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# Mapping of Homicide Prevention Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean

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FINAL REPORT

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## FORWARD

This report is the result of a study of homicide prevention programs in Latin America and the Caribbean carried out in 2015 and 2016, financed by Open Society Foundations in the context of a general strategy for reducing homicides. Other initiatives are part of this same strategy, such as the drafting of the Bogotá Protocol on Homicide Data Quality (2015) and the campaign to raise awareness on homicides in Latin America, currently under way. Ours is, unfortunately, the region with the highest homicide rates in the world, and it needs to react to the problem. Participating in this reaction is a task that everyone must take up, including government authorities and civil society.

## I. INTRODUCTION: HOMICIDES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Despite the historical trend towards an overall decline in violence (Lappi-Seppala and Lehti, 2014; Pinker, 2011; Eisner, 2003, 2014), violence continues to be a serious problem for humankind. In 2012 alone 475,000 persons died due to intentional homicide (UNODC, 2014) and it is estimated that in the last 15 years approximately 6 million individuals have died for that reason. This means homicides are responsible for more deaths than the armed conflicts that have taken place during the same time period (Butchart, Mikton, Dahlberg, and Krug, 2015).

Latin America and the Caribbean stand out for the high incidence of lethal violence. With just 8% of the world population, the region accounts for 33% of the homicides on the planet, followed by Africa with 31%, Asia with 28%, Europe with 5%, North America with 3%, and Oceania with 0.3% (Jaitman, 2016; UNODC, 2013). In addition, just four Latin American countries – Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela – account for 25% of all homicides worldwide (Avelar, 2016; Eisner, 2015).

The region holds a worrisome place not only in absolute terms but also in terms of recent trends. In contrast to the situation in other continents, the Americas have experienced an increase in violence from 2000 to 2012, with an increase from 15.2 homicides per 100,000 population to 21 per 100,000. The rate for 2012 is significantly greater than the global rate (8.3 per 100,000) and the rates for Europe (2.2 per 100,000), Asia (3.6 per 100,000), Oceania (4.4 per 100,000), and Africa (8.3 per 100,000) (UNODC, 2013; Vilalta, 2015).

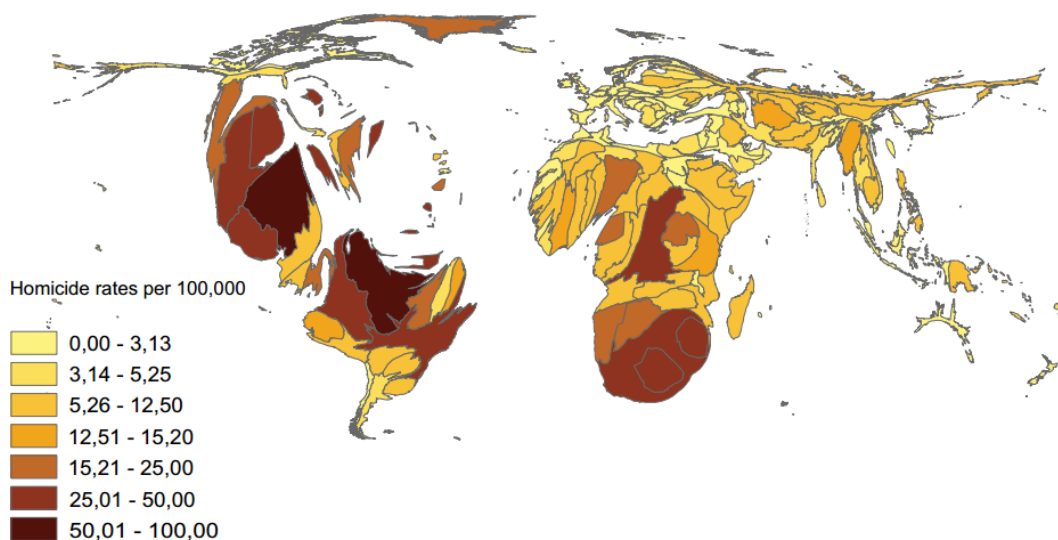
Nonetheless, it should be noted that the aggregate figures conceal a high degree of heterogeneity within each region (UNODC, 2013). In this regard, the UNODC divides the Americas into four subregions with contrasting rates: North America (4.5), Central America (33.8), South America (16.6), and the Caribbean (22.4). The trends or variations in the rate also differ from one subregion to the next, such that from 2000 to 2012 it declined in North America (-40%) and South America (-20%), yet saw sharp increases in Central America (60%) and the Caribbean (90%). At present Central America is the subregion with the highest homicide rates on earth (UNODC, 2013; Vilalta, 2015).

As happens with the regions, within the subregions there are also inequalities in the distribution of homicides. In South America, for example, the rates in the Southern Cone countries (Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay) are similar to the figures for Europe, while in northern South America (Venezuela and Colombia) the rates are similar to the high figures for

Central America (UNODC, 2013). At the same time, in the most violent countries and cities the incidence of homicide also tends to be concentrated in certain localities or urban areas.

To graphically illustrate the distribution of homicides, Figure 1 shows how the world would look if the size of the countries were adjusted for their homicide rates.

**FIGURE 1. ANAMORPHIC MAP OF HOMICIDES (2012)<sup>1</sup>**



The map represents the distribution of homicide rates around the world. In this way, Central America, South America and Southern Africa are disproportionately represented.

**Source:** Igarapé Institute (2015)

The countries of the region are also unfavorably situated in relation to the level of clarification of homicides and homicide convictions. From 80% to 85% of homicides are clarified in Asia and Europe, whereas in the Americas this percentage is only 50%. The conviction rate, which is the number of convictions per 100 victims of intentional homicide, is 24 per 100 in the Americas at the same time as it is 48 per 100 in Asia and 81 per 100 in Europe. This indicates an insufficient response on the part of the criminal justice system, which translates into high rates of impunity in homicide cases (UNODC, 2013).<sup>2</sup>

As regards the social profile of the victims of homicide, most of the victims in the world are youths ages 15 to 29 years, although this profile is more marked in the Americas (UNODC, 2013). In addition, countries with high rates generally have many instrumental homicides, i.e. homicides carried out in association with and related to crimes such as the control of

<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from Eisner (2015: 5).

<sup>2</sup> Just as an example, in Honduras only 3% of homicides result in a conviction of the perpetrator, while that percentage is 79% in countries such as England and Wales (Eisner, 2015).

territories and illegal markets. In countries with low homicide rates it is a more individual phenomenon and generally takes place in social circles closer to the victim (Eisner, 2015).

Beyond the suffering of the individual victims, lethal violence has negative consequences for whole societies (Waters, Hyder, Rajkotia, Basu, and Butchart, 2005). Not only does it involve direct costs associated with medical services and criminal justice, but also significant indirect costs related to the reduction of productivity, the erosion of human and social capital, the weakened legitimacy of the state, the disincentive to investment and tourism, and deterioration in the quality of life, among other costs (Butchart, 2008; Waters et al., 2005).

Indeed, violence is giving rise to growing interest on the part of the international community. In 2014, the 67<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly asked the World Health Organization (WHO) to draw up an action plan to prepare the services to prevent and respond adequately to situations of violence (WHO, 2014). In addition, in 2015 the United Nations General Assembly defined as one of the objectives in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development “promote peaceful and inclusive societies,”<sup>3</sup> which would imply, among other things, carrying out strategic actions to reduce violence (United Nations, 2015).

The multilateral agencies have analyzed and implemented violence prevention initiatives, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean (for example, IDB, 2014; CAF, 2014; UNDP, 2013; OAS, 2012; World Bank, 2011). A review of documents from those institutions clearly reveals that homicides are being taken into account, though they are not always conceptualized as the main problem.

The homicide rate is a common indicator of violence in societies and has relative advantages with respect to other crimes and expressions of violence. Homicide data generally has a lower level of under-registration, in addition to making possible comparability between countries and the triangulation of records from the health sector and crime statistics. For that reason, the homicide rate per 100,000 population is considered the most common indicator of the distribution and evolution of violence in societies<sup>4</sup> and is frequently used as contextual information and/or as a criterion for selecting areas or groups for interventions. While

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<sup>3</sup> This is Goal 16 of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. It reads as follows: “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

<sup>4</sup> For a critical analysis of homicide data quality in Latin America and the Caribbean, see: Ribeiro, Borges and Cano (2015).



homicides generally appear in the vast literature on preventing violence and crime, there is little specific literature on the topic. This is explained mainly because homicides are generally thought of in the framework of violence more broadly conceived.

In general, homicide may be associated with other kinds of violent crime in one of three ways: (i) homicide may result from causes common to other violent behaviors; (ii) homicide may be determined by other violent behaviors (for example, in the case of homicide followed by robbery); and, (iii) homicide may represent the maximum intensity of a continuum of violence associated with a general phenomenon (for example, in the case of femicide and gender violence). This way of seeing homicide, based not on its specificity<sup>5</sup> but as an epiphenomenon or as the extreme expression of other expressions of violence, informs numerous international recommendations and public policies. Such a perspective allows one to lay a foundation for a holistic approach to reducing violence, of which homicides are a part.

In Latin America and the Caribbean several international organizations (for example, IDB, 2014; CAF, 2014; UNDP, 2013; OAS, 2012; and World Bank, 2011) have promoted the development of broad strategies for reducing violence and crime associated with the idea of citizen security.<sup>6</sup> Citizen security, in contrast with the more traditional paradigms of security, naturally refers to prevention, requires an inter-sectoral approach, and aims to articulate social components (cultural activities for youth), environmental components (recovery of public space), components related to risk factors (arms control), and components associated with the criminal justice system (community policing, restorative justice, improving the prison system, etc.). From this perspective, one generally recommends a wide array of highly varied initiatives with the expectation of not only impacting crime in general, but also reducing homicides specifically.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in its Global Status Report on Violence Prevention, also relies on a broad concept of interpersonal violence<sup>7</sup> to offer recommendations on prevention nationally and internationally. In brief, it offers the countries a series of suggestions such as: (i) reinforce data collection to reveal the true scope of the problem; (ii) draw up integrated national action plans based on data; (iii) integrate violence

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<sup>5</sup> Conceiving of homicide as a specific phenomenon does not mean ignoring its complexity, either as regards its connection to other forms of violence or in relation to its many etiologies.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on citizen security programs implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean, consult: <http://citizensecurity.igarape.org.br/>

<sup>7</sup> Interpersonal violence may occur between members of the same family, couples, or persons who know each other or who do not, including child abuse, youth violence, violence in the couple, sexual violence, and abuse of older adults.

prevention in other health platforms; (iv) reinforce the leadership and coordination mechanisms; (v) see to it that the prevention programs are thorough, integrated, and evidence-based; (vi) guarantee that services for victims are integral; (vii) reinforce support for the studies to evaluate the results; (viii) apply the laws in force and examine their impact; (ix) promulgate and apply policies and laws adapted to different types of violence; and (x) strengthen the capacities for violence prevention (UNODC, 2014: 10). UNODC also recommends to the international community that it: (i) bolster the world program for violence prevention; (ii) strengthen support for the establishment of complete and integrated violence prevention programs; (iii) reinforce the initiatives of the regional and subregional organizations for them to cooperate with the national offices so as to compile data and disseminate the results obtained; (iv) strengthen the collaboration among international organizations and donor agencies; and (v) establish baselines and goals, and monitor the progress made (UNODC, 2014: 10).

From the realm of public health, the WHO also uses a general concept of violence<sup>8</sup> when it proposes prevention strategies. The main recommendations it has offered include: (i) support the establishment of safe and stable relationships between children and their parents and caregivers; (ii) reduce the availability and unlawful use of alcohol; (iii) reduce access to lethal means; (iv) improve the life skills of and opportunities for children and youth; (v) promote gender equality and women's autonomy; (vi) change the cultural norms that support violence; (vii) improve the criminal justice systems; (viii) improve the social welfare systems; (ix) reduce the social distance among groups in conflict; and (x) reduce economic inequality and concentrated poverty (WHO, 2008; PAHO, 2013). In tandem with the prevention strategies to reduce violence in the long run measures are needed to attenuate the most immediate consequences of violence. It is also argued that such measures could contribute to interrupting the cycle of violence, manifested for example in children learning aggressive behaviors or in acts of vengeance for prior violent acts by different groups of youths. In summary, the WHO also recommends: (i) securing a commitment from the health sector to work on violence prevention; (ii) providing mental health and social services to the victims of violence; (iii) improving the emergency response to injuries caused by violence; and (iv) reducing recidivism among offenders (WHO, 2008; PAHO, 2013).

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<sup>8</sup> The WHO understands violence broadly, including various manifestations of intentional violence (youth violence, child abuse, violence in the couple, sexual violence, etc.), accidental violence, and self-inflicted violence.

In 2014, the WHO and Cambridge University held a conference for violence reduction that issued the following recommendations: (i) prioritize the areas with the greatest problems: target the low- and medium-income countries, hot spots, and the most violent cities; (ii) disseminate, adapt, and replicate the best practices in other countries; (iii) take advantage of the power of big data to reduce violence, improving the scope of data, access to data, and standards; (iv) protect the most vulnerable, focusing on children, youth, and women; (v) improve violence prevention leadership, governance, and policies; and (vi) create global strategic partnerships for prevention (Krisch, Eisner, Mikton, and Butchart, 2015: 8)

In sum, the problem of violence has emerged as an important issue internationally and is being addressed from various angles, such as the criminal justice system, the health system, and organized civil society. Nonetheless, the recommendations for reducing homicides are framed in a general concept of violence prevention. There are still very few targeted and specific recommendations.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is *to map the existence of homicide prevention and reduction programs in the region and offer a critical analysis* of them. The idea is to contribute to a better understanding of these programs and at the same time offer an array of possible options to policymakers or members of organized civil society who wish to undertake or improve initiatives along those lines. More broadly, this research study has the strategic purpose of helping to raise the profile of the issue of lethal violence in Latin America.

Ideally, it would be desirable to also offer the reader a conclusion on the effectiveness and efficiency of each of these programs, which would be very important for deciding on the initiatives that should be employed. Nonetheless, for a number of reasons that will only be possible in very few cases in this paper. The first is that the vast majority of violence prevention programs do not have impact evaluations, much less cost-benefit evaluations with the methodological rigor required to make a conclusive judgment. Most of the initiatives have, at most, audits and evaluations of implementation that relate to the activities they have carried out, often performed by the same personnel who carry out the program. These evaluations of implementation occasionally show how homicides evolved during the process, but rarely do they make it possible to unequivocally attribute the causality of the results to the measures taken. Thus, there is very little in the way of baselines, control groups, time series, or other quasi-experimental strategies. Second, many of these programs are relatively recent, such that the time needed for them to achieve their potential results and to be able to be subject to evaluation has yet to elapse. Third, some of those programs have limited evaluability, either because they do not have clear objectives and components, because they include a large number of interventions of various types, making it difficult to determine which are having an impact, or because the policy simultaneously affects the entire territory, making it impossible to establish control groups. Fourth, even in the minority of cases in which there are impact evaluations, the results are not always conclusive and there are often disputes over the extent of the success attained. Accordingly, offering a final assessment of the existing evidence requires a careful examination of a volume of data and literature that we are not in a position to assume for all the programs. Therefore, this study will take stock of the presumable effectiveness of the policies for only a few cases.

In general, the initiatives considered in this study have to *meet at least one of the following two criteria*:

(i) Programs that *propose reducing homicides as a specific goal*. These programs may be national, state, or local, undertaken by the government, organized civil society, other actors such as private companies, or a combination of the above. Both the successful programs and those that have failed will be considered, as well as those in which there is not yet any evidence of impact, in the understanding that one can and should learn from both successful experiences and those that did not work out and should be avoided in the future.

(ii) Programs which even without a stated objective of reducing lethal violence had a *proven impact reducing homicides* at some point. In this case, it is required that the initiative be susceptible of fitting into the area of public security or violence. In other words, programs from other areas, such as reducing illicit crops, will not be incorporated even though they may have had some effect reducing homicides.

As regards this second group of programs with a proven effect reducing homicides, independent of the original intent, the greatest difficulty, as mentioned above, is determining impact based on evidence that is not always definitive. Therefore, we recognize that the decisions one way or another applied to a specific program will necessarily be open for discussion.

This study specifically considers programs, that is, deliberate interventions carried out at a specific moment, designed with the intent of changing some important aspect of the situation. Accordingly, structural events that affect a society and that cannot be conceptualized as a program, such as the end of a civil war, will not be considered, following the logic that they do not constitute interventions that other policymakers can imitate. Nor will changes in legislation be considered, nor everyday investments in improving the criminal justice system (such as improving the equipment and capabilities for police investigation), even though they may have an effect on crime and violence, unless they have been proposed for the stated objective of reducing homicides.

This exercise does not propose to be exhaustive, which is extremely difficult in such a large and diverse region, but simply to present the most important types of initiatives. Therefore, it is possible that there are other programs additional to those described here, especially at the local level, that have not been detected by our search. In short, the objective was not to offer a registry of all the existing programs, but a critical compilation of the main options that are possible.

In recent decades Latin America has experienced a set of violence prevention programs, broadly speaking, both national and local, at times financed by international

organizations. Nonetheless, although several of these mention the phenomenon of homicides in one way or another, few explicitly propose to reduce their magnitude. So the result of this study will depend on the extent to which violence prevention programs actually focus on homicides. In summary, the programs with a focus on homicides will be included and analyzed, while violence prevention policies without a specific focus on homicides, which are much more numerous, will be set aside. This is a tenuous difference that requires decisions on inclusion and exclusion that can always be questioned. For this reason, criteria were progressively developed that can be summarized as follows:

(i) Programs that mentioned the homicide rate just as a general indicator of violence or security were excluded. Given their ubiquity and comparability, many policies mention the rate of homicides per 100,000 population as one of the indicators, or the main indicator, through which the impact of the intervention will be measured. When there is no explicit reference to homicide reduction we understand that the homicide rate operates only as a generic metric of violence or security, and we thus interpret that there is no focus on homicides, so the program is not included. These policies are quite common in the field of citizen security, such that if we had taken the opposite approach we would have had to incorporate many very general programs.

(ii) Programs that used the homicide rate as a criterion for selecting territories to be benefited by violence prevention programs were excluded. In tandem with what is explained in the previous point, we concluded that there is not a focus on homicides when the homicide rate is merely a criterion for choosing the areas for intervention, along with poverty or social vulnerability, without this being related to the objective of the intervention. This is also a relatively common scenario in the area of security, though not as much as the one mentioned in the previous point.

(iii) Programs that at least incorporated a specific goal of homicide reduction as part of the intervention were included. In this case, we considered that the degree of focus was sufficient and that we could understand this goal as an implicit objective of reducing homicides. Even so, several of those programs did not contain an explicit logic of how the type of intervention would bring about a reduction in lethal violence. It should be underscored that the degree of focus required considers just a minimum, for if we were rigorous in requiring an explicit logic showing how the theoretical mechanism directly impacts homicides, several programs would have to be excluded.

The existence of a specific homicide reduction goal, let's say 5% or 10% over some years, was a sufficient but not necessary condition for including the projects, for initiatives that made clear the purpose of reducing homicides were included independent of whether they mentioned a specific expectation in terms of the reduction.

(iv) As was already explained, policies that referred to violence prevention generally were considered to lack specificity and, therefore, were not incorporated in the analysis. At the same time, programs that mentioned as an objective reducing "armed violence" were interpreted as sufficiently focused on homicide, and therefore were included, considering the high lethality of firearms, especially in the regional context.

Some of the programs selected are large national initiatives that are quite complex, while others are local efforts more limited in scope. It is up to the reader and the policymaker to assess to what extent each of those experiences could constitute an inspiration for acting on one's own reality.

The analysis of the programs selected is divided into two parts. The first part presents an analysis of the set of programs that met the criteria for inclusion. Based on this empirical evidence a typology of homicide reduction initiatives was put together that is presented in one of the following chapters. The second part presents a set of case studies each of which represents a different type of intervention.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The first phase consisted of identifying the programs that were in line with the objectives of the study. First, a review was done of the specialized literature, and Internet searches were performed. To that end the descriptors used were words such as “homicide,” “femicide,” “feminicide,” “prevention,” “reduction,” and “program.” To increase the effectiveness of the search the Google search engine was used corresponding to each country on which information was sought. Depending on the case, the search was done in Spanish, Portuguese, English, or French. At least the first 10 pages of results from each consultation in each country were examined. As regards time frame, even though we did not determine a particular interval for the programs, the searches prioritized the last 25 years. The reports and articles found were archived and classified by program and country. The contact information of several key actors who were identified (academics, government institutions, social organizations, etc.) was organized in a data base and used in the next phase.

Second, an effort was made to supplement and verify the results of the Internet search. An email was sent to more than 500 contacts to request cooperation in identifying homicide prevention programs in each country of the region. Documents were requested on the initiatives of interest and phone interviews were conducted with qualified informants. Summaries were prepared on each program<sup>9</sup> that were used by the members of the research team to discuss and decide whether or not to include each program. Subsequently, a matrix was designed to analyze the programs considered relevant. The matrix codifies and systematizes information on the institutions in charge of the programs, their characteristics, funding sources, evaluation procedures, etc.<sup>10</sup> A review of the contents of the matrix made it possible to construct a typology of programs that will be described below.

The second phase began with a selection of programs that represented the different types of intervention. Each program selected was the subject of a case study. With this aim, the research team visited each of these initiatives in the respective countries and conducted semi-structured interviews<sup>11</sup> with actors involved in the development of the program, such as those directly responsible, funders, beneficiaries, specialists, and other qualified voices who could offer a perspective from outside. When possible, the team also attempted to make field

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<sup>9</sup> Each summary was approximately two pages long, and they were structured in four sections: description, objectives, results, and observations.

<sup>10</sup> For the Matrix of Programs, see Annex I.

<sup>11</sup> For the general interview script, see Annex II. Nonetheless, the script was adapted for context and type of program addressed.



visits so as to observe the intervention directly. The visits to projects took place from October 2014 to May 2016. In addition, the specialized literature on the programs in question was compiled and examined, including studies, evaluations, reports, and scientific publications.

This approach makes it possible to go more deeply into the nature, logic, implementation, and impact of the program studied, which helps to better understand how it works, its comparative advantages, its limitations, and its problems. The choice of the programs that would constitute case studies was not necessarily centered on those with the greatest degree of success or visibility, but rather those that allowed one to better understand how each type of intervention represented works.

#### IV. ANALYSIS OF HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

This section offers a general analysis of the 93 homicide prevention programs identified in Latin America and the Caribbean based on a universe of cases unknown *a priori*. It should be noted that when a single program was carried out in various countries, for our purposes it counted once for each country. For example, Cure Violence,<sup>12</sup> which was found in nine countries of the region—in general financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) or by the United Nations Agency for International Development (USAID)—appears nine times of the 93 initiatives mapped.

As was already mentioned, the selection of programs is not exhaustive and is subject to omissions and imprecisions to the extent that it has been based on information collected from the Internet. The likelihood of locating a program depends on several factors, such as the level of documentation of the experiences, the degree of transparency, and its public visibility. At the same time, the information that is presented here on the programs is subject to methodological definitions that are always subject to questioning and to the researchers' interpretation of the documents. We hope that the dissemination of this study will foster a review and updating of this mapping, and at the same time encourage the design of new programs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The distribution of the programs by *region*, which can be observed in Table 1, reveals that four correspond to Mexico, 18 to countries in the Northern Triangle of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras), and 20 to other countries of Central America and the Caribbean (Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad and Tobago). In South America the largest concentration of programs is observed in Brazil (14) and Colombia (10), while the density is a bit less in Venezuela (5), in the Andean countries (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru, with 10 cases among the three), and in the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, with 12 cases). The complete list of the 93 programs can be found in the annexes.

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<sup>12</sup> Cure Violence is a program for interrupting violence among youth gangs that is inspired by the experience of Project CeaseFire in Chicago and which will be mentioned in one of the types of intervention that will be presented next.

**TABLE 1. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY REGION, COUNTRY, AND HOMICIDE RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION**

Region	Country	Homicide rate per 100,000 pop. (2014)	Number of Programs (%)
<b>Mexico</b>		15.7	4 (4%)
<b>Northern Triangle</b>	El Salvador	64.2	6 (7%)
	Guatemala	31.2	6 (7%)
	Honduras	74.6	6 (7%)
<b>Central America and the Caribbean</b>	Belize	34.4	2 (2%)
	Costa Rica	10.0	2 (2%)
	Jamaica	36.1	4 (4%)
	Panama	17.4*	7 (8%)
	Puerto Rico	18.5	1 (1%)
	Dominican Republic	17.4	2 (2%)
	Trinidad and Tobago	25.9	2 (2%)
<b>Venezuela</b>		62.0	5 (5%)
<b>Colombia</b>		27.9	10 (11%)
<b>Brazil</b>		24.6	14 (15%)
<b>Andean Countries</b>	Bolivia	12.4*	3 (3%)
	Ecuador	8.2	3 (3%)
	Peru	6.7	4 (4%)
<b>Southern Cone</b>	Argentina	7.6	3 (3%)
	Chile	3.6	4 (4%)
	Paraguay	8.8	3 (3%)
	Uruguay	7.8	2 (2%)
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>93 (100%)</b>

**Source:** Homicide rate based on data from UNODC statistics. Last year available: Panama (2013) and Bolivia (2012).

These data suggest, as one would expect, that there is a relationship between the homicide rate and the number of programs developed by the countries to respond to that problem. The countries with five or more programs tend to have homicide rates greater than 25 per 100,000 (Northern Triangle, Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil), whereas in the countries with fewer programs one generally finds more modest rates (Southern Cone, Mexico, and the Andean countries, and to a lesser extent Central America and the Caribbean).

On examining the programs by *start year*, it is notable that approximately two-thirds (70%) started in the last 10 years. This accumulation of cases more recently may be due to the more prominent place violence has come to occupy on the countries' public and social

agendas or the very increase in violence in several countries of the region, although one cannot discard biases stemming from the methodological approach in this research study.<sup>13</sup>

**TABLE 2. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY START YEAR**

Year	Number of Programs	%
1991-1995	5	5
1996- 2000	5	5
2001-2005	15	16
2006-2010	31	33
2011-2015	34	37
No data	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

The *institutions responsible* for the programs are for the most part public. Most operate as part of the national governments (55%) while 12% are under regional governments (state governments, for example, in countries with a federal system), and 5% local governments. Civil society initiatives account for a relatively small share of the programs (12%), though they may be underestimated.<sup>14</sup> Finally, there is one case undertaken by a private company.

**TABLE 3. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION**

Type of institution	Number of Programs	%
National Government	51	55
Regional Government	11	12
Local Government	5	5
Civil Society	11	12
Private Enterprise	1	1
Other	6	6
No information	8	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

The participation of *international organizations* may take various forms, including technical assistance in program design, financing, or evaluation. According to the information

<sup>13</sup> In effect, the effort to locate programs was based on searching materials via the Internet and consulting qualified informants. The advent of the information society presupposes a greater likelihood of gaining access to newer documents. In addition, for the persons interviewed it could also be simpler to record and report recent experiences.

<sup>14</sup> It is possible that programs promoted by public institutions are larger in scope and have greater visibility than interventions carried out by civil society, which are usually more local. If so, there would clearly be a greater likelihood that these latter experiences would not be identified in the survey of programs.

collected, one finds the participation of international organizations in 32 programs (34%). Table 4 sets forth detailed information on this aspect, yet two caveats are in order: (i) a program may receive support from one or more international organizations simultaneously, and (ii) it cannot be said that the cases in which there is no participation of international organizations actually did not have any, due to possible restrictions on access to information. The SICA and the IDB are the organizations most involved in homicide prevention programs, though the participation of USAID and UNDP is also notable. Both SICA and USAID tend to focus their activities in Central America and the Caribbean (including the Northern Triangle countries) whereas the IDB and UNDP maintain a more diversified presence among the countries of the region.

**TABLE 4. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

<b>International Organizations</b>	<b>Number of Programs</b>
AECID	1
IDB	10
World Bank	2
CAF	1
INTERPOL	1
OAS	1
ILO	1
PAHO	1
UNDP	7
SICA	11
EU	1
UNFPA	1
UNICEF	2
USAID	7

As regards the *criteria for inclusion*, already mentioned in the chapter on objectives, 84 programs (90%) were included in the survey because they had specific homicide reduction objectives, whereas nine (10%) were included for having a proven impact on the phenomenon despite not having homicide reduction as a stated objective.

A usual way of classifying violence prevention programs is based on the *type of prevention* proposed. Primary prevention seeks to intervene on the population in general, secondary prevention is limited to vulnerable or at-risk groups, and tertiary prevention is aimed at individuals and groups who have been directly involved in acts of violence, whether as victims or perpetrators, to prevent recidivism or revictimization. On examining the

experiences of homicide prevention in the region one notes that tertiary prevention initiatives are preponderant. Indeed, 35% of the programs are exclusively for tertiary prevention, whereas if we add the initiatives that combine tertiary with other types of prevention the figure climbs to 70% of all the cases. In almost one-fifth of the programs all three types of prevention are pursued.

**TABLE 5. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY TYPE OF PREVENTION**

Type of prevention	Number of Programs	%
Primary	14	15
Primary and Secondary	4	4
Secondary	10	11
Secondary and Tertiary	15	16
Tertiary	33	35
Primary, Secondary and Tertiary	17	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

The programs can also be distinguished based on whether they *target* specific sub-populations or territories. In all, 56 initiatives (60%) have a social focus (prioritizing certain social profiles) and 34 (37%) have a territorial focus (prioritizing certain geographic areas). In this respect, one should consider that these two categories are not mutually exclusive, for there may be programs with both a certain social focus and a territorial focus.

Depending on the *target audience*, one notes that 28% of the programs are geared to young people and 22% to victims and witnesses in criminal proceedings. Thirteen initiatives were found that seek to reduce femicide or homicides of women more generally; a more detailed analysis can be found in the corresponding case study. In addition, four programs were found to be geared to police officers, a group very closely associated with situations of violence as both victim and perpetrator. Finally, one of every four initiatives is aimed at the general population, without any limitation or prioritization of certain social groups.

**TABLE 6. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY TARGET AUDIENCE**

Target audience	Number of Programs	%
Youths	26	28
Women	13	14
Victims and witnesses in criminal proceedings	20	22
Police	4	4
Other populations at risk	8	9
Population in general	26	28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

A review of the *territorial coverage* of the programs shows that most of the initiatives are national in scope (66%), followed by local ones (25%) and regional ones (10%). Some of the initiatives with national coverage correspond to international programs carried out in several countries of the region.<sup>15</sup> The two best-known cases in this regards are Cure Violence (implemented in Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, Honduras, Colombia, Mexico, Jamaica, El Salvador, Brazil, and Guatemala), and the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) (carried out in Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama). In both of these, international agencies play a key role, particularly USAID.

**TABLE 7. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY TERRITORIAL COVERAGE**

Coverage	Number of Programs	%
National	61	66
Regional	9	10
Local	23	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

Finally, just 15 programs (16%) were the subject of *impact evaluations*. These included, obviously, the nine that did not have homicide reduction as a stated objective, and which then entered into the analysis in light of their impact. Accordingly, impact evaluations were done for only six of the programs that set out to reduce homicides.

Most of these evaluations (10) were performed externally, while the others were done in a mixed fashion, i.e. with the combined participation of outside actors and the persons responsible for the program. No cases were found in which internal evaluations had been

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<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that the unit of record for our survey is “program-country,” thus a single program carried out in four countries will count as four different cases in this study.

performed, which coincides with the general recommendation that the evaluator not be the one evaluated, so as to avoid creating conflicts of interest and to facilitate the transparency and objectivity of the evaluation process. In addition, the absence of internal evaluations is associated with the criteria adopted in the survey, for requiring rigorous evaluation methodologies (experimental or quasi-experimental designs, time series, etc.) demands specialized competencies, which are generally external. The audits and progress reports, which are generally part of the internal monitoring routines, were not considered impact evaluations.

In summary, impact evaluations for projects of this type in Latin America and the Caribbean are quite uncommon. There are any number of reasons that explain why this is so, such as: (i) the lack of valid and reliable data; (ii) the limited offer of human resources with technical training; (iii) the complex evaluability of many interventions as the result of the breadth of the strategies; (iv) the failure to plan evaluations when designing programs (defining indicators, baselines, etc.); and, (v) the absence of a culture of evaluation on the part of the political authorities, which is reinforced by the weak citizen demand for accountability. Establishing a routine for evaluating programs in the region is a fundamental condition for undertaking effective and efficient interventions.

The societies with the highest homicide rates tend to have a limited capacity to perform evaluations and research in the area of prevention. Indeed, the vast majority of the scientific literature on violence prevention refers to the United States and countries of Europe, societies with low homicide rates. Accordingly, it is urgent to further research in places where violence is more concentrated (Krisch et al., 2015). Similarly, adapting international experiences to the reality of Latin America should also involve performing evaluations of these interventions in the regional context.



## V. TYPOLOGY OF HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

As was already mentioned, the objective of this section is to set forth an analytical overview that makes it possible to identify the types of interventions undertaken in Latin America and the Caribbean for the purpose of reducing homicides or those which, albeit having broader objectives, have had a proven impact reducing lethal violence.

The typology is empirical, that is, it is based on the existence of specific cases developed in the region, and it is not a theoretical reflection on all existing possibilities. This means that the typology is not exhaustive, to the extent that innovative interventions may not have been discovered or could appear in the future, opening up the possibility of new types being created.

Just one case of an intervention in the region suffices to establish a concrete type. In practice, some types are represented by a large number of examples whereas others are atypical or exceptional interventions which could, nonetheless, inspire others. Likewise, the criterion for selection or inclusion does not require that the interventions necessarily be successful; accordingly, some could have limited, non-existent, or even negative effects.

The typology is divided into six *broad areas or strategies*, as follows:

(i) *Control of Risk and Protective Factors*. This type of policy is aimed at diminishing the incidence of factors that have been shown to be associated with a lesser or greater risk of homicides, such as alcohol and firearms. Accordingly, it is not a systemic approach to all possible elements that could impact on lethal violence, but specific interventions on specific factors, such as those mentioned above. The factors of prevention include situational prevention strategies, which aim to reduce the likelihood of homicides being committed in certain places by making changes in the locale, such as improving the lighting or creating cultural or sports facilities. This strategy has a long-standing tradition in the field of violence prevention in Latin America, but generally has not been pursued specifically in connection with homicides.

(ii) *Promoting Cultural Changes*. These programs aim to reduce homicides by promoting values contrary to violence with the objective of transforming the culture, for example, programs that promote a “culture of peace.” Once again, this type of approach is much more common in the case of general violence prevention and more uncommon in the specific field of homicides.

(iii) *Protecting Groups at Risk.* These proposals are aimed at persons and groups subject to a high risk of falling victim to homicide, to whom it offers some type of protective measure. In some cases this involves specific persons or very specific groups, such as trade unionists or youths facing death threats. In others broad groups are involved, including majorities, such as women, who are subject to certain forms of lethal victimization. In this regard, the struggle against homicides of women perpetrated by their spouses or partners has represented the cutting edge of the fight against gender violence in the region, and has given rise to new criminal legislation, such as provisions establishing the crimes of “femicide” or “femicide.” As was already mentioned, changes in the legislation were only considered when their objective was to prevent homicides; the adoption of legislation on femicide fits into this context. Nonetheless, the new laws adopted, as they are not programs, will not be included individually in the study, nor codified in the template, but analyzed together in a specific case study on the issue (see section on legislative changes and programs to prevent femicide).

(iv) *Improvements in the Operation of the Criminal Justice System.* These initiatives seek to increase the effectiveness of the justice system when it comes to taking on homicides. This approach is distinguished in large measure from the previous ones in that it does not propose new interventions, but merely improves upon the usual mechanisms by which the state tackles crime in general and homicides in particular. The measures proposed may be related to prevention, such as patrolling, to investigation, for increasing the rate of clarification of homicides, or to other aspects, such as reducing the lethality of police interventions, which constitute a specific type of homicide.

(v) *Reinsertion, Mediation or Negotiation geared to Perpetrators.* These initiatives engage with real or potential perpetrators as interlocutors and not simply as the target of repression by the state apparatus. For this same reason these are the most controversial experiences. All told they include strategies for the reinsertion of ex-convicts, mediation with members of armed groups to reduce the violence, and even truces or general accords entered into by the state itself with some armed groups to diminish lethal violence. This last case is probably the most polemical and the one entailing the greatest political risk, but at the same time it is a strategy that has proven, on occasion, to have the capacity to drastically reduce homicides in a very short time.

(vi) *Integrated strategies for reducing lethal violence.* In most cases these are plans to reduce violence or insecurity in general that entail a broad set of different kinds of actions that include a component related to homicides. In some cases, however, strategies have been

proposed specifically designed to reduce homicides based on various types of intervention by the authorities.

Following is a presentation of the various types of intervention identified based on the strategies already described.

## V.i. CONTROL OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

### TYPE 1: CONTROL OF FIREARMS

Firearms are the main vector of lethal violence in the world, but their weight is even greater in the Americas. According to the figures from the Global Study on Homicide (UNODC, 2013), 41% of homicides in the world and 66% in the Americas are committed using a firearm. In several countries of Latin America, particularly in those with a high incidence of lethal violence, the proportion is even greater. Therefore, it is not unusual for this to be one of the policies for reducing homicides most widely implemented in the region, in addition to it being relevant for suicide prevention and accident prevention.

Controlling firearms may be done in various ways:

(i) *Reducing the stock of firearms* in circulation, such as through programs for citizens to turn in arms, or to exchange arms for an economic reward or some other benefit. The firearms, after being collected, are usually destroyed in ceremonies that highlight the danger they represent or, in some cases, are handed over to the security forces. Such programs have a long-standing tradition in the region, and have been supported by governments, civil society organizations, and international organizations such as the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC). Although these initiatives have succeeded in taking thousands of weapons out of circulation, in general it is not possible to determine the impact of the number removed from circulation on the total stock. In any event, the most common criticism of such programs is that the weapons that are most likely to be turned in by citizens are old firearms, or ones that cannot be used, which are precisely the least likely to be used to commit crimes and, therefore, those with the least propensity to impact on the homicide rate.

(ii) *Restricting the bearing of arms*. In this case, the objective is not to eliminate arms but to keep them from being carried in public spaces, and thereby reduce the likelihood of their use. The prohibition on bearing arms may be temporary or definitive and may be developed through changes in the law or administrative measures. Often the prohibition on

bearing arms is accompanied by an increase in enforcement and/or public campaigns. Some of these initiatives, such as the ones that were carried out in El Salvador, Bogotá, and Cali, have impact evaluations, several of which have found a moderate yet significant impact on homicide reduction (Villaveces et al., 2000; Cano, 2007).

(iii) *Control of armed incidents* in certain areas or within institutions. In Costa Rica, for example, there is an initiative that seeks to control armed incidents within the schools and offers guidance on what to do to reduce harm if there is such an incident.

## **TYPE 2: CONTROL OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION**

Alcohol consumption is also a risk factor for violence in general and for lethal violence in particular, albeit to a lesser extent than firearms. In the case of homicides, alcohol is associated with interpersonal violence in day-to-day conflicts, which can lead to fatal results. Accordingly, in many countries the incidence of homicides increases on holidays and weekends, when alcohol consumption is also high.

In light of the health problems that excessive alcohol consumption poses, and also as a result of its association with traffic accidents and violence, campaigns to prevent abusive use are common. In some cases, however, the attempt to control consumption results from a local diagnosis that associates it with homicides and is a direct consequence of a strategy to reduce lethal violence. These are the cases of interest for our study.

Restricting alcohol consumption may involve campaigns to raise awareness and step up enforcement as well as restrictions on the days and times when establishments can dispense alcoholic beverages. Bogotá (“La Hora Zanahoria”) and Diadema, Brazil (“Lei Seca”) are among the best-known cases in the region of cities that restricted the schedule for alcohol sales in their security policies.

## **TYPE 3: SITUATIONAL PREVENTION IN PUBLIC SPACES**

As was already indicated, situational prevention as a strategy for preventing violence has a long-standing tradition in Latin America, mainly by recovering deteriorated public spaces that are generally associated with the presence of violence or, more commonly, a perception of insecurity on the part of citizens. Accordingly, it is expected that improvements in lighting, the construction of sports and cultural facilities, or the installation of surveillance systems, such as cameras, will achieve a public re-occupation of those spaces previously abandoned or

deteriorated. That movement should ideally generate a virtuous circle that progresses from a greater perception of security to diminished crime, and vice versa. Nonetheless, these initiatives are generally set forth in the context of violence prevention plans broadly speaking or plans to promote citizen security. On an exceptional basis – and those are the cases of interest here – these situational prevention measures may be part of a homicide reduction strategy or may have a proven effect reducing homicides.

## V.ii. PROMOTING STRUCTURAL CHANGES

### TYPE 4: PROMOTING VALUES AGAINST LETHAL VIOLENCE

Approaches such as this are focused on disseminating messages and values that can transform persons so as to build a less violent society. Many of these public awareness-raising campaigns involve fostering a culture of peace or coexistence in a broad sense. Nonetheless some of them, which are the ones that enter our field, use concepts related to lethal violence, such as "valuing life," or make explicit mention of ending homicides, such as the "Guatemala 24-0" campaign, which promotes 24 hours without a homicide. In general, campaigns of this sort are not evaluated in ways that would make it possible to gauge their actual impact on lethal violence.

