LEARNING FROM LATIN AMERICA: POLICY TRENDS OF CRIME DECLINE IN 10 CITIES ACROSS THE REGION

Flavia Carbonari  
The World Bank, USA

Alys Willman  
The World Bank, USA

Renato Sergio de Lima  
Brazilian Forum of Public Safety, Brazil
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BACKGROUND PAPER

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Flavia Carbonari
The World Bank, USA

Alys Willman
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Renato Sergio de Lima
Brazilian Forum of Public Safety, Brazil
Abstract

Latin America is the region with the highest homicide rate in the world. However, a number of its cities have managed to bring down crime dramatically, leading observers to their successful and sometimes innovative strategies for good practices. This paper draws lessons from 10 of such city cases of violence reduction in five different countries, with the objective of identifying trends that could inform policy makers facing similar challenges. It highlights practices that have been or are being tested, and which, according to the existing literature and international experts, seem to be effective or promising. The cities profiled showed that, first, having a solid diagnostic is essential to targeting scarce resources to where they can be most effective in comprehensive territorial approaches. Second, building the institutional coordination mechanisms that lay out a clear division of labour between different levels and sectors of government and resourcing channels, and connecting these within a guiding national policy framework, makes for a more coherent response to violence. Combining targeted ‘quick win’ interventions such as recovery of public spaces, or controls on alcohol or firearms, with more long-term and targeted programmes like youth employment or re-integration, was important in building momentum for prevention. And finally, engaging a wide range of stakeholders helps ensure that prevention programmes meet the needs of the most vulnerable group. Finally, the extent to which policymakers were able to ‘institutionalise’ prevention by setting up the government bodies and coordination mechanisms that would outlast political cycles seemed to be also key.

Keywords: Urban violence, Latin America, Crime and violence prevention, Municipal policies, Local Governments
Introduction

For over a decade, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) has been considered the most violent region in the world. With 8 percent of the world’s population, LAC concentrates roughly 33 percent of all homicides of the globe. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the region has had an average annual homicide rate of more than 22 per 100,000 inhabitants since 2004. In recent years, Central America, which in the UNODC definition also includes Mexico, ranked first among all sub-regions, with rates above 30 per 100,000, while South America ranked third, with rates around 25 per 100,000 (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Homicide rates per 100,000, by sub-region (2012 or latest year)

Much of this violence is concentrated in Latin America’s urban areas, where almost 80 percent of the population now lives. In 2015, 41 of the world’s 50 most violent cities were located in LAC, according to Mexico’s NGO Seguridad, Justicia y Paz annual ranking. Citizens are understandably concerned. The Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) showed that in 2014, on average

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2 According to UN and World Bank data, Latin America is considered the most urbanised region in the world (http://data.worldbank.org/topic/urban-development).
1 out of every 3 adults considered crime, violence, or insecurity the most important problem facing their country (LAPOP, 2015).

The violence is also concentrated heavily among the youth population. Most of the victims in virtually every country in the region, as well as perpetrators, are young males ages 15 to 29. The homicide rate for male victims at that age group is more than four times the global average rate in both Central and South America (UNODC, 2014).

However, these national-level trends mask important country as well as sub-national level dynamics. While some national homicide rates are particularly high (Honduras had over 85 per 100,000 in 2015), some countries have very few homicides. Chile’s rate was only 2.8 per 100,000 in 2012. At the subnational level, variation is even greater; Cortes state in Honduras, for example, had a rate of 447 that same year.³

Violence is by no means inevitable in the urban space. A number of cities have managed to bring down violence and crime dramatically in relatively short time periods. In the 1990s, cities like New York, Boston, and Los Angeles adopted comprehensive crime and violence reduction strategies with impressive results. Later, Latin American cities such as São Paulo⁴ and Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, or Bogotá and Medellín, in Colombia, followed suit, with significant declines in homicides throughout the 2000s.⁵

Today, more and more observers are looking to the successful and sometimes innovative strategies of Latin American cities for good practices. Local governments are now rightly recognised as the frontlines of urban violence prevention, and a source of important innovations in policy. Municipal authorities usually possess an acute understanding of their city context. Because they are in many ways closer to their constituents, municipal governments, when sufficiently empowered to devise and execute prevention policies, hold strong potential to identify geographic areas and populations at risk, and target resources more effectively (Soares, 2006; Beato and Silveira, 2014).

⁴ São Paulo is one of the most successful cases of homicide reduction in the last decade in Brazil. Between 2000 and 2014, for example, homicides fell more than 70 percent in the state. Although the case has been fairly studied, there is no monitoring assessment of specific actions or programmes implemented. Recently, the Brazilian Forum for Public Safety created the http://fbsp.memoriaseguranca.org.br/ platform, which seeks to document all public initiatives and the available evidence related to the case. Thus, we decided to prioritise other cases with specific programmes and plans and for that reason did not include São Paulo as a case study. More information about that case can be found in the platform abovementioned.
⁵ Ibid.
**Purpose of The Study**

It is in this context of a region with the highest crime rates, but also place of birth of promising innovations, with several sub-national governments taking the lead in promoting solutions, that this study was conceptualised. Its main purpose is to draw lessons from selected local cases of violence reduction in LAC that could inform policy makers facing similar challenges.

The overall objective of the paper was to identify the common elements that seem to make a difference in generating sustained reductions in urban violence. By drawing connections across these important elements, the review can be useful to practitioners hoping to get beyond problems of external validity posed by individual studies and evaluations.

A growing number of evaluations have produced a list of policies and programmes demonstrating positive effects on different forms of violence; yet, to make sense of this, practitioners need an analysis of the common factors that are important in these successes and the general principles that have guided these interventions (Lipsey, 2009). The study did not intend to discuss all the characteristics of such elements, but rather to provide an exploratory analysis of them. It should be noted that public responses to crime in Latin America are strongly influenced by a context of relatively new democracies, and therefore associated with discussions of ongoing structural reforms, which makes the present study even more relevant.

The analysis highlights practices that have been or are being tested, and which, according to the existing literature, seem to be effective or promising. In order to understand these successes in context, and their applicability elsewhere, the paper also tried to look at the challenges they faced and their sustainability over time. There is still a need for more robust evidence about most of these experiences, but there is enough valuable information available to tell interesting stories that could inform and inspire policy makers in other cities.

**Methodology, Research Focus and Limitations**

This analysis draws on a review of the literature on urban crime and violence prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean and on phone interviews and consultations via email with experts, policy makers or practitioners who have either studied or taken part of the interventions discussed.6

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6 The authors would like to thank Veronica Martinez-Solares, Talles Andrade de Souza, Alberto Concha-Eastman, Andres Villaveces, Claudio Beato, Eduardo Machado, Gerard Martin, Jorge Llamas, José Luiz Ratton and Raúl Soto Zamora for their valuable inputs and time provided through interviews via email or phone. We are also greatful to Hugo Acero Velazquez, Rodrigo Guerrero, Jocabed Portillo, Jose I. Lobo, Lainie Reisman and Alexandre Veyrat-Pontet for the reference materials shared.
For the review of homicide rates, specifically, we first looked at each country’s national databases (from the health and police sectors), when available, at municipal sources (e.g. observatories), and at the UNODC data.7

Given the objective of this study and its primary audience, we focus on literature that describes the role played by policy in bringing down rates of violence, and which could therefore inform current and future mayors and local governments facing the same challenges. We excluded literature that focussed primarily on factors largely outside the influence of urban policy, such as demographic shifts, or structural changes in labour markets, for example.

The paper also focusses explicitly on prevention strategies and policies – those that are targeted at addressing risk factors for violence. This is not meant to discount the importance of control-oriented measures, such as policing, law enforcement, or military operations, which are also mentioned in some cases. The latter have been especially important in addressing organised crime and civil conflict that in several countries are deeply interrelated with urban violence. Nor are the prevention and control categories mutually exclusive; law enforcement can have a preventative component, for example. In this paper, we discuss control-oriented interventions as they relate to overall prevention strategies, for example, community policing. Although we do not focus only on youth policies, as this would have told only a small fraction of the story, all these cases confirm that these populations should be at the centre of any citizen security and violence prevention efforts.

As we focussed our analysis on policy responses, we also looked at the institutional and legal framework behind them, with the objective of identifying which role the existence of specific coordination bodies and overall citizen security plans, strategies or policies (at the local level, specifically, but also at the national and state levels, whenever relevant), or lack thereof, played in the overall crime decline. We also tried to identify where violence prevention sat in the government structure and within the overall plan, strategy or policy. All cases are also preceded by an overview of crime decline and overall framework for violence prevention at the country level, since in almost all of them national efforts also played a key role in the decline at the city level. Although we initially tried to follow a more systematic pattern in the way we presented each case, each of the stories took its own course, depending on the literature available and on the aspects highlighted.

7 The authors would like to thank William Fausto Cárdenas Ávila, from the Grupo Centro de Referencia Nacional sobre Violencia, who provided disaggregated data by age for Bogotá, Cali and Medellín; Armando Rodríguez Luna, researcher at Colectivo de Análisis de la Seguridad con Democracia and Raul Benitez-Manaut, professor at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, with whom we established a most helpful dialogue about the different sources of homicide and population information in Mexico.
In addition, it should be noted that this review did not attempt to be a compilation of several case studies. That would have required more time and field research, to provide a clearer and thorough picture of what happened in each place. Thus we highlighted the factors and aspects of each case most emphasised in the literature, hence the focus on political leadership in places like Bogotá, the focus on evidence-based policy in Cali, citizen participation and government coordination in Juarez, or private sector engagement in Monterrey.

Following the study’s main objective, the first and main selection criteria was that violent crime declined significantly, and over a steady period of time within the past two decades. We did not exclude cases where crime started to increase again after a steady decline, because such cases may provide interesting insights about sustainability challenges of such policies.

Given the difficulty in finding comparable crime data across countries, and the fact that this is used as the main proxy to define a country’s level of violent crime, we used homicide rates as our basic indicator to categorise the crime decline. While widely considered the most accurate, and most accessible indicator for measuring overall crime, the use of homicide rate indicator still comes with important caveats. First, the legal definition of a homicide often differs across countries; some countries include traffic accidents or even abortions as homicides, for example. Since we use homicide rates only as a selection criteria and not to compare across cities, some variation in the definition is acceptable. Perhaps a more important caveat is that while homicide rates are generally accurate as a proxy for overall levels of interpersonal crime and violence, especially ‘common’ violence or gang/youth violence, they are less useful for measuring other forms of violence, especially intimate partner or domestic violence. This paper focusses on more ‘public’ forms of violence, and therefore its application to what might work to reduce domestic or intimate partner violence may be somewhat limited.

Second, since the work would not involve any fieldwork, and the analysis would be primarily based on the existing literature, another criteria for the selection was the availability of enough literature to ‘make the case for a good case’. This allowed us to define an initial group of cities for analysis, within the group of eleven countries in the region with high levels of homicide (UNDP, 2013). We then approached about a dozen experts, academics and professionals from this field to get their inputs on the preliminary list. We reviewed the homicide data for a longer list of

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8 UNDP (2013) divided the region into two groups: those with high levels of homicide rates, which included Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Venezuela; and those with lower levels of homicide, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Peru, and Uruguay.

9 The authors would like to also thank Joan Serra Hoffman, Jorge Llamas, Veronica Martinez-Solares, Jeremy Biden, Paula Miraglia, José Luiz Ratton, Carlos Cruz, Elizabeth Johnston, Andres Villaveces, Jeremy Biddle, Lorena Cohan and Jessica Varat for their inputs on the cities’ selection.
approximately 16 cities in 9 countries, and based on the identified homicide trends over the past two decades, defined a threshold for the general crime decline. We narrowed down to places where the decline, or at least the maintenance at a reduced level, had happened at least for a relatively consistent period, which in some cases represented a decade, and in more recent ones just a couple of years; where the starting point, with homicide rate reaching its peak, before the new policy/programme was adopted, was at least at 40 per 100,000 (almost twice the regional average over the past decade); and where the overall decline of the rate during the period of analysis was considered significant enough by the literature or experts to make it a good or promising case. To the extent that was possible, we also tried to ensure regional representation, including countries with different types of government and legislation on public security\textsuperscript{10}, and to select cities with different demographics composition.

Overall, the selection process was therefore mostly qualitative, almost a subjective pruning of case studies based on recommendations of experts, most cited cases in the literature, and regional and city size balance. At the end of the day, our main concern was to select a pool of experiences that could be most useful to local policymakers and implementers in the region. Nevertheless, since our intention was not to compare the selected cases, but rather to draw lessons from them, we decided to include not only traditional ones that are recurrent in the literature, but also others, more recent and so far less studied ones, such as Mixco, in Guatemala, and Santa Tecla, in El Salvador, for which materials have only recently started to emerge. In that sense, this literature review also contributes to the systematisation of information about promising cases of violence prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean that could inspire further research. The final selection of cities included the following 10 cities in 5 countries, is presented in Table 1 below.

\textsuperscript{10} In this report, the term public security and citizen security will be used interchangeably, according to the nomenclature more used at that particular country.
Table 1. Key Information about the Selected Cities for the Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Period of Analysis</th>
<th>Crime Decline</th>
<th>Decline in Homicide Rate for Period of Analysis (%)</th>
<th>Homicide Rate per 100,000</th>
<th>Decline in Homicide Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Bogota</td>
<td>7,980,000</td>
<td>(1995-2013)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>-70.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Medellin</td>
<td>2,486,723</td>
<td>(2002-2014)</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>-84.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Cali</td>
<td>2,394,870</td>
<td>(1994-2014)</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>-44.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Belo Horizonte</td>
<td>2,479,165</td>
<td>(2003-2010)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>-36.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Recife</td>
<td>1,599,513</td>
<td>(2006-2013)</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>-55.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ciudad Juarez</td>
<td>1,423,166</td>
<td>(2010-2015)</td>
<td>282.7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-93.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Monterrey</td>
<td>1,183,171</td>
<td>(2011-2015)</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>-81.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Santa Tecla</td>
<td>121,908</td>
<td>(2005-2013)</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-78.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Mixco</td>
<td>495,079</td>
<td>(2008-2011)</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-42.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: See Appendix 1 for sources per country and selected cities and methodological considerations about data collection.

The purpose of including such variety of cases, some of which better documented than others, was to provide information that can be valuable to a diverse group of policy makers and technicians, who have to face different levels of crime and violence challenges under different institutional frameworks and with different capacity. The level of depth of the analysis of each individual case, however, also varies since there is uneven information available about them. Some, such as the Colombian cases or Belo Horizonte, in Brazil, refer to policies and programmes that have been in place for a decade or more, which has allowed for a larger number of studies. In these cities, the strategies discussed also involved strong partnership with universities, which also contributed to more analysis about them.

Structure of The Report

This report is divided into 8 sections. After this introduction, we devote one section to each country and its respective cities. We start with Colombia and its three case studies, Bogotá, Medellín and Cali; followed by Brazil, where we look at Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro and Recife; Mexico, focused on Ciudad Juarez and Monterrey; Guatemala, looking at Mixco; and El Salvador, where we present the case of Santa Tecla. Section 7 then looks at common trends identified across these examples as well as common challenges. The last presents our conclusions. Appendix 1 includes additional graphs produced in the writing process, including those where we could find data disaggregated by age and which shows that youth was disproportionately affected by homicides throughout the period of analysis.
Colombia

National Context

Less than thirty years ago, Colombia was mainly known as one of the world’s most violent places. A longstanding-armed conflict between the government, leftist guerrillas and paramilitary groups; the dominance of drug cartels; and high levels of police corruption had led to unprecedented levels of insecurity. Homicide rates increased by almost 160 percent in less than 10 years, between 1985 and 1995 (Heinemann e Verner, 2006).

Although the country still has one of the highest murder rates in Latin America, in recent decades Colombia has become a major reference point for the field of urban violence reduction and prevention. In a process that involved a shift from control toward prevention, significant national as well as local government efforts, partnerships with academia and civil society, as well as the participation of the private sector, some of Colombia’s largest cities achieved sharp and steady reductions in crime rates. In 2014, Colombia registered 26 murders per 100,000, its lowest rate in thirty years.

The main reasons behind this shift have captured the attention of policymakers and experts around the globe, and they can be traced to a multiplicity of factors. Because of its prominence as a success story, the Colombian experience has been the subject of many studies and evaluations over the years. This should not be taken to mean that it is necessarily more successful than other cases that have been less studied.

Colombia differs from many other countries in the region in that violence in urban areas has historically been inextricably linked with the civil conflict between various leftist insurgent groups, paramilitary groups and the state. The Colombian state has been dealing with insurgencies since the 1960s, and with powerful drug trafficking organisations since the 1980s. National security policy has shifted to deal with these evolving threats. For the purpose of this literature review, which focuses on urban violence prevention, we will not be discussing specific details of the armed conflict per se or the ongoing peace negotiation process. However, we do make links to these factors relevant.

The Colombian experience with successful reduction in urban violence is essentially a story about strong and consistent leadership by local governments, within a context of national reform. This chapter begins there, with the 1991 constitutional reforms that devolved more decision-making authorities to the municipal level, allowing mayors to take strong leadership in violence prevention. A second factor was the establishment of crime and violence surveillance systems that facilitated the targeting of resources to geographic areas and high-risk populations where they could be most effective. Third, the combination of control measures with a strong focus on social and situational prevention that addressed key risk factors helped build resilience to violence. These measures
brought in a broad base of stakeholders, including academic centres, non-profits and community members and leaders, to ensure that the interventions were context-appropriate, and provide feedback to make needed changes throughout implementation.

While the three cities discussed here all saw important decreases in violence, Bogotá and Medellín have had more success than Cali at maintaining those declines over time. The related challenges and factors for this are discussed later in the chapter, and centre on political commitment to sustain longer term strategies that target some of the key underlying risk factors that drive violence in urban cities. What we will also see in the next chapters is that, beyond these three cities, the Colombian experience has also influenced many other cases in Latin America.

*Early Reforms Set the Stage*

Although the policies discussed in the following sections focus on the initiatives that led to the first years of crime decline in those three cities (in different time periods between early 1990s and mid 2000s), as well as on the principles, institutional arrangements and strategies that allowed their relative sustainbility overtime, it is important to situate these in the context of national policy reforms. Learning from its own experiences and through evaluations of several local programmes, and also as a response to the changes in Colombia’s security context, throughout the 2000s the national government continued to refine the legal framework that would lay the foundation for integrated citizen security policies and programmes.

The Constitution of 1991 and the National Strategy against Violence (*Estrategia Nacional contra la Violencia*) launched by President Cesar Gaviria (1990-1994), the first national policy focussed on security, made important advances in the identification and formulation of actions to improve citizen security, bringing attention to human rights issues and groups at higher risk of victimisation, such as youth. In particular, the 1991 constitution devolved greater power to local governments. This redefined the role of mayors, in particular making them heads of the security forces in their jurisdictions and giving a stronger role in monitoring of police activities. The issuance of the Security for People strategy (*Seguridad para la Gente*), in 1993, tried to make further advances in that respect.

This broad reform process included a major reorganisation of the police forces. One of the distinct aspects of such reorganisation – and an apparent factor in its success – was that it was promoted by the institution itself, and not driven by external political interventions. It began with a crackdown on corruption that resulted in the discharge of over 7,000 officers in 1994, and continued in 1995 with the creation of the National Police Integrated Management System (*Sistema de Gestión Integral*). With the support of the academia (specifically, Los Andes University), the reform also involved the development of a more business and results oriented policing system.
These policing reforms were consolidated into their first Strategic Institutional Plan for 1999-2002. This plan was centred around five key axes: community participation, a new working culture, strengthening operational capacity, management development, focus on knowledge, and an effective management of the administrative system (Fruhling, 2003; Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, 2015).

The national guidelines established by the Strategic Institutional Plan were translated at the local level into municipal citizen security plans. However, while the latter provided local governments with the necessary legal authority to act and innovate, and included the necessary reforms at the police level, it took the political will of selected designated mayors to take that new responsibility and transform it in innovations that would lead to significant improvements in citizen security (Martin, 2013).

**Putting Prevention at The Centre of a National Strategy**

The second national security strategy, the Defense and Democratic Security Policy (*Política de Defensa y Seguridad Democrática*) of 2002, was a muscular, counter-insurgency intervention aimed at eliminating threats to the state, and financed heavily by bilateral partners (especially the United States) and a ‘wealth tax’ levied on the country’s richest taxpayers. The policy was therefore mostly focussed on the armed conflict and narcotrafficking, although it also included the reduction of homicide as one of its priorities, and homicide rates in Colombia continue to decline (Velásquez, 2005). With that policy, President Alvaro Uribe (2002-06 and 2006-10) began to reverse the trend of up until the early 1990s, whereby the national military had been deliberately kept weak in order to prevent coups.

Local governments were not given a significant role in this policy, nor was there a strong focus on citizen security. This gap was later filled by the Safer States and Municipalities Program (*Programa Departamentos y Municipios Seguros*). Launched in 2004 under the main responsibility of the National Police, this initiative would bring mayors back to the centre stage of security efforts (Velásquez, 2005).

Beginning in 2010, violence prevention took a prominent role at the national front. In that year, a Presidential Advisory Board on Safety (*Alta Consejería Presidencial para la Seguridad*) was created with the goal of defining a national and integrated policy that would respond to the main crime and violence challenges faced by Colombia’s cities.

The Advisory Board led the formulation of a National Citizen Security and Coexistence Policy (*Política Nacional de Seguridad Ciudadana y Coexistencia, PNSCC*). Officially launched in 2011, this policy, the first of its kind in Colombia’s history, was created with the main goals of breaking the cycle of violence, strengthening the social environment and empowering local communities, and building capacity of scientific and judicial institutions. At a conference held in Cali, in 2013,
Francisco Lloreda, then head of the Advisory Board, explained that the national policy had been based on several evidence-based principles, including that: “a) preventing violence is more effective and less costly than addressing its consequences, b) violence has multiple causes but also multiple intervention points, c) interventions should be comprehensive, but with focussed implementation, d) and interventions should occur early in life and be prolonged” (World Bank, 2014).

These principles informed the definition of the policy’s five central pillars for intervention: (1) Social and Situational Prevention, which included policies targeted at youth, families, and the recuperation of public spaces, and responded for 86 of the 147 actions proposed by the policy; (2) Police Presence and Control, including permanent police presence near the community and focussed and strategic deployment of forces, and the strengthening of the National Plan for Community Surveillance by Cuadrantes (Plan Nacional de Vigilancia Comunitaria por Cuadrantes)\(^\text{11}\); (3) Justice, Victims and Socialisation, with improvements in the justice system, inclusion of alternative justice mechanisms, and support for victims of violence; (4) Culture of Legality and Coexistence, including the creation of a non-violence media strategy; and (5) Active and Responsible Citizenship. These central pillars were complemented by two crosscutting areas that included all efforts to improve information systems, monitoring and evaluation, and promote legal reforms to sustain the actions implemented by the policy (Alta Consejería Presidencial para la Seguridad, 2011, 2012).

The policy formulation process started with a broad diagnostic, which showed a strong concentration of violence in certain geographic areas: in 2010, 80 percent of all homicides registered in the country had happened in just 30 percent of the country’s municipalities. Four of them, including Bogotá, Medellín and Cali, were responsible for 30 percent of the total number of murders. This diagnostic led to the prioritisation of 20 municipalities where national and local efforts would be mostly concentrated (Alta Consejería Presidencial para la Seguridad, 2011, 2012). Lessons learned with the crime decline in several areas of the country had also shown that inter-institutional coordination, buy-in from all levels of government, and continuous dialogue were prerequisites for a sustainable policy (World Bank, 2014).

\(^{11}\) The Plan Cuadrantes Program was launched in 2010 as part of these national efforts and based on the same principles. It consists of a community policing strategy and patrolling programme that divided large cities into small geographical areas (cuadrantes), assigning a small group of police officers to each area under a distinct protocol that involved more community interaction and additional training in interpersonal skills. This strategy recognised that new types of violence that had emerged in urban cities, required law enforcement to change its way of operations, and include more elements of prevention, focussing on coexistence and citizen security (World Bank, 2014). An independent evaluation of the programme showed that it can lead to a reduction of different types of crimes, including homicides, possibly because its training programme increases the patrol police’s sense of accountability to the population and promotes higher police motivation (Garcia et al., 2012).
That assessment led an integrated intervention model and a targeted territorial prioritisation to become the core elements of the national policy (Alta Consejería, 2012), which contributed to the coordination of more than 17 national agencies and an increased cooperation between those and their municipal counterparts. The two main mechanisms to ensure such coordination were the national Citizen Safety Transversal Board (Junta Directiva de Seguridad Ciudadana/ Mesa Transversal), chaired by the President, and the Discussion Boards, organised as working groups across the country, with the participation of the mayors of the prioritised cities. At the local level, Security Councils were complemented by Territorial Committees of Public Order (Comités Territoriales de Orden Público), with the first being responsible for the proposal and design of citizen security plans, and the latter for their implementation, among other functions. Thus, while implemented at the national level, the policy included specific actions and responsibilities targeted at local governments, including the development of Integrated Security and Coexistence Municipal Plans (Plan Integral de Seguridad y Convivencia) that also had a special focus on the most violent neighbourhoods. Although no impact evaluations of the national policy, specifically, have been carried out yet, the National Policy Management Report of 2012, the latest available, shows some progress in the activities proposed.12

Translating Data into Action

A key element of Colombia’s national and local strategies to reduce and prevent crime and violence that needs to be emphasised, as it relates to all efforts previously mentioned, is the investment in improving data collection systems to inform policy design. The country could be considered the region’s top example on the development of municipal crime observatories that have contributed to reduce homicides by informing the design, targeting and evaluation of interventions, through the collection and analysis of the most basic data about each injury incident: what incident happened (e.g. homicide, attempted homicide, etc.), where (geo-referenced location), when (e.g. day of the week and time), how (e.g. weapon), profile of the victim (e.g. age, gender), and context (e.g. interpersonal or domestic violence, gang involvement, confrontation with the police, etc.).

This trend started in the early 1990s in Cali, with a mortality surveillance system developed by the mayor’s office. Since then, many others were established at the municipal level with the main objective of documenting and preventing the occurrence of violence and unintentional injury, through a collaborative process that involved the participation of national institutions (Llamas and

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12 The report also notes that, between January and August of that year, the number of homicides in the 20 prioritised municipalities had fallen 12 percent, in addition to reductions in other crime indicators. (Available at: http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Seguridad-Ciudadana/consejeria/Paginas/objetivos-y-principios-politica-nacional-seguridad-convivencia-ciudadana.aspx).
Hoffman, 2011). The use of surveillance systems to inform decisions about targeting prevention resources appears to have been an important factor in the drop in violence. An assessment of policies that had been established by local governments in seven small Colombian cities based on data from crime observatories found an average decrease in homicides of almost 50 percent over a two-year period (2002-2004), although the study does not affirm that such results are attributed to the surveillance methods or to the policy initiatives stemming from it (Gutierrez-Martinez et al., 2007).

**Bogotá: Empowering Local Governments for Citizen Security**

Colombia’s capital, Bogotá, is considered one of the best examples of crime reduction in the Latin American region. The city managed to achieve sharp declines in homicides over a long and consistent period of time, with different municipal administrations providing continuity to public policies, and also further expanding or improving them. In a period of only ten years (1993-2003), homicide rates fell by more than 70 percent, in a pattern that would continue relatively stable for the following decade. In 2013, the city had its lowest homicide rate in over thirty years, of 16 per 100,000, almost half of the national average and also lower than the regional average.

**Figure 2. Homicide Rates per 100,000 inhabitants, Bogotá and Colombia, 1993-2013**

These results are attributed by specialists to a comprehensive process that included the institutionalisation of citizen security management at the city level, and the explicit and continuous

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13 During this period, there were small increases in homicide rates from one year to another only in 2005, 2008 and 2010.
definition of citizen security as a top priority for the government since 1995. Driven by the strong political leadership of subsequent mayors, this experience shows that a variety of measures can be pushed from the local level, and that different types of institutional mechanisms can be built in to connect local initiatives with national entities, such as the National Police and other public security agencies (Velásquez, 2005; Llorente and Rivas, 2005).

This section focuses mostly on the initial eight years of crime decline in Bogotá (1995-2003), which laid the foundation for the sustainable pattern that continued, and for which there is more literature available. It provides an overview of the main policies mentioned in the literature as potential drivers of such decline, as well as the institutional changes that contributed to their successful implementation.

**Political Prioritisation, Institutional Setup and The Role of Information**

The appropriation by mayor Antanas Mockus (1995-1997; 2001-2003), in 1995, of the citizen security agenda, placing this issue at the centre of the government’s agenda and at the highest management level within the city administration, was crucial for the development of the policies and programmes to come and their sustainability over time. As an initial step, Mockus led the creation of a Security and Coexistence Council (*Consejo de Seguridad y Convivencia*), which was strengthened three years later when it was converted to the Sub-department of Citizens’ Security and Coexistence (*Sub-departamento de Seguridad y Convivencia*), with more structure and authority. While the department was in charge of developing plans and programmes, inter-institutional coordination bodies, such as the Security Councils and an Epidemiological Monitoring Committee (*Comité de Vigilancia Epidemiológica*), contributed to their design and to the monitoring and evaluation of their implementation.

The government of Bogotá invested heavily in setting up the institutional infrastructure for violence prevention. This included, first, a surveillance system that began to gather and disseminate accurate information about crime incidents. Following the epidemiological public health approach implemented a few years earlier in Cali, which tried to identify risk factors in order to design measures to prevent injuries from occurring, Mockus and his successor, Henrique Peñalosa (1998-2001) invested in a surveillance system that engaged different institutions in persisting to reduce homicides and in injuries in general. The Crime and Violence Observatory, later modernised and transformed into the Unified Information System on Violence and Delinquency that is still in place.

14 According to Concha-Eastman and Guerrero (1999), “epidemiological surveillance is defined as a systematic, continuous, and timely collection of reliable, relevant and necessary information about some health conditions of the population, whose analysis and interpretation are useful for decision making” (p.323) (authors’ translation).
today (Sistema Unificado De Información en Violencia y Delincuencia de la Subsecretaria de Gobierno de Bogotá, SUIVD), collects data from the Metropolitan Police and the National Institute of Legal Medicine, in the case of homicides, on all violent deaths that occur in the city. It provides specific information on a victim’s identity, place and time of the injury, days of the week, mechanisms or types of weapons used etc., with the ultimate goal of identifying the main risk factors behind them and defining measures that could prevent them from reoccurring (Villaveces et al., 2000; Llorente and Rivas, 2005).

Information generated by the SUIVD was used at the Security Councils meetings, and directly informed the decision making process in the design of some of the policies that will be discussed below. The system also allowed a series of studies focussed on different topics related to citizen security and the development of a variety of evaluations of the specific activities, mostly financed by the city.

The improvements in collecting information, and disseminating it to policymakers, helped to foster a culture of monitoring and evaluation and transparency, and with it, stronger involvement of the civilian authorities in the provision and supervision of security services (Abuelafia, 2010a).

Changing a Culture of Violence

In addition to the aforementioned institutional transformations, Mockus’ first years in government are largely remembered for his campaigns to change a “culture of violence”. Based on the hypothesis that the high levels of violence found in the city were largely a consequence of a culture that began with intolerance and was exacerbated by the availability of alcohol and guns, and with patterns of family violence that started with maltreatment of children, the Mockus administration promoted a series of measures to change citizen behaviour (Llorente and Rivas, 2005). Media and educational campaigns on issues such as domestic violence, alternative conflict resolution, and alcohol and drug use were widely used. Nontraditional methods, such as anti-violence “vaccination days” for children, or the use of mime artists in transit accident prevention campaigns, were also part of these initiatives. Overall, Mockus’ measures aimed at improving citizen security and enhancing the coexistence among Bogotá’s citizens by promoting institutional and behavioural changes (Abuelafia, 2010a).

Based on information gathered by the surveillance system, which indicated that the vast majority of homicides were committed with firearms, especially on weekends between Friday 6 p.m. and Monday 6 a.m., both Mockus (in his two terms) and Penalosa led an aggressive and intermittent

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15 The SUIVD was one of about 15 observatories designed to increase transparency and monitoring and evaluation of municipal management (Velasquez, 2005).
programme to ban and confiscate firearms (Villaveces et al., 2000). This included voluntary disarmament campaigns; a gun buy-back programme that had the church and the private sector as key partners; and a ban on concealed firearms during selected time periods, especially on weekends and public holidays, using police checkpoints and traffic stops (Villaveces, 2013). By 2001, Bogotá’s residents had handed in some 6,500 firearms. Confiscation of illegal guns increased more than 160 percent, going from 6,000 in 1995, to 16,000 in 2003 (Llorente and Rivas, 2005).

Data had also shown that one third of the victims of homicides had high levels of alcohol in their blood and that more than half of the transit accident fatalities implied high consumption of alcohol (Llorente and Rivas, 2005). These findings led to another parallel set of measures to reduce the risk factors related to violence, which was to control the use of firearms and alcohol consumption. They included a voluntary disarmament campaign and a gun buy-back programme; and the reduction of functioning hours for bars, the so-called *Hora Zanahoria* (Carrot Law), which limited alcohol sales until 1 a.m. and also included intense police operations to check compliance with the law. With the constant and significant reduction in the number of violent deaths in the city overtime, Peñalosa and Mockus, during his second term, made the law more flexible. By 2003, the limit had been pushed to 3 a.m., and the policy rebranded as *Hora Optimista* (*optimistic hour*). Both gun and alcohol control measures were accompanied by intense communications and educational campaigns.

**Improving Urban Environments and Strengthening Social Inclusion**

While the policies related to a change in culture and behaviour were initially pushed by Mockus, with Peñalosa being responsible for their continuity, the focus on recovery of public spaces as a citizen security measure is linked in the literature to Peñalosa’s term. Inspired by the “broken windows” theory 16, “Misión Bogotá”, the mayor’s main citizen security and coexistence programme consisted of a combination of activities to renovate the social and physical environmental of some of the most vulnerable and deteriorated areas of the city, including urban renewal, the construction of public spaces for coexistence, and improvements in the provision of public services such as transportation. The programme, which was accompanied by an intensified police presence, operating in strong collaboration with community associations, also provided support for at risk population (Llorente and Rivas, 2005; Abuelafia, 2010a). Between 1999 and 2002, almost 4,000 jobs as “Civic Guides” were offered to youth, sex workers, homeless people and to those displaced by violence, among others, in an effort to break the stigma toward these groups and offer them income opportunities and support. The guides would educate the public on a variety of topics that

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16 The broken windows theory argues that lack of public order, such as the presence of abandoned and deteriorated buildings, noisy places, poor illumination, and petty criminal behaviour may lead to more criminal activities (Kelling and Cole, 1998).
would promote good and responsible behaviour for safety and coexistence in public spaces (Martin and Ceballos, 2014). These social inclusion efforts provided what Llorente and Rivas (2005) consider to have been the most significant coexistence programme led by that administration.

Other initiatives promoted by both mayors targeted youth at-risk (including those in conflict with the law and school dropouts), their families, and victims of sexual violence included job training and educational and artistic activities. It also involved short courses focussed on building coexistence and social skills for youth going through reintegration processes, and activities that promoted youth involvement in the community. Changes in the schools’ curriculum to promote peaceful coexistence were also made. Between 1998 and 2005, more than 25,000 youth benefitted from these interventions (Velásquez, 2005).

**Strengthening Justice Services, And Reforming the Metropolitan Police Force**

The literature also highlights the alternative justice and conflict resolution mechanisms established around this time in Bogotá as part of the key citizen security measures adopted over that period. The Family Police Stations (Comisarias de Familia), for example, were expanded (from 5 to 20, just in 1995); and 12 Conflict Mediation Centres and 2 Houses of Justice were created to address issues between neighbours and family members, prevent child abuse and domestic violence, and improve access to judicial services (Velásquez, 2005; Abuelafia, 2010a). Likewise, investments were also made to expand the city’s detention capacity, including the building of a Permanent Justice Unit (Unidad Permanente de Justicia, UPJ), which integrated different justice service providers and helped to speed up processes. Criminal investigation was also strengthened through the standardisation of police procedures for the inspection crime scenes and training to technical teams of different agencies.

Finally, significant efforts were also made to strengthen the metropolitan police and improve its operations, starting with substantial investments in police infrastructure and logistics. The presence of patrolling officers on the streets was also increased, with additional training for more than 14,000 officers being provided in different areas such as human rights and judicial police (Velásquez, 2005). A Community Policing programme was formally introduced in 1999 to bring the police closer to Bogotá citizens.

Other programmes promoted by the police to encourage community engagement in citizen security matters included the Citizen Security Schools (Escuelas de Seguridad Ciudadana), which provided training to community leaders to work with authorities in violence prevention efforts in their respective communities; and Safer Zones (Zonas Seguras), which consisted in the definition of 28 city blocks, especially in commercial and with high population density, where the police, with the participation and support from organised community, would be permanently present.
Linking Municipal Efforts to an Overarching National Strategy

It is important to note that all the aforementioned policies and programmes were part of an integrated national Citizen Security and Coexistence Plan (Plan de Seguridad y Convivencia) first launched in 1995. Thus, the multi-institutional and interdisciplinary approaches used to address the violence and crime in Bogotá were coordinated within an overarching strategy with assigned resources to implement projects, programmes and strengthen the National Police and other judicial bodies in order to prevent violence (Velásquez, 2005). This plan was also externally watched by “Bogotá como Vamos” (Bogotá, How are we Doing?), a private initiative led by the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá, the main newspaper of the country (El Tiempo) and a recognised NGO, which started to monitor the Plan’s results by conducting surveys of victimisation and perceptions of safety. This initiative, which continues today, helped to show that, during those years, Bogotá citizens were feeling increasingly safer, more confident in the police, and fewer reports of victimisation were being registered (Velásquez, 2005).

**Box 1. Evaluating the Impacts of Bogotás’ Citizen Security Interventions**

Despite the improvement of data gathering and analysis, and the focus on monitoring and evaluation, few evaluations have been able to separate the specific impacts of the different programmes and policies discussed. Most evaluations focus on the gun and alcohol control measures. For example, Llorente, Nunez y Rubio (2000) found that the Hora Zanahoria contributed at best to 8 percent of the reduction of homicides in the city, and gun control measures by 14 percent. Looking at data for 1995 and 1996, Villaveces et al. (2000) found gun restrictions to be responsible for 13 percent of homicide decline over that period.

In an attempt to separate the effect of distinct policies implemented in Bogotá from 1993-2002, Sanchez et al. (2003) classified the interventions according to the following typology: sticks (i.e. deterrence and incapacitation of criminals, measured against variables such as arrests, rates of police officers per 100,000); carrots (modifying changes in the economic environment, such as unemployment rates and expenditures in education and health); sticks and carrots (policies focussed on modifying social risk factors, such as gun and alcohol control and the promotion of a civic culture, and using as proxy the rate of deaths in traffic accidents per 100,000 habitants); and broken windows (e.g. investments in the recovery of public spaces). Their conclusions point to the “stick” policies having most effects on homicide, explaining 53 percent of the total murders over that period and 76 percent of the robberies. Carrot policies showed an impact of 9 percent and 2 percent, respectively, on the same types of crime; the carrot-stick policies explained 11 percent and 12 percent of the decrease in homicides and robberies; and broken windows 8 percent and 11 percent.

Llorente and Rivas (2005) and Abuelafia (2010a) also mention an unpublished study by Alviar et al. (2003) that looked at the effectiveness of conciliation and of prevention measures of the
**Comisarias de Familia** in cases of domestic violence. According to the authors, this analysis recognises the positive effects of the **Comisarias** but point to serious challenges in the handling of cases that involve physical violence. The study concludes that protection was effective in stopping violence, but conciliations were not.

**Leading by Continuity**

In the words of Hugo Acero Velásquez, Secretary for of Security and Coexistence of Bogotá for nine consecutive years (1995-2003), when analysed as a whole, the Bogotá example for those ten years shows that “the positive results in crime rates were the result of the local and coordinated work of different actors under strong political leadership of mayors who bet on a long-term development vision for the city”, in a balanced combination of preventive and coercive actions (Velásquez, 2005).

Even though homicides continued to decline over the following decade, some experts have criticised what they view as the disintegration of public security policy at the city level in subsequent years, as well as the lack of management of these issues by mayors and secretaries of government, directly responsible for the safety of citizens (Velásquez et al., 2013). That said, several plans were developed since 2003. A White Paper on Citizen Security and Coexistence was published by the city government in 2008, providing a retrospective of the achievements in this field in Bogotá and problematising remaining challenges. In 2011, the integrated citizen security plan Bogotá, Protective and Safe City (**Bogotá, Ciudad Protectora y Segura**) was launched, centred around three key strategies: the consolidation of safer territories, promoting a culture of violence prevention, and institutional strengthening. The Metropolitan Police also presented its Master Security Plan, based on the Strategic Institutional Plan of 2010-2014, providing a detailed diagnostic and proposing a series of strategies, programmes and projects, with their respective responsible agencies, for the period of 2012-2015. Finally, the Integrated Policy of Coexistence and Human Security, with a specific focus on children and youth, was launched in 2014.17

No evaluations of such plans and interventions are available to identify the specific impact of the programmes and projects implemented. However, a review of the different plans published by the Bogotá Chamber of Commerce in 2014 pointed to a few conclusions that attribute these strategies to the first decade of crime decline, and based on that provides the following recommendations: the mayor’s leadership is key to institutionalise the policy and allow the necessary follow up for its execution, monitoring and evaluation; integrated plans should be designed in close coordination.

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17 For a review of policies and programmes implemented under these plans between 2008 and 2012, see **Políticas y Programas de Seguridad Ciudadana en Bogotá, 2008-2014** (Camara de Comercio de Bogotá, 2014).
with the Metropolitan Police and all other jurisdictions, including civil society, in order to facilitate coordination in the implementation phase; these plans should be adopted at the beginning of the mayor’s term and not at the end of their administrations, as it has been the case, which compromise the continuity of previous efforts. This review also stresses the importance of further strengthening a territorial approach to violence prevention, concentrating efforts in the most violent areas; the need to increase transparency and accountability mechanisms; and suggests that improving perceptions of insecurity should also be included as a specific goal within the citizen security plans (CCB 2014). Finally, an assessment made by the Bogotá District Veeduría (Oversight/Accountability Office), also recommended stronger community participation, the promotion of external evaluations and political leadership to improve the city’s administration of security issues (Velásquez et al., 2013).

These criticisms relate to a continuous debate on the institutional mechanisms that should be responsible for the design and execution of security policies both at the national and at the city level. While Medellín has a Security Secretary, for instance, Bogotá up until now only had a unit in charge of surveillance data. Over the past few years, the city has been debating the creation of a specific Secretary of Security, which could help to further ensure the continuation of polices over different administrations. In 2016, Henrique Peñalosa was elected mayor once again, and made the creation of the secretary one of its priorities.

**Medellín: Promoting Inclusion for Violence Prevention**

In the early 1990s, Medellín had become known as the most violent city in the world. Home to Pablo Escobar, during the conflict between his cartel and other armed groups, including the state, the city’s homicide rates neared 400 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1991. With his death in 1993 and the dismantling of the Medellín Cartel, a few years followed with huge drops in homicide rates. However, the urbanisation of Colombia’s long-standing armed conflict, combined with other drivers of crime and violence, led to a different type of control of the city. Entire territories were dominated by insurgent and paramilitary factions, and by 1999 violence started soaring again, reaching 179 homicides for every 100,000 inhabitants in 2002.¹⁹

¹⁸ Perceptions of insecurity have increased in Bogotá in recent years. According to the Bogotá Chamber of Commerce annual surveys, in 2014, 49 percent of Bogotá citizens felt more insecure, when compared to 2013, although the percentage of people who had been victimised decreased by 6 percent over the same period.

¹⁹ According to Salazar (2011), at its height, the urban conflict in Medellín involved some 650 armed bands, 4 National Liberation Army (Ejército para la Liberación Nacional, ELN), and numerous Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC) urban insurgent structures, 3 United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, AUC), paramilitary counterinsurgent units, and an independent militia known as CAP (Armed People’s Commanderships) (Salazar, 2011, 93).
As the number and intensity of armed groups in Medellín’s vulnerable areas increased, the state took a heavy-handed strategy to regain urban territory. Within the context of the national counter-insurgency campaign under President Uribe’s Defense and Democratic Security Policy, the focus was on areas of Medellín controlled primarily by the insurgent group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

However, there was an understanding from the beginning that these gains would not be sustained without immediate measures to restore services, and longer-term efforts to promote a sense of inclusion in the broader city. The initial military interventions were immediately followed by a series of integrated urban and social interventions, and the city was able to turn the corner. By 2004, homicide rates had been reduced by half, and by 2007, they were 37 per 100,000. In 2014, Medellín had its lowest number of murders in 25 years, and for the first time its homicide rate was almost lower than the national average.

Figure 3. Homicide Rates per 100,000 Inhabitants, Medellín and Colombia, 1999-2014

This section focuses mostly on the crime decline of the early and mid 2000s, which most of the literature considers a turning point largely led by local government actions. It should be highlighted, however, that the Medellín experience is extremely multifaceted, as the city embodied the urbanisation of a complex armed conflict, and the relevance of national government efforts in the overall crime decline should not be underestimated. Nonetheless, “efforts at the local level have been responsible for the changes in the local infrastructure and the sustainability of these improvements” (Giraldo-Ramírez and Preciado-Restrepo, 2015). Hence, transformations led by national interventions in 2002 and 2003, combined by the institutional and local political shifts that followed and were consolidated over the next ten years, created structural changes that would allow the reduction of homicide to be relatively sustained over time.


Retaking Control, Demobilising, And Prioritising Security at The Local Level

In the face of the spike in violence led by battles between insurgent groups and paramilitary forces and their control of entire areas of the city, in 2002 the national government, in a joint operation with military forces, the police and justice sector, launched Operación Orión to intervene in one of the most violent sections of the city, the Comuna 13, an area dominated by the FARC. After three days of combat, 300 prisons and 14 deaths, the government was able to recover control of the neighbourhood (Salazár, 2011). Two years after the intervention, the number of murders in Comuna 13 had fallen by more than 75 percent, from 717 registered in 2002 to 173 in 2004 (Velásquez, 2005, 209).

This intervention was followed by a broad process of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of the paramilitary forces. A ceasefire with the paramilitary groups was signed at the end of 2002, contributing to the most dramatic drop in violence ever observed in the country and the city, with murders in Medellín falling from 3,300 in 2002 to 2,200 in 2003. This had the indirect impact of consolidating control of the drug trade in Medellín in the hands of the paramilitary group United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), which many credit with a large part of the dramatic drop in homicides (Isaacson, 2011). The eventual head of the local AUC forces (the Cacique Nutibara Bloc), Diego Fernando Murillo (“Don Berna”), largely controlled the drug trade during subsequent years. Murillo participated in the AUC demobilisation process in 2005, but was later imprisoned for violating the terms of the demobilisation. From his prison cell, he continued to instruct his group in Medellín to keep homicides low (Llorente and Mc Dermott, 2014). Murillo was extradicted to the United States in 2008 and violence rose sharply again as local groups contested territory. However, it is notable that homicides did not get near the pre-2002 levels (see Figure 3), and began to decline soon after. Some analysts point to this as evidence of the effectiveness of the social policies implemented following the 2002 military intervention (Operacion Orion).

Although the demobilisation process in Medellín was led by the National Government as part of the national demobilisation programme, at this point the new city administration, under Mayor Sergio Fajardo (2004-2007), had taken the initiative of establishing a closer relationship with the central government in all security related interventions. Medellín became the first municipal government to take on the demobilisation process as part of the local government responsibility, and later became the Colombian city with the largest cumulative numbers of disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration processes. In its Development Plan, the mayor included a
municipal Peace and Reconciliation Program, which provided psychosocial, education, and economic reintegration support to over 3,500 demobilised people.20

This period represented a turning point in the way Medellín deals with crime and violence, with the municipality making citizen security – and not only coexistence - a core priority in its own agenda (Giraldo, 2008). Fajardo would also develop the city’s own Public Policy for Citizen Security and Coexistence, with a special focus on violence prevention targeted at boys, girls and youth victims of violence (Bonilla and Palma, 2011). His policy would also include initiatives to strengthen the metropolitan police and its presence in the most vulnerable areas, bringing conflict mediation, justice houses and family police stations to these areas, with the goal of bringing justice services closer to community residents.

Social Urbanism as A Crime Prevention Strategy

After the recovery of Comuna 13 and other neighbourhoods in 2002, Fajardo’s administration began a process of re-appropriation of the territories dominated by irregular groups and criminals. Schools and health facilities that had been closed for 5 or 6 years were finally reopened. Under the principle that the quality of urban infrastructure and efficient management of resources would be able to respond to the demands of these communities, the 2004-2007 municipal development plan represented a combination of urban development and upgrading policies, housing, social inclusion and safety, targeted at the city’s most vulnerable areas. These efforts to promote social inclusion through infrastructure improvements became known as "social urbanism". This model proved that it could also work as a crime prevention strategy by effectively contributing to improve the well-being of socially excluded families, promoting positive social behaviour, improving confidence and community integration in high-risk neighbourhoods, and reducing opportunities and incentives for criminal acts (Salazar, 2011).

Social urbanism was materialised in the Integral Urban Projects (Proyectos Urbanos Integrales, PUIs). These sophisticated, individual neighbourhood interventions were essentially highly participatory multi-neighbourhood intervention plans for the most vulnerable areas of the city, contextualised to their own specific needs. The projects had the permanent involvement of community residents, from the decision-making process on how and where to allocate the resources, to the implementation, supervision and monitoring of interventions. It also involved a strong management information system, with the design of strategic indicators for the interventions, allowing the constant, two-way flow of information between the local government, communities and local project managers.

20 The Medellín DDR programme since Fajardo’s administration has been accepted as such a success that the national government has been using it as a model for its own DDR policy (Giraldo-Ramírez and Preciado-Restrepo, 2015).
In the words of Colombian specialist Gerald Martin, “before deciding on which sidewalks to build, they figured out how people walk in the neighbourhood. They would ask where the community wants to gather”. And while that was being done, the government was also already investing in more complex infrastructure projects, such as the building of the library, a new school, or a support centre for business. According to Martin, by the end of Fajardo’s administration, the PUIs had delivered 80 percent of their planned products.

The strategic and participatory management model of social urbanism’s approach was also one its key features. It involved a top-level monitoring strategy, based out of the mayor’s office, in close coordination with a local management and coordination structure that not only rested on strong citizen participation mechanisms, but also involved the integration and coordination of several different government agencies. Each PUI had a task force to meet and coordinate all actions.

Local Government Committees (Comites Locales de Gobierno) were also created to work as an interlocutor between the central administration and the communities (Bonilla and Palma, 2011; Giraldo, 2008). Composed of a police inspector, the family commissar (from the family police stations), the commander of the police station, a social technician and the chairman of the local administration board, the purpose of these committees, which were established in several communities, was to provide an accurate diagnostics of the security, coexistence and public order problems in each commune and lead specific actions to solve them. This mechanism helped to build legitimacy of the state in the territories (Bonilla and Palma, 2011).

This entire decision-making process, analysis of the crime and violence context in the territories, and inter-agency coordination to implement the interventions was later supported by an Information System for Security and Coexistence (Sistema de Información en Seguridad y Convivencia, SISC), created in 2008.

The pilot project that became the symbol of the city’s social urbanism approach was the magnificent Parque España Library and the cable car (Metrocable), built to facilitate the transport of local residents from Comuna 1 to the city centre. Although the library and the cable would become the symbols of the transformation of Medellín around the world, even inspiring the policies that would be replicated in other cities such as Rio de Janeiro, most of the resources were used in the “social” aspect of the social urbanism approach. Of the total amount of US$ 325 million invested by the municipality in the urban area of approximately 150 hectares that was covered by the Metrocable between 2004 and 2007, 80 percent was directed to 290 social programmes. These included “health and basic and secondary educational services, integral protection for children and vulnerable households, psychosocial and legal assistance for victims of violence, support for communities receiving ex-combatants, access to recreational, cultural and sport activities for youth, promotion and monitoring of participatory budgeting processes, and improvement of access to administrative and consensual justice, among others” (Salazar, 2011). The other 20 percent were used in the improvement and building of public spaces, such as the library park.
Even though the social interventions in these neighbourhoods had human development and improvements of citizen’s quality of life as their primary objective, policy makers and analysts alike increasingly acknowledged that social urbanism had a positive impact on citizen security (Giraldo, 2008). In an attempt to measure the effects of these urban interventions on violence reduction, Cerda et al. (2012) looked at the neighbourhoods that had benefited from the public transit system and heavy investments in the local infrastructure. Comparing data from these areas with that of similar neighbourhoods not targeted by the same interventions, the authors found that the reduction in the homicide rate during the 2004-2008 period was 66 percent greater in targeted neighbourhoods than in the control areas. Resident reports of violence also decreased 75 percent more.

A Policy of Continuity

The demobilisation and reintegration process started by Fajardo, as well as his social urbanism approach embodied in the Integral Urban Plans, were continued by the following administration of mayor Alonso Salazar (2008-2011), who had been deputy mayor for security in Fajardo’s cabinet. His Master Plan for Security, Defense and Justice (Plan Maestro de Seguridad, Defensa y Justicia) had a heavy emphasis on the modernisation of the security and justice agencies, as well as on human rights and the protection of victims of violence (Giraldo 2008). Salazar also aimed at continuing to revert the historical trend of youth exclusion from public policies, as acknowledged by the previous administration, which in their view “had opened the way for illegal groups to take advantage of their potential and skills in favor of violence and crime” (Bonilla and Palma, 2011). The implementation of the city’s Public Policy for Citizen Security and Coexistence would continue to focus on programmes targeted at youth at risk in some of the most violent neighbourhoods of the city. According to Gerald Martin, Salazar basically continued with the broad reforms that had been started and essentially consolidated and advanced the agenda that had been defined by Fajardo’s team.

Despite Salazar’s advances in this reform agenda, difficulties with the demobilisation process, the extradition of top paramilitary commanders, and the resurgence and proliferation of criminal gangs (also known as bandas criminales, or Bacrim) associated with small-scale drug traffic, extortion,

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21 For example, he continued the implementation of the second PUI, in Comuna 13, and started a couple of others. He also continued the building and upgrading of schools, created four new libraries, built a dozen or so pre-kindergartens, and further focussed interventions on the poorest neighbourhoods. (“How Medellin Revived Itself”, Parts 1-4. Citiscope interview with Colombia specialist Gerald Martin, 2014, retrieved from http://www.citiscope.org/story/2014/how-medell%C3%ADn-revived-itself-part-2-reclaiming-city-violence#sthash.3JrFclFe.dpuf).
and illegal economic activities in certain territories, led to an increase in homicide rates between 2008 and 2009. In 2010 the city revised its Citizen Security and Coexistence policy. The adjusted version of the policy was translated into a new plan, "Making Medellín Safer: Together we Can" (Medellín Más Segura: Juntos si Podemos). The reformed policy included a strong emphasis on the integration and coordination of different actors, including law enforcement agencies, justice, civil society and the private sector, and the further territorialisation of actions (Bonilla and Palma, 2011). Integrated strategies were developed for several areas of the city, which were divided according to their own diagnostics for different types of interventions: secure communities, secure zones, sensitive areas, and critical spots. Social mobilisation and civic culture were strengthened, through the creation of citizen networks, security fronts, security schools and area security committees; further social investments were made, especially in programmes targeted at youth; and the modernisation of the judiciary and of security forces was continued.

One of the youth programmes highlighted by the policy included Young Force, which provides psychosocial care, job training, education, and involvement in community social service guidance for youth from the neighbourhoods that have been most affected by violence. By 2011, 20,000 young men had benefitted by the programme (Bonilla and Palma, 2011).

In 2012, Aníbal Gaviria was elected mayor on the same party ticket as former mayor Fajardo, who was by then governor of Antioquia (2012-2015), the state in which Medellín is located. Gaviria’s administration continued and enhanced the approach of previous administrations through the Integral Plan for Security and Coexistence and the creation of the Secretary for Security. During Gaviria’s term, Medellín reached its lowest homicide rate in 35 years, making the greatest regional contribution to the decrease in national-level homicides (Giraldo-Ramírez and Preciado-Restrepo, 2015). Improvements in coordination with the central government and increased articulation with policies at the national level, increases in security investment including police manpower, and progress in the formulation of public policy also contributed to these positive results (Giraldo-Ramírez and Preciado-Restrepo, 2015).

Medellín continues to face serious challenges in sustaining its security achievements. At almost 27 per 100,000, Medellin’s homicide rate is today still much higher than the regional average of 18 (UNODC, 2015). One of the most important challenges relates to its geographical location, surrounded by areas with a strong presence of emerging criminal groups and remnants of traditional ones (Giraldo, 2008). It should not be forgotten that Medellín’s state, Antioquia, was the Colombia region most affected by the armed conflict over the last three decades, with the greatest presence of armed actors. Additionally, a culture of intolerance among youth gangs that control various territories, also exacerbates interpersonal conflicts and violence (Giraldo-Ramírez and Preciado-Restrepo, 2015).

The promising news is that the city has apparently learned, initially inspired by Bogotá, but later following its own lessons, that a lot can be done at the local level when the municipal government
takes responsibility for local security governance. Investments in crime and violence prevention to address risk factors that lead to violent behaviour, the promotion of shared responsibility through partnerships with different actors and a strong participatory and social engagement model, and an uncompromising political commitment to the agenda of security and coexistence through social and urban inclusion are some of the messages that the Medellín experience provides to other cities in the region.

**Box 3. Recent Youth Violence Prevention Programmes in Medellín**

A recent review of youth violence in selected Colombian cities (CERAC, 2014) identified 80 initiatives of youth violence prevention in Medellín being executed since 2008. Out of these, 34 are implemented only in the city, and the other 46 are initiatives implemented at the national level, with Medellín being one of its targeted areas. Of the total of interventions, 37 are directly aimed at preventing youth violence by working with young people from vulnerable areas, at risk of being victims or who are or have been involved in crime and violence. The other 43 initiatives focus primarily on educational programmes, training and development of skills in different areas. Specifically, all programmes are divided across four key areas: social skills, culture and sports, education, and social participation. Most are implemented by NGOs (26), followed by government initiatives (21) and the private sector (17).

**Cali: Applying an Epidemiological Approach to Violence Prevention**

Throughout the 1980s and until the early 1990s, Cali, Colombia’s third largest city, also suffered from a surge in violent crime. In the city, where Medellín’s rival Cali Cartel operated, homicide rates jumped from 23 per 100,000, in 1983, to 104 in 1993. It was then that, under the strong leadership of a new mayor who decided to place citizen security at the central stage of his political agenda, Cali became a pioneer in the region in the development of an integrated and multi-sector intervention at the local level. His successor initially maintained his key prevention policies. By 1997, homicide rates had fallen to 86 per 100,000. Throughout the next decade homicide trends followed uneven patterns, but remained lower than the peak of the early 1990s.
Although less studied than the other two Colombian cases, Cali’s experience offers some unique and fundamental insights for local governments’ efforts. Part of the key pieces of the strategies that would later be developed in Bogotá and Medellín started there, in the early nineties. In addition, the lack of consistency in its crime decline trends also offers important lessons, as it contrasts with the continuity in policies seen in Bogotá and Medellín. This section focuses mostly on the policies implemented in the city in the early nineties, and which influenced many others in the country and the region, as it will be described below.

**Understanding The Problem to Design Evidence-Based Solutions**

When mayor Rodrigo Guerrero (1992-1994; 2012-2015) was first elected, in 1992, the increase in crime rates had made citizen security one of the top concerns for Cali residents. Using his training as an epidemiologist and academic, Guerrero’s first move was to try to understand crime and violence behaviour in the city in the same way one could understand a disease epidemic – as a contagious phenomenon that could be reduced and prevented by addressing risk factors and strengthening resilience factors. His administration started to develop a database to identify all the societal risk factors that were linked to violent behaviour. A multi-disciplinary committee was created, under the direction of an epidemiologist, and involving the police forces, the judiciary, forensic and health and human rights representatives. One of the first tasks of the group was to standardise crime data, since in police and health records homicides were being documented differently. This committee would meet once a week to analyse and prepare a report that would be discussed at the Municipal Security Council, which also met weekly and was presided over by the mayor himself.
Improving information systems and analysing data with the establishment of the injury surveillance system, which would later be replicated by Bogotá and many other cities in the region, was the first step to develop targeted policies to address the risk factors identified. The creation and analysis of this database showed that most of the homicide victims and perpetrators were male youth, many of them unemployed and with lower levels of education (Guerrero, 2015). The data also demonstrated that two thirds of murders happened during weekends and during public holidays, that 80 percent were committed by firearms (Villaveces et al., 2000); and that half of victims had high levels of alcohol in their blood.

The analysis of the data led to the conclusion that the majority of homicides were related to social disintegration rather than the drug trade. The presence of the drug trade was however an important indirect risk factor to violence, because it weakened institutions by threatening and bribing police forces, the judiciary and the political system as a whole. Child maltreatment and constant exposure to violence through the media were also found to be important risk factors (Guerrero, 2015).

**Community Engagement, Focus On Youth and Guns and Alcohol Control**

With the above diagnostic in hand, mayor Guerrero and his team developed the multi-sector programme Development, Security and Peace, or DESEPAZ for its Spanish acronym (Desarrollo, Seguridad y Paz). The programme, founded based on the understanding violence was a multi-causal phenomenon, and that reliable information was necessary to develop the appropriate public policy responses, aimed to tackle the different and complex social processes being identified as the key drivers of violence in the city and the risk factors that could be controlled by local policies. It established violence prevention as its core priority, although enforcement measures were also adopted, together with the improvement of the judiciary and police systems (Concha-Eastman and Guerrero, 1999).

Community empowerment and engagement in policy decision-making process, priority needs assessments, and the promotion of a more tolerant and peaceful culture were all part of the objectives as well principles of the programme, which also aimed to strength municipal capacity to deal with crime and violence (Abulafia, 2010b). Community Government Councils were created in the different neighbourhoods to promote a closer interaction between the government and local residents. Every Monday the mayor and his cabinet would meet with leaders and residents of different communities. To further strengthen government accountability, workshops on how to monitor infrastructure works and service provision and to explain the municipal budget were also

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22 Cali’s surveillance system was replicated in the Department of Valle, the state in which the city is located, and further expanded under the name of ‘crime observatories’ by the CISALVA Institute at the University of Valle (Gutierrez-Martinez et al., 2007).
offered. Media campaigns in collaboration with the private sector with educational messages about peace, coexistence and tolerance were also launched.

DESEPAZ also created “Youth Houses”, spaces that provided social, cultural and sport activities for young people. Investments were also made to improve access to school and quality of education by expanding primary education, building new high schools and creating “didactic centres” with tutors, libraries and computer rooms. Significant outreach efforts were also made to engage high-risk youth (World Bank, 2014). Some gang members who decided to give up their weapons in response to some of the government’s campaigns were offered job training and employment opportunities as contractors with the city government for services such as gardening and cleaning of buildings. They also received support from a team of educators who worked as role models and provided guidance in group activities and discussions. All these multidisciplinary interventions were targeted at the most vulnerable and at risk communities of the city (Abuelafia, 2010b).

Two of the most important policies quickly established based on the diagnostic emerging from the surveillance system were measures to control alcohol consumption and the use of firearms in public spaces. A “semi-draw” was established by restricting alcohol sales in public spaces between 2 a.m. and 10 a.m. The measure didn’t pass without resistance from bars and nightclub owners. To get their support, mayor Guerrero made a ‘deal’ with the sector: the law would be implemented for three months and, if during that period homicide rates had not declined, he would suspend the measure. But the mayor’s bet, trusting the science behind the intervention, proved to be right. In just two weeks, hospitals registered a drastic reduction in all injuries related to violence, which led the mayor to reinforce the law until the end of his term (Guerrero, 2015).

Parallel to that, the local government banned weapon-carrying permits in public spaces in specific dates, such as public holidays as well as paydays, which in Colombia usually coincides with a Friday. The epidemiological surveillance system had identified these dates as high-risk, also because they coincided with higher consumption of alcohol.

**Box 4. Partnering with Academia to Evaluate Policy Impacts**

If policies were being designed based on data and evidence, their continuity or adaptations also had to benefit from a constant process of monitoring and evaluation. The quality of the data provided and the establishment of partnerships with the Research and Development in Violence Prevention and Promotion of Civic Coexistence (CISALVA) at University of Valle, was crucial in that area, and led to the development of different evaluations. Villaveces et al. (2000) found a 14 percent homicide reduction for the 1993-1994 period in which the gun laws were applied. Sánchez et al. (2011) found that alcohol sales restrictions between 2 a.m. and 10 a.m. versus 4 a.m. and 10 a.m., implemented in the 2004-2008 period and following the policies started by mayor Guerrero, were associated with a 25 percent reduction in homicide across the city, and also with significant reductions in traffic injuries.
Strengthening and Improving the Judicial and Police Responses

DESEPAZ also included interventions to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement, and build and restore trust between the police and judiciary system and Cali citizens. Part of this centred on creating incentives for law enforcement to be more efficient and effective. For example, to help fight police corruption, the city government launched a privately funded initiative to help officers become home owners (since some of them were bribed with houses from drug lords), encouraged the continuous studies of those who did not have high school diplomas, and provided special training on human rights.

Six Family Judiciary Precincts were also created to focus on family violence. Two Houses of Peace were also established in violent neighbourhoods, operating 24 hours a day as one-stop shop justice centres where representatives from the police, court etc. provided services. Local communities were also provided with reconciliation centres and community security councils were created, where residents would come to discuss security issues. Such councils helped to start rebuilding trust of citizens on the governments and, specifically, the police forces, encouraging them to provide information about criminals (Conchas-Eastman and Guerrero, 2015).

Finally, criminal investigation was strengthened through the creation of special brigades trained to investigate homicides, and helped to increase the murder clearance rate from 8 percent to 18 percent from 1993 to 1994 (Guerrero, 2015). The participation of law enforcement agencies in the Municipal Security Council weekly meetings also helped to strengthen their work by improving coordination and targeting of law enforcement actions.

It should be noted that all these efforts during Mayor Guerrero’s first term coincided with other structural factors, such as improvements in the economy, capture of Cali Cartel chiefs, and the significant police reform being carried out at the national level. Since the programme as a whole has not been evaluated, it is difficult to attribute relative success to the different factors and interventions. However, a combination of them certainly played a key role.

Intermittent Leadership

A quick look at the homicide trends in Cali, Bogotá and Medellín over the past twenty years shows a significant difference in patterns, with Cali having a much less consistent one. The same could be said about the violence prevention and citizen security policies implemented in the city throughout that period. The dry law and gun control policies were intermittent throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Guerrero’s successor initially continued them, but couldn’t finish his term due to corruption scandals. Crime started to increase again in 1998, and although there would be declines in the mid 2000s, the local administrations of that time were also accused of corruption. Programmes targeting youth were also modified.
Although there were still social prevention interventions being implemented, they became isolated, sporadic and “lost any type of stability, because the idea of an integrated and coordinated strategy was gone”, says Alberto Concha-Eastman, advisor for violence prevention to the city government during three administrations, and also regional advisor on violence prevention for the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). According to Colombian epidemiologist Andres Villaveces, Cali’s structure also made it more susceptible to political changes. Cali did not have a solid bureaucratic office, with a dedicated permanent team, to ensure resilience of the evidence-based policy approach. As a result, new mayors reverted to policies based on political context, not evidence.

The surveillance system, or observatory, on the other hand, was maintained by all administrations, consolidating an accountability mechanism that has allowed universities and the private sector to continue to monitor and evaluate government policies (Concha-Eastman and Guerrero, 1999).

**Adapting The Approach to A Changed Context**

In 2012 Rodrigo Guerrero was elected mayor for a second term. While the big cartels had been dismantled since the 1990s, new and smaller gangs had been formed and new forms of crime had emerged. Thousands of people displaced by the armed conflict had also migrated to the city, requiring a special type of support and assistance. Differently from the initial diagnostic of his first administration, the data this time showed that the proportion of premeditated killings carried out with heavy machine guns, which they classified as organised crime related, had increased substantially and was now higher than the proportion of homicides resulting from interpersonal conflict (Guerrero, 2015). At the same time, the Colombian police had become more professional and trustworthy.

Guerrero brought citizen security back to the centre of the city political agenda, together with the epidemiological approach. The weekly Security Council meetings were resumed. Based on data from the surveillance system, now called Social Observatory, he suggested to the national government the need for specialised groups of criminal investigators, police and prosecutors to dismantle criminal groups in the most high-risk areas of the city, with the worse social, economic and crime indicators. They then developed special integrated interventions for 11 districts under the Inclusion and Opportunities Territories programme (*Territorios de inclusion y Oportunidad*, TIO), which consisted in a massive social investment plan.

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23 Alberto Concha-Eastman was interviewed by the authors in March 2016.
24 Andres Villaveces were interviewed by the authors in January and March of 2016.
This territorial approach aimed at promoting social and economic development of these communities. The key goals were to reduce poverty in these areas and strengthen social cohesion, contribute to peace building, security and resilience, while also empowering communities to manage programmes targeted at them. The programme included early childhood development interventions, recovery of public spaces, activities to promote social inclusion of youth, the establishments of digital centres, and an employment programme that gives youth access to their first job. A methodology to articulate public and private investments in these areas was also developed, helping to ensure the necessary amount of resources and their effective use (Rentería and Bernal, 2015). In 2015, and with the support of the national government efforts to fight organised crime, Cali achieved its lowest homicide rates in over 20 years, of 56 per 100,000.25

TIO made great achievements in increasing community participation and establishing effective mechanisms for public and private partnerships, and led to the effective implementation of resources. However, among its weaknesses is the fact that it lacked a monitoring and evaluation strategy in its early stages, which has not allowed rigorous evaluations to identify the specific impacts of these interventions in the crime decline. Although the new administration that started in 2016 has decided to continue with the programme, another challenge faced by the programme relates to the fact that it has not been institutionalised as a public policy, which makes it susceptible to political changes (Rentería and Bernal, 2015).

Lessons Learned

Although Cali still has a very high homicide rate, significantly above the national average, the city’s pioneer violence prevention efforts have been fundamental in creating a culture of evidence-based interventions that has been spread throughout the region. The epidemiological approach to fight urban violence and its reliance on a strong surveillance system, which have led to several crime observatories in the country and abroad, have made an undeniable contribution to the field of violence prevention in Latin America. Continued efforts are needed to sustain progress, particularly in light of additional political and social risk factors that make up today’s crime and violence context in the city (World Bank, 2014).

In the words of Rodrigo Guerrero (2015), the approach leaves a couple of important lessons: first, following this system requires substantial political will, since the data may show that unpopular measures to address the underlying drivers of violence, such as controlling guns and restricting alcohol sales, may be necessary. The strategy also requires the government to share crime information, which public officials themselves may be reluctant to do. Second, this process

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“requires perseverance and patience”. While certain risk factors can be controlled rapidly, several other measures will require a longer time – more than a political cycle - to show impact. Finally, for Guerrero’s formal advisor, Alberto Concha-Eastman, who has continued as an advisor to the new administration, one of the most important results of the Cali experience was its ability to prove and convince society that violence can be prevented, and that a combination of interventions, not only enforcement activities, should be implemented and can be led by local governments.

**Brazil**

**National Context**

Brazil is known for its beautiful beaches, passion for soccer and carnival, and diverse culture. However, this country of contrasts is also often remembered by its high levels of violence. With almost 200 million inhabitants, the largest population in Latin America, over the past decade Brazil has lost more than 55,000 people per year due to violence, an annual number of deaths similar to countries going through civil wars. In 2014 alone, 58,599 people were victims of an intentional and lethal violent crime, equivalent to a homicide rate of 28.9 per 100,000 (Brazil Forum for Public Safety, 2015).

The high national homicide rate, which has remained relatively stable over the past decade, hides an enormous heterogeneity across regions. While in the Northeast region homicide rates have increased exponentially, rising up to 300 percent in state capital cities such as Natal between 2002 and 2012, Southern States like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have managed to reduce their respective homicide rates by almost 70 percent over the same period (Waiselfisz, 2014). Policy options played a key role in the successful cases, as the Southern region cities of Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro and the Northeastern exception of Recife, to be discussed in this section, show.

**Youth Violence and Vulnerability**

With this staggering figures of homicides, Brazil concentrates more than 10 percent of the total homicides in the world, while its population represents only 2.8 percent of the global population (UNODC, 2013). The country also topped the ranking of nations with most violent cities produced by the Mexican NGO Seguridad, Justicia y Paz. According to their 2015 report, of the 50 most violent cities with more than 300,000 inhabitants in the world, 21 are located in Brazil.

The majority of victims, as well as perpetrators of these crimes, are young men, as it is the case in most countries in the region. Youth in the 15 to 29 years of age cohort accounted for over 30,000, homicide victims, or 53.37 percent percent of the total registered in 2012, even though they represent only 26.9 percent of the country’s population. Of that total, more than 93 percent were men, and over 77 percent afro-descendant (Waiselfisz, 2014).
To make matters worse, not only have youth homicide rates been increasing over the past decade – 10 percent from 2000 until 2012 - but also victims have become steadily younger (Waiselfisz, 2014). This has become such a national concern that an Adolescent Homicide Index (Índice de Homicídios na Adolescência, IHA) was created. The fifth edition of IHA, released in 2014, showed that 36.5 percent of homicide victims in 2012 were in the age cohort 10-18. The index estimates that more than 42,000 Brazilian adolescents and youth ages 12-18 could be victims of homicides between 2013 and 2019.

Prior to that, the government had also developed, in 2008, a Youth Vulnerability to Violence Index (Índice de Vulnerabilidade Juvenil, IVJ), which looks at variables such as school attendance, level of education, insertion in the labour market, rates of death due to external causes and due to violent causes and family income, among others, to determine the level of youth vulnerability at all municipalities with more than 100,000 inhabitants (equivalent to 288 cities in 2012). In 2014 this index was revised to also include a racial dimension. Results showed that an afro-descendant youth in Brazil is, on average, 2.5 times more likely to be killed than a white youth. In some states, such as Pernambuco and Paraíba, that difference is much higher, with afro-descendant youth being 11 or 13 times more at risk, respectively, than white youth (Secretaria Geral Presidência da República, 2015).

**Institutional Framework and Policy Responses**

In Brazil, the National Secretary of Public Security (Secretaria Nacional de Segurança Pública, SENASP) is responsible for the overall coordination of national public security policies and law enforcement agencies. Under the umbrella of the Ministry of Justice, SENASP was created in 1997 to oversee national security policies or plans. Its role has evolved significantly since then,

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26 IHA was developed by the National Secretary of Human Rights in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the NGO Observatório das Favelas, in partnership with the Laboratory for the Analysis of Violence at the State University of Rio de Janeiro (Laboratório de Análise da Violência, Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro, LAV-UERJ). The IHA was developed as part the Lethal Violence Reduction Program (Programa de Redução da Violência Letal) launched by the same institutions in 2007 and coordinated by the Observatory of Favelas, and focussed on producing indicators and methodologies related to the prevention of lethal violence among adolescents and youth in the country, as well as on promoting mobilisation around the issue (Borges and Cano, 2014). In early 2015, the National Secretary of Human Rights created a working group to start designing a National Plan to fight Violence against Children and Adolescents (“SDH vai criar grupo para enfrentar violência letal de crianças”, Portal do Brasil, accessed on January 28, 2016 at [http://www.brasil.gov.br/cidadania-e-justica/2015/01/sdh-vai-criar-grupo-para-enfrentar-violencia-letal-de-criancas](http://www.brasil.gov.br/cidadania-e-justica/2015/01/sdh-vai-criar-grupo-para-enfrentar-violencia-letal-de-criancas).

27 In Brazil, the Statute of Children and Adolescents (Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente, ECA) of 1990 establishes as children those aged 1-11, and as adolescents those aged 12-17. The Statute of Youth of 2013 considers youth those aged 15-29, and mentions that for those aged 15-17, ECA legislation should apply first.
increasing its mandate and efforts to promote studies and analysis, the qualification of police forces, and the systematisation of public security data across the country. The Secretary created in 2001 a National Fund for Public Security (Fundo Nacional de Segurança Pública, FNSP) that provided resources for local governments to invest in citizen security. That contributed to mainstream the violence prevention agenda, transforming municipalities in relevant actors by strengthening their role in prevention (Costa e Lima, 2014).

A National Program for Public Security and Citizenship (Programa Nacional de Segurança Pública com Cidadania, PRONASCI) was launched in 2007, focussed on territories and populations at higher risk of victimisation. It aimed at transforming hotspots areas into “territories of peace” by providing resources to local government to implement specific violence prevention programmes (World Bank, 2013). Any municipality that ‘signed up’ to PRONASCI had to create Integrated Management Cabinets (Gabinete de Gestão Integrada, GGI) to monitor the implementation of the programme. The programme’s two main interventions – Women of Peace (Mulheres da Paz) and Protect (Protejo), which aimed at identifying and proactively assisting youth living in the most dangerous neighbourhoods – were short lived, and by 2012 not much was being said about them.

Safer Brasil (Brasil mais Seguro) was then launched with a pilot in Alagoas, back then the most violent State in the country. Parallel to that, the federal Government also approved new legislation creating a national information system for public security data (Sistema Nacional de Informações de Segurança Pública, SINESP), “with the objective of pressuring states to integrate all police, health and justice sectors databases, systematising the methodologies on data collection used across the country, and promoting the use of evidence in the design of citizen security policies” (World Bank, 2013). The Youth Alive Program (Juventude Viva), which had the specific objective of reducing violence against afro-descendant youth, was also created in 2012, allowing State and local governments to apply for funds for violence prevention policies and projects focussed on youth. None of these efforts have been rigorously evaluated so far.\(^\text{28}\)

In 2015 SENASP announced yet a new Plan – the National Pact for the Reduction of Homicides (Plano Nacional para a Redução dos Homicídios, PNRH). Constructed with the support of a group of experts from the academia and civil society, the Pact aimed at reducing the country’s homicide by 20 percent in four years. It would prioritise 81 municipalities by developing thorough quantitative and qualitative analyses for these areas and, based on those, a matrix of responsibilities, with specific targets and goals, and activities to achieve them, to be carried out by

\(^{28}\) It is worth mentioning the enactment of breakthrough legislation against domestic violence in 2006, the Maria da Penha Law. Although figures on domestic and gender-based violence have not declined since then, it helped put a stop to a long-run increasing trend of female homicide (Cerqueira et al., 2015).
federal, state and municipal governments. The Pact recognises that the responsibility of prevention and coercive measures have been increasingly shared between States and municipalities, and provides an opportunity for municipal governments to expand and strengthen their prevention efforts. The Pact has not been implemented yet, and its future is unclear given the political crisis that hit Brazil in 2016.

In contrast to Colombia, Brazil is a Federal State, in which state Governments have significant authority in several areas. In Public Security, specifically, the Constitution establishes that the two main law enforcement agencies should be under the responsibility of states: the Military Police, responsible for patrolling; and the Civil Police, in charge of investigations. The lack of coordination between the two is a historical problem in the country that adds to the many challenges to improve citizen security. The main agency at the national level is the Federal Police, which performs tasks similar to those of the FBI in the United States. At the local level, 71 percent of the cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, and 84.6 percent of those with a population of 500,000 or larger have municipal guards (their creation is decided by the local governments themselves), whose main role is to protect public spaces (Astolfi, 2015). They were forbidden to carry guns up until 2014, when a legislation further regulating their functions allowed municipal forces to be armed as well, a controversial measure criticised by many specialists.

Under such institutional framework, public security reforms have been traditionally designed and implemented by state governments, and most of them are coordinated by State Public Security Secretariats, which in some cases are called Social Defense or Justice Secretariat. For that reason, when talking about the Brazilian cities in this chapter, we will also be talking about state policies. In a few cases, the State Planning Secretary or another similar government agency coordinates such policies. It is also common for them to have an integrated structure of cooperation and institutional articulation between different sectors, although with different levels of coordination across states. There also seems to be an increasing trend to establish coordination mechanisms of such policies at the municipal level (Engel et al., 2015). Of the total number of cities with municipal guards, for instance, 22 percent now have a Municipal Security Council, 14 percent have a Municipal Public Security Plan, and 5 percent have both (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2015).

29 A national diagnostics published by the Ministry of Justice in 2015 shows that, out of 26 States and the Federal District, 19 declared currently having a specific policy aimed at reducing violent crime; 20 said that a new or additional policy is being planned; and 18 declared having had such policy over the past four years. These numbers are likely higher given that five states, including at least three with well-known security policies, did not respond to the Ministry of Justice questionnaires. Among the 54 reported policies, 25 seemed to have an integrated coordination structure among different government agencies and sectors, and 19 of those included the establishment of articulation mechanisms with municipalities (Engel et al., 2015).
Given the institutional framework established in Brazil, none of the cases of violence reduction discussed in this chapter can be attributed solely to local policies. They were a combination of municipal and state efforts, with the latter being responsible for the reforms within the police that were also necessary to implement the policies or programmes discussed. In the case of Rio de Janeiro and Recife, specifically, the main policies discussed are in fact led by their respective state governments, but in close coordination with and with direct impact at the city level.

Overall, the success of Brazilian cities in reducing violence derives from several factors. On the policy level, the establishment of a national policy framework and municipal strategies for prevention, as well as coordination mechanisms, helped ensure appropriate setting of priorities and targeting of resources. At the strategic level, the sequencing of control measures to recover urban space from non-state actors, followed by re-establishing state presence with basic services, was important in setting the foundation for prevention over the longer-term. The creation of integrated data systems to identify hot spots and target resources was another key factor, along with the strengthening of management of such systems. On the programme level, programmes to address risk factors focussed on youth helped create a more enabling environment for prevention. And across all these efforts, a community-oriented approach gave neighbourhood residents a key role in prioritising, implementing and monitoring the programmes in their areas.

**Belo Horizonte: Fica Vivo Targeted and Cross-Cutting Policy**

Belo Horizonte is the capital city of Minas Gerais, the second most populous State of Brazil and the third highest GDP. Traditionally known as a relatively peaceful city when compared to other state capitals in the country, violence started to increase substantially there in the 1990s. The homicide rate went from 17 per 100,000 in 1998 to 33.9 per 100,000 in 2002.

As a response, in 2003 the state government launched an innovative homicide reduction programme, *Fica Vivo* (Stay Alive), in one of the most violent neighborhoods of the city, and later scaled it to other areas. By 2010 homicide rates in the city had declined by 36 percent. The crime decline at both the city and, to a larger extent, state level, was not constant since the early 2000s, and in recent years’ crime has started to increase again, as Figure 5 below shows. However, several lessons can be learnt from *Fica Vivo* and other policies and interventions efforts that accompanied the programme, and which made Belo Horizonte the first sought out example by many other Brazilian cities during that decade. This section focuses on the key features of *Fica Vivo*, specifically, and presents some of the results that were found, specifically during the first years of implementation. It also discusses some of the challenges faced, which could have affected its sustainability over time.
**Figure 5. Homicide rates per 100,000 inhabitants, Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais and Brazil - 1997-2013**

[Graph showing homicide rates per 100,000 inhabitants, Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, and Brazil from 1997 to 2013.]

**Source:** MS/SVS/CGIAE – Sistema de Informações sobre Mortalidade/SIM (Information System about Mortality); Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazil Institute for Geography and Statistics, IBGE).

**Origins and Approach**

In face of the alarming trend on increasing homicide rates of the 1990s, especially among youth, in 2002 the Center for Criminality and Public Safety Studies (Centro de Estudos de Criminalidade e Segurança Pública, CRISP) at the University of Minas Gerais (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, UFMG) started designing, together with government agencies, the homicide control programme *Fica Vivo* (Stay Alive), inspired by successful international experiences that had been rigorously evaluated abroad, such as Ceasefire in Boston.\(^{30}\)

The design of the programme followed a community-based strategy that aimed at controlling and reducing crime, drug trafficking and gang violence in a sequencing manner. First, it implemented targeted territorialised policing interventions, coordinated with the justice sector. Second, it brought a whole set of social prevention initiatives targeted particularly at at-risk youth who lived in that area (Beato and Silveira, 2014; Silveira et al., 2010). Targeting young people involved in trajectories with criminal dynamics was one of its key features, says Talles Andrade de Souza, Special Coordinator for the Prevention of Crime at SEDS from 2011 until 2015.\(^{31}\) While public

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\(^{30}\) Ceasefire was an innovative gang violence reduction and prevention programme implemented in Boston in the 1990s that led to substantial drops in homicide rates in the city. The programme focussed on enforcement and social services and targeted youth involved with gang activities in hotspot areas of the city. An inter-agency coordinated effort, which also included a strong partnership with academia to develop, monitor and evaluate its results, the programme would later be adopted by several other cities in the U.S. (Braga et al., 2013).

\(^{31}\) Talles Andrade de Souza was interviewed by email in April 2016.
policies for youth tended to require some participation criteria (e.g. school attendance), which often limits access to those already experiencing processes of criminalisation, Fica Vivo focussed on those hardest to reach, aiming to reverse and construct new paths, together with the youth, based on non-violent forms of conflict resolution, and promoting access to rights and positive forms of participation, visibility and social recognition. With the latter, the programme aimed at reducing different risk factors prevalent in the community and strengthening the protective ones, hence the strong engagement with schools and youth family members.

The programme thus involved a comprehensive strategy, for its combination of control and prevention measures, and at the same time a targeted intervention, focussed on hotspot areas and at a population group at higher risk of victimisation and perpetration of crime (Beato and Silveira, 2014; World Bank, 2013).

The community-based approach is emphasised from the design to the execution and monitoring stages. Local residents of targeted neighbourhoods play a key role, from the development of local plans to improve citizen security, to the execution of specific activities and their overall monitoring and supervision. By placing the community at the centre stage, it helps to strengthens “social control, social cohesion and trust among neighbors” (Beato and Silveira, 2014).

Control and Prevention

Fica Vivo is composed of two main operation pillars. It begins with a “strategic intervention”, which consists of targeted policing actions in hotspot areas to capture hardened criminals living in the community, carry out searches, apprehend guns and inhibit the drug trafficking. A community police force, the Special Police Group for High-Risk Areas (Grupo Especial de Policiamento em Áreas de Risco, GEPAR), is then established in the area, with the objective of engaging and collaborating with the community. Initially, monthly community forums were set up to discuss security problems and coordinate strategic responses (Silveira et al., 2010; World Bank, 2013). Periodic meetings with the judiciary system are also set up to identify priority areas, analyse local dynamics and joint build strategies for these territories. The second and following pillar involves social prevention and social protection activities, providing youth 12-14 years old, and especially those involved with criminal activities, educational and cultural activities, professional training, sports, psychological support, as well as workshops to discuss violence prevention. One of the most important equipment and partners of the initiative were the local schools, which started to open on weekends for community activities.

Management Structure and Institutionalisation

One of the key features of the programme mentioned in the literature is the coordination among different government agencies, civil society and the academia (Silveira et al., 2010; World Bank, 2013; Beato and Silveira, 2014). A General Coordination Group was created to manage its
implementation, integrating representatives from two main groups in charge of *Fica Vivo* operationalisation: the “community mobilisation group”, which included community leaders, local officials, NGO representatives, the private sector and UFMG university; and the “strategic intervention group”, composed by law enforcement agencies (civil and military police forces), the Judiciary, the Public Prosecutor’s Office, and also UFMG (Silveira et al., 2010).

After one year of implementation in the pilot area, Morro das Pedras, homicide rates in that area had declined by 40 percent (Beato, 2005). These initial quick results led the state government who took power in 2003 to expand the programme to other hotspot areas of Belo Horizonte and 25 other communities of the city and the interior of the State. According to Claudio Beato, one of the founders of the programme, this was a turning point as it made the programme a true state policy and government priority. In his view, the solid partnership that was then established between the government and academia was unprecedented in the field of public security in Brazil. As in the case of Cali, this allowed research and evidence to drive the policy.

As *Fica Vivo* expanded, a higher degree of institutionalisation was required. The programme became part of the then newly created State Secretariat of Social Defense (*Secretaria Estadual de Defesa Social*, SEDS), which was composed of Secretariats of Justice and Public Safety. SEDS was responsible for the integration of all institutions and agencies in charge of public security in the state (i.e. the civilian and military police forces, the public prosecutor’s office, firemen, the penitentiary administration, and agencies responsible for juvenile detention). A special sub-secretary focussed on violence prevention was created within SEDS to manage *Fica Vivo* and other violence prevention initiatives, such as Conflict Mediation (World Bank, 2013). Specific structures within targeted communities called Nucleus for the Prevention of Criminality (*Núcleo de Prevenção à Criminalidade*), were also established, with permanent staff, remunerated facilitators, and a defined budget (Silveira et al., 2010).

**Beyond Fica Vivo, Management for Results and Improved Information Systems**

As public security strategies and law enforcement agencies are part of State Government’s mandates, it is important to highlight that other factors beyond *Fica Vivo* are also responsible for the significant clime decline in Belo Horizonte in the 2000s. First, the scaling up of the programme was part of a broader multi-sector and integrated public security strategy that involved a strong institutional and management reform focussed on results. Performance of state agencies was monitored and measured against goals established by SEDS around three key pillars: integrated

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32 Claudio Beato is the coordinator of CRISP and a Professor of the Department of Sociology at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG). He was an advisor to the governor when *Fica Vivo* was launched. He was interviewed by the authors in January 2016.
management; prison system reform; and social prevention of crime and violence, in which *Fica Vivo* was included (World Bank, 2013).

The first pillar involved the creation, in 2005, of the State Integrated Management of Public Safety (*Integração e Gestão da Segurança Pública*, IGESP) in Belo Horizonte. Following New York’s Compstat model and its problem-oriented policing approach (Zimring, 2007), IGESP aimed at providing timely georeferenced information for both the military and civil police forces. The main objective was to promote their coordinated and integrated responses in targeted and strategic efforts. The implementation of the system represented an institutional breakthrough, since the lack of coordination, information sharing, and trust between the two police forces has always been a historical challenge faced by the public security sector throughout Brazil.

Through the use of modern technology tools, the State of Minas Gerais, and therefore also Belo Horizonte, began to map the criminal activities, identifying places where there is a higher incidence of crimes, generating intelligence systems that enable the identification of trends and developing preventive actions. The combination of data integration from different sources, such as police forces, emergency lines and police vehicle dispatches, with spatial analysis; coupled with coordinated actions at the territorial level in Integrated Areas of Public Security (*Áreas Integradas de Segurança Pública*, AISP), where different agencies operated together and met weekly to coordinate their strategies; and a results-based management approach that established targets and indicators, making police more accountable for its services delivery, allowed for the optimisation in the allocation of police resources and facilitated the monitoring of police activities by the population (Lima et al., 2016; World Bank, 2013). By 2008, IGESP had become the key pillar of Minas Gerais public security policy to improve public security policies’ management, monitoring and evaluation (Cruz and Batitucci, 2006).

The process of improving information systems allowed the increase of police patrolling in areas were crime was mapped as more frequent. A pilot of a community policing strategy, the Active Prevention Program (*Programa de Prevenção Ativa*, PPA), was implemented between 2004 and 2005 in Belo Horizonte, increasing police effectiveness (Andrade and Peixoto, 2007).

The prison system reform, another pillar of the state government strategy, is also mentioned as a key driver of crime reduction in Belo Horizonte. This reform consisted in the implementation of a new management model for the prison system, under SEDS’ responsibility and no longer spread across different secretariats (Sapori, 2007; World Bank, 2013). Tertiary prevention activities focussed on offenders were also implemented, with education, health, legal support and professional training being provided or expanded in most prisons.
Box 5. Evaluating Fica Vivo and other Policies

Very few violence prevention programmes have been rigorously evaluated in Brazil. However, the innovative methodology, the relatively quick reduction in homicides in targeted areas, and the fact that Fica Vivo was designed and initially implemented in partnership with academia helped to inspire a series of studies about it. Azevedo, Peixoto and Andrade (2008) found, for example, that Fica Vivo had a significant effect on homicide reduction, although the effect was not homogeneous across the targeted communities and had an increasing effect over time. Their analysis showed that, in the pilot area, Morro das Pedras, the programme was able to prevent between 12 and 18 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants per semester in its first two years of implementation, when compared to a control group of slums where the programme had not been implemented. When Fica Vivo is expanded to other places its impact is reduced, but still exists in great magnitude. A cost-benefit analysis by Peixoto (2008) also showed that Fica Vivo had a 99 percent rate of return.

Silveira et al. (2010) point to the fact that the quick and sharp decline of homicides in the first months of implementation, even before social activities had started, demonstrate the importance of policing actions in these strategies. This initial moment, the authors argue, where security is restored, is what permitted the subsequent implementation of social interventions, which can then lead to a “virtuous cycle and ensure good results in the long run” (Silveira et al., 2010).

Soares and Viveiros (2010) found a causal effect of IGESP on crime by looking at the evolution of crime and other variables in municipalities that adopted the programme before and after implementation. They estimated that IGESP contributed to a 24 percent reduction in property crimes and 13 percent in personal crimes, but had a negative but non-significant effect on homicides. By measuring the number of weapons seized and clearance rates, the results also demonstrated that the system led to improvements in police response.

Finally, an evaluation of the first year of implementation of the community policing programme PPA showed an effectiveness rate of approximately 5.3 percent in terms of crime reduction (Andrade and Peixoto, 2007).

Current Status and Challenges

Despite changes in municipal and state governments since its launch in 2003, Fica Vivo remained a government priority, and has been appropriated by the communities in which it intervenes. It is still managed by the Special Coordination for the Prevention of Criminality under SEDS, which has also expanded the Conflict Mediation programmes and also manages tertiary prevention activities, targeted at ex offenders, including alternative justice programmes. Today, there are 45 Social Crime Prevention Units in the State (up from 19 in 2005), 14 of which located in Belo Horizonte, which manage both Fica Vivo and the Conflict Mediation Centers at the territorial level. Fica Vivo has benefitted more than 11,000 youth per year since 2005, and the Conflict Mediation Program has attended more 183,000 cases since its creation that same year. The percentage of cases...
that achieved a pacific resolution went from 60 percent in 2005 (when about 4,000 were registered), to 90 percent in 2014, when over 23,000 were managed.  

However, while these information provides a dimension of how far the programme and social prevention have come at the city and state levels, according to Talles de Andrade Souza, there is still a need to qualify their results’ indicators and to institutionalise the social prevention policy at the state level and further expand the violence prevention component of *Fiva Vivo*.

**Rio De Janeiro: The Police Pacification Units (Upps) And The Promise of an Integrated City**

If Brazil is a country of contrasts, Rio de Janeiro could be nothing but one of its best representations. In the “marvelous city”, as the city is known, some of the richest neighbourhoods are located right next to a few of its largest *favelas* (slums), areas composed by irregular settlements and poor access to basic social services. During the 1980s, with the shifts in the drug trade markets and Brazil’s transition to democracy, favelas became the perfect spot for drug traffickers to operate freely. For almost three decades, their occupation of several of these areas affected daily lives of residents, preventing further access to services, reducing social and economic opportunities and hindering their freedom to come and go (Perlman, 2010). Their dominance also fueled outsiders’ perceptions and social representations of these communities, consolidating a process of exclusion and segregation that would also grant Rio the nickname of the “divided city” (*cidade partida*). In the 2000s, some of these areas also fell into the hands of *militias*, further extending the dominance of what the media would call “the parallel power”. These communities became hostage to recurrent shootouts between different drug factions, the factions or militias and the police, and brutal sporadic police incursions into the favelas. As a result, violent crime and social vulnerability indicators in these areas were much higher than in the rest of the city. As tension escalated, throughout the 1980s and 1990s Rio city ranked among the most violent cities in the country, with homicide rates reaching almost 80 per 100,000 (Cano, 2009; World Bank, 2013b).

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34These areas are defined by the Brazil Institute for Geography and Statistics (IBGE) as “subnormal agglomerates” for their lack of basic public services (in the majority of the cases), land titling and, in general, organised in a “disordered and dense manner” ([www.ibge.gov.br](http://www.ibge.gov.br)). According to the city’s Instituto Pereira Passos (IPP), Rio has approximately 392 favelas, with more than 1.16 million people([www.rio.rj.gov.br/web/ipp](http://www.rio.rj.gov.br/web/ipp)).
35Militias are mostly composed by corrupt police officers, some of them retired. In the beginning, they claimed to occupy these areas to fill the vacuum left by the state and also make extra money through the exchange of an alleged protection to residents and local businesses. However, their presence resulted in the same type of brutal territorial control, if not worse. Although their presence was smaller, when compared to the number of areas taken and number of members, they were better structured and usually had more economic power and political connections (Cano, 2009; World Bank, 2013b).
2012), and youth homicide rates in the favelas almost seven times higher than the rest of the city (Perlman, 2010). Throughout that period, different public policies were tried, including different versions of community policing interventions. However, shortly after all of them would fail due to lack of investment, discontinuity or cases of police corruption.

In 2008, the state government launched the Police Pacification Units programme (Unidades de Polícia Pacificadoras, UPPs), which would become the longest of this kind to be ever implemented in Rio, and would also coincide with a period of relatively constant crime decline in the city (and consequently the state), as demonstrated by Figure 6 below. The programme started with a pilot in community Santa Marta, in 2008, and followed to another 4 communities in 2009. By the end of 2014 there were 38 UPPs operating in 264 territories of the city, with 9,543 police officers (SESEG, 2015).36

**Figure 6. Homicide per 100,000 inhabitants, Rio de Janeiro city, state (S) and Brazil, 1997-2013**

Source: MS/SVS/CGIAE – Sistema de Informações sobre Mortalidade/SIM (Information System about Mortality); Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazil Institute for Geography and Statistics, IBGE).

**Proximity Policing Followed by Social and Economic Integration**

The UPPs were Rio de Janeiro State Government’s attempt to break the cycle of violence in the favelas territories and reintegrate their residents to the rest of the city. The design of the programme was directly inspired by Medellín and Bogotá, and involved an intensive police intervention component followed by a social and urban development strategy.37

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37 According to the Rio de Janeiro Public Security Secretary, the idea to start designing this programme emerged right after a visit to Colombian cities (SESEG, 2015).
The policing component included having a much higher number of police officers per inhabitant (when compared with other regions of the city) being placed in these territories, with the primary objectives of recovering territorial control and disarming the drug traffic. Differently from previous experiences, the Rio de Janeiro Public Security Secretary (Secretaria de Estado de Segurança do Estado Rio de Janeiro, SESEG) did not aim, at least formally, to end drug trafficking; previous “war on drugs” efforts had largely failed and led to too many casualties (SESEG, 2015; Rodrigues, 2013). It followed the principles of proximity or community policing, with the main difference that, at this time, officers would remain on the territories at a full time period and would ideally ‘integrate’ with the communities (Rodrigues, 2013). This was also an attempt to change Rio’s history of brutal policing culture by bringing newly trained officers. The implementation of the UPPs was also accompanied by the establishment of a system of goals and bonuses based on results, measured against strategic crime indicators (Lima, 2016).

After the territories had been reoccupied by the State, the second major goal was to allow the formalisation and expansion of public service provision and a real opening of economic and social opportunities to favela residents. This would be achieved through UPP Social, as it was originally called, the “social arm” of the UPP programme that aimed to consolidate peace and promote social development in these areas. Announced in 2010, two years after the pilot UPP was launched, this social component was another key difference between the UPP and previous policies targeted at favelas. Then under the direction of Rio de Janeiro State Secretary for Social Assistance and Human Rights (SEASDH), soon after its announcement, UPP Social was transferred to the city government, under the coordination of the Urban Municipal Institute Pereira Passos (IPP), which manages all data related to the city. The programme’s main role was to interact closely with the communities, gather information through tools such as participatory mapping and field agents, and coordinate with other agencies so they could provide the needed services. UPP Social thus held the promise of completing the integration of the favelas to the rest of the city by allowing those residents the same type of social services and economic and social opportunities provided to the rest.

**Early Positive Results**

Surveys and qualitative studies carried out in the first years of the UPP programme showed an overall positive reaction from the majority of residents, who believed that safety as well as

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38 This first broad phase of the programme, the ‘pacification stage’, would involve a massive coordinated operation, preceded by a strategic and tactical assessment, to retake control of the area. In the first communities this was carried out without warning, leading to heavy fights and high numbers of casualties, which led the government to start announcing the occupation. The retake of the area would then be consolidated with the inauguration of an UPP unit inside the favela (SESEG, 2015; World Bank, 2013b).
outsiders’ perception about favelas and their residents had significantly improved (IBPS, 2010; World Bank, 2013b). Several studies soon after also demonstrated specific impacts on violent crime, confirming the data monitored by Rio Public Security Institute (Instituto de Segurança Pública, ISP). The most comprehensive of them so far, coordinated by Ignacio Cano (2012), showed a significant reduction in homicide rate in these areas, in the order of 75 percent when compared with the control communities. The fact that it was rolled out sequentially across favelas set up a natural experiment, with natural control groups, lending itself nicely to evaluating results.

Figure 7. Homicide rates in UPP areas and in Rio de Janeiro city, 2007-2014

Source: ISP.

At the same time, Cano also found an increase in some non-lethal crimes, such as assault and family violence, and also of cases of defiance of authority, as shown in Table 2 below. The author, as well as others, attributes this increase in other types of crime partially to the fact that the arrival of UPPs had brought greater social control to these areas, with more people reporting cases because of an increased trust in the police, and also more officers willing to register cases, including of defiance of authority (Cano, 2012; Rodrigues, 2013; Lima, 2016).

Table 2. Crime Rates Registered in “Pacified” Communities Before and After the UPPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Crime</th>
<th>Average number of cases per month and community</th>
<th>Average rate per 100,000 inhabitants per month and community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre UPP</td>
<td>After UPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Violent Death</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Intentional Homicide</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Death in Confrontation with the Police</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Disappearance</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Intentional Assault</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>11.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Domestic and Family Violence</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>8.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Threats</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>7.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Rape</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Robberies</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Thefts</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Drug Related Crimes</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>5.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cano, 2012. Green shows a decrease in the crimes reported, yellow an increase.
Early news stories also pointed to improvements in school attendance and a decrease in patients wounded by gunshots registered in public hospitals in areas with UPPs (SESEG, 2015). Cano (2012) also found that the UPPs had indeed allowed an increased amount of public investment, as well as the formalisation of economic activities in these territories, leading to greater social and political impacts, although the amount of investments and their respective impacts varied widely among different communities (Cano, 2012). Neri and Butelli (2015) also recently found a reduction of youth homicide and suggested positive impacts of the UPPs on social welfare and school proficiency of favela residents.39

**Adjusting the Pacification Process**

As the UPP expanded into more territories throughout the years, at an accelerated pace, and moving into more difficult areas, challenges and criticisms also started to appear. Although the trends in crime declined continued in UPP areas as well as in the city as a whole, cases of UPP police brutality and the lack of coordination between the policing and the social component of the programme, with the latter delaying to catch up, started to affect the programme’s image. People closely involved with the implementation of the programme warned about its sustainability, especially if the pace and prioritisation of social policies and urbanisation did not follow the police occupation (Rodrigues, 2013; Cano, 2012; World Bank, 2013b). Property rates and price of services in UPP areas also went up, leaving some residents satisfied but others fearful of potential gentrification effects (Cano, 2012; World Bank, 2013b).

On the municipal side, UPP Social started to lose strength. The programme survived on a year-to-year basis, with constant threats of discontinuation. Difficulties of coordination between the municipal and the state governments and other partners; IPP’s lack of mandate to demand the execution of the needed actions; constant changes in the UPP Social coordination and team, accompanied by a context of fiscal constraints, were part of the challenges preventing the consolidation of the UPP Social programme. Its integrated actions lacked permanent arrangements that could allow the generation of a constant flow of information and consolidation of a network, which would contribute to the institutionalisation of the programme. Despite several efforts, there is also not yet a consensus on a methodology to measure the specific results of UPP Social (Lima, 2016).

In 2014, UPP Social was rebranded as Rio + Social in order to boost confidence of communities in the programme’s field teams, and the city government announced that this programme would be for the whole city – and not only the pacified areas, also in an attempt to distance itself from the UPP

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39 “As UPPs, as Causas e as Consequências dos Homicídios”, presentation given by Marcelo Neri at the Annual Meeting of the Brazilian Forum for Public Security in Rio de Janeiro in July 2015.
brand, which had started to loose legitimacy in several communities. Although the programme is today present in all communities with UPPs, criticisms concerning the lack of advancements in the local development agenda, in parallel to police actions, continues.

On the policing side, one of the main criticisms was that the programme was taken to scale before an overall policy strategy and institutional structure was set up, which allowed gaps in its implementation to become more evident. The programme was being implemented largely based on the experiences of the officers in different communities, without formal direction (Lima, 2016; ISER, 2013). This criticism was even shared by Colonel Robson Rodrigues, the first UPP Coordinator and today Chief of Staff of Administration of the State Military Police of Rio de Janeiro. In a paper published in 2013, he argued that the heavy and sophisticated media strategy of the UPPs, intended to deconstruct the idea of a ‘war’ “in order to build peace”, was not accompanied by the same level of efforts in the institutional front. In his view, lack of investments in training, security and information technology and the absence of a systematised programme led to too much improvisation (Rodrigues, 2013).

Another common criticism also shared by Rodrigues is that the UPPs did not pay enough attention to the existing local leaders and associations prior to entering these areas. Meetings with community leaders and residents would be hosted, but they were not part of the design of solutions and there were no strong accountability mechanisms to allow a constant flow of information and feedback in all areas (Lima, 2016). The lack of a structure legal framework and systematisation, as well as a previous dialogue with local leaderships, led local UPP captains to act in several ways as local chiefs, trying to occupy a place previously run by the drug traffic, but still with no legitimacy within the communities (Lima, 2016; World Bank, 2013b). In addition, the different histories of the communities with both the police and the drug traffic were not taken into account, which would reflect in the way residents received the programme (World Bank, 2013b). The absence of a legitimised governance system would eventually lead to confrontations between the communities and the UPP units.

40 In 2015, Rio + Social was operating in 41 communities with UPPs (some UPPs cover more than one community), reaching a total of 30 territories. According to IPP, between 2009 and 2014 approximately R$ 1.8 billion (US$ 460 million, based on the exchange rate of February 5, 2016, with 1 US$ at R$ 3.91) was invested by the programme in education, health, urbanisation, elimination of areas at risk, and the provision of services such as installation of streetlights and garbage collection. http://www.riomaissocial.org/mapa-riomaissocial/#sthash.8XeWYUXX.dpuf, accessed on February 1, 2016.

41 The legal framework establishing the UPP was based mainly in three decrees and two guidance notes from the Military Police issued in 2009. These were then replaced in 2011 by a new decree that updated the previous ones, providing general guidelines in respect to the implementation, structure of intervention and functioning of the UPPs. It created a general Coordination Unit and established that the Public Security Institute would release detailed reports about the performance of the UPPs every six months. However, these texts were still short and sometimes vague, and lacked information about the overall model and approach, not standardising actions and procedures (Cano, 2012; Lima, 2016).
It wasn’t until 2015 that the government would establish, through two different decrees, a Pacification Policy and the Pacification Police Program, recognising the need of further institutionalising the programme. The first would incorporate the latter, which would then be followed by the Social Occupation Phase. The overall Pacification Policy would thus provide a broader framework for both the police component, now better systematised and with proposed increased mechanisms of monitoring and accountability – including of police misconduct; and would strengthen, at least normatively, the social component, establishing that a management committee chaired by the Governor himself would coordinate the actions of the police as well as the other secretariats of the state to consolidate the pacification process by bringing the social, economic and political integration. It’s yet to be seen how these changes will affect the pacification process, and what will be the future of Rio + Social and the challenge at the municipal level of matching the social services with security.

**Recife: Pacto Pela Vida Management for Results and Political Leadership Model**

Pernambuco and its capital Recife are the second most populous state and third most popular capital of the Northeast of Brazil. Over the past decade, they have raised significant attention from policy makers and academics after becoming the “Northeast exception”: while homicide rates were increasing exponentially in all neighbouring states, rates in both fell significantly and steadily for a consecutive period of seven years. While robust analyses about the specific impacts of different interventions are still on the making, there is a consensus on crediting such decline to the Pernambuco State Government Pact for Life programme (*Pacto pela Vida, PPV*), a bold and

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42 The decrees were No 45.146, of February 5th 2015, and No 45.186, of March 17, 2015, respectively. In 2015, the State Government, in partnership with the International Association for the Administration of Cities and Municipalities (ICMA), the non-governmental organisation ISER and USAID, also launched a toolkit about the UPPs, further systematising the process to develop specific training materials for UPP officers at different ranks and with different responsibilities. In this document, the government not only reviews a series of lessons learned in the process, but also clarifies some of its earlier premises that had led to criticism. For instance, it acknowledges, explicitly, that the term used for the process – “pacified communities”, or “communities in the process of pacification” - only refers to a stage of the programme in that area, and not to the fact that “peace has been taken to this place”. The document also acknowledges the importance of better understanding the local dynamics of crime in order to gain legitimacy (Secretaria de Estado de Segurança do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, SESEG. 2015. “UPP: da origem do programa à política de pacificação”. Available at [http://www.amuprev.org/biblioteca/publicacion.php?id=122](http://www.amuprev.org/biblioteca/publicacion.php?id=122)

43 It is worth mentioning that, also in 2015 and based on lessons learned with the UPPs, the State government launched a pilot programme – Proximity Policing Integrated Company (*Companhia Integrada de Policiamento de Proximidade, CIPP*) in a different area, not dominated by the traffic or militias. The launch of the programme was accompanied by a request by the governor to the Center for Citizen Security Studies at University Candido Mendes (*Centro de Estudos de Segurança Cidadã, CESEC*), to carry out independent evaluation of the pilot.
innovative policy that represented a shift in paradigm in the public security sector in Pernambuco as well as the Northeast region (Ratton et al., 2014a).

Pact for Life is a cross-sectoral programme aimed at controlling and reducing crime and violence through the combination of a set of repression and prevention measures. Launched in 2007 by governor Eduardo Campos, who placed security at the centre of the administration’s priorities, the Pact’s first activity was to design a Public Security State Plan. The Plan, the first ever produced in the state, established strategic guidelines for the government, with actions for the short, medium and long term, divided into six priority areas: qualified repression, institutional improvement, education and training, information and knowledge management, social prevention of crime and violence, and democratic management.

The design of PPV was based on an intensive participatory process. The objective was to build a real “pact” with society. A State Public Security Forum was created to inform the plan and serve as a permanent mechanism for dialogue between the public sector and civil society. The forum included 16 technical groups, composed of experts on security, academics, civil society organisations, and government representatives from the three levels of government, to discuss specific areas of intervention (e.g. youth, drugs, urban revitalisation, police and violence prevention) within the Plan’s six pillar areas. These discussions informed the prioritisation of a series of projects to be implemented or strengthened in the different cities and communities.

At the operational level, the state was divided into 26 Integrated Security Areas (Áreas Integradas de Segurança, AIS), in which civil and military police would work in an integrated manner, following specific protocols, and would be together accountable for crime rates in their respective areas. While the civil police would investigate the homicides, the military police would carry out “neighborhood patrolling”, also trying to establish a connection with community residents; community policing was also a key pillar, and also for the first time present in the state security strategy. This division of AIS, which followed the steps of Minas Gerais and São Paulo, was a crucial step to help improve the historical problem of lack of coordination between the two forces. Within the AISs, the government identified 80 hotspots and, in addition to the policing component, a series of specific projects, carried out by different government agencies, were targeted at those areas, with the main objective of addressing local vulnerabilities.44

The Pact had a very specific target as its main goal: to reduce lethal violent crime by 12 percent every year in the state. Each AIS had its own monthly target, calculated according to the expected total reduction in number of homicides at the state level. Between 2007 and 2013, homicide rates

dropped by 37 percent and 55 percent in Pernambuco and Recife, respectively. In the city, rates fell from 67.5 to 30.6 per 100,000 inhabitants over that period, as Figure 8 below shows.

**Figure 8. Homicide rates per 100,000 inhabitants, Recife, Pernambuco and Brazil - 1997-2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Recife</th>
<th>Pernambuco</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>49.7</td>
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<td>60.0</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>29.0</td>
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</table>

**Source:** MS/SVS/CGIAE-SIM; IBGE.

In a first attempt to evaluate the specific impacts of the programme on homicide rates, Neto et al. (2015a, 2015b) found indicative evidence that between 2007 and 2011 the PPV had an average direct effect of 9.1 points per year on homicide rates in Pernambuco, and of 15.5 points per year on homicide rates in the Recife Metropolitan Region, when compared to synthetic controls created for both areas. These results would be equivalent to a reduction of about 17.3 percent over the state homicide rate in 2007, when the programme started, and of 18.2 percent over the rate found in the Recife metropolitan region that same year.

**Political Leadership and Integrated Management for Results**

At the core of the PPV success was a coordination and management for results model that brought together 12 state secretariats, the Prosecutor’s Office and municipal governments under a monitoring system led by PPV Management Committee. Created in 2008, this Committee was responsible for the overall monitoring of the programme, and sat under the political coordination of the state governor and the technical coordination of the Secretary of Planning, the strongest secretary within the state bureaucracy. Assisted by the PPV Center of Management for Results, the committee held weekly meetings with the purpose of determining priorities, monitoring results, revising targets and according on immediate actions to be taken. Once a month, the governor himself chaired these meetings. The PPV Management Committee was also divided into five technical groups, namely: Social Defense; Prison Administration; Liaison with the Judicial Power, Prosecution Services and Public Defender’s Office; Social Prevention and Fighting Crack. These groups met weekly, prior to the general committee meeting, to discuss each of their themes. The Committee’s role was so crucial that Silva and Ratton (2015) found that within the implementation period of the PPV, homicide rates only started to decline at all territorial levels – state, Recife
metropolitan region, Recife city and the interior of the state - after the Committee started its operations.

Aspects of PPV were directly inspired by some of the key reforms previously implemented in Minas Gerais, São Paulo and other international experiences such as Compstat in New York: the integration of the police work; the strengthening of information systems; as well as the link with academia, through the hiring of an expert in public security from the Federal University of Pernambuco as special advisor to design and help implement the Plan, were some of them. However, a distinct and more prominent characteristic in this case, which was more similar to the Colombian experiences discussed, was the political leadership factor. According to experts and several stakeholders, the personal involvement of the governor in driving the process and monitoring its results, and in pushing all the necessary institutional changes, not only served as a key motivational factor for all agencies involved, but also helped to streamline internal procedures (Ratton et al., 2014b; Lima, 2016).

Early PPV Social Prevention Efforts

“The Government is Present” programme (Governo Presente, GP) was initially branded as the key social prevention arm of PPV. The programme’s ultimate goal was to prevent violence by targeting the most at risk groups and providing these populations with equal access to services as in other areas of the state. It followed an integrated and territorially based approach, coordinating all efforts of 15 different secretariats in the most violent and vulnerable areas of the state. Similar to UPP Social in Rio, GP mapped the key demands of each territory and prepared a local diagnostic, channeling these demands to each responsible Secretariat through the development of a local Plan of Action for each territory. Local agents would visit the areas and each family every two months, and territorial committees would meet regularly. Weekly joint meetings with all the secretariats allowed follow-up of about 80 programmes and actions in the territories, which were also coordinated with local governments in specific areas, as needed (e.g. lighting, pavement, etc.).

GP was institutionalised by law in 2011 and GP Stations (Estações Governo Presente) were established in priority areas. These spaces were initially designed for the provision of different services, specific prevention activities such as conflict mediation training, and the identification of the most at risk group in the communities where they were based. With time, they became centres where residents can obtain information about government activities and mobilisations that are happening in their community.

45 This factor was also highlighted by Jose Luiz Ratton, the special advisor to the governor who led design of PPV, in an email interview to the authors carried out in February 2016.
Conflict mediation was done at the community level through the mobilisation of security agencies, community leaders, religious leaders, etc. who received training to become mediators and help to solve minor conflicts between families and neighbours, informal work-related disputes, and land disputes at the community level. A school mediation programme was also created around that time. “Cool School” (Escola Legal) was designed to help mediate conflicts between students, their families and also to identify children and youth who may have been victims of abuse or violence and provide them with the adequate support.

Other programmes mentioned in official documents as part of PPV Social Prevention component include Youth in Alert (Jovem em Alerta), which consisted in the provision of workshops and lectures in schools and community spaces to promote culture of peace and prevent the use drugs, violence against women, children and adolescents and urban violence. Rescuing Citizenship helped to promote access to issuance of identity cards and work permits.

The abovementioned efforts were never evaluated and lost strength over time. They are barely mentioned in the literature about PPV, except for in official documents. The one programme in this area considered a good and innovative practice is Programa Atitude, an intervention that integrated health services and the justice system to treat and protect crack users at risk of victimisation. Atitude combined a pro-active approach of outreach to users and their families (in particular those that are known to be at risk of victimisation) with the more traditional type of support psychological and social support provided in specialised centres, and included centres for intensive care and a temporary financial support for graduates of the programme to support them in the process of social and economic reintegration.

The Challenge of Sustained Consolidation

In 2014, crime rates started to increase again in the Pernambuco and the Recife, and gaps in the programme started to show. Findings from a victimisation survey conducted in Recife between November 2013 and March 2014 also indicated a perception of increased criminality, insecurity and lack of trust in the police (Ratton et al., 2014a). This period also coincided with the departure of the governor in the last year of his second term to run for presidency.46 While the governor’s political will is identified as one of PPV’s strongest features, paradoxically it ended up becoming one of its main fragilities when elections arrived (Ratton et al., 2014a). The link with civil society, highly praised in the first three years of the programme, weakened over time, with some feeling excluded from the programme, with no direct mechanisms to take part in the project evaluation and monitoring (Ratton et al., 2014b).

46 Eduardo Campos passed away in a tragic accident before elections took place.
The difficulty in generating “efficient and permanent” violence prevention programmes was one of the key challenges during implementation, as well as the incorporation of municipalities in social prevention processes. According to Ratton et al. (2014b), one of the main complaints from civil society groups was that the prevention side of PPV did not receive the same amount of resources and attention as the repressive one, even in terms of establishing specific targets and monitoring its results. Government officials interviewed by the same authors replied to this criticism by highlighting several efforts in the education front, which were monitored by the State Education Pact (the state plan for the education sector), such as the extension of school days (Ratton et al., 2014b).

Other challenges included the police forces resistance to the integration of their work, the lack of a prison reform and socio-educative measures, and an overall low institutionalisation of all the results achieved, with a lack of legislation, decrees and protocols ensuring that the reforms and institutional arrangements would be maintained (Ratton et al., 2014b; Ratton, 2015).

Recent attempts have been made to address some of those gaps. In 2015, for example, the government created the Pact for Life Certificate/ Stamp for Social Prevention to stimulate individuals, NGOs and companies to invest in prevention projects. The Department of Social Development, Child and Youth also announced new measures, such as the possibility of youth serving sentences in juvenile facilities to work as apprentices in public sector agencies. The new governor also announced the hiring of more officers and crime investigators. Finally, the government is also continuing to invest in analyses to help understand the factors that may be contributing to the most recent crime increase.

Municipal Efforts and Recife Pact for Life

The incorporation of Recife into the National Program for Public Security and Citizenship, PRONASCI, in 2008, with the institution of the Integrated Management Cabinet (GGI) to articulate its interventions, is also mentioned by experts as an important moment in citizen security efforts at the city level. Although there are no evaluations of the specific impacts of these interventions, the launch of PRONASCI’s “Peaceful Territories” in Santo Amaro, then the most violent neighbourhood of the city, had at a minimum an important symbolic effect. The launch included the announcement of 29 projects, of which 12 were to be coordinated by the municipal government, focussed on violence prevention, and to be executed in partnership with the Federal Government and the state government of Pernambuco. Examples of integrated actions included

47 Email interview carried out by the authors with José Luiz Ratton in February 2016.
centres for sports and community justice centres. According to Sávio (2012), the development of a Municipal Citizen Security Plan – in Defense of Life (Plano Municipal de Segurança Cidadã – em Defesa da Vida), in 2006, was key to open the opportunity for the city to develop violence prevention projects supported by the Federal Government. Such projects included urban renewal; the expansion of the role of the Municipal Guard, incorporating activities such as security of schools and transit; and the implementation of policies targeted at vulnerable groups, including the support to victims of violence; and programmes to prevent drug use (Sávio, 2012).

Although PPV is mainly a state government programme, the results seen for years at the local level, especially in the capital Recife, led to good incentives. Following the state example, the municipal administration that took office in 2013 created the city’s first Urban Security and Violence Prevention Municipal Plan, also called Recife Pact for life (PPV). The municipal PPV was also the result of a positive political moment of robust alliance between the state and city governments, and benefitted from a strong leadership from the mayor, who had himself been part of the creation of the state PPV. An Urban Security Secretary was also created and put in charge of integrating all interventions at the city level aimed at protecting and assisting the populations most vulnerable to violence. The management and coordination model, as well as the target homicide reduction of the city programme had the same standards of the state one. Even the overall coordination also fell under the responsibility of the Municipal Planning Secretary, and the two PPVs were implemented in close coordination.

While the state programme has a strong focus on the control side of crime and violence prevention, the municipal PPV is focussed on prevention activities. The city multi-sector and integrated territorial plan targeted the 13 most violent areas of the city, where more than 50 percent of the homicides were concentrated. Consultations with civil society helped to define a total of 85 priority actions, divided among four key pillars: Social Participation and Promotion of Citizenship Culture; Urban Control and Order; Recovery of at Risk; and Crime and Violence Social Prevention. Community participation was also strong at the monitoring stage, through the hiring of community representatives at each territory, elected by their communities, to sustain the dialogue between the community and the municipal government, and help monitor the implementation of the different initiatives coordinated by PPV.

The interventions proposed include activities at the three prevention levels – primary, secondary and tertiary – and were heavily inspired by the examples of Medellín and Bogotá. They included

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49 Primary prevention interventions targets the entire population and seeks to prevent violence before it occurs, for example, through public education campaigns aimed at changing societal norms that tolerate violence; secondary prevention interventions focus on populations already exhibiting risk factors for violence, such as youth who are not in school or working; and tertiary prevention is targeted at rehabilitating
situational prevention (i.e. improving street lighting, natural surveillance, recovery of public spaces etc., also ensuring the inclusion of community-based infrastructure such as parks and recreational areas, particularly for children and youth); and social prevention activities that include interventions targeted towards addressing the risk factors that affect those groups who are most at-risk and vulnerable groups to violence, such as youth, crack users, women, and people living in the streets.

One of the most prominent projects of Recife’s PPV is the construction of Communities of Peace centres (COMPAZ) in the prioritised territories, which consist in building top quality infrastructure equipment (libraries, parks, etc.) and bringing recreational activities, services such as counseling, judicial support, conflict mediation and other interventions targeted mostly at youth at risk. Trampoline Program (Programa Trampolim) provided job training, arts, sports and social skills classes to 160 youth offenders that had recently left the juvenile justice system, most of which either got jobs (including at the Secretary itself) or went to university. Only 12 of those did not conclude the course.

By the end of 2013, Recife had registered the highest annual homicide decline in its historical series, in the order of 24 percent – twice the annual target. According to Eduardo Machado, Executive Secretary at the Recife Urban Secretary, the city PPV marked a shift in paradigm in the discussion of security at municipal level, with the city taking responsibility for dealing with crime and violence. Although acknowledging that the homicide reduction in Recife should be attributed to the state government PPV, Machado highlights that the city initiative showed that local governments can provide great support to improve citizen security, if disposed of resources to do so.

The key challenges for the municipal PPV was, according to Machado, trying to make different secretaries understand that they need to work together, in an integrated manner, to do an effective prevention work.

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50 Given Brazil’s economic crisis and fiscal constraints in 2014 and 2015, the first COMPAZ was only opened in 2016, and the other four not delivered.

51 Eduardo Machado, Executive Secretary at the Recife Urban Secretary, was interviewed by the authors in February 2016.
Mexico

National Context

For the past two decades, Mexico has remained a relatively low crime country when compared to its neighbours in LAC. With a national homicide rate of 10 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2015, Mexico ranks significantly lower in homicide rates than most of its regional counterparts, including Colombia and Brazil, and even below the regional average rate of 18 per 100,000 (UNODC 2014). However, after a decade of relatively stable crime levels, homicides in the country almost tripled between 2007 and 2011, and security became a top priority for citizens and the government.

The upward trend found during those years is mainly explained by an increase in drug-related homicides resulting from battles among criminal organisations and confrontations between state authorities and criminal groups (Rios, 2012; Enamorado et al., 2013). Indeed, drug-related homicides accounted for 73 percent of all homicides in Mexico in 2011, after a 55 percent annual increase since 2007. Non-drug related homicides, on the other hand, decreased by an average of 4 percent per year between 2007 and 2011 (Enamorado et al., 2013).

The increase in violent crime rates over the 2007-2011 period was also concentrated in selected areas. In 2011, approximately 70 percent of all drug-related homicides occurred in just eight out of 32 states, and 24 percent in just five cities (Rios, 2012). The most violent state was Chihuahua, with the city of Ciudad Juarez driving the numbers.

Yet within a few years of the spike, homicides began to decline again. While part of such decline can be explained by changes in the dynamics between organised crime organisations, several prevention efforts promoted at the national and local level seemed to have played a role. While they have yet to be rigorous evaluated, these initiatives offer promising insights about the types of collaborations across government levels and sectors that can help to turn things around. This was the case of Ciudad Juarez and Monterrey, described later in this chapter.

National Institutional Framework

As in the case of Brazil, Mexico is a federal state, granting higher levels of authority to state and local governments over a series of matters. The Mexican Constitution establishes that public security is a shared responsibility between the federal, state and municipal governments. While this division provides an opportunity for increased collaboration, it also poses challenges in terms of ensuring coordinated action. In 2008, the National Public Security Council (Consejo Nacional de
Seguridad Pública) was established under the Ministry of Interior (Secretaria de Gobernación, SEGOB) with the main objective of promoting the coordination of public security policies, and with representation of the three levels of government. The law also created an Executive Secretariat charged with the implementation of the agreements adopted by the different levels of government. To further address the coordination gaps, in 2009 the government published the General Law for the National Public Security System (Ley General del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública, SNSP), regulating the integration, organisation and functioning of the system, and laying out the respective mandates of the states, municipalities and the federal government. This law led to the creation of the National Center for Crime Prevention and Citizen Participation (Centro Nacional de Prevención del Delito y Participación Ciudadana, CNPDyPC) in 2010, the first national entity devoted to the prevention of crime and violence in the country. Among its many attributions, the Center is responsible for proposing cross-cutting policies focussed on the social prevention of crime. It also monitors and evaluates programmes implemented by public security institutions at the federal, state, and municipal levels, and makes recommendations on how to improve them. The promotion of citizen participation in the design and implementation of prevention policies and programmes is also one of its core principles of operation (World Bank, 2012).

Although the Center was the national entity primarily responsible for policy formulation on crime prevention, other ministries promoted a variety of violence prevention-oriented and socio-economic programmes, such as the “Recovery of Public Spaces” (Rescate de Espacios Públicos), led by the Secretary for Social Development (Secretaría de Desarrollo Social, SEDESOL); “Towards a Safe Community” (Hacia una Comunidad Segura), an initiative by the Public Security Secretary and the Secretary for Public Education to capacitate teachers and educators in social prevention of crime and violence; “Safer Schools” (Escuela Segura), focussed on youth violence.

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52 The National Council is chaired by the Public Security Secretary. State governors, the National Defense Secretary, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of Communications and Transportation, the General Attorney of the Republic, the Chief of the Federal District, and the Executive Secretary of the SNSP are also members.

53 President Calderon’s (2006-2012) National Development Plan (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo, PND) for 2007-2012 had included fighting impunity; and the reduction, prevention and fighting of organised crime as government priorities (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2007-2012. Accessed on March 1, 2016 via http://pnd.calderon.presidencia.gob.mx/index.php?page=documentos-pdf). Following that national plan, specific State plans were also developed, including priority cities and agreements made within the National Council on Public Security determining different responsibilities and obligations of different government agencies. An Integral Strategy for the Prevention and Combating of Crime (Estrategia Integral de Prevención del Delito y Combate a la Delincuencia) was approved in 2008, consolidating the government’s commitment to prevent crime and improve criminal justice, which was then further institutionalised with the creation of the Center (Estrategia Integral de Prevención del Delito y Combate a la Delincuencia, Secretaría de Seguridad Pública, March 7, 2008. Accessed on March 1, 2016, via http://www.ssp.gob.mx/portalWebApp/wlp.cj;sessionid=cVDVQSPQ2LqdDLg0WGINQDXJQgX3RKlzTRSVJZ2RCCGDx1pDsh4!748328741?__c=fb1).
prevention and reduction in elementary schools located in areas with high incidence of crime; *Siguele*, by the Secretary for Middle and Higher Education, which identifies students that are at risk of dropping based on an early warning system, and then provides complementary support to keep them in school; and the national youth development programme *Construye-T*, which focuses on reducing risky behaviour of upper secondary students through counseling, family support, and individualised programming, and encouraging them to stay in school (World Bank, 2012).

The Center also manages the prevention share of the Subsidy for Municipal Public Security (*Subsidio para la Seguridad Pública de los Municipios*, Subsemun), a fund provided by the national government to municipal public security programmes. Established in 2008, Subsemun was created to improve the capacity and performance of municipal and state forces to prevent crime. In 2011, the legislative established that 10 percent of the subsidy would be devoted to prevention programmes, distributed between the municipalities with the worst crime and violence indicators, among other criteria. That percentage was later elevated to 20 percent. The subsidy, which started benefitting 108 cities in 2008, reached 268 municipalities in 2014.

Subsemun’s objectives and focus areas also changed with time, informed by lessons learned with the implementation from previous years, results from different programme and policy evaluations, and continual analysis of the changing contexts in different municipalities. Social prevention of violence and crime with citizen participation, strengthening of public security institutions, and the improvement of emergency and information systems, were some of its priority areas, with the majority of resources being spent on the professionalisation of public security actors, followed by social prevention. An inventory of Subsemun financed programmes showed that, of the 1,069 prevention programmes implemented by the targeted municipalities, 139 related to cultural or sports programmes for social prevention violence and crime, 121 programmes to promote citizen participation, 102 youth programmes, 98 prevention and preventive programmes to support women. Issues related to youth, prevention of alcohol and drug use, or institutional capacity building were highlighted in most of them (Orozco and Fondevilla, 2014). School violence, youth

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54 The government has implemented three rounds of analysis to assess the objectives, outputs and potential outcomes of Subsemun. Authors of the third analysis, Orozco and Fondevilla (2014) highlight the challenges in carrying out a rigorous evaluation of the programme, and conclude that Subsemun measurement indicators have evolved towards crime prevention, professionalisation, confidence control mechanisms and improved telecommunications systems, being previously only measured according to the effectiveness in the delivery of the resource.

55 Up until August 2014, for example, 26 percent of the total resources spent through Subsemun that year had been destined by municipalities to social prevention activities, following the professionalisation of public security actors, with 59 percent of all investments made by municipalities (Orozco and Fondevilla, 2014).
at risk, community mediation, safe mobility, and gender equality were the priority areas for funding in 2015.\textsuperscript{56}

With the election of Enrique Pena Nieto in 2012, there was a restructuring of the institutional framework for security and violence prevention. The administration continued to focus on organised crime as the key source of the violence, through targeted control strategies. One of the early steps was to pass the National Law for the Prevention of Violence and Crime (\textit{Ley General para la Prevención Social de la Violencia y la Delincuencia}) in 2012. This law established the basis for the coordination between the federal, state, and municipal governments around prevention policies and programmes, and promoted the development of interventions aimed at reducing risk factors and combating the roots of violence from a social, situational and psychosocial perspective. The Pena Nieto administration also placed a greater focus on targeting social risk factors in hotspot areas, through a territorial approach to small areas called “polygons.” The administration’s flagship programme, the National Program for the Prevention of Crime (\textit{Programa Nacional de Prevención del Delito}, PRONAPRED), identifies priority municipalities via a formula that takes into account crime rates and social-risk factors, and within them, smaller high-risk “polygon”, areas with 10,000 to 15,000 inhabitants. Similar to the Medellín model, the objective is to give autonomy to municipal authorities and follow a “socio-urban acupuncture” approach, investing in small-scale but catalytic interventions that had the potential to transform these most vulnerable areas affected by violence. In 2013, PRONAPRED focussed on 57 municipalities and districts, reaching 74 in 2014 and more than 80 in 2015 (International Crisis Group, 2015).

\textbf{Box 6. An Overview of the National Prevention Policy, PRONAPRED}

\begin{quote}
Mexico Evalua (2015) assessed more than 5,500 activities implemented by municipal governments under PRONAPRED, which in 2015 allocated over USD 280 million in prevention programmes. The document emphasises that, although the country has made significant progress in this area, much more remains to be done. The need for solid and better diagnostics prior to the definition of interventions, improved monitoring and evaluation efforts, as well as transparency over the selection process for the areas to be prioritised are some of the reports’ main recommendations. The analysis also shows that decisions about the definition of priorities in the territories targeted by the programme, measured by the relative amount of resources allocated to individual projects, is not necessarily based on the available evidence on the type of actions that have proven to work to prevent crime and violence. The report cites, for instance, the fact that the rehabilitation of public spaces takes up the largest share of the budget, followed by thematic and communications
\end{quote}

campaigns, whereas actions with a stronger track record – such as those to follow and improve the academic performance of youth, along with therapy -receive less funding. In terms of number of activities according to category/type of intervention, the report shows that 72.8 percent of actions proposed in 2014 focussed on social development, followed by the actions of community strategy (23.5 percent), which seek to provide capabilities to prevent crime to communities, and situational prevention (3.7 percent). Also, 82.4 percent of interventions were focussed on secondary prevention, targeting those populations at higher risk, especially youth, but very few consisted of tertiary prevention focussing on the reinsertion of those already in conflict with the law.

In 2013, violence prevention was further institutionalised as a government priority by the new administration through the creation of the Subsecretary for Prevention and Citizen Participation (Subsecretaría de Prevención y Participación Ciudadana), also under SEGOB. The Subsecretary would, in practice, take over the responsibilities of the National Center CNPDyPC, and in 2014 it started implementing the National Program for the Social Prevention of Violence and Crime (Programa Nacional para la Prevención Social de la Violencia y la Delincuencia, PNPSVD), specifically aimed at addressing the risk and protective factors linked to violence and crime. The programme involves all three levels of government, different sectors of civil society and includes the participation of the private sector and international organisations. Based on the principles of intersectoriality, integration, targeting and participation, it focuses on 238 territories in 107 prioritised municipalities (among them Ciudad Juarez and Monterrey). Social prevention activities financed under its umbrella are benefitted by federal financing from sources such as PRONAPRED and Subsemun, as well as from the Contributions to Public Security Fund of municipalities and states (Fondo de Aportaciones para la Seguridad Pública, FASP).

In 2016, Subsemun was discontinued, after an assessment from the government that considered that the fund had not led to expected results (Martínez-Solares et al., 2016). In January the government announced that a new fund – FORTASEG – was being launched, with more resources, additional beneficiary municipalities, and new rules of operation. News articles related to the release of the new fund indicate that a stronger focus is being placed on police training and improvement of information systems.

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Improving Control Measures

The Federal Government also implemented a series of reforms to improve law enforcement and the justice system to respond to the rise in crime. The total number of federal police forces increased significantly, going from 21,034 to 37,238, just between 2006 and 2009; the budget allocated to the public security secretary and the attorney general office also increased from 8.8 and 8.6 million pesos to 12.3 and 32.9 million pesos, respectively, over the same period (Sabet, 2010).

In Mexico, law enforcement agencies are divided into municipal, state, and federal police departments, with different responsibilities. The police have been traditionally divided into preventive and investigative departments. While the preventive police first operated at all three levels of government and was primarily responsible for patrolling, maintaining public order, and preventing crime and administrative violations, the Federal Ministerial Police - formerly known as the judicial police - is responsible for investigation and judicial and ministerial warrants (Sabet, 2010). In 2009, the Federal Police Law granted the newly named Federal Police some investigative functions as well (Sabet, 2010). Despite Subsemun support to improve the performance of police forces, state and municipal police officers still suffer from weak capacity and few evaluation mechanisms to assess their work (Sabet, 2010).

To weaken and combat organised crime organisations, the 2007 National Security Strategy included the launch of joint operations in support of local authorities as part of the efforts to tackle corruption. National security agencies have since then backed up, replaced or taken over state and municipal police forces in different states and cities, as the cases discussed in this section will show. Finally, institutional mechanisms such as the National Public Security Council, and communication systems such as Platform Mexico (Plataforma Mexico), a sophisticated computer system/database created in 2008 to help to automate and consolidate public information records at the federal, state and municipal levels, were also created to improve coordination between Mexico’s police forces.

Ciudad Juarez: Todos Somos Juarez Coordinated Efforts by Multiple Levels of Government, And Civil Society

In the midst of the crime spike in homicide rates seen in the mid 2000s in Mexico, one city stood out and made headlines worldwide: Ciudad Juarez, located in the northern border of the country, on the limits of El Paso in Texas, United States. Home to many of the maquila manufacturing industries, Juarez had already been known in the 1990s for the high levels of femicides, with 442

59 Seguridad y Justicia Penal en los estados: 25 indicadores de nuestra debilidad institucional, México Evalúa, Centro de Análisis de Políticas Públicas.
victims accounted between 1993 and 2005 (Ramos Lira, 2012). However, overall homicide rates had remained steady for many years; in 2005 the rate was around 17 per 100,000, higher than the national average (of 9.6 for that same period), but low when compared to other cities in the region.

This scenario would suddenly change in 2008, when the Sinaloa Cartel, one of the most powerful in the country, declared war against its business ally Juarez Cartel, in an attempt to gain full control over that area (Dudley, 2013). In just one year, the total number of homicides jumped by more than 700 percent, going from 192 in 2008, to 1589 in 2009, to then reach a peak of 3,766 in 2010.

With 1,500 police officers for 1.3 million residents, and a security force plagued by corruption, during the first months of 2008 almost all senior commanders of the local forces had either been murdered or resigned (Lobo, 2013). In March of that same year, 2,000 federal troops were sent to the city, marking the beginning of the “Chihuahua Joint Operation”, with the national army taking over the municipal police force. However, the war between the two cartels continued, and the numbers of deaths kept rising. A year later, 5,000 more troops were sent to Juarez, and by then the municipal force had been reduced to almost 1,000 after more officers resigned, were killed, or expelled after the reform and vetting process supported by the Federal Police (Lobo, 2013). The strategy of putting the army on the streets, without a clear mandate and practice to fight urban violence, was not improving security in the city. In April 2010, federal police forces were sent to replace the military, but soon their effectiveness also started to be questioned, and crime rates continued to rise (Felbab-Brown, 2011). At that point, with a rate of 282 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, Ciudad Juarez became known as the world’s most violent city.

**Figure 9. Absolute Number of Homicides and Homicide Rates per 100,000 inhabitants, Ciudad Juarez 2000-2015**

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tr>
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<td>92.1</td>
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<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ calculations based on data from INEGI and CONAPO.
Todos Somos Juarez

A breakthrough moment came in early 2010. A massacre of 15 people in Villa Salvarcar, most of them students, followed by a high-criticised reaction from President Calderón, who first suggested that the slaughtered victims were members of a criminal organisation, led to a public outcry and calls for a stronger government response. Soon after, the Federal Government announced a quick-impact socioeconomic package for the city, which would later become known as the We Are All Juarez strategy (Todos Somos Juarez, TSJ) (Lobo, 2013; Felbab-Brown, 2011).

We Are All Juarez consisted of a comprehensive and integrated social and urban development programme with US$ 380 million of investments made in just two years (2010-2011) (International Crisis Group, 2015). It was quickly designed in consultation with the local community, youth groups, the business sector, trade unions and government officials from a variety of sectors, who agreed on 160 actions aimed at providing more opportunities to the city’s residents in order to prevent those social situations that lead to violence. The programme was focused on: security (12 actions); health (40); education, culture and sports (72); social development (20); jobs (5); and economy (11). In 2011, another 118 actions were proposed. These actions were based on a diagnostics that identified insecurity (e.g. kidnapping, extortion, homicides), anti-social behaviour (e.g. alcoholism, drug use, domestic violence, gang involvement), lack of socioeconomic opportunities (e.g. unemployment, education and health needs) and the disintegration of the social fabric (e.g. lack of trust and citizen participation) as the key factors that had to be addressed, from the social perspective side, to restore peace in the city.60

Several of these actions represented investments in existing programmes, but new ones were also created. Among them was the inclusion of all public and private elementary schools in the city in the national Safer Schools programme. An extended-day-school programme was expanded to some of the city’s most vulnerable areas. Several public spaces were recovered and rehabilitated, and community centres were built with the main purpose of providing cultural activities for youth (Lobo, 2013). Lower interest rates and training were offered to small businesses, as well workshops for young entrepreneurs, and 4,000 temporary jobs were created in areas such as park rehabilitation, reforestation and garbage collection (International Crisis Group, 2015).61

61 Information gathered during an interview with Raul Soto by phone on April 20th, 2016.
Coordination Setup and Citizen Engagement

One of the key aspects of the We Are All Juarez strategy highlighted in the literature refers to the participatory mechanisms for coordination and monitoring established. ‘Citizen boards’ (mesas ciudadanas) composed of federal and local government officials and representatives of the different sectors of society (NGOs, business leaders, trade unions, youth groups) were created and divided according to each of the key areas of action (i.e. health, education, security, social development, etc.). In addition to supporting the design of the proposed actions, these boards met weekly to monitor their implementation and take any necessary corrective measures. These efforts also aimed at building the local development capacity and reinforcing civil society’s cooperation with local authorities (Felbab-Brown, 2011). At the national level, line ministries also had to report to the president’s office every week on the progress of their respective initiatives being carried out as part of We Are All Juarez.

Most of the citizen boards were never formally institutionalised and eventually stopped functioning. However, the Security and Justice one (Mesa de Seguridad y Justicia)62 not only still exists but is mentioned by most as a model of citizen engagement in the security sector (Felbab-Brown, 2011; Dudley, 2013; Conger, 2014; International Crisis Group, 2015). The board was essentially a formal space where citizens could interact regularly with government officials, through meetings that would be managed and facilitated by citizens (who would control the agenda, minutes, etc.) and held in hotels or government offices. Similarly, to the meetings held by the PPV Management Committee in Pernambuco and Recife, they would start with a revision of crime indicators (homicides, extortions, robberies, etc.), and then go through the agreements previously made to check on their status. To facilitate the work, the Board was also divided into different committees, focussed on specific types of crimes. It has helped to build trust between Juarez’s residents and authorities, contributing to improve a system of intelligence information sharing that has also helped to solve cases (Conger, 2014).

Although We Are All Juarez ended with President’s Calderon term in 2012, the Security Board still meets twice a month to monitor key crime indicators – homicides, car robberies, car jackings, kidnappings, extortion and business robberies, which have all continued to decline in 2014 and 2015 – and agree on actions to be taken (International Crisis Group, 2015). Even though it remains legally as an informal institution, it has taken the shape of an executive body, which counts with the presence of the mayor himself, along with representatives from the other levels of government, in every meeting. This experience has inspired the implementation of several other mesas de

62 http://www.mesadeseguridad.org/
**seguridad** across the country, granting stronger citizen engagement the one positive legacy attributed by most to the We Are All Juarez.

Cooperation between the different authorities and the local community was not only crucial, but also one of the key challenges faced by the programme. Limitations in this area contributed to an eventual dispersion of resources and a lack of strategic vision. In practice, there was not a new, integrated strategy, said Raul Soto, a violence prevention specialist from Juarez who has been working in this field in the city for more than ten years and who saw and participated in the programme on the ground.\(^6^3\) In his view, there was a lack of a planned and systematic coordination, despite the efforts of the citizen boards. In his view, the security was the most successful one as it related to what really mattered for businesses (especially the problem of extortions), which were part of the Security and Justice Board. Nevertheless, he recognises that the strategy brought a much-needed investment to the city, empowering social sectors to provide a counter balance to the massive investments that had been focussed on control measures. He also highlights the significant drop in kidnappings and extortions, key priorities for the city’s business sectors, who also became key partners and players in the overall citizen security strategy implemented in the city.\(^6^4\)

Although homicide and extortion rates in Juarez dropped significantly during the years that followed the implementation of the strategy, and kidnappings fell almost to zero, the absence of a rigorous impact evaluation does not allow one to conclude that the reduction in crime was the due to actions carried out in the context of that strategy, and even less so to assess which ones within its umbrella would have had a greater influence in the crime decline. The deployment of security forces or other factors, such as victory for the Sinaloa cartel, a hypothesis also raised by some analysts as well as residents, would also have to be factored in (Felbab-Brown, 2011; International Crisis Group, 2015; Basombrío, 2014).

However, as in the case of other inter-sectorial and integrated policies and programmes, it is likely that the combination of all of them did play a role. In ex-President Calderón’s view, the Juarez “success” resulted from a combination of “the federal government’s deployment of police and troops, massive funding of social and economic programmes and support for state prosecutors and local police”, and demonstrated the importance of coordination at the three levels of government (International Crisis Group, 2015).

\(^6^3\) The authors interviewed Raul Soto by phone in April 2016.

\(^6^4\) Although some new institutional bodies were created and others further professionalised (e.g. the Municipal Public Security Secretary in Juarez and its unity focussed on social prevention), Soto believes that, in general, the city still lacks the resources and capacity to deal with the problem on its own.
Beyond Todos Somos Juarez

Beyond We Are All Juarez and the deployment of troops already mentioned, it should be noted that the reform of the local police forces was also a continued process that accompanied both efforts. Between 2011-2013, more than half of the municipal officers were either fired or resigned, in a process led by an iron-fist commander whose reputation was also linked to several accusations of human rights violations and police abuse. The judicial system was also increasingly improved, with the percentage of homicide clearance rates going from 1 percent, in 2010, to about 40 percent in 2014 (International Crisis Group, 2015).

President Peña Nieto’s national prevention programme, PRONAPRED, aimed to continue We Are All Juarez’s legacy. The city has received about USD 6 million per year in PRONAPRED subsidies since 2013, focussed on prevention programmes targeted at three polygons with about 57,000 residents (equivalent to 4 percent of the population). Among the activities financed with these resources is the improvement of public libraries, the creation of a youth orchestra, and the financing of a drug addiction treatment centre and campaigns against drinking and driving and bullying, although criticisms over the distribution, mechanisms for selection and delay of resources abound (International Crisis Group, 2015). The business sector has also continued to provide important support, and has created a specific financing mechanism for social prevention programmes to help give sustainability to the achievements made by the city thus far. Although it is still hard to identify the key drivers of these sustainable patterns, the fact is that crime rates have continued to fall at a steadily pace, making Ciudad Juarez a hopeful example for other Mexican cities.

It should also be noted that, given the amount of federal resources and support received, Juarez’ experience offers limited lessons to other cities, unless the same amount of human and financial capital could be targeted at those places (World Bank, 2012; Lobo, 2013). Up until 2012, We Are All Juarez was seen as the only truly integrated and cross-cutting policy implemented in Mexico over that period, with the remaining actions being spread out into disconnected and disperse interventions with little impact in violence reduction (World Bank, 2012). That scenario started to change in recent years, with that programme serving as the basis to the design of others focussed in other municipalities, including Monterrey, as we will discuss next.
Box 7. Youth Gang Prevention Programmes in Juarez

We Are All Juarez provided the appropriate setting for programmes focussed on youth and gang violence prevention. Youth: Work Mexico, for example, worked with local civil society organisations to create safe spaces for vulnerable youth. Implemented by Youth International, this initiative strengthened and expanded after-school and summer programmes to 7,500 people. Its main target was youth who had either dropped out of school or were at the risk of doing so. The employability component of the programme provided over 2,000 youngsters with training and life skills and connected them with job opportunities. To make the programme sustainable, local organisations such as Empréndete Juárez were trained to continue with implementation. The programme was able to form alliances between existing youth groups in Juarez and former youth gangs, turning them into positive social forces that would then help to promote the programme and engage others (Conger, 2014).

Circo Volador is another programme that uses cultural activities, such as movies, radio shows from local youth and art to build trust in the communities. The programme starts with a diagnostic of the profile of youth in the community and perceptions about them to then design a one-year intervention that includes workshops to improve existing skills, and which also serves as a space to discuss themes related to violence and build social cohesion. Although the programme was originated in Mexico City, it is now present in several others. Juarez is one of those who have a permanent full-time team. Cauce Ciudadano, another NGO with a long history of gang prevention work in Mexico, also set foot in Juarez in 2008. The organisation provides life skill training to strengthen protective factors, reduce risk factors and promote healthy lifestyles for youth, as well as art and cultural activities. Cauce works in territories controlled by gangs, where there is a strong social cohesion and ties that these groups. Instead of simply trying to remove youth from the gangs, they also try to transform the gangs themselves (World Bank, 2015).

Monterrey: Private Sector Engagement and The Emergence of a Hybrid Civic Movement to Improve Citizen Security

Monterrey is known as Mexico’s industrial hub. As the third largest metropolitan area in the country, its greater area includes 12 municipalities (including Monterrey) and about 4 million people. Several multinational corporations have their headquarters in the city, which is also home to the prestigious Tec de Monterrey University. The capital of Nuevo León state, Monterrey is also located in the complex northern side of Mexico. Up until 2006 the city was considered the safest in

65 http://www.iyfnet.org/initiatives/youthwork-mexico
Latin America by business publications (Conger, 2014). However, as in the case of Juarez, that suddenly started to change. In 2007, murders and kidnappings increased, with the number of homicides jumping 143 percent, from 57 in 2006, to 139. Many police officers were among those killed. By 2008, the Beltrán-Leyva cartel had set up business in the city, followed by the Zetas, then the Gulf Cartel’s brutal guard.

The number of youths engaging in gangs in Monterrey doubled to over 26,000 during those years, and reports suggested that the number of gangs had risen to about 2,000 in the metropolitan area (Conger, 2014; Jones, 2014). By 2010, the Zetas came to a definite split with the Gulf Cartel, and Greater Monterrey became their battleground (Dudley and Nieto, 2014, Conger, 2014). The number of homicides jumped to 344, and more than doubled the following year, reaching 791 murders in 2011. The massacre of 52 people at Casino Royale, attributed to the Zetas as retaliation to the non-payment of its required ‘quota’, in August 2011, marked the peak of the unprecedented level of violence in the city’s history (Dudley and Nieto, 2014).

**Figure 10. Absolute Number of Homicides and Rate per 100,000 Inhabitants, Monterrey, 2000-2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Absolute Number</th>
<th>Rate per 100,000 Inhabitants</th>
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</tr>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>177</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>151</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ calculations based on data from INEGI and CONAPO.

**Private Sector and Civil Society Responses**

While the massive amount of investments channeled through the federal government to Ciudad Juarez required a strong and engaged civil society to flourish, in Monterrey the initial response was largely driven by a local civic infrastructure led by the powerful private sector in town. In 2011, the largest employers in the Monterrey metropolitan area decided to revive the civic group Council of Civic Institutions of Nuevo León (Consejo Cívico de Instituciones de Nuevo León, CCINLAC), rebranding it simply as Civic Council (Consejo Cívico). Bringing together more than 100 institutions and individuals, including chambers of commerce, charitable organisations, service industry companies, and neighbourhood associations, in what Conger (2014) framed as a ‘hybrid’ civic organisation, the Council started to work as a watchdog for the security and justice system. Its powerful interlocutors had easy access in the government arena, including at the federal level, and
became a key mechanism to promote dialogue between civil society and municipal and state security officials.

The Council started managing the monthly release of information of the Crime Spotlight (Semáforo Delictivo).\(^{68}\) Created a few years earlier also by civic movements, with data from the State Attorney General’s Office, the Spotlight monitors murders, carjacking, family violence, and property thefts in Monterrey and its metropolitan cities. Based on the results tracked, it sets up goals for the reduction of crime (Conger, 2014). Continuous talks with the government mediated by the Council led to the prioritisation of a strategy focussed on reforming the police and the judicial system, investing in social programmes, and promoting a peaceful and civic culture.

**A New Police Force**

Cleaning up and professionalising the municipal police forces, which had been also infiltrated by the Zetas, was the first priority agreed with government officials. Confidence tests of municipal and state officers, including through the use of lie detectors, were applied. While the Nuevo León chief of public security was in charge of leading the reform, the Civic Council was responsible for monitoring it. More than 4,000 officers were fired after failing the tests.\(^{69}\)

In 2011, with financial and technical support form the private sector, a new police force was launched. The Civic Force (Fuerza Civil), as the new agency was called, was composed of new agents carefully recruited and screened with the support of several companies. A phone company based in Monterrey created a call centre for the recruitment, for example; universities offered their human talent to prepare training programmes; and business leaders were invited to join the meetings of a coordination group created to implement the process, composed of all agencies in charge of security (i.e. the army, the state police, the attorney general’s office, the state intelligence agency and the local mayors). In the process, the government also increased from 2 percent to 3 percent a payroll tax on businesses to help finance the expansion of the force. This 50 percent increase was initially met with resistance from sections of the business community, but the measure was maintained (Conger, 2014). By the end of 2013, the new force already had 3,000 officers, and the results of such partnership and coordination established in Monterrey became a model for many cities in the country (Dudley and Nieto, 2014).

More importantly, the successful model of partnership established through the creation of the Civic Force not only helped to build trust between the government and the business sector, but it also led

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to their commitment to other initiatives. More private investments started to be channeled into urban programmes, youth training, recovery of parks and public spaces, among others, although government officials and civil society representatives still believe that the private sector could do more in the social prevention front (Conger, 2014).

**Expanding Accountability Mechanisms**

As the engagement between the private sector and civil society grew stronger, new mechanisms to monitor government response and make officials accountable for their actions started to emerge. Once again, the unique context of Monterrey, as an industrial as well as tech-savvy city, also home to young generations coming out of some of the country’s leading universities, was the perfect place for these innovations to emerge. One of them was the online social media platform Center for Citizen Integration (*Centro de Integración Ciudadana, CIC*), which allows citizens to report crimes and also interact with each other and propose projects or the city. Reports to the platform cover security issues as well as others related to the provision of public services. They are divided into categories such as “situations of risk”, which include shootings, as well as thefts, traffic accidents, broken street lights, and other problems with public services. In addition, it also provides legal and psychological support to victims of violence and crime who report through its channels. Up until April of 2016, the platform had received more than 146,000 reports for the 12 cities of Monterrey metropolitan area. The number of users of the app increased from about 4,000, in 2012, to almost 8,500 in 2014. CIC is now also working with the national Sub-secretary for Prevention and Citizen Participation to disseminate its methodology to other metropolitan areas of the country.  

Also in 2011, the Civic Council and business chambers started financing quarterly surveys conducted by the Tec de Monterrey University, the Security Metropolitan Pulse (*Pulso de Seguridad Metropolitano*), measuring citizens’ perfection of security and their confidence on municipal authorities and the police forces. Results of the surveys are also made available through the CIC platform.

Finally, the Civic Council, together with the local governments of nine out of the 12 cities of Monterrey metropolitan area, also launched the programme “Mayor, how are we doing?” (*Alcalde, Cómo Vamos?) at the end of 2011. Resembling the initiative promoted by the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá, the programme consists in a list of ten commitments made by the authorities and monitored by civil society organisations, including the Civic Council, and representatives from the academia. The commitments included specific citizen security demands, such as ensuring a minimum of three police officers for every 1,000 inhabitants, as well as more broad ones, such as

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decrease in crime rates and improvements of public spaces (e.g. parks, sidewalks, sports centres) (Conger, 2014; Dudley and Nieto, 2014). In December 2015, representatives of the platform presented the results of three years of work monitoring the agreed commitments with the mayors, who were then completing their terms. In general, most of the municipalities achieved their target goals and received positive evaluations.

**The Way Forward, More Prevention**

As in the case of Juarez, no evaluations implemented thus far allow us to attribute the decline of violent crime rates in Monterrey to the strong partnership established between the public and private sectors, together with civil society organisations; the new police force that was also possible because of such alliance; and the accountability mechanisms that were fostered. Even though these initiatives and processes coincide with the great crime decline in the city and its metropolitan area and should not be understated, as in the case of Juarez analysts also mention changes in the dynamics of the organised crime as part of the key drivers of crime reduction over this period (Basombrío, 2014).

Despite increased investments in youth programmes, community services and cultural activities in areas with higher incidence of violence, some analysts and civil society representatives believe that the same amount of efforts and pressure from the business sector put into reforming the police and restoring security to the city should be met with initiatives focussed on social prevention, which will contribute to make such achievements sustainable over time (Conger, 2014).

The current National Program for the Social Prevention of Violence and Crime has prioritised all Monterrey and its neighbour cities in the metropolitan area. Some of the activities implemented through the programme so far, to strengthen social cohesion and promote a comprehensive package of support to youth, include: the establishment of school surveillance committees, psychological

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71 In Mexico, mayors are elected for a three-year term. “Mayor, how are we Doing?” started at the beginning of the last mayors’ term, at the end of 2011. (Consejo Cívico. Culminó primera edición de la Plataforma Alcalde ¿Cómo vamos? Retrieved April 1, 2016 from http://www.consejocivico.org.mx/editoriales/culmino-primer-edicion-de-la-plataforma-alcalde-como-vamos/).

and legal assistance to adolescents in conflict with the law and their families; rehabilitation of public spaces, including a public library, three comprehensive care centres for youth, a community mediation centre and a multipurpose centre (SEGOB, 2014). These policies are implemented at the state level in coordination with Nuevo León Undersecretary for Prevention and Citizen Participation, created with the mandate to develop and propose the State Program for Social Prevention and Citizen Participation.

At the local level, Monterrey city also has a Security and Mobility Secretary (Secretaria de Seguridad y Vialidad) with the mandate to develop programmes focussed on social prevention and to coordinate with non-governmental organisations and government agencies the development of strategic plans to address risk behaviours. It is also tasked with the promotion and organisation of municipal councils or advisory committees of public safety, public protection, crime prevention, road and transit safety.\(^73\)

**El Salvador**

**National Context**

El Salvador has, often disputed with Honduras, the infamous reputation of the most violent country in the world. The context and characteristics of violent crime in El Salvador, as well as the recent history of responses over the past decade, makes this a unique case in this analysis. El Salvador’s history of violence has been significantly influenced by a context of civil war, which lasted from 1980 to 1992 and left as part of its legacy a strengthened culture of violence and widespread availability of firearms. Added to that, there was the proliferation of street gangs (“maras”), many of them formed by deportees from the United States in the 1990s, who started gaining control of several territories in the country throughout the 2000s (UNDP, 2013).\(^74\)

Violence started escalating, and homicide rates jumped from 36.9, in 2001, to 64.4, in 2006, falling again in 2008 and reaching new highs in 2009 and 2011. The fall that followed in 2012 and 2013

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\(^73\) Gobierno de Monterrey, retrieved on April 1, 2016 from [http://www.mty.gob.mx/tramites-y-servicios/secretario-de-seguridad-y-vialidad](http://www.mty.gob.mx/tramites-y-servicios/secretario-de-seguridad-y-vialidad).

\(^74\) The two major gangs in Central America, who have their stronger presence in El Salvador among the three countries in the Northern Triangle, the Mara Salvatrucha (MS13) and 18th Street, have their origins in the United States, to where millions of Central Americans had fled from the civil conflict in their region in the early 1980s. There, especially in Los Angeles, a small percentage of them got involved with gangs. During the mid-1990s, many were deported and replicated the 18th Street and MS13 gangs in their countries of origin (World Bank, 2011).
was led by a controversial truce between the two main gangs facilitated by the government, which will be discussed later.

As one of the most violent countries in the world, El Salvador is not usually included as a case of successful violence prevention. It is also one of the poorest countries in the hemisphere. Yet, even in the face of these challenges, some cities have been able to bring down violence significantly. Santa Tecla managed to formulate and build wide support for a multi-sectorial citizen security policy, create an information system to define priorities, and set up a legal and institutional framework to implement the policy. The process involved strong engagement with civil society, including the local private sector, which was institutionalised into the municipal government structure.

**Gang Violence and The Failure of ‘Mano Dura’**

Youth violence and, in particular, gang violence, is a key concern and usually perceived as the most important driver of violent crime rates in El Salvador. However, youth violