SUMMARY

Regional Human Development Report **2013 - 2014**

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

CITIZEN SECURITY WITH A HUMAN FACE:

Evidence and Proposals for Latin America

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CITIZEN SECURITY WITH A HUMAN FACE:
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Prologue

The Latin American region has established itself firmly on the international stage, and is making progress on poverty and inequality reduction and on economic growth and financial stability.

There are, however, still challenges: taken as a whole the region carries a heavy burden of violence, registering more than 100,000 homicides per year. Most countries in the region have homicide rates which are much higher than for other regions and which are considered to be at epidemic levels by the World Health Organization. The human and social costs of this violence are high.

This reality led UNDP to dedicate its Regional Human Development Report 2013-14 for Latin America to the challenge of providing citizen security. Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and proposals for Latin America maps the problems of crime and violence in the region, and offers important recommendations for improving public policies on citizen security. The report builds on UNDP's Central America Human Development Report, Opening Spaces to Citizen Security and Human Development launched in 2009, and its Caribbean Human Development Report, Human Development and the Shift to Better Citizen Security, of 2012.

Around the world, rule of law and citizen security are key elements of UNDP's programming. We work on justice and law enforcement, and on preventive measures like generating employment opportunities and promoting social inclusion and a culture of peace and stability.

Citizen security, as defined in this UNDP Report, is a sensitive issue which preoccupies many political decision-makers, and reverberates in the heat of electoral campaigns. It is not surprising that the issue has escalated in Latin America to become the number one public concern in many countries. The level of insecurity many experience impedes human development.

This report analyzes the phenomenon of citizen security in-depth, studying successful experiences, and proposing concrete recommendations for improvements. UNDP's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean has involved both experts and high-level political leaders in the discussion and preparation of the report, and has collected a wealth of data and analyses on which it plans to improve continuously in both scope and quality.

UNDP is actively working on citizen security in most of the countries of Latin America. In some cases, we have supported the development of comprehensive national policies on citizen security and coexistence, implemented observatories of violence, and engaged in legal reforms to achieve arms control or to design local security plans. The results are promising in many countries. With this new report launched, we are ready to help turn its proposals into actions, and to enlarge our partnerships with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to improve citizen security and life human development.

Helen Clark
Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and
Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Presentation

Latin America today shows stronger and more integrated economies, less poverty, more consolidated democracies, as well as States that have taken on greater responsibilities in terms of social protection. However, the weak link in the region is crime and insecurity. Throughout the last decade the region has suffered an epidemic of violence, accompanied by the growth and dissemination of crime, as well as an increase in fear among citizens.

Between 2000 and 2010, the murder rate in the region grew by 11 percent, whereas it fell or stabilized in most other regions in the world. In the last decade, more than one million people have died in Latin America and the Caribbean as a result of criminal violence. Moreover, considering the countries for which data is available, robberies have almost tripled over the last 25 years. On a typical day in Latin America, 460 people suffer the consequences of sexual violence, most of them women. Violence and crime directly harm the rights that are at the core of human development: life itself and the physical and material integrity of people.

The deterioration of security has not been a uniform phenomenon.. In some countries, lethal violence is what most affects the population, whereas in others murder levels are relatively low but the sharp increase in crimes against property has triggered a public perception of insecurity. Meanwhile, within these countries the situation varies greatly, with some municipalities, states or departments showing indicators comparable to those of European nations, and others where lethal violence is even greater than in countries at war.

Countries in the region show large deficits in capacities concerning justice and security, which are reflected in alarming levels of impunity, the crises in their prison systems and the feeling of mistrust citizens harbor regarding the institutions of justice and the police. In light of these deficits, privatization of security has gained momentum, which deepens inequality in access to security and leaves unsolved the challenges the State faces as the main guarantor of citizen security. Simultaneously, community bonds such as the family, schools and the community itself have weakened in some contexts as social tensors which would enable cooperation and positive coexistence, leading to distorted forms of organization driven by fear and distrust such as "vigilantism" (taking justice in one's own hands), as well as support for "iron fist" policies.

In order to examine what is behind this phenomenon of insecurity and offer recommendations to improve government policies in this matter, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) decided to produce the present Report on Human Development for Latin America. The report offers a regional view of citizen security for the 18 countries in continental Latin America, from Mexico to Argentina, and the Dominican Republic. The report excludes English-speaking Caribbean countries because their situation was analyzed in depth in the UNDP Human Development Report Human Development and the shift to better citizen security (2012).

While preparing this report, the UNDP Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean brought together a distinguished team of specialists coordinated by political scientist Rafael Fernández de Castro, with the support of high-ranking public representatives and civil society. This investigative and propositional effort to shape better and more effective public policies was made possible by the determined commitment of the Spanish Government through the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation which established the Spain-UNDP Fund for Latin America. This is another demonstration of the Spanish cooperation solidarity with the region and the bonds that tie it to Latin America.

This report is also an example of collaboration between different regional agencies and organizations, as well as within the United Nations System itself. The economic costs of crime addressed in this report were researched along with the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB); the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) supported some of the prison surveys, the results of which help to better understand the complexities of crime. The participation in the report's Advisory Council of the top managers from the IADB, the CAF, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) and the World Bank made it possible to bring together a valuable diversity of visions and data to our study. In the United Nations system, we received the support and active participation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In the UNDP, the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) and the Human Development Report Office (HDRO) were fundamental partners in the process of preparing this study.

There is no single magic formula to solve the problem, but insecurity can be remedied. Latin America has experiences and lessons learned that are analyzed in the report. These experiences range from the improvement of police work derived from their deployment by blocks and neighborhoods and their close work with communities, through to the collection of statistical data and the adoption of new technologies to locate hot spots of criminal activity and focus efforts on prevention at those risk areas, as well as the creation of specialized units within the justice and security systems to provide support to vulnerable groups, such as young people and women who have been victims of crime.

The different threats to citizen security must be addressed with differentiated responses that take into consideration the level of criminal organization and the places in which they occur: the home, schools or the public environment. Lastly, security policies need to be evaluated periodically in terms of their effectiveness and impact, ensuring that they do not result in even greater levels of violence and that they fully respect human rights.

The Regional Human Development Report calls on governments in Latin America and the Caribbean to shift from reflection to action, with creative and innovative responses, learning from successes and failures.

Progress in citizen security does not stem from a single isolated policy or action, but from a multi-sector approach and a series of policies including preventive measures, institutional reforms, sufficient public investment, changes in the relationship between the State and communities, broad and sustained political will, and the adoption of more modern and effective systems of information and intervention.

Thus, rather than thinking of a one-size-fits-all model, decision makers must design a series of policies and reforms with clear goals to address needs in the short, medium and long term. To accomplish this, each country's social and political forces are advised to arrive at a National Agreement for Citizen Security so as to align public and private efforts towards the reduction of crime and violence as a State policy. Among other recommendations, we propose the creation of a Regional Forum on Citizen Security in Latin America and the Caribbean, open to the participation of non-governmental stakeholders, with the aim of identifying common challenges, sharing successful experiences and identifying mechanisms of cooperation.

This report urges us all to act at the local, national, regional and global level to build a vision of citizen security that prioritizes human development. Citizen security with a human face is an attainable objective.

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Regional Human Development Report 2013-2014
Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and Proposals for Latin America

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Executive Summary

Citizen insecurity has become an urgent challenge for human development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Citizens of the region state that crime and violence limit their opportunities and rights to live a life free from fear and threats. Five out of ten Latin Americans perceive that security in their country has deteriorated: up to 65 percent stopped going out at night due to insecurity and 13 percent reported having felt the need to move to another place for fear of becoming victims of a crime (LAPOP-UNDP 2012). Considering the total population of Latin America, this 13 percent represents approximately 74.8 million people, equivalent to the entire population of Argentina, Peru and Uruguay combined[1].

The backdrop to this perception of insecurity is a region characterized by high levels of lethal violence and crime. Although homicide rates have been stable or decreasing in some countries, they are still high in most countries in the region. In 11 out of the 18 countries included in this report, the homicide rate is higher than 10 per 100,000 inhabitants, considered by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an epidemic level. Robberies have tripled in the past 25 years becoming the most common crime in Latin America.

Multiple threats have been added to this record of insecurity, some of which have intensified during recent years. This is the case of organized crime as well as crimes such as extortion and kidnapping, which deeply affect the lives and physical integrity of Latin Americans. Other forms of insecurity that impact both the public and private spheres include gender-based violence, street crime, corruption, and illegal violence by state agents, as well as crime and violence by and against young people. These multiple threats and their local nature show that not every crime occurring in Latin America can be explained by the incidence of transnational organized crime.

This report presents a systematic analysis of citizen security in 18 countries in the region[2], and includes a set of recommendations addressed to decision makers, civil society stakeholders and the international community. The report acknowledges that citizen insecurity is a challenge shared by all countries in the region and, as such, a regional consensus is needed to tackle the obstacles and responses to citizen insecurity.

This report states and provides systematic evidence that citizen insecurity is a challenge that must be overcome by means of democratic and inclusive policies that respect human rights.

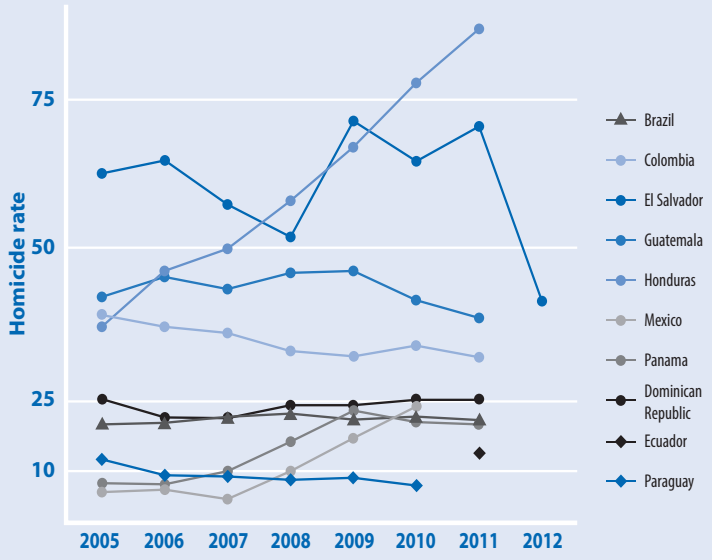
A Regional Problem

Insecurity is a problem shared by the 18 countries analyzed in this report. There are, however, significant variations within and between them[3]. Latin America is the only region in the world where lethal violence increased between 2000 and 2010. While homicide rates in most regions of the world have fallen by as much as 50 percent, in Latin America they increased by 12 percent. In a decade, more than one million people have died in Latin America and the Caribbean as a result of criminal violence.