## V.iii. PROTECTING AT-RISK GROUPS

### TYPE 5: PROTECTING AT-RISK GROUPS FROM SUFFERING HOMICIDES

The objective of these programs is to protect persons, communities, or social categories that are at risk of suffering homicide. The protection strategies may be varied, including police protection, removing the threatened persons from their surroundings, receiving them in specialized centers, introducing legislative changes to stiffen penalties for homicide against those groups, and various forms of economic, psychological, and institutional support for the victims.

Among the beneficiaries of such programs we can mention:

(i) *Specific individuals who have suffered death threats* and who come to be included in witness and victim protection programs. One of the largest programs for minors in the region is the Program for the Protection of Children and Adolescents facing Death Threats (PPCAM:

Programa de Proteção a Crianças e Adolescentes Ameaçados de Morte) in Brazil, with hundreds of persons benefited throughout the country.

(ii) Members of *high-risk professional or political categories*, as is the case, for example, of the Colombian state's Program for the Prevention and Protection of Trade Union Leaders and Unionized Workers.

(iii) *Broad social categories who suffer specific risks*. The clearest example is women, who suffer the risk of abuse and, in the extreme, death at the hands of their spouse or partner, or former spouse or former partner. In recent decades Latin America has begun to develop strategies to oppose domestic violence, which has transitioned from being considered a private problem to being the subject of various public debates, many of them preceded or accompanied by legislative changes that accord harsher treatment to domestic assailants and seek to improve protection for victims. Although the most common approach tends to be preventing violence against women generally, several interventions make reference to reducing homicides of women as a stated objective. Indeed, adopting criminal statutes on "femicide" and "feminicide," with tougher treatment by the criminal justice system in relation to common homicide, may be interpreted as an attempt to develop a public policy aimed at reducing homicides of women, often accompanied by protective measures such as establishing shelters for women at risk.

#### **V.iv. IMPROVEMENTS IN THE OPERATION OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Several efforts have been made to optimize the operation of the police, the prosecutorial authorities, the judiciary, and the prison system to reduce the incidence of homicides. To be considered in this study such measures must constitute a "program," that is they should have been, at a given point in time, articulated jointly with the objective of reducing lethal violence. Incremental improvements in resource endowments, training, or equipment of the institutions of the criminal justice system, which occur on a day-to-day basis in all the countries, are not included.

#### **TYPE 6: POLICE INTERVENTIONS IN AT-RISK AREAS**

In some countries of the region the authorities have developed innovative police interventions in places with a high incidence of homicides whose explicit objective is to reduce lethal violence or which, even when they have had broad objectives, have had significant

impacts reducing homicides. Examples of the first type of intervention are the “Fica Vivo!” program in Minas Gerais and the Pact for Life (Pacto Pela Vida) program in Pernambuco, while an example of the second type can be found in the Pacifying Police Units (UPP: Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora) in Rio de Janeiro, all in Brazil.

In several of those cases the police presence in areas with high levels of lethal violence is accompanied by other types of preventive interventions, such as holding cultural workshops with youths from the communities in the Fica Vivo! program.

In any event, drawing up police strategies for homicide reduction is a significant innovation in the region, for traditionally homicide is considered an externality or a relatively peripheral phenomenon, whereas the police priorities are on other kinds of crimes (drug trafficking, crimes against property, kidnappings, etc.).

#### **TYPE 7: OTHER POLICE INTERVENTIONS WITH PATROLLING**

This includes all the police programs in the area of prevention that are not focused on areas with a high incidence of homicides, which constitute the previous type, and which are aimed at reducing homicides, or have attained this in practice through a preventive police program. One example is the Plan Cuadrante (Quadrant Plan) of the National Police of Colombia, whose evaluation shows that it appears to have succeeded in reducing homicides in the areas in which it was implemented.

#### **TYPE 8: IMPROVING HOMICIDE INVESTIGATIONS**

These are strategies that aim to improve the rate of clarification of and convictions for the crime of homicide, such that a higher proportion of perpetrators are subjected to criminal punishment. Impunity rates are very high in several countries of the region, including for homicides, which means that many homicides continue to go unpunished. Criminological studies tend to note high levels of recidivism among the perpetrators of homicide. The most extreme case in this regard is the phenomenon of contract killers, present in several countries of the region; it basically involves hiring persons specialized in carrying out assassinations for a sum of money. Taking account of all these considerations, any intervention that seeks to improve the rates at which homicides are clarified would appear to be a plausible alternative.

The criminal justice system is generally characterized by strong institutional inertia, such that the specific programs with concrete objectives are not very common. In some

countries the police created special units for investigating homicides or crimes against the person (such as homicide divisions), which are generally better resourced than the conventional units and have more specialized training, all in the hope of improving the results of their investigations. One interesting example is Honduras, where the Asociación para una Sociedad Más Justa, a civil society organization, carried out a project along with the authorities in an effort to improve the rates of clarification in homicide investigations.

#### **TYPE 9: REDUCING POLICE LETHALITY**

Some countries of the region have suffered historically from excessive use of police force which, when involving lethal force, may cause a high number of homicides. Jamaica and Brazil are clear examples of this situation. Nonetheless, this is not always perceived as a problem by the governments, or even by major sectors of society, which demand a no-holds-barred policy against crime that encourages or tolerates abuses. The different treatment received by these deaths compared to all other homicides is reflected in the fact that in several countries these cases are not even classified as homicides.

Occasionally, some governments or some police forces have developed programs to attempt to reduce the lethality of the police. Such initiatives not only are able to directly reduce the number of homicides caused by police intervention, but also have the potential for a broader reduction to the extent that violent police interventions are generally answered by greater violence by the criminal groups. In those contexts the criminals generally attack the police and cause victims among law-enforcement officers, encouraging a vicious circle. Accordingly, less violent intervention by the police could help to reduce lethality more broadly.

One example of this type of initiative to reduce police lethality is the Program to monitor military police agents involved in high-risk events (PROAR: Programa de Acompanhamento de Policiais Militares Envolvidos em Ocorrências de Alto Risco) launched by the government of the state of São Paulo in 1995, though subsequently interrupted. Under that program all police officers involved in incidents that resulted in the death of a person were required to participate in a six-month refresher course, during which time they were taken off the streets and received psychological care. The logic of the program was to prevent an agent who was subjected to situations of stress, stemming from his or her participation in armed confrontations, from having an increased likelihood, afterwards, of using excessive force again.



More recently, in 2015 the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro publicized the Program for managing and controlling the use of force (Programa de Gestão e Controle do Uso da Força), which includes the creation of an Index on Aptitude for the Use of Force (Índice de Aptidão para o Uso da Força); it measures the use of police force by each agent through the individual use of munitions and establishes maximum thresholds.

#### **V.v. REINSERTION, MEDIATION, OR NEGOTIATION GEARED TO PERPETRATORS**

As was already mentioned, this heading takes in initiatives directed at perpetrators not as the target of repression and prosecution by the criminal justice system but as interlocutors to modify their conduct. Actually, if the criminal justice system worked efficiently to identify, prosecute, convict, and rehabilitate those responsible for homicides such initiatives would not be needed and indeed probably would not have occurred to anyone.

#### **TYPE 10: RESINSERTION OR REHABILITATION OF PERPETRATORS OF ARMED VIOLENCE**

The objective is to reinsert persons who were involved in armed violence into society, particularly those who belong to armed groups, promoting their inclusion in educational, work, or recreational activities that offer them an alternative to their previous life. Programs of this type may be applied both to former inmates and to members of armed groups. The first would involve programs for the reinsertion of ex-convicts, which exist in many countries, but which could be applied to armed violence. In the second case, the members of criminal groups are offered an alternative to get them to leave those groups or stop criminal activities related to armed violence. One example is the Proyecto Alcatraz in Venezuela, in which a private company offers an alternative life through sports, training, and employment to youths who are members of criminal groups and gangs in the area. Given that some of these youths may have criminal cases pending, and that work is done directly with persons potentially or actually engaged in criminal conduct, these programs are controversial and politically and legally a delicate matter. Yet considering the low capability for re-socialization of the vast majority of the prison systems, if programs such as this are successful one could potentially reach a more favorable result for society in terms of reducing homicides than would be obtained by the criminal prosecution of some members of these groups.

#### **TYPE 11: MEDIATION WITH ARMED GROUPS**

In interventions of this sort the engagement is not with individuals in isolation, but with armed groups as a whole, because the objective is not to demobilize some persons but to secure a change in the conduct of the group as a whole. The protagonists in this engagement may be members of civil society or government authorities, in which case the political risks of the process are high, considering the indirect legitimation the state may lend to presumably criminal groups by maintaining communication with them. In addition, such approaches have the potential capacity to reduce homicides very intensely and very quickly, especially in those contexts in which lethal violence is associated with the activity of the armed groups. To the extent that these initiatives are not aimed at dismantling the armed groups but at reducing the violence they generate, they could also be considered harm reduction programs.

The objective of these interventions is to reduce the level of violence among the armed groups or to secure compliance with certain rules in order to reduce the levels of violence, analogous to the role that international humanitarian law plays among conventional armed actors. The most common example of this sort is the Cure Violence program, which according to our information is found in nine countries of the region. It is inspired by the CeaseFire<sup>16</sup> program in Chicago and implemented by civil society organizations in several countries of the region, often with financing from international organizations or the United States. The main idea is to establish relations with the different youth gangs or armed groups through community workers who are well-regarded locally such that when a violent incident occurs these agents (called “interrupters”) can intervene immediately to try to stop an act of revenge, which could unleash a spiral of violence among the groups. This approach appears to have a greater likelihood of success in dealing with inter-group violence when the armed groups are more territorial and less linked to organized criminal activities. An evaluation of the impact in seven communities of Chicago by Skogan et al. (2009), comparing the outcomes with those of other communities with a similar profile, using a time series methodology, showed a statistically significant reduction in the number of persons who were victims of gunshot wounds in four of the seven localities. The reduction was from 16% to 34%. Nonetheless, the decline in homicides committed with firearms was statistically significant in just one community, though the authors point to the difficulty obtaining statistical significance with small numbers. In addition, “revenge homicides” (*“homicidios en represalia”*) dropped

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<sup>16</sup> There is another prior project with the same name, Operation Ceasefire, that was carried out in Boston and that shares some key characteristics with the one in Chicago, as an effort to reduce homicides based on working with groups of youth at high risk of becoming involved in armed confrontations. At the same time, there are major differences between the two. In any event, it was mainly the Chicago experience that was exported to Latin American countries in recent years.

significantly in four communities. Unfortunately, we did not find impact evaluations for the Cure Violence projects implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In Jamaica, the Peace Management Initiative project, created by the Ministry of National Security, independently developed a philosophy of intervention with armed groups very similar to Cure Violence. The project continues to this day and has also inspired other government initiatives.

Apart from these state-led examples, other community-based interventions share the same philosophy of reducing harm in the context of conflicts among gangs and armed groups. In Venezuela, for example, a group of mothers of gang members performs this function of negotiating to reduce violence among them, in the project called Commissions for Coexistence in Catuche (Comisiones de convivencia de Catuche).

## **TYPE 12: NEGOTIATION WITH ARMED GROUPS**

In this case, it is not a mediation of the conflict between or among armed groups, but a negotiation between representatives of these groups and the state, for the purpose of reducing violence. Given the possible high political cost of negotiating with criminals, it is not unusual for such conversations to be secret and for those in government not to acknowledge such initiatives or the resulting agreements.

The best-known example of this strategy is the so-called Gang Truce (Tregua entre las maras) in 2012 in El Salvador, in which the government improved the conditions of some of the imprisoned gang leaders and allowed them to have contact with their respective organizations in exchange for a reduction in homicides among them and of public agents. The political risks of these processes are high, among them the legitimation the state may bestow on criminal groups, the possibility of them becoming strengthened throughout the process (or at least of this being citizens' perception), possible criticism by the political opposition, and the possibility of criminal groups coming to "administer" homicides as a way of permanently negotiating with the government authorities. The case of El Salvador also exemplifies the potential advantages of this type of dynamic when certain groups, criminal or otherwise, are responsible for a large share of the violence, for no one doubts that the homicide rate dropped abruptly, at first, as a result of the truce.

## V.vi. INTEGRATED STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING LETHAL VIOLENCE

This last group of projects includes interventions that involve several different kinds of actions with the objective of preventing violence and, specifically, lethal violence. These are general prevention plans or strategies for intervention that are relatively ambitious compared to the previous types insofar as they include various interventions, all with the same aim. At the same time, the impact of these programs, precisely for this reason, tends to be very difficult to evaluate given the challenge of calibrating the impact of each of the component actions, and given the practical impossibility of establishing control groups.

These prevention strategies may be applied nationally, regionally, or locally, in general by the authorities, though without discarding the involvement of others. In this area we can distinguish two types.

### **TYPE 13: PLANS FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION THAT INCORPORATE A COMPONENT ON HOMICIDE**

These interventions, common to several countries of the region, include distinct convergent actions of various sorts, all designed to reduce violence and promote security. As already described, in order to be included in our study they must have a specific homicide reduction component or a goal along those lines; it is not enough to use the homicide rate as a general indicator or as a criterion for selecting the areas of intervention. This requirement is not met in many cases, such that most violence prevention or security promotion plans were not included in this study. Moreover, in those cases in which there is a homicide reduction element the logic that ties each intervention to homicide reduction is not always clear, nor the articulation among the various actions proposed.

One well-known example of such programs is Todos Somos Juárez in Mexico, in which a strategy coordinated among the federal government, the regional government, and civil society implemented a broad series of intersectoral measures, from investments in public infrastructure to interventions by the federal security agencies, including establishing thematic roundtables to facilitate community participation. It was all planned with the objective of overcoming insecurity and, among other things, reducing the very high rate of homicides that the city faced in 2009 and 2010.

### **TYPE 14: INTEGRATED STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING HOMICIDES**

Unlike the previous type, in which homicide reduction is just a component, in this case strategies are contemplated that bring together various actions in different realms designed specifically to reduce homicides. In general, they are plans developed by some public institution, such as the case of the National Strategy against Homicide, formulated by the National Police of Colombia in 2011.

This type of approach has the highest degree of focus on homicide reduction, although it is still difficult to evaluate the impact of different measures carried out simultaneously.

#### V.vii. GENERAL DISTRIBUTION OF PROGRAMS BY STRATEGY AND TYPE

The distribution of the 93 programs surveyed by this study, by typology as described above, is presented in Table 8.

**TABLE 8. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS BY STRATEGY AND TYPE**

Strategy	Type	Number of Programs
<b>Control of Risk Factors or Protection of Risk</b>	Arms control	8
	Controlling alcohol consumption	3
	Situational prevention in public spaces	2
<b>Promoting Cultural Changes</b>	Promoting values against lethal violence	13
<b>Protecting Groups at Risk</b>	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	25
<b>Improvements in the Operation of the Criminal Justice System</b>	Police interventions in areas at risk	2
	Other police patrol interventions	1
	Improving homicide investigations	1
	Reducing police lethality	4
<b>Reinsertion, Mediation or Negotiation geared to Perpetrators</b>	Reinsertion or rehabilitation of perpetrators of armed violence	4
	Mediation with armed groups	12
	Negotiation with armed groups	1
<b>Integrated Strategies for Reducing Lethal Violence</b>	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a component on homicide	19
	Integrated strategies for reducing homicides	3

The most common programs, in order, are those for protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides (25); violence prevention plans that incorporate a component on homicides (19); promoting values against lethal violence (13); mediation with armed groups (12); and weapons control (8). Other less common types are situational prevention in public spaces, an initiative typically associated with controlling crimes against property; integrated strategies to reduce homicides, which represent a high degree of focus on the problem and its

complexity; reducing police lethality, still a novel approach in the region; and negotiating with armed groups, which implies various risks for the state, as was already mentioned.

## VI. CASE STUDIES OF HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

As was already explained in the section on methodology, case studies were done on a series of homicide prevention programs in Latin America and the Caribbean. The programs were selected mindful of the objective of representing, through each experience, one of the types that make up the typology. In all, 10 case studies were done; they are summarized in the following table:

**TABLE 9. CASE STUDIES BY TYPE OF PROGRAM**

Strategy	Type of Program	Program	Country
<b>Controlling Risk Factors</b>	Controlling alcohol consumption	Lei Seca of Diadema	Brazil
<b>Promoting Cultural Changes</b>	Promoting values against lethal violence	Campaign to value life	Venezuela
<b>Protecting Groups at Risk</b>	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicide	Legislative changes and programs for preventing femicide <sup>17</sup>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>Improvements in the Operation of the Criminal Justice System</b>	Police interventions in areas at risk	Fica vivo!	Brazil
	Improvements in the investigation of homicides	Paz y Justicia	Honduras
<b>Programs for Reinsertion, Mediation or Negotiation geared to Perpetrators</b>	Reinsertion or rehabilitation of perpetrators of armed violence	Proyecto Alcatraz	Venezuela
	Mediation among armed groups	Peace Management Initiative	Jamaica
	Negotiation of the State with Armed Groups	The gang truce	El Salvador
<b>Integrated Strategies for Reducing Lethal Violence</b>	Plans for violence prevention that incorporate a homicide component	Todos Somos Juárez	Mexico
	Integrated homicide reduction strategies	National Strategy against Homicide	Colombia

<sup>17</sup> As was already mentioned, this case study is different from the others, for instead of focusing on a specific case it analyzes the various legislative initiatives and programs to stop femicides in the region.

## VI.i. “LEI SECA,” BRAZIL <sup>18</sup>

### TYPE 2: CONTROL OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

#### 1. Basic information.

- Name of Project: Lei Seca (Dry Law)
- Institution: Municipal government of Diadema, in São Paulo.
- Type of Institution: Local government.
- Dates: From 2002 to date.
- Focus: Bars and commercial establishments that dispense alcoholic beverages.
- Areas covered: Municipality of Diadema.

#### 2. Context and historical antecedents.

Diadema is a municipality in the São Paulo metropolitan area with a population of approximately 400,000. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a large number of persons settled there, building their homes without planning, with a weak presence of the state, and scant access to public services such as education, health care, lighting, sanitation, etc. Poverty and unemployment were characteristics endemic to the place, while at the same time commercial establishments and informal economies proliferated as an alternative.

The security situation was also impacted by that framework of precariousness and social vulnerability. With a homicide rate greater than 102 per 100,000 population, in the late 1990s Diadema was the most violent municipality of São Paulo and one of the most violent in all Brazil. The work of the police not only did not represent a solution, but was part and parcel of the problem. The police were accused of committing acts of torture and summary executions. A similar *modus operandi* was pursued by the “*justiceiros*,” private agents who operated punishing the “bandits” (sometimes hired by someone else), and maintaining “order” in the community.

In addition to being relegated by the authorities and exposed to violence, the residents of Diadema were stigmatized for being from there. Many inhabitants registered their cars in

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<sup>18</sup> The evidence used for this case study is as follows: three members or former members of the city government (Prefeitura) of Diadema were interviewed, in addition to two members of the Instituto Sou da Paz, one member of the Military Police of the state of São Paulo, and two academics. In all eight interviews were conducted in São Paulo in March 2016. In addition, publications and other documents provided by the informants and by those involved in the initiative were analyzed.

the neighboring municipality of São Bernardo do Campo or changed the municipality of their residence on their résumés when looking for work. Various day-to-day strategies were deployed to minimize the shame of being from Diadema, a perception that was amplified by the media.

A violent incident that would definitively mark the history of Diadema was the case of police brutality in March 1997 in the shantytown known as Favela Naval. The incident, filmed by an amateur videographer, revealed striking scenes of police mistreatment that ended with the summary execution of a young person. The images were broadcast on open television and had major repercussions throughout Brazil and internationally. Questions were raised and demands were made on the authorities immediately after the Favela Naval scandal, and the community of Diadema mobilized in response. In this context the Municipal Council on Public Security (COMUSP: Conselho Municipal de Segurança Pública) was established, made up of several social actors (mayor's office, Military and Civilian Police, prosecutorial authorities, churches, research institutes, non-governmental organizations, neighbors, etc.) for the purpose of monitoring the situation of violence, fostering the public debate, and encouraging community participation in security policies. The COMUSP sought to raise awareness among and secure commitments from all the candidates in the municipal elections of 2000 along these lines.

In 2001 José de Fillipi Júnior, of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT: Workers' Party), was elected mayor and established the Social Defense Coordinating Body (subsequently, Secretariat for Social Defense), a unit geared to designing, implementing, and monitoring security policies. The objectives of this Coordinating Body included advising the local authorities on security policies, developing the Municipal Civil Guard (GCM: Guardia Civil Municipal), organizing coordinated actions with the Civilian and Military Police, fostering civil society participation, and analyzing crime so as to effectively intervene in the areas with the greatest incidence.

Related to these last two points, the Instituto Fernand Braudel undertook an analysis of homicides in Diadema from 1997 to 1999. The objective was to learn of the dynamics of violence so as to give direction – based on that assessment – to preventive actions. The study showed that homicides occurred predominantly on the weekends, at nighttime and in early morning hours, and in the vicinity of bars. In addition, it was apparent that most of the incidents were caused by interpersonal conflicts (brawls, settling of accounts, domestic violence, etc.), in which the use of firearms provoked several victims, generally male youths.



With that study as the basis, a bill was proposed to shut down bars to reduce homicides in Diadema. The idea, debated and supported by the COMUSP, was included in the first Municipal Security Plan (“Diadema Melhor Fazendo uma Vida Segura”), led by Regina Miki from the Social Defense Coordinating Body.<sup>19</sup> In addition to the “Lei Seca,” the Plan included several other components: improving the system for video surveillance and monitoring; strengthening the Municipal Civil Guard (GCM) and adopting a proximity patrol<sup>20</sup>; integrating the work of the GCM and the police; social projects for secondary prevention; disarmament campaigns<sup>21</sup> and campaigns to raise awareness concerning alcohol and drug use; integrating social and environmental policies (lighting, urban development, etc.); and strengthening social and community participation through the COMUSP.

Diadema’s experience won national and international recognition. It was classified “best” in the Best Practices Competition sponsored by Dubai in 2006.<sup>22</sup> Beyond the level of success attained, there is consensus regarding the contribution of Diadema’s experience to ushering in an era of local authorities assuming a more prominent role in the public security sector in Brazil. This new actor was not limited merely to working with the traditional actors of the criminal justice system, but contributed its own tools, generally participatory, preventive, and involving multiple government agencies.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> In 2011 the case of Diadema catapulted Regina Micky to the post of National Secretary for Public Security.

<sup>20</sup> The GCM, created by statute in December 1999, saw its staff increase from 137 in 2001 to 230 in 2003. At the same time, the model of policing came to emphasize foot, motorcycle, and bicycle patrols to prevent criminal actions and to increase the contact of the forces of order with the population.

<sup>21</sup> In addition to voluntarily turning in firearms, the campaign included promotion of a culture of peace with schoolchildren and the destruction of toy weapons. According to the persons running the program, in only nine months the Campaign for Disarming Firearms collected approximately 1,400 weapons and 15,000 toy weapons, which were exchanged for children’s books and comic books.

<sup>22</sup> See: <http://habitat.aq.upm.es/bpal/onu06/bp1310.html>

<sup>23</sup> In Brazil there are three levels of government, federal, state, and municipal. While constitutionally public security is primarily a responsibility of the states, the other levels of government also perform public security-related functions. The municipal governments have become more involved in security functions in recent years, though it varies from case to case. Their activity is normally limited to social prevention (educational projects, welfare-type projects, etc.), situational activities (surveillance cameras, alarms, etc.) and police (guards). The Municipal Guards (Guardias Municipais) have the mission of protecting public property (buildings, parks, etc.) and organizing traffic, though in practice they may also contribute to law enforcement tasks. For more information, see Sento-Sé (2005).

### 3. Purpose of the intervention.

The goal was to reduce the number of homicides by restricting the schedule for the sale of alcoholic beverages in the bars and similar establishments in the municipality of Diadema, in São Paulo, considering the prior assessment already mentioned that indicated that many deaths occurred on weekends due to interpersonal disputes in the vicinity of bars.

### 4. Description of the intervention.

While the Municipal Security Plan involved multiple simultaneous interventions<sup>24</sup>, this document is focused on the law on closing bars, popularly known as “Lei Seca” (literally, “dry law”) and inspired by the “*ley zanahoria*” implemented since 1995 in the city of Bogotá. The Lei Seca represents the flagship of Diadema’s security policies, having succeeded in articulating the efforts of various actors: the municipal executive, exercising regulation and oversight in its territory; the municipal legislature, which is to say the local council members, who approved and supported the measure; the Social Defense Coordinating Body, which coordinated the process from the technical standpoint and kept tabs on the GCM; the federal authorities, which contributed financially; the state police forces; civil society; and the residents who channeled their proposals through the COMUSP.

Based on the assessment by the Instituto Braudel, the Lei Seca was conceived of as an intervention into the places and moments that would have the greatest impact on homicides. It is estimated that there are approximately 4,000 bars in Diadema. In particular, in the poorest neighborhoods, the “*botecos*”<sup>25</sup> are part of the landscape, as they constitute an option for income and leisure for residents. Despite not being a “friendly” measure, the law enjoyed the strong support of public opinion<sup>26</sup>; it was adopted by unanimous vote of the local council in March 2002, and then came into force in July 2002.

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<sup>24</sup> Since the creation of the Social Defense Coordinating Body three Municipal Security Plans were implemented in Diadema: the first from 2001 to 2004, the second from 2005 to 2010, and the third since 2011. This study is focused, therefore, on a measure that came up in the first plan and has been maintained in the subsequent ones.

<sup>25</sup> *Botecos* are small bars typically found in Brazilian cities where regular customers meet to drink or eat. In Diadema, most of the *botecos* are informal, that is, they operate without the authorizations and licenses required for running such an establishment.

<sup>26</sup> Some bar owners resisted, but others understood the initiative as necessary for reducing the violence. Annual public opinion surveys done by the Instituto Gallup from 2002 to 2006 indicated that the law was supported by more than 80% of the population of Diadema (Duailibi, 2007).

Law No. 2107 established the schedule of 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. for bars and similar establishments, that is, other establishments that serve alcoholic beverages for consumption in the locale. In addition, it prohibited granting licenses to establishments situated less than 300 meters from schools.

The law also provided for granting special licenses for extending the operating hours of bars, which were to be subject to the decision of a Commission<sup>27</sup> constituted for that purpose, and to compliance with a series of requirements regarding sanitary surveillance, environment and acoustics, accessibility for persons with disabilities, certification by the fire department, and other measures aimed at guaranteeing customers' safety and physical integrity.

Among the sanctions for breach, the law established the progressive application of: (i) written notice for coming into compliance within no more than 30 days; (ii) fines that are doubled in the event of recidivism; (iii) cancelation of the special regime for operating; and (iv) administrative closure of the establishment. After being closed and after 12 months have elapsed, one could consider granting a new operating license if the establishment is in full compliance with the laws and regulations in force.

The legal provisions adopted are important, but as one person interviewed said, "it is of no use to have a law if it doesn't have practical effects." In this regard, and according to several of the persons consulted, the key part of Diadema's experience was the enforcement process. This element, indeed, was likely a distinguishing feature compared to other municipalities that applied or "imported" the law without attaining the same apparent results.<sup>28</sup>

The program Diadema Legal was established for oversight and enforcement, bringing together municipal inspectors, members of the GCM and the Military Police. Teams made up of members of those entities circulate daily through the streets of Diadema to guarantee compliance with the law. The inter-institutional makeup of the inspection groups appears to have been an important measure not only as a matter of functional complementarity, but also to reduce the risk of the inspectors being corrupt or corrupted.

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<sup>27</sup> The Commission is made up of members of the Departments of Urban Development, Environment and Health Surveillance, the Municipal Civil Guard, the Division of Taxes, and the Division of Supplies.

<sup>28</sup> Another reason offered by those interviewed to explain that the Lei Seca works in Diadema better than in other municipalities has to do with the assessment. In effect, the law was a specific instrument to address a problem of violence associated with alcohol consumption. Of course the etiology or factors contributing to homicides may be different elsewhere.

The citizens also played a decisive role in the enforcement tasks. From its origin, the initiative had been debated in the COMUSP, which helped raise awareness among local residents and helped to get them involved. In the words of one of the persons interviewed, “the population was willing to set aside to some extent the right to recreation because what was in question was the fundamental right to life.” The collaboration of the local residents was crucial for findings of infractions, as well as the establishment of the “Disque-denuncia” (“Dial-lodge a complaint”), a phone line for taking in complaints. For example, complaints by neighbors made it possible to identify certain bars that began to work behind closed doors, which would have been very difficult otherwise. Another difficulty to which some residents sounded an alert was the presence of “informants” (“*olheiros*”). The *olheiros* were motorcyclists who discretely accompanied the inspection rounds to alert the bar owners to a possible inspection. Once note was taken of the presence of *olheiros* they were detained by the authorities so as to ensure the continuity of the operations.

According to several persons interviewed, the population’s enthusiasm has died down over time, in part as a result of the attrition in social mobilization, in part as a result of the actual reduction of violence in Diadema. In recent years some local politicians have stated that the law had run its course, since it excessively restricts recreation and commerce, and is not called for by the current reality of Diadema.

## **5. Factors that may condition the intervention.**

Several factors may have influenced the implementation of the “Lei Seca” and the situation of violence at which it was aimed.

First, as indicated above, the Municipal Security Plan presupposed the implementation of a set of actions that may have had some impact, both on the application of the law and on the incidence of homicides. In this regard, it is not possible to say what would have happened to the “Lei Seca” if it had been implemented in isolation. Along the same lines, the mobilization and commitment of civil society to security policies, basically through the COMUSP, is an element that is not part of the law but which appears to have contributed to its implementation and effectiveness.

Second, a relevant factor in the security situation in Diadema has to do with the work of the Military Police. Before the episode in Favela Naval, Diadema was a destination for police officers with serious disciplinary problems, whether abuse of force or corruption. Being assigned to work in Diadema was understood by the agents as punishment meted out by their

institution. After the public scandal around Favela Naval, the Military Police was the target of harsh criticism from social movements and organizations and from government quarters. In response, the selection of agents assigned to Diadema was changed, better police officers were sent, in larger numbers, and a patrol system was implemented closer to and more sensitive to the demands of the community. This may have reduced the violence perpetrated directly by the police, in addition to preventing and repressing the violence committed by third persons. The change in the police presence may have led to a greater perception of legitimacy of the authorities and public institutions in the eyes of the population, which at the same time would tend to work to the advantage of implementation of the Lei Seca.

Third, albeit linked to the previous point, the level of coordination between the municipal authorities and the Military Police could also affect enforcement of the law. Some of the persons interviewed indicated that the fact that the Military Police depends on the state and that the command alternates approximately every two years makes it difficult to ensure the continuity of the integrated actions. In this regard, it is proposed that cycles of dialogue involving municipal security policies be reinitiated time and again. The greater or lesser political affinity between the state and local government executives is an important aspect that could support or hinder enforcement efforts.

Fourth, the decline in the number of homicides and the supposed improvement in the performance of the Military Police may have been associated with greater efficiency in the investigations by the Civilian Police.<sup>29</sup> According to several persons interviewed, the percentage of homicides clarified in Diadema increased in recent years from 10% to approximately 80%. That reduction in impunity is said to have supported the reduction in homicides as well, whether by the deterrent effect or by incapacitating potential offenders. Similarly, a greater perception of justice may have also contributed to respect for the laws and regulations in force.

Fifth, it is possible that the Lei Seca has motivated a movement of young people from Diadema to the neighboring municipalities of São Bernardo and São Paulo, especially on the weekends. According to some of those interviewed, this movement towards consuming alcoholic beverages was taken advantage of commercially by other municipalities that at the same time saw an increase in violence. The situation is said to have provoked political questioning of the authorities of Diadema, who responded by calling on them to apply the

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<sup>29</sup> According to some of the persons interviewed, the Social Defense Coordinating Body also played a key role in this respect, monitoring homicides and cross-checking police information with other sources such as the Institute of Forensic Medicine (Instituto de Medicina Legal).

same law. However, this situation raises two interesting questions about this type of initiative: (i) the first has to do with the possibility of a displacement of the violence from one municipality to another; (ii) the second leads one to wonder whether the population of Diadema's support for the "Lei Seca" would have been the same had there not been a realistic alternative for consuming alcoholic beverages.

Sixth, the "*pancadão*" emerged in Diadema after the "Lei Seca" and could condition its efficacy. The *pancadão* is basically a street party in which the young people gather to socialize, and to listen and dance to funk.<sup>30</sup> These events are common on weekends and bring together up to 2,000 persons each. For the GCM and the police the *pancadão* has become a source of conflicts as a result of the volume of the music, which is a nuisance for the neighbors, the drug and alcohol consumption that goes on, and possible criminal and violent incidents among the youths. Indeed, the Lei Seca is of no use for restricting the sale of alcohol in social gatherings of this sort. As one interviewee said, "the bar is shut down, but not the street." Some put forward the hypothesis that Diadema excessively limited places for young people to go at night to socialize, setting the stage for the rise of alternative spaces such as the *pancadão*. This phenomenon makes for a difficult relationship between the municipal authorities and the bar owners, who protest unfair competition and feel that municipal enforcement is not even-handed. The influence of this phenomenon on the discussion of, compliance with, and the effects of the law is evident.

## **6. Monitoring and impact.**

The evolution of homicides came to be monitored by the Social Defense Coordinating Body of Diadema through the Municipal Observatory of Public Security. That unit also systematizes administrative data associated with the process of enforcing the Lei Seca. According to the Observatory, for example, in the first 10 years that the law was in force 3,134 notices were issued, along with 337 fines, and 21 establishments were shut down; in addition, 34 special licenses were granted for the operation of bars and similar establishments after 11 p.m.

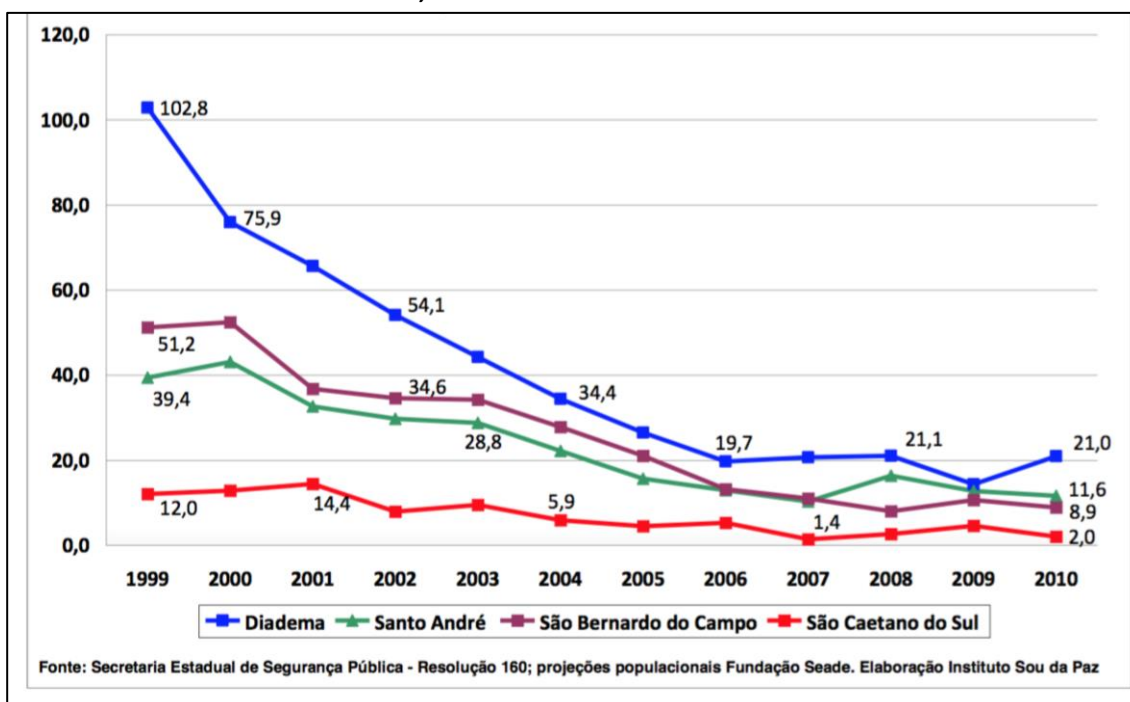
Homicides were reduced significantly after the entry into force of the law limiting the schedule for dispensing alcohol. Diadema suffered an extraordinarily high peak of violence in

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1999, with a homicide rate of 102.8 per 100,000 population. In 2004, just two years after the new law came into force, the homicide rate dropped to 34.4 per 100,000, and it continued to decline in the following years.

Nonetheless, on analyzing homicide data it is important to observe two things: (i) that the reduction began before the law was applied in July 2002; and (ii) that the trend noted was not particular to Diadema, but a general phenomenon in the state of São Paulo.<sup>31</sup> The following graph presents the homicide rates from 1999 to 2010 for the municipalities of the São Paulo metropolitan region.

**FIGURE 2. HOMICIDE RATES PER 100,000 POPULATION IN THE ABCD MUNICIPALITIES OF SÃO PAULO<sup>32</sup>**



**Source:** Instituto Sou da Paz (2011), O panorama da situação da violência e da criminalidade no município de Diadema (SP).

As noted above, the Municipal Security Plan for 2001 entailed a number of simultaneous interventions that make it difficult to isolate the effect of the Lei Seca on homicides. Moreover, on comparing the trajectory of Diadema with that of other municipalities one should consider that in some other cases similar laws were implemented restricting the hours of bars.

Kahn and Zanetti (2005) examined a group of cities in the São Paulo metropolitan region, some of which applied some kind of restriction on the dispensing of alcohol. An initial

<sup>31</sup> For the state of São Paulo as a whole, the homicide rate dropped from values between 35.3 and 31.2 per 100,000 in the 1999-2002 period, to a rate of 14.5 per 100,000 in 2010.

descriptive approach shows that the homicide rate from 2001 to 2003 saw a greater reduction (-9.8%) in the cities with a Lei Seca than among those that did not have it (-0.6%). Nonetheless, the law does not appear to be a necessary or sufficient condition for reducing homicides given that there is a reduction in some municipalities without it, and also increases in others that did adopt it.

Seeking to gauge the impact of the Lei Seca on homicides, Kahn and Zanetti (op. cit.) analyze monthly police data for the São Paulo metropolitan area from 2001 to 2004. The authors use a general model for historical series that assumes a dichotomous independent variable (before and after adoption of the Lei Seca) to compare differences in the average and variance of homicides.<sup>33</sup> The results show that of the 16 municipalities included in the study, the law contributed to significant reductions in homicides in four of them: Osasco, Embu, Mauá, and Diadema. In these cities some 750 lives were saved from 2002 to 2004, which represents 21% of the drop in homicides in São Paulo for that period.<sup>34</sup> Specifically in relation to Diadema, the average number of homicides per month fell from 19.8 a 12.3, for an effect of 7.5 lives saved per month as a result of the law (Kahn and Zanetti, 2005).

Nonetheless, as the authors of the study indicate, some nuances are necessary. First, the impact of the law was significant only in cities with a high number of homicides monthly, which to some extent could entail a “regression toward the mean” effect in those cases in which it was mistakenly interpreted as an impact of the program. Second, the four cities in which the effect of the law was found have Municipal Guards (Guardias Municipais), which makes it plausible that there would be an interactive effect of both elements. Third, aspects related to the intensity of enforcement of the law and the number of bars in the cities, not considered in the analysis, could influence the results. Fourth, no “control groups” were

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<sup>32</sup> Translator's Note: all commas in the original numbers in Portuguese should be read as periods in English.

<sup>33</sup> The study uses two procedures. In the first the date assumed is that of the entry into force of the Lei Seca as the moment of intervention. In the second, one used a procedure called “intervention detection” (determined by the data), which seeks the moment of the change as of the rupture of the trend and not in an *a priori* fashion. Once the moment of the intervention is identified empirically, a new dichotomous independent variable is added to the causal model. In principle, the results obtained this way would make it possible to control for false positives, and could take account of the possible heterogeneity in the times of enforcement of the law. In Itapevi and Barueri, two of the six municipalities in which the law apparently had a significant effect according to the first procedure, the second procedure shows that the drop in homicides happened long after the entry into force of the law, which would weaken the plausibility of a causal connection between the two phenomena.

<sup>34</sup> As a form of control, three large cities from São Paulo metropolitan area were also analyzed that did not adopt the Lei Seca, Santo André, São Bernardo, and Guarulhos. Of these three, homicides saw a



established nor were factors that are theoretically relevant (social, economic, criminal, etc.) controlled for that may explain changes in homicides.

