Report of the Surgeon General*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; World Health Organization, 2002.
[186] Benda and Tollet, 1999.
[187] Homan and Ziedenberg, forthcoming.
[188] Abt and Winship, 2016.

- **Illegitimacy.** If stakeholders perceive the intervention to be illegitimate, it will not be sustainable. This highlights the importance of identifying the right stakeholders. For law enforcement interventions, for example, engaging communities alongside police could result in improved outcomes.
- **Lack of capacity.** Well-designed interventions fail when there is a lack of capacity to implement them at the local level or there are insufficient resources to carry them to completion.
- **Lack of theory of change.** Without a theory of change that links interventions to results and lower-level results to higher-level outcomes, the intervention will lack a roadmap for success, making it more difficult for implementers to effectively guide programming and address obstacles.

PART 5: DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES[189]

Research and operational experience has demonstrated that crime and violence can be substantially reduced through well-planned, cross-sectoral strategies that combine law enforcement and prevention interventions. Effective strategies coordinate with health, education, economic, and other sectors; focus on the most critical risk factors; provide differentiated approaches according to the level of risk; are placed-based, targeting the most dangerous areas; are implemented by different levels of government (national and local); and include citizen participation. Reducing incidences of crime and violence and improving citizen security are long-term goals, but shorter-term interventions can have significant impact in lowering risk factors, reducing citizens' fears of victimization, and fostering trust in public institutions. To achieve long- and short-term goals, it is critical that planners of crime and violence prevention interventions use available data to analyze the dynamics of a particular community; identify realistic and relevant goals and objectives; establish measurable indicators; and apply a well-articulated theory of change to design and plan activities.

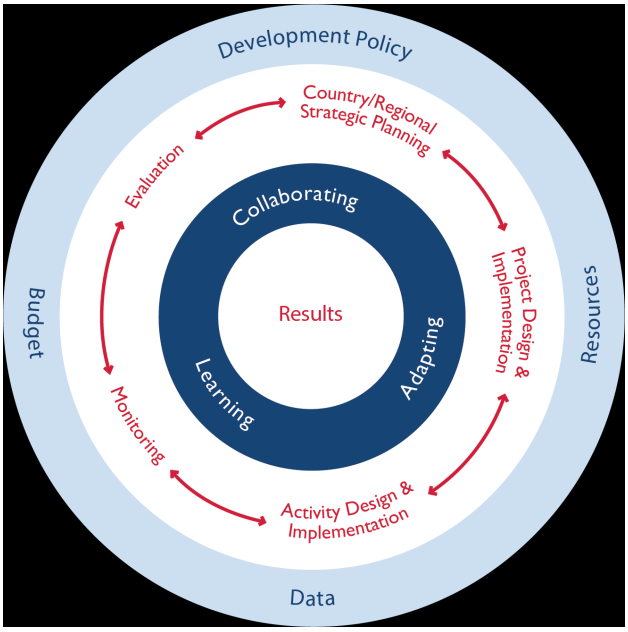
Designing and implementing crime and violence prevention projects and activities should be rooted in the USAID Program Cycle, an Agency-wide programming process introduced to maximize results and increase development effectiveness. This is a strategic, evidence-based approach based on continuous collaboration, learning, and adaptation. The main components of the Program Cycle—strategic planning, project design and implementation, activity design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (shown in Figure 5 below)—should be all integrated into program planning. This will ensure that projects and activities' design and implementation decisions are informed by policies and strategic priorities. It will also ensure that findings from activity monitoring and evaluation contribute to continuous learning and adaptation and inform future policy and strategic decisions.

At the outset of the USAID Program Cycle, USAID defines policies and strategies in alignment with higher-level policies, such as the President's Policy Directive on Global Development (PPD-6) and the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). These policies and strategies determine which global development challenges should be addressed. Then, the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for each country or regional mission defines the development results that missions should achieve, and a theory of change explains why these results will have a strategic impact. Moving through the project cycle, project and activity design and implementation will identify how best to achieve those results and what tools should be used. Evaluation and monitoring, supported by broader collaboration, learning, and adapting approaches, provide evidence and data regarding whether

[189] This section draws extensively from *Resource Guide for Municipalities: Community-Based Crime and Violence Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean,* published by the World Bank in 2003, which was in turn based on the *Manual for Community-Based Crime Prevention*, developed for the South African Department of Safety and Security by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the Institute for Security Studies.

the intended impact was achieved and why (or why not), ultimately informing future policy direction, the budget, and the other core components of the Program Cycle.

Figure 5: USAID Program Cycle



Source: USAID Automated Directive Systems

This Field Guide provides detailed information on crime and violence prevention activity design and implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Well-designed crime and violence prevention activities are rooted in robust analysis, the articulation of a theory of change explaining the causal linkages between activities and expected results, and the identification of appropriate and relevant performance indicators (output and outcome) to monitor and track implementation and evaluate results. In this section, we unpack the activity design and implementation component of the USAID Program Cycle by identifying three phases: (1) analysis and problem identification; (2) the articulation of a theory of change; and (3) designing a monitoring and evaluation plan. Then, following USAID's Evaluation Policy, we elaborate on how to monitor and evaluate crime and violence prevention projects.

> *"The quality and utility of an evaluation are dependent upon a well-designed and implemented project. The results and impact achieved by projects are dependent upon a well-conceived strategy and Results Framework, which is informed by evidence obtained from evaluation and other learning. If in the midst of project implementation, performance monitoring indicates that anticipated progress is not being made, then an evaluation may be conducted to determine why . . . . The evaluation could require project redesign, a change in implementation approach, or possibly even a revision of the Results Framework."*
>
> USAID, Program Cycle Overview, 2011.

5.1 PHASE 1: ANALYSIS AND PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Crime and violence prevention programming should begin with a robust analysis of crime and violence in a country, municipality, community, or target neighborhood. Because citizen insecurity is a complex phenomenon, a diagnosis of the citizen security situation is imperative. Understanding the specific problem and identifying the main risk factors will enable planners to target interventions to the appropriate beneficiaries. Ideally, the diagnosis will include a formal assessment focused not only on the challenges and risk factors, but also on protective factors and assets that help insulate individuals and communities from crime and violence. Data is needed to understand root causes of violence, what might be driving it, who is affected the most, and how current policies and programs are working. The data may come from official records on incidents of violence and could also include trauma-informed conversations with youth, families, and community members who are experiencing violence as victims or bystanders. In cases where there is no preexisting data, or it is thought to be unreliable or out of date, efforts can be made to collect new data using multiple methods in the community (e.g., surveys, focus groups) and from agencies (e.g., enter paper file information into a database on calls for service/crime response by police).

A robust assessment will allow the mission to target affected communities (based on crime indicators, demography, and other data) and risk groups (defined according to age, gender, relative marginalization, geographic location, and other factors). By defining the target population, activity managers can focus programs and policies in ways that are appropriate, strategic, and effective. USAID has a number of assessment frameworks that can be helpful in analysis and problem identification in crime and violence prevention settings. These include a DRG Sector Assessment Framework (SAF), a Political Economy Analysis (PEA) framework, a Conflict Assessment Framework (CAF), and some other sub-sector assessments that can get at issues related to crime and violence prevention. It is outside the scope of this field guide to assess the applicability and pros/cons of each. The PEA and the CAF are those with the broadest applicability to crime and violence prevention programming, and more information can be found on all of these tools within other USAID resources. Specifically, crime and violence assessments should:

- Apply analytical rigor to define the problem of crime and violence the intervention seeks to address using the best available evidence and to identify information gaps.
- Assess the structural (long-term) conditions that contribute to crime and violence, including economic performance and opportunities for employment; quality and coverage of basic public services; weaknesses of government (corruption, lack of accountability, exclusion, and impunity); relationships between the police and citizens; mechanisms for citizen participation; and access to public information.
- A political economy analysis focused on issues that include who benefits from the status quo in a particular community; who would benefit from change; who might oppose change and the resources at their disposal to do so; and incentives that could be used to neutralize opposition.
- Profile typical perpetrators, victims, and areas most vulnerable to crime and violence.
- Identify the main risk factors at different levels of the socio-ecological model.
- Identify the stakeholders, including champions, spoilers, and others.

- Analyze protective factors and assets that make individuals and groups less vulnerable to crime and violence. Protective factors may include religious organizations, strong families, victims' services, social networks, and community organizations.
- Prioritize target areas, individuals, and/or groups.
- Propose a strategy and potential approaches.
- Identify the resources that will be needed to have an impact on the identified problem.
- Serve as a baseline for evaluation of the eventual programming implemented to measure results, using information and data gathered before implementation.

WHAT INFORMATION DOES AN ACTIVITY MANAGER NEED?

Activity managers need a variety of information to diagnose the problem and to target, design, and implement appropriate interventions. Requisite information includes data on perpetrators and victims of crime and violence; the nature of crime in a community or target area; the timing, location, and impact of crime and violence; and protective factors that might help mitigate crime and violence.

Perpetrators and collaborators. Crime and violence are highly concentrated in a few places and among a few individuals. Activity managers should develop a profile of individuals responsible for committing most of the crimes in in a particular location. The profile should include information about age and gender, as well as the average distance traveled to commit a crime, previous criminal history, and probable motivation.

Risk factors. It is important to identify the risk factors that motivate, encourage, or contribute to crime and violence in a particular situation. As discussed, in some cases, the main risks may be at the individual and relationship levels, entailing psychosocial factors, while in others the main risk factors may be above and beyond an individual's psychological motivations. Only by understanding the specific risk factors of a target area and population can appropriate interventions be applied.

Details about how crimes are committed. Details about how a crime is committed can be useful information for prevention. If an analysis shows that most murders in a target neighborhood are committed by young men who know their victims, for instance, the intervention will be very different than if the majority of murders occur during the course of carjackings or are committed by gangs or organized crime groups.