Although the homicide rate is still high in most countries, during the last three or four years it has stabilized and has even decreased in some countries in the region. Figure 1 illustrates the homicide trend from 2005 to 2011 in countries with a rate higher than 10 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Among the countries with the most significant decrease in homicide rates are those that experienced armed conflicts or severe security crises. Colombia reduced its homicide rate almost by half in 10 years. Recently, homicide rates in Guatemala (since 2009) and El Salvador (since March, 2012) have shown substantial drops. In Costa Rica, a country with low levels of murder, the homicide rate decreased by almost 15 percent between 2011 and 2012. It is too soon to conclude that this decreasing trend will continue. Nevertheless, these data indicate that an increase in homicide rates can be reversed.

Lethal violence affects particularly and disproportionately young males in Latin America. The homicide rate among youth is more than double the rate of the general population, approximately 70 per 100,000 young people (Inter-American

Figure **1** Evolution of homicide rates per 100,000 inhabitants, countries with high rates, circa 2005-2011



Source: Official administrative records compiled by UNDP (2013). No official data from Venezuela for this series. See methodological-statistical Annex.

Commission on Human Rights 2009). But, even though the great majority of victims and victimizers of homicide are males, approximately 1 in 10 homicide victims are female. In addition, femicides -the killing of women by men because they are women—has increased in several countries in the region (ACUNS 2013, 50-51). This report calls for the development of inclusive policies for young people and for quicker progress towards the adoption or implementation of laws or reforms to identify and eradicate femicide (UNDP-UN Women 2013).

Box 1: Weapons and the consumption of drugs and alcohol: their role in facilitating violence and crime

According to the OAS Report on Citizen Security in the Americas 2012, 78 percent of homicides in Central America and 83 percent in South America are committed with firearms (OAS 2012, 28). Surveys carried out among inmates also show how weapons intensify crime. A significant number of interviewees—between 25 percent and 60 percent—admitted having a weapon when they committed a crime, especially robberies. In all cases, between 42 percent and 67 percent of the inmates stated that they had access to a weapon before turning 18. A high percentage said that they got the weapons from the police.

Chart **1** Percentage of inmates who stated having used a weapon to commit a crime, selected countries, 2013

	Argentina	Mexico	Peru	El Salvador	Brazil	Chile
Carried a weapon to commit a crime	59.9	33.3	26.0	25.1	36.2	36.6
Used a weapon (among those who carried a weapon)	37.0	18.7	20.4	18.0	26.0	22.4
Got the weapon from a friend or the police [a]	37.9	57.6	47.4	56.1	41.8	40.3
Had a weapon before turning 18 years old	65.4	49.3	41.7	57.9	63.5	67.5

Source: Comparative Study of Prison Population, UNDP (2013).
a. Response of those who had bought a firearm within six months prior to their arrest.

With regard to drug consumption, the data shows that violence and crime directly associated with drug consumption is marginal (OAS 2013). As indicated in the OAS Report (2013), consumption tends to be high among people who have committed crimes. However, it cannot be stated that the incidence of crimes is high among people who have consumed drugs. For example, although consumption levels are higher in prisons than in the general population (CICAD 2010), these levels may be facilitated by other factors, such as the marginalization and exclusion faced by prisoners (Bennett et al. 2008). This report describes two other ways in which drugs may be associated with the violence and crime affecting the region. The first refers to growing, producing and selling drugs (Goldstein 1985; MacCoun et *al*. 2003), and the second, to the unexpected consequences of the State fighting drug trafficking organizations.

In addition, there is evidence that alcohol abuse is associated with high-risk behavior, such as violence. Prison surveys show that there is a link between alcohol consumption and crime: alcohol represents more than 60 percent of the drugs consumed before

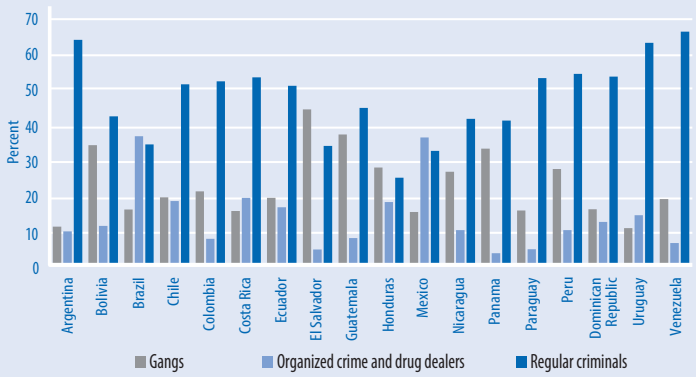
Box 1: Weapons and the consumption of drugs and alcohol: their role in facilitating violence and crime

the commission of a crime, a much higher percentage than other psychoactive substances, whether legal or illegal. Moreover, surveys conducted in 12 countries in the region show that women who were the victims of violence by their male partners perceived that these aggressions were alcohol related—29 percent in Guatemala, 53 percent in Ecuador (Bott et al. 2012, 51-53). Public policies to limit alcohol sales and reduce consumption times have resulted in a decrease in violence. In Diadema, Brazil, a city that at some point had the highest homicide rate in the country, these restrictions reduced homicides to nine per month (Duailibi et al. 2007, 2276-2280).

Robberies have become one of the most significant threats to citizens: one in five people report having suffered some type of robbery last year (LAPOP-UNDP 2012). This explains why common crime is considered the primary threat in the majority of the countries in Latin America, with higher rates than organized crime and criminal gang activities (see Figure 2).

Some statistics indicate that over the course of the last 25 years there has been a remarkable increase in robbery rates—including violent robberies—in most countries in the region. The percentage of the total population that fell victim to robbery, either with or without violence, ranges from 10.82 percent in Chile to 25.19 percent in Ecuador (LAPOP 2012). It should be noted that on average 6 out of 10 robberies in Latin America are violent.

Figure **2** Main threat to security according to citizens[a], Latin America, 2012



Source: LAPOP-UNDP (2012).
a. These responses refer to the following question: "I will mention some groups and I will ask you to indicate which one represents the greatest threat to your safety?" Other groups that were included in this question were: police or military personnel, family members and neighbors.

Chart **2** Robbery rate per 100,000 inhabitants, Latin America, circa 2005-circa 2011

Country	Rate circa 2005	Rate circa 2011
Argentina	980	973.3
Bolivia	75.3	86.3
Brazil	N/A	572.7
Chile	394.1	468.1
Costa Rica	873.1	397.6
El Salvador	150.4	88.3
Guatemala	63	67
Honduras	33.2	276.3
MExico	496	688
Nicaragua	79	71.5
Panama	51	62
Paraguay	17	18.2
Peru	163	217
Dominican Republic	N/A	210.9
Uruguay	251.4	456.5
Venezuela	N/A	211

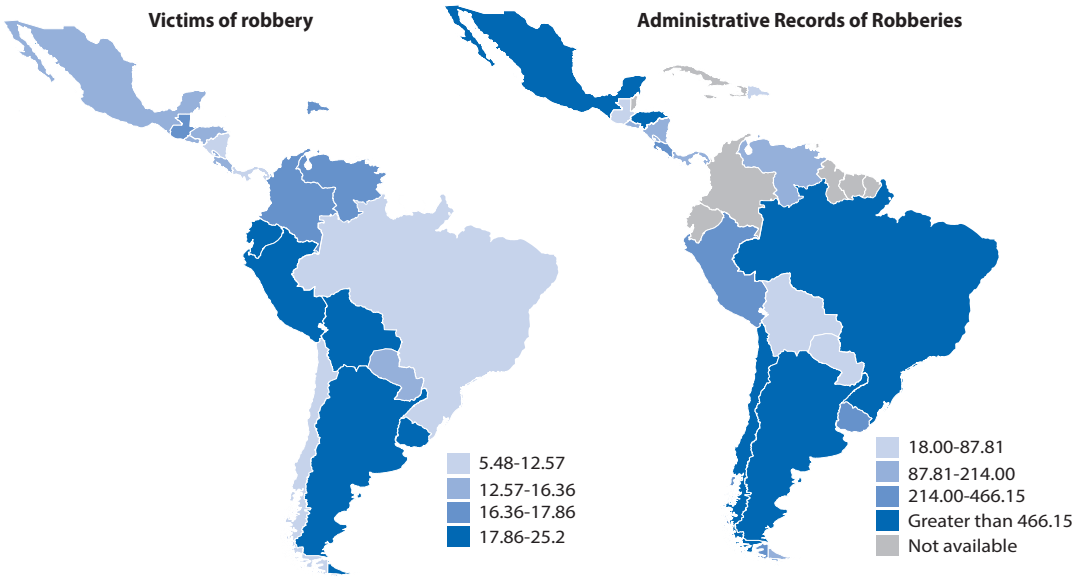
Source: Official administrative records compiled by UNDP (2013). See methodological-statistical Annex.
Note: The rates for Argentina correspond to years 2005 and 2008; for Bolivia, 2005 and 2009; for Honduras, 2007 and 2011; for Costa Rica and Paraguay, 2005 and 2010; for El Salvador and Chile, 2005 and 2012. For the remaining countries the rates correspond to years 2005 and 2011. N/A refers to unavailable data.