Another evaluation of the impact of the Lei Seca in Diadema was done by Duailibi, Ponicki, Grube, Pinsky, Laranjeira, and Raw (2007). In this case the authors analyzed police data on homicides (from 1995 to 2005) and violence against women (from 2000 to 2005), using a log-linear regression. The effect of the closing time of bars was modeled as a variable that assumed a value of 0 before July 2002, 0.5 in July 2002 (the month the law came into force), and 1 in subsequent months. The monthly unemployment rate of the São Paulo metropolitan region was used to control for local economic conditions. In addition, a dummy variable was used to consider the effect of the national arms control law, which was approved during the period analyzed. Two dummy variables were used to control for the changes in police interventions. The first includes the observations as of January 2000, when the Municipal Civil Guard was created and when special operations against drug trafficking were carried out. The second began in July 2000, when operations to enforce the law began.<sup>35</sup>

The study concludes that the law resulted in a significant reduction of 319 homicides<sup>36</sup> during the first three years of its implementation, 44% less than what one would have expected without the law. Assaults against women did not show statistically significant differences. Using a qualitative approach the authors highlighted seven factors that apparently contributed to the success of the measure restricting the sale of alcohol in Diadema: (i) a precise record of the data; (ii) an analysis of the homicides, which made it possible to develop specific strategies for solving the problems; (iii) raising public awareness of and popular support for the law; (iv) providing guidance to vendors of alcoholic beverages through periodic informational meetings; (v) the enforcement process; (vi) the active, equitable, and honest performance of the controls; and (vii) the effective application of progressive sanctions (Duailibi, Ponicki, Grube, Pinsky, Laranjeira, and Raw, 2004).<sup>37</sup>

Despite being the subject of research studies and having drawn much attention in the area of violence prevention policies, Diadema's Lei Seca has not been evaluated using quasi-

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significant reduction only in Santo André, which saw a reduction of 4.3 in the average number of monthly homicides from 2002 to 2004.

<sup>35</sup> In addition, models were estimated with and without a linear variable to control for the evolution of violence due to other factors.

<sup>36</sup> This estimate may range from 193 to 445, with a 95% confidence interval.

<sup>37</sup> It is a study similar to Duailibi et al. (2007) by the same team of researchers in the context of a collaboration between the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) and the Universidade Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP). The 2007 publication is focused on the quantitative analysis of the

experimental designs that make it possible to control for the effect of “third variables” and arrive at more categorical conclusions. Nonetheless, there is some evidence to support the conclusion that the measures to reduce homicides in Diadema have been effective. That was also the generalized opinion of the informants in this study, even though in some cases it was argued that the measure was over-valued and managed politically.<sup>38</sup>

## 7. Summary.

With a rate greater than 102 homicides per 100,000 population, Diadema was, in the late 1990s, the most violent municipality in São Paulo and one of the most violent in all Brazil. In response the Municipal Council on Public Security (COMUSP) was formed, made up of various social actors (office of the mayor, Military and Civilian Police, Public Ministry, churches, research institutes, non-governmental organizations, residents, etc.) for the purpose of monitoring the situation of violence and fostering community participation in security policies. In 2001 José de Fillipi Júnior came to the helm of the municipal government and created the Social Defense Coordinating Body with the aim of designing, implementing, and monitoring policies in this area. The Coordinating Body drew up a Municipal Security Plan providing for several interventions or preventive measures. Based on an assessment of the phenomenon of homicides by the Instituto Braudel, one of the main initiatives given impetus was the law to close the bars, inspired by the “*Ley zanáhoría*” of the city of Bogotá, and it was known as the “Lei Seca.” Municipal Law No. 2107 established the schedule of 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. for bars and similar establishments and created a progressive system of sanctions for failure to comply. Nonetheless, according to several persons interviewed, the most noteworthy aspect of the experience was the enforcement operation, based on teams made up of municipal inspectors and members of the Civil Guard and Military Police. The citizens also played a decisive role, supporting the initiative and cooperating by filing complaints to help with enforcement.

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impact of the law, and presents more technical details as it is a scientific article.

<sup>38</sup> Nilson Vieira (2006) states that in Diadema an authentic “myth around the lei seca” has emerged based on a simplified view of the phenomenon of violence and ignoring other efforts made by the state and municipal governments. Along the same lines, Military Police Reserve Colonel and former National Secretary of Security José Vicente da Silva Filho considers that “the city government does great marketing, treating the case as the best anti-crime action of all times. However, the reduction of violence was already occurring in the municipality one year before the law came into force, thanks to expanded investment by the state in management and numbers of the Civilian and Military Police.” *Diário do Grande ABC, Setecidades*, June 11, 2012.

Several factors may have conditioned the implementation of the Lei Seca, among them the many measures of the Municipal Security Plan that were implemented in tandem with it; significant changes in the performance of the forces of order; political and institutional relations among the actors involved in the tasks of enforcement, etc. Implementation of the law also faced challenges such as the movement of youths from Diadema to neighboring municipalities to drink, or holding massive street parties known as “*pancadão*.” Both alternatives to the consumption of alcoholic beverages during restricted schedules of sale no doubt limit or qualify the expected effects of implementing the law.

Indeed, homicides were reduced noticeably after the adoption of the Lei Seca. Diadema suffered an extraordinarily high peak of violence in 1999, with a homicide rate that reached 102.8 per 100,000 population. In 2004, just two years after the entry into force of the law, the homicide rate dropped to 34.4 per 100,000, and it would continue to fall in the following years. This does not necessarily mean that the decline in homicides was due in full or in part to the closing of the bars. In fact, the drop began before implementation of the law in July 2002, and the trend noted was not particular to Diadema but a general phenomenon in the state of São Paulo.

Some research studies sought to evaluate the specific impact of the Lei Seca on the evolution of homicides in Diadema. In general, the results agree that the measure was effective and note that seven to nine lives were saved monthly in relation to what one would have expected without implementation of the law (Kahn and Zanetti, 2005; Duailibi et al. 2004, 2007). Nonetheless, Diadema’s Lei Seca has not been evaluated with quasi-experimental designs that make it possible to control for the effect of “third variables” and arrive at more solid conclusions.

Beyond the discussion on how effective it has been, Diadema’s experience raises some interesting ideas. Of these, one can mention: (i) the great potential of the municipal level of government for preventing violence; (ii) the possibilities of generating synergy articulating the work of different institutions and the participation of civil society; (iii) the importance of starting from technical assessments to develop specific strategies adapted to the local context; (iv) the need to guarantee compliance with laws and regulations through adequate oversight procedures; (v) the importance of ongoing monitoring of public interventions, mindful of the changes in context (such as going to other municipalities or the *pancadão*) and evaluating their results.

## VI.ii. CAMPAIGN TO RAISE AWARENESS TO VALUE LIFE, VENEZUELA <sup>39</sup>

### TYPE 4: PROMOTING VALUES AGAINST LETHAL VIOLENCE

#### 1. Basic information.

- Project Name: Campaign to Raise Awareness to Value Life
- Institution: Laboratory of Social Sciences (Laboratorio de Ciencias Sociales) and Venezuelan Observatory of Violence (Observatorio Venezolano de Violencia)<sup>40</sup>
- Type of Institution: Civil society
- Financing: Approximately US\$ 30,000
- Dates: August 2011 to June 2012
- Focus: Violent and socioeconomically vulnerable neighborhoods
- Areas covered: City of Caracas (municipalities of Libertador, Chacao, and Sucre), Maracay, Valencia, Barquisimeto, Maracaibo, San Cristóbal, Ciudad Bolívar, Puerto Ordaz, Cumaná, and Nueva Esparta.
- Personnel: Those who participated as the persons in charge of the initiative were 15 persons belonging to the LACSO-OVV and the national universities. In addition, the collaboration of the authorities and members of the Central Única de Autos Libres y por Puesto was fundamental. Two professional photographers were contracted to produce the graphic pieces. The persons who made the model for the campaign worked as volunteers. Most were mothers who had lost their children to violence or who resided in problematic areas.

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<sup>39</sup> The evidence used for this case study is as follows: interviews were conducted of two members of LACSO responsible for the project, one member of the Universidad Católica del Táchira in charge of the campaign in the city of San Cristóbal, and one representative of the Central Única de Autos Libres y por Puesto, a key actor in the dissemination process. Other interviews were sought, but the fact that it was a very particular initiative that had concluded made them impossible. In all, four interviews were done, all in Caracas in November 2015. In addition, published documents and documents provided directly by the organizers of the campaign were analyzed.

<sup>40</sup> The Venezuelan Observatory of Violence (OVV: Observatorio Venezolano de la Violencia) arose in 2005 as an initiative of the Social Sciences Laboratory (Laboratorio de Ciencias Sociales) bringing together various academic actors, such as the Universidad Central de Venezuela, Universidad de Oriente, Universidad del Zulia, Universidad Católica del Táchira, Universidad Católica de Guayana, and the Universidad Centro-occidental Lisandro Alvarado.

## 2. Context and historic antecedents.

The idea of launching a campaign geared to reducing lethal violence came about after a period of an extraordinary increase in homicides in Venezuela. From 1998 to 2010 homicides practically quadrupled, climbing from 4,550 to 17,600 annually, according to data from the Venezuelan Observatory of Violence (OVV). At that time Mariana Caprile culminated her education in social communication at the Universidad de Chile, where she presented a thesis that would later be proposed to the OVV and transformed into the Campaign to Raise Awareness to Value Life (Campaña de Sensibilización para la Valoración de la Vida).

The promoters of the initiative believed in the importance of warning society about the banalization of violence that was gaining ground in Venezuela. Without similar experiences on which to draw, a proposal was drawn up for communication, and support was sought to implement it.

Initially the idea was to make use of several media, such as public signs, radio, television, and social networks. Later, the limited support and financing would limit the campaign to posters. To disseminate the posters thought was given to using the backs of busses, a space usually used by the owners for private purposes, such as advertising, religious messages, or family photos. This proposal to use signs to be displayed on the vehicles, understood as an innovative way to reach the population, was presented to the National Institute of Overland Transportation (INTT: Instituto Nacional de Transporte Terrestre), under the Ministry of People's Power for Internal Relations, Justice, and Peace, which had authority over overland transportation. Yet the government dismissed the initiative based on the argument that the space sought was reserved for public campaigns to prevent traffic accidents. Some of the persons interviewed stated that the refusal was a way of denying that violence was a serious problem in Venezuela.

In the search for alternative forms of support the possibility arose of working with the Central Única de Autos Libres y por Puesto, an association or federation that pulls together 320 transport organizations, civil associations, and cooperatives, with a total of approximately 80,000 members in the Caracas metropolitan area. On transporting persons and valuables through different parts of the city, the drivers were a population exposed to violent crimes such as robbery, kidnapping, and homicide. This perceived vulnerability would lead the federation to offer its support to the campaign. The campaign also benefited from not being an initiative of the Chávez government, which it accused of not providing security and of being

an unfair competitor since it had its own transport company and at the same time determined the rules for the sector.<sup>41</sup>

### **3. Purpose of the intervention.**

According to those who carried out the campaign, the objective was to raise awareness as to the value of life through a series of messages (written and audiovisual) that used a close, simple, and direct language, geared to capturing the attention of a potential killer, ideally to change his conduct.

### **4. Description of the intervention.**

The initiative was taken by the Laboratorio de Ciencias Sociales (LACSO) and the Observatorio Venezolano de Violencia (OVV), who were responsible for financing the campaign, designing it, and developing the communication strategy. In the implementation stage the participation of the Central Única de Autos Libres y por Puesto turned out to be crucial; it appealed to its members to voluntarily support the campaign.

The campaign was carried out simultaneously in the cities of Caracas (municipalities of Libertador, Chacao, and Sucre), Maracay, Valencia, Barquisimeto, Maracaibo, San Cristóbal, Ciudad Bolívar, Puerto Ordaz, Cumaná, and Nueva Esparta. This broad coverage was made possible thanks to the partnership between the OVV and the Universidad del Zulia, Universidad de Oriente, Universidad Católica del Táchira, Universidad Católica de Guayana, Universidad Centro Occidental Lisandro Alvarado de Lara, and the Universidad Central de Venezuela. Students from these universities worked on getting out the message by distributing the materials and holding related activities.

The target audience of the campaign was males ages 15 to 25 years, belonging to low socioeconomic sectors. According to several studies, this is the social profile with the greatest risk of becoming involved in violent conduct. To gain access to this specific group the public transport lines running through the most violent and vulnerable neighborhoods were given priority.

The campaign included making and placing more than 1,000 posters on doors and windows on the back of busses and taxis. The messages drew on accessible and direct

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<sup>41</sup> Among the main complaints put by the Federation to the government were security, aspects related

language, in an appeal to hold up the intrinsic value of life. Indeed, the main slogan was “¡Valora la Vida!” – “Value Life!” It was not an initiative aimed at discouraging crimes such as robbery or assault; rather, it was specifically aimed at getting the perpetrators of crimes against others to refrain from taking the lives of their victims. With that aim, the campaign sought to raise the awareness of the population as to the consequences of lethal violence using messages which, through the image of the mother as the indirect victim of homicidal violence, would appeal to emotions and elicit empathy.

FIGURE 3. IMAGES FROM THE CAMPAIGN TO VALUE LIFE <sup>42</sup>



to renewal of the fleet, and imports of spare parts.

<sup>42</sup> Translator’s Note: The text in the upper image means: Stop hanging with the bad apples! Listen to your mother. Value life! The text in the lower image means: Enough of so much pain! Value LIFE!



Along with the work with graphic elements, in 2012 a video of the campaign was also publicized on social networks.<sup>43</sup> It was led by young residents of the Petare neighborhood who wrote a musical theme with the orientation of the producer company (Prahka Producciones Cinematográficas), LACSO, and the OVV. The key message of the video, “One bullet brings more bullets” (“Una bala trae más balas”), warns about the cycles of vengeance that are generated by violence, a phenomenon known in Venezuela as “*la culebra*,” the snake.

## 5. Monitoring and impact.

The campaign to raise awareness to value life in Venezuela is a very specific experience that did not have rigorous routines for monitoring and evaluation. While at first the proposal included the use of various channels of communication (posters, radio, television, and social networks), scant funding limited it basically to the use of graphics on public transport lines. The lack of support from the government, in the context of a highly polarized political climate, also helped limit the scope of this initiative.

According to the persons interviewed some media outlets, such as radio stations and newspapers, echoed the campaign. While no opinion study was done, the campaign was

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<sup>43</sup> See the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLL2Fs5b0w4>



received positively both by transport workers and by the general public. Nonetheless, there is no guarantee that this type of initiative will have a direct impact on homicides, though it could prove useful for alerting civil society and the government as to the importance of offering effective responses to violence.

## **6. Summary.**

The campaign to raise awareness to value life in Venezuela was promoted in 2012 by the Laboratory of Social Sciences (LACSO: Laboratorio de Ciencias Sociales) and the Venezuelan Observatory of Violence (OVV: Observatorio Venezolano de Violencia), and implemented with the support of the Central Única de Autos Libres y por Puesto. This initiative basically entailed creating and placing more than 1,000 posters on back doors and in backdoor windows on busses and taxis.

The purpose of the campaign was to raise awareness of the value of life through a series of messages aimed at capturing the attention of a potential killer so as, ideally, to bring about a change of conduct. The target audience was males, ages 15 to 25, belonging to low socioeconomic sectors. According to several studies this is the social profile at greatest risk of becoming involved in violence. To reach this specific group, priority was assigned to the public transport lines that served the most violent and vulnerable neighborhoods of different cities in Venezuela.

The message in the posters lifts up the value of life, seeking to elicit empathy through the figure of the mother, as an indirect victim of homicidal violence. Along with working with graphic elements, in September 2012 a video was also published with the message “one bullet brings more bullets,” warning about the circles of vengeance generated by violence.

The campaign was a very specific experience that was not subject to monitoring or evaluation. According to the persons interviewed, the project had been well received by the transport workers and the general public. Nonetheless, there is no evidence that this type of initiative succeeds in reducing homicides, even though it may have a mobilizing effect to alert civil society and the government to the importance of the issue and the need for public policies to address it.

## VI.iii. LEGISLATIVE CHANGES AND PROGRAMS TO PREVENT FEMICIDE

### TYPE 5: PROTECTION FOR GROUPS AT RISK OF SUFFERING HOMICIDES

#### 1. Introduction.

One of the strategies for homicide reduction is defined by its focus on protecting groups at risk, more than by the nature or characteristics of the interventions. This strategy may include several types of cases, is aimed at delimited populations (e.g. trade union leaders) or broad populations (e.g. women), and may be based on simple or complex measures. In recent years femicide and the debate about how to prevent it have come to occupy a prominent place in the academic, political, and social agendas of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Unlike the other case studies described, this one will not analyze a specific experience in a given country but rather will attempt to offer a general vision of efforts to prevent femicide in the region. One other difference in relation to other initiatives examined in this analysis is that in this case legislative changes are put forward as a key part of the strategy. Previously it was indicated that this study would not include legislative initiatives unless they had the express purpose of reducing homicides. We believe that the laws on femicide squarely meet this condition.

The concept of femicide came about in the mid-1970s in British academia based on the work of Diana Russell, who makes reference to “the killing of females by males because they are female” (United Nations, 2013: 15). Subsequently, in the 1990s, Marcela Lagarde created the neologism “*feminicidio*” (“femicide”) to describe the extreme violence that existed against women in Mexico and Central American countries, with the complicity of the state. It was specifically in the Latin American context that the concept would be taken further, debated, and translated into laws and regulations in the justice systems (United Nations, 2013).

In its generic definition femicide or feminicide corresponds to the intentional homicide of females for being female or for reasons of gender (ECLAC, 2015). Nonetheless, the concept is not unanimous to the extent that there is no consensus-based definition in the specialized

literature (PATH, InterCambios, MRC, WHO, 2009; Boira, Marcuello-Servós, Otero, Sanz Barbero, Vives-Cases, 2015).<sup>44</sup>

Domestic laws and regulations also vary as regards the meaning of the term. The narrower understandings include intimate femicide, which may be limited to homicides of a woman by her husband, by her intimate partner more generally, or in cases of consanguinity. The broader conceptions include a wider variety of homicides of women in the public and private spheres, with motivations related to gender, as well as the possible responsibility of the state for failing to protect the victims (ECLAC, 2015).

Similarly, substantive differences and specificity can be observed in the definitions of the international organizations. For example, the United Nations (2006) considers femicide as the homicide of women for reasons of their gender. The Organization of American States (2008) understands femicide as the violent death of women for reasons of their gender, whether in the context of the family, the domestic unit, or in any other space of interpersonal relations, by any person, that is perpetrated or tolerated by the state and its agents by act or omission. Tied to this point is a debate over the need to distinguish between direct and indirect femicide, where first refers to intentional deaths of women for reasons of gender, and the second to deaths of women due to indirect causes of gender discrimination such as deaths due to clandestine abortions, maternal mortality, trafficking in women, etc. (ECLAC, 2015: 70).

The lack of consensus on the definition of femicide limits the possibilities of operationalizing, scoping out, and intervening to address the phenomenon. To this difficulty are added other kinds of limitations and criticisms. For example, in legal terms the concept of femicide is often called into question as contrary to basic criminal justice principles such as (see ECLAC 2015: 73):

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<sup>44</sup> Some authors prefer to use “*feminicidio*” (feminicide) instead of “*femicidio*” (femicide) to make explicit the component of state impunity in homicides of females because of their gender (Lagarde, 2008). Nonetheless, both terms are commonly used interchangeably. In this paper a decision has been made to use “*femicidio*” (femicide), since it is the original term and is more general on not requiring the presence of systematic impunity. Of course all text in quotes is as per the author of the quoted text.

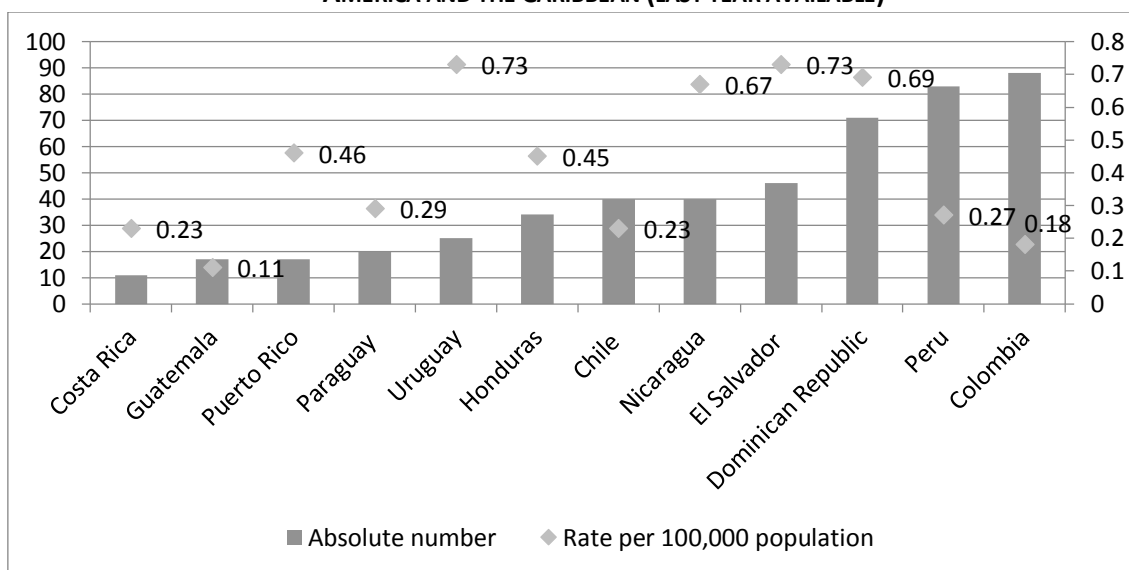
- Principle of legality: “all behaviors that are defined as crimes should be clearly identified by laws and described univocally”;
- Objections associated with perpetrator-based criminal law, “which condemns acts committed by a group of individuals rather than the act itself (which would be the case, for example, if femicide were defined as a behavior that can only be perpetrated by men against women, but not against women by other women even in the case of couples.”
- Proportionality of penalties: “The principle of proportionality requires that similar acts receive similar punishments, so the punishment for killing a woman cannot be disproportionately harsher than for killing a man in similar circumstances.”

The measurement of the phenomenon suffers from the lack of indicators and reliable data. According to ECLAC: “Femicide is one of the areas where the information void is most apparent, since there are, among other issues, many different sources of information, substantial underreporting, a lack of methodological validation, no official figures and no agency assigned to generate them.” (ECLAC, 2015:48) Despite this limitation, ECLAC’s Gender Equality Observatory collects data from the governments of the region to account for the number of deaths of women at the hands of their husbands or former husbands.<sup>45</sup> That appears to be the closest indicator of femicide in the region. The following figure presents the last year available for the countries that report data (2015).

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<sup>45</sup> ECLAC’s definition presents several problems, such as the lack of specification as to the intent of the aggressor (to distinguish intentional homicides from negligent homicides) or as to the motives and circumstances of the death (to distinguish femicides from other causes of violent death). One additional problem is that the denominator of the rate of femicides per 100,000 population includes all females, whereas the numerator considers only those over 15 years of age. Other indicators used as proxies for femicide are violent deaths of women (ECLAC, 2015) and deaths of women with presumption of homicide (CESF, 2011).

**FIGURE 4. KILLINGS OF WOMEN COMMITTED BY HUSBANDS AND EX-HUSBANDS IN 12 COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (LAST YEAR AVAILABLE)**



**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, December 2013.

The graph shows that the rate of femicides per 100,000 women is higher in countries such as Uruguay, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Honduras. Nonetheless, only cases of intimate femicide are counted; if one were to adopt a broader definition those numbers would surely be underestimates.

The objective of this section is to review the recent incorporation of femicide in the legislative and criminal justice framework of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean as a strategy for reducing homicides attributable to gender inequity. An effort is also made to identify the main prevention programs developed in the region.<sup>46</sup>

Both the enactment of statutes and the creation of programs have the purpose, from different strategies, of preventing lethal violence directed against women. In the first case, one hopes to attain that aim basically by punishing the assailants, that is, by severely stiffening the penalties to deter and incapacitate the perpetrators. In the second case, reducing femicides is sought by any number of prevention activities, undertaken by different actors, and geared to the potential victim, the assailant, and/or environmental conditions.

<sup>46</sup> Following the general criteria for this study, initiatives were discarded that generally address domestic or gender violence without a specific focus on the phenomenon of femicide.

## 2. Legislative initiatives on femicide in Latin America and the Caribbean.

### 2.1. Adopting specific criminal statutes on femicide.

The first country in Latin America and the Caribbean to legislate on femicide was Costa Rica, in 2007. Nonetheless, it was in the wake of the homicides of women in *Ciudad Juárez* (Mexico) that the phenomenon became more widely known. Indeed, in 2009, with the beginning of the trials in the case known as the “cotton field of Juárez” in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the term “feminicide” (“*feminicidio*”) was used for the first time by an international court.

Today, at least 15 countries of the region have included femicide in their legal frameworks. The countries pursued different strategies which, in some cases, have changed over time. Six countries (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Bolivia, and Mexico) have developed comprehensive statutes addressing femicide, while eight countries have reformulated provisions of their respective criminal codes along these lines. Among the latter, most (Venezuela, Chile, Peru, Panama, Ecuador, Honduras, Brazil, and Colombia) define femicide as an autonomous offense, while Argentina considers it an aggravating circumstance in a homicide.

In general, the path followed by several countries of the region would appear to be as follows: (i) a first generation of policies against domestic violence without any differentiated criminal sanction; (ii) a second generation of policies that consider femicide an aggravating circumstance of homicide (for example, similar to infanticide); and (iii) a third generation that defines femicide as an autonomous offense.

The following table presents the regulations or statute law in force on femicide in the region, considering the country, the year it was adopted, the definition, and the statutory definition or legal form. As regards statutory definitions, three categories were identified: autonomous offense in the context of a general law on violence against women, simple autonomous offense in the criminal code, and aggravating circumstance in the crime of homicide.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> This distinction between incorporating femicide based on the reform of the criminal codes or the adoption of comprehensive laws is highlighted in the UN-UNiTE report (2013). According to the report, having comprehensive laws has the advantage “that they incorporate important aspects for understanding and applying the offense of femicide/feminicide, and for its prosecution, punishment, and reparation” (UN-UNiTE, 2013: 18).

**TABLE 10. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY PROVISIONS ON FEMICIDE IN COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Country	Year	Law or Regulation	Specification	Criminal definition	Textual definition of femicide/feminicide
<b>Bolivia</b>	2013	Comprehensive law for ensuring women a life free from violence	Law No. 348	Autonomous offense in a specific law on violence against women	Femicidal violence: It is the action of extreme violence that violates the fundamental right to life and causes the death of a female for being female. (Art.7.2)
<b>Mexico</b>	2012	General law on women's access to a life free from violence	Law DOF 15-01-2013	Autonomous offense in a specific law on violence against women	Killing a female for reasons of gender (Art. 21 refers to Art. 325 of the Criminal Code)
<b>Nicaragua</b>	2012	Comprehensive law against violence against women	Law No.779	Autonomous offense in a specific law on violence against women	The male who, in the context of unequal power relations between males and females, kills a female.(Art.9)
<b>El Salvador</b>	2010	Special comprehensive law for a life free from violence for women	Law No.520	Autonomous offense in a specific law on violence against women	Death of a female mediated by motives of hatred or disdain because she is female. (Art. 45)
<b>Guatemala</b>	2008	Law against femicide and other forms of violence against women	Decree 22-2008	Autonomous offense in a specific law on violence against women	Violent death of a female caused by unequal power relations between males and females. (Art. 3.e)
<b>Costa Rica</b>	2007	Law criminalizing violence against women	Law No. 8589	Autonomous offense in a specific law on violence against women	Death of a female with whom one was married or co-habited, declared or not. (Art. 21)
<b>Brazil</b>	2015	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	Law No. 13,104	Simple autonomous offense	Killing a female for reasons of her sex, when the crime is based on domestic and family violence, holding in contempt or discriminating against her status as female. (Art. 121)
<b>Colombia</b>	2015	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	"Rosa Elvira Cely" Law, Law No. 1,751	Simple autonomous offense	Violent death of a female because she is female (Art. 2)
<b>Venezuela</b>	2014	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	Organic law on women's right to a life free from violence	Simple autonomous offense	The homicide of a female, committed by a male, for reasons strictly associated with her gender (Art. 57)
<b>Ecuador</b>	2014	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code	Simple autonomous offense	Killing a female as a result of power relations manifested in any type of violence, for the fact of being female or because of her gender (Art. 141)
<b>Peru</b>	2013	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	Law No. 30,068	Simple autonomous offense	Killing a female for being female (Art. 108-A)
<b>Panama</b>	2013	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	Law No. 82	Simple autonomous offense	Causing the death of a female based on belonging to the female sex, due to discrimination, or any other form of violence (Art. 4.7)
<b>Chile</b>	2010	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	Law No. 20,480	Simple autonomous offense	Reforms the legal rules on parricide: If the victim of the offense described in the foregoing section is or has been the spouse or domestic partner of its perpetrator, the offense shall have the name of femicide (Art. 390.b)
<b>Argentina</b>	2012	Reform of the Criminal Code or statute	Law No. 26,791	Aggravating circumstance	Homicide of a woman by a man for pleasure, greed, hatred motivated by race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, gender identity, or its expression (Art. 1.1 and 1.4)

Source: By authors, based on: UN-UNiTE, 2013; ECLAC, 2015; Law 13,104 (Brazil) 2015; Law 1751 (Colombia) 2015, Organic Law on the Right of Women to a Life Free from Violence (Venezuela), 2014.

All the cases analyzed make reference to the death of females because they are females. In some countries the definition is accompanied by more specific motivations, be it hatred (El Salvador and Argentina), discrimination (Panama and Brazil), or sexual orientation or gender identity (Argentina). In other countries femicide is defined in the context of the structural relations of domination and power (Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Ecuador). In some cases, it is indicated that this crime is committed by men against women (Venezuela, Nicaragua, Argentina), while others are not explicit in this regard.

As was indicated, six countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Mexico) define femicide as an autonomous offense, adopting comprehensive statutes and in some cases new institutions with authority over the matter. Costa Rica was the first country in the hemisphere to legislate on femicide (2007); nonetheless, it only criminalizes intimate femicide, understood as the death of a woman caused by a person who has or had a relationship of marriage or consensual union, which may or may not have been declared (Article 21, Law No. 8589). Bolivia defines feminicide in the context of a comprehensive law to guarantee women a life free from violence that defines feminicidal violence (*la violencia feminicida*) and the crime of feminicide (*delito de feminicidio*) (Article 252 bis). Mexico includes the definition of feminicide and a series of emergency measures for addressing feminicidal violence in specific territories. In the remaining cases (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua), based on a broader definition “the offense of femicide/feminicide is incorporated in special comprehensive statutes which, in addition to including other statutory definitions of criminal conduct, establish specialized criminal justice agencies to investigate and punish the offenses defined in the statute, and they define the mechanisms entrusted with designing and carrying out public policies for preventing, attending to, and protecting the women victims of violence.” (UN - UNiTE, 2013:17-18).

The other eight countries (Venezuela, Chile, Peru, Panama, Ecuador, Honduras, Brazil, and Colombia) simply add femicide as an autonomous offense to their criminal codes. Among them, the countries that most recently incorporated femicide into their criminal statutes as an autonomous offense were Brazil and Colombia, in 2015. In both cases femicide is understood as the homicide of a woman for being a woman. Brazil considers it a heinous (“*hediondo*”) crime associated with contempt for and discrimination against women (Article 121 of Decree-law 2,848). For its part Colombia, after having imposed sanctions for femicide as an aggravating circumstance in homicides, includes it as an autonomous offense in its criminal code in order to punish whoever causes the violent death of a female because she is female, or because of her gender identity, in a private space or publicly (Article 2, Law 1761).



Venezuela also began considering intimate femicide<sup>48</sup> as an aggravating circumstance of homicide (ECLAC, 2015). Nonetheless, since 2014 femicide has been considered an autonomous offense, defined as “the homicide of a female, committed by a male, for reasons strictly linked to her gender.” This definition includes intimate femicide, non-intimate femicide<sup>49</sup>, and femicide by association<sup>50</sup> (*por conexión*) (Article 57, Law that partially amends the Organic Law on the Right of Women to a Life Free from Violence).

In 2014 Ecuador adopted the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code, which at Article 141 defines femicide as the crime in which a person, “as the result of relations of power manifested in any kind of violence, kills a female for being female or because of her gender.” Peru, a country that defined cases of femicide as parricide, reworked its criminal code in 2013 so as to establish it as an autonomous offense based on the basic definition of killing a female because she is a female (Article 108-A, Law 30062). Using a similar definition, Panama also determined that femicide is an autonomous offense.

In Chile, incorporating femicide into the criminal code involved adapting the old crime of parricide so as to incorporate femicide as one of its constituent categories. In Chile, as in Costa Rica, femicide is considered an offense limited to relations in the private and family spheres.<sup>51</sup> Finally, Argentina is currently the only country that considers femicide an aggravating circumstance for homicides of women perpetrated by men in the context of gender violence (Law 26,791).

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<sup>48</sup> “When the spouse, former spouse, paramour, former paramour, person with who the victim lived in *de facto* consensual union or a relationship of affection, with or without living together, has killed a woman.” (Art. 57)

<sup>49</sup> “A man who has intentionally killed a woman, taking advantage of a labor, academic, professional, or any other relationship that might imply trust, subordination, or superiority, to the detriment of the victim’s body to satisfy sexual instincts.” (Art. 57).

<sup>50</sup> “A man who has intentionally killed a woman for being involved in contexts such as human trafficking, criminal conspiracies, or international networks of illicit industries.” (Art. 57)

<sup>51</sup> In Chile, social organizations and members of the legislature introduced a bill according to which crimes against females because they are female transcend the sphere of private relations and reach the public sphere (Muñoz D’Albora, 2009).

## 2.2. Measures of protection provided for in the legislation.

Some laws on violence against women, beyond defining femicide, incorporate measures of protection such as shelters for women at risk of death (Costa Rica<sup>52</sup>, Guatemala<sup>53</sup>, and Chile<sup>54</sup>), compensation, or protection for victims' descendants or relatives (Chile<sup>55</sup>, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama<sup>56</sup>, and Peru).

Few cases incorporate measures of rehabilitation for assailants. In Brazil the Maria da Penha Law mentions the Centers for Education and Rehabilitation of Assailants. In Peru, the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations works on the reinsertion of men who have been convicted of violence as a strategy to prevent violence against and deaths of women (Ministerial Resolution 0163-2015).<sup>57</sup>

Other laws are geared to various actors in the criminal justice system. For example, Colombian law provides for "granting security guarantees to the witnesses of and family members of the victims of femicidal violence, and judicial officers" (Article 7(h), Law 1751). At the same time, countries such as El Salvador<sup>58</sup>, Costa Rica<sup>59</sup>, and Guatemala<sup>60</sup> have particular

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<sup>52</sup> The "Inter-institutional protocol of intervention for attention to women at high risk of death due to violence" provides for care at "Centers of Specialized Care and Temporary Shelter for Battered Women at risk of death."

<sup>53</sup> Article 16 of the Law against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence against Women provides for the establishment of "Comprehensive Support Centers for Women Survivors of Violence."

<sup>54</sup> The "Protocol for attention to victims of femicide," according to the agreement signed by Carabineros de Chile, Ministry of Interior, National Service for Minors (SENAME) and National Service for Women (SERNAM), includes safe houses for receiving women in situations of violence (SERNAM, 2012): "the role of SERNAM is to contact the persons affected and offer them legal counsel and support from the network that constitutes the Circuito del Femicidio, which includes the participation of Carabineros de Chile, Centers for Attention to Victims (CAVDs), the Ministry of Interior and Public Security, and SERNAM. The CAVDs provide attention in terms of reparations, whereas the National Service for Minors provides support and protection to the victims' children." (SERNAM, 2014:553)

<sup>55</sup> "Intersectoral Protocol for children and adolescents who are indirect victims of homicide or parricide in the context of Family Violence," of the National Service for Minors (SENAME). (SERNAM, 2012).

<sup>56</sup> According to Article 71 of Law No. 82: "reparation for the victim shall be proportional to the harm caused. The reparation should be decreed by the judicial authority who takes cognizance of the specific case. When the victim has died, the right to reparation extends to his or her successors, as provided by law."

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.elperuano.com.pe/NormasElperuano/2015/06/09/1248180-1.html>

<sup>58</sup> In El Salvador, Article 47 punishes the failure to act to guarantee the victim's right to justice: "One who in the performance of a public function fosters, promotes, or tolerates impunity or obstructs the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of the crimes established in this law shall be punished by imprisonment of two to four years and disqualified from discharging a public function for the same period." (Law No. 520)

measures for persons who in the performance of their public function encourage or tolerate impunity in cases of femicide (ECLAC, 2015: 72).

Some statutes seek to bring about changes in the administration of justice to adapt the institutions and procedures to the demands of the laws (United Nations, 2013). Examples along these lines include El Salvador and Nicaragua, where the implementation of comprehensive laws gave way to procedures for inter-institutional coordination to ensure the greatest speediness and accuracy of judicial investigations and decisions (United Nations - UNiTE, 2013: 20). One should also mention Guatemala's Comprehensive Services Model (Modelo de Atención Integral), which includes specialized criminal trial courts for crimes of femicide and other forms of violence against women ("Primera Instancia Penal de Delitos de Femicidio y otras Formas de Violencia contra la Mujer"), as well as specialized divisions of other institutions like the Office of Prosecutors for Crimes against the Lives and Physical Integrity of Women (GGM, 2010: 36).

In some countries (Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru) the laws on femicide also encompass the work of police and prosecutors. With the adoption of its law on femicide Nicaragua strengthened its specialized units for prosecuting gender violence and Mexico adopted the "Protocol for Proceeding in Investigations into the Crime of Homicide from the Perspective of Femicide" for the purpose of contributing to the work of the officers of the justice system (Government of Mexico, 2009).

International agencies such as UN Women foster the construction of a "Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women (femicide/feminicide)" to facilitate effective investigations (ECLAC, 2015:30). With that basis countries such as Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Peru are developing tools for investigating femicide, including guides for collecting evidence, judicial procedures, and investigations, as well as mechanisms for fostering women's access to the justice system (OHCHR and FGR, 2012: 6).

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<sup>59</sup> In the case of Costa Rica, "criminal sanctions are imposed on one who, in the performance of a public function, promotes impunity or obstructs a police, judicial, or administrative investigation related to actions of violence against women." (United Nations, 2013: 24)

<sup>60</sup> In Guatemala the State is considered responsible "for the act or omission of a public servant who obstructs, delays, or refuses to carry out the sanctions provided for in this law; an action of indemnification may be brought against them, if convicted, without prejudice to administrative or civil liabilities." (Article 12, Decree No. 22-2008)

### 3. Programs for preventing femicides in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In most countries of the region the efforts made to include femicide on the legislative level do not have any correlate in the development of prevention programs (ECLAC, 2015; Cladem, 2013; Office of the Attorney General (Procuraduría General de la República), Mexico, 2006, Office of the Human Rights Ombudsperson (Defensoría del Pueblo), Bolivia, 2012; GGM, 2010; CESF, 2011). Even though initiatives aimed at controlling domestic violence are common, few programs are focused on reducing femicides.

Among the existing programs one can distinguish three types:

- Campaigns for raising the awareness of the population
- Training officers in the criminal justice system
- Implementing risk scales or alarms.

#### 3.1. Campaigns for raising awareness.

The main objective of the campaigns to raise awareness is to bring about changes in cultural patterns and gender stereotypes in the population at large. Most are domestic violence prevention programs with some type of focus on femicide.

In Panama the “Stop Femicide” campaign (“Alto al Femicidio”) was launched in 2012, and more recently the “Not one [woman] less” campaign (“Ni una menos”) was adopted in the Southern Cone; it denounces the deaths of women due to gender violence. Another example is the Bolivian campaign promoted by the United Nations and the Ministry of Justice in 2010 under the motto “Not one more [woman], violence never again” (“Ni una más, violencia nunca más”). That message was put out in several languages (Spanish, Aymara, and Quechua), with materials for dissemination and television spots on the rape of women, trafficking, and femicide, which were disseminated throughout the country (OAS, 2014).

Similar examples can be found in Chile with the campaign “Caution! Machismo kills” (“¡Cuidado! El machismo mata”), undertaken by the Red Chilena contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres (Chilean Network against Violence against Women) in 2015; or “Our decision is made, NO more feminicide” (“Nuestra decisión está tomada, NO más feminicidio”), undertaken by various organizations that promote women’s rights in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> One can consult the campaign at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKEC6GsgGck>

### 3.2. Training personnel in the criminal justice system.

One of the main justifications for training the personnel of the criminal justice system is the need to generate technical competences and sensitivity in the attention given to cases of risk to life or femicide.

In this regard, the Women's Emergency Centers (CEMs: Centros de Emergencia de la Mujer) of Peru have incorporated modules on femicide in the courses for training justice promoters (MIMP, 2012). Those programs are aimed at "strengthening the capacities of the police, prosecutors, and judicial officers to detect and identify the risk of femicide and attempted femicide." Beyond that, the CEMs also undertake awareness-raising and rehabilitation programs for the victims or family members of victims of femicide (MIMP, 2012:76).

In the case of Mexico, the National Women's Institute (Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres) also holds seminars for improving access to justice for women victims of violence, as well as special days for training the staff on human rights, justice, and femicide (SNPASEVM, 2011). Also in Mexico, in 2004 the federal government created the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes Related to the Homicides of Women in the Municipality of Juárez, Chihuahua, in the wake of the ongoing complaints of corruption and inefficiency of the local justice system in relation to femicides. That Special Prosecutor's Office had the purpose of helping the state authorities investigate the crimes, drawing attention to the reports of homicides and disappearances of women as well as the family members of the women killed or disappeared.