Involvement of alcohol and drugs. Many street crimes and violent crimes (such as assault, rape, and child abuse) involve drugs or alcohol. In addition, the motivation behind some crimes may be to obtain drugs.

Where and when crime and violence occur. Location is an important aspect of any crime analysis data. Crime and violence patterns are often linked to particular places (so-called "hotspots"), so data should be as location-specific as possible. Even within neighborhoods, crime and violence tend to be concentrated in specific locations. In addition, activity managers need information about when crimes occur, broken down into season, month, day, and time of day. Data can be used to help identify patterns and the potential motivation behind crime, such as when crime or violence increases on a Saturday night, after sporting events, or during holidays.

Impact of crime. Information regarding the impact of crime is particularly helpful in areas where there are serious problems with several types of crimes and activity managers must decide priorities. It is important to remember that the crimes that have the greatest impact on a community may not be those

that are most common. In addition, activity managers should work with local communities and government leaders to determine the types of crime that they believe should be a priority. Priorities may be based on the relative seriousness of crimes, the complexity of addressing various types of crime, risk factors, and trends. While homicide may generate the most attention, residents may be more concerned about other crimes such as extortion or street crime.

Crime rates. Although crime rates are based on the number of incidents, rates are more useful when comparing one area to another. Crime rates may also help provide a benchmark for various types of crimes, including benchmarks established at the outset of implementation that can provide a basis for assessing results over time. Importantly, however, many crime and violence prevention interventions cannot materially affect the incidence of crime, but rather they can reduce the risk factors that make individuals in a particular community more vulnerable to violence and victimization.

Protective factors. An important part of carrying out a diagnostic assessment is determining what assets—people, groups, organizations, and community characteristics—can be strengthened to prevent and mitigate crime and violence and build resiliency. These protective factors serve as a crucial foundation upon which to build prevention efforts. In addition to organizations already engaged in crime and violence prevention, communities are bound to have assets that have not yet been tapped for crime prevention activities. Such organizations could play a central role in addressing risk factors and sources of conflict to enhance prevention. Research has found that the existence of community organization, communication and trust, and individuals and groups playing key leadership roles can be the difference between communities that experience high levels of violence and those that do not, even in overall high-crime areas.[190]

The benefits of identifying protective factors and community assets include:

- Strengthening leaders and groups that could play an effective role in crime and violence prevention;
- Making coordination of activities easier;
- Avoiding the duplication of programs;
- Identifying the gaps in service delivery (for example, a diagnostic assessment might reveal that there are no shelters for victims of domestic violence);
- Maximizing scarce resources, skills, and capacity; and
- Improving sustainability in the longer term.

By focusing attention on the existing assets of a particular area, activity managers do not have to "reinvent the wheel." In this way, activity managers can obtain the participation of people and resources that would otherwise be underutilized. In addition, this approach engages community members in controlling the problems facing their community—as problem solvers rather than passive clients or service recipients.

SOURCES OF CRIME AND VIOLENCE INFORMATION

Many different sources provide information related to crime and violence. It is imperative not to rely solely on official police crime statistics when measuring crime and violence. There are significant weaknesses to official crime data. Activity managers need to gather multidimensional data from several sources to get a full picture of crime and violence in a given location or among a given population.

[190] Norris et al., 2008; Sampson, 2012.

Following a brief discussion of police statistics and their limitations, this section reviews the importance of using public opinion and victimization surveys, as well as other sources of quantitative and qualitative data. (See the list of potential sources in Annex E.)

Police Records

Official police records are an important source of information about crime and violence. In general, police records are the official statistics used by the national government. The data and the methodology for collecting the data are generally available to the public. Because the data on homicide rates is generally collected in the same way, they may be the best source of information to assess trends, make comparisons, and evaluate the impact of prevention initiatives over one or more years.

Limitations of police records. Police records also have serious limitations because there may be many types of security services operating within a jurisdiction. For example, there may be federal or national, municipal, and preventive police, as well as other investigative and law enforcement bodies. The military also may be charged with maintaining public security but may not have the processes in place to record reported crimes consistently. Moreover, some police data on homicides record number of arrests rather than homicides. By definition, the number of arrests may over- or underestimate the number of actual deaths, because several people might be arrested for a single homicide or, more commonly, no one is arrested for a homicide.

In many countries, the official data should be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism. In many places, many crimes go unreported. This may be due to a lack of confidence in justice-sector institutions, fear of retribution, or the belief that police are involved in crimes. Indeed, in some countries, police are perpetrators of criminal activity, and victims are reluctant to report violence committed by police or other representatives of the government. Sexual violence, extortion, petty crimes (such as muggings), crimes against children, corruption, and drug-related crimes are often the least likely to be reported.

Another limitation of police records is that the information may be incomplete. Crime and violence patterns often vary from one neighborhood or one street to the next. Available crime data may be aggregated to a higher level, which makes it useless for identifying pockets of crime and violence. In addition, records may not include important details about crimes, such as whether and which weapons are used, the types of injuries, or the relationship of the victim to the perpetrator. In some cases, the information may be incomplete because the police officers assigned to the case are not fully literate or do not speak the language of victims or perpetrators. This is especially true in a country like Guatemala, with numerous indigenous languages. Finally, the police may not have the authority to share data with the public or with donors.

A final limitation of police data is that it may not be accurate or it may be manipulated for political reasons. Another reliable source of data on homicides can be obtained from the forensic medicine institutions. A medical examiner's determination is typically required to establish the cause of death from suspicious means, including death by homicide. Medical examiners report homicide data based on the examination of each patient/victim and thus could yield more accurate data on the number of homicides than those reported in police records.

If police are better trained and/or trust levels between the police and the community increase, reports of crimes may increase even though the actual crime level is reduced. In these cases, increases in the numbers of homicides may indicate a greater level of trust in the police rather than increases in the levels of violence in a community.

Crime and violence observatories. A foundational element of any crime and violence prevention strategy is solid localized data. Crime and violence observatories bring together a broad cross-section of actors—including law enforcement, emergency services, health officials, and civil society organizations—to jointly analyze data and present agreed upon findings to decision makers. Municipal observatories have been an effective way to regularly bring together local actors (both governmental and non-governmental) and, in addition to creating a unified understanding of crime and violence conditions, help improve coordination and collaboration among actors. Typically led by the mayor, a municipal observatory provides inputs for local government action. One of many areas of success has been the use of data to limit alcohol sales, which was first piloted by the mayor of Cali, Colombia and since has been implemented in other cities throughout LAC. For example, the alcohol policy of Diadema, Brazil (pop. 350,000) to prohibit alcohol sales after 11:00 PM was shown to prevent an average of 11 murders a month.[191]

Public opinion and victimization surveys

Rigorously gathered survey data can be the most systematic method of gathering information from the general public. Respondents may be more likely to discuss their experiences with and attitudes about crime and violence anonymously. Surveys may include victimization questions that ask respondents about their experience with crime and/or perception questions that ask about feelings of insecurity or fear, behavior changes, or knowledge of crime and violence occurring.

These surveys are useful in filling in gaps in information from official data. Surveys can and should cover all types of violence, including violence that may not be reported to the police or considered a crime under local laws. They also can be designed to gather information about respondents' opinions regarding a range of crime-related issues and institutions, including the police, victim support agencies, and private security organizations, as well as how law enforcement services could be improved.

Surveys also provide important information about fear of crime, which can have a powerful influence on people's behavior, freedom of movement, social fabric, and trust in the government and police. Fear of crime also may have broad implications, as it may influence people to arm themselves or to emigrate to what they believe to be a safer environment.

Survey limitations. One of the main issues related to surveys is that they can be both costly and time-consuming. Baseline surveys should be conducted before program implementation begins, which can be difficult to schedule. In addition, household surveys, in which residents are interviewed at home, can sometimes be dangerous. The people responding and/or conducting surveys may be threatened, intimidated, or assaulted.

Other limitations affect the reliability of results. Women may be compelled to answer survey questions in front of their partners or family members or may not be allowed to participate. Even anonymously, respondents may be reluctant to talk about sexual and domestic violence or child abuse. In addition, most surveys collect information only from adults. The lack of minors' experiences and perceptions may be particularly problematic in areas where youth crime is a major concern. In addition, most surveys do not provide information from perpetrators of crime and violence.

[191] Pan American Health Organization, 2013. "Prevention of alcohol-related injuries in the Americas: from evidence to policy action." https://iris.paho.org/bitstream/handle/10665.2/6085/Prevention%20of%20alcohol-related%202013.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Survey results also may reflect citizens' perceptions of crime and violence based on exaggerated media coverage or recent incidents. When government authorities begin a highly publicized initiative to combat crime and violence, citizens sometimes perceive the problems to be more severe than they are.

Qualitative data on crime and violence

Generating qualitative information can help researchers understand the context behind crime and violence trends. Most information gathered from these sources will not be in the form of numbers but will come from interviews, meetings, or group discussions.

Group consultations. Meetings with residents or community organizations to discuss community problems often reveal invaluable information. Although the views presented will not represent the whole community, group discussions may be helpful for obtaining detailed information from members of a particular neighborhood or area or from specific groups such as women, taxi drivers, teachers, merchants, or police officers. Consultations also may include local activists and members of different civic and governmental organizations; women's groups; church groups and leaders; non-governmental organizations working on related issues; school staff; local police; local merchants; neighborhood watch members; informal traders; youth leaders; trade union and religious and other civic leaders—individuals who are especially knowledgeable about the community.

Typical venues for community consultations include:

- Official public or private meetings hosted by one or more stakeholders who invite other relevant or influential parties;
- Public meetings, such as town hall meetings or community forums, open to the entire community; and
- Formal and informal meetings in places where various sectors of the community might congregate, such as religious venues, schools, workplaces, street corners, and youth and sports clubs.