The robbery trend in Latin America also differs from the trend observed in other regions of the world. For example, while most of the countries in Eurasia —including Russia, Ukraine, Spain, and the United Kingdom— experienced a decrease in the number of robberies during the 2005-2011 period, Latin America showed an increasing trend. Despite the fact that Latin America is less populated than Eurasia, the number of robberies is more than double[4].

Another resource providing insight into the magnitude of robbery in the region comes from victimization surveys. Given the self-reporting nature of these data, the hidden magnitude of crime that has not been reported to the authorities is revealed. Robbery reported to the authorities is substantially lower than that recorded through victimization surveys (See Map 1).

Peru, for example, reports a 23.43 percent victimization rate through victim surveys. In other words, 6,888,000 Peruvians report having been victims of robbery. In contrast, the official incidence of robbery is 217 per 100,000 inhabitants, the equivalent of 64,701 incidents (General Planning Office, Ministry of the Interior, 2011)[5] . Under-reporting is a colossal problem in that more than 6 million incidents went unreported.

Map **1** Percentage of robbery victimization (2012) vs. robbery rate per 100,000 inhabitants, Latin America, last available year



Sources: For Victimization Rates, LAPOP-UNDP (2012) and official administrative records compiled by UNDP (2013). See methodological-statistical Annex.
Note: Last year available of robbery rates per 100,000 inhabitants: El Salvador and Chile: 2012; Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela: 2011; Paraguay, Costa Rica: 2010; Bolivia: 2009; Argentina: 2008.

In El Salvador, 12.46 percent of the survey respondents report having been a victim of a robbery (LAPOP, 2012). This is approximately equal to 779,000 individuals[6], in contrast to the 5,521 registered reports (Poder Judicial, 2012), and represents an official statistic that is 130 times lower than the victimization survey data.

In conclusion, all the countries of Latin America demonstrated a higher victimization rate for robbery than the figures reported to the authorities. Thus, the problem of robbery is of a different magnitude. While this discrepancy is high everywhere, it occurs with varying degrees depending on the country.

The disparity between the victimization surveys and the official crime statistics can be explained mainly by the obstacles involved in reporting, as well as the lack of citizen confidence in the justice system.

The Local Dimension of Insecurity

The geographical dispersion of violence and crime within the region, and even within the countries themselves, is not homogeneous. A country with high lethal violence at the national level may have much less lethal violence in certain municipalities and cities. In the same way, a country with low average homicide rate at a national level may have sub-regions or cities with high rates. This report maintains that crime and violence have a significant local dimension—which should serve as the basis for the formulation of public policies.

Map 2 illustrates the varying intensities of violence among the countries in the region. Homicide rates are aggregated averages for each country, and therefore do not accurately reflect the spatial distribution of these crimes.

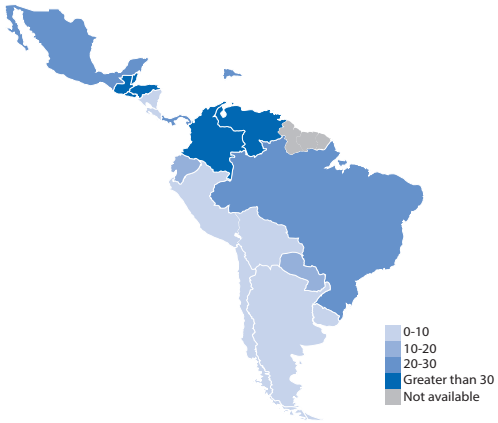
Map 3 and Chart 4 show the homicide rate disaggregated to a state or regional level in two different years for Mexico and Chile. In Mexico, the state of Chihuahua has a rate of 194 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, while Yucatán, which is the safest state, has a rate of 1.74. In Chile, despite low rates between 2000 and 2010, the Antofagasta region has 2.8 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, while in Los Ríos it is 0.5, meaning that the rate is 5.6 times lower.

Homicide concentration not only varies from country to country and from city to city, but also between neighborhoods and streets. A study of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, shows that violence is concentrated in 6 out of the 81 districts comprised of favelas, or slums (see map 4).

The Costs of Insecurity

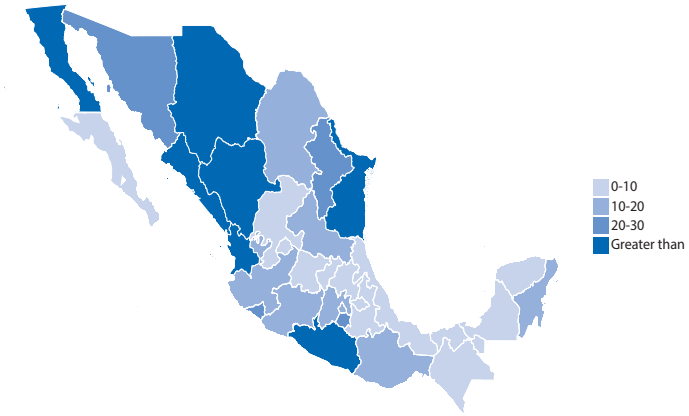
Citizen insecurity has multiple negative impacts on human development. Crime, violence and fear severely limit the capabilities and freedoms of people, the way in which they organize their lives in society and the way they relate to the state and to other institutions. For example, the percentage of people who report limiting the places of recreation they visit out of fear of becoming victims of crime ranges from 20.6 percent to 59.1 percent in different Latin American countries (see Map 5).

Map 2 Homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants, Latin America, last available year



Source: Official administrative records compiled by UNDP (2013). See methodological-statistical Annex. For Venezuela, UNODC (2012).
Note: The last available year is: El Salvador and Costa Rica: 2012; Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Uruguay: 2011; Mexico and Paraguay: 2010; Bolivia: 2009; and Argentina: 2008.

Map 3 Homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants by State, Mexico, 2010



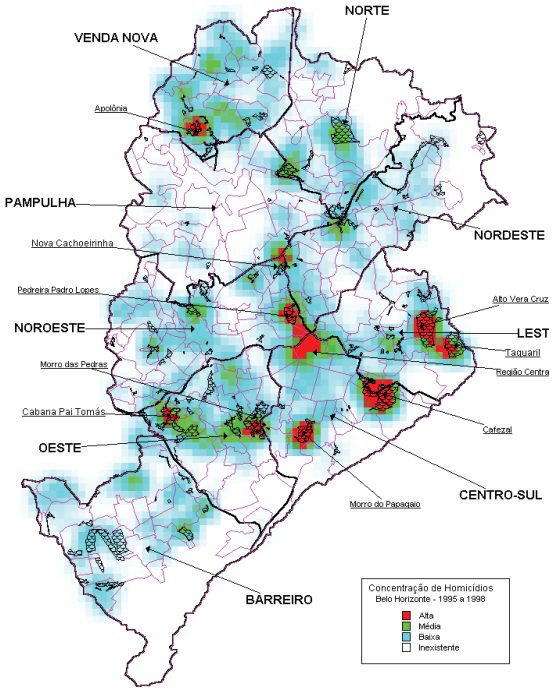
Sources: National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, 2012).

Chart 4 Reported homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants by territorial unit, Chile, 2010

Region	2010
XV Arica and Parinacota	0.5
I de Tarapacá	2.2
II de Antofagasta	2.8
III de Atacama	0.4
IV de Coquimbo	0.8
V de Valparaíso	1.2
VI del Libertador General Bernardo O'Higgins	0.9
VII del Maule	1.4
VIII del Biobío	1.3
IX de La Araucanía	1.1
XIV de Los Ríos	0.5
X de Los Lagos	0.7
XI de Aisén del General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo	1.9
XII Magallanes and Antártica Chilena	1.3
Metropolitan Santiago	1.5

Source: Ministry of the Interior and Public Security. Undersecretary's Office for Crime Prevention.

Map 4 Concentration of Homicide, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 2003



Source: Beato (2012).
Legend: High, Medium, Low, Non-existent

Map 5 Percentage of people who have limited the places of recreation they frequent due to insecurity, Latin America, 2012

Source: LAPOP-UNDP (2012).
Note: Maps only express values which are greater than or equal to 35%. Question: "For fear of becoming a victim of crime during the past 12 months, have you limited the places of recreation you frequent?"

Likewise, the percentage of people who have limited the places where they shop because they were afraid of crime ranged from 16.8 percent to 51.5 percent. Moreover, between 45 percent and 65 percent of respondents, depending on the country, stopped going out at night (LAPOP-UNDP 2012). This fear has an impact upon the people's behavior, —limiting their use of public space, their freedom of movement and their recreation. In other words, it restricts freedom and diminishes the quality of life.

Insecurity undercuts citizen support for the rule of law. Various opinion polls show that Latin Americans express a strong preference for the enforcement of tougher laws and iron-fisted policies. However, this public demand for quick, strong-arm responses against criminals, combined with a lack of professional police forces, may lead to human rights violations.

In addition, insecurity generates considerable costs for both public and private institutions. The latter include paying for private security, costs associated with the physical and mental well-being, and the tragic loss of life.

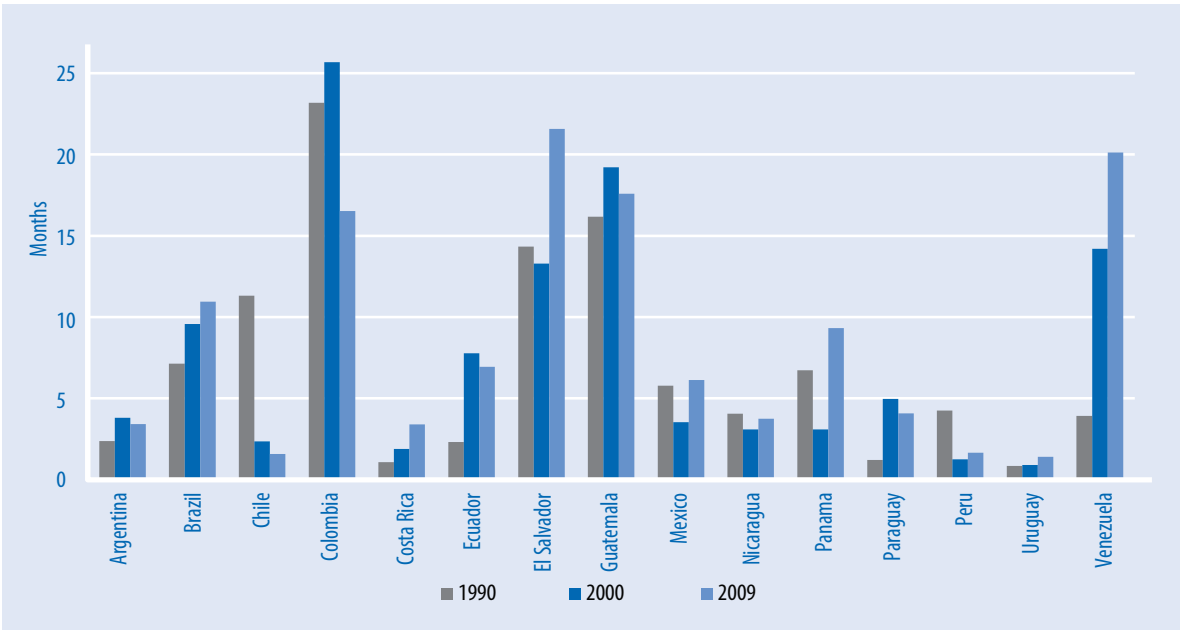
A joint study conducted by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and UNDP for this report analyzed costs in five Latin American countries and showed significant and differentiated costs in terms of GDP: they range from 3 percent in Chile and Uruguay, up to over 10 percent in Honduras (see Chart 5).

Chart 5 Costs of crime and violence as a percentage of GDP, selected countries, 2010

Type of cost	Chile	Costa Rica	Honduras	Paraguay	Uruguay
As an anticipation of crime	0.71	0.34	1.50	0.72	0.49
As a consequence of crime	2.11	1.47	8.01	6.26	1.22
As a response to crime	0.50	0.71	1.03	1.72	1.29
Cost of Crime and Violence	3.32	2.52	10.54	8.70	3.00

Source: Based on the Costs of Crime and Violence, IADB-UNDP (2013).

Figure **3** **Months of life expectancy lost due to homicides, Latin America, 1990, 2000, 2009**



Source: UNDP-CERAC (2013) based on Restrepo (2013) data from WHO, UN, and Penn World Tables.
Note: This loss is measured as the difference between the homicide rate by country and the average of the homicide rates of the rest of the world.

Another way of calculating the costs of violence is to estimate the years of life lost due to homicide; that is to say, the impact of lethal violence on life expectancy. The last measurement of the Human Development Index (HDI) in 15 Latin American countries shows that in 2009 the region lost 331 million years of life due the homicides. If homicides were reduced in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Venezuela, the average life expectancies in these countries would increase by more than one year (See Figure 3).

Human Development and Citizen Security

Insecurity has a negative impact upon the lives and welfare of people, their communities and institutions, and it is also associated with human development deficits and challenges in Latin America. The citizen security agenda is part of the development agenda and involves social and local development policies that go beyond the Ministries of the Interior and Security.

Threats to citizen security do not appear in a vacuum, but in environments of social, economic and institutional vulnerability, which constitute risk factors. The report highlights particular situations of vulnerability and risk experienced by young males, women and the victims of crime and violence.

Today, Latin America is facing a paradox: although the economies in the region have shown an annual average growth of 4.2 percent during the past 10 years and have significantly reduced both poverty and unemployment levels (UNDP 2013), rates of violence and crime are still high.

Growth in Latin American countries is uneven and large segments of the population have been left behind: Latin America suffers from an average loss of 25.7 percent of the HDI adjusted for inequality (UNDP 2013, 155). However, homicide rates are not linearly correlated with poverty or inequality. The phenomenon is highly complex and there are several factors that explain the current scenario of insecurity affecting the region.

The explanation for the growth of violence and crime is multi-dimensional. The report analyzes four principal dimensions: (a) the economic-structural dimension, involving low quality jobs and insufficient social mobility, which in the context of the consumer-driven economic growth has generated "aspirational crimes"; (b) the social dimension, reflecting structural changes in families (which have demonstrated a significant increase in single parent households), dropout rates and accelerated urban growth that erodes the social fabric; (c) crime-drivers, such as weapons, alcohol and drugs; and, (d) the lack of capacity of the State—police forces, judges, prosecutors, and prisons—to adequately address security challenges.

Box 2: Job Insecurity and Crime in Latin America

In the region there are still concerns regarding employment quality. A positive employment rate does not necessarily mean that poverty or vulnerability have been overcome. Surveys conducted in the region's prisons revealed that most inmates (60 percent in Chile, 70 percent in Brazil, and Argentina, and 84 percent or more in other countries) were working and at the same time were committing crimes. Furthermore, on average, they had started to work before they were 15 years old. Therefore, we may argue that low quality jobs and low salaries drove them to supplement their income by illegal means, such as robbery (see Chart 6).

Chart **6** Characteristics of the labor history of inmates, selected countries, 2013

	Argentina	Mexico	Peru	El Salvador	Brazil	Chile
Average age when inmates started to work	14.8	14.3	14.2	14.2	13.9	15.7
Percentage of inmates who started to work before the age of 9	4.2	9.8	12.6	9.6	8.5	9.7
Percentage of inmates who started to work before the age of 15	49.4	48.3	56.5	52.9	54.8	46.4
Percentage of inmates who had worked for 1 month before arrest	69.7	85.9	88.7	84.6	70.2	60.3
Percentage of inmates who were working and reported other income in addition to their salary	22.5	30.8	26.2	30.5	25.4	36.6
Percentage of inmates who were members of the police or armed forces	6.0	10.1	24.9	11.6	6.0	6.1

Source: Comparative Study of Prison Population, UNDP (2013). See methodological-statistical Annex.

In addition, some social institutions such as the family, schools and the community have lost their strength as the cohesive elements of the social fabric that used to promote forms of peaceful coexistence and provide mechanisms of social protection and crime prevention.

In recent years, families in Latin America have experienced important changes. Particularly, the percentage of births in households headed by single mothers has doubled in 30 years, going from 7.3 percent in 1970 to 15 percent in 2000 (Castro et al. 2011). This trend reveals changes in socio-cultural patterns and also a marked incidence of paternal abandonment or absence. The demographic profile of single mothers is still concentrated in the younger sector of the population, with lower education and income levels (Castro et al. 2011, 52-3). This phenomenon generates important challenges in the parenting and supervision of children (Navarro 2009; Jelin 2005), which need to be addressed by means of extracurricular educational, recreational and social programs targeted towards these families.

The comparative study of prison populations (UNDP 2013) reveals the prevalence of broken homes and abandonment in inmates' family histories (see Chart 7). The same study finds that imprisonment may, in turn, damage and break up the family. In the case of women inmates who are mothers, the percentage of women with children living with them in prison is 1.2 percent in Brazil, 3.9 percent in El Salvador and from 7 to 8.3 percent in Argentina, Mexico, Peru and Chile.

Chart **7** Inmates' family histories, selected countries, 2013

	Argentina	Mexico	Peru	El Salvador	Brazil	Chile
Percentage who never knew the mother or father	13.1	16.6	19.4	26.7	23.2	28.2
Percentage not completing 12 years of schooling	38.4	32.5	36.1	37.4	27.8	56.0
Percentage who grew up without a father or a mother (up to 12 years old)	14.5	14.0	15.6	18.2	11.7	14.9

Source: Comparative Study of Prison Population, UNDP (2013).

With regard to education, Latin America has managed to significantly increase literacy levels and children's access to elementary and high school. However, education systems in the region face important difficulties when trying to strengthen juvenile resilience against insecurity. In this respect, there are three challenges: high drop-out rates, deficits in the quality of education, and lack of job opportunities (ECLAC 2010). The comparative study of the prison population (UNDP 2013) reveals conclusive evidence: in six countries under study, more than 80 percent of inmates did not complete 12 years of schooling, and more than 60 percent did not complete nine years (see Chart 8).

Chart **8** **Education levels attained by inmates, selected countries, 2013**

	Argentina	Mexico	Peru	El Salvador	Brazil	Chile
Percentage not completing Elementary School	23.8	15.2	24.8	38.1	N/A	40.2
Percentage not completing 9 years of schooling[a]	- -	51.1	62.9	68.6	60.6	60.4
Porcentage not completing 12 years of schooling	84.7	85.9	87.1	87.3	83.6	84.4
Level with the highest percentage of drop-outs	High School	High School	High School	Elementary School	Elementary School	Elementary School

Source: Comparative Study of Prison Population, UNDP (2013).
Note: N/A refers to unavailable data.
a. Does not apply to Argentina.

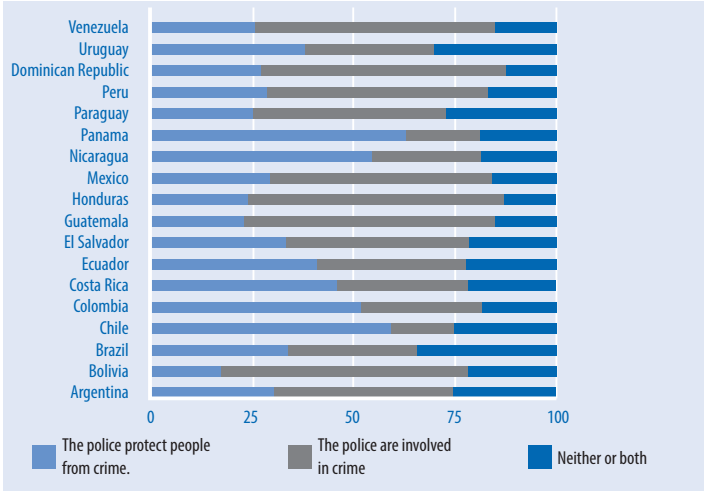
Capacities of the State and the Provision of Public Security

This report considers security as a public good and stresses that the State has the primary and fundamental responsibility for its provision.