Other initiatives in this regard were undertaken by the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU: Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer), in an effort to improve the capacities for institutional response to prevent and address violence, trafficking, and femicide with training courses for professionals and seminars.<sup>62</sup>

### 3.3. Risk scales or alarms.

Risk scales can be used as a way to raise the awareness of women and the population in general, and as a tool for public services that work with women at risk.

One experience in raising awareness was carried out in El Salvador by ISDEMU based on disseminating risk scales to inform women about the stages of violence and to alert them to

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<sup>62</sup> For more information see: <http://www.isdemu.gob.sv/>

the risk of femicide. This scale was presented in the form of a “thermometer” that begins with aggressive joking and has femicide at the highest point. The idea of the thermometer image is to depict domestic violence as a phenomenon that is expressed in different ways that can lead to the death of women. Similarly, a scale was implemented in Mexico for classifying the levels of violence called the “Violentómetro,” or “Violence meter.” The scale was developed by the Universidad Politécnica, and concerns management with a gender perspective. It was disseminated using graphic material in the form of a ruler or thermometer to “visualize the different expressions of violence that are hidden in daily life and that are often confusing or unknown.”<sup>63</sup>

In Peru, 149 Emergency Centers for Women (CEM: Centros de Emergencia de la Mujer) also use risk scales at the same time as they offer “free of charge legal representation, psychological evaluation and support, social orientation and support” (MIMP, 2012: 27). Preventing femicide by using risk scales includes evaluating three factors: assailant, victim, and the relationship between the two. The result of this evaluation “is expressed on a scale that situates or classifies each case as minor, moderate, or severe. The CEM classifies cases from greater to lesser; most of the attention of the service is focused on the cases with greater risk.” (MIMP, 2012: 42)

**TABLE 11. CATEGORIZING THE RISK OF FEMICIDE ACCORDING TO THE CEMs-PERU<sup>64</sup>**

Categorization	Definition
Minor risk	There are indicators of family or sexual violence, but there is little likelihood that violence will recur in light of the protective factors the victim has in her favor.
Moderate risk	There are risk factors that increase the likelihood of a recurrence of physical, psychological, or sexual violence due to the weakness of the protective factors and the presence of active risk factors in the aggressor. It is moderate violence in magnitude and frequency.
Severe risk	Risk factors are present and protective factors are lacking. The violence is aggravated, endangering the physical integrity of the victim. In the case of family violence, in general it is a situation of frequent violence, of medium to long duration, which is accompanied by death threats or threats of physical harm. This category is associated with feminicides and attempted feminicides.

Source: MIMP, 2012: 44.

<sup>63</sup> For more information see:

[http://www.genero.ipn.mx/Materiales\\_Didacticos/Documents/ARTICULO3BCD.pdf](http://www.genero.ipn.mx/Materiales_Didacticos/Documents/ARTICULO3BCD.pdf)

<sup>64</sup> The data sheet is detailed in the annex.

The preventive actions of the CEMs are guided by the risk scale, which may require moving the women to shelters, or beginning judicial proceedings or police investigations, beyond support in the form of medical and psychological care.

In Guatemala, with the adoption of the Law of 2008 a comprehensive care model was implemented whose main objective is to avoid re-victimization by domestic violence and to prevent femicide. The program is implemented by the Office of Attention to the Victim (OAV: Oficina de Atención a la Víctima) of the Attorney General’s Office with the Office of the Prosecutor for Women and the Office of Permanent Attention. The Office of the Prosecutor for Crimes against Women (Fiscalía de la Mujer) is the institution entrusted with opening the inquiry and offering measures depending on the classification of risk of the complaints. The classification determines three levels of risk:

**TABLE 12. LEVELS OF RISK OF THE COMPLAINTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR FOR CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN IN GUATEMALA**

Types of risks	Definition
Risk 1	Psychological attacks or threats, without risk of physical injury or to life
Risk 2	Threats and minor injuries, without risk to life
Risk 3	Risk to life

Source: GGM, 2010, page 62.

The National Women’s Service (SERNAM: Servicio Nacional de la Mujer) is the agency of the Government of Chile charged with carrying out activities to prevent domestic violence. In the context of the program “Chile Acoge” (“Chile Takes In”) (2010), that service undertakes a series of actions to prevent family violence, such as the panic button initiative, which has been designed for women victims whose lives are at risk. More than 690 women have received the panic button, “which consists of installing, in one’s personal cell phone, an emergency number for women at high risk so that they can get immediate attention.” (SERNAM, 2014: 553)

#### 4. Monitoring and impact.

The lack of quality information is one of the main limitations to determining the scope of the phenomenon of femicide and putting in place effective prevention programs (ECLAC, 2015). Studies on femicide in the region are predominantly descriptive and qualitative, and are generally geared to arguing for the need for public policies to address the issue. In many cases obstacles are identified in the criminal justice systems and suggestions are offered to

overcome them, in others an effort is made to interpret the evolution of indicators. Nonetheless, there are very few evaluations of the impact of public interventions.

Even so, in recent years some countries have made gains. Colombia, for example, developed a National Statistics System on Gender Violence. Argentina is working on implementing a Unit for Registration, Systematization, and Monitoring of femicides and homicides aggravated by gender, and Guatemala is creating a National Information System on Violence against Women, with data on femicide.

One exception to the absence of impact evaluations is the case of the Maria da Penha Law in Brazil. Posenato Garcia et al. (2013) evaluate the impact of the law on the mortality of women due to assaults using the interrupted time series technique. Among the conclusions is that there was no reduction in the annual rates of mortality, comparing the periods prior to and after the implementation of this law. It is noted in this regard that mortality rates per 100,000 population fell from 5.28 in the prior before the law (2001-2006) to 5.22 after its implementation (2007-2011) (Posenato Garcia et al., 2013). Nonetheless, two observations are in order. First, as regards the dependent variable, the study measures the effect of the law on the mortality of women due to assault, and not exactly on femicide.<sup>65</sup> Second, and in relation to the dependent variable, the analysis does not control, using multivariate methods, for the presence of other intervening factors or for the levels of operationalization and implementation of the law. Moreover, the Maria da Penha Law defines and regulates domestic and family violence against women, yet the specific statutory definition of femicide as an autonomous offense did not become law in Brazil until 2015. Accordingly, the conclusions of this evaluation must be taken with caution.

An evaluation after the Maria da Penha Law was done by Cerqueira et al. (2015), using a differences in differences model where the group addressed (homicide of women) was controlled for by using the control group (homicide of men). The study proposed to distinguish factors associated with social violence that would generally affect homicides of both men and women from other factors associated specifically with gender that would affect only homicides of women. Models were estimated with this aim in mind to explain homicides of women and homicides of women in the home, the latter being a closer indicator of the phenomenon of

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<sup>65</sup> The data were obtained from the Mortality Information System (SIM: Sistema de Informações sobre Mortalidade) and considered the deaths of women of all ages that occurred in Brazil from January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2011. The following causes of death were analyzed: other extreme accidental causes of traumatism; intentionally self-inflicted lesions; assaults; and events whose intent is undetermined. Deaths due to legal interventions or operations of war were not considered (Posenato Garcia, 2013: 384).



domestic violence. Also considered were local and temporary fixed effects, beyond the control variables, such as the prevalence of firearms and consumption of alcoholic beverages in micro-regions of Brazil. In contrast with the results arrived at by Posenato Garcia et al. (2013), this evaluation notes that the introduction of the Maria da Penha Law had statistically significant effects reducing homicides of women associated with their gender. While it does not arise directly from the quantitative analysis, three mechanisms appear to be at work in this reduction, according to Cerqueira et al. (2015): (i) an increase in the costs of the penalty for the aggressors; (ii) greater empowerment and improved security conditions for the victim to lodge a complaint; and (iii) improvements in the judicial mechanisms making possible more effective attention from the criminal justice system for cases of domestic violence.

## 5. Summary.

Despite the increasingly prominent place of femicide on the academic, social, and political agenda of the region, there is no consensus definition of the concept or a harmonized operationalization of specific indicators.

Most of the countries in the region have focused on the problem of femicide legislatively either by adopting specific statutes (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Bolivia, and Mexico), adding new offenses to their criminal codes (Venezuela, Chile, Peru, Panama, Ecuador, Honduras, Brazil, and Colombia), or establishing aggravating circumstances in homicides (Argentina). The criminalization of femicide presupposes a stiffer penalty for the assailants, especially with the imposition of more severe sentences in relation to homicides. Other types of measures proposed in the legislation are protection for victims and their children (Chile, Peru, and Guatemala), protection for witnesses and judicial officers involved in the trials (Colombia), shelters for women at risk of death (Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Chile), and reparation or protection for the descendants or family members of victims (Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, and Peru).

In some cases (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico) the implementation of new laws also implied changes in the judicial system, leading to the creation of agencies specialized in gender issues and femicides. At the same time, several countries have drawn up protocols for investigating and prosecuting this crime (Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Peru).

Nonetheless, legislative and judicial efforts do not generally find a correlate in the implementation of general femicide prevention programs. The few examples that exist in the regional context are limited to campaigns to raise the awareness of the population (Bolivia,

Peru, Ecuador, Chile, El Salvador, and Mexico), training of the public servants who work in the criminal justice system (Peru, Mexico, and El Salvador), and implementing mechanisms to detect or predict cases of extreme violence, such as risk scales or panic buttons (Guatemala, Peru, and Chile).

One of the limitations to putting in place prevention programs is associated with the lack of quality indicators and data. According to ECLAC's Gender Equality Observatory: "Femicide is one of the areas where the information void is most apparent, since there are, among other issues, many different sources of information, substantial underreporting, a lack of methodological validation, no official figures and no agency assigned to generate them." (ECLAC, 2015:48) Similarly, there is a great scarcity of evaluations of the impact of the laws and programs being implemented. Most studies on femicide seek to describe the phenomenon based on the scant data available or in qualitative approaches. Little is known about the effectiveness of the measures being implemented in the region. Only in the case of Brazil were evaluations found that estimate the impact of the Maria da Penha Law on homicides of women. Evidently, better quality data are needed not only to prioritize resources and distinguish what works from what doesn't work in terms of prevention, but also for improving the citizen debate about femicide in a region characterized by both violence and gender inequality.

## VI. iv. FICA VIVO!, BRAZIL <sup>66</sup>

### TYPE 6: POLICE INTERVENTIONS IN AREAS AT RISK

#### 1. Basic information.

- Name of Project: Fica Vivo!
- Institution: State Secretariat for Social Defense, Government of Minas Gerais
- Type of Institution: Regional Government
- Financing: Approximately US\$ 5,500,000 up until 2006
- Dates: From August 2002 to present
- Focus: Communities or *favelas* with a high incidence of homicides
- Areas covered: State of Minas Gerais
- Personnel: In 2006, the program had 15 local centers for organizing activities and supporting the community, 30 professionals (psychologists, social workers, educators, etc.), 15 groups for patrolling zones at risk, and 202 monitors who were imparting workshops.
- Number of beneficiaries: in 2006, approximately 11,500 youths participated in activities carried out by the program.

#### 2. Context and historical antecedents.

The capital of the state of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, experienced a major increase in violence in the second half of the 1990s and the first years of the following decade. In effect, the homicide rate climbed from 12.7 per 100,000 population to 42.9 per 100,000 from 1994 to 2002.

In light of that scenario in 2001 the State Secretariat for Justice and Human Rights established the Human Rights and Public Security Inter-institutional Forum, which was made up of public agencies and private organizations for the purpose of developing effective policies to combat crime and promote human rights. The idea was thus put forward of generating

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<sup>66</sup> The evidence used for this case study is as follows: there was on-site observation of one of the spaces where the program was being implemented. Six members or former members of Fica Vivo! (authorities and technical personnel) were interviewed, along with one workshop monitor, one member of the Public Ministry, one member of the Military Police, and one member of the Civilian Police. In addition, five interviews were conducted with known academics specialized in violence. In all 15 interviews were conducted in Belo Horizonte in April and May 2016. Finally, the publications and other documents offered directly by the informants and the persons running the project were analyzed.

synergy between two fronts of action that have not always been very connected, public security officers and human rights activists.

The Center for the Study of Crime and Public Security (Centro de Estudos em Criminalidade e Segurança Pública) of the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (CRISP-UFGM) participated in the Inter-institutional Forum. One of its contributions was an assessment of the characteristics of homicides in Belo Horizonte. The study evidences, among the main results, hotspots, i.e. areas with a high concentration of homicides in poor areas of the city, residential proximity between victims and perpetrators, and a very well-defined profile in relation to the persons involved in those events, preponderantly black male youths.

Once the problem was defined, the CRISP, along with other actors, held a series of meetings to design a proposal for intervention. The proposal arrived at had two components, one involving “qualified repression” by the police, and another involving social prevention. The focus was on the youths involved in criminal groups or at high risk of becoming involved, it had a strong community base, and it drew inspiration from the experience of Operation Ceasefire<sup>67</sup> in the city of Boston (United States).

The region of Morro das Pedras was chosen for implementing a pilot experience; it is a conglomerate to the west of Belo Horizonte with a population of 30,000 and a homicide rate of about 200 per 100,000 population. The experience was directly coordinated by CRISP with the collaboration of various actors (Military Police, Civilian Police, Federal Police, Public Ministry, Judiciary, trade associations, social organizations, local persons of reference, etc.) and it represented the beginning of the “Homicide Control Program,” which ended up being called “Fica Vivo!” (Stay Alive!). One of the reasons behind the change in the name of the program was to avoid stigmatization by the communities by making direct reference to homicide or violence.

The experience of Morro das Pedras was valued positively by its protagonists and by the citizenry in general. The results indicated a reduction in homicides of approximately 45%, as well as the possibility for residents to move about more freely. The program suggested promising ideas: prioritizing the most violent communities; focusing on homicide reduction and not on drug trafficking, as had been traditional; carrying out “qualified repression” seeking to incapacitate contumacious offenders; combining social prevention actions with ostensive patrolling; and actively involving the local community, among others. In 2003 the new state

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<sup>67</sup> For more information, see: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/188741.pdf>

government, headed up by Aécio Neves, decided to incorporate the program within the Secretariat for Social Defense (SEDS: Secretaria de Defesa Social).<sup>68</sup>

The Fica Vivo! program has undergone several transformations in its 15 years. It came about as a pilot intervention in a single region of Belo Horizonte, coordinated by civil society, and it has come to constitute one of the leading policies of the state government in this area, covering 32 regions throughout Minas Gerais. This lengthy process has entailed changes in organization, methodological approach, budget, leadership, etc. As one person interviewed put it, with historical perspective, “there are many Fica Vivos.”

Next is a description of the most representative characteristics of this program, deliberately avoiding getting into accessory aspects or aspects that have come and gone.

### **3. Purpose of the intervention.**

The purpose of Fica Vivo! is to reduce the incidence of intentional homicides through acts of prevention and repression in areas at risk of the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte and other municipalities of Minas Gerais with high levels of violence.

The program also seeks to contribute to the following objectives: (i) to prevent conflicts and violent rivalries involving adolescents and youths; (ii) to expand the sense of security; and (iii) to strengthen the socio-community network for protecting the adolescents and youths served.

### **4. Description of the intervention.**

From the organizational standpoint Fica Vivo! has a structure with a General Coordinating Body, Municipal Coordinating Bodies, and the Municipal Forum.

The General Coordinating Body has the function of establishing the program’s guidelines and following up on its implementation by the Municipal Coordinating Bodies. It is chaired by the Secretariat for Social Defense and is made up of representatives of various institutions: Court of Justice, Legislative Assembly, Public Ministry, Military Police, Civilian Police, Secretary for Social Development and Sports, Secretary of Education, and CRISP-UFMG.

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<sup>68</sup> By Decree 43334/2003.

It is up to the Municipal Coordinating Bodies to implement the actions of the program in their respective areas. These are interagency spaces made up of representatives of the office of the mayor, the municipal council, the Public Ministry, the Judiciary, the Military Police, the Civilian Police, and organized civil society. The Municipal Forum also holds monthly sessions; it is a meeting of everyone involved in the program for the purpose of monitoring the results and discussing the strategies or actions needed. This markedly local working dynamic somehow seeks to bring the program into line with the specific demands of each community or region.

As noted above, Fica Vivo! has two basic components, social prevention and strategic intervention. Following that logic in each municipality where the program is unfolding working groups are formed that operate in an articulated fashion to reduce homicides.

The strategic intervention is aimed at facilitating the coordination of SEDS with institutions of the criminal justice system such as the Public Ministry, the Judiciary, the Military Police, and the Civilian Police. The main elements of this component are the Strategic Intervention Group (GIE) and the Group Specialized in Policing Areas at Risk (GEPAR).<sup>69</sup>

The Strategic Intervention Group brings together the SEDS and the other institutions of the criminal justice area with a view to optimizing the production, circulation, and analysis of statistics and other information. It is responsible for police intelligence tasks and for examining the criminal dynamics in a given territory based on identifying criminal groups, contumacious homicides, *modus operandi*, etc. Its action is crucial for orienting the “qualified repression,” and for defining objectives and strategies.

The GEPAR is a police unit for preventive patrolling that is community-oriented; it is established permanently in the regions where Fica Vivo! operates. The agents of the Military Police who make up the GEPAR voluntarily offer to do so and must meet certain requirements, such as having a minimum of experience in operational activities and not having committed grave disciplinary breaches. After selection its members are trained in a 180-hour training course. Once a group of police officers from the GEPAR is assigned to a region it stays for two years, which is the time considered necessary for getting to know the community and developing ties with the population.

There are three main lines of work of the Fica Vivo! program in the territory: prevention, “qualified repression,” and social promotion. The social protection component seeks to offer a network of local services to prevent violence and improve community life and

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<sup>69</sup> For more information, see instruction 002/05-CG, which regulates the operation of the GEPAR.

the exercise of citizenship. To that end, different services are offered the population ages 12 to 24 years residing in the communities in which the program is involved. Various kinds of activities are undertaken in this context, including psychosocial care and workshops on sports, art, and culture.

The selection of the regions for intervention by the program considers the homicide rate, although one also considers the social vulnerability constructed based on indicators such as average years of schooling, illiteracy, unemployment, and child mortality. The decision on the communities in which to intervene is made in the GIE and is followed by the deployment of the GEPAR in those territories.

Once the GEPAR assumes control of the community, the technical teams of Fica Vivo! perform a field study to get to know the history of the community, its sociocultural characteristics, the dynamics of criminal behavior, and the local public services network (education, health, recreation, etc.). This assessment is to be the basis for adjusting the approach to the specificities of the place and make the most of community resources. The process of implementing Fica Vivo! continues with an event to introduce it to the locality, with the search for an adequate space for installing the Crime Prevention Center and also the search for candidates to work as workshop monitors.

The Crime Prevention Centers are the local bases of the program and the places of reference for the work of the technical experts and the workshop monitors. The monitors are persons from the communities where the program is being implemented who teach activities such as theater, graffiti, and soccer. Beyond the educational function, the monitors have the objective of engaging the young people in dialogue, interesting them in socially productive tasks, fostering their social cohesion, contributing to defusing conflicts and resolving them non-violently. The fact of being neighbors of the youths means they know the territory and it facilitates building bonds of trust. The criteria used by Fica Vivo! for selecting monitors are that they reside in the community, have experience in the subject covered by their workshop (sports, culture, art, etc.), and be positive local references. No one is allowed to work in more than one Fica Vivo! workshop at the same time.

The monitors receive monthly remuneration of approximately US\$ 250<sup>70</sup> and their work is done twice weekly, for two-and-a-half hours each time.<sup>71</sup> Their duties include taking

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<sup>70</sup> The equivalent of R\$ 800 reais, based on the exchange rate as of April 2016: 3.2 reais to the dollar.

<sup>71</sup> Periodically the program also carried out sports “Olympics” with the young people from several workshops. This event has been highlighted as positive during the interviews, given that it gave a certain

attendance (there are generally 10 to 20 persons per workshop) and making reports on how the workshops went, the situation of the region, and the beneficiaries. Despite being key actors in the program, the monitors do not receive special training.

The technical personnel of the program (psychologists, social workers, educators, etc.) provide orientation for the work of the monitors, and provide psychosocial care at the Crime Prevention Centers. Approximately three technical staff work at each Center; they receive a short training by the program. The performance of the technical personnel and monitors, as well as the general operation of the Centers, is supervised by a social worker.

One sensitive issue for Fica Vivo! is the engagement that takes place in a given territory between the technical personnel and monitors, on the one hand, and the GEPAR, on the other. Coordination between them is, in principle, a foundational idea of the program, which seeks to prevent the proximate and ultimate causes of violence, and to apply “qualified repression.”

The technical personnel in the social area, on making direct contact with potential victims and perpetrators, access relevant information on the sources of conflict in the community. This may involve identifying problematic persons or groups, anticipating cycles of vengeance among youths and criminal groups, or noting the arrival of a load of firearms, among other things. While this information is significant for the police, the technical personnel of the social area should maintain a certain professional confidentiality so as not to prejudice the beneficiaries of the program and to win their trust. Taking on the role of police informants would endanger not only their work, but also their physical integrity. Nonetheless, the ethical dilemma becomes more complex when failing to give the authorities certain information could compromise the lives of third persons. Without there being recipes to respond to the different situations, it is important to note that technical staff and monitors keep a distance from the police, especially in the eyes of the beneficiaries. According to one person interviewed, in the territory this relationship “was never denied, but it is concealed.” Despite the delicate nature of the situation, the tie exists and some information is shared in the context of the Municipal Forum. For example, when the technical staff from the social area receive complaints of abuses committed by certain agents of the GEPAR, they alert the police commanders so that they can examine and correct the situation. Inversely, the institutions of the criminal justice system often give orientations to the technical personnel from the social area to prioritize attention for certain individuals in situations of risk, such as when the youths are going to get out of prison and return to the community without having the support of family ties. Finally,

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public visibility to the youths, leading to new spaces for integration and getting them to move around and get to know their city.



this type of engagement at times makes it possible to forecast an explosion of violence stemming from a dispute between gangs and to begin a process of dialogue with the parties to defuse the conflict, without one assuming an active role in mediation.

Despite its complexity, the articulation between the social and police approaches is, for most of those interviewed in this study, one of the most interesting aspects of Fica Vivo!

## 5. Factors that may condition the intervention.

One initial factor to mention is related to the demand to extend the *coverage of the intervention*. The positive assessment of Fica Vivo! by the media and the citizenry led the government to expand the program. This process, which occurred mainly from 2005 to 2010, appears to have impacted Fica Vivo! in various ways.<sup>72</sup> First, it contributed to consolidating its institutional existence, giving it infrastructure, economic resources, political support, and public visibility. Nonetheless, it also had some negative effects, such as: incorporating political criteria, in addition to technical criteria, for selecting the communities in which to intervene; the limitation on performing assessments before implementing the program in new localities to speed up the time for implementation; the collapse of the management structure, which ended up working with more technical staff, with less training, and facing a broad mix of local problems (drug trafficking, prostitution networks, etc.).<sup>73</sup> It was suggested that the very “success” of Fica Vivo! may have had a negative impact on its integrity as a public policy.

Stemming from the previous point, a second factor has to do with *management*. In order to monitor the growth of Fica Vivo!, in 2007 the SEDS entered into an agreement with the Instituto Elo, a public interest civil society organization.<sup>74</sup> The Instituto Elo was to provide the government a flexible arrangement for contracting personnel and administering the program. Nonetheless, many of the persons interviewed noted that in practice the Instituto Elo was not committed to the program nor did it have the methodological or managerial capacity required for administering it.

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<sup>72</sup> The number of youths served annually from 2005 to 2010 climbed from 4,814 to 13,420. At the same time, the number of services provided annually, defined based on the number of times that the youths accessed the program, skyrocketed from 24,646 to 227,058 in that same period.

<sup>73</sup> According to some of those interviewed, the adoption of political criteria for selection led Fica Vivo! to set up in communities without major problems of violence and homicide. Similarly, the effort to set itself up “blindly” and without prior assessments led to the program being expelled by armed drug-trafficking groups in Vila Ideal, in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte.

<sup>74</sup> For more information in this regard, see: <http://www.institutoelo.org.br/site/>

Beyond being managed by the Instituto Elo the program had its own problems of growth. During its first years Fica Vivo! was limited in scope and size and operated with technical teams committed to the program's objectives. According to several persons interviewed, the process of institutionalizing the initiative to increase its coverage entailed a change in the profile of the teams, which went from being made up of activists to being made up of workers. Managing those human resources, more numerous than before, led to a greater bureaucratization of employment relations. These changes also reached the monitors, since persons without the right profile were being recruited as a result of the greater demand. In the face of that difficulty the program opted to become more flexible on the criterion of one workshop per monitor, allowing one person to work in several workshops in some cases. One perverse result of that decision was turning the monitors into workers dependent on the program, an arrangement quite far from the original proposal.

A third element that has conditioned the operation of the program has to do with the *methodology*. Until 2009 the program did not have a documented methodology, just a series of guiding concepts that were more or less tacitly known.<sup>75</sup> This was considered negative by some of the persons interviewed and upheld as positive by others. Among the negative aspects noted is the risk of weakening the integrity of the program and the scant capacity to plan, manage knowledge, and evaluate. As there are no universal, detailed, and standardized protocols, a good part of what was done in the program was subject to the particular perspectives of those who were carrying out the intervention. This happened with the social approach of technical personnel and monitors, but also with the police approach, in which each commander of the GEPAR could assume his or her role differently. On the other hand, among the positive aspects of not having a formalized methodology is the flexibility of the program to adapt to the particular situations in the territories. In the words of one person interviewed, "it is a wide open policy, the complexity of the places does not fit in the methodology." This characteristic, mainly in the first years, gave the technical personnel and monitors autonomy to construct responses to the problems they were facing.

The persons interviewed who value the original methodological flexibility generally attribute greater rigidity in the procedures, with a negative impact on its performance, to the expansion of Fica Vivo! And those who value a more formalized methodological proposal tend

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<sup>75</sup> One aspect that conferred a certain sustainability on the program was the designation as coordinators of the persons who had technical positions, and who had knowledge of the achievements and challenges of the initiative based on their own history.

to assume that if it had existed earlier it would have made it possible to have better managed the program's expansion, without affecting its integrity.

A fourth factor to be highlighted is associated not with the particularities of those who execute the program, but with the space where it is carried out. In this regard, the presence of *social networks* (schools, churches, NGOs, etc.) in the territory could affect the development and results of Fica Vivo! In the assessment phase, prior to implementation, one finds the actors present in the community who could be potential allies of Fica Vivo! Linkages are constructed locally, with broad and strong networks tending to have a favorable impact on the program's development, whereas the absence of such networks hinders it.<sup>76</sup> Nonetheless, communities have negative social networks based on a tie between the residents and the criminal groups, which can pose additional difficulties for the program. Finally, the involvement of the local authorities varies among the different regions, depending on the political party composition of the municipal government and its connection with the state government, which is responsible for the program.

Changes in *security policies and the availability of economic resources* also condition the program. A point of inflection in this regard occurred at the end of Governor Aécio Neves's term in 2010, with a particularly difficult impact on Fica Vivo! Several of the persons interviewed indicate that since then the SEDS has lost its governance of the security sector and that Minas Gerais no longer has a public policy in this area. Budget restrictions took their toll on Fica Vivo!, hitting the program as a whole, and the interrelation among its components.

The participation of the Military Police through the GEPAR had been fostered and sustained by the availability of resources from the Secretariat for Social Defense which, when cut back, impacted on that collaboration. As a result, there was a weakening of the GEPAR explained by economic, political, and institutional factors, since according to several of those interviewed crimes against property were prioritized over homicides and the Military Police managed the GEPAR independent of Fica Vivo! First, members of the GEPAR from the communities considered under control came to be reassigned to other functions. Second, the Military Police began to select the regions for intervention on its own, such that some communities ended up having a presence of the GEPAR without the presence of the social

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<sup>76</sup> A common paradox in this area is that in the most violent contexts, where they are most needed, social networks tend to be weak, and in some cases also more resistant to working with problematic youth.

component of Fica Vivo! These changes also increased tension in the regions where both components were present.<sup>77</sup>

As the fieldwork for this study was being done, in May 2016, Fica Vivo! may have been going through the greatest institutional crisis of its history: there were no coordinators designated, its management agreement with the Instituto Elo had been rescinded, and the link between the social and police components appeared to have grown very weak.

## **6. Monitoring and impact.**

From the standpoint of monitoring, at the beginning of the program the CRISP-UFMG was monitoring the indicators and performing assessments. After institutionalization by the state the GIE monitored the results indicators. Nonetheless, according to some of those interviewed, the data represented a limitation because police data were used to evaluate a program that was only partially a police program.

Subsequently, the Instituto Elo was responsible for reporting management indicators. It also conducted a survey of 293 beneficiaries in 2014. Among other things, the survey indicates that 96% of the youths believe that Fica Vivo! is important or very important for their community, and 84% say they are satisfied or very satisfied with their participation in the program.

Fica Vivo! has won recognition as a “best” experience in the Best Practices Competition sponsored by Dubai in 2006.<sup>78</sup>

In relation to impact evaluations, the experience has been the topic of several studies by researchers from Minas Gerais, some of them even quasi-experimental. The most rigorous study is the one by Peixoto, Andrade, and Azevedo (2008b), who use the difference in differences methodology and a generalized least squares model to compare the evolution of homicide rates by six-month-period of the sectors of seven communities covered by the program with those of other census sectors that constitute the control group. The most important novelty is that the census sectors of the control group are chosen through a propensity score which estimates the likelihood of having been selected as areas for

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<sup>77</sup> According to some of those interviewed, from a police perspective there are those who argue that the work of technical personnel and monitors is “to run their hands over the bandits’ heads,” that is, to pamper them. In addition, the technical staff in the social area accuse the police of myopia and of failing to understand their work.

<sup>78</sup> See: <http://habitat.aq.upm.es/bpal/onu06/bp1259.html>

intervention based on a series of relevant variables.<sup>79</sup> This makes it possible to compare the areas covered by the program with other relatively similar areas. The authors' conclusion is that Fica Vivo! appears to have had a considerable effect on reducing homicides in the pilot community, Morro das Pedras, with a reduction in the rate on the order of 45 per 100,000 population. It is estimated that the program prevented 15 homicides in this community from 2004 to 2006 (Peixoto, Andrade, and Azevedo, 2008a). Nonetheless, among the other six communities where Fica Vivo! operated, in only one was it estimated that there had been a reduction in homicides. In another community, the results were contradictory among the various six-month-periods; and in four of them the coefficients indicated an increase in the rate after the program came in.

Silveira, Assunção, da Silva, and Beato Filho (2010) used a generalized linear model with a Poisson distribution to estimate the impact of Fica Vivo! on the number of homicides in the community of Morro das Pedras, comparing it with the homicides in violent and non-violent favelas and with the rest of the city. The conclusion they reached is that in its first six months of operating in the community (second half of 2012) the entry of the program is associated with a 69% drop in the number of homicides compared with the control groups. In practice, we are talking about a reduction from 14 homicides for August to November 2001, to seven homicides for August to November 2002. Since in the first six months of the program it consisted of the police component alone (the social component came later), the authors attribute this outcome to the action of the police. Nonetheless, the continuity of the program in the following years and its degree of implementation does not appear to be associated with the intensity of the reduction in homicides. For example, from June 2003 to April 2004 homicides climbed even though it was a period in which the program, after some interruptions, appeared to be fully up and running.

Matta and Andrade (2006) attempt to assess the impact of the program on crime in general through the difference in differences method, comparing the census sectors in which the program worked with the rest of the municipality using a least squares regression. The conclusion they reach is that Fica Vivo! reduced crime 2.7% compared to the rest of the municipality.

Andrade and Peixoto (2006) perform a cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness assessment, comparing eight crime prevention programs, including Fica Vivo! Of the eight, it is precisely

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<sup>79</sup> The importance of this strategy is that if one compares the areas covered by the program with the rest of the city or even with the rest of the *favelas*, this comparison may be strongly biased by the fact that the areas the project decides to intervene in are very different – much more violent – than the rest.

Fica Vivo! that appears to show a cost-effectiveness relationship, with a total of 1,548 crimes prevented for every million reais invested.<sup>80</sup> For their part, Peixoto, Andrade, and Azevedo (2008a) estimated that for the community of Morro das Pedras each homicide prevented had a cost of 201,000 to 214,000 reais<sup>81</sup>, considering average spending per beneficiary of approximately four reais per month.

In summary, the evidence suggests that the program was successful, if we consider its impact in Morro das Pedras, the pilot community. Nonetheless, one must take the results with caution in light of several considerations: (i) the results are not consistent among the various communities or over time; (ii) the reductions in homicides are relatively small in absolute numbers given the small size of the communities, which translates into unstable estimates; (iii) existing studies were focused above all on that first community, and only some got comparable control groups using the propensity scores; and (iv) 2001, the year prior to the start-up of the program, was a year with a high incidence of crimes and homicides in Morro das Pedras, such that the subsequent reduction could be due, to some extent, to the phenomenon known as regression towards the mean (Shadish, Cook, and Campbell, 2002).

## **7. Summary.**

Fica Vivo! is a program designed by the Center for the Study of Crime and Public Security of the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, inspired by the experience of Operation Ceasefire of Boston (United States). Its main objective is to reduce intentional homicides in communities with a high incidence through a combination of social prevention and police enforcement actions. After the success of a pilot experience implemented in 2002 in the Morro das Pedras area, in Belo Horizonte, the initiative was institutionalized and came under the Secretariat for Social Defense (SEDS) as of 2003, and it expanded to other communities.

The program proposes a multiagency approach with a local and community-based imprimatur. It has two main components, “social protection” and “strategic intervention,” the latter associated with the action of the criminal justice system. Its main elements are the Strategic Intervention Group (GIE) and the Group Specialized in Policing Areas at Risk (GEPAR). The GIE is a forum that brings together various institutions of the criminal justice system to optimize the production, circulation, and analysis of criminal information. Its action is key for

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<sup>80</sup> Approximately US\$ 312,500, at the exchange rate in August 2016.

<sup>81</sup> From US\$ 62,000 to US\$ 67,000, at the exchange rate in August 2016.

giving direction to “qualified enforcement,” defining objectives, and determining the strategy for action. The GEPAR is a preventive patrol unit, with a community orientation, that is established on a permanent basis in the region where the Fica Vivo! program is being implemented.

The social protection component seeks to offer a network of local services to prevent violence, and improve community life and the exercise of citizenship. To that end different services are offered to the population ages 12 to 24 years living in the communities where the program is established. Different kinds of activities are carried out in this framework, including psychosocial care, and workshops for sports, art, and culture.

The selection of the region where Fica Vivo! is to be established is done based on the homicide rate, though one also considers a vulnerability index. The initial decision is made in the Strategic Intervention Group and then the GEPAR is deployed in those territories. After the GEPAR assumes control of the community, the Fica Vivo! technical team performs a field study to become familiar with the criminal dynamics and the community resources already in the area. The process of implementing Fica Vivo! continues with holding an event in the locality, searching for an adequate space for establishing the Crime Prevention Center, and sounding out candidates to work as monitors in the workshops for the young people.

The Crime Prevention Centers are the local base of the program. They are administered by social workers and are the place of reference for the work of the technical personnel and monitors. The monitors are persons from the very communities where the program is established who work teaching activities such as theater, graffiti, music, and soccer, among others. Beyond that educational function their objective is to engage the youths in dialogue, interest them in socially productive tasks, and contribute to defusing conflicts and resolving them non-violently. The technical personnel working with the program (including psychologists, social workers, and teachers) provide guidance for the work of the monitors, and psychosocial services at the Crime Prevention Centers. Each center is staffed by approximately three technical personnel, who receive a brief training. The performance of the technical personnel and monitors, as well as the general operation of the Centers, is supervised by a social worker.

Despite its complexity, the articulation between the social and police approaches is one of the aspects of the program that stands out. That engagement, which is not free from problems to the extent that excessive proximity of the police would keep away the youth of

the community, seeks to help prevent the proximate and ultimate causes of violence, and to apply “qualified enforcement.”

The evidence presented in some studies supports the conclusion that the program succeeded in reducing homicides significantly, at least initially, in its first community, Morro das Pedras, but is much less clear in relation to other places and other moments.

Based on its own “success” the program saw a major expansion of its coverage from 2005 to 2010, which may have affected its integrity as a public policy. That growth had an impact on aspects of management, affecting labor relations, the commitment of the technical personnel, and the profile of the monitors. The methodology of the program, which had not been documented until 2009, also underwent changes, becoming more structured and standardized. According to some of the persons interviewed this likely limited the flexibility of the program to adapt to the particularities of the areas in which it is implemented. Finally, changes in the political agenda and in the availability of economic resources likely affected the governance of security in Minas Gerais, with a particularly negative impact on Fica Vivo! as of 2011.



## VI.v. PAZ Y JUSTICIA, HONDURAS <sup>82</sup>

### TYPE 8: IMPROVING HOMICIDE INVESTIGATIONS

#### 1. Basic information.

- Name of Project: Paz y Justicia (PyJ)
- Institution: Asociación por una Sociedad Más Justa (ASJ)
- Type of Institution: NGO
- Funding: Approximately US\$ 1 million per year, mostly financed by the United States Department of State
- Dates: 2005 to date
- Focus: Communities selected
- Areas covered: Four communities in Tegucigalpa and two in San Pedro Sula, all of them in areas with a high incidence of homicides
- Personnel: In the Tegucigalpa office: 1 coordinator, 3 psychologists, 2 attorneys, 4 investigators (former members of the police), 1 administrative staff, and 1 IT staff. In the San Pedro Sula office: 1 coordinator, 4 investigators (former police), 2 attorneys, 2 psychologists, and 1 administrative staff.
- Number of cases: Approximately 200 homicides annually in all the communities served in both cities.

#### 2. Purpose of the intervention.

The main objective is to reduce the impunity associated with crimes of homicide in certain high-incidence communities by improving investigations, clarifying those crimes in the justice system, and securing convictions of the persons responsible for them. More broadly, the goal is to promote securing justice for the victims' families.

Complementary objectives include support for victims' families to minimize the harm suffered and to stimulate improvements in the criminal justice system, which should also

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<sup>82</sup> The evidence used for this study is as follows: Group interviews were conducted with the technical teams of the project in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, including psychologists, researchers, and attorneys. In addition, individual interviews were conducted with three members of the project team, three beneficiaries, in addition to three police agents and two members of the prosecutor's office who worked with PyJ. In all, there were two group interviews and 11 individual interviews. Direct observation was done of one case, a family that was accompanied to make a statement to the court and that received support for moving to another city the next day. In addition, the project documentation and texts used in public presentations by the promoters were analyzed.

contribute to reducing impunity. Along these lines, one of the members of the team told us that "we make sure the [criminal] process goes forward. We are a real instance of oversight.... We are keeping tabs on the State."

### **3. Description of the intervention.**

The two pillars of the program are criminal investigation and psychological care. PyJ has a team of experienced investigators all of whom are former members of the police. This experience is very important because of both their technical competence and their capacity to win the trust of the police and the prosecutorial authorities. Each investigator has a given community assigned to him or her.

The members of the project follow up on all the homicides that occur in their area through the local press. When they identify a case they go to the morgue and try to talk with the family and offer support. Second, the contacts with the police and the intelligence network put in place by the project help to detect homicides in the area.

The members of PyJ introduce themselves to the family of the victim as a religious-inspired non-profit organization, as "valiant Christians" ("*crístianos valientes*") in the words of several of those interviewed, whose mission is to help in the investigations and provide support to the family.

The PyJ investigators collect all the information and begin to investigate the death. The evidence they obtain is forwarded to the police and subsequently to the prosecutorial authorities, to put together a criminal case. Direct participation in the investigations reaches the point, for example, of entering the communities in the police vehicles to identify suspects or places where there is evidence of a crime. In these situations PyJ's investigators and the witnesses who sometimes accompany them use balaclavas so as not to be identified. Often the victims' family members become "collaborators" of PyJ and an essential part of the intelligence network that is being developed. They inform PyJ of new homicide cases and help to collectively, discreetly, provide information on the suspects. The fact of being a "collaborator" is kept secret and is known only to the members of PyJ who work in that area. The contact with them follows a strict protocol to preserve the security of everyone. The meetings, for example, always take place outside the community and in public places, whereas the phone calls use messages in code and are subsequently erased from the cell phones. The members of PyJ note the importance of these security measures, which have been set down in a manual to ensure the continuity of the project.

One of the consequences of the emphasis on security is the very low institutional visibility of the project, which does not publicize its activities, except to its donors. When they make contact with the victims' family members or with the judicial officers with whom they collaborate, the members of the project introduce themselves as members of the broad institution, Asociación para una Sociedad Más Justa (Association for a More Just Society), and that is how they are known by persons who have a long-standing professional relationship with them. In the case of the families, the PyJ investigators do not mention, at least initially, that they are former members of the police, to avoid any suspicions.