Interviews with key informants. These could include local leaders of political parties, women's groups, church groups and leaders, nongovernmental organizations working on related issues, victim support agencies, legal resource centers, school administrators or counselors, social workers, police chiefs or management, leaders of local crime prevention units, magistrates, judges, prosecutors, neighborhood watch members, taxi drivers, youth leaders, trade union representatives, religious leaders, civic leaders, and any other individuals who are especially knowledgeable about the situation, understand the information needed, have particular insights into specific forms of violence, and are willing to provide data or collect it. Informants should be asked for their views on the importance of various crime- and violence-related problems, the perceived causes of these problems, current or past efforts to address these causes, and the outcome of these efforts. Finally, key informants should be asked if they are aware of other sources of information or other individuals who might provide useful information. This process, known as "snowballing," can result in additional information as well as help validate the information obtained from other key informants.

Focus groups. These groups are specifically selected for each target sector of the population in order to obtain a more in-depth view of their perceptions of the issues in question and methods to address them. Special care should be devoted to compose focus groups that are representative of the community. Rather than relying on a single leader, engage various community leaders and organizations in constituting the focus groups. Focus group sessions generally include a facilitator, a recorder who takes notes, and eight to ten participants. Ideally, the facilitator is not only skilled, but also is of the same

gender and ethnicity or race of the majority of the group in the session. This helps to ensure that focus group participants will be comfortable sharing their opinions.

Other data sources

There are a number of other sources of data on crime and violence and the perception of the community. The sources that are most useful may vary from one community to the next. The following sources may provide valuable information:

- Crime and violence observatories
- Census and demographic ministries
- Municipal government departments, including housing, welfare, education
- Mapping information
- Newspaper and other media
- Shops, small businesses, insurance companies, and banks
- Private security companies
- Hospitals, clinics, social workers, and doctors
- Victim support agencies, including those specializing in domestic violence
- Prisons, jails, and juvenile offender programs
- Women's organizations, youth groups, children organizations
- Civic and religious organizations
- Trade unions.

Outputs and Inputs

Outputs *are a tangible, immediate, and intended product or consequence of a project within USAID's control. All outputs that are necessary and together sufficient to achieve the purpose should be identified.*

Inputs *are the tasks, processes, and resources that the project is expected to undertake or consume in order to produce outputs. All the inputs that are necessary and together sufficient to achieve the outputs should be identified. A complete identification of inputs is essential to preparing the budget estimate required prior to project approval.*

Source: USAID, Program Cycle Overview, 2011.

Once all available information is obtained from different sources, it can be merged to create a comprehensive picture of the problem. Annex F provides longer descriptions on how to assess the physical and social characteristics of a potential target area. Annex G provides some examples of programming for municipalities. Annexes I and J provide bibliographic references on crime and violence in Latin America and the Caribbean and a list of useful resources.

5.2 PHASE 2: DEVELOPING THE RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND ARTICULATING A THEORY OF CHANGE

After assessing the crime and violence problems in the community, the next step is to design appropriate interventions that will best address the problem. Central to the design process is the development of a results framework, a graphic representation of the development hypothesis behind a particular activity. A results framework identifies and presents cause-and-effect linkages between results at different levels of intervention and the critical assumptions that must hold for the development hypothesis to lead to achieving the expected results.

IDENTIFYING THE OVERALL ACTIVITY GOAL AND OBJECTIVE

A community may experience many types of crime and violence at the same time. A crime and prevention activity needs to clearly identify the specific type(s) of crime and violence that it seeks to address, as interventions will vary according to the nature of the problem. The diagnostic assessment should help activity managers prioritize problems to be addressed.

Ideally, a crime and violence prevention activity should be targeted to one or two priorities. Trying to do too much may contribute to a lack of focus and result in spreading resources too thinly. In addition, activity implementers may have too much to manage and insufficient capacity to handle a broadly defined activity.

Identifying the main problem that a crime and violence prevention activity seeks to address is an essential step in identifying and clearly articulating the activity's goal, overall objective, and expected results. It is critical to define the desired change, which may include a change in attitudes, behavior, and/or institutions and organizations.

A result is some measure of achievement of or progress towards an objective. Results should be described in the past tense and articulated as statements, not activities or processes. Perhaps most importantly, results should be measurable as outputs and outcomes, which should be related to the overall objective and goals of the activity. For example, if the activity seeks to address increasing homicide rates affecting young people in El Salvador, then the overall goal of the activity can be articulated as: "Homicide rates among youth in El Salvador reduced." As mentioned, this goal may be an objective articulated at the CDCS level and, therefore, an aspirational goal of the activity towards which the activity expects to contribute but is regarded as outside of its control. In contrast, the activity purpose is the highest expected result for which managers can be held accountable; it is a result that should be feasible and attainable provided the expected outputs are achieved and the right inputs are provided. In this example, the purpose could be articulated as: "Fewer young individuals are engaged in gangs in targeted municipalities of El Salvador." In this example, the purpose of the activity is to change behaviors, but it may also seek to shift attitudes before it can achieve this behavioral change.

ARTICULATING THE THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change is a narrative accompanying the Results Framework. It is an explanation of why change is expected to occur as a result of a particular intervention. It articulates in a causal and logical manner how the interventions are expected to produce expected results and why. Results can be conceptualized at different levels over time; achievement of lower-level results is often necessary before higher level results can be achieved. This has important consequences for the timing and sequence of an activity's interventions. Theories of change should be within USAID's manageable interests, meaning they should only include results that USAID can materially affect through programmatic interventions. Theories of change should be articulated as causal processes expressed in "IF-THEN" statements.

The assessment of the situation and existing evidence and analytical research should inform the theory of change. Of particular interest are similar interventions that have been successful elsewhere. In cases where the design entails an innovative approach and/or adaptations of existing interventions, it is important to explain why change is expected to occur and what conditions explain both beneficiaries' and the activity implementer's readiness for the intervention. The validity of the theory of change should be ultimately tested through an evaluation of the activity performance.

Following our former example, if the activity's objective is to reduce the number of youth actively engaged in gangs in targeted municipalities in El Salvador, we would need to explain how this change is going to occur or what interventions will be used to accomplish this objective. The latter requires

successfully identifying and addressing the factors that lead youth to join gangs in that particular community. The major assumptions underlying this theory of change is that gangs are responsible for a relatively large percentage of homicides and that youth can choose whether to join a gang. (In some communities throughout Central America, gangs do not give a choice to youth; those who refuse to join risk their life.) While the activity's overall goal—reducing the rate of homicides—is beyond its control, the activity will contribute toward this goal.

In our example, the theory of change for this prevention intervention can be articulated as follows:

> *IF youth in targeted communities become more aware of the risks of joining gangs; and*
> *IF they are offered appropriate after school educational opportunities; and*
> *IF new employment opportunities are generated in the community;*
> *THEN youth will be less attracted to joining gangs and the number of youth actively engaged in gangs will be reduced.*

If this activity is targeted for youth who are regarded at higher risk of violence, the activity's theory of change could be articulated as:

> *IF middle school students who are failing and frequently absent from school are offered remedial education programs; and*
> *IF these students and their families strengthen family ties through psychological support; and*
> *IF these students have greater opportunities to continue with high school education;*
> *THEN they will be less predisposed to joining gangs and the number of youth actively engaged in gangs will be reduced.*

Finally, if the activity is targeted to those youth who have already engaged in violent behavior or are members of gangs, the theory of change could be articulated as:

> *IF young crime offenders receive adequate psychological assistance; and*
> *IF they improve their life and technical skills; and*
> *IF opportunities are created to employ these individuals;*
> *THEN they will be less inclined to return to gang activity and continue to be actively engaged in criminal activity.*

A well-articulated theory of change should help activity managers identify the target groups, the level of intervention (primary, secondary, tertiary), the specific geographic areas where the project will focus its activities, and the timeframe required for interventions to affect expected changes in knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviors.

TARGETING INTERVENTIONS

Geographic Location

When considering the geographic level of intervention for community-based interventions, activity managers should consider several questions:

- Where are crime and violence concentrated? Why are they concentrated there? For example, do the majority of crimes occur in a few lawless neighborhoods, in newly settled areas with few basic services, or along a drug trafficking route?
- Are there existing relationships or potential partnerships that would contribute to the success of the activity? For example, might private-sector companies agree to participate in a job training program for youth? Has the police chief or mayor championed prevention?

- Does the host government or the donor community have complementary national or foreign policy interests? For example, does the government want to target prevention programs in areas where there has been weak state presence to improve the rule of law in those areas? Or does the U.S. Embassy want to target prevention activities to communities from which migrants originate because of insecurity?

Annex G provides examples of crime and violence prevention interventions that can be introduced at the municipal level.

Target Groups

Once the focus areas are defined, it is important to identify the target groups that will benefit from the intervention. These might include victims, crime targets, or offenders. An activity might also target a particular community or neighborhood. Activity managers should consider the following questions.

- What kind of prevention is most appropriate for the local context: primary, secondary, and/or tertiary? A combination? (For example, if a neighborhood is at-risk of crime and violence based on demographic and communal risk factors, then activity managers may choose to employ primary and secondary prevention interventions. If a neighborhood already has significant gang presence, then tertiary and secondary prevention interventions may be necessary to have more immediate impacts on violence outcomes.)
- What is within the manageable interest of the activity?
- Are there other host country assets and/or donor focus on the area?
- What types of targeting tools exist for selecting beneficiaries of a particular intervention or service?

Target Institutions

The activity may target specific institutions that need to be strengthened. Activity managers should consider the following questions:

- Are there any specific policy/institutional reforms that need to be introduced at the national level to be able to implement the project?
- Are there institutions or organizations providing services that need to be strengthened?
- Is the activity engaging local government officials who should be engaged?
- Is the activity collaborating with local police officers? If so, how can the police be engaged productively in a prevention intervention?