Police reforms are one of the ongoing challenges facing democracies in the region. The professionalization of the police force by means of programmes strengthening their investigation skills and preparing them to work within communities remains a challenge. Politicization, rigidity of pre-existing structures and a lack of suitable incentives have been obstacles to reforming police forces and encouraging accountability. Figure 4 shows the negative perception held by populations of the police forces in the region, a fact which necessarily impacts on their effectiveness and legitimacy.

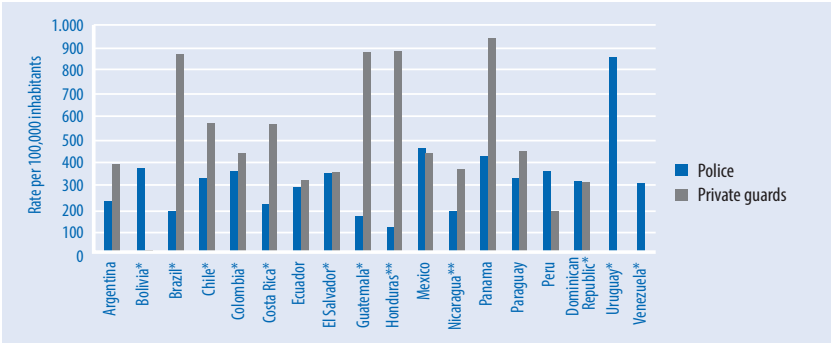
The police force, as the most visible face of the State, is amongst the least valued institutions with the lowest levels of confidence among Latin America's youth (OIJ 2013). Only a very small percentage of women, especially among those who have been victims of sexual violence, report incidents to the police. According to the study "Sexual Violence Research Initiative 2010", only 5 percent of adult victims report these incidents to the police in Latin America and the Caribbean. The report underscores the need to create specialized units within police forces, which provide particular attention to women and at-risk youth.

Figure **4** **Public perception of police participation in criminal activities, Latin America, 2012**
percent



Source: LAPOP-UNDP (2012). Note: Respondents were asked the following question: "Some people say the police in this community (town, village) protect people from criminals, while others say the police are involved in criminal activity. What do you think?"

Figure 5 Ratios of private security guards and police officers per 100,000 inhabitants, Latin America, last year available

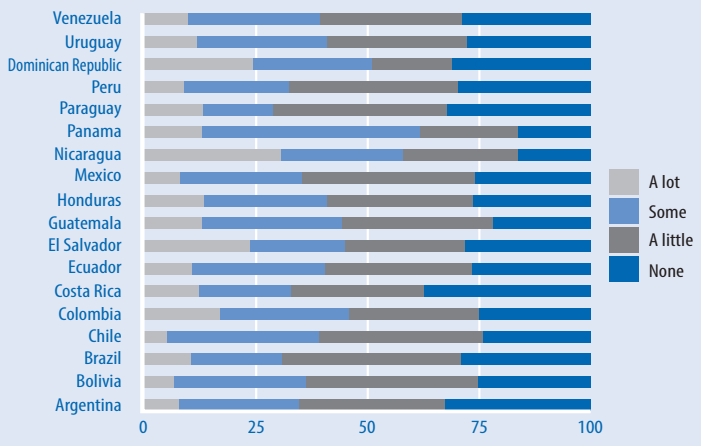


Source: OEA-Alertamérica (2012). Notes: Private guards data source: countries with **: Small Arms Survey (2013). Small Arms Survey (2013). Police data source: countries with *: official administrative records. official administrative records complied by UNDP (2013). See methodological-statistical Annex. For Mexico and Panama, police data comes from official administrative records compiled by UNDP (2013), while guard data comes from the Small Arms Survey (2013).

The institutional weaknesses of police forces and the growing perception of insecurity has contributed to a substantial increase in hiring private security guards over the last two decades (Ungar 2007, 20). In most of the countries where information is available, there is a higher ratio of private security guards than police officers per 100,000 inhabitants, with a total of 3,811,302 private security guards and 2,616,753 police officers in the region. This imbalance deepens inequality in access to security as a public good. The case of Guatemala is striking: 19,900 police officers watch over the country's 12.7 million inhabitants while 120,000 private guards protect those who can afford to hire them (see Figure 5).

Even though in recent decades a number of judicial system reforms have been carried out, guaranteeing access to justice and the rule of law remains a major weakness in Latin America. In some countries courts have become politicized, limiting the consolidation of the rule of law and the impartiality of the justice system, while also encouraging corruption. These dysfunctions are at the heart of the high rates of impunity present in most of the countries in the region.

Figure 6 Citizen confidence in the criminal justice system, Latin America, 2012
percent



Source: LAPOP (2012). Note: Respondents were asked the following question: "If you were the victim of a mugging or a robbery, how confident would you be that the judicial system would punish the guilty party?"

The judicial systems' inability to adequately deliver justice has reinforced the public perception that the laws are not strict enough. Of particular concern is the growing demand to reduce the age of criminal responsibility, following the general perception of increased violence acts carried out by minors (Basombrío 2012).

Implementing laws to prevent and punish gender-based violence remains a challenge. Nearly all (97 percent) countries have passed laws against domestic violence – though less than half explicitly penalize rape within marriage – and eight countries have laws or reforms in their penal codes that characterize femicide (UNDP-UN Women 2013). To ensure that these laws are applied and that violence against women is tackled comprehensively, the report recommends national plans that involve all levels of the justice system

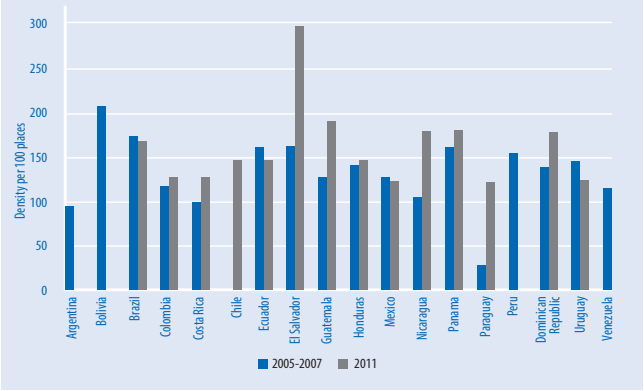
Lack of confidence in the justice system remains an endemic problem in the region. As shown in Figure 6, except for Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Panama, over half of the citizens in the countries surveyed expressed little or no confidence in their court systems.

The crisis of confidence that both the Latin American police forces and the justice systems are facing has led citizens to search for alternative methods for procuring security. These include the rising number of private security guards, the phenomenon of vigilantism where citizens take justice into their own hands, and to other illegal practices (see Chart 9). The consequences of these crises in capacity and confidence seriously impact democracy, human rights and security in general. The vacuum created affects the poor most heavily, since it not only reproduces and helps increase levels of violence and insecurity, it can also represent a direct threat to the physical integrity of people.

The institutional deficiencies of police forces and justice systems are reflected in Latin American prisons, regarded as the final link in the criminal justice chain.

The penitentiary system is in crisis in virtually all countries in the region. Overpopulation and issues of pre-trial detention are the clearest symptoms of this crisis (see Figure 7). The abuse of pre-trial detention results in the loss of jobs, family fracture and stigmatization, and generates high costs that prevent resources from being spent on social development

Figure 7 Penitentiary overpopulation, Latin America, 2005-2007 and 2011



Source: Carranza (2012, Table 1a). Note: No data was reported for Chile for the 2005-2007 period. No data were reported for Argentina, Bolivia and Peru for the 2011 period.

Chart 9 Acceptance of vigilantism, Latin America, 2012
percent

Country	Disapprove	Approve	Country	Disapprove	Approve
Argentina	82.3	17.7	Honduras	77.7	22.3
Bolivia	69.6	30.4	Mexico	77.8	22.2
Brazil	86.6	13.4	Nicaragua	68.8	31.2
Chile	80.5	19.5	Panama	88.7	11.3
Colombia	77.8	22.2	Paraguay	76.9	23.1
Costa Rica	84.8	15.2	Peru	71.3	28.7
Ecuador	62.4	37.6	Dominican Republic	65.1	34.9
El Salvador	65.6	34.4	Uruguay	83.4	16.6
Guatemala	66.2	33.8	Venezuela	85.1	14.9
Total				76.1	23.9

Source: LAPOP-UNDP (2012).
Note: Respondents were asked the following question: "To what extent do you agree or disagree with people taking the law into their own hands when the State does not punish criminals?"

Rehabilitation has not been a priority in the contemporary Latin American penitentiary system. Violence, human rights abuses, criminal networks and high levels of recidivism commonly characterize prisons. As illustrated in Chart 10, with the exception of El Salvador, in all countries where prison surveys were conducted, 60 percent of inmates claim to feel less safe inside the prison than where they lived before their incarceration. The number of inmates who report having been beaten by penitentiary staff is above 60 percent in El Salvador, Chile and Argentina. Violence from other inmates is also high, with over half of the respondents claiming they were beaten by other inmates in Mexico, Peru and El Salvador

Chart 10 Security and violence within penitentiaries, selected countries, 2013
percent

	Argentina	Mexico	Peru	El Salvador	Brazil	Chile
Percentage of inmates who feel less safe (in the prison) than where they lived before	66.5	76.4	74.1	44.1	67.5	79.4
Proportion of inmates who have been beaten during the last six months	18.2	15.1	14.4	3.5	4.4	25.5
Percentage of inmates indicating they have been beaten by prision staff	76.8	40.2	48.7	65.9	36.4	71.8
Percentage of inmates indicating they have been beaten by other inmates	35,8	73,4	58,2	95,5	27,3	43,1

Source: Comparative Study of Prison Population, UNDP (2013).