The police and prosecutors interviewed confirmed that the local population distrusts state institutions. In addition, the presence of the police or prosecutorial authority in these areas may unleash reprisals by armed groups against the individuals considered responsible for it. As a result of these two elements, police or prosecutors cannot, for example, enter the communities openly and interview the witnesses without placing them at risk. Accordingly, the intervention of PyJ is much more discreet, in order to be effective. Another advantage of PyJ noted by police and prosecutors is having more resources and being able to access them more quickly. For example, the project leases the vehicles for transporting witnesses such that these vehicles change on each occasion and cannot be identified or tracked by the criminal groups.

All those interviewed agreed that one of the great contributions of PyJ lies in "managing witnesses," especially in the case of protected witnesses. Honduran legislation considers the existence of this type of "protected witness," whose identity is only known by the judge and the prosecutorial authority. When they go to give testimony they wear a long tunic with a hood that hides their face (the "jackal") and they speak through a voice distorter. Despite these precautions, driving to and from the court causes anxiety and fear in the witnesses concerning the possibility of being recognized. The members of the project explain the process to the witnesses, prepare them to give testimony, and accompany them before and after the statement, to ensure their protection.

In the communities in which the project does not have a presence, i.e. in the vast majority of cases in the country, the prosecutorial authority is not able to relocate the witness at the time of trial (in general two or two-and-a-half years after the facts) due to changes in domicile or phone number. Paz y Justicia, however, maintains regular contact with the witness, which guarantees that he or she can be located, and provides transport to get the witness to and from the court. In addition, the project engages in a pedagogic effort with the witnesses, insisting on the importance of their testimony for ending impunity, and reinforcing trust and the perception that they are safe during the process. Some of the beneficiaries interviewed

recognized that had it not been for the support they received from Paz y Justicia it is very likely that their family members, witnesses in the trial for homicide, would have refused to testify and would have left justice “in God’s hands.”

The PyJ investigators’ comparative advantages in relation to the state apparatus can be summarized in the following points: (i) more resources available to them; (ii) focus of their task in specific areas; (iii) greater trust by the population; and (iv) in light of the foregoing elements, the capacity to construct a local intelligence network that appears to have a significant impact on the investigations.

Accordingly, as cases accumulate in a community the local intelligence network grows, making it possible to solve crimes more easily, for the potential informants increase in number and even make it possible to cross-check information among multiple sources. It could be said that with this dynamic the marginal cost of solving each case diminishes over time.

The criterion for selecting the cases covered by the project is that the homicide has been committed against a resident of the neighborhood or by an inhabitant of the neighborhood. In addition, when it is learned that a resident of the community has committed a crime outside the community, he or she may also be subject to investigation. Nonetheless, when the corpse is simply dumped in the area without the crime having any other relationship with the locality, the case is not taken up by the program.

In some of the communities where the project is working the technical personnel of PyJ stated it was impossible to investigate all the cases, and therefore that one had to focus the investigations on some cases to obtain better results. The priority is to focus all the investigations not on certain facts but on criminal structures. The criterion of preference is the gangs, or *maras* and, more specifically, local leaders of the *maras*, because convicting these leaders would make it possible to dismantle the criminal groups, at least for a time.

The PyJ investigators stated that winning over the trust of police and prosecutors was no easy task. At present there appears to be a well-established relationship of cooperation such that the police and members of the PyJ together turn the case over to the prosecutor. Indeed, the project maintains formal agreements with both the National Directorate for Investigations (DNI: Dirección Nacional de Investigaciones), the investigative body of the police, and the Technical Agency for Criminal Investigation (ATIC: Agencia Técnica de Investigación Criminal), the investigative body of the Office of the Attorney General. The only moment when the PyJ investigators cannot be present is the statement before the judge.

It appears that the officers of the criminal justice system have received the project very positively, and the persons interviewed confirmed this perception. For police and prosecutors, who generally work with hundreds of cases each, and cannot devote the time or resources necessary to each one, the project means a contribution of additional resources and greater ease in solving the cases. For example, PyJ maintains a book of photos of suspects in each region that is useful for the investigations and has color printers that facilitate the work of the police officials. At the same time, the scant public visibility of the project enables the criminal justice officers to take credit for solving cases, which helps diminish potential institutional jealousies.

The PyJ investigators describe the problems of coordination among the institutions of the state, particularly the Police and the Office of the Attorney General, and note their own role as outside articulators to expedite their operations and make them more efficient.

The victims' families receive several kinds of support. The most general and important is psychological support, which includes therapy and accompaniment while grieving, usually for several months to one year. The meetings and therapy sessions, which may be individual or family, are conducted in clinics established for that purpose. It would appear that many of the families did not have the resources or contacts to be able to have access to a psychologist outside of the project.

The psychological care offered has several advantages. The first is, obviously, the psychological care and support in the grieving process. At the same time, this support contributes to fostering trust in the families and commits them, somehow, to continuing forward with the criminal case. Indeed, the psychologist has the sensitivity and ideal profile for winning people's trust, especially when minors are involved. In summary, psychological care serves the dual purpose of supporting the victims, often forgotten by the criminal justice system, and extending ties with the families to maximize the possibility of them collaborating to clarify the crime.

When any of the family members affected are members of gangs (*maras*) or other organized crime groups the investigation continues normally, but they do not receive psychological support so as not to compromise the security of the project. Local intelligence is also essential for knowing who is who in the community and to identify the risks.

In addition to psychological assistance the families receive other types of support in case of need. Among these one can mention the delivery of basic food baskets and assistance for enrolling their children and to purchase books if they have to change schools. If the

evaluation indicates that the family is at risk in its place of residence, PyJ organizes the evacuation to another place or another city, and transports their property. The attorneys who work with the project not only provide legal advice to the family in the criminal proceeding, but also provide assistance in civil matters, for example to obtain documents.

The support received excludes economic transfers, so as not to generate dependency, with the sole exception of small sums for reimbursing the transport costs incurred by witnesses to get to the place where they are to testify, or for patients receiving therapy to get to the clinic. Similarly, witnesses who are going to testify receive a payment equivalent to one day of salary for the day of work missed.

Independent of the assistance provided, the psychologist and/or the investigator in charge of the case maintain regular contact with the families throughout the criminal proceeding to keep them informed and to take stock of their needs, establishing a close relationship. The beneficiaries interviewed expressed trust in the project and gratitude for this relationship, which is eminently personalized with the technical person who provides the service. This compartmentalization of the relationships and contacts also contributes to the security of the persons involved.

The beneficiaries interviewed expressed reasonable knowledge of the status of the criminal proceedings; in the cases in which trials had already been conducted, they did not know exactly the term to which those convicted had been sentenced.

Despite the specificity of each one's function, psychologists and investigators appear to have attained a high degree of integration in their work within the project, each coming to assume, in part, the other's role. In other words, the psychologists are attentive to the information and contacts that may help the investigation, whereas the investigators are concerned to ensure the psychological care of the families.

#### **4. Factors that may condition the intervention.**

The intervention was designed specifically to reduce impunity in the most common types of homicides in the areas targeted by the program. In general, these are homicides committed by members of criminal groups associated with the *maras*, especially the Mara 13 and the Mara 18. The perpetrators of the crimes are generally neighbors or acquaintances of the victims, and normally there are witnesses who can testify as to what happened. Impunity is based on the ability to intimidate those witnesses and the fear of reprisals. In addition, in the

Honduran criminal justice system the importance of witness testimony is determinant for securing a conviction.

That is why the project is designed to protect witnesses and make them feel confident about their security throughout the process. The greatest challenge is convincing witnesses to overcome the fear and testify, especially against members of the *maras*. There are accounts of persons who did not leave their homes for months after being witnesses to a crime for fear of reprisals. And so the Paz y Justicia model is very much bound up with the existence of the “protected witness” in Honduran legislation, which allows such a witness to testify officially without his or her identity being revealed to the accused. If this were not possible witness protection would be much more difficult.

When murder convictions are secured it is possible to create a virtuous circle and convince more persons to collaborate. Accordingly, considering that recidivism tends to be high in these kinds of crimes, it is not unusual, once a criminal proceeding has begun, for evidence of other prior crimes committed by the defendant to come to light. In addition, the existence of a criminal justice response in keeping with the rule of law can avoid future cycles of vengeance among persons close to the victims, reducing the tendency for them to take justice into their own hands.

To understand how the program operates one should consider the type of criminal structure being faced. First, they are structures affiliated with the country’s most dangerous and violent *maras*, which is why some persons had doubts, initially, about the feasibility of the intervention. Nonetheless, they are local and relatively unstructured groups that can be dismantled, in the opinion of the technical personnel working with the program, by imprisoning some leaders. It is likely that the project would suffer much greater difficulties and also greater risks to the security of the technical personnel and the beneficiaries if it had to confront criminal structures that were more organized, more sophisticated, and less tied to their territories.

Another relevant element of the local scene is the profound religiosity of Honduras, which justifies the members of the project presenting themselves as “valiant Christians” and reinforces the importance of the spiritual aspect in contact with the beneficiaries.

To the extent that relationships in the project are highly personal, both with the beneficiaries and with the judicial officers, the high turnover of the police poses an additional difficulty, for relationships of trust and cooperation must be rebuilt with the new officer.

Finally, given the limited salaries of the police in Honduras, it is possible for a private institution to offer remuneration to former members of the police that is greater than the public-sector salary, which enables them to hire highly specialized personnel.

## **5. Monitoring and impact.**

The project pulls together information on homicides, investigative measures, arrests, and convictions based on the homicide cases accompanied in the regions where it is operating. Each investigator provides input to the data base. The homicide data are from the police books on the officials acts of removing the corpse.

Nonetheless, despite all that is covered by these data, it was not possible to obtain a set of consolidated information that would make it possible to estimate accurately the effect of the project on homicide investigations and convictions.

In any event, the existing data show a reduction in the number of homicides in the communities where the project has been implemented the longest, in both Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. All those interviewed, both the technical personnel of the project and the prosecutors and police who work with them, believe that this reduction in homicides is the direct result of the work of Paz y Justicia, to the point that several police and prosecutors interviewed called for expanding the project to other communities in Honduras. Nonetheless, a rigorous evaluation has yet to be conducted to establish the project's actual impact.

## **6. Summary.**

Paz y Justicia is an innovative and bold project in which it, a civil society organization, hires investigators to be able to resolve crimes of homicide in communities with a high incidence of such crimes, assuming a function that is characteristically performed by the state.

While each of the state institutions follows an intra-institutional logic that often loses sight of the general progress of the case and the victims, Paz y Justicia is centered on the victim's family members, with whom it establishes a personal relationship throughout the criminal proceeding, also offering psychological support and help with food and education for the children.

The project has more resources than the state institutions, since it is focused in certain areas and works with a small number of cases, and the resources can be used with greater agility. In practice the members of the program state that they are the ones who coordinate



among the various public institutions, especially between the Police and the Office of the Attorney General (Fiscalía). In addition, people place more trust in a non-profit organization than in the state institutions. By maintaining regular relations with the families the project is able to locate them when they need to make a statement in court, and it accompanies them in this process to protect them and make them feel more confident. When the beneficiaries are at risk Paz y Justicia organizes their transfer to another residence and supports them in this process. Accordingly, the project also performs the functions of a witness protection program, which should also be a state function. Indeed, there is an official witness protection program, but with many more limitations than PyJ.

To summarize, at the same time that it seeks to reduce impunity in crimes of homicide, Paz y Justicia also supports the victims, who tend to be forgotten by the criminal justice system. The reaction of the beneficiaries interviewed is gratitude, for, in the words of one technical staff person, “the people don’t think that there are people who can treat them well.”

No impact evaluation has been done yet, but there are clear indicia that violence has been reduced in the areas in which the project has been implemented for years. All the actors consulted, within and outside the project, attribute this reduction to the impact of the intervention.

Although the technical staff of the project believe that it could work in other countries with a similar cultural context, particularly in Central America, its success depends on a configuration of internal and external factors that is not easy to replicate.

Some of the technical staff interviewed, as well as some funders, have said that they intend for the project to end up encouraging the state to assume part of these functions and to become more efficient, considering that it does work that in principle should be done by the state. Nonetheless, the potential to inspire the state is limited by the state’s scant resources. So, while Paz y Justicia focuses its resources in limited areas, the state appears to have considerable difficulty equalizing this level of investment throughout the national territory. Indeed, part of the project’s impact is due precisely to the fact that the work of Paz y Justicia leads the state to target those same territories, steering its selectivity in the direction of those cases with a greater likelihood of resolution. Accordingly, extending the project to more territories could end up reducing its impact in each one.

## VI.vi. PROYECTO ALCATRAZ, VENEZUELA<sup>83</sup>

### TYPE 10: RESINSERTION OR REHABILITATION OF PERPETRATORS OF ARMED VIOLENCE

#### 1. Basic information.

- Name of Project: Alcatraz
- Institution: Fundación Santa Teresa, Compañía Anónima de Ron Santa Teresa
- Type of Institution: Private business
- Financing: Approximately US\$ 300,000 yearly
- Dates: 2003 to date
- Focus: Criminal groups in the locality of El Consejo
- Areas covered: Municipality of José Rafael Revenga, state of Aragua
- Personnel: 4 full-time staff, supported by community leaders and technical personnel who participate periodically - approximately 10 persons in all are involved in the project
- Number of beneficiaries: since the beginning of the project nine groups have been served, with a total of 163 beneficiaries

#### 2. Context and historical background.

In the late 1990s the municipality of Revenga had a population of approximately 45,000 and was one of the most violent in Venezuela. Unemployment and poverty were widespread problems that particularly affected El Consejo, a locality where the Compañía Anónima de Ron Santa Teresa (CARST) was the main source of employment.<sup>84</sup> This company, engaged in the production and sale of rum, blamed the economic difficulties it was experiencing at the time for a restructuring in which it let go of 70% of its workers (Granda,

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<sup>83</sup> The evidence used for this case study is as follows: the space where the program was implemented was observed *in situ*, where two members of the team (one manager and one technical staff person) and one beneficiary were interviewed. In addition there were seven interviews with academics and persons of reference from Venezuelan civilian society regarding violence. In all there were 10 interviews, in Caracas and in the locality of El Consejo (state of Aragua) in November 2015. Finally, the publications and other documents offered to us directly by the project promoters were analyzed.

<sup>84</sup> Santa Teresa Estate (acquired in 1885) and the CARST (founded in 1955) are owned by the Vollmer family, a family of German origin that has a long tradition in the place.

2006). This circumstance had a major impact on the community of El Consejo; the social crisis and violence deepened, which in turn affected the company.

Proyecto Alcatraz arose in 2003 after three youths raided the CARST, reducing the security personnel and stealing their weapons for the purpose of confronting other local youth gangs. Even though they fled initially, the persons responsible were arrested by security agents of the CARST. Notified of that incident, the owner of the company requested a meeting with the offenders before lodging a complaint with the police authorities. At that meeting it was proposed that they choose between making reparation for the harm caused by three months of unpaid labor, or be turned over to the police and go to prison. The youths accepted the first alternative proposed and signed what they understood to be a “gentlemen’s agreement.” Soon after the work on the hacienda began other members of the same criminal group asked to join the experience, which they saw as an opportunity to change their lives. That demand was granted, and so began Proyecto Alcatraz, almost spontaneously. Over time other criminal groups would be recruited and, through a specific incident, a model of intervention would be formally established.

### **3. Purpose of the intervention.**

The main objective of the Proyecto Alcatraz is to reduce the homicide rate in the municipality of Revenga, state of Aragua, through the social reinsertion of the youths who are members of the groups responsible for the violence and crime, offering them opportunities for change and employment. Beyond that one seeks to develop the associative capacities of the population, involving the community networks in solving security problems.

### **4. Description of the intervention**

The Proyecto Alcatraz is an initiative for the *social prevention of violence* that combines intensive work, job training, rugby practice, training in values, psychological care, family support, restorative justice, and community work. The project takes its name from Alcatraz prison, in California, United States. According to its promoters, this name “refers to the fact that the worst prison is oneself, and the great challenge is to escape from oneself.”<sup>85</sup> In this regard, the Proyecto Alcatraz is an alternative to prison that requires of its beneficiaries a

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<sup>85</sup> Alcatraz is also a marine bird, which represents the possibility of a life in liberty. The image of this bird is the logo for the project.

change in identity associated with the values of respect, accountability, transparency, pro-activity, humility, and trust.

The *financing* of the project is basically entrusted to CARST, although support is also received from private actors, the office of the governor of Aragua, and international organizations such as the World Bank, IDRC, and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF: Corporación Andina de Fomento). Two massive fundraising events are held each year: a rugby championship and a mountain race.

The *target audience* of the Proyecto Alcatraz is constituted by the criminal groups of the municipality of Revenga. These groups are made up of a variable number of youths (generally 10 to 20) mostly involved in perpetrating crimes and engaging in violent conduct. It is a project for secondary and tertiary prevention, given that the beneficiaries are consummate offenders or persons who present a high risk of criminal involvement. One of the central characteristics of this initiative is the recruitment of entire criminal groups and not just individual offenders. The selection of the groups is done considering the localities with the greatest levels of violence. On entering a community an effort is made to establish alliances with the community leaders and authorization is sought from the local residents through assemblies. Only after acceptance by the community is the voluntary recruitment of a criminal group begun. It is interesting to note that the Proyecto Alcatraz acts with a view to several criminal groups, previously enemies, getting along with each other. This approach is aimed at interrupting the cycles of revenge among the youths (known as "*la culebra*", or the snake), reinforcing their decision to abandon the world of crime, and facilitating their re-entry into the community at the end of the project.

The characteristics of the intervention and the makeup of the *work team* have varied over time. In the first years it was entrusted to workers of the CARST who did not have specific training for managing social projects and worked with Proyecto Alcatraz on a part-time basis. The activities were carried out with little planning, a situation that changed as of the consultancy carried out in 2010 to systematize the initiative. At present four staff members are working on the project full-time in addition to other technical personnel (for example, the psychologists and social workers) who participate periodically. This experience is also supported by the community leaders, that is, youths from the same communities as the beneficiaries who receive two to three months training to operate as a nexus between the project managers and the beneficiaries. Their function is to accompany the beneficiaries over

time, defuse conflicts, and observe the disciplinary aspects.<sup>86</sup> In addition, they provide accompaniment for the youths who emerge from Proyecto Alcatraz in their areas of residence.

The intervention is structured in *three phases*, with a total duration of two years, plus one more year for follow-up. The *first phase* is *isolation* and it lasts three months. The participants are removed from their natural setting and prepared to assume a new lifestyle.<sup>87</sup> This phase involves intense work at the hacienda, detox, training in values, training in social skills, and psychological support. While the work is not paid, the beneficiaries are given full support in terms of food, shelter, and clothing during this period.

The *second phase* is *reintegration to the community*; it lasts seven to nine months. The youths return to their setting and go to work on the hacienda daily, and obtain a work fellowship (*beca laboral*), which represents economic assistance to get by. They take rugby classes, receive training in values, and have individual or group psychotherapy. In addition, experiences with community work and restorative justice begin. Community work activities are held to bring about a positive rapprochement of the beneficiaries with their community, such as improving gardening, cleaning public spaces, or painting schools. As regards restorative justice, efforts are made for the youths to take responsibility for their acts, promote peaceful conflict resolution, and rebuild the social bond with the victims. Each beneficiary must choose one of his victims to apologize to and to whom to make reparation for the harm caused. If the offense for which reparation is to be made has been serious, the technical personnel working with the project first communicate with the victim or his or her family members to assess the possibilities of a process of reparation.

The *third phase* is *job training*. It lasts 12 months. There the beneficiaries receive vocational guidance, are given a job opportunity in CARST or in one of various other companies, and are trained in a trade in which they can work on leaving the project.<sup>88</sup>

The technical personnel perform a weekly *follow-up* of the individual progress of the young people while they participate in the project. After completing the three phases and exiting, there is an additional period of one year of accompaniment (offering psychological

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<sup>86</sup> In the case of minor infractions dialogue and reparation are encouraged; serious infractions are analyzed by a discipline committee. Three minor infractions are equivalent to one serious infraction, whereas committing three serious infractions is grounds for expulsion from the project.

<sup>87</sup> During this phase the youths see their families just once a month.

<sup>88</sup> To expand this offer of possibilities, in recent years the CARST has promoted a workshop on community-based self-construction with a view to establishing a housing cooperative and an undertaking for coffee production. Nonetheless, the Proyecto Alcatraz does not include definitive placement of participants in the job market.

assistance, legal assistance, and other support) to reduce the risk of recidivism. In addition to working with the youths alongside their peers, Proyecto Alcatraz also addresses the *family and community environments*. Along these lines, the Network of Mothers (Red de Madres) seeks to provide training in values and also offers job training to the female figures closest to the beneficiaries (mothers, wives, sisters, etc.). The purpose is to impact the immediate social environment of the young person by making the persons closest to them part of the process of social reinsertion. In addition, Proyecto Alcatraz works in coordination with the community councils (Consejos Comunales) to facilitate the return to the communities.

Of all the components of the intervention, the most visible one is *rugby practice*. As it is a sport not played much in Venezuela, rugby has become a trademark of Proyecto Alcatraz and the CARST, whose advertising slogan is: “We play rugby. We make rum.” This “sport of villains played by gentlemen” is a symbol of identity for the “*alcatrazes*,” who participated in the national championship and in 2016 won the title of champions. Although the practice of rugby is associated fundamentally with the personal preferences of Alberto Vollmer, the owner of CARST, seen from the vantage point of Proyecto Alcatraz one notes several positive contributions of this sport to the social reinsertion of the youths: it promotes teamwork and the sense of belonging; it fosters discipline and respect for the rules; and it is a productive outlet for them. Engaging in activities that imply adrenaline, risk, rigor, sacrifice, and physical effort makes it possible to draw on the skills acquired, which before were used in criminal activities, for undertaking conventional activities.

##### **5. Factors that may condition the intervention.**

As regards the *project itself*, one element one necessarily comes across is the person of Alberto Vollmer. As mentioned above, Proyecto Alcatraz arose almost spontaneously from a specific event. The need to improve the security conditions of the company, a philanthropic response by Alberto Vollmer (known as “the red sheep of the oligarchy”), his enjoyment of rugby, and his great influence locally made it possible to construct an intervention in a basically empirical and voluntaristic manner. Not only the rise but also the growth and consolidation of Proyecto Alcatraz owe quite a bit to the personal attributes of Alberto Vollmer. According to several persons interviewed, his social capital was crucial for the project to win the approval of local residents, mobilizing support from other private companies for getting the youths jobs, and enjoying the support of the public authorities such as the office of the governor of Aragua and the police. The fact that CARST is one of the main sources of employment there is also an

element to consider for understanding the strength and sustainability that Proyecto Alcatraz has enjoyed.

The *political factors* are another element that may condition the intervention. Some of the persons interviewed note that one of the veiled purposes of Proyecto Alcatraz may have been to win over the sympathies of the Chávez administration. Whatever the intent with which it was done, Proyecto Alcatraz won the recognition of President Chávez, who in 2006 invited Alberto Vollmer to serve as a member of the commission on police reform in Venezuela. At the local level, after some initial resistance, Proyecto Alcatraz obtained the support of the local authorities and police. For some of the informants interviewed this also entails risks that should be considered. Ultimately, Proyecto Alcatraz involves a company applying alternative penalties, which entails a parallel system for the administration of justice outside of the scope of the public institutions. The interaction between the company and the institutions of the criminal justice system is particular, considering that the youths associated with the project are not as subject to the police breathing down their necks as others. On some occasions, when the youths are arrested they are released with the intermediation of CARST. According to some of those interviewed, the same strength that enables the company to contribute to public security can give rise to privileges and immunity, eroding the law and the legitimacy of the state institutions.

The receptivity of the *community* also affects how the intervention unfolds. The first reactions to Proyecto Alcatraz were not entirely positive. Many residents didn't understand the project and considered it unjust to prioritize the "scoundrels" ("*malandros*") for a job next to other honest persons who deserved a chance. According to several of the persons interviewed, this situation even led some youths to exaggerate the crimes they had committed in order to get into Proyecto Alcatraz, with the expectation of landing a job. The positive impacts on security, inclusion of community components in the logic of the project, and the visibility attained by the project over time put it in a less stigmatizing and more collaborative position in local public opinion. Community support is fundamental both for positively reinforcing the process of change the youths are undergoing and for facilitating their social reinsertion.

Based on the interviews conducted it is possible to highlight some *dilemmas or limitations* that could compromise the process or the results of Proyecto Alcatraz. First, there is the possibility that the youths who enter the project and lay down their arms will become vulnerable to their enemies, increasing the likelihood of victimization. Similarly, the

beneficiaries' life changes may also spark envy and turn them into targets of assault by other youths.

Second, another difficulty for gaining ground on crime is that removing one criminal group from the territory may be an incentive to the strengthening or rise of another. The appearance of new leaders, generally younger and less experienced than the previous ones, may unexpectedly aggravate the conflictiveness and violence. In effect, of the 17 members of the last criminal group to enter the program, 10 were minors, and several had committed homicides.

Third, there may be tensions between the typical objectives of a company and those of a program for the social prevention of violence with a focus on youth. Some critics suspect that Proyecto Alcatraz may be using youths to improve security for the company, get cheap labor, improve the corporate image, and foster a close political relationship with whatever political forces are in the government.<sup>89</sup> The fact that drugs are understood as a factor of violence and that the company is devoted to the production of alcoholic beverages was also criticized.

## **6. Monitoring and impact.**

Proyecto Alcatraz arose almost spontaneously, without planning, assessments, or consolidated routines for monitoring and evaluation. The systematization of the intervention occurred long after the project began, in 2010, with a consultancy contracted to that end.

While there are some specific studies (for example Granda, 2006; San Juan et al., 2006; Zubillaga, 2009; Monsalve and Zambrano, 2010), it is not possible to take stock of the impact of this experience on the homicide rate. The descriptive reading of police data shows a sharp decline in the homicide rate in the municipality of Revenga from 2003 to 2013, on dropping from 114 homicides per 100,000 population to 12 per 100,000. In the view of the informants interviewed, it is plausible that the diminution in violence in the region is connected to the implementation of Proyecto Alcatraz. Nonetheless, the lack of rigorous evaluations does not allow one to state to what extent the reduction in homicides is caused by the intervention.

Since it began, Proyecto Alcatraz has dismantled nine criminal groups and has had 163 beneficiaries belonging to different sectors of the locality: La Placita (19); El Cementerio (43);

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<sup>89</sup> Even if they were true, not all these suspicions are necessarily grounds for disqualification. In principle there would be not a problem with the company contributing to community security in the framework of its corporate social responsibility policy, even if it may benefit directly (fewer robberies) and indirectly (marketing or relations with the authorities) from doing so.



Los Cerritos (16); Juan Moreno I and II (33); La Huerta or Vecindad (8); La Gruta (8); Los Cerritos (8); Santa Rosalía (11); and Juan Moreno I, II, and III (17). Of the 163 youths who participated in the project, 75 have been trained (i.e. they completed all the phases of the project) and of them, 24 are inserted in the job market. At the other end of the spectrum, 43 youths dropped out of the project (mainly during phase 1); 11 of them died.

Beyond the objective of reducing homicides, several of the persons interviewed noted other possible results of this initiative: reducing stigmatization of and prejudice against the youths, raising the awareness of the population and of several actors to the problem of violence, fostering the practice of a sport that has been distinctive to the place, improving ties with and participation of the community, reducing police excesses, and showing that one can punish and at the same time offer opportunities to get ahead, among others.

This experience received international recognition and has drawn the attention of other countries of the region such as Colombia and El Salvador, with a review to possibly replicating it.<sup>90</sup> Nonetheless, on weighing the experience one should bear in mind the high level of territorial focus (municipality of Revenga) and the limited coverage of cases by the project (163 youths). Replicating this initiative in other contexts or on a large scale is an uncertain exercise.<sup>91</sup>

## **7. Summary.**

Proyecto Alcatraz is a violence prevention project promoted and financed by a private company, the Compañía Anónima de Ron Santa Teresa. Its main objective is to reduce homicides, and to that end entire criminal groups are recruited in the most violent localities of the municipality of Revenga. There the youths are taken to live together and share in intensive work, vocational education, rugby practice, training in values, psychological assistance, family support, restorative justice, and community work. Since it was started up in 2003 a total of 163 youths belonging to nine criminal groups have participated in this experience.

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<sup>90</sup> For example, it was chosen by the World Bank as a case study for eradicating poverty at the Youth, Peace and Development Conference, Sarajevo, 2004; it was considered the Best Project, Sport for Social Inclusion, at the Beyond Sport Awards, in England, 2009; it was selected as “best” at the Best Practices Competition, Cities for a More Sustainable Future, in Dubai, 2010; and it was classified as “Best of the Best for Risk Taking” by the Young Presidents Organization, in 2013.

<sup>91</sup> At this time a version of this experience is being implemented at the national level, known as “Proyecto Alcatraz 2.0.”

The intervention is structured in three phases, with a total duration of two years plus another year for follow-up. The first phase involves isolation from one's surroundings, the second entails processes of restorative justice and reintegration in the community, while the third involves vocational guidance and job training. The technical personnel monitor the progress of the youths weekly during the three phases, and when the youths leave they provide additional accompaniment to reduce the risk of recidivism. In addition to working with the youths and their peers, the family and community spaces are also approached to increase the likelihood of reinsertion.

Practicing rugby is a peculiar characteristic of Proyecto Alcatraz. This sport is used to foster teamwork, discipline, and a sense of belonging in the youths.

In a way this project assumes functions of the state, such as punishing criminal offenders and facilitating their social reinsertion. Some of those interviewed warn of the risk of moving away from statutory parameters and due process guarantees, resulting in privileges for the beneficiaries of the project.

Although there are some specific studies, Proyecto Alcatraz has not been the subject of impact evaluations. The descriptive reading of police data shows a major reduction in the homicide rate in the municipality of Revenga from 2003 to 2013, from 114 per 100,000 population to 12 per 100,000. The opinion of the informants interviewed is that it is plausible that the reduction of violence in the region is connected to implementation of the project. Nonetheless, the lack of rigorous evaluations does not allow one to affirm this categorically.

This experience won international recognition and it has been of interest in other countries of the region. Nonetheless, on assessing this possibility one must bear in mind its high degree of territorial focus and its limited coverage. In this sense, it is not known whether this initiative can be replicated in other contexts or on a large scale.

It is clearly an interesting case that would be very important to evaluate so as to determine more precisely its outcomes. Beyond that, this experience has aspects that should be highlighted, including: (i) the possibilities of companies contributing to public security; (ii) the importance of applying approaches that are not merely punitive and geared to social reinsertion; (iii) the group approach, based on criminal groups and not just individuals in conflict with the law; (iv) the idea of taking advantage of the competences of youth (strength, risk, etc.) for conventional aims such as rugby; and (v) the approach based on restorative justice and community reinsertion.

## VI.vii. PEACE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE, JAMAICA<sup>92</sup>

### TYPE 11: MEDIATION WITH ARMED GROUPS

#### 1. Basic information.

- Project Name: Peace Management Initiative (PMI), Kingston
- Institution: Peace Management Initiative (PMI)
- Type of Institution: NGO, but implementing a project designed and financed primarily by the national government
- Financing: 12.5 million Jamaican dollars for the Kingston area<sup>93</sup> (approximately US\$ 99,000)
- Dates: 2002 to date
- Focus: More than 60 communities selected in three parishes in the country
- Areas: Kingston, St. Catherine, and Clarendon<sup>94</sup> parishes. Our analysis is centered on the experience in Kingston.
- Personnel: Currently, in the Kingston area, one coordinator, 2 administrative assistants, 4 field officers, and around 20 community liaison officers work with the program. The latter receive a small scholarship or stipend as compensation for their participation.

It is important to note that PMI is the name of both the strategy and the project, as well as the civil society organization created to implement it.

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<sup>92</sup> Much of the material on which this case study is based was gathered during six individual interviews and two group interviews. One group interview was conducted with academics, and the other with representatives from the executive branch. In all, eight interviews were conducted in October 2015 in Kingston with a variety of actors: public security officials from the state, PMI technical personnel, academics, and members of civil society. We also witnessed PMI's work in the field, accompanying their activities in four communities. Finally, we reviewed documents provided by project officials, as well as various studies and publications on the matter.

<sup>93</sup> One project specific to the St. Catherine area receives additional funding of 35 million Jamaican dollars (US\$ 276,000).

<sup>94</sup> Another parallel project with the same name (PMI) exists in the St. James parish, in the western part of the country, but is implemented by a different organization with a similar structure. We did not visit this other project.

## 2. Historical context.

Jamaica is a country with a relatively high rate of lethal violence. Until the 1980s, the homicide rate remained below 30 per 100,000 population, but it has increased significantly in recent decades. In 2005 and 2009, for example, UNODC data (UNODC, 2014)<sup>95</sup> show a rate of over 60 per 100,000. The weakness of the criminal justice system, with scarce investment in forensic evidence and low rates of clarification and conviction, is another element that has historically contributed to violence.

In the 1960s and 1970s part of this violence began to revolve around what are known as garrison communities. The government's housing policy offered small houses to its supporters and so a clientelistic relationship developed with communities that were politically aligned with one of the two major parties, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP). Violence, or the threat of violence, committed by organized groups was used to prevent other parties from campaigning in these territories. The local leader of such an armed group, in connection with a legislative representative of the corresponding party, exercised strict local control, administered "justice," and resolved internal conflicts. These local armed structures also controlled drug trafficking. Consequently, police lost access to some of these garrison communities, which became autonomous territories within the state.

Subsequently, with the decline of the political parties, violence in these low-income communities lost its political character and became a struggle for space between groups that dominated certain territories. As such, violence between communities gradually evolved into violence within each community. The prevalent culture of masculinity associated with weapons and showing force vis-à-vis any sign of "disrespect" helped intensify the problem. Police were sometimes confronted with intense resistance when attempting to enter these areas, and it was common for operations to end with victims on both sides. Indeed, in July 2001, the year before the Peace Management Initiative was launched, police intervention in the Tivoli Gardens community resulted in the deaths of an estimated 20 civilians, one police officer, and one soldier.

This model of garrison communities seems to have been definitively overcome after the events of May 2010, also in Tivoli Gardens. The police operation to capture Christopher "Dudus" Coke, the local drug trafficking boss, became a pitched battle, with more than 70

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<sup>95</sup> UNODC (2014). Global Study on Homicide 2013: Trends, contexts, data. Vienna: UNODC.

civilians and four members of the police and military killed. Many accusations were made against the security forces for excessive use of force in several of these cases. Coke, who was considered to have strong political ties with the ruling party, was arrested some weeks later and extradited to the United States. This incident marked the beginning of a new phase for Jamaican public security. On the one hand, it was the end of certain territories being completely disconnected from state control. On the other hand, as mentioned above, it meant the decline of garrison communities and violence being seen as political. Changes to the electoral law to reduce fraud contributed to this process (see Levy, 2009).<sup>96</sup>

In the wake of the Tivoli Gardens incidents, the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM) was created to investigate accusations against members of the police and military. It cannot be forgotten that Jamaica has one of the highest rates of police killings in the world. In recent years, the number of annual police killings, which used to hover around 300, has decreased to approximately half that figure. Some interviewees noted the important role played by INDECOM in this decline, while also mentioning changes made within the police forces. The emergence of some civil society institutions, such as the Jamaican Civil Society Coalition, is also associated with the repercussions of the 2010 incidents.

### **3. Purpose of the intervention.**

The main objective is to interrupt the cycle of revenge that tends to follow an act of violence between rival gangs using mediation and working with groups of youths. This philosophy of interrupting violence between youth gangs is very similar to other initiatives carried out in Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles, among other cities, and, in particular, the Cure Violence project, which has been implemented in various countries in the region with United States government funding. However, according to all sources, the strategy to interrupt violence between gangs in Jamaica developed independently and just recently came into contact with Cure Violence.

It could be said that this first central component of the intervention does not seek to end the violence, but rather to manage it (as indicated by the project's name), limiting its intensity and reducing harm. This strategy is based on a willingness to work directly with perpetrators of violence and implies a certain capacity to respond immediately to crises, such as the homicide of a youth at the hands of a rival group.

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<sup>96</sup> Horace Levy is an academic who has worked on these issues for many years; he is also an original member of the PMI council.

Second, the program attempts to offer some type of support to victims and their families, as well as the greater community, to overcome the trauma brought on by violence. This component includes support and counseling services for victims provided by social workers.

Third, PMI seeks to change the values and lives of youths by promoting a culture of peace and offering resocialization alternatives through productive and educational projects, so that they can leave their gangs, or, at least, cease criminal and violent activity. This third group of objectives is defined using terms such as “mainstreaming” and “demobilization.” Other terms used by the project are building “social capital” and consolidating respect for the law and the rule of law. This third component does seek to find a permanent solution to the problem of gang violence.

As a whole, while PMI may be considered a program for preventing armed violence in general, there is no doubt regarding its strong emphasis on homicides, as they initiate and perpetuate the cycles of revenge that must be interrupted.

#### **4. Description of the intervention.**

In January 2002, within the aforementioned context, the Ministry of National Security launched the Peace Management Initiative as an alternative way to tackle violence that would avoid the bloodshed associated with harsh police repression. To this end, it created a council of 14 respectable persons who volunteered their time to mediate the violence occurring in communities. The council was headed by a bishop, and comprised of three religious leaders, two academics, three representatives from each of the two major political parties (JLP and PNP), one police representative, one representative from the Ministry of National Security, and one high-level official from the Disputes Resolution Foundation.<sup>97</sup> The council met every two weeks and visited communities in conflict, holding meetings and marches. The participation of the political parties was seen as essential given the political nature of some of the violence at the time.

According to our sources, this was the first time the state called on civil society to participate directly in violence reduction efforts, an implicit recognition that the repression of crime alone was not enough. Members of civil society would have more legitimacy than the

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<sup>97</sup> This is a non-governmental organization that has worked closely with the government to promote non-violent conflict resolution mechanisms.

state to address these groups of youths, and they could to act more flexibly and less bureaucratically. One of the principal challenges facing the project at its outset was the volatile situation in the community of Mountain View. After a series of initiatives it was possible to reduce violence in the community; various actors noted the important role played by PMI in this process.

Basically, the intervention of PMI in times of crisis is centered on the idea of cutting short (“interrupting” is the term most commonly used in other interventions of this nature in other countries) the explosions of violence that occur during cycles of revenge between two or more groups. In fact, the local term used by participants to refer to their mission during a crisis is “defusing,” equating the situation to an explosive that must be deactivated. The strategies are similar to those used during the mediation of conventional military conflicts. Initially, the members of PMI meet separately with both parties behind closed doors. They then attempt to hold a joint meeting for the purpose of creating a minimum level of trust that may allow for a truce or ceasefire. When a peace agreement is signed publicly – as occurred in June 2008 in August Town, one of the best-known success stories – the publicity and formality surrounding the event increase pressure to respect the agreement.

In some cases PMI fosters the creation of peace councils with the participation of diverse sectors of the community. The objective of these councils is to avoid future episodes of violence, or to resolve them as quickly as possible. The councils meet regularly, making it possible, if successful, to build trust between the parties and to refute rumors of violence that spread through the communities and which, if not clarified, can lead to acts of revenge. Some interviewees noted the role of religion in this whole process, as the council president was a bishop and many meetings ended with group prayer.

The members of the PMI council initially carried out these mediations. With time, the project’s technical personnel took on this role, and came to be locally known and respected. Additionally, as inter-group violence transformed from a political conflict to a mere dispute over territories, the role of the political parties within the council naturally declined.

Mediation requires proximity to the groups of youths who commit acts of violence, and this relationship should obviously be established before a crisis occurs, not during or after, so that there can be legitimacy to intervene. This also requires that PMI members not give any sensitive information to police on suspects or criminals who they know through their work, and that they not call the police in the event of a crisis, for otherwise they would automatically lose the trust of the youths and could be viewed as snitches or traitors. It also increases

distrust on the part of the police, who view this contact with criminals or probable criminals with suspicion. In fact, the relationship between PMI and the police is limited, and PMI members sometimes ask the police not to enter communities when they are present. Some interviewees revealed that the police, although holding a seat on the PMI council, have not attended a meeting in years. PMI attempted to resolve this tension between the necessary proximity to the perpetrators of violence and the legal and political consequences of being in contact with persons responsible, or potentially responsible, for committing crimes by deciding not to work with individuals sought by the police. However, given the scant collaboration with police, it is unknown what this means in practical terms, as it is unclear whether PMI members know who those persons are. In short, while the state organized the strategy, those in charge of enforcing the law seem to display a certain resistance, and there are complaints within the program regarding the lack of support on the part of some officials.

Another of the program's favorite strategies is holding three-day retreats for youth gang members once a crisis ends or before it sets in. These retreats, held in rural areas far from conflict zones, teach a variety of practical content, emphasize discipline, and seek to establish contact among the youths that goes beyond the traditional confrontations. The initiative's emphasis on discipline makes it seem analogous to boot camps in the United States, which are based on the belief that rigor and effort can train young people to avoid anti-social behavior.

One aspect of PMI's strategy worth noting is that once a project enters a community it remains permanently linked to that community, even after the crisis has ended. That is, there are no exit criteria for deciding when work in a given area should be completed so as to then focus on other areas. The technical staff persons have indicated that there are no criteria for exiting a community because "we never leave a community."

The second component of the intervention, mentioned above, is providing services to victims and the community, which translates into support for funerals, for example, and especially therapeutic and psychological care for addressing the trauma. Thus, when the extreme violence ends the team visits the homes of the families affected.

With regard to the third component, transforming the lives of the young people, there are two approaches. The first aims to change the prevailing values and culture by means of courses on mediation techniques<sup>98</sup>, community and sports activities (such as soccer leagues), and leadership conferences, among other activities. The second focuses on offering

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<sup>98</sup> In cooperation with the Dispute Resolution Foundation.



educational and work opportunities for youths, such as assistance for school courses or professional development. Another form of intervention is offering credit so that youth gang members can start small businesses, such as chicken farms or small brick factories. The idea is for youths as a group to find lawful and productive activities while maintaining their network of relationships, the argument being that youths do not want to resocialize on an individual basis. This is where the idea of mainstreaming comes into play; it can be interpreted as an attempt to draw the group to a set of more conventional and productive activities. However, several of these small businesses have already been abruptly interrupted by episodes of violence. The other side of this mainstreaming process is the attempt to reduce the criminalization that looms over youths in these communities, regardless of their individual level of involvement in crime or acts of violence.

Members of the PMI technical team stated that the organization also opens the door for many other state programs and agencies so that they may carry out their activities in community once the crisis has passed. The trust built by PMI among the youths in the community makes it possible to bring in other public institutions. Accordingly, PMI describes its work as a large-scale collaborative agreement among multiple public and private institutions, each with a specific mission.

Over the years, pure mediation of armed conflicts appears to have gradually diminished; as this has happened, PMI has shifted more towards activities geared to the community. These activities focus on changing attitudes and creating social capital by offering training and professional opportunities. In line with this evolution, the PMI team now prefers to speak of “community violence” rather than “gang violence or youth violence.” As such, if violence is a characteristic of the community, then a community intervention is needed to confront it. This change has also led PMI to tend to focus more on specific communities, rather than responding to just any call.

Some PMI participants described the dilemma its members experienced between attending to new emergencies that would come up on a regular basis and consolidating the peace-building process in communities that have overcome more serious crises drawing on the second and third components described above. Faced with this dilemma, it seems that the new explosions of violence always receive more attention, even though better results could have been obtained precisely in those places where PMI has worked the longest (see Levy, *op. cit.*).

In 2014, the Jamaican authorities learned of and visited the Cure Violence project. Based on experiences in Chicago, the project aims to interrupt gang violence; it is being implemented in several countries throughout the region with U.S. funding. Considering that the principle is the same as that applied by PMI, the Jamaican government contracted Cure Violence to provide technical support to PMI. The interviewees, all Jamaican, stated that this was in reality an exchange of experiences between the two institutions, which learned from one another. In their opinion, PMI is more focused on communities than on gangs, incorporates social workers, and works with communities on a longer-term basis. For its part, PMI learned from Cure Violence how to improve its recordkeeping and incorporate individual case management as a treatment-based model rather than a services-based one. Everyone at PMI recognizes that its internal structure and information management have improved as a result of the relationship with Cure Violence.

## **5. Institutional structure.**

As an organization, PMI has a very small team whose activities are based on building personal relationships between its members and community youths. PMI also has a very limited budget, which limits its capacity, especially with regard to training and professional development projects, unless it has agreements with other, larger institutions.

The state only finances operating costs, office space, and salaries for the central team. All other expenses must be covered by specific projects, for which the organization must find funding. This new financing allows for the expansion of services, as occurred with the St. Catherine project, but it also makes the organization's work more unstable. PMI has received funds from the European Union, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the Japanese and Canadian development agencies. Financing for PMI from the Jamaican state was framed as a project of the Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP), a large-scale, multi-component violence prevention program financed by the IDB and the British government's Department for International Development (DFID). While the CSJP focuses on medium- and long-term prevention, the government's hope is that PMI can act immediately to contain violent conflicts.

PMI's relationship with the state comes across as ambivalent. As mentioned earlier, PMI was launched by the Ministry of National Security, which then convened the council. Furthermore, the state continues financing the project, at least its current expenses, as part of its official violence prevention program. This means that PMI submits monthly reports to the

government accounting for its work. At the same time, the organization seeks out private financing and its members insist that they are fully autonomous with respect to the government's decisions. Some have stated that of late the government has "wanted to appropriate the PMI brand" but the organization has maintained its independence.

## **6. Factors that may condition the intervention.**

The first requirement for this type of strategy is that violence be inter-group in nature, otherwise the notions of mediation and interruption would be meaningless. In Jamaica there is a consensus that a large part of the violence is inter-group, and, at the same time a belief that mediation and violence containment are adequate approaches, so much so that other institutions also operate under this paradigm.<sup>99</sup>

Second, the possibility of carrying out interventions of this nature to reduce inter-group violence depends critically on the type of group with which one sets out to work. Many studies on gangs have attempted to classify them and study their evolution, from those that are merely groups of youths who occasionally resort to violence to others that qualify as examples of organized crime. What can be accomplished in each case depends on this characteristic. PMI members differentiate between "corner crews," with which they work, and criminal gangs, which they try to avoid. The crews are said to use violence episodically to defend their territory and community, and have been subjected to criminalization by society and the police, a process that must be reversed. The gangs use violence instrumentally and with planning, and no negotiation with them would be possible. The difference between these two kinds of groups is crucial, not only technically and operationally, but also in terms of the possibility of mediation gaining social legitimacy, which would only be possible with groups less involved in crime.

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<sup>99</sup> For example, we had the opportunity to be in touch with the Proactive Violence Interruption Strategy (PVIS) program, operated by the Jamaican police since 2012. It is headed by the police chaplain in collaboration with other sectors within the police, such as community policing and investigations. This initiative, which we did not get to know in-depth, has mobilized a team of 450 pastors throughout the island, coordinated by the police chaplain, to immediately visit homicide sites accompanied by a group of volunteers. During this initial contact they attempt to speak with the victim's family and prevent acts of revenge. They also attempt to convince people to leave justice in the hands of the police and cooperate with the investigation. Interestingly, the PMI team had not heard of PVIS, and many of them, like other outside observers, doubted that mediation or interruption could be carried out by the police. At any rate, this example shows the strength of this intervention model in Jamaica, both within and outside of the state apparatus.

Levy (2012) distinguishes among three types of groups: “corner crews,” which are charitable and carry out activities that would be expected of any group of youths; “defense crews,” which are differentiated from the former by their willingness to employ violence in an organized manner for the purpose of defending themselves and their communities; and criminal gangs. The first two could be targeted by an intervention and should be rescued from criminalization, even though the second and third share a willingness to impose order by means of violence, such as executing persons considered undesirable (“jungle justice”). The problem is that these distinctions are tenuous and dynamic, such that it is not easy to know with whom and when one can work. In any event, differentiating is crucial for these interventions, and there is consensus that groups that commit acts of violence can be divided between those that can be targeted by prevention and re-socialization programs, and those that should be fought in the traditional manner. Thus, treating the former in the same way as the latter would only aggravate their criminalization and push them along on their way to becoming more involved in crime.

In fact, PMI members recognize that they do not work in areas where criminal structures clearly exercise territorial control. Additionally, several informants stated that PMI’s work in the western part of the country, which is not analyzed here, is made much more difficult by the presence of organized criminal groups that commit telephone fraud against United States residents. Rather than exercise territorial control, these groups carry out organized criminal activity with considerable economic benefits and employ violence in an equally intense manner.

## **7. Monitoring and impact.**

As for monitoring, and noted earlier, PMI submits monthly reports to the government accounting for its activities and providing information on individual cases. These reports are not public.

As regards evaluation, the project has been formally evaluated twice. The first evaluation was requested by PMI and carried out in 2006 by Trevor Spence, Georgia Sinclair, and Alicia Hayman.<sup>100</sup> The second was commissioned by the Government of Jamaica in conjunction with international cooperation, and carried out by Andrew McLean and Sherrone

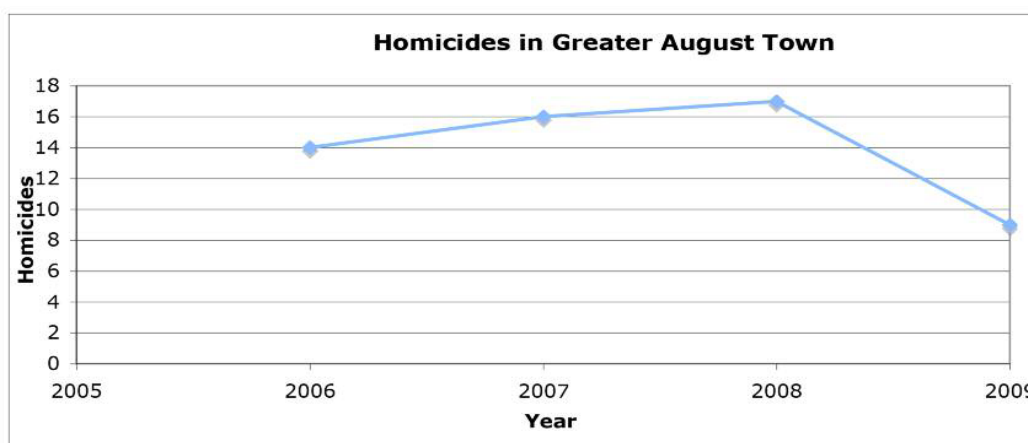
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<sup>100</sup> Spence, T., Sinclair, G. and Hayman, A. (2006) Peace Management Initiative (PMI): a Review of the PMI. Final Report.

Blake Lobban.<sup>101</sup> The second one encompasses all government programs that could be classified as community security or violence prevention initiatives, ten in all; so PMI is only one of the initiatives evaluated. Strictly speaking, neither is an impact evaluation, though both attempt, in different ways, to estimate the project's effects.

In addition to these two evaluations, several local specialists have studied and reflected on the project's impact. Levy (2012, op. cit.) concludes that PMI was able to curb violence in some of the communities in which it worked. In order to demonstrate its impact, he shows how homicides dropped in some of these communities, as illustrated below.

**FIGURE 5. HOMICIDES IN GREATER AUGUST TOWN**

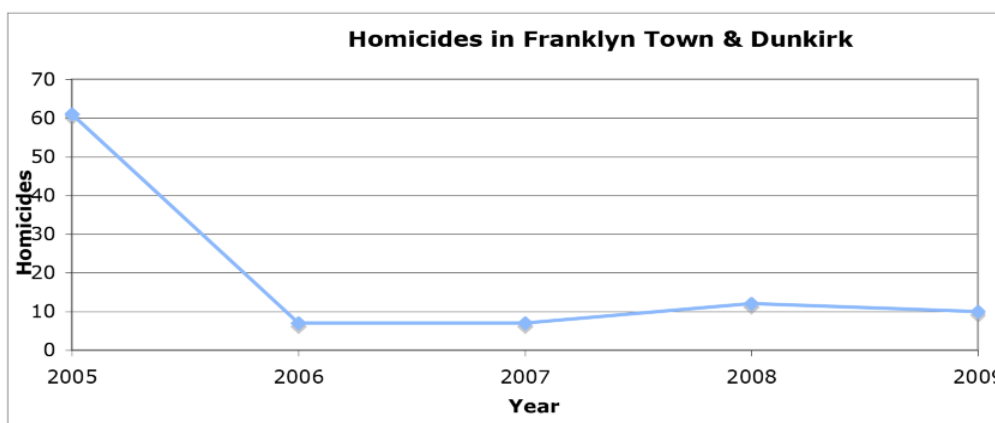


Source: Levy, 2012, p. 65.

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<sup>101</sup> McLean, A. and Lobban, S.B, (2009) Assessment of Community Security and Transformation: Programmes in Jamaica. Report Commissioned by the Government of Jamaica.

**FIGURE 6. HOMICIDES IN FRANKLYN TOWN AND DUNKIRK**



Source: Levy, 2012, p. 66.

These figures show that there was a significant reduction in homicides in some communities, but they do not demonstrate that this was due directly or exclusively to PMI’s influence. In fact, Levy and the other authors who have studied this issue, including the authors of both evaluations, are cautious in affirming that other factors contributed to this reduction of violence, such as the role of the communities themselves, police activity, or the parallel presence of other prevention projects. The authorities agree that there is no definitive proof of PMI’s impact, but that there are indications that point in the right direction. However, declines in homicides in areas where the project has been implemented have not always been permanent.

The 2006 evaluation states that PMI is a project with an exceptional profile and an exclusive niche insofar as it has been able to establish a relationship with the protagonists of the violence. The authors affirm that its role is too broad and ambiguous, especially considering its ambitious mandate (which includes mediation, community well-being, and social development) and the small number of technical personnel. Therefore, they recommend that the organization reevaluate its strategic planning, defining its points of entry and exit from the “peace process” in each community. The authors compare the situation of the project to a relay race in which there is only one sprinter for all the different stages who must pass the baton to himself. This imagery reinforces PMI’s need to specialize in a particular role that cannot be performed by others, namely, building relationships with groups of youths who engage in violence.

The 2009 evaluation points in a similar direction. It defines PMI as a small organization with scarce resources, especially in light of the varied nature of its activities, that is overly

dependent on its limited personnel and the voluntary contributions of the council's members. It recognizes the institution's deep understanding of the field and its ability to intervene, but considers it to be caught in a dilemma between deepening its interventions in some communities and broadening its geographic reach. It analyzes the distinction between community violence and criminal violence put forth by the project, but considers that the line separating the two has become ever more tenuous. It also notes the resistance of various actors within the country to supporting initiatives that provide resources to armed individuals. Furthermore, it describes the relationship between PMI Kingston and PMI St. James as unclear. In terms of suggestions, it recommends that the organization grow and stabilize its budget, and specialize exclusively in mediation and support for victims, leaving development or reinsertion projects to other institutions, with which it should establish formal agreements. It suggests that, at most, PMI have funds available for very short-term projects (three months), which is enough time for these other institutions to begin their activities. At the same time, PMI could advise these organizations on how to focus their programs on high-risk youths.

Understandably, PMI's own administrators also complain of the low level and unstable nature of its funding, which prevents longer-term planning.

From a methodological standpoint, these types of projects are very hard to evaluate in light of various factors: (i) the broad nature of their interventions; (ii) the reduction in homicides per community; (iii) the concurrence of several projects and incidents in each community. Furthermore, because the initial intervention was fundamentally carried out during an emergency, it is susceptible to the methodological problem known as "regression to the mean." In other words, after a crisis it is likely that homicides will drop, not necessarily as a result of the intervention but simply as a result of the exceptional nature of the circumstances that led to that critical point. So there is a risk that part of this natural decline will be attributed, in an overly optimistic manner, to the project itself. In the case of Jamaica, several interviewees spoke of their community's strong willingness to overcome the violence in light of the crisis they were experiencing. This relatively intangible element was to be essential for understanding subsequent developments, and did not appear to be tied to any project.

## **8. Summary.**

PMI's experience in Jamaica is centered on the idea of ending cycles of revenge in conflicts between groups of youths who live in and control peripheral areas of the country by means of mediation. This is a common model in other countries, especially the United States,

for addressing disputes among youth gangs and reducing their negative impact. Given that mediation requires proximity to those who perpetrate violence, it tends to be carried out by civil society and results in certain resistance from law enforcement officials, who are trained to arrest and investigate those responsible for crimes, not mediate with them. In the case of Jamaica, PMI's relationship with the state is profoundly ambivalent, as it is an initiative created and financed (at least in part) by the state, yet led by bishops, professors, and social workers. As such, the state is able to avoid close contact with possible criminals, while at the same time attempting to reduce violence by non-conventional means.

In addition to mediation, which has resulted in truces and "peace accords," PMI has increased its actions to support victims and address trauma, as well as social reinsertion initiatives that offer youths an alternative to gangs, or offer gangs themselves an alternative so that they renounce violence. It seems clear that the organization's mandate is excessively broad and diffuse for its small size and low levels of funding, especially considering that there are many other public institutions carrying out social development work with this mission. There are clear indications that PMI, along with other actors, contributed to reducing the wave of violence in some communities, even though no rigorous impact evaluation was ever carried out, in part because none was planned, and in part due to the technical difficulty of doing so.

The possibility of applying this model of gang mediation depends, first, on whether violence in a country is inter-group in nature. Second, there is a broad consensus that some groups of youths would be susceptible to this prevention and containment-based approach, and that other, more purely criminal groups would be immune to such an approach. There is no consensus, however, on where to draw the line between redeemable groups that could be engaged with such an initiative and those for which only conventional law enforcement would apply. This is certainly a fine line, with respect to which there are intermediate and dynamic situations. The youth gangs that employ violence mostly to defend their territory against rival groups seem to be a more appropriate target for this type of intervention.



## VI.viii. GANG TRUCE, EL SALVADOR<sup>102</sup>

### TYPE 12: NEGOTIATION OF THE STATE WITH ARMED GROUPS

#### 1. Basic information.

- Project Name: Peace-building process among gangs, popularly known as the gang truce
- Institution: National government, in cooperation with members of civil society
- Type of Institution: National government
- Dates: March 2012 to approximately May 2013 (the end of Munguía Payés's term as Minister of Justice and Security). The start date is clear, but the end date is open to interpretation.
- Personnel: There are no personnel specifically assigned to this project except for the mediators.

#### 2. Context and historical background.

El Salvador was shaken by a particularly bloody civil war from 1980 to 1991 in which approximately 80,000 people were killed. After the 1991 peace accords there was hope that the country would regain the security that had been absent during so many years of political violence. However, several factors, among them the demobilization of thousands of armed combatants on both sides in a context of social exclusion, contributed to a dramatic increase in lethal violence. In 2011, UNODC figures, based on information from the Salvadoran police, showed a homicide rate of 69.9 per 100,000 population, the second highest in the world after Honduras.

The main protagonists of violence in the country have included the gangs, or *maras*, groups of youths with a strong identity and sense of belonging that have violent disputes among them and regularly commit serious crimes. The *maras* were born on the streets of Los Angeles and transplanted to El Salvador during the 1990s when their members were deported from the United States. They have grown exponentially since. The two largest gangs are the Mara Salvatrucha, or MS13, and Barrio 18, or La 18, who have traditionally had violent clashes

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<sup>102</sup> The material used to conduct this case study was gathered from 10 interviews with members of Salvadoran civil society, four interviews with high-level state officials, and two with members of international organizations. Many of those interviewed, from both the state and civil society, participated directly in the truce process, and some were key actors. In all, 16 field interviews were conducted, 15 in August 2015 in El Salvador, and the other over the Internet. Additionally, various academic publications, news articles, and other materials related to the truce were reviewed.

over control of the streets. In 2005, Barrio 18 split into two groups, Sureños and Revolucionarios. The ensuing violence and polarization was so intense that most Salvadoran soccer teams stopped using the numbers 13 and 18 on their jerseys. Members had tattoos that identified them as members for life; leaving was not an operation that was tolerated.

The state's response during the first decade 2000-2010 relied on ever harsher and more repressive policies, such as the Mano Dura (Heavy Hand) and Super Mano Dura (Super Heavy Hand) plans, which culminated in the criminalization of merely belonging to a gang. Some laws that passed at the time, and were later declared unconstitutional, allowed for jailing any group of youths with tattoos identified with a *marra*. This policy of mass arrests and the subsequent mass convictions filled Salvadoran prisons, which were considered subhuman due to overcrowding and generally poor conditions. This hardline and indiscriminate strategy for dealing with the *maras* did not reduce their influence or their operational capabilities. To the contrary, gangs were strengthened and hardened during this period, as they multiplied their power and territorial control. One of the most visible consequences for the population was the increase in extortion. Bus owners, and even residents in certain areas, were forced to pay regular quotas in order to work or simply commute.

The failure of the most repressive policies to contain the gangs resulted in some political actors, including the most recent administrations, distancing themselves from the "heavy hand" approach, especially in terms of rhetoric. Prevention policies began to be discussed, although significant investments were never made in this direction. In recent years, the possibility of promulgating a law to facilitate the reinsertion of gang members who want to leave those groups has been discussed, but as of 2015 no such initiative had been approved. In any event, the failure of the more hardline, repressive policies is one of the factors that created the opportunity for different and bolder initiatives, such as the truce of the *maras*, or gang truce.

### **3. Purpose of the intervention.**

As this initiative was not based on a detailed or public plan, it is not really possible to speak clearly of its objectives, which in fact were different for each player. To begin with, even its name is subject to dispute.

According to the mediators, key government officials at the time, and civil society sectors that supported the initiative, it was a "*proceso de pacificación*," or peace-building process, while the name "*tregua de las maras*" (gang truce) was given by the press and critics

of the initiative. So for the mediators, the ultimate goal was to arrive at a permanent and collective solution to both the crime committed and promoted by gangs, and the social exclusion of their members, this being at the root of the problem. Understood in those terms, the truce would merely be an instrument for bringing about the conditions for promoting much deeper changes, and, ultimately, to achieve the collective reinsertion of all gang members. The dynamic of negotiations among the gangs, civil society, and the state should produce the conditions necessary for reducing violence among the gangs themselves, as well as between the gangs and the state, so as to then find ways of generating income to take the place of criminal activity. In the words of one religious leader, “A truce, as the name says, is something temporary and must be transformed into a peace-building process.” The term “peace-building” (“*pacificación*”) is not used by chance and alludes to the idea of ending the war. Indeed, many of the main actors in the process use the 1991 peace negotiations between the government and the FMLN guerrillas, which resulted in the end of the civil war, as a permanent point of reference. Although they acknowledge differences between the identity, aims, and *modus operandi* of the guerrilla groups and the gangs, they maintain that today, just as yesterday, high levels of violence can only be reduced by negotiating with the armed groups. In this sense, they consider the government’s attempts to eliminate or outlaw gangs to be useless and even counterproductive. Despite these hopes for a comprehensive solution, ongoing extortion and the inability to generate alternative forms of income played a central role in the demoralization of the process.

For other social sectors, among them various state agents and other sectors critical of the initiative, the objective was a truce – be it among the *maras* or between them and the government – that would make it possible to keep homicide levels low in exchange for certain concessions, but whose expansion to other, broader objectives, and whose sustainability, were in question. The detractors of the process were using pejorative epithets, such as “hypocritical truce,” which was used frequently by the attorney general at the time, or “mafia pact.”

In short, the lack of a clear and agreed upon definition of the strategy’s objectives allowed for many possible interpretations and speculation, and ended up decisively influencing its course.

#### **4. Description of the intervention.**

On March 8, 2012, 30 leaders from the two largest gangs serving sentences under a special internment regime at the Zacatecoluca maximum security prison were transferred,

without public knowledge, to various less restrictive prison facilities. Six days later, the newspaper *El Faro* published news indicating that the transfers were the result of negotiations between the government and the gangs that resulted in an agreement to reduce homicides.<sup>103</sup> This information was provided by state intelligence agents close to the police, who were apparently in disagreement with sectors of the military and General Munguía Payés, who was later revealed to be the initiative's main promoter. Munguía Payés was an army general and the Minister of Justice and Public Security at the time. The sources interviewed for this study reported that one of the discrepancies between the two groups was the percentage of homicides they attributed to gangs, which was higher according to military intelligence (around 90%) and lower according to the police (around 40%). To confirm the existence of the agreement, the article in *El Faro* stated that in recent days the number of homicides per day, which was around 14 at the time, had plummeted to fewer than six. The article also stated that in addition to improved prison conditions some gang members had received money from their families. This point is disputed to this day, maintained by the newspaper through personal and documentary sources, and vehemently denied by those who promoted the process as a fabrication by rival intelligence sectors.

At first, the government of Mauricio Funes, the first in the country's history led by the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN), denied the negotiation and attributed the transfers to various reasons that were hardly credible: that they had received reports of a planned attack on the Zacatecoluca prison; that some of the transferred gang members suffered from serious illnesses; and that the legal time limit for holding them under the special regime had ended. One mediator stated that the government's denial was due to its commitment to the *mara* leaders to give them time to spread news of the agreement internally. Finally, on March 20, the two lead mediators, Monsignor Colindres, the head chaplain of the military and police, and former FMLN guerrilla fighter and former legislator Raúl Mijango<sup>104</sup>, held a press conference during which they denied that there had been any negotiation with the government and stated that they had intermediated a non-aggression agreement among the gangs, which the government had simply facilitated.<sup>105</sup> They also said that gang members were willing to contribute to solving the problem of violence that was

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<sup>103</sup> <http://www.elfaro.net/es/201203/noticias/7985/>

<sup>104</sup> The selection of mediators seems not to have been a coincidence. In addition to their personal relationships with the minister, one represented the left, and the other, the military and police chaplain, represented more conservative sectors.

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.laprensagrafica.com/el-salvador/judicial/254500-pandillas-acordaron-una-tregua-entre-ellas-asegura-fabio-colindres>

devastating the country, thus presaging a broader process of transformation. The mediators interviewed for this study said that the gang leaders, who were older, were tired of violence and genuinely interested in an exit that would benefit their families. They also said that transferring the gang leaders was essential for facilitating the transmission of orders to the rest of their respective organizations. At the same time, the benefits received in prison are also described as important for empowering the leaders within their groups. Plus many of these advantages, in their opinion, such as visits by family members, were among the legal rights of prisoners that had not been previously respected.

On March 22, Mijango presented a communiqué signed by the principal spokespersons of the *maras* in which they committed to stop killing each other and to suspend attacks against law enforcement officers. A subsequent statement in May declared schools in the country as “peace zones.” Also in May, Monsignor Colindres visited the Organization of American States (OAS) and requested support for the initiative. The OAS responded boldly, becoming one of the pillars of the process. The secretary general visited El Salvador in June and participated in a ceremony where gang members handed over their weapons. The OAS signed an agreement with the Salvadoran government supporting the process and created a technical committee for that purpose. The OAS Secretariat for Multidimensional Security was tasked with implementation, and the process in El Salvador was to be an example of the “smart security” strategy with an evidence-based, multidimensional approach.

On June 16, Munguía publicly declared that after 100 days the number of homicides per day had dropped from 14 to six, and that the government supported the initiative though it had not negotiated with the gangs. Various sources confirmed that there was in fact a day with no homicides in the country, which coincided with an important speech delivered by the president in Cartagena, Colombia.

Throughout the process the press interviewed gang leaders. Their faces and statements became part of the news, turning them into public figures. Information got out that the gang leaders were receiving various benefits, such as improved living conditions in prison, visits at night, television, or access to money brought to them by family members. Most of these benefits are set forth in the law, but were perceived as privileges by a large part of public opinion. Another significant change was that the army was no longer tasked with registering prisoners’ family members before visits, records that were alleged to have been abused. At the same time, there were also incidents that exceeded legal bounds, such as the entry of prostitutes into prison cells, or the exit of some leaders from prison to participate in

religious ceremonies. These incidents, which were highly publicized, aroused public indignation and helped discourage the process.

In October, other *maras* announced their willingness to agree to a mutual cessation of hostilities and join the process. On January 23, 2013, MS 13 and Barrio 18 (both Sureños and Revolucionarios) announced an agreement declaring various municipalities “violence-free zones” in which they agreed not to commit acts of violence against the inhabitants. They explained, however, that ending extortion was only possible if alternative economic activities were found for their members. Ilopango was the first municipality declared violence-free; others followed in the next months. This change created the opportunity for mayors to take a leading role in the process, and to begin to design social and economic projects for gang members and their families. And so negotiations were conducted, in some cases, at the local level, and agreements were reached in certain areas. The mediators stated that the national government’s consent was needed to implement the social projects at the local level, for otherwise police would arrest participating gang members.

Fundación Humanitaria was created to support this type of initiative and to coordinate international cooperation to that end. The European Union, among others, was one of the largest funders of this organization’s projects. The European Union also funds Interpeace, an international NGO dedicated to consolidating peace processes around the world, which has played a leading role in the negotiation with the *maras* in El Salvador. The lead mediator, Mijango, as well as youth gang members who worked as mediators, came to receive salaries from the organization.

Despite the sharp reduction in homicides, the so-called truce suffered major political fatigue. First, the very idea of negotiating with criminal groups was rejected by many sectors. Second, it was perceived that the government was offering privileges to imprisoned gang members. Third, and perhaps most important, the ongoing extortions affecting many citizens undercut support. So the possibility of the truce becoming the first step towards ending criminal activity never materialized, at least not at the national level.

By May 2013, the truce had more opponents than supporters. As mentioned earlier, the attorney general was a direct enemy of the process. The Catholic Church, which had initially given its implicit support through the participation of the military chaplain, and later the papal nuncio, completely disassociated itself from the process after the Bishops’ Conference released a statement on May 12, 2013, concluding that the truce “had not produced benefits for the upright and working people.” The political parties, after an uncertain

start, criticized the truce, making it the subject of partisan political debate and a source of tension between the government and the opposition. Various civil society sectors came out against the lack of transparency of the process and questioned its sustainability. The United States, always a relevant actor in El Salvador, was reticent and had vetoed the use of U.S. international development funds for programs benefiting persons who had committed crimes. And Salvadoran public opinion did not support the initiative. A survey of a representative sample of the population from May 2013 showed that 83.1% of persons interviewed had “little” or “no” confidence in the truce, and 72.6% thought it had reduced crime “little” or “not at all” (IUDOP, 2013).

On May 17, 2013, the Supreme Court of Justice declared the appointment of members of the military to public security offices, which, according to the peace accords, should be under civilian control, to be unconstitutional. This meant the automatic exit of General Munguía from the Ministry of Security. Although he was named Minister of Defense, and despite the government’s commitment to continue the process, his exit from the Ministry of Security neutralized the principal sponsor of the process. In fact, the *maras* issued a statement lamenting the Court’s decision.

Shortly after the new minister, Ricardo Perdomo, took office, an incident occurred that would have serious repercussions: two known gang leaders left prison to participate in a religious ceremony and give a television interview at an evangelical church, an incident that led to the removal of the director general of prisons. Thereafter, prison conditions for *mara* leaders gradually worsened, and access for mediators became more limited. Thus we have identified Munguía’s departure from the ministry as the end of the initiative, although in reality it ended gradually from that point on. Indeed, during the 2014 presidential election campaign the main parties adopted ambivalent positions. Although many political actors came out against the truce, recent evidence indicates that both parties attempted to negotiate with the *maras* behind closed doors during that campaign. In September 2014, the new President of El Salvador, Salvador Sánchez Cerén, from the same party as his predecessor, created the National Council for Citizen Security and Coexistence, with broad civil society participation. Evangelical churches and some civil society sectors once again proposed dialogues with *maras* in that Council, but were rejected. Initially, the president himself did not rule out the possibility of dialogue with the gangs until a January 5, 2015, speech in which he stated, “We cannot return to the model of reaching understandings with one another and negotiating with gangs,

because that is outside the law.”<sup>106</sup> Some analysts identify that moment as the formal end of the process. In February 2015, gang leaders were returned to the Zacatecoluca maximum security prison, reversing the most symbolic measure taken by the previous administration.

Homicide levels were extremely high in 2015, as El Salvador most likely reclaimed its status as the most violent country in the world. The military and police carried out many operations in which gang members were killed, some of which have been described as summary executions. And the gangs attacked and killed a large number of law enforcement officers. In a step further distancing the government from the former strategy, a law was passed in April 2016 making it a crime to enter into agreements with gangs, and one month later, Raúl Mijango, the lead mediator, was arrested on charges of illicit association (“*agrupación ilícita*”).

The first three months of 2016 saw extremely high levels of lethal violence. On March 26, the three largest gangs (MS13 and both branches of La 18, 18-Sureños and 18-Revolucionarios) released a statement stating that they had committed to a ceasefire, which meant ending attacks against one another and attempts to invade territories. This time leaders outside of prison negotiated the agreement. As the state did not participate, this new initiative does not fit within the type studied here, and will not be analyzed. On March 29, the government announced extraordinary measures against the gangs, with the support of all the political forces. The second quarter of 2016 saw a notable drop in homicides, with an average of 11 per day, approximately half the rate of the first quarter, but still much higher than the rate during the 2012 truce (approximately five). As to be expected, the government attributed this decline to the measures it adopted, while the gangs attributed it to their ceasefire agreement.

## 5. Monitoring and evaluation

As this was not a planned program, but rather an initiative in relation to which there has been constant ambiguity on the part of the actors involved, there is no system for monitoring, not to mention evaluation. The most important dependent variable, the homicide rate, is easy to measure and is published regularly in the records of the Institute of Forensic Medicine and the National Police. It should be noted that despite some problems, official homicide figures in the country are considered reasonably reliable, and that in recent years the

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<sup>106</sup> <http://www.laprensagrafica.com/2015/01/06/gobierno-toma-distancia-de-la-tregua-entre-pandillas#sthash.KvsY3m1e.dpuf>



various institutions that produce these figures have made efforts to develop mechanisms to align the data.

If the government had any doubts as to the capacity of the gang leaders to reduce homicides, the facts showed that it was real. The number of homicides per day fell to one-third of previous levels in a matter of days and stayed that way for a long time. Given the abrupt change in the homicide rate, and its coincidence with *mara* leaders issuing their orders, there is no doubt as to what caused this shift.

The chart below, taken from an article in El Faro,<sup>107</sup> the newspaper that broke the news of the truce and that has been a key player in the process, shows monthly homicide figures for 2002 to 2016.

**FIGURE 7. HOMICIDES PER MONTH IN EL SALVADOR<sup>108</sup>**

	Enero	Febrero	Marzo	Abril	Mayo	Junio	Julio	Agosto	Septie..	Octubre	Noviem..	Diciem..
2016	740	664	611	353	353	331						
2015	336	307	484	418	643	677	470	918	685	684	449	586
2014	234	247	309	284	394	372	351	346	333	291	341	410
2013	198	183	173	143	174	186	253	245	245	240	257	216
2012	413	404	255	157	173	167	175	157	169	179	177	168
2011	361	313	377	341	384	343	370	390	371	385	375	361
2010	401	339	325	366	355	370	292	338	217	344	315	305
2009	374	321	368	343	385	370	352	337	397	438	334	363
2008	271	262	255	226	256	279	263	281	241	269	303	273
2007	334	275	274	304	285	263	341	289	306	307	252	267
2006	325	251	304	305	359	342	366	382	324	346	331	293
2005	297	261	252	280	314	338	394	339	353	356	287	341
2004	206	206	242	213	274	227	259	321	221	245	252	267
2003	210	200	190	234	233	204	216	191	171	180	168	183
2002	238	172	202	188	174	175	171	186	194	199	210	235

Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de la PNC y del Instituto de Medicina Legal.

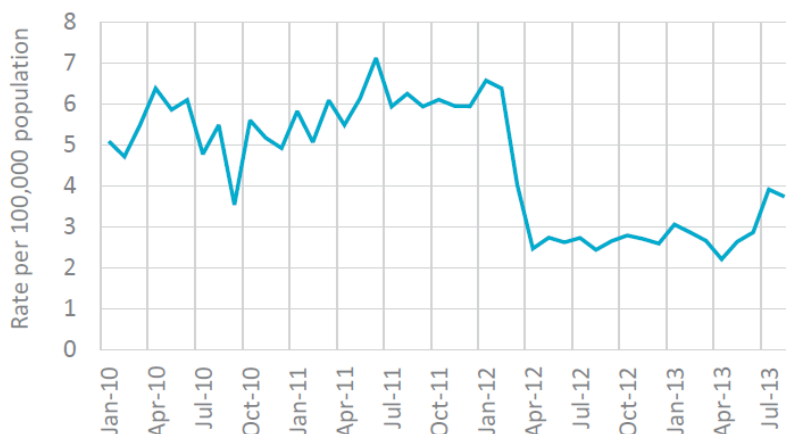
**Source:** Figures from the National Police and Institute of Forensic Medicine.

<sup>107</sup> [http://www.elfaro.net/es/201607/el\\_salvador/18871/La-tendencia-a-la-baja-en-los-homicidios-se-ratific%C3%B3-en-junio.htm](http://www.elfaro.net/es/201607/el_salvador/18871/La-tendencia-a-la-baja-en-los-homicidios-se-ratific%C3%B3-en-junio.htm)

<sup>108</sup> Translator's Note: Each column in the graphic corresponds to a month of the year, starting with January (Enero) and ending with December (Diciem.).

This chart shows the impact of some of the aforementioned actions. The following graph, taken from a comprehensive UNODC study on homicide<sup>109</sup>, illustrates the sudden impact of the truce on the monthly homicide rate.

**FIGURE 8. MONTHLY HOMICIDE RATE IN EL SALVADOR**



Source: National Police of El Salvador (2013).

Some analysts, using an estimate based on a time series, have estimated that approximately 5,501 homicides were prevented as a result of the intervention (Katz and Amaya, 2015). The same study found a positive correlation between the number of imprisoned MS13 members from a particular municipality at the beginning of the process, and the intensity of the drop in homicides in that municipality after the truce came into force. At the same time, the number of imprisoned Barrio 18 members from each municipality correlated positively with the increase in homicides after the truce ended.

However, two warnings were raised against the direct interpretation of the truce's impact. First, it is possible, to a certain extent, that there was a strategy in place to hide homicides rather than eliminate them, keeping them from being registered (see, for example, Cruz and Durán-Martínez, 2016). Second, and complementary to the first, is that forced disappearances increased as homicides fell, which raises the hypothesis that the former took the place of the latter. However, even those critical of the truce recognize that the increase in disappearances was clearly of a lesser magnitude than the drop in homicides. In short, and without ruling out the possibility that some bodies were hidden, the vast majority of sources recognize a very significant drop in homicides.

<sup>109</sup> UNODC (2014) Global Study on Homicide 2013. Vienna: UNODC.

Some who question the role attributed to gangs in relation to total violence in the country have said that in order to have such an impact the truce should have included other criminal groups, such as drug traffickers, not just the *maras*. At any rate, this possibility refers to the identity of those involved but would not affect the nature of the intervention.

## **6. Taking stock of the truce or peace-building process.**

On the positive side, there was undoubtedly a reduction of lethal violence that was unprecedented in its rapidity, large scale, and national reach. In fact, it is very difficult to find comparable examples in the world of such an intense and rapid reduction in the number of violent deaths due to criminal activity. Such drastic declines tend to result only from the resolution of armed conflicts.

Another positive development noted by various interviewees is the attention drawn to the precarious prison conditions in the country. The issue received public exposure, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) entered Salvadoran prisons to verify the conditions.

More broadly, several interviewees in favor of the initiative stressed that despite its final outcome the process showed that homicide reduction was possible and created a space for discussing dialogues with armed groups, which in their opinion is the only possible solution to violence in the country.

There are several negative points as well. First, and cited by almost all of those interviewed, is the ambiguity and lack of transparency of the process, mainly on the part of the government. As one high-level official said, “We were doing it, but it was as though we were hiding our hand.”

The government initially stated that it was simply facilitating a negotiation among gangs, and always maintained that it was not a party in the negotiation, but the transfers of imprisoned gang leaders and concessions granted to them negated that narrative. At the same time, the president seemed to clearly support the process, even seeking external support in conversations with international organizations and foreign governments. Gradually, and to the extent that homicides remained low over a prolonged period of time, the government took more credit for the initiative, which ended up becoming, perhaps inevitably, a target for partisan political debate. The government, in its ambiguity, seems to have attempted to reduce the political costs and at the same time reap the main benefits of the initiative. The bet,

however, did not pay off, as its ambiguous position increased the political attrition. Additionally, the lack of transparency helped to create many rumors about the truce.

Second, and perhaps most important, is that establishing a dialogue with criminal groups inevitably generates resistance and doubts, as it confers a certain sense of legitimacy to those groups and discredits the state. Benefits conceded during these dialogues tend to be perceived as undue privileges for criminals who, as in El Salvador, command organizations that continue committing crimes against the population. Following the end of the truce, and with the new spike in homicides, the most common interpretation in the country has been to attribute this increase in violence to the process, due to the supposed strengthening of the gangs, as reflected in their intensified territorial control expanded to other areas of the country. There is consensus that the gangs have expanded the areas under their control since 2012, although the cause is disputed. In this context of the state lacking territorial control in certain areas, some actors have recently begun using the term “failed state,” causing notable irritation on the part of the government.

There is no concrete evidence that the increase in violence since 2014 is a consequence of the previous truce. Some analysts believe that it is simply a continuation of the upward trend observed during the years prior to the truce. For the proponents of the process, the rising violence confirms the need for dialogue and negotiation, and they blame the government for hindering mediation efforts among the *maras*. For its opponents, the gangs already held significant power before the truce, as the process demonstrated. So there are two opposing narratives regarding how the truce, and its absence, have impacted the violence. According to the mediators, more than anything else the process reduced violence because it was possible to mediate conflicts between gangs at the local and national levels, introducing alternative resolution mechanisms, ending revenge attacks, and respecting the territories of the other groups. According to the opponents, violence was reduced because gang leaders gave orders to that effect in exchange for personal privileges in prison. The recent drop in homicides following the March 2016 truce among *maras* would appear to support the first interpretation, that violence basically arises from disputes between gangs, and would show that it is possible to reduce it by means of mutual agreements in which the government’s participation is not necessary.

In any case, and in the absence of concrete evidence, the dominant interpretation in the country is that the truce worsened violence. In a speech delivered on January 5, 2015, the current president, Sánchez Cerén, stated, “We did not want to continue with that strategy [of promoting the truce] because that is what allowed the gangs to grow and strengthen.” So

instead of focusing on the lives that the process may have saved during the 15 months in which it was operating, public opinion pays more attention to the ongoing extortions and the new rise in violence, which ends up serving as retrospective “evidence” of its failure. In the words of one high-ranking official, “The truce was harmful because it did not allow for a real reduction of violence, as proven by the subsequent increase.... When the prebends ended, homicides went up. Those persons’ deaths were simply delayed.”