IDENTIFY POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND CHAMPIONS

Meeting with local groups and organizations can help to identify possible partners to involve in the crime and violence prevention activity. Bringing local stakeholders together for conversations regarding these issues helps to understand what their main concerns are and what skills they can bring to the table. Communicating and establishing relations with likely partners can help to:

- Create publicity around the activity and expected services
- Broaden the forum to include a bigger range of interest groups
- Allow the activity to reflect the views of the fullest range of interest groups

- Review debate around the main crime and violence problems
- Ensure support for the activity and assess conditions to promote sustainability
- Identify who can help
- Link local stakeholders to national level actors and processes
- Identify gaps in services and available resources
- Allow for a participatory approach and formalize this process.

ESTABLISH A REALISTIC FUNDING LEVEL AND TIMELINE

After the target group, geographic location, and specific activities have been defined, it is important to estimate the resources that will be needed to implement the activity and develop a budget that clearly outlines expenditures. If resources are limited or are insufficient to implement the activity as conceived, activity managers need to narrow the focus, reduce the geographic coverage, and/or reduce the number of beneficiaries.

It is important to ensure at the outset that the implementing partner has the necessary skills and knowledge to complete the tasks, the activity's period of performance is sufficient, and the level of funding is adequate. A timeline is a critical implementation tool. Activity managers will need to allocate a specific length of time for each activity. Some services will run concurrently; others cannot begin until previous tasks have been completed. Ensure that there is sufficient time for each activity, then use this information to determine the length of time for the entire activity.

The timeline should include interim dates for activities and tasks to be completed. Ongoing monitoring can help ensure that the activity stays on track. If there are unforeseen problems, the timeline should be revised to illustrate the impact.

The time that various tasks and services will take to implement has consequences for the costs of the activity. Scheduling is therefore seen simultaneously as an activity planning, budgeting, and monitoring tool.

5.3 PHASE 3: ESTABLISHING A MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

A crime and violence prevention activity should develop a monitoring and evaluation plan that describes the objective(s), explains the theory of change behind the intervention, and outlines the critical conditions needed for the activity to succeed. The monitoring and evaluation plan also articulates the expected results to be achieved, the indicators to measure these results, and the timeline for the implementation of all the interventions.

Setting Objectives and Expected Results

Establishing clear, measurable objectives makes it possible to assess at a later stage whether the activity was successful in achieving desired results. The objectives should specify *who* should do *how much* of what, *where* it should occur, and by *when*.

Objectives are expressed in statements that begin with verbs such as "Decrease…," "Increase…," "Change…," etc. The clearer and more specific they are, the easier it will be to select the appropriate activities to achieve them. Desired results can be expressed in future tense; for example: "Life skills of at-risk youth improved" or "perceptions of fear in the community decreased."

When formulating the targets and results, activity managers and implementers should work closely with beneficiaries, communities, authorities, and other stakeholders to understand what they consider success to be for the activity. It is also important to determine what is realistic based on the community's characteristics and resources. As much as possible, activity managers need to consider and accommodate the potential impact of events beyond the activity's control, as well as the impact of activities on other aspects of a community.

Objectives and Results

A project should have broad **objectives**. Examples include:

- Making the community safer
- Reducing the fear of crime
- Reducing property crime
- Reducing the incidence of violence
- Reducing the impact of crime on vulnerable groups.

The project's **expected results** should be more narrowly defined and measurable. For example, they can be articulated as:

- Domestic burglaries in a specified area reduced by 20 percent.
- Trust in the police increased by 10 percent.
- The number of domestic violence cases reported to the police or other authorities increased.
- School dropout rates reduced.

Achieving expected results contributes to achieving the overall objective of the project.

INDICATORS FOR CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

Like any other intervention, crime and violence prevention activities should be monitored and evaluated at different result levels and at different points in time. Indicators are used to measure expected results. Depending on what the objective of a particular intervention is, indicators should be identified to measure *outputs*, results directly related to the intervention, and *outcomes*, defined here as higher-level results that are the consequence and only indirectly related to the specific intervention. For example, a crime prevention activity seeking to increase security in an area may increase the number of police patrols. The output of the activity can be articulated as increased police presence in a particular area; the expected outcome is increased security. Indicators will need to be defined for these different levels of results.[192]

Table 2 offers some illustrative examples of different outputs and outcomes of crime and violence prevention interventions.

[192] USAID has recently published a resource guide on how to select appropriate indicators for youth violence prevention interventions in the LAC region. Please refer to: Campie, P., Hill, C., Dias, P., Garcia, M. & Mizrahi, Y. (2021) Youth Violence Prevention in LAC: A Resource Guide for Aligning Indicators and Interventions to Deepen Impact. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.

Table 2: Examples of Outputs and Outcomes

Output	Outcome
Community police officers operational/visible policing increased by 50 percent by end of fiscal year.	Reduction of muggings by 20 percent Reduction in fear of crime.
Security locks fitted on 100 percent of houses in [defined area] by [date].	A 20 percent reduction in burglary in [defined area].
Domestic violence referral network created and leaflets distributed to all households by [date].	Victims of spouse abuse are more prepared to report incident to police services.

Table 3: Examples of Outputs and Output Indicators

Outputs	Output Indicators
Clean up and rehabilitate a public park	Number of people visiting the park
Establish outreach centers offering services to youth	Number of youths participating in outreach centers activities
Increase levels of security patrols vehicles in [defined area]	Average daily deployment of security patrols vehicles, as shown on duty rosters
Make community policing project operational	Number of community police officers trained and equipped
Fit security locks	Number of locks fitted
Create domestic violence shelter	Domestic violence shelter in operation
Distribute leaflets on domestic violence	Number of leaflets distributed
Outreach workers to counsel youths about risks of substance abuse	Number of information packs distributed to youth
Police trained in new police surveillance skills	Percentage of police officers who pass a post-training test

Table 4: Examples of Outcomes and Performance Indicators

Outcome	Output Indicators
Reduced burglary	Crime survey burglary rates Burglary rates recorded by the police Attempted burglary rates recorded by police Level of expenditure on repairs to local government owned property Insurance claim rates Self-reported offending rates by known burglars
Reduction in violence using knives, guns, etc.	Recorded rates for injuries/homicides caused by guns/knives Incidents of knife/gun attacks in hospital records Number of seizures of illegal weapons
Lowered fear of crime in public open space system	Rates of fear of crime measured through surveys Levels and types of street activity measured through observation
Reduced substance abuse-related harm among teenagers	Number of drug or alcohol abuse incidents in schools Hospital records on patients admitted for substance-abuse problems
Improved quality of victim support and response to victims of crime	Rates of satisfaction with victims' services Number of victims of crimes attended at victims' centers Number of reports filed at the police

The IDB developed a list of standardized indicators to measure results of crime and violence prevention interventions. This list is provided in Annex H. Recently, USAID has created a Violence Prevention Indicators Resource Guide that can used as a resource to identify appropriate and relevant indicators for crime and violence interventions.[193]

GUIDANCE FOR SELECTING APPROPRIATE AND RELEVANT INDICATORS

USAID's general guidance on indicator selection applies to crime and violence interventions. Indicators selected should be direct (linked to the result), objective (comparable over time), practical, attributable, adequate, and precise.[194]

The identification of appropriate indicators and the sources of data to measure these indicators is essential for monitoring and evaluating an activity's results. Once indicators have been selected, it is important to establish a baseline at the inception of an intervention. If reliable sources of data do not exist, the activity may generate the data by conducting baseline surveys, collecting information from program beneficiaries before any services are provided, or finding any other sources of data that can be

[193] Campie, P., Hill, C., Dias, P., Garcia, M. & Mizrahi, Y. (2021) Youth Violence Prevention in LAC: A Resource Guide for Aligning Indicators and Interventions to Deepen Impact. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.
[194] See USAID Tips for selecting performance indicators. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnadw106.pdf

used as proxies to determine the situation at the inception of the activity. This baseline is used to measure results over time and assess the changes achieved from inception to the end of the intervention.

Is the indicator direct?

Indicators should measure the expected result and no other thing. For example, if the outcome is the reduction of violence in a community, direct indicators can be homicide rates or numbers of patients treated for violent-related incidents in a community hospital. Yet, if the overall objective of the activity is a reduction of risk factors associated with lack of family bonding, then homicide rates is not an appropriate indicator since it is not directly linked to the expected result. In this case, a more appropriate indicator could be the percentage of families that report having strong affective ties.

Is the indicator objective and comparable over time?

The data measured should be clear (not ambiguous) and should be used consistently over time. For example, when measuring the degree to which citizens trust the police to protect community safety, the same sets of survey or interview questions should be used across time with the same population, so that changing responses are the result of actual change among police rather than discrepancies in questions or different populations answering the questions. Moreover, definitions of trust should be provided so that anyone reviewing the indicator can understand the meaning of the indicator and the use of the term.

Is the indicator practical?

Indicators should have data that can be collected on a timely basis and at a reasonable cost. It can be tempting to collect as much data as possible when trying to measure complex and vague indicators such as "improved community well-being" or "reduced influence of crimes or gangs." However, in most cases, there will be a much smaller subset of measures that have the greatest salience or utility for understanding how these indicators are performing. For example, available data from administrative sources (e.g., schools, justice agencies) typically measure indicators of importance to the organization producing the data and may not be as useful for purposes outside of their organizational/institutional context.

Similarly, if we are measuring perceptions on crime and violence that rely on a national survey, we should not measure this indicator every six months.

Is the indicator attributable?

It is important to note that violence and crime patterns may change for reasons unrelated to the specific activity. The implementation of new law enforcement initiatives, changes in drug trafficking routes, or new disputes between gangs or organized crime entities are just a few of the myriad examples of things that may impact crime and violence rates.

Indicators should measure the result that is expected to be achieved by the intervention. For example, an indicator that measures reduced homicide rates may not be attributable to an intervention that seeks to improve life skills of at-risk youth. While a reduction of homicide rates could be the ultimate goal of the activity, it is difficult to attribute changes in the homicide rate to the intervention. This indicator, however, could be selected as a good context indicator to define the situation in which the activity operates. Similarly, if an activity is introduced in one community, indicators that measure changes at the national level cannot be attributable to the activity. In this case, an indicator measuring the expected change at the community level would be more appropriate.