Over-criminalization is part of the prison crisis. In countries as varied as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, the vast number of people jailed for drug-related crimes, including possession continues to grow (WOLA 2011). This trend affects women and youth in particular, who are being jailed at increasingly younger ages (WOLA-TNI 2011). Data from the comparative study of prison populations (UNDP 2013) put this problem into perspective. In five of the six countries surveyed, trafficking or possession of drugs was reported as the main crime committed by female inmates above –robbery and homicide (see Chart 11).

Towards a Latin America with Citizen Security

The diagnoses of insecurity and the socioeconomic and/or institutional challenges facing Latin America indicate that there is no single solution for strengthening citizen security in the region.

Chart **11** **Types of crimes committed by female inmates, selected countries, 2013**
percent

	Argentina	Mexico	Peru	El Salvador	Brazil	Chile
Robbery	29.6	36.7	10.8	9.1	18.4	34.9
Homicide	13.9	19.4	8.3	19.1	7.8	9.2
Trafficking and possessing drugs	52.8	5.4	69.2	25.2	66.0	55.0
Proportion of female inmates who consumed alcohol or drugs within 6 hours prior to the crime	25.0	18.2	10.3	7.6	33.0	40.2

Source: Comparative Study of Prison Population, UNDP (2013).

The report's cumulative evidence shows that comprehensive policies are required, based on knowledge of local needs and carried out with the active involvement of communities.

Nation States, in conjunction with non-state actors, and assisted by the international community, must take action to address and control threats to citizen security in the short term. They must also offer a wide range of responses, such as institutional reforms in the areas of security and justice, and work to align efforts at the local, national and international levels.

Adopting a gender perspective, and recognizing youth and women as rights-bearing citizens, should be a crosscutting and integral part of citizen security policies in the region.

A summary of the key lessons to strengthen security and improve Latin Americans' human development, gathered from the analysis carried out in the 18 countries, follows.

From Discourse to Action: Effectively Strengthening Citizen Protection

International evidence shows that certain preventive programmes have direct effects on violence, and that, in some cases, their impact can be fast and cost-effective (Schochet, Burghardt y McConnell 2008).

The response to crime in the region must go beyond the criminal justice system's attempts to deter crime. Policy-makers have increasingly recognized that preventive programmes can have a positive impact in the reduction of crime. This must be considered as an opportunity to broaden the scope of these programmes and increase their resources, based on more rigorous evaluations in order to replicate their results.

A comprehensive security policy requires coordination between different levels of government. From the institutional perspective, carrying out these types of programmes has relied upon the growing leadership of local governments in crime prevention. Local government's involvement in crime prevention has become a constant in the region; even though only in a few countries do they have constitutional responsibilities concerning citizen security.

Successful local multi-sector programmes tend to be concentrated in larger municipalities and cities that either count with their own resources, or receive significant financial support from the State. These programmes need to be promoted in smaller municipalities with technical assistance from national/federal public bodies. (Dammert 2007).

In order to carry out comprehensive, inter-sectoral policies which complement crime prevention programmes, policy makers need reliable, high quality data. The orientation of the programmes must be based on information about acts of violence in specific areas, the vulnerability of victims, and the existence of risk factors suggesting the possibility that crime may be on the rise.

With regard to youth, public and private investment should be increased to promote training and the creation of dignified job opportunities. These efforts should be directed towards young people who neither study nor work, and should be carried out in urban contexts where poverty is persistent. Crime prevention policies must establish mechanisms to facilitate direct youth participation.

Specific programmes should be created to promote real opportunities for women, including girls and young women, so that they can fully exercise their rights, assert their autonomy and overcome situations of vulnerability and dependency. In particular, sexual and reproductive education initiatives must be put in place to prevent teenage pregnancies.

The successful enforcement of preventive strategies requires the professionalization of the staff involved. This can be both complex and costly, as in the case of treating addiction and psycho-social interventions directed at young people who have

committed crimes. The State should create alliances with the private sector and universities to promote professionalization.

No to the Iron Fist. Yes to Comprehensive Interventions in Highly Violent Situations

Iron fist policies adopted in the region have failed to achieve their objective of reducing levels of violence and crime. They have also had a deep negative impact on democratic coexistence and respect for human rights, which are at the heart of human development.

Iron fist policies – with a punitive focus privileging repression, increasing the severity of penalties and the use of force – have had negative repercussions, many unexpected, among which are an increase in levels of lethal violence, the strengthening of criminal networks, congestion in already overcrowded prisons, human rights violations – particularly against youths and minors – and abuse of authority (Hume 2007, Zilberg 2011, Basombrío and Dammert 2013). For example, the strategy used in Rio de Janeiro in the mid nineties, *Gratificação por Pecúnia,* which gave incentives to police officers that were tougher on criminals, resulted in an increase in levels of police abuse and coincided with the highest murder rate in the state of Rio. Meanwhile, in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, the use of iron fist or "extreme iron fist" tactics between 2000 and 2005 against criminal gangs known as maras intensified the levels of violence in all three countries. This in turn resulted in more organized and violent crime on the part of the gangs and the mass imprisonment of young people, further crowding the penitentiary systems.

In Latin America, according to this report, valuable experiences have been developed to prevent and mitigate the impact of violence and crime, by means of strengthening the capacities of the State and encouraging active, responsible citizen participation. In particular, there are examples of interventions that have responded effectively to contexts of high violence and concentration of crime. Some examples include policies and programmes like *Fica Vivo* (Brazil), Plan Cuadrante (Colombia), Barrio Seguro (Dominican Republic), Todos Somos Juárez (Mexico), as well as the truce between gangs initiative in El Salvador. Experience demonstrates that effective interventions were preceded by a series of reforms and important changes in the capacities of the State, which resulted in successful programmes or policies.

In addition, both local and federal governments must work towards improving information on criminal activity and promoting the adoption of new technologies for collecting information on crime, such as creating geo-referenced statistics. The latter optimizes the use and allocation of resources, such as police patrolling, aimed at reducing the incidence of criminal activity. Universities and research centers are key allies in this area.

One of the first steps taken by the *Fica Vivo* Project, since its inception in 2001, was to map, through geo-referenced databases, the composition and territorial presence of homicides. This allowed the determination that violent homicides were concentrated in six slums of Belo Horizonte which were affected by drug trafficking and gang-related conflicts. Similarly, the execution of the National Neighborhood Watch Plan (PNVCC) in Colombia is based in a strategic study of each neighborhood, supporting the geo-referencing of data and allowing for informed decision-making and more targeted resource distribution (Llorente, Bulla y Castillo 2011).

Building strong, long-lasting bonds between the police force and the communities or neighborhoods in which the police operate is also a promising strategy to strengthen the legitimacy of state interventions and to optimize police work in the region. The PNVCC, for example, has changed the way the police work by focusing attention on problems of social coexistence within communities, in close collaboration with local institutions and stakeholders. Likewise, the Dominican Republic's programme Barrio Seguro (Safe Neighborhood) involved a considerable effort to improve relations between the State and society by means of social programmes directed at high-risk areas (Bobea 2011, 396-398). This programme, which was part of the Democratic Security Plan (PSD as per its acronym in Spanish) promoted by the government of the Dominican Republic (2004-2012), led to a substantial improvement in the population's perception of the police force and confidence therein.

Experience shows that interventions must be multi-sectoral and address both short term needs as well as the structural vulnerabilities that lie behind crime and violence. The Todos Somos Juárez (We are all Juarez) programme, established in 2010 by the federal government of Mexico and the state government of Chihuahua, adopted a multi-sector approach to comprehensively address the persistent social and economic risks associated with vulnerability and insecurity. The strategy focused on six basic sectors: public security, economic growth, employment, health, education and social development (Dudley 2013).

The non-violence agreement between the two largest gangs in El Salvador – Mara Salvatrucha 13 (MS13) and Barrio 18 – made known in early March 2012 and forged by members of the church and local society, with logistical support from the Ministry of Justice and Security, has launched a wide range of alternatives for social reinsertion and integration, and has made

it possible to tackle other underlying factors related to violence. The gangs' agreement, although controversial, opened space for debate on the possibility of adopting alternative measures to tackle the difficult security problems associated with gangs.

The most effective interventions are those that adapt to local circumstances and respond to citizen insecurity problems, identified and defined jointly with the involved communities. Active citizen participation in formulating and setting up these interventions is of paramount importance. Lastly, it is essential to be able to rely on the sustained commitment of decision-makers, beyond electoral changes and partisan divisions.

A Common Challenge, Differentiated Responses

In order to build an effective citizen security policy, it is necessary to understand how threats to security are articulated and manifested within a particular context. Every country, city and municipality has a different combination of threats. The most effective responses to insecurity depend less on a single isolated policy than on the correct combination of policies derived from an accurate diagnosis of the local context.

According to criminological theories, places where crime takes place in a disorganized and opportunist manner require a standardized set of measures to inhibit crime, such as the development of geo-referential information and deploying patrol units at strategic points (Felson and Clarke 1998). Other responses may consist of improving street lighting, restructuring public spaces, encouraging pedestrian circulation or closing bars earlier with the purpose of preventing fights or violent incidents generated by alcohol abuse.

Where low-level criminal organizations exist, such as juvenile gangs, it is necessary to strengthen links between society and local authorities to prevent and control crime. Community policing is crucial in providing attention to at-risk populations. Educational programmes, providing resources or technical training, and promoting leisure activities in the neighborhoods or communities can help strengthen the bond between these vulnerable groups and the rest of the community, as well as to reduce risk factors linked to youth violence.

The presence of organized criminal groups requires highly targeted responses. The growing presence of drug-trafficking networks or criminal groups dedicated to extortion or kidnapping, for example, requires a greater investment in investigation, intelligence work and collaboration between the different security agencies. When organized crime permeates community dynamics deeply, it is necessary for the State to regain territorial control and strengthen local institutions, including public security forces.