Although reducing the homicide rate may be the main objective for a policymaker in the area of security, public opinion will not necessarily share this priority, especially if the vast majority of homicide victims are members of criminal organizations, while victims of crimes such as extortion are common citizens.

The third negative point was the communication strategy used, as recognized by all the national and international actors involved. The evaluation of the strategy was split among those who thought it was poor, awful, or nonexistent. As a result of the government’s ambiguity, disseminating information on the process was left to the mediators and gangs, while the government sat by as a spectator to improvised releases of information that had a high political cost. For many it seemed that to a certain extent the process was serving as an apologist for crime and presented an idealized image of the criminal groups. There is consensus on the fact that not all of the details on the dialogue could be released; however, there is unanimity on the conclusion that regardless of the content decided to be published, it should have been the subject of a deliberate and cautious strategy.

## **7. Factors that may condition the intervention.**

The experience in El Salvador demonstrates, on the one hand, the potential of such strategies to reduce violence, and, on the other hand, the enormous risks involved in engaging in dialogue or negotiation with criminal groups.

Indeed, this type of initiative has a capacity to control homicides that is considerably more powerful and accelerated than most possible measures when applied in contexts of high levels of violence resulting primarily from conflicts among organized groups whose structures are strong enough to implement the agreements. It could be said, for example, that this option is limited to criminal associations that Hagedorn (2008) characterizes as “institutionalized gangs,” that is, groups that have complex organizational structures, multiple and specialized roles for their members, the ability to adapt to changing environments, symbols of belonging, and the capacity to meet community needs.

At the same time, the decision to negotiate with criminal groups is a delicate one full of paradoxes and tends to have significant political costs. It is not an exclusively technical measure, but rather a political process that includes not only the government and the criminal groups, but also society at large, whose support is necessary. In tandem with this political process was another process between the leaders of criminal organizations and the rest of their members. These groups are not necessarily monolithic and hierarchical, as demonstrated by the split of Barrio 18 into two opposing groups. If the leaders are in prison and receive personal benefits, the acceptance of their decisions by the rest of the organization may be compromised. According to all of the testimonies, disagreements arose within the gangs, in El Salvador, that were quieted by the use of violence against dissidents, many of whom were killed. Here we find the first paradox, that internal gang violence was used as an instrument to reduce the violence directed outside a given gang.

A second, related paradox is that the state must strengthen criminal groups, or at least their leaders, to enable them to impose their orders and implement the agreements reached. While many government initiatives in various countries are geared to dismantling organized criminal groups, in these situations one observes the inverse situation, for only by strengthening and consolidating these groups will it be possible for negotiations to succeed. Obviously, if an agreement is not reached or is broken, this easily leads to accusations that the process strengthened the criminals, as seen in El Salvador.

Another worrisome aspect is that once homicides have been controlled as a part of the negotiation, there is a risk that the illegal groups will increase or decrease homicides in keeping with their interests, perpetuating the process to their advantage. Therefore, a definitive solution to the situation generating violence is highly desirable, if at all possible, as sustaining a permanent negotiation is always difficult. One suspicion that tends to hang over this type of dynamic is that, during the process, criminal groups who once opposed one another may end up uniting against the state. While in El Salvador there is no clear evidence that this occurred militarily or in terms of the violence, it can be said that it happened politically, as *maras* were able to articulate common demands that were clearly political. In this way the gangs gained strength as political actors in the country. In the words of a member of civil society, "Today, they are almost a new insurgent movement." In some recent statements they even encouraged members to vote in the elections and committed to maintaining order (see Tager Rosado, 2016).

A third paradox in the Salvadoran case is that many of the concessions granted by the government during the negotiations were in reality rights of the prisoners, such as having a

minimum of decency in living conditions in prison and ending degrading inspections of visiting family members. Thus, we can conclude that the state was negotiating selective compliance with its legal obligations, which hardly strengthens the rule of law.

## 8. Summary.

From March 2012 to May 2014 El Salvador experienced a rare situation in which the imprisoned leaders of the largest gangs made a commitment to reduce homicides through agreements in which they renounced attacks on one another and against the military and police, in addition to ending forced recruitment and respecting schools. The leaders of these groups were then transferred to lower-security prisons and received various benefits; the state's role in the process was evident, even though the government insisted that it did not negotiate with criminal groups. In retrospect, the representatives of the state argue that arrests of gang members increased during the truce to show that the government was not soft on the *maras*.

Subsequently, “violence-free municipalities” were declared, which opened the door to various local agreements that included social and economic programs for the gang members and their families.

It was not the first time the government had engaged in a dialogue with the *maras*. Indeed, there is evidence of such contact, more or less undercover, during previous administrations, but this was the first time that agreements with concrete results were made public. As a result of these agreements, homicides in the country quickly dropped to one-third of previous levels and remained that way for many months, demonstrating the capacity of the gangs, and their leadership, to contain the violence. However, extortions continued, and attempts to reach a collective agreement to definitively end violence were not fruitful. This, combined with the political attrition the process suffered, gradually brought an end to the initiative, as of May 2013. By 2014, and into 2015, violence had reached and even surpassed earlier levels.

Public opinion turned clearly against the truce, referred to by proponents as the “peace-building process” (“*proceso de pacificación*”); it was perceived as a concession of privileges to leaders of criminal groups, and a space that legitimated them and justified their positions. The continued extortions undercut support for the project, and the ambiguous position of the government, which was reluctant to recognize its role, did not help either. Today the country is divided between a majority that considers the experience a serious

mistake and a minority that genuinely believes it is the only possible way to resolve a situation deeply rooted in social exclusion that affects, according to their calculations, 500,000 people who in one way or another are involved in gangs. As stated by one of the mediators, “This conflict is not ideological, but it is political because it refers to a structural problem.” Many of the protagonists in the mediation seem to have undergone a personal transformation, in some cases almost a conversion, and proclaim an unbreakable faith in this type of solution despite the adverse environment. Some describe it as a paradigm shift, comparing it to the transition under way in some countries that used to imprison drug users, but now offer treatment. This dialectic is similar to that found during the negotiations with the FMLN guerrillas, sometimes explicitly, and comparisons to the peace accords are made frequently.

The word “truce” has been replaced in current political discourse by the term “dialogue,” a concept that runs counter to the idea of negotiating with criminals and is approved by many sectors, including the government. The problem is that the idea of dialogue is interpreted in many different ways by the various actors. For some, it is a prelude to negotiation, while for others it is simply a way to encourage those involved to abandon violence. For the Catholic Church, for example, dialogue has a humanitarian quality to convince rank-and-file gang members to give up crime individually. According to proponents of the process, however, the only possible solution is a collective one, such that appeals to individual reinsertion are of little avail.

When the process had a more positive image, some other Central American countries considered the possibility of using the Salvadoran experience as a model, but no proposal took hold. In initial polls in Guatemala the idea did not receive enough support. In Honduras, the *maras* announced an end to homicides in May 2013 in exchange for a series of petitions put to the authorities. The announcement was made with the mediation of the Archbishop of San Pedro Sula and was supported by the OAS, yet despite an initial statement of support from the government the agreement was never approved.

The dangers of a process such as this are so evident that some analysts believe that it should be employed only as a last resort when there are no other alternatives (see, for example, Katz and Amaya, 2015), since the risk is not only that the results may be ineffective but also counterproductive.

The following are some recommendations, drawn from the Salvadoran experience, for policymakers considering such a strategy:



(i) Before beginning the process, one must have a clear goal and a precise idea of the timeframe to avoid creating false expectations. For example: Is the objective to reduce homicides to a certain extent in exchange for specific incentives? Or is that just a first step towards a broader solution to the issue of criminal groups and the demobilization of their members? If a truce is conceived of as a starting point, as an opportunity to implement more in-depth measures, a clear roadmap in that direction is necessary, otherwise this transitional period becomes increasingly unsustainable. In El Salvador the lack of a clear definition of the objective and the expectation of many actors that a comprehensive solution was possible resulted in the reduction in homicides being perceived as a failure. Likewise, it is essential to decide *a priori* what the state can and cannot offer during a negotiation, which should be in keeping with the law. If the ultimate goal is the reinsertion of gang members into society, credible and well-funded programs should exist to that end. In El Salvador, many analysts consider that the government was mistaken in not implementing such reinsertion programs, which, if successful, could have changed the tenor of the dialogue with the *maras*, or even made it unnecessary.

(ii) It is imperative to reflect on the political sustainability of the process before beginning. Considering the political risks, it is advisable that the decision be made not by the government alone, but in conjunction with the main political forces in the country, to keep it from becoming an electoral weapon. In El Salvador, which is highly polarized politically, the two main parties have maintained contacts with the *maras* over time, and have accused their rivals of doing the same. Ideally, the dialogue or negotiation should be led not by individual mediators but by some institution, preferably with the participation of civil society. The National Council for Citizen Security and Coexistence of El Salvador would have been the appropriate institution had it opted for this strategy.

(iii) Stemming from the two previous points, it is necessary to develop a communications strategy that is transparent and that keeps citizens informed of the most important points, with the exception of details of the negotiation whose disclosure would be detrimental. Otherwise, it is very possible that the impression will spread that it is a hidden or secretive process in which the authorities are not telling the whole truth, and that rumors will start to circulate discrediting the process.

## VI.ix. TODOS SOMOS JUÁREZ, IN CIUDAD JUÁREZ, MEXICO <sup>110</sup>

### TYPE 13: VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLANS THAT INCORPORATE A HOMICIDE COMPONENT

#### 1. Basic information.

- Institution: Federal government, in cooperation with the state government (Chihuahua), the municipal government, and civil society.
- Type of Institution: Federal government.
- Financing: 5.033 billion Mexican pesos in 2010 and 2011 alone, which corresponds to approximately US\$ 400 million.<sup>111</sup>
- Date: February 2010 to November 2012 (end of Calderón administration)
- Focus: Municipality of Ciudad Juárez.

#### 2. Context and historical background.

Ciudad Juárez, one of the largest urban centers in the Mexican state of Chihuahua, is a city on the border with the United States, a circumstance that has always marked its history. El Paso (Texas) is its sister city on the other side of the border.

Historically, Juárez was a center of recreational activities for U.S. tourists, among them illegal activities, such as consuming alcohol during Prohibition in the United States.

In recent decades Juárez specialized in the labor-intensive export industry (*maquila*). This made it into a receiving center of migrants, mainly females, who came to work in the industry, in addition to those whose destination was the United States. This type of industry generated great economic activity yet at the same time made the city very vulnerable to economic crises such as that which unfolded at the end of the last decade. In those years several of the persons interviewed described hunger in the population.

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<sup>110</sup> The data used for this study came from interviews with nine members of civil society who participated in the thematic roundtables organized by Todos Somos Juárez, four members of civil society and academics who did not participate in the roundtables, two members of the federal and state governments who participated in the roundtables, and one member of the technical support team for the roundtables. In all 16 people were interviewed in Ciudad Juárez and in Mexico City from March 2015 to April 2016. In addition to the interviews, some of the infrastructure projects financed by Todos Somos Juárez were visited. Furthermore, the official documentation of the project was analyzed along with academic texts that have been published about the intervention.

<sup>111</sup> Based on the exchange rate as of February 2016.

The name of Ciudad Juárez began to be associated with the national and international news of crimes in the wake of the killings of women, femicides, that occurred as of the 1990s, and which have never been sufficiently clarified.<sup>112</sup>

In the following decade, in the midst of the economic crisis of 2008, the city experienced an unprecedented security crisis. If up to 2007 the number of homicides per year was from 200 to 300, starting in 2008 it shot upwards such that in 2010 the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) recorded 3,798 homicides in one year, i.e. more than 200 homicides per 100,000 population.

The violence not only increased in intensity but also became more spectacular and cruel, with exhibitions of mutilated bodies and heads. At first the violence manifested as a war between the Juárez and Sinaloa cartels, the latter of which was led by el Chapo Guzmán. These groups recruited neighborhood gangs as soldiers in their conflict. Many members of the local police were accused of belonging to criminal groups, particularly the Juárez Cartel. The El Paso police detained Saulo Reyes, the local chief of police, in January 2008 for marijuana trafficking. The assassinations of police became more and more common; in a well-known incident the assassins displayed the heads of eight police officers.

Extortion of individuals and businesses was common, according to some to replace the income from drug sales, which had become impossible due to the mutual extermination of both cartels. It is estimated that 37,000 businesses closed, which further depressed the local economy. It is estimated that as a result of this scenario 24% of the residents left the city to live in El Paso or elsewhere.

In 2008 the municipal and state authorities protested to the federal government about the presence of the army, part of the Calderón administration's drug war strategy, which was already being implemented in other states. This strategy left the army as the main entity in charge of the fight against organized crime; the focus was on neutralizing the heads of the criminal groups. In just a few years Mexico saw a dramatic increase in the number of homicides and the cruelty with which they were committed.

Although the local elites of Ciudad Juárez supported the arrival of the army, this support disappeared as military personnel were accused of robberies and various other abuses, and as the violence only increased.

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<sup>112</sup> For more information see the case study on femicides.

Despite the climate of fear and intimidation, civil society began to organize against insecurity. Marches were held in 2008 and 2009 to call for an end to the violence. Two of the most active groups were Juarenses por la Paz and Observatorio para la Seguridad, in addition to a collective of doctors who organized against the kidnappings. At that point Ciudad Juárez was known as the city with the highest homicide rate in the world.

On January 31, 2010 a group of young people having a party at a private home in the Colonia Villas de Salvácar were gunned down, resulting in 15 deaths. President Calderón, who was on an official visit to Japan, initially declared that the incident was a settling of accounts between gangs, but immediately thereafter it was clear that many of the victims were students without any connection to crime. The public outrage that followed the president's words, during the period of desperation due to the violence prevailing in the city, led to an official visit by Calderón to Juárez on February 11, during which he asked for forgiveness and listened to many grievances. During a very memorable incident, one of the mothers of the victims blurted out publicly that "he was not welcome" to the city and, in the opening discussion, a local leader corrected the president, saying that he had not come two hours late, a delay for which he had apologized, but two years late.

This official visit by President Calderón to Juárez can be considered the context in which the Todos Somos Juárez initiative came about. Although sources from the federal government stated that they had already intended to initiate a violence prevention project in Juárez, there is no doubt that the tragedy in Villas de Salvácar was a turning point for the process that followed and put the federal government in a more vulnerable political position, making it more inclined to follow suggestions from the local community.

### **3. Purpose of the intervention.**

The main objective of this project, which appears in the official documents and is also expressed by those interviewed, is the "to rebuild the social fabric," which had been destroyed by violence, by reducing crime and violent behavior.

Although the intervention was not directed exclusively at homicide, all the actors considered homicide reduction the primary goal both because of its intrinsic importance and because of its connection to other crimes.

Reducing violence should occur by two paths. The first is recovering public spaces and improving quality of life, i.e. social prevention and situational prevention. The second is improving the operation of the criminal justice system.

#### 4. Description of the intervention.

The intervention can be summarized in three central concepts: (a) social investment; (b) changes in the organs of the criminal justice system, such as the police and the prosecutorial authorities; (c) the mechanisms for social participation and the institutional architecture that supported the program.

Those three dimensions are interrelated and some initiatives continue today, but here we will focus on the time period of February 2010 to November 2012, which is the end of President Calderón's term, considering that the following administration, although it did continue some of the policies, did not appropriate the name "Todos Somos Juárez."

The program was focused on 160 specific agreements, grouped together in six areas, which are listed in the following table, along with the respective budget allocated to each one in 2010. These commitments were disclosed in April 2010 and were to be carried out in just 100 days.

**TABLE 13. NUMBER OF ACTIONS AND BUDGETS BY AREA FOR THE PROGRAM TODOS SOMOS JUÁREZ<sup>113</sup>**

Area of public policy	Number of actions	2010 Budget* (millions of pesos)
Security	12	870
Economics	11	215
Employment	5	92
Health	40	706
Education, culture and sports	72	800
Social development	20	700
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>3,383</b>

(\*) Approximate figures subject to updating.

**Source:** Estrategia Todos Somos Juárez, reconstruyamos la ciudad. At: [www.todosomosjuarez.gub.mx](http://www.todosomosjuarez.gub.mx)

In the area of security the promises included: improved response to emergency calls, increase in the number of prosecutors and investigative agents, doing away with the use of cars without license plates, establishing "safe corridors" in some areas of the city, inspection of centers of nightlife, vetting of the police, and increased transparency in the investigations into human rights abuses.

<sup>113</sup> Translator's Note: This table was translated from the original in Spanish.

In the economic sphere, special mention should be made of credit for productive projects, stimulus to entrepreneurs and the training of young business owners, the legalization of imported cars, and the holding of the Business Forum (Foro Empresarial).

In the area of employment the initiatives include fellowships for job training, projects in productive occupations, educational workshops, and a program for part-time employment.

In the area of health, one can mention various projects focused on strengthening addiction treatment centers, hiring doctors, nurses, and other health professionals, as well as psychologists for mental health services, improving the use of breathalyzer machines in traffic, creating centers for the social reintegration of mentally ill people, affiliating more than 200,000 new beneficiaries of Seguro Popular, a public healthcare initiative, increasing the number of hospital beds, building nine primary health care units, and completing the psychiatric hospital.

In the area of education, culture, and sports, the area with the most actions, we can highlight addiction prevention programs and violence prevention workshops for schoolchildren, grant programs, the creation of chorus groups and youth orchestras, the addition of classes in schools on the culture of legality, promoting programs that extend the school day, academic strengthening initiatives for elementary school children, programs that serve children and young people living on the street, strengthening the centers for children with disabilities, remote learning secondary school for indigenous populations, building new secondary schools, refurbishing existing schools, creating business incubators in universities, refurbishing museums, cinemas, and theatres, acquiring collections for libraries, holding artistic talent contests, and building or refurbishing sports centers.

Finally, in the area of social development one finds initiatives such as the increase in funding for the National Institute for Social Development (INDESOL: Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Social) for programs of non-governmental organizations, fixing up parks, paving roads, incorporating families into the Oportunidades program, which offers support to persons living in extreme poverty, making improvements to housing, and expanding day care centers.

#### 4.1. Social investment.

According to the official data, in 2010 and 2011, 74% of the program's budget was allocated to commitments in health, education, culture, sports, and social development. In other words, most of the resources have been earmarked to social investment or, alternatively, to projects for the social prevention of violence.

The volume of investment in Juárez in those years was very significant considering that in subsequent years the federal budget for violence prevention for all of Mexico came to less than 3 billion pesos, or less than what had been spent in Juárez in just one year.<sup>114</sup>

Of all the investments the ones most mentioned by those interviewed were the construction of parks and education and sanitary infrastructure. Although there was some criticism about the citizens not always being consulted on these infrastructure projects and the use ultimately made of equipment, which is now underutilized, nobody doubts that the investment was notable.

In one way or another, all this investment was to offset the perception of historical abandonment of the city by the state and federal governments. For example, the number of secondary schools was much lower than other cities of similar size, and the situation was similar with other types of services and public infrastructure.

In most cases, the actions of the federal government in Juárez were the continuation of projects that already existed, which were now being applied to the city in a focused way. In this context some voiced criticism that there was an excess of centralism in the administration of the projects and they complained that the projects were not properly tailored to the local reality in a dialogue with the citizens.

The desire of the federal government to show almost immediate results and the meager timeline (100 days) would make it impossible to have a longer process for consultation and for developing the projects.

Another recurrent criticism, also related to the speed of the process, was directed at the lack of control over spending and the financing granted to some organizations that allegedly did not have the experience or the technical competence in their respective field, but had been attracted by the generous financing. The very processes of accountability were also said to have been simplified and incapable of detecting possible diversion of funds.

Some interviewees protested that partisan political criteria influenced the distribution of resources for some areas or the cooptation of civil society organizations by the governments or parties.

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<sup>114</sup> Ciudad Juárez received more funding for the prevention of violence from the United States as part of the Mérida Initiative, but the quantity was much less than what was offered by the Mexican government.

#### 4.2. Performance of the public security system.

Although initially diverse social sectors supported the arrival of the Army, by 2010 the image of the armed forces had deteriorated considerably due to the many accusations of abuse and because of their inability to contain violence. Hence, when Calderon visited the city, the most common demand was for the army to withdraw, a demand that had profound political resonance, for in one way or another it called into question the militarization of public security, which had been one of the trademarks of the president's policy.

Soon the army left the city and was replaced by the Federal Police, who were also frequently accused of committing abuses, particularly extortion. Many people are convinced that it was the Federal Police that introduced extortion to the city, as such incidents were hitherto relatively unknown.

One of the most specific demands made of the president by civil society was for an additional 200 investigators to be assigned to the public prosecutor's office to be able to reduce impunity. After more than a year 40 investigators finally arrived. Despite their limited numbers, many sectors are convinced that bringing in the new investigators was essential to improve the investigations and curb crime. Those interviewed describe a substantial improvement in the rate of clarifying homicides, which was very low, and strategic crimes. The accounts mention the dismantling of criminal groups and the conviction and sentencing of those responsible as an example of success. This is said to have been fundamental for reducing the phenomenon of extortion, which the police had contributed to significantly. The federal police commanded an anti-kidnapping group and the state police created an anti-extortion group.

To combat vehicle thefts local inspections were implemented to inspect the locales where cars were dismantled and campaigns were organized to stop the circulation of cars without license plates, which was conducive to the circulation of stolen cars.

During the first few years that public security was in the hands of federal forces, the municipal police played a marginal role, and was accused of cooperating with the Juárez Cartel. Nevertheless the municipal police gained greater prominence after the appointment of Julián Leyzaola as Secretary of Public Safety in the municipality in March 2011. The role of the state police became critical after the gradual retreat of the Federal Police in July 2011. Leyzaola is a controversial figure to this day. Those who defend him say that he was able to severely restrict the levels of corruption in the state police, using "confidence checks" ("*controles de*



*confianza*")<sup>115</sup>, firing those who committed irregular acts and sending the best cadre to the central areas of the city that they hoped to recover. His detractors underscored the many human rights abuses committed by the police under his command, particularly the massive arrests of youths living in run-down or violent areas. Many of those youths had to pay a fine to be released, which was perceived as a new form of extortion. It is estimated that more than 100,000 youths were detained indiscriminately each year from 2011 to 2013.

The local society was split between Leyzaola's supporters, who defended heavy-handed policies even though they could lead to abuses, and his critics, who considered that the human rights violations committed were not only illegal but also ineffective from the standpoint of reducing violence.

#### **4.3 Mechanisms for coordination and social participation.**

To try to ensure the success and speed of the program, the president designated a close advisor as the coordinator of the federal officials responsible for the intervention. The commission in charge of the project, which also included state and municipal officials, would meet weekly for one year, and then less often, to follow the progress and work out obstacles. Every two weeks the commission would meet with members of civil society who took part in the participatory bodies.

In the opinion of some of the participants in this process, this mechanism for coordinating across institutions and at the highest level among institutions was crucial for attaining the objectives in a short time. The declaration of Ciudad Juárez as a "national emergency" helped simplify administrative procedures and expedite investments. In addition, creative strategies were used, from an administrative standpoint, such as classifying youths in at-risk areas as having "psychosocial disabilities," which allowed them to access federal funds for persons with disabilities.

If there is any element that characterizes the public image of the Todos Somos Juárez project it is social participation. Indeed, the systematization of the experience carried out by the Ministry of Interior (SEGOB, 2014) highlights this point above all else. What has come to be known as the "Juárez Model," which inspired similar interventions in 21 cities in Mexico, is above all a model of participation.

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<sup>115</sup> "Confidence checks," or "control de confianza," is a strategy for periodic evaluation of police agents in Mexico, including polygraph tests to determine if they are lying, with the objective of removing corrupt police.

It is helpful to start by looking at the history of this process in order to understand how it came about. Starting in February 2010, six roundtable groups comprised of members of civil society and the authorities from different sectors were brought together to listen to the demands of the citizenry and to attempt together to develop proposals for addressing these problems. The six roundtables took up the following themes: work, health, the economy, education, social development, and security.

During Calderón's visit, which was overshadowed by a certain tension, as previously noted, some persons and groups were not admitted to the meeting and the police came to repress those protesters who tried to enter. These groups intended to directly question the drug war policy that the president had adopted in 2006. At that moment, there was an expectation that one of these roundtables would be focused on human rights and that the issue of the drug war policy and its consequences would be discussed in that context. Nevertheless, the federal government decided that these sectors were too inclined to confrontation and decided not to continue the roundtable on human rights. At that moment, the most critical sectors of civil society in Ciudad Juárez decided not to participate in Todos Somos Juárez. Nevertheless, some members of these groups, despite not necessarily agreeing with the decision of the federal government, chose to join the Security Roundtable and to be spokespersons for this human rights perspective there.

In each roundtable the coordinator was necessarily a member of civil society, which had convened the meetings. This was an important element for the empowerment of civil society. The first civilian members were convened by the government. From that point forward the roundtables themselves adopted criteria for inclusion, generally requiring that new members be recommended by a senior member, that they not be affiliated with any political party, and that they spend some time working on one of the committees or commissions before joining the plenary. The general profile sought appears to have been a citizen with free time to dedicate to the work and who was willing to maintain a proactive and constructive attitude towards cooperating with policymakers, even though they might be critical of the administration. Most of the participants in the process described the attitude of the citizens participating on the boards as initially more critical and later on more proactive, with an increasing level of cooperation. In the words of one interviewee, this process inspired the change from a "culture of protest to a culture of proposing."

The work of the roundtable, which held a monthly plenary session, was organized through committees or commissions that worked on specific issues. For example the Security Roundtable had committees that worked on the culture of legality, how to identify cars (that

drove around without license plates), a system of indicators, kidnapping and extortion, “safe corridors,” and citizen intelligence.

The Security Roundtable was comprised of members from the civil society organizations Juarenses por la Paz, Comité Médico Ciudadano, and Observatorio Juarense para la Seguridad Pública. Their members were business owners, academics, and professionals who had mobilized around the issue of insecurity. One of the main criticisms of the Security Roundtable, and more generally speaking of the “Juárez model” of participation, was its selectivity. More specifically, the experience is accused of especially reflecting the vision of security of the business owners, first of all due to their considerable participation in the Roundtable and second in light of the types of actions and objectives chosen. For example, according to the persons interviewed, the “safe corridors” were located in commercial areas. Some of the members of the Roundtable recognize this bias in the process in favor an entrepreneurial vision of security, while others think that these measures benefitted the entire population and not just the business owners who, in any case, were already better protected than the majority of the population.

In relation to some issues, the members of the Roundtable were divided between those who were less sensitive or more sensitive to human rights. The latter would bring reports of human rights violations committed by the police force to the Roundtable, and they believe that in doing so they were helping reduce abuses in some way, especially in the case of sexual abuses. Among the academics more geared to human rights within the Roundtable there was a lack of consensus about how to participate, because some are of the view that the human rights groups should have been invited to participate, while others thought that the more militant groups would have made the more operational work and the joint work with policymakers more difficult. One emblematic example of division in the Roundtable was with respect to Secretary for Security, Leyzaola, as explained above.

According to its members the Security Roundtable was executive in nature; its agreements were binding and reviewed periodically. The decision was made to focus attention on six crimes: homicides, vehicle theft with or without violence, kidnapping, extortion, and theft from commercial outlets. Each meeting started with a presentation of indicators for the six monitored crimes based on the information that the Committee on Indicators gathered from various sources. Considering that the chiefs of police were present, this exercise had

similarities to the “Compstat model”<sup>116</sup> for monitoring criminal indicators, and indicators required for rendering of accounts, which is used by the police in several Latin American countries.

This dynamic allowed civil society to have a certain influence on the policies and measures adopted by the security agencies. At the Roundtable decisions were made, for example, on strategies for combating car theft, inspecting the chop shops, and requiring vehicles to have license plates. The criminal intelligence obtained by civil society also reached the Roundtable, for many victims would not report crimes to the police initially due to the lack of trust.

The clearest difference between the Security Roundtable and the rest of the roundtables was that the Security Roundtable did not manage public resources or decide on how they were to be used; rather, it worked on articulating public policies. Indeed, this is the only Roundtable that continues to this day, and many think this has happened precisely because it did not rely on public resources, which ran out with the end of the program. Currently the Security Roundtable is closely associated with a trust created by business owners of Chihuahua to promote violence prevention policies (FICOSEC), such that the majority of the members of the Roundtable’s executive committee are business owners who are part of FICOSEC. This connection retrospectively reinforces the sensation that the vision of the business owners was always accorded priority. The Roundtable maintains the goal of making Ciudad Juárez the safest city in Mexico by 2020.

Beyond the roundtables, diverse voices agree that Todos Somos Juárez helped mobilize diverse sectors for violence prevention, among other things as a result of the financing that it directed to civil society. Nevertheless, the dominant perception was that above all the members of organized civil society and the sectors with more resources were the ones who constituted the project participants. Another common criticism is that Todos Somos Juárez did not give sufficient consideration to the organizations that already existed in the city before it came on the scene. At the same time, the project provided resources to create youth associations and helped to create youth networks.

## **5. Factors that can shape the intervention.**

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<sup>116</sup> This model was inspired by the experience of police in New York City and was exported to many countries in the region.

We can cite some elements that worked as opportunities and risks in the context of Todos Somos Juárez. Among the factors that shaped the setting in a negative way are the following:

(i) the profound economic crisis that descended upon the city;

(ii) its geographic position as a point of connection of the trafficking of humans and goods, both legal and illegal, to the United States. In the words of one interviewee, “El Paso is the bank and this is the market,” meaning the disputes and violence stay on the Mexican side and the resources produced as a result of illegal trafficking remain, in large part, on the other side of the border; and,

(iii) the security policies, which were based on the war against the drug cartels waged by the Calderón government.

Among elements that could be considered opportunities for a more favorable outcome we can cite:

(i) the existence of citizen groups mobilized against violence and insecurity, before the beginning of the program, whose demands the program partially responded to;

(ii) the willingness of the federal government to invest considerable amounts of resources in Ciudad Juárez, as compensation in the face of the historical abandonment of the city and also based on the high political cost of the crisis that followed the case of Villas de Salvácar.

## **6. Monitoring and impact.**

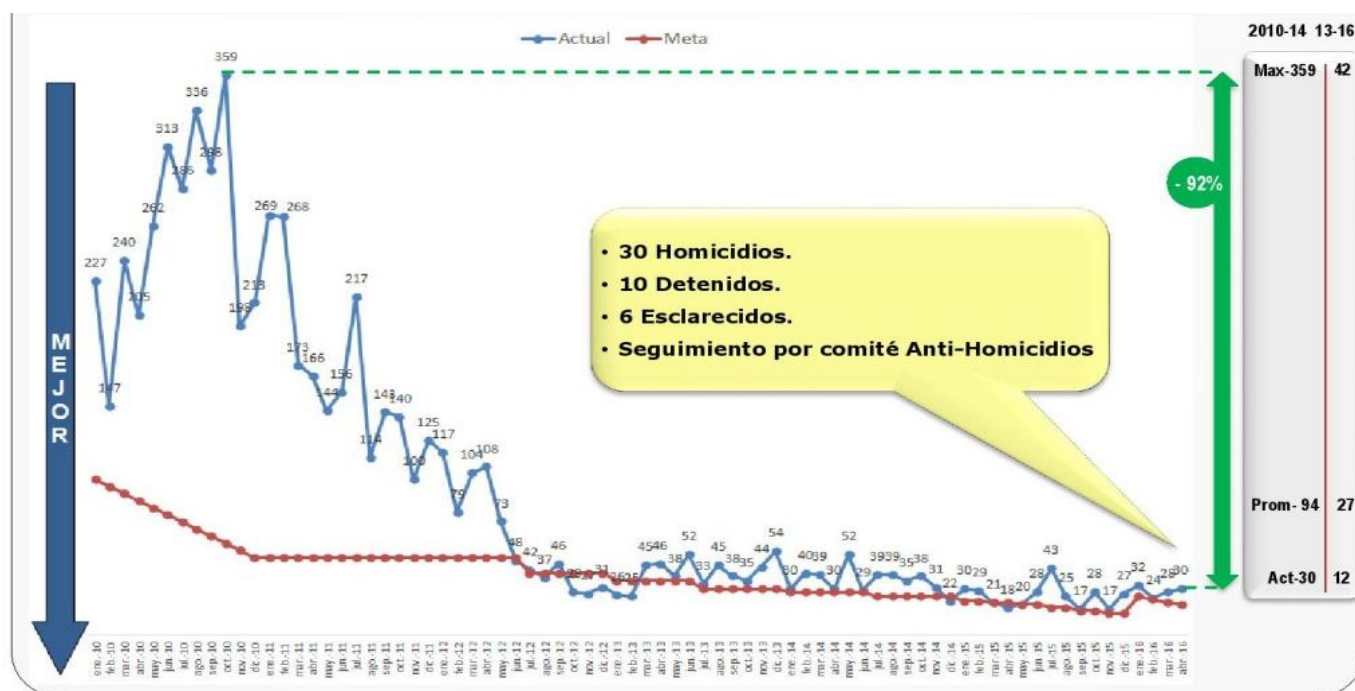
The project received much national and international attention and produced considerable data about its implementation and results. There are instances where this model has been reproduced, especially the participatory aspect which, as previously mentioned, has inspired similar actions in many cities. Nevertheless, no baseline was ever determined at the outset nor has there been any evaluation of the impact with any rigor, such as to make it possible to measure exactly the effects of the project.

It is hard for a project of this size, and with all these components being applied simultaneously during an emergency, to be evaluable. Moreover, Ciudad Juárez experienced such a sudden and intense increase in violence, which was such an exceptional moment, that it could be expected that the violence would be reduced in some way simply with a return to greater normalcy. More technically speaking, we could say that given the “epidemic” character

of the outbreak of violence in Juárez starting in 2007, the regression to the mean could be an alternative hypothesis to explain the subsequent drop in violence.

What nobody doubts, not even the sectors most critical of the program, is that lethal violence was reduced dramatically and steadily starting in 2010, as can be seen in the following graph, disseminated by the Security Roundtable. While there were many months with more than 300 homicide victims in 2010, the rate quickly fell in 2011 and 2012, such that in the second half of 2012 there were no more than 50 homicides reported in any month. Since then the trend has remained constant.

**FIGURE 9. NUMBER OF HOMICIDES BY MONTH RECORDED IN CIUDAD JUÁREZ<sup>117</sup>**



Source: Security and Justice Roundtable of Ciudad Juárez:  
<http://www.mesadeseguridad.org/autor/mesa/>

In short, the homicide epidemic in Ciudad Juárez has definitely subsided, although the incidence of violence is still high and some crimes are still being committed with a level of cruelty not seen before.

<sup>117</sup> Translator's Note: the graphic has months on the horizontal axis and absolute numbers on the vertical axis. The text in the box, referring to the last month, reads: 30 homicides; 10 arrested; 6 cleared; Follow-up by anti-homicide committee. The band to the right of the graphic shows the maximum value (Max.), the average value (Prom.), and the current one (Act.). The band to the left of the graphic indicates that the lower the value the better. The blue line shows real values and the red line presents the target for each month.

Many public spaces that had been abandoned were recovered by the community, particularly in the center of the city, where the municipal government focused its attention. Extortion and theft have also decreased and the general climate of impunity has diminished noticeably.

## **7. Causes for the decrease in homicides.**

In the same way that there is unanimity over the final outcome, the reduction of violence, there are a number of versions regarding the causes of the phenomenon. In the absence of an impact evaluation, it is natural that the interpretations of such a complex process with so many dimensions diverge depending on the perspective.

The first hypothesis is that the reduction of lethal violence is due to the intervention of the state in two different ways: the first is the intervention of the security forces and the organs of the criminal justice system and the second is the large investment in infrastructure and social prevention, which are said to have given the youth alternatives to participation in criminal groups. Many of those interviewed highlight the role of the police and the public prosecutor's office in fighting crime, disbanding criminal groups, and reclaiming territories. More effective investigations and a less corrupt police force, albeit not very respectful of human rights, are two oft-mentioned points. The withdrawal of the federal forces, the Army and the Federal Police, in the opinion of many interviewees, played an important role reducing homicides. Nobody doubts the importance of the social prevention projects, although there is no agreement about the scope of their impact.

The second hypothesis refers to the role of the social participation and coordination organs associated with Todos Somos Juárez. Although most of those interviewed think that the participation was important for the citizens and for reorienting some policies, the role attributed to it in the reduction of homicides was minor, though not irrelevant. Several members of the Security Roundtable agreed with this perception. The closer collaboration of the federal, state, and municipal authorities, encouraged by their joint participation in the roundtables, is also mentioned as a factor that helped increase the effectiveness of the state apparatus. In summary, although the participatory model has been the most widely publicized initiative and the central feature of the "Juárez model," it is not necessarily considered the key component in reducing homicides.

The third hypothesis is centered on the role of criminal groups in reducing homicides. The most widely disseminated version is that there was an agreement between the government and the cartels, or between the cartels alone, to reduce the levels of violence. Although there is no specific evidence to support this theory, many of those interviewed consider it credible in light of the capacity traditionally attributed to the federal administrations to regulate organized crime and in light of the role attributed to the police and military forces in the genesis of the violence. Others disagree and argue that if there really had been an agreement between the federal government and organized crime, the reduction of homicides would have happened beyond Ciudad Juárez. Another opinion is that the criminal groups themselves had decided to reduce the violence due to the high costs locally and due to limits in their ability to generate income. A third possibility is that one cartel defeated another cartel, and that this ended the violence. Lastly, a fourth narrative related to the cartels is that the large number of deaths and prisoners left the cartels without “soldiers” to continue the “war.” In any case, the nature of the homicide epidemic in the last decade and the central role of criminal groups in this process make it so that many people think that the reduction in homicides cannot be explained exclusively by the role of the state.

Apart from these three explanations, the improvement of the severe economic crisis is mentioned as a significant cause of the reduction in violence. Lastly, there are those who mention the role of United States criminal justice agencies, which had become involved in the fight against the cartels, as a significant factor.

## **8. Summary.**

Ciudad Juárez experienced a sudden increase in homicides starting in 2007, mainly carried out by drug cartels, and an increase in related crimes such as extortion, kidnapping, and theft. The local and state authorities requested assistance from federal forces, but homicides continued to increase. In 2010 a massacre of young people in Villas de Salvácar, which the president mistakenly attributed to a shootout between two gangs, unleashed a controversy that resulted in Calderón’s visit to the city to meet with outraged citizens who demanded strong action from the government.

These events led to the emergence of the project Todos Somos Juárez (TSJ). It brought together the three levels of government and civil society with the objective of restoring the “social fabric” affected by the violence. The project had 160 objectives relating to six areas, which were to be covered in the short period of 100 days. The intervention had three central



points. The first was a major investment in the construction of infrastructure, which in some way was compensation for the historical abandonment of the city, and social prevention of violence. The second point was focused on the public security forces and the criminal justice system, through the coordination of the local, state, and federal agencies, improved criminal investigation, and a reduction in police corruption. Nevertheless, the public security forces were also accused of numerous human rights abuses throughout this process. There were frequent reports of military personnel stealing, of federal police participating in extortion, and of local police making arbitrary arrests.

The third component of Todos Somos Juárez is comprised of the mechanisms of coordination and participation that have come to define what is known as the “Juárez model,” which has already been carried out in many other Mexican cities. Participation was channeled through thematic roundtables on six areas: security, the economy, employment, health, education, culture and sports, and social development. These roundtables brought together policymakers from the three levels of government and ordinary citizens, who would chair and convene the meetings. From the perspective of policymakers, Todos Somos Juárez represented a type of coordination that had not previously existed and a very close presence of the federal government, which was previously perceived as very distant. From the perspective of civil society, the roundtables became spaces for the public to share their stories and a way to encourage the social oversight of public policies, which, for many people, was the greatest success of Todos Somos Juárez and the most exportable. Nevertheless, social participation was not broad and unrestricted, it was based on the most mobilized and articulated sectors. The members of the roundtables were not elected by civil society but were invited by the government, such that according to one interviewee “the government decided who represented civil society.” In fact, the meetings of the roundtables were not open to the public. The Security Roundtable, one that stood out, and the only one that continues operating to this day, was made up of business owners, academics, and leaders of some movements. There is a widely shared perception, even among some of the members of the Roundtable, that the vision of the business owners in regards to security was prioritized. The Security Roundtable focused on six main crimes, which it went on to monitor monthly through various sources, establishing progressive goals.

As of the second half of 2010 homicides saw a sharp decrease that mirrored their previous increase, so much so that in the second half of 2012 homicides had returned to levels similar to, although somewhat greater than, 2007 levels. Extortions, kidnapping, and theft

were also reduced significantly. In the words of one interviewee, “there is no place on earth that has had a recovery like Juárez.”

In the absence of rigorous impact evaluations, the explanation for this positive evolution is open to many interpretations, starting with the impact of Todos Somos Juárez and due to more effective action from the police and the public prosecutor, continuing with attributing the reduction in violence to the criminal cartels. The improvement in the economic situation and the extraordinary nature of the previous explosion of violence are also factors to consider.

What happened in Juárez cannot be explained without understanding the broader context of the war against drugs carried out by President Calderón starting in 2006, a strategy for which Todos Somos Juárez was a turning point. From that moment Calderón, without completely dismantling the war on drugs, began to think about a policy for violence prevention that could be applied alongside it, and he began to refer to Todos Somos Juárez as his main legacy in this area. There are many different versions about this new orientation; some think that Calderón had already realized the limits of his strategy and was looking for a change of course while others think that it was the experience in Juárez that influenced this strategic turnabout. There is no doubt that, in the words of one interviewee, “there is a before and after Juárez in the [federal government’s] antidrug policy.”

The intensity of the violence experienced in those years was so great that many in the city are convinced that the objective of rebuilding the social fabric will only be possible in the long run, for that generation was deeply damaged, as attested to by the many orphans in the city.

There is no consensus among those interviewed as to whether Todos Somos Juárez would work in other cities or countries, but there is no doubt that what happened in Juárez answered to very particular local circumstances. The first obstacle to replicating this project is its high cost, which would make it impossible to expand, for example, to the rest of the national territory. In fact, the National Program for the Social Prevention of Violence and Crime (PRONAPRED), launched in 2014 by the federal government, was inspired by the experience in Juárez, but with a smaller investment for each of the territories involved.

## VI.x. NATIONAL STRATEGY AGAINST HOMICIDE, COLOMBIA <sup>118</sup>

### TYPE 14: INTEGRATED STRATEGIES FOR HOMICIDE REDUCTION

#### 1. Basic information.

- Project Name: National Strategy against Homicide
- Institution: National Police of Colombia
- Type of Institution: National Government
- Dates: Began in 2010 and ended in 2012.

#### 2. Context and historical antecedents.

The National Police is an armed corps, civilian in nature, under the Ministry of Defense. It is organized in Directorates (Direcciones) and decentralized in Departments (Departamentos) or Metropolitan units. The institution has a predominantly technical profile, and has as its missions both ostensive patrolling and criminal investigation. The security policies are established by the government authorities, at both the national and municipal level, whereas it is up to the police to develop the technical skills for attaining the objectives defined.<sup>119</sup>

One relevant actor for defining national policies is the Superior Council on Criminal Policy, a collegial body that advises the President of the Republic on security matters. This Council is presided over by the Ministry of Justice and made up of the president of the Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice, the president of the Administrative Chamber of the Superior Judicial Council, the Attorney General of the Nation, the Minister of Education, the National General Prosecutor, the Human Rights Ombudsperson, the Director General of the National Police, the Director General of the National Intelligence Agency, the Director General of the National Institute of Prisons and Jails, the Director General of the Unit of Prison and Jail Services, the Director General of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, and the Director General of the National Planning Department. Its functions include coordinating the various

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<sup>118</sup> The evidence used for this case study is as follows: three collective interviews and seven individual interviews conducted in December 2015, for a total of 14 qualified informants consulted, who belong to both public institutions and civil society. Those interviewed include the National Police, the Ministry of Justice, the Institute of Forensic Medicine, the National Planning Department, Fundación Ideas para la Paz, and the city governments of Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali. In addition, publications and other documents related to the initiative were analyzed.

<sup>119</sup> In an effort to armor the National Police from party politics, police agents do not have the right to vote in Colombia.

institutions of the sector, compiling and improving statistics, commissioning scientific studies on crime, monitoring the prison system, analyzing the legal framework as it relates to procedural and criminal law, preparing draft legislation, and designing a national plan for criminal justice policy.<sup>120</sup>

Local authorities constitute another key political actor. In a model that is unique in Latin America mayors have autonomy to establish priorities in police work, define their security plans, and allocate economic resources to carry them out. In effect, Article 315 of the Constitution of Colombia establishes that the mayor is the top police authority in the municipality. It is at the municipal level where, ultimately, all security initiatives actually play out. Indeed, while the Ministry of Defense covers the budget for the basic operations of the National Police, it is the mayor's offices that finance the development of local security plans or projects.

The policies that come down from the national government require the commitment and shared responsibility of the mayors so that the activities can be co-financed and/or carried out. The application of the National Police's strategic principles for tackling certain problems is also subject to the decisions of the mayor. Accordingly, the relevance and degree of implementation of an initiative such as the National Strategy against Homicide may be uneven from one municipality to the next, among other things due to the specificities of crime in each place, the definition of municipal priorities, the way in which the mayors envision solving their problems, available economic resources, and the type of relationship with the National Police.

One of the main policies during the first term of President Juan Manuel Santos was the National Policy for Security and Citizen Coexistence (PNSCC: Política Nacional de Seguridad y Convivencia Ciudadana). The National Policy for Security and Citizen Coexistence prioritized certain crimes (such as homicides, personal injuries, and robberies) and was implemented in a targeted manner in the municipalities with the greatest incidence of crime in the country, seeking precisely to articulate the effort of various national and local agencies. In relation to homicides, the National Security Policy proposed as a goal reducing homicides 30% from 2010 to 2014, i.e. dropping from a national rate of 34 homicides per 100,000 population to 24 per 100,000. In addition, it was proposed to increase the percentage of homicides that go to trial,

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<sup>120</sup> For more information on the powers of the Superior Council on Criminal Justice Policy, see: <http://wp.presidencia.gov.co/sitios/normativa/decretos/2014/Decretos2014/DECRETO%202055%20DEL%2016%20DE%20OCTUBRE%20DE%202014.pdf>

though in this case no goal was established due to the lack of statistics for establishing a baseline.<sup>121</sup>

### 3. Purpose of the intervention.

The National Strategy against Homicide was designed by the National Police in 2010 as part of the Strategy of the National Police for the Consolidation of Citizen Security, when Major General Óscar Naranjo served as Director General of the Colombian National Police. Those strategies, the first more specific than the second, define a set of operational guidelines aimed at increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of police units.

The National Strategy against Homicide<sup>122</sup> is an internal initiative of the National Police that involved designing a set of orientations and police measures developed for the specific and explicit purpose of reducing the homicide rate in Colombia. In that way, it would answer the question of what could the police do, in each of their assignments and missions, to help diminish the incidence of lethal violence in the country. It represents, at least on paper, the most systematic effort found to date for reflecting upon how the police could prioritize homicide reduction in its work.

### 4. Description of the intervention.

The fact that the Strategy against Homicide was an internal initiative of the National Police and that it was designed several years ago, later to be replaced by new strategies that are being carried out now, limited to some extent our ability to garner perspectives on the initiative from outside the Police, considering that several relevant actors in the area of public security in Colombia were unaware of it, or at least were not familiar with it in any detail.

More than a specific model of intervention, the National Strategy against Homicide represents a toolkit aimed at improving the effectiveness of the police in controlling homicides. As mentioned above, the aspects related to its management and financing are largely subject to the local governments.

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<sup>121</sup> For more information on the PNSCC, see <http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Seguridad-Ciudadana/consejeria/Documents/Pol%C3%ADtica%20Nacional%20de%20Seguridad%20y%20Convivencia%20Ciudadana-%20Espa%C3%B1ol.pdf>

<sup>122</sup> For the official document, see: <http://oasportal.policia.gov.co/portal/page/portal/HOME/Lineamientos/Tomo%202.3%20Estrategia%20de%20la%20Polic%EDa%20para%20la%20Seguridad.pdf>

Tactically and operationally the Strategy is divided into the following components: police intervention, interagency coordination, normative considerations, citizen culture, citizen participation, resource management, media, oral accusatory criminal justice system, and evaluation. Without trying to describe each one in detail, next is a description of the main related activities, taking as a reference the official document.

First, the *police intervention component* includes activities for prevention, deterrence, control, intelligence, and criminal investigation. The preventive activities include measures to encourage citizens to report crime; establishing watch committees to assess the phenomenon of homicide (*modus operandi*, victim, perpetrator, etc.); and analyzing the use of firearms and the possible suspension of permits to possess and carry firearms. The deterrent activities encompass aspects such as promoting rewards for information that may make it possible to clarify homicides and implementing specific interventions determined based on the mapping of homicides. The control activities involve seizing weapons and munitions in the most violent places; responding with swift attention to reports of pillaging and family violence; and identifying persons in public establishments and times of day when there are more homicides. The intelligence activities involve implementing the National Plan of Police Intelligence by Quadrants; the use of georeferencing techniques; and the execution of plans against groups of criminals and paid killers. Finally, the criminal investigation activities include creating an anti-hit man unit; individually identifying masterminds and direct perpetrators; and publicizing the 20 most wanted murderers.

Second, the *interagency component* includes measures such as entering into agreements with security-related institutions; exchanging information with judicial organs; forming a committee to strengthen homicide prevention actions involving the Office of the Attorney General, the local executive (Secretaría de Gobierno) and the Institute of Forensic Medicine.

Third, the *normative component* includes suggesting regulatory provisions to the political-administrative authorities (bearing arms, schedules during which public establishments operate, curfew for minors, etc.); promoting self-control and respect for human rights; adjusting police procedures to a framework of the culture of legality; and granting incentives to patrols assigned to actions to prevent and prosecute homicide.

The *citizen culture component* establishes days for pedagogy and campaigns for voluntary disarmament; “pacts of coexistence” that promote tolerance and respect for life; the construction of a culture of rights of the child and peaceful resolution of day-to-day

conflicts; and launching the campaign “Todos ponemos” (“We all chip in”) to encourage citizens to collaborate with information to counter impunity in homicide cases.

Fifth, the *system of citizen participation component* entails measures such as establishing schools for citizen security to promote community life; getting commitments from the Networks of Support and Solidarity (Redes de Apoyo y Solidaridad) with regard to prevention and providing timely information when faced with the possible occurrence of homicides; developing sports and cultural actions for the participation of vulnerable groups; coordinating centers of conciliation; and establishing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

For its part, the *resource management component* entails managing the National Community Watch Plan by Quadrants; reorienting the system of cameras based on the occurrence of homicides; appointing an official responsible for monitoring and evaluating homicides in the municipalities hardest hit; strengthening systems for information and analysis of crimes with a local and regional focus; and using technological applications that make it possible to learn about criminal activity in real time.

Seventh, the *media component* involves working groups for communicating the most significant cases of homicide to the uniformed personnel; highlighting the heroic participation of citizens in prosecuting homicides; publicly disseminating the names and photographs of the 20 persons most wanted for homicide; presenting the results attained in fighting homicide; and promoting public debates in universities and research centers.

The component called *oral accusatory criminal justice system* is geared to ensuring the reliable and transparent operation of the mechanisms for feedback of information on crime in Colombia among the agencies with judicial police functions in order to facilitate an objective process of analyzing and prosecuting crime; increasing the number of investigators in urgent situations; and improving the ratio of arrests to cases clarified.

Finally, the *evaluation component* provides for collecting information on a series of indicators related to the incidence of homicides; arrests *in flagrante delicto* and by judicial order; weapons seizures; the dismantling of criminal groups; the implementation of preventive and enforcement actions; and the management of resources at the regional and local levels for combating homicides.

## **5. Factors that may condition the intervention.**

Some factors may have conditioned the development of the National Strategy against Homicide in Colombia. First is the scant participation of the Police in defining security policies at the national level<sup>123</sup>, but also to some extent at the local level. As indicated above, the mayor is the lead authority of the police locally, determining the priorities and disbursing the resources for security in the territory. There is a dual chain of command, since the police units must report simultaneously to the Ministry of Defense and to the corresponding mayor's office. This represents a potential source of institutional conflict, which was made clear in the interviews. While some of those interviewed indicated that the National Police should be subordinate to the national and municipal executive, as per the constitutional mandate, others said that beyond the policy deliberations it is the police who patrol the street and have the technical capacity to resolve security problems.

Implementation of the Strategy is limited by the fact that it is not equally applicable everywhere. The incidence of homicide, its factors or specific causes, the local security agenda and local approaches to security, the economic resources available, and inter-institutional coordination all depend to a major extent on the characteristics of the municipalities. As a result, the levels of relevance, feasibility, and effective implementation of the Strategy vary from case to case, which can compromise the integrity of this initiative.

A third aspect to highlight concerning the development of the Strategy is related to the change in authorities in the National Police. The exit of Óscar Naranjo as director general of the Police in 2012, and the subsequent assumption of the post by José Roberto León Riaño (2012-2013) and Rodolfo Palomino López (2013 to date), meant changes in the way homicides were treated. While the National Strategy against Homicide presupposed a battery of measures that were aimed at reducing homicides in a targeted approach, under the new directors homicide reduction came to be addressed as part of efforts to prevent a series of other crimes. In other words, homicides ceased to be tackled as a specific and priority problem, and came to be seen as the result of different crimes (drug trafficking, domestic violence, kidnappings, extortion, fights among criminal groups, etc.) with respect to which it has a preventive approach. Accordingly, in 2012 the National Police launched the Integral Plan for Citizen Security (known as "Corazón Verde," or "Green Heart"), which replaces the previous approaches with 16 crime-

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<sup>123</sup> It is striking that despite its importance the Ministry of Defense is not among the institutions that make up the Superior Council on Criminal Justice Policy. According to some of the persons interviewed, this makes the existing forums for coordination insufficient.



reduction strategies.<sup>124</sup> According to some of the persons interviewed that change may have been due to the fact that homicides ceased being a security priority; the priority came to be, instead, crimes against property, such as burglary and robbery.

## 6. Monitoring and impact.

The National Strategy against Homicide has not been the subject of evaluations that could verify or discard its impact on homicides. This results at least in part from the characteristics of the initiative, which consists of a set of orientations more than a specific model of intervention, and also from the fact that it was necessarily implemented unevenly, as it was subject to the decisions of the municipal authorities.<sup>125</sup>

Moreover, the short time the initiative lasted also limited the possibilities of evaluation. The National Strategy against Homicide lasted no more than two years, which is a short time for obtaining significant results considering the times needed for its implementation.

In Colombia homicides are monitored by different institutions, such as the National Planning Department (which monitors the results of national policies), the National Police, and the mayors' offices. Colombia has shown a downward trend in homicides in recent years. According to data from the National Police, in 2002 Colombia had 68.3 homicides per 100,000 population, a figure that in 2006 fell to 36.8 per 100,000, and in 2010, the year the Strategy was implemented, to 32.7 per 100,000. The subsequent years saw slight fluctuations in the homicide rate: in 2011 it increased to 34.1 per 100,000, in 2012 it dropped to 31.3 per 100,000, in 2013 it was 32.6 per 100,000, and in 2014 it fell to 27.9 per 100,000 population.

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<sup>124</sup> "Corazón Verde" is structured into the following components: (i) Strategy for Community Life and Citizen Security; (ii) Strategy for Comprehensive Intervention against Drug Trafficking; (iii) Institutional Strategy against Criminal Bands; (v) Institutional Strategy for Roadway Safety; (vi) Strategy against Trafficking in Narcotics in Small Quantities; (vii) Strategy against Robbery of Cell Phones; (viii) Comprehensive Strategy against Informatics Crimes; (ix) National Strategy against Kidnapping and Extortion; (x) Comprehensive Strategy against Extortion of Smaller Sums or Micro-extortion; (xi) Strategy of Intervention in Childhood and Adolescence; (xii) Strategy Against Contraband; (xiii) Strategy for Comprehensive Intervention against Terrorism; (xiv) Institutional Strategy for Restitution of Lands; (xv) Integrated System of Rural Security; and (xvi) Strategy of Comprehensive Intervention against Illicit Exploitation of Mining Deposits. For more information, see: <http://oasportal.policia.gov.co/portal/page/portal/HOME/16-estrategias>

<sup>125</sup> In addition to the possibility that the activities associated with the Strategy might vary from case to case, a difficulty for the evaluation would be the interaction with other security initiatives undertaken by the municipal governments.

In principle, the evolution of homicides does not appear to suggest a major impact of the National Strategy against Homicide. Nor does its discontinuation and replacement by a different approach in 2012 suggest much of an impact.

## **7. Summary.**

The National Strategy against Homicide was adopted in 2010 as part of the National Police's Strategy for Consolidation of Citizen Security, when the National Police was under the command of General Óscar Naranjo.

More than a concrete model of intervention, the National Strategy against Homicide represents a toolkit for improving the performance of the police in controlling homicides. Tactically and operationally the Strategy has several components, namely: police intervention, interagency approach, normative, citizen culture, citizen participation, resource management, media, oral accusatory criminal justice system, and evaluation.

Among the factors that may have conditioned the development of this initiative, special mention should be made of the limited participation of the Police in the definition of security policies, both nationally and at the municipal level. Related to the previous point, the levels of feasibility and effective execution of the Strategy are necessarily variable by municipality, which may somehow compromise the integrity of this initiative.

Finally, the Strategy ceased to be implemented when there was a change in authorities in the police. The exit of Óscar Naranjo as director general of the Police in 2012 entailed changes in how homicides were handled. If the National Strategy against Homicide presupposed a battery of measures aimed at reducing homicides specifically, this crime came to be approached transversally with the prevention of other crimes, such as drug trafficking, domestic violence, and fights between criminal groups, among others. Accordingly, in 2012 the National Police launched the Integral Plan for Citizen Security, which replaced the previous approaches with 16 strategies for controlling crime.

The National Strategy against Homicide has not been subject to evaluations that can verify or discard its impact on the phenomenon of homicides. While Colombia has seen a downward trend in its homicide rate in recent years, the most recent data do not appear to suggest a strong impact of the National Strategy against Homicide, especially taking into account that it was interrupted and replaced by a different approach in 2012.

Considering the wide variety of measures proposed, the variability among the municipalities, and the relatively short time during which it was in force, one cannot discard that to some extent the Strategy remained on paper, that is, it was an aim more than a program that was actually implemented. Even so, it represents an interesting example of a systematic reflection on how the role of the police could be reformulated with the objective of reducing homicides.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

This study sought out and systematized the homicide prevention programs in Latin America and the Caribbean in recent years. In all, 93 initiatives were analyzed that met the criteria for inclusion in the study. The main idea is to offer civil society and policymakers who are interested a critical outlook on the options available for intervening against homicides.

The first conclusion from the research is that interventions focused on homicides are relatively few in number, as there's a predominance of general programs for preventing violence and crime in which homicide is treated as just an extreme manifestation and addressed transversally. The international organizations that have played a leading role in prevention and security tend to endorse this approach.

In other words, preventive policies focus on homicide to a limited degree, despite the dramatic levels of lethal violence prevailing in many Latin American and Caribbean countries. The homicide rate is commonly used as an instrument, but to measure violence and/or as a criterion for selecting the territories for intervention.

As one would expect, homicide prevention programs tend to be more common in those countries with a high incidence of lethal violence, such as the Northern Triangle countries of Central America, Colombia, and Brazil, and less common in subregions with relatively low homicide rates, such as the Andean countries and the Southern Cone. These programs are mostly led by the national and regional governments, although the role of civil society has been significant. Two-thirds of the programs have national coverage. The local governments do not have much of a presence in such activities, though this may reflect the greater difficulty detecting local programs, which are less visible. In at least one-third of the programs we find the participation of international organizations such as the IDB or the SICA, in addition to international cooperation agencies such as USAID.

More than half of the homicide prevention programs could be characterized as tertiary prevention, that is, aimed at persons and groups who have been perpetrators and victims of violence, to avoid recidivism and revictimization. In second place are interventions involving secondary prevention, geared to persons at high risk of becoming victims or victimizers. And lastly are projects involving primary prevention, designed for the population as a whole. This result, which is exactly the opposite of what one obtains in relation to general violence prevention programs, appears to confirm that homicide prevention requires much greater

targeting in terms of the profile of the beneficiaries when compared to general crime-fighting initiatives.

Approximately one-third of the programs have some degree of territorial focus on areas of greater risk. Youths, victims and witnesses in criminal proceedings, and women are the three most common groups of beneficiaries.

Despite their relatively limited number, the homicide reduction initiatives are striking in view of their variety and multiplicity of perspectives. The programs can be classified in six different thematic areas or strategies: (i) controlling protective or risk factors, such as firearms and alcohol; (ii) promoting cultural changes, such as the campaigns against violence that seek to value life; (iii) protecting at-risk groups, some of which are very narrow, such as trade unionists, while others are broad, such as women; (iv) improvements in the operation of the criminal justice system, such as police interventions in very violent areas or enhancing criminal investigation so as to increase the percentage of cases that are clarified; (v) programs for reinsertion, mediation, or negotiation geared to perpetrators; and (vi) integrated violence reduction strategies. In each of those areas some specific initiatives – 10 in all – were analyzed as case studies in this research study, to provide a window into how such programs work in practice.

Among the integrated strategies for violence reduction, the vast majority (19) are general initiatives against violence and crime that have a homicide control component. Just three are strategies developed solely against homicides, which further verifies the lack of a focused approach, noted above. Of these three, the National Strategy against Homicide of the Colombian National Police is one of the 10 case studies included in this study. Even though it is difficult to evaluate to what extent it had an effective impact, among other considerations given the short time it was in force and the wide variety of measures that it includes, it is still an interesting case of how a police institution can adapt its action for the specific purpose of containing homicides.

Some of these programs are simple and do not give rise to much resistance, such as the campaign to value life, though there is no specific evidence of their impact. Other initiatives are daring or controversial and are exposed to various risks, such as negotiations with members of armed groups. Nonetheless, at times it is precisely these strategies that directly involve the perpetrators or potential perpetrators that have more potential to bring about quick and intense reductions in the homicide rate, especially in cases of intergroup violence. Another approach that showed a potential for significantly reducing homicides in

relatively short periods has to do with changes in the criminal justice system, whether by patrols in at-risk zones, or through criminal investigation.

On occasion civil society ends up assuming the roles that it is difficult for the state to play, such as the work of mediating between rival groups, done by PMI in Jamaica, or even the task of investigating homicides, as in the case of Paz y Justicia in Honduras. In those situations civil society wins greater trust from the population than the state, and also more expeditious action, pointing out road maps that the authorities should follow to improve their performance.

Just a minority of programs, less than 20%, underwent impact evaluations, a very low figure that may be due to the lack of planning and technical limitations, accompanied by the absence of a culture of evaluation, and also the difficulties and challenges inherent to evaluating violence prevention projects. The elements that limit evaluability include: (i) lack of valid and reliable data; (ii) differentiated effects in the short, medium, and long term; (iii) legislative changes or universal programs for which it is impossible to establish control groups; (iv) the relative infrequency of homicides, which makes it difficult to apply statistical significance tests and requires modeling with statistical distributions different from the normal (Poisson, etc.) distribution; (v) programs without clear objectives or that involve a large number of actions simultaneously in a single territory, with which it is almost impossible to evaluate the impact of each of them; (vi) criminal displacement of violence from the territories subject to the intervention to other territories, which makes it difficult to evaluate the overall impact; and, (vii) evaluation of the work of institutions such as the police based on the information they themselves produce, which can compromise the validity and reliability of the data.

In any event, one must emphasize the need to invest in evaluating interventions and in research on prevention generally. Otherwise the programs will continue to be designed and evaluated based on criteria drawn from other countries with situations very different from the region, mainly European countries and the United States.

The fact that most homicide reduction programs have appeared relatively recently, i.e. that they have been implemented in the last 10 years, may indicate an increased concern with the issue and a change in trend to which this study seeks to contribute. The region should move without delay to assign a level of priority to homicide compatible with the seriousness of the problem.

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## IX. ANNEXES

### IX.i. MATRIX FOR SYSTEMATIZING THE PROGRAMS

**TABLE 14. MATRIX FOR SYSTEMATIZING THE PROGRAMS**

<b>INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROGRAM</b>	<b>Country</b>	Refers to the country in which the program is or was carried out. If a program is implemented in more than one country (for example, in Caribbean countries) it is recorded in different rows, keeping one line for each country in which the program is implemented. EXAMPLE: Uruguay
	<b>Institution responsible</b>	Refers to the first hierarchical level of the lead institution responsible for the program. EXAMPLE: Ministry of the Interior
	<b>Type of institution responsible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- National government</li> <li>2- Regional government</li> <li>3- Local government</li> <li>4- Other state institutions</li> <li>5- Civil society</li> <li>6- Private business</li> <li>7- Other</li> <li>8- No information</li> </ul>
	<b>Implementing institution</b>	Refers to the institution, agency, or department that carries out the program directly. EXAMPLE: National Police
	<b>Type of Implementing institution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- National government</li> <li>2- Regional government</li> <li>3- Local government</li> <li>4- Other state institutions</li> <li>5- Civil society</li> <li>6- Private business</li> <li>7- Other</li> <li>8- No information</li> </ul>

	<b>Other implementing agencies</b>	Refers to other institutions involved in the design, implementation, or evaluation of the program. Sponsors or funders should NOT be considered in this field. EXAMPLE: Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro
	<b>International organizations</b>	Refers to the participation of international organizations in any aspect related to the development of the programs: funding, design, technical support, evaluations, etc. EXAMPLE: UNODC
<b>FINANCING OF THE PROGRAM</b>	<b>Funding sources</b>	Refers to the financial institutions related to the development of the program. EXAMPLE: IDB
	<b>Annual average of resources allocated (US\$)</b>	Refers to the annual amount in U.S. dollars that the program mobilizes, on average, for each year of implementation. EXAMPLE: US\$ 300,000
<b>CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROGRAM</b>	<b>Name of the policy (general level)</b>	Name of the policy or general plan that provides the framework for the specific program of interest. EXAMPLE: National Plan for Citizen Security
	<b>Description of the policy (general level)</b>	Open field to note the main characteristics (objectives, methodology, etc.) of the policy.
	<b>Name of the program</b>	Name of the specific program of interest. EXAMPLE: Fica Vivo!
	<b>Description of the program</b>	Open field to note the main characteristics (objectives, methodology, etc.) of the program.
	<b>Is it a program specifically geared to reducing homicides?</b>	1-Yes 2-No 3-No information
	<b>Is it a program with a proven impact on homicides?</b>	1-Yes 2-No 3-No information



	<p><b>Theme of the program</b></p>	<p>1- Weapons control                  2- Controlling alcohol consumption                  3- Situational prevention in public spaces                  4- Promoting values against lethal violence                  5- Promoting groups at risk of suffering homicides                  6- Police interventions in areas at risk                  7- Other police interventions through patrols                  8- Improvements in homicide investigations                  9- Reducing police lethality                  10- Reinsertion or rehabilitation of perpetrators of armed violence                  11- Mediation with armed groups                  12- Negotiation with armed groups                  13- Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component                  14- Integrated homicide reduction strategies</p>
	<p><b>Level of prevention</b></p>	<p>1-Primary                  2-Secondary                  3-Tertiary</p>
	<p><b>Does the program have a territorial focus?</b></p>	<p>1-Yes                  2-No                  3-No information</p>
	<p><b>Does the program have a social focus?</b></p>	<p>1-Yes                  2-No                  3-No information</p>
	<p><b>Definition of the target audience</b></p>	<p>Indicate the audience to which the program is directed.                  EXAMPLE: Youths, men, and persons in socioeconomically vulnerable communities.</p>
	<p><b>Average annual population serviced by the program</b></p>	<p>Average annual number of persons actually served by the program.                  EXAMPLE: 5,000 persons.</p>
	<p><b>Territorial coverage</b></p>	<p>1-Supranational                  2-National                  3-Regional                  4-Local                  5-No information                  6-Does not apply</p>

	<b>Start date of the program</b>	Date or year program implementation began. EXAMPLE: 2002
	<b>End date of the program</b>	Date or year program implementation ended. EXAMPLE: 2020
	<b>Specify whether there is coordination with other programs or initiatives</b>	Open field for noting related programs.
<b>EVALUATION OF PROGRAM</b>	<b>Have impact evaluations been done of the program?</b>	1-Yes 2-No 3-No information.
	<b>Evaluating institution or agency</b>	Refers to the person who performed the program evaluation. EXAMPLE: Empresa DATA
	<b>Date of Evaluation</b>	Date or year of publication of the evaluation report. EXAMPLE: 2008
	<b>Was the evaluation internal, external, or mixed?</b>	Refers to whether the evaluation was performed by the implementing agency of the program (internal), by an independent agency (external), or by both (mixed). 1-Internal 2-External 3-Mixed 4-No information 5-Does not apply
	<b>Characteristics of the evaluation</b>	Description of aspects associated with the type of design (longitudinal, correlational, etc.), the sources of data, and the techniques of analysis (logistic regression, cluster, etc.) used in the evaluation.

## IX.ii. SCRIPT USED FOR INTERVIEWS FOR THE CASE STUDIES

- What were the program's objectives initially?
- Who designed the program and what were the reasons that led to that intervention?
- What institutions are responsible for carrying out and funding the project?
- Could you describe what exactly was entailed in the intervention (activities)?
- Is there some type of territorial or group-based focus in implementing the project?
- What is the project's relationship with other projects or policies?
- Was the project implemented as designed? What were the main changes introduced during project implementation?
- What are the main innovations and differences of this project/program in relation to the previous situation and in relation to other projects?
- What have been the main difficulties and problems faced in carrying out the project?
- What kinds of monitoring and evaluation have been in place until now? Have impact evaluations been done?
- In general, how was the project received by ... the beneficiaries, public opinion, and policymakers?
- To what extent do you believe that the project would be applicable to other contexts or moments?

### IX.iii. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

**TABLE 15. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN MEXICO**

Start year	Country	Institution in charge	Name of program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
2003	MEXICO	Federal Government of Mexico	Program of Actions of the Federal Government to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2010	MEXICO	Federal Government of Mexico	Todos Somos Juárez	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2012	MEXICO	Office of the Attorney General	Federal Program for the Protection of Persons	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2014	MEXICO	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths

**TABLE 16. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN THE NORTHERN TRIANGLE OF CENTRAL AMERICA**

Start year	Country	Institution in charge	Name of program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
1996	GUATEMALA	Office of the Attorney General (Ministerio Público)	Protection Service for Persons participating in trials and Persons of interest to the Administration of Criminal Justice	Protection for groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2005	EL SALVADOR	National Council of Public Security (CNSP: Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Pública)	Weapons-Free Municipalities	Control of firearms	Secondary	Population at risk
2005	HONDURAS	Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa (ASJ)	Paz y Justicia	Improving homicide investigations	Tertiary	Population at risk
2006	EL SALVADOR	Coordinating Commission of the Justice Sector	Victim and Witness Protection Program	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2007	HONDURAS	Office of the Attorney General (Ministerio Público)	Witness Protection Program	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2008	HONDURAS	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)	Violence prevention plans that have a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2008	EL SALVADOR	United States Agency for International	Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)	Violence prevention plans that have a homicide	Primary, Secondary,	Youths

		Development (USAID)		component	Tertiary	
2008	GUATEMALA	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)	Violence prevention plans that have a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Youth
2008	GUATEMALA	Presidency	Open Schools	Situational prevention in public spaces	Secondary	Youths
2009	EL SALVADOR	United Nations System	Violence Prevention and Construction of Social Capital	Violence prevention plans that include a homicide component	Secondary	Population at risk
2009	GUATEMALA	Ministry of National Defense	United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons	Control of firearms	Secondary	General public
2012	EL SALVADOR	Ministry of Justice and Public Security	The truce among gangs	Negotiation with armed groups	Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2012	HONDURAS	Tribune of women against femicides	National campaign against femicides	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary	Women
2013	HONDURAS	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths
2014	HONDURAS	Social Interagency Force	“Everyone for a Better Life” Plan (Todos Para Una Vida Mejor)	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2014	GUATEMALA	Ministry of Interior	National Policy for Prevention of Violence and Crime, Citizen Security, and Peaceful Coexistence 2014-2034	Weapons control; Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Population at risk
No information	EL SALVADOR	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths
No information	GUATEMALA	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths

**TABLE 17. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN OTHER COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Start Year	Country	Institution in charge	Name of the program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
2000	TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	Ministry of National Security	Justice Protection Programme	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicide	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2001	JAMAICA	Ministry of National Security	Justice Protection Programme	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicide	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2002	JAMAICA	Ministry of National Security	Peace Management Initiative	Reinsertion or rehabilitation of perpetrators of armed violence; Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths

2005	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Ministry of Interior and Police (MIP)	Barrio Seguro (Safe Neighborhood)	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2005	COSTA RICA	Vice-Ministry of Justice and Peace	Weapons-free Schools Program	Control of firearms	Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2005	BELIZE	Attorney General	The Justice Protection Programme	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2006	PANAMA	Ministry of Interior and Justice (MINGOB); Ministry of Public Security (MINSEG)	National Public Security Strategy of Panama	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2008	PANAMA	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2009	COSTA RICA	Office of the Attorney General	Program for the protection of victims, witnesses, and all others involved in criminal trials	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2009	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Office of the Attorney General	Victim and Witness Protection Program	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2010	PANAMA	Ministry of Public Security (MINSEG)	National Public Security Strategy (PROSI: Integral Security Program)	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2010	PANAMA	Office of the Governor of the province of Panama	Weapons and Munitions for Food and Medicines	Control of firearms	Primary, Secondary	General public
2011	JAMAICA	Ministry of National Security	Citizen security and justice programme (CSJP)	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2011	BELIZE	Ministry of Human Development	Community Rehabilitation Department (CRD)	Reinsertion or rehabilitation of perpetrators of armed violence; Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths
2012	PUERTO RICO	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths
2012	TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths
2012	PANAMA	National Institute of Women	Campaign: Stop femicides	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2014	JAMAICA	Ministry of National Security	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths
2014	PANAMA	Office of the Attorney General	Protocol for Action of the Unit for the Protection of	Protecting groups at risk of suffering	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in

			Victims, Witnesses, Experts, and other persons involved in criminal proceedings (UPAVIT)	homicides		criminal trials
2015	PANAMA	Ministry of Security	Safe neighborhoods	Reinsertion or rehabilitation of perpetrators of armed violence	Secondary, Tertiary	Youths

**TABLE 18. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN BRAZIL**

Start year	Country	Institution in charge	Name of program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
1994	BRAZIL	Military Police of the State of São Paulo	Program to monitor military police agents involved in high-risk events (PROAR)	Reducing deaths caused by police action	Secondary and Tertiary	Police agents
1998	BRAZIL	Office of Attorney General (Ministério Público Federal)	Program to protect threatened victims and witnesses	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2001	BRAZIL	Local government of Diadema	Municipal Security Plan of Diadema	Control of alcohol consumption	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2002	BRAZIL	Centro de Estudos de Criminalidade e Segurança Pública (CRISP)	Fica Vivo!	Integrated strategies for reducing homicides, Police interventions in at-risk areas	Secondary and Tertiary	Youths
2003	BRAZIL	Federal Government	Program for Protecting Children and Adolescents facing Death Threats (PPCAAM)	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Youths
2007	BRAZIL	Government of the State of Pernambuco	Pact for Life (Pacto pela Vida, PPV-PE)	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary	General public
2008	BRAZIL	Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro	Pacifying Police Units (UPPs)	Police interventions in areas at risk	Secondary, Tertiary	Population at risk
2010	BRAZIL	Military Police of the State of São Paulo	Case study of high-risk incidents (ECOAR)	Reducing deaths caused by police action	Secondary and Tertiary	Police agents
2011	BRAZIL	Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro and Secretariat for Public Security	Pact for Life Program (PPV-BA) xx[make note, rj]	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2012	BRAZIL	Government of the State of Rio Grande do Sul	Rio Grande do Sul na Paz	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary	Population at risk
2014	BRAZIL	Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro	Special Programming for Training and Psychological Support (PETAP)	Reducing deaths caused by police action	Secondary and Tertiary	Police agents
2015	BRAZIL	Government of Brasília	Viva Brasília – Our Pact for Life (Nosso Pacto pela Vida)	Integrated strategies for homicide reduction	Primary, Secondary,	General public

					Tertiary	
2015	BRAZIL	Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro	Index of Suitability of the Use of Police Force (IAUF: Índice de Aptidão Para Uso da Força Policial)	Reducing deaths caused by police action	Secondary and Tertiary	Police agents
No information	BRAZIL	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths

**TABLE 19. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN COLOMBIA**

Start year	Country	Institution in charge	Name of program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
1991	COLOMBIA	Safe Departments and Municipalities Program, DMS; Metropolitan Security Council, National Government; Office of the Presidential Adviser for Medellín	Homicide reduction in Medellín	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Population at risk
1992	COLOMBIA	Office of the Attorney General (Fiscalía)	Program for protection and assistance of witnesses, victims, and persons involved in criminal proceedings	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
1993	COLOMBIA	Ministry of Justice	Weapons control	Control of firearms	Secondary	General public
1994	COLOMBIA	Ministry of Justice, Institute of Forensic Medicine, National Police, COLCIENCIAS, and National Planning Department	National Policy for Security and Citizen Coexistence	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2000	COLOMBIA	Office of the Presidential Adviser for Medellín	Prevention and protection for trade union leaders and unionized workers of the Colombian State	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Secondary	Population at risk
2008	COLOMBIA	Ministry of Health and Social Protection	Pact for life	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2009	COLOMBIA	Office of the Mayor of Medellín	Plan Desarme en Medellín	Control of firearms	Primary, Secondary	General public
2010	COLOMBIA	National Police	National Plan for Community Watch by Quadrants	Other police interventions involving patrols	Primary	General public
2010	COLOMBIA	National Police	Strategy of the National Police against Homicides	Integrated homicide reduction strategies	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2013	COLOMBIA	No information	Cure Violence	Mediation with armed groups	Tertiary	Youths



**TABLE 20. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN VENEZUELA**

Start year	Country	Institution responsible	Name of program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
2003	VENEZUELA	Fundación Santa Teresa	Proyecto Alcatraz	Reinsertion or rehabilitation of perpetrators of armed violence armada	Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2006	VENEZUELA	Office of the Attorney General (Ministerio Público)	National Coordination of Protection for Victims, Witnesses, and other Persons participating in the procedure	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2007	VENEZUELA	CONSORCIO SOCIAL CATUCHE	Commissions for coexistence in Catuche	Mediation with armed groups	Secondary, Tertiary	Youths
2009	VENEZUELA	Government of the Capital District	Plan for Recovery and Maintenance of Meeting Spaces to strengthen and beautify Caracas	Situational prevention in public spaces	Primary	General public
2012	VENEZUELA	Laboratory of Social Sciences (LACSO); Venezuelan Observatory of Violence (OVV)	Campaign to raise awareness for valuing life in Venezuela	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary	General public

**TABLE 21. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN THE ANDEAN COUNTRIES**

Start year	Country	Institution in charge	Name of program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
2002	ECUADOR	Office of the Attorney General (Ministerio Público)	System of protection and assistance for victims, witnesses, and other participants in criminal trials (SPAVT)	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2006	PERU	Office of the Attorney General (Ministerio Público)	National Program of Assistance to Victims and Witnesses	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trial
2009	PERU	Ministry of Promotion of Women and Human Development	Women's Emergency Centers (CEM: Centros de Emergencia de la Mujer)	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Secondary	Women
2011	ECUADOR	Ministry of Interior	National plan for integral security	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary	General public
2011	PERU	Metropolitan Municipality of Lima	Ordinance No. 1568 of the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima	Control of alcohol consumption	Secondary	General public
2011	BOLIVIA	Ministry of Justice	Not one more woman, no more violence (Ni una más, violencia nunca más)	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2014	BOLIVIA	Alianza por la Solidaridad	Campaign: Our decision has been made, NO more femicide	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2014	PERU	Alianza por la Solidaridad	Campaign: Our decision has been made, NO more femicide	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2014	ECUADOR	Alianza por la Solidaridad	Campaign: Our decision has been made, NO more femicide	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2015	BOLIVIA	Office of Attorney General (Ministerio Público)	System of Protection for Whistleblowers and Witnesses	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials

**TABLE 22. HOMICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE**

Start year	Country	Institution in charge	Name of program	Issue addressed	Level of prevention	Target audience
2000	URUGUAY	Ministry of Interior	Program of protection of witnesses and those who report presumably criminal acts (Decree No. 209/2000)	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2003	PARAGUAY	City Council of Asunción	Ordinance No. 114/03 Draft ordinance “for violence prevention and citizen coexistence”	Control of alcohol consumption	Secondary	General public
2003	ARGENTINA	Ministry of Justice, Security and Human Rights	National Program of Protection for Witnesses and Defendants	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2007	CHILE	Red Chilena contra la Violencia	Campaign “Careful, machismo kills” (“Cuidado, el machismo mata”)	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2008	CHILE	Office of the Attorney General (Ministerio Público)	Orientation, Protection, and Support Model	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2010	PARAGUAY	Ministry of Interior	National Strategy for Citizen Security	Violence prevention plans that incorporate a homicide component	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	General public
2010	CHILE	Government of Chile	National Service for Women	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2011	ARGENTINA	Ministry of Justice and Human Rights	National program for voluntary surrender of firearms	Control of firearms	Secondary	General public
2011	PARAGUAY	Office of the Attorney General (Fiscalía)	Witness Protection Program	Protecting groups at risk of suffering homicides	Tertiary	Victims and witnesses in criminal trials
2015	ARGENTINA	Ni una Menos	NOT ONE WOMAN LESS No more Femicides (NI UNA MENOS Basta de Femicidios)	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2015	CHILE	Ni una Menos	NI UNA MENOS Basta de Femicidios	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women
2015	URUGUAY	Ni una Menos	NI UNA MENOS Basta de Femicidios	Promoting values against lethal violence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Women