Is the indicator adequate?

Indicators should measure what we want to measure, and data should be available on a timely basis. Taken as a group, an activity should identify the minimal number of indicators that are necessary to measure performance. If measuring an output indicator, such as the number of youth who complete a job training program, the data must measure the completion of the program as it occurs for every youth that enters the program for as long as the program is operating. That indicator would be sufficient to measure the expected result at that level. In contrast, if measuring an outcome indicator from the same job training program to see if the youth received or retained employment after leaving the program, the appropriate outcome measure will come from future data, typically from a different data source, such as an employer or agency that collects employment information.

Is the indicator precise?

For example, if the indicator is a reduction in the number of homicides, the data measure should reflect the number of people killed by homicide (not arrested for homicide or perceptions of homicide) over at least two different time points that match the time period over which change is desired or that interventions were in place (i.e., before and after an intervention). To generate an accurate "trend" showing change over time, it is important to understand the nature of the indicator and what existing research suggests about the rate of change one can expect. For example, when measuring recidivism, a 2-year measurement period is considered best practice for producing the most reliable prediction of a person's likelihood of reoffending.

Indicators used to measure violence at the community level rely on large data sets with many data points. For example, when measuring the indicator of reductions in community crime, data might be available for total number of crimes, for different types of crimes, for rates of crime per population size, for specific places in a community, at specific times of day or days of the week, and may or may not include information on victim and offender characteristics (e.g., gender, age, relationship to each other). If using community crime data like this—as an indicator for measuring the outcomes of a crime reduction program in a particular part of the community with a particular group of youth—it will be important to know whether the community crime data can be disaggregated to include data on the gender, age group, and area relevant to the youth program. If these data are missing, it will be very difficult to make the case that any changes in community crime are related to the youth crime reduction program.

DATA SENSITIVITY, SECURITY, AND TRANSPARENCY

Understanding the way data are defined, collected, and analyzed will provide insights on the relevance and quality of the measures and whether they are a good fit for the indicators of interest.

Documentation typically comes from the data source, or institution/person who is responsible for producing the data and may also be available on institutional websites if data are available to the public.

Access to data will depend on a range of conditions tied to data sensitivity, security, and transparency concerns. Femicide and non-lethal violence against women may not be available, as cases are often not reported and/or recorded. Collecting data from female victims of violence is made more difficult by the reality that reporting the crime/act is almost guaranteed to bring more violence to the woman, without the protection of law to prevent more harm.

Aggregate, or group-level, data that do not report on individual youth will be easier to access in most cases and may even be available on public-facing websites (e.g., homicide rates per 100,000). However, these aggregate indicators will also be the least precise means for understanding why change is occurring, because individual changes in behavior cannot be examined. Conversely, data measuring change in individual youth behavior can be aggregated up to explain why change is happening at the community level and who is contributing to these changes. But these data needs may trigger privacy concerns due to the age of the youth (i.e., under age 18), sensitivity of the data (e.g., arrested but not yet found guilty), or inability to reach individual youth to collect outcome data once they are no longer in a violence prevention or related program.

Key considerations when deciding what indicators are best suited to a violence prevention strategy

- Choose indicators most closely tied to the intervention's purpose so results are more attributable and direct
- Use indicators that are measurable and specific
- Use indicators that are culturally relevant, gender specific, and age appropriate, adapting as needed
- Use indicators that are specific to different population risk levels
- Use indicators that align with specific primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention levels
- Examine the quality of indicator data
- Check the accessibility of indicator data
- Build sustainability by incentivizing program implementers and others to collect and share data
- Build trust in cross-sector relationships that encourage data transparency and data sharing

The best way to mitigate these issues and collect individual-level data is to establish an evaluation plan for each initiative and design protocols to enable activity implementers to work with relevant stakeholders, obtain consent from youth and parents, provide data protection agreements, and deploy outreach methods to collect follow-up outcome data from beneficiaries after exiting a program.

5.4 PHASE 4: MONITORING AND EVALUATION[195]

Monitoring and evaluation must be planned early on in the strategy design process. The monitoring and evaluation process begins during the assessment process and the selection of the focus areas when information about crime and violence is first gathered. This information helps to establish baseline data that can later be used to assess project effectiveness. If an impact evaluation is planned for a particular activity, it should be considered during the design phase because it requires statistical criteria that will allow for a randomized control trial.

[195] This section concentrates on the unique issues related to monitoring and evaluating citizen security, crime, and violence-related projects. For more detailed general information about monitoring and evaluating projects, refer to *USAID Evaluation Policy* (January 2011) and to other online sources of expert advice on designing project evaluations.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation are closely related and are usually planned concurrently. Although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, they have different purposes and goals.

Monitoring is an ongoing process that focuses on an ongoing activity's interventions. Monitoring determines how closely the activity work plan is conducted and how well interventions are implemented. Monitoring uses routine data to measure progress and make revisions on activity implementation. Tracking performance is an integral part of activity implementation.

Evaluation measures the performance at set points of time, usually at midterm and/or completion. The purpose of evaluation is to assess the extent to which a project has achieved predetermined outcome-oriented objectives. Evaluation focuses on outputs and outcomes, including unintended effects. It is critical to include budgeting for evaluation in activity design, with current USAID evaluation policy suggesting three percent of budget for evaluation.

A project evaluation often involves value judgments about the project's achievements of its expected results and the extent to which these results can be attributed to the implementation of project's activities. Evaluations are generally conducted to answer the "why" question behind monitoring.[196]

> *Evaluation at USAID is defined as the systematic collection and analysis of information about the characteristics and outcomes of programs and projects as a basis for judgments to improve effectiveness, and/or to inform decisions about current and future programming.*
>
> *Evaluations should be planned as part of the design of an activity, and appropriate resources for conducting the evaluation should be allocated.*
>
> *Evaluation is distinct from assessment (which may be designed to examine country or sector context to inform project design) or as an informal review of projects.*
>
> USAID Evaluation Policy (ADS 203.3.6)

A specific type of evaluation is a **performance evaluation**. Performance evaluations focus on descriptive and normative questions: what a particular project or program has achieved (either at an intermediate point in execution or at the conclusion of an implementation period); how it is being implemented; how it is perceived and valued; whether expected results are occurring; and other questions that are pertinent to program design, management and operational decision making. Performance evaluations often incorporate before-and-after comparisons, but they generally lack a rigorously defined counterfactual.[197]

Performance evaluations may use qualitative and quantitative methodologies to assess the results of a particular project. A mixed method evaluation that combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies is often required to answer one or more evaluation questions. Using mixed methods also has the advantage of triangulating information and increasing the validity of findings. Mixed method evaluations may use different data collection methods including structured observations, key informant interviews, focus groups, pre-and post-project surveys, analysis of project monitoring and evaluation plans, and document reviews. (See USAID TIPS for conducting Mixed Method Evaluations).

Performance evaluations can be internal, external, or participatory. Internal evaluations are conducted by people within the organization, and external evaluations by people outside the organization. Participatory evaluations engage external evaluators with representatives of donor agencies and

[196] Rist, Ray C., *The Road to Results: Designing and Conducting Effective Development Evaluations*, World Bank, 2009.
[197] United States Agency for International Development Evaluation Policy, 2011.

stakeholders to design carry out and interpret evaluation results. The relative advantages and disadvantages of each of these approaches are discussed in the sidebar.

Another type of evaluation is an **impact evaluation.** Impact evaluations measure the change in a development outcome that is attributable to a defined intervention. Based on models of cause and effect, impact evaluations require a credible, rigorously defined counterfactual to control for external factors that might account for the observed change. Impact evaluations that enable comparisons between beneficiaries randomly assigned to either a treatment or a control group provide the strongest evidence of a relationship between the intervention and outcome measured.[198] Ideally, impact evaluations start at the beginning of a project, when baseline data are gathered for later comparison. Data can then be gathered at project midpoints and completion.

The gold standard for conducting an impact evaluation is the Randomized Control Trial, where beneficiaries of an intervention are selected randomly and compared with a randomly selected control group. These evaluations are costly and not always feasible or ethically appropriate to conduct. For example, it may be extremely problematic to withhold treatment to individuals who are at risk of violence. Furthermore, it is often difficult to isolate these interventions from the environment, which could affect the result. Beneficiaries of crime and violence prevention interventions live in communities and interact with people from other communities.

If Randomized Controlled Trials are not feasible, there are alternative methodologies for conducting robust impact evaluations, such as Interrupted Time series and Propensity Score matching.

> *Interrupted Time Series*: Interrupted Time Series (ITS) involves examining community violence trends over time using a large number of observations or time points (e.g., monthly) on violent incidents before and after an intervention is operating to see if the intervention "interrupted" the violence trend that would otherwise be expected, based on pre-intervention rates of violence. This method requires a minimum of 90 to 100 "observations" or point in time measurements of violence, using the same indicators measured in the same manner over the time period of interest.
>
> *Propensity Score Matching*: Propensity Score Matching requires examining changes in individual propensities for violence by drawing a non-random comparison group sample from existing administrative data from police, courts, or corrections who are not receiving any treatment and comparing outcomes with youth who are receiving the intervention treatment. The comparison group, formed through administrative data alone, is created by identifying youth who share the same program eligibility requirements that youth in the actual program must meet to receive services.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, few crime and violence prevention activities have been evaluated using rigorous qualitative and quantitative evaluation methodologies. It is indeed paradoxical that in a region where crime and violence have escalated to epidemic levels, there is a dearth of knowledge on what works and what does not.

Impact evaluations of crime prevention projects using rigorous evaluation methodologies are even rarer than performance evaluations in Latin America and the Caribbean. Recent systematic research of literature of crime and violence prevention interventions in 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries found only 18 impact evaluations of youth violence prevention projects, nine of which were unpublished.

[198] Ibid.