Figure 8 summarizes the types of responses that can be adopted to address the different threats to citizen security, based on their level of organization. It is important to mention that gender violence may appear at any point within this range: as a form of "disorganized" violence (intra-family violence) or as a form of organized crime (human trafficking, sexual exploitation); hence the requirement for preventative measures and responses promulgated from the criminal justice system.

Threats such as corruption and illegal violence by public officials require the strengthening of auditing structures and internal discipline, as well as public accountability mechanisms. Nonetheless, as with other threats, both violence and corruption exercised by State actors may occur at different levels of organization.

When corruption appears as isolated incidents or only affects some elements of the police, it is usually sufficient to use control mechanisms. However, if corruption or police abuse becomes widespread in some sectors or jurisdictions, the State should consider a change of leadership. In extreme cases, if the leadership itself is compromised, profound reforms may be required in the security structure. Non-state actors and civil society in general may perform a crucial role in promoting transparency and accountability (Peruzzotti and Smulovitz 2006).

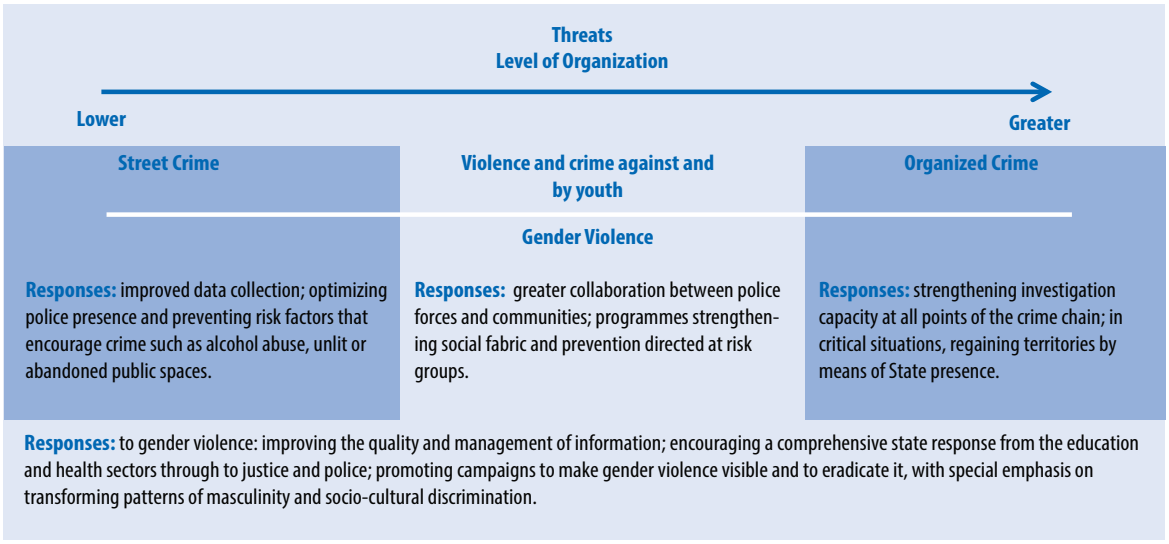
Figure 9 illustrates the different levels of organization of corruption and the use of illegal violence by state actors, as well as the type of responses that states can adopt.

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is crucial in guaranteeing security effectively within an inclusive, democratic framework. Numerous successful experiences and lessons learned have been carried out by civil society (civil society organizations, social movements, neighborhood groups, academia, among others), the private sector and mass media, to provide functional responses that reinforce citizen security and governmental accountability.

In order to prevent violence in a sustainable manner, a change in collective thinking is required to move away from a culture of violence towards a culture of peace. For this, civil society must take a leading role in combatting discrimination against certain groups (for example youths, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered people), and drug users), ensuring that forms of violence that tend to go unnoticed are made visible (such as sexual, intra-family and school violence) and sensitizing the population regarding the negative consequences of certain practices (such as iron fist policies or vigilantism), in order to

Figure **8** Types of responses to threats and level of organization



delegitimize them.

Mass media has a crucial responsibility in transforming public perceptions about insecurity and offering legitimate and timely mechanisms for addressing it. Countries require media professionals that avoid sensationalism and the stigmatization of vulnerable groups – youths in particular. In order to achieve this, investigative journalism—that contextualizes the facts presented, while fully respecting the principles of media ethics, such as the presumption of innocence—is crucial.

Experiences in insecurity prevention through civil society participation are varied and include, for example, programmes that focus on individual attention for high-risk groups; building positive, non-violent masculinity; strengthening the culture of dialogue; community mechanisms for positive conflict resolution; as well as working with children and youth to broaden their skills and freedom. In order to promote the positive impact and replicability of these initiatives, it is necessary to further strengthen skills and institutions within civil society organizations, as well as to develop clear work methodologies, assessment of results and transparency mechanisms. Collaborative work between civil society organizations and communities, the private sector and the government is crucial

Figure **9** Levels of corruption and use of violence by State actors

to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives.

It is necessary to promote civil society watchdogs for investigation, research, advocacy and auditing in order to guarantee transparency and accountability from authorities. Both civil society organizations and the private sector have promoted the creation of watchdog groups and investigation centers which have generated and analyzed useful information to improve the understanding of problems and to contribute to decision-making. An example of this would be generating surveys and systematizing public data, on both the problem of insecurity and governmental performance in its reduction.

On the other hand, formulating and applying public security policies require active participation from the main stakeholders affected by insecurity. In the region, numerous social movements and citizen coalitions have emerged to influence policies and norms related to the provision of security. In order for the demands of vulnerable groups, such as victims of violence and crime, to be included in government actions and strategies, effective spaces for public participation need to be opened up.

At the local level, citizen participation must reach a high-priority. Security boosting programmes implemented in communities must stem from the needs and concerns of the local population, as well as their specific skills and strengths, in order to generate safe environments and a sound social fabric. Only by taking ownership of prevention programmes as well as confidence networks between communities and the security and justice agencies, will communities be in a position to implement legitimate and sustainable public policies.

International Cooperation: Facing a Global and Regional Challenge with Local Nuances

Over the last decade, efforts to strengthen international cooperation concerning security in Latin America and the Caribbean have multiplied. Cooperation with the United States in the region—traditionally centered on fighting drugs—has begun to be diversified towards prevention and even triangulation, such as programmes to train Central American police officers in cooperation with Colombia. Global and regional agencies such as the World Bank, IADB, OAS and UNDP, have multiplied their efforts to develop prevention programmes to strengthen police skills at both federal and sub-national levels. Moreover, Latin America has emerged as an important player in discussions on the nexus between drugs and security. This can best be seen by the various leaders in the region, and the OAS, who are driving the international discussion on flexible and differentiated perspectives to address the drug problem as a public health issue. Central to this perspective is the possible option of regulating and decriminalizing the consumption of marijuana.

Recent advances in South-South cooperation are encouraging. Given that they are countries with similar experiences, problems and institutions, exchanging knowledge facilitates the construction of joint capacities. In this sense, the collaborative efforts promoted by the Chilean Carabineros and the Nicaraguan National Police Force (PNN) stands out. In the case of Chile, the International Cooperation Programme of Uniformed Police (CECIPU) has offered training to police officers in 25 countries. In Nicaragua, the PNN, with support from the UNDP, has designed a comprehensive South-South cooperation strategy (ECSS).

Successful experiences in security cooperation have contributed to the positioning of the subject transversally within sub-regional mechanisms, such as the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). The OAS, in turn, has taken on a key role in the debate on drug policy at a global and hemispheric level. "The Problem of Drugs in the Americas" report contains a critical analysis of the topic in Latin America, portraying it as a challenge that needs to be addressed in a differentiated, flexible manner, based on a hemisphere-wide vision (OEA, 2013) (see Box 4).

It is indispensable to build a common vision of citizen security as a shared and urgent challenge to underpin the effectiveness of Latin American cooperation. To this end, our report recommends the creation of a Regional Forum on Citizen Security as a specialized political space to strengthen security in Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, and contribute to preventing the so-called "balloon effect" by means of improved coordination between countries and a greater understanding of the consequences of national and local policies on the regional environment.

Cooperation between the United States and Latin America has undergone important advances towards more symmetrical forms of cooperation, with more clearly aligned objectives. At present, U.S. cooperation practices have become more diversified and have extended into areas of prevention and strengthening of local capacities. In order to deepen this comprehensive approach to security and avoid overlapping efforts, it is necessary to enhance coordination between agencies in charge of U.S. aid and those responsible for the traditional aspects of cooperation such as the Justice Department and the Defense Department.

Decentralized cooperation promoted by regional and global agencies has great potential, given that it encourages receiving countries to accept their responsibility to provide citizen security, including the strengthening of institutional capacities among their central objectives. Decentralized cooperation facilitates horizontal interaction, improving the exchange of best practices among sub-national stakeholders. Such cooperation modalities have proven to be efficient when it comes to tackling specific problems, and facilitate participation and ownership of programmes by the local community. In the case of Honduras, for example, UNDP's support was decisive in adopting the local Comprehensive National Citizen Security Policy (2012-2022) and in promoting alternative mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts for establishing mediation and conciliation units in municipal justice systems. In El Salvador, UNDP has contributed to strengthening public institution's capacities and those of civil society organizations in matters of gender violence.

Box 4. The Problem of Drugs in the Americas Report from the Organization of American States. Main Conclusions

1. The drug problem is a hemisphere-wide problem.
2. The drug problem involves specific treatments in each of its different stages and in each of the countries where these stages occur.
3. There is no inextricable relationship between the problem of drugs and the situation of insecurity many citizens of the Americas experience.
4. Insecurity affects those societies more in which the State is not able to provide effective responses.
5. It is necessary to approach drug use as a public health issue.
6. The drug problem must be addressed in a differentiated and flexible manner between countries, based on how it affects each country in particular.

Source: OEA (2013)

The diversity of multilateral support to Latin America is a valuable contribution to the region. In order to increase its effectiveness, it is necessary to encourage aligning the efforts of different international agencies in matters of citizen security to avoid overlap and contradictions. A good practice in this sense is the UNETE (UNITE) campaign to end violence against women, where over 15 organizations from within and outside the United Nations System have promoted actions in all countries of the region and among governmental and non-governmental sectors, aiming to curb gender-related violence. This campaign shows the great potential of the joint coordinated work of agencies, programmes and multilateral funds to multiply human and financial resources, mobilize national and regional actors concurrently, and to transfer experience and knowledge.

Lastly, it is necessary to strengthen coordination mechanisms between different international cooperation actors and to align the cooperation modalities with the objectives, needs and capacities of the receiving countries. In order to do so, it is necessary to establish goals, indicators and cooperation schemes that recognize the common objective of citizen security, as well as improve instruments for assessing the effectiveness and impact of the cooperation with a focus on institutional strengthening, human development and ending the reproduction of violence. The best way to optimize these international efforts is to grant them continuity and establish transparent and comparable success indicators.

Ten Recommendations for a Safe Latin America

The report makes the following ten recommendations available to Latin American decision makers and citizens:

1. Align national efforts to reduce crime and violence, based on existing experiences and lessons learned.

Each country should establish a National Agreement for Citizen Security as a policy initiative based on a national consensus between the government, political parties and civil society. Budgets for such agreements should be consistent with the magnitude of the levels of insecurity. Countries should professionalize citizen security management, and work to create professional capacity, especially for those who assume managerial and policy implementation roles in the central and local governments. Adequate inter-governmental mechanisms should be put in place to enable the coordination of actions between the central, regional or state, and local levels of government.

2. Prevent crime and violence, promoting inclusive, fair and equitable.

Concentrate and optimize prevention programmes to focus on the main risk factors and most urgent needs identified jointly with the communities. Carry out urban and environmental interventions that enable the use of public spaces and boost interaction and peaceful coexistence as a means to deter crime. Specific programmes should be carried out and directed towards specific groups or sectors that are particularly and disproportionately exposed to violence in the home and in public spaces, such as children, young people and women.

3. Reduce impunity by strengthening security and justice institutions while respecting human rights.

Substantially improve police selection and recruitment processes and strengthen the professionalization of the police, encouraging close relationships with communities and respect for human rights. The continuous education of judges and prosecutors should be encouraged on a permanent basis and the quality of criminal investigations should be optimized. New penitentiary policies should be designed with a focus on social reinsertion, reduced criminal sentences, and the creation of dignified prison conditions inline with international standards. Internal control and citizen auditing mechanisms should be established to identify, prosecute and effectively punish cases of corruption, abuse of authority and human rights violations.

4. Generate public policies oriented to protect the people most affected by violence and crime.

Strengthen police presence in the most critical areas based on prior knowledge of the geographic concentration of violence and crime. This police presence should be backed up with social and work programmes closely connected to the vulnerable communities and groups. For higher impact crimes such as homicide, kidnapping, extortion, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and disappearances, inter-sector responses should be developed involving the police, prosecutors, and other competent stakeholders.

5. Promote the active participation of society, especially in local communities, to build citizen security.

Guarantee the participation of communities in identifying and assessing needs at a local level, in addition to designing and applying citizen security-related public policies. Create incentives for universities and research centers to carry out independent assessments of security policies with full access to data and statistical information of public institutions. Generate research and teaching programmes in the field of citizen security public policy to encourage the exchange of experiences and lessons learned between countries in the region. Encourage private sector cooperation in citizen security, guaranteeing transparency and police impartiality.

6. Increase real opportunities of human development for young people.

The disproportional impact of insecurity on young people as the main victims and perpetrators of violence requires public policies that make youth development a priority. Public and private efforts should be increased to improve quality educational and coverage, job creation and training to enable job creation for young people, especially in poor urban areas. Prioritize the social reinsertion of children and young people that come in contact with the penal system, while avoiding lowering the age of penal responsibility for minors. Launch awareness campaigns to protect children and young people from the cultural or media influence criminal groups may exert. Establish accessible spaces and strengthen the skills of young people to ensure their participation in citizen security policies and programmes.

7. Comprehensively address and prevent gender violence within the home and in public environments.

Guarantee the effective application of current laws to prevent and punish violence against women in the region, including laws related to domestic violence, sexual violence and femicide. Formulate and implement comprehensive state policies, with a specific budget, multi-sector and institutional coordination to tackle the multiple causes of violence against women. Promote awareness campaigns starting from childhood to encourage relationships of respect and equality between women and men and non-violent masculinity.

8. Actively safeguard the rights of victims.

Formulate national policies and a legal framework, with the active participation of victims, to guarantee care, protection and timely reparation of loss and put in place effective mechanisms for the application thereof. Define mechanisms for the reparation of loss and the services and support that the State will provide to victims of violent crime by means of an inter-sectoral effort. Train and professionalize public officials that come in direct contact with victims and their families, defining protocols for care, courses of action and responsibilities.

9. Regulate and reduce "triggers" of crime such as alcohol, drugs and firearms, from a comprehensive, public health perspective.

Regulate gun ownership by civilians by means of strengthening gun owner registries and the definition of the legal requirements to acquire and carry guns. Improve cooperation between countries to stop the illegal flow of weapons across borders and prevent criminal organizations from acquiring high-powered weapons. Tackle drug use as a public health problem through prevention, treatment, harm reduction and rehabilitation programmes. Limit the hours in which alcohol may be purchased at bars and stores and strengthen control of the sale of alcohol to minors.

10. Strengthen mechanisms of coordination and assessment of international cooperation.

Encourage South-South cooperation between security and justice institutions. Foster a Latin America-wide vision of citizen security through the organization of a Citizen Security Forum of Latin America and the Caribbean to exchange public and private experiences, coordinate initiatives and prevent consequences, such as the balloon effect, that the security policies of a particular country or city can generate in others in the region. Strengthen the exchange of information and intelligence between countries and encourage the effective coordination of police operations in the region, with particular emphasis on dismantling transnational criminal organizations. Improve the comparability of security data on a regional level and strengthen data transmission mechanisms between local governments. Prioritize and direct international cooperation efforts towards countries, sub-national jurisdictions and municipalities with the least resources. Assess the impact of international cooperation related to violence reduction and strengthened local capacities.

Notes

1. This calculation was based on 2012 population data from the World Bank.

2. This report analyzes 18 countries in the region: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

3.Statistics on crime , violence and fear used in this report come from three primary sources: (a) administrative records produced in each country by the competent authorities (the police , criminal justice and the Institutes of Statistics) , (b) victimization surveys and perception, based primarily on the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) surveys made since 2000 and special questions conducted jointly by LAPOP and UNDP in 2012 (LAPOP - UNDP 2012) , and (c) unpublished surveys of inmates in five countries in the region - Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador , and Peru, mainly financed by UNDP, the Latin American Development Bank (CAF), and other institutions such as the Centre for Research and Teaching in Economics (CIDE), Open Society Initiative, National University of Tres de Febrero in Argentina and the Ombudsman's Office in Peru .

4. The 15 Latin American countries being considered are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Uruguay. The 36 countries considered are: Austria, Germany, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Luxemburg, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, The Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, United States, Sweden, Turkey, and Ukraine (UNECE 2011).

5. The base population for calculating the number of victims of theft was taken from World Bank data for 2011.

6. The base population for calculating the number of victims of theft was provided by the UNDP Country Office of El Salvador for 2012.

Insecurity and violence are serious obstacles to human development in Latin America. Citizens across the region identify insecurity as a priority issue, demanding that governments implement policies which tackle this serious problem that affects their everyday lives and hinders their development potential.

As a result of a rigorous research process, extended consultations and assessment, this report analyzes the various dimensions and impacts of citizen insecurity, as well as national or regional plans that address these challenges. It offers a number of public policy recommendations—to State and non-State actors and the international community— aimed at reducing crime while creating an environment that enables development. These include measures such as prevention, education, citizen participation and institutional reforms, in the perspective of enhancing democracy in the region.

This report confirms that there are remedies for citizen insecurity, which is both a challenge and a key to unleashing human development in the region. That is, Latin America needs citizen security with a human face.

"I'm impressed by the quality and analytical soundness of this report and would emphasize one of its key findings: a responsible State is indispensable in providing all Latin Americans the public good which is citizen security."

RICARDO LAGOS
Former President of Chile, President of the Foundation for Democracy and Development.

"Security must be constructed by citizens and for citizens. This solid report shows that effective security policies require citizen collaboration and oversight."

BEATRIZ PAREDES
Former Senator in Mexico, Former President of the Latin American Parliament, Ambassador of Mexico in Brazil.

"This report contributes a much needed reflection on a concept of security that prioritizes citizens. It also emphasizes the need to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, from the private to the public spheres."

ANA PALACIO
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, Member of the State Council.

"This UNDP report will be an essential point of reference for understanding citizen security in the region. It will contribute significantly to governments' challenge to improve public policies for citizen security and to avoid giving in to the easy temptation of an 'iron fist' approach."

JOSE MIGUEL INSULZA
Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

"Due to its objectivity and sound analysis, as well as the relevance of its proposals for institutional reforms and public policies, this report will be a crucial point of reference for discussing and finding solutions to citizen insecurity, the main obstacle for the development of Latin America and the Caribbean."

ERNESTO ZEDILLO PONCE DE LEÓN
Former President of Mexico; Director of the Center for the Study of Globalization, Yale University.

"This UNDP report is rigorous, useful and original. One of its central points is the importance of shifting from the 'iron fist' tactics to a multidimensional, people-centered approach to security."

OSCAR NARANJO
Former Director General of the National Police of Colombia, Executive Director of the Latin American Citizenship ITESM System.

"The report's findings will be a roadmap for governments, enabling them to gear public policies towards common solutions to the challenges of insecurity. The IADB contributed to the report through the costs of violence analysis, aiming to promote safer and more inclusive societies."

LUIS ALBERTO MORENO
President, Inter-American Development Bank.

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