Most of the impact evaluations were undertaken in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Jamaica, rather than in the most violent countries, with the exception of Jamaica.[199]

In 2014, USAID commissioned LAPOP to conduct a rigorous impact evaluation of crime and violence prevention projects in four Central American countries. This evaluation demonstrated a positive impact of USAID-funded, community-based prevention projects in Honduras, Panama, El Salvador, and Guatemala, but it is impossible to assess which projects were more successful and why. The evaluation assessed several community-based interventions implemented in control areas, which were selected using randomized criteria.[200]

THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATING PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS

Crime and violence prevention in international contexts is a relatively young field. Activity managers should experiment to find the best mix of interventions to address local contexts. It also is important to measure results and share evaluations with others working in the field. Like any evaluation, the evaluation of crime and violence prevention interventions should rely on the best methods possible to respond to the evaluation questions.

Well-conducted evaluations that demonstrate a program's success or provide lessons to improve future implementation help stakeholders make the case for prevention as a fundamental part of citizen security. Rigorously conducted evaluations can increase opportunities for prevention funding and develop champions for prevention approaches within the U.S. Government and LAC governments. Like in other development fields, evaluation of prevention projects enhances learning and accountability of USAID-funded projects. Demonstrating what works, what does not, and why some strategies work better than others is essential for accountability and also allows USAID officials to learn from implementation experiences in order to improve the design of future projects.

[199] Helen Moestue, Leif Moestue, and Robert Muggah, "Youth violence prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean: A scoping review of the evidence," Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center, August 2013.
[200] United States Agency for International Development, *Political Culture of Democracy in Guatemala and in the Americas, 2014: Democratic Governance across 10 Years of the AmericasBarometer,* by Dinorah Azpuru and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/guatemala/AB2014_Guatemala_Country_Report_English_V2_W_102015.pdf.

Internal, External, and Participatory Evaluations

Internal evaluators usually know more about a program, project, or policy than do outsiders. Internal evaluators usually know more about the history, organization, culture, people involved, and problems and successes. Although this may be an advantage, internal evaluators may be so close to the program, project, or policy that they cannot see it clearly or objectively. As a result, evaluators may be unable to recognize solutions or changes that others may see. Internal evaluators also may be subject to pressure or influence from program decision makers.

External evaluators usually have more credibility and lend the perception of objectivity to an evaluation. They are also independent from the administration and financial decisions about the program. An external evaluation is not a guarantee of independent and credible results, however, particularly if the consultants have prior program ties. External consultants also may be overly accommodating if they hope to obtain future work.

Participatory evaluation is a form of evaluation where the distinction between experts and laypersons, researchers and subjects is deemphasized or redefined. Evaluators act as facilitators helping others make the assessment. These evaluations may have similar disadvantages as internal evaluations, but they may prove useful for learning purposes.

Source: Linda G. Morra Imas and Ray C. Rist, *The Road To Results*. World Bank, 2009.

ANNEX A: RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Level	Definition	Risk Factors	Protection Factors
Individual	Biological and personal history factors that increase the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.	• History of abuse/trauma • Anti-social attitudes • Low levels of self-esteem • Low level of performance in school • Substance abuse • Access to arms • History of abuse • Teenage pregnancy	• Positive social attitudes • No history of substance abuse • No history of physical or emotional abuse • School enrollment • Spirituality
Relationship/family	Close relationships, including the person's family and closest circle of peers that influence his or her behavior.	• Low family support and parental involvement • Harsh disciplinary practices • Domestic violence • Low commitment to school • Close association with criminal peers • Access to arms	• Family emotional support and supervision • Commitment to school • Association with positive friendships • Involvement in social activities
Community	Settings, such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods, in which social relationships occur and may influence a person's behavior.	• Unemployment • Lack of educational opportunities • Low level of community participation • High levels of insecurity • Insufficient investment in youth programs • Normalization of violence as a way of resolving conflicts • Presence of criminal organizations • Availability of arms	• Involvement in social activities • Association with groups that do not endorse violence • Secure neighborhoods • Safe community spaces
Societal	Broad societal factors, including structural problems that help create a climate in which violence is encouraged or inhibited.	• Inequality • Poverty • Corruption • Deficient public services • Police/military abuse	• Social equality • Opportunities to improve one's lifestyle • Adequate public services • Low corruption of public service

ANNEX B: CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, the violence that affect most countries is interpersonal violence (including family, intimate partner, and neighborhood disputes) perpetrated by gangs, drug trafficking organizations, and/or by unorganized groups (such as random killings resulting from street fights, causal robberies that end violently, opportunistic crimes, etc.). During the 1980s and early 1990s, on the other hand, Colombia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala experienced cases of collective violence. In Colombia, the high rate of homicides during the 1980s was linked to the conflict among guerrillas, paramilitary organizations, and the military. Similarly, in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, high levels of violence during most of the 1980s and 1990s were caused by bloody civil wars between left-leaning organizations and authoritarian governments supported by the military. Although the region has made significant progress with transitions to democratic governance, an end to civil wars, and the signing of a peace agreement in Colombia, political violence has not completely ended. Assassinations of politicians, electoral candidates, judicial officials, and political activists continue across the region, due in part to land disputes in Peru and Brazil and to party activism in Honduras and Mexico.

Some countries in the LAC region have experienced rapid increases in crime and violence, while the crime rates in others have remained stable. In Mexico, a relatively peaceful country until 2006, a crime epidemic began after former President Felipe Calderón decided to wage a "war on drugs" and confronted drug trafficking organizations. Although for years Mexico was an important transiting distributor of illegal drugs entering the United States, the powerful cartels that dominated the transit routes did not generate high levels of violence. As drug dealers had monopolistic control over their territories and these lines were well defined, violence was controlled. The government's war on drugs upset the status quo, and criminal organizations fighting over transit corridors and territory has contributed to extremely high homicide rates in some parts of Mexico.

Belize and Panama are not significant narcotics producers but in recent years have also become the major transit countries for illegal drugs moving from South America to the United States. Despite the fact that Panama is a major transit point for the international drug trade, it has been relatively unaffected by drugs, crime, violence, or gangs, although the situation has worsened in recent years.

The Caribbean routes that had been favored shifted to Central America in the 1990s, following strong sea and air interdiction efforts in the Caribbean. Evidence suggests that Caribbean drug trafficking may once again be on the rise. Honduras and Guatemala are the most heavily affected by illicit trafficking. In Honduras, this is likely due to the easy sea and air access to the coast and land access between Honduras and Mexico. Guatemala's advantages for drug traffickers also include the remote regions bordering Mexico.

Violent urban youth gangs are exacerbating the citizen security problem in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, possibly increasing their involvement in the drug trade. El Salvador is not a major transit country, but it is seen as a safe haven for narco-dollars. Nicaragua and Costa Rica, on the other hand, have been less affected by crime, violence, and drug trafficking. Although there is a lack of clear evidence as to why, some experts suggest it may be due to better-performing police forces and, in the case of Costa Rica, a better-performing justice sector.

The countries of the Caribbean region, with the possible exceptions of Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, display very different characteristics from Central America and Mexico. By and large, they have stable, democratic governments and a history of respect for the rule of law. The islands have been used

as major transit stops for illegal drugs coming out of northern South America by sea and air. The drug trade had abated due to strong interdiction efforts but appears to be increasing once again. Youth unemployment also has contributed to an increase in domestic drug consumption. A rise in violent crime rates also is of concern. Homicide rates are on average considerably lower than in Central America, but they are going up at a worrisome rate, and St. Kitts, Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago have rates comparable to the Central America. While Jamaica has reasonably good human development and consistently improving stable democratic governance, it nonetheless has an extremely high murder rate, fueled in large part by drug trafficking. In fact, according to InSight Crime's 2019 Homicide Round-Up, Jamaica had the highest homicide rate in the LAC region (47.4 per 100,000) behind Venezuela (60.3 per 100,000).[201] A gang culture extolling violent behavior and heavy firearms use has taken root, especially in marginalized urban areas. Criminal organizations in marginalized urban areas have longstanding ties to the leading political parties, which use them to enforce electoral loyalty and protect corrupt practices. The Dominican Republic also has been used in drug trafficking for many years. The generally improved interdiction of the movement of drugs through the Caribbean had reduced interest in the Dominican Republic as a transit country, but signs point to an effort by traffickers to reestablish earlier routes. Non-drug-related youth violence and crime also represents a citizen security challenge, and homicide levels and gang presence are increasing. Corruption is thought to have infected the police at high levels, and the Dominican Republic continues to be a transit point for arms trafficking.

[201] Asmann, P. and E. O'Reilly. 2020. "InSight Crime's 2019 Homicide Round-Up." https://insightcrime.org/news/analysis/insight-crime-2019-homicide-round-up/

ANNEX C: MATRIX OF EVIDENCE-BASED CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS, ACCORDING TO RISK LEVEL AND PREVENTION LEVEL

Risk level		Types of Prevention		
		Primary prevention	**Secondary prevention**	**Tertiary prevention**
Individual level	**Highly Effective***	• **Early child development and preschool enrichment programs for at-risk children**	• **Providing incentives for youth at high risk for violence to complete secondary schooling** • **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (like Becoming a Man program in Chicago)[202]**	• **Drug courts** • **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**
	Undetermined†	• Parenting training • Job training combined with life skills and internships (comprehensive job training programs) • School-based programs that help students develop social, emotional, and behavioral skills to build positive relationships	• Academic enrichment programs for those at risk of dropping out	• Rehabilitation of firearm victims

[202] Becoming a Man is a dropout and violence prevention program in Chicago for at-risk youth male students in grades 7-12. http://www.youth-guidance.org/feature/b-m-becoming-man/. For a study of this program, see Heller S.B. Shah, A.K. Guryan, L. Ludwig, J. Mullainathan, S. and Pollack, H.A. *Thinking Fast and Slow? Some Field Experiments to Reduce Crime and Dropout in Chicago.* National Bureau of Economic Research, 2015.

Risk level		Types of Prevention		
		Primary prevention	**Secondary prevention**	**Tertiary prevention**
Individual level	*Not Effective*‡	• *Programs providing information about drug abuse* • *Individual counseling*	–	• *Scared Straight programs. Probation and parole programs that include meetings with prison inmates describing the brutality of prison life* • *Trying youth offenders in adult courts*
Relationship level	**Highly Effective***	• **Mentoring programs that pair youth with caring adults** • **Targeting incentives to mother to keep child in school** • **Family therapy**	–	–
	Undetermined†	• Training in parenting skills • Home-school partnership programs to promote parental involvement	• Court protection orders for intimate partner violence victims • Alternative dispute resolution programs	• Shelters for victims of domestic violence
	Not Effective‡	• *Peer mediation or peer counseling*	• *Gang membership prevention/intervention programs—providing education and employment opportunities to youth at risk of becoming involved in gangs*	–

Risk level		Types of Prevention		
		Primary prevention	**Secondary prevention**	**Tertiary prevention**
Community level	Undetermined[†]	• Situational prevention/neighborhood upgrading/beautification programs (including CPTED) • Community policing • Creating safe routes for children on their way to and from school or other community activities • Improving school settings, including teacher practices, school policies, and security • Providing after-school programs to extend adult supervision • Extra-curricular activities • Positive youth development programs • Life skills training • Training health care workers to identify and refer youths at high risk for violence • Community policing • Reducing the availability and increasing price of alcohol • National youth service programs	• Providing equivalency education and diploma programs • Community policing • Directed patrols • Violence interruption, like Cure Violence, Boston Cease Fire	• Prison-based drug rehab programs

Risk level		Types of Prevention		
		Primary prevention	**Secondary prevention**	**Tertiary prevention**
Community level	*Not Effective*‡	–	• *Gun buy-back programs* • *Citizen patrols* • *Random patrols*	• *Reactive arrests* • *Trying young offenders in adult courts*
Societal level	Undetermined†	• De-concentration of poverty • Reducing income inequality • Reducing media violence • Public information/media campaigns disseminating information about risks and consequences of violent behavior; drug abuse; information on mediation and other non-violent conflict resolution resources available in the community • Enforcing laws prohibiting illegal transfers of guns to youth	• Legislation restricting concealed carrying of firearms • Laws that reduce children's access to firearms • Regulating sales of alcohol • Raising alcohol prices	• Restorative justice • Setting up trauma systems for rapid response and rehabilitation • Mandatory reporting laws for child abuse and abuse of the elderly • Laws establishing procedures for handling cases of sexual violence • Implementing disarmament and demobilization programs

Key:

*** Highly Effective: Demonstrated to be effective in reducing risk factors for crime and violence**

† Undetermined: Interventions for which rigorous evaluations have not yet been conducted

‡ *Not Effective: Less promising or shown to be ineffective in reducing crime or violence or risk for crime and violence*

ANNEX D: EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

Key: 1 - Primary Level, 2 - Secondary Level, 3 - Tertiary Level

Intervention Type	Intervention Example	Prevention Level Supported by Evidence
Hot spots policing	Hot Spots Policing in Bogotá	3
Psychosocial parenting programs	Triple P	1 2
Structured interventions targeting criminogenic risk (e.g., Thinking for a Change)	Sustainable Transformation of Youth in Liberia (STYL)	3
Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)	Becoming a Man (BAM)	2 3
School-based interventions to reduce aggressive and violent behavior	School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)	1 2 3
Multi-dimensional family therapy	Multi-dimensional family therapy (MDFT)	2 3
School-based program to prevent dating violence	Safe Dates	1 2
Multi-sector outreach and community intervention with proven risk youth	Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI)	3
Focused deterrence	Operation Ceasefire	3
Violence interruption	Cure Violence	3
Afterschool programs	Trinidad & Tobago Violence Prevention Academy; Glasswing intervention in El Salvador	1
Peer influence, whole school intervention	KiVa anti-bullying program	1 2

Source: Campie, Patricia et al. "Evidence Mapping and Gap Analysis of Youth Violence Prevention Interventions." USAID, October 2018.

ANNEX E: POTENTIAL SOURCES FOR CRIME AND VIOLENCE DATA

DATA CATEGORY	POTENTIAL DATA SOURCE	EXAMPLES OF COLLECTED INFORMATION
Mortality	Death certificates, vital statistics, death, time, place and location of medical examiners or coroners	Individual characteristics, cause of registries, reports from mortuaries
Morbidity and health-related	Hospital, clinical, and medical records	Disease, injuries, physical or mental health information, circumstances of injury, injury severity
Self-reported	Surveys, focus groups, media	Attitudes, beliefs and practices, victimization and perpetration, exposure to violence in community and the home, risk behavior
Community-based	Demographic records, local government records, community consultations	Population counts, income levels, educational levels, unemployment rates, community perceptions
Criminal	Police records, judiciary records, prison records, crime laboratories	Offense type, characteristics of offenders, circumstances of event, characteristics of victims
Economic/social	Institutional or agency records, special studies	Health expenditures, use of services, access to health care, costs of treatments, personal and household income, distribution of income
Policy or legislative	Government and legislative records	Laws, decrees, institutional policies and practices

ANNEX F: ASSESSING THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A POTENTIAL TARGET AREA

Information about the physical and social features of the target area is critical in analyzing and understanding the causes and contributors of crime and violence. It also helps in designing crime and violence prevention programs that take into account the particular characteristics of the community and its physical environment.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Information about physical characteristics is particularly useful for designing situational crime prevention projects, including CPTED interventions. The main physical characteristics that should be assessed during the diagnostic phase include:

- **Population density.** Areas with high population density and overcrowded conditions often have higher crime rates.
- **Neighborhood layout and housing types.** Factors such as zoning for allocating land for specific uses, layout of neighborhoods, the type of housing, and the size of plots can affect crime rates. Improvised dwellings in informal settlements are often easier to break into and harder to secure with burglar bars or door locks. Large plots or small holdings reduce the number of pedestrians using the streets, meaning there are fewer "eyes" on the street.
- **Image and infrastructure.** Graffiti, garbage, broken windows, and neglected yards create an impression that an area is unsafe and may mean that residents will be less interested in improving the area where they live. It is important to take note of what parts of the community are electrified and have infrastructure and services. Poor street lighting may encourage criminality; a lack of infrastructure and services makes people more vulnerable to crime.
- **Transport routes.** The layout and nature of roads and railway lines can provide opportunities for crime and hinder crime prevention efforts. Highways bring non-resident traffic and provide easy routes for criminals to enter and escape from an area.
- **Vacant land and houses.** Large areas of vacant or underdeveloped land are often poorly maintained and provide opportunities for crime, render people walking in these areas vulnerable to attack, and make police patrol more difficult. Vacant houses are sometimes used by criminal groups for drug sales or other criminal activities.
- **Commercial and industrial facilities.** Certain types of business may attract or facilitate crime. Pawnshops, for instance, may provide an easy way to sell stolen goods shortly after committing a crime, while rental storage units provide a place to hide stolen merchandise until it is safe to unload it.

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Social characteristics are important because crime and violence affect people in different ways throughout the community. Important social factors to consider include:

- **Age.** Age can be an important factor in understanding and anticipating crime levels in the area. Changes in crime levels in the United States have been linked to the number of people between the ages of 15 and 24—the largest pool of offenders.
- **Gender.** Women are more vulnerable to certain types of crime, such as domestic violence and sexual assault. Young men are most at risk of other violent crimes and are more likely to commit crime.
- **Sexual orientation.** Members of the LGBTQI+ community are targets of crimes such as homicide and physical and sexual assault.
- **Disability.** Youth with disabilities are about four times more likely to experience violence than non-disabled children.[203]
- **Ethnic background.** Members of indigenous communities and Afro-descendants are more often victims of crime and violence.[204]
- **Socioeconomic status.** Poverty and unemployment are associated with crime and need to be considered in designing prevention activities.
- **Income inequality.** High levels of crime and violence are often linked to high levels of economic inequality. In many Latin American and Caribbean cities, rich and poor people live side by side. This is often where crime is highest.
- **Youth activities.** Many types of crimes and violence are committed by young, unemployed adults and adolescents. It is important to find out what recreational, sports, and social facilities exist and whether there are any organizations to which young people can belong. Schools may also provide activities and may be involved in crime and violence reduction activities such as raising awareness or providing aftercare facilities.
- **Communication and participation in community activities.** It will be easier to implement crime and violence prevention programs in communities where there is good communication among residents and high levels of participation in local organizations and activities. Neighborhood watch programs and street or block committees indicate that people are willing to participate in crime and violence prevention activities.
- **Security of tenure and length of occupancy.** Crime tends to be higher in communities where there is a high degree of change of occupancy or property. Residents who rent may have less interest in securing their communities than do homeowners, as do those who live in a community temporarily rather than settling long-term. Different types of land tenure can affect the ability and inclination of residents to invest in their houses. Rapid turnover of housing also affects the social cohesion of the community.

[203] WHO. "Violence against adults and children with disabilities." https://www.who.int/disabilities/violence/en/#:~:text=The%20review%20indicated%20that%20children,be%20victims%20of%20sexual%20violence.
[204] World Bank. 2018. "Afro-descendants in Latin America: Toward a Framework of Inclusion."

SETTING PRIORITIES

Crime and violence prevention projects are most likely to succeed if they focus on a small number of manageable problems. That allows projects to target interventions where they are most needed and are most likely to succeed.

Setting priorities may mean choosing between several serious crime or violence problems and among geographical areas that are equally affected by crime and violence. Community engagement in priority setting is critical for reducing violence long-term. The following criteria can be used to prioritize:

SEVERITY OF CRIME AND VIOLENCE

- **Volume:** how much crime and violence occurs
- **Rate**: which problems have the highest rates of occurrence
- **Risk:** which problems pose the greatest risk to the community
- **Rate of change**: which problems are increasing the fastest
- **Fear and concern**: which problems people are most concerned about
- **Injury:** which problems lead to the most physical harm
- **Cost**: problems associated with the highest dollar loss
- **System response**: problems that the system deals with least effectively
- **Community assets**: problems that communities may be able to deal with most effectively
- **Reduction potential**: which problems will be easiest to prevent.

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS WHICH ARE MOST AFFECTED

It is important to identify the places, or "hot spots," where specific crimes are most likely to occur. If an analysis shows that certain parts of the community are more prone to crime and violence, this may affect the decision to prioritize these areas for crime and violence prevention interventions.

CHARACTERISTICS OF VICTIMS AND TARGETS AT HIGH RISK

It is important to identify factors such as the age, gender, ethnicity, and occupation of the victim; the type and location of home or business establishment; and the type and make of stolen property. There may be information about the extent of repeat victimization (whether people are victim of a crime more than once). Also consider which crimes victims tend to fear the most and why. Such characteristics can help to identify which type of interventions may be most appropriate in a particular crime and violence prevention strategy. For instance, elderly victims or persons with disabilities need to be offered different solutions than those offered to school children. Similarly, assaults on strangers require different approaches than domestic assaults.

CATEGORIES OF MOST-LIKELY OFFENDERS

Information about offender characteristics is particularly important for social development programs that are directed toward changing offenders or preventing potential offenders. Many programs neglect to target offenders; a mistake that can reduce the effectiveness of a crime and violence prevention strategy.

ANNEX G: EXAMPLES OF A SELECTION OF FOCUS AREAS AND INTERVENTIONS FOR A MUNICIPALITY

Focus area 1: Reducing youth related crime and violence

- Develop evening sports and recreational programs at local schools
- Make schools crime- and violence-free environments
- Enforce laws relating to under-age drinking and sale of alcohol to minors
- Develop school completion and business development program for at-risk youth
- Keeps schools open later with supervision for pupils
- Train teachers to recognize child abuse
- Develop parenting programs: single-parent support and training opportunities
- Ensure children with learning difficulties continue at school
- Support preschool activities

Focus area 2: Reducing domestic violence

- Develop and run a shelter in a neighboring town and provide a job placement service
- Develop a school-based sensitivity program
- Provide victim counseling services through primary healthcare workers
- Provide counseling services for abusive partners
- Design community norms and attitudes programs
- Restrict the sale of alcohol and supervise bars
- Train residents on available resources and how to support victims and witnesses, referrals for perpetrators

Focus area 3: Developing internal crime and violence prevention capacity in the community:

- Train residents in crime and violence prevention
- Initiate a functional planning process to increase community violence prevention activities
- Initiate quarterly meetings of community leaders and government representatives to discuss integrating crime and violence prevention programs
- Agree on priorities with all departments and ensure that they are included in strategic work plans and budgets.

Source: A Resource Guide for Municipalities: Community-Based Violence Prevention in Urban Latin America, World Bank, 2003.

ANNEX H: INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S REGIONAL SYSTEM OF STANDARDIZED INDICATORS FOR CITIZEN SECURITY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION (SES)

In an effort to standardize indicators on crime and violence across countries in the LAC region, the IDB has created the "**Regional System of Standardized Indicators for Citizen Security and Violence Prevention (SES)."** The Regional System of Standardized Indicators in peaceful coexistence and Citizen Security (RIC) is a project through which **15 countries** and two capital cities of Latin America and the Caribbean have partnered to improve and compare their statistics on crime and violence. This initiative has been promoted and financed by the **Inter-American Development Bank - IDB** through the **Regional Public Goods** program under the coordination and execution of **CISALVA Institute** at the **Universidad del Valle** in Cali, Colombia. The **citizen security indicators** were designed, reviewed and approved by the project's **partner countries** , along with established **definitions and methodologies** for the standardizing of the collecting, processing and analyzing stages of the information flow in order to support the **quality of the data** published. These indicators were reviewed in various regional boards, resulting in the improvement of some of them and the selection of additional citizen security indicators. The indicators are obtained via administrative records and others via surveys. In order to ensure the comparability of the indicators, a standardization process of concepts relating to the variables of time, place, person and circumstance was developed. The standardization of the following citizen security indicators will enable countries that associate with the RIC to develop, implement and evaluate public policies for security, based on comparable and verifiable information for more effective joint actions across the region.

Nota bene: *The Regional System of Standardized Indicators for peaceful coexistence and citizen security is an ongoing effort that is just in its initial stages with some of the partner countries. Therefore, only the data that has undergone the project's technical analysis and meets the standards has been published on the section* ***Indicators.***

1. Homicide rate per every 100,000 inhabitants.
2. Death rate by traffic accidents per every 100,000 inhabitants.
3. Suicide rate per every 100,000 inhabitants older than 5 years of age.
4. Firearm death rate per every 100,000 inhabitants.
5. Complaint rate for sex crimes per every 100,000 inhabitants.
6. Rate of complaints of intrafamily/family/domestic violence per every 100,000 inhabitants.
7. Complaint rate for child and adolescent maltreatment for every 1000 individuals younger than 18 years of age.
8. Theft rate per every 100,000 inhabitants.
9. Robbery rate per every 100,000 inhabitants.
10. Rate of automotive theft and robbery per every 10, 000 vehicles registered.
11. Kidnapping rate per every 100,000 inhabitants.
12. Violation rate for driving while intoxicated by alcohol in people over 15 years.
13. Prevalence of sexual violence.
14. Prevalence of intrafamily/family and domestic violence.
15. Rate of criminal victimization in people older than 18 years of age.
16. Percentage of victimization due to robbery, in people older than 18 years of age.
17. Percentage of victimization due to theft, in people older than 18 years of age.
18. Percentage of people with perception of insecurity, in people older than 18 years of age.

19. Percentage of people with perception of risk, in people older than 18 years of age.
20. Percentage of people with perception of fear, in people older than 18 years of age.
21. Percentage of people who justify the use of violence, in people older 18 years of age.
22. Percentage of people with confidence in the institutions, in people older 18 years of age.

Recently, USAID published a resource guide for aligning indicators and interventions to deepen impact of youth violence prevention interventions in the LAC region.[205]

[205] Campie, P., Hill, C., Dias, P., Garcia, M. & Mizrahi, Y. (2021) Youth Violence Prevention in LAC: A Resource Guide for Aligning Indicators and Interventions to Deepen Impact. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.

ANNEX I: REFERENCES

Note: The literature on citizen security is vast, especially in recent years; however, most studies refer to examples of work done in developed countries. An emerging body of research and reports is focusing on Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean because of the acuteness of the crime and violence problems there.

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ANNEX J: USEFUL RESOURCES RELATED TO CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Crime Solutions
https://crimesolutions.ojp.gov/

Blueprints for Violence Prevention
http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
http://www.ojjdp.gov/

The Prevention Institute
http://www.preventioninstitute.org/

International Center for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC)
http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org

Inter-American Development Bank – Regional Systems of Indicators
http://www.seguridadyregion.com/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention –Division of Violence Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/

European Forum for Urban Security
https://efus.eu

United National Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
https://www.unodc.org/

World Bank – Citizen Security Program
www.worldbank.org/lacurbancrime

National League of Cities – Institute for Youth, Education, and Families
http://www.nlc.org/

Washington Office on Latin America
https://www.wola.org/

Insight Crime
https://insightcrime.org/

Woodrow Wilson Center
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/

Chicago Crime Lab
https://crimelab.uchicago.edu/

U.S. Department of Justice – Office of Justice Programs
http://ojp.gov/programs/youthviolenceprevention.htm

International CPTED Association
https://cpted.net/

World Health Organization (WHO)
https://www.who.int/en/

Small Arms Survey
http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/

ANNEX K: LESSONS LEARNED FROM USAID/OFFICE OF TRANSITION INITIATIVES HONDURAS PROGRAM

The USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) Honduras program is designed to reduce homicide and other violent crime and reduce illicit control in marginalized urban neighborhoods in the cities of Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, La Ceiba, and Tela. All program activities are focused on the creation of low-tech and low-cost models of violence disruption that can be implemented by the Government of Honduras. USAID/OTI uses an iterative programming model, based on small grants, that allows for rapid feedback of lessons learned into the design of new activities.

Below is an annotated list of lessons learned from the USAID/OTI Honduras program that may be useful for practitioners in the field of crime and violence prevention:

- **A focus on change at the community and institutional level can lead to positive results in crime and violence prevention**

A lack of state presence is one of the prime contributors to crime and violence in a community; the most violent areas of Honduran cities coincide with those areas where the state is least present and most distrusted. Efforts to build trust between state institutions and violent communities as a whole can begin to break down this distrust and reintroduce state institutions. This is best accomplished by involving communities in the process of determining what services they want, then assisting state institutions in providing those services, and subsequently aiding communities in holding the government accountable for what they have agreed to do.

- **Improvements in the built environment can lead to improvements in levels of crime and violence**

Some physical improvements have direct impacts on security, such as street lighting installation and upgrades or public space rehabilitations that allow communities to reclaim spaces for positive community activities. Additionally, these projects can serve to increase community cohesion, if implemented through an inclusive process that increases the ability of the community (through legitimate community leaders) to advocate for itself and fight for its interests, which include improving security.

- **Within any violent community, there are residents who are willing to work to reduce violence**

Those residents need skills, encouragement, and a reason to come together to take action in the face of high levels of crime and violence. Building their capacity to advocate for their communities and facilitating partnerships within communities and between communities and government institutions allows these willing residents to become active participants in reducing violence in their communities.

- **An intensive focus on data and analysis, especially geographic, is critical**

In violent urban environments, levels and dynamics of violence vary neighborhood by neighborhood, and even block by block. Constant monitoring of changing trends is critical to correctly target activities in the complex and shifting urban landscape.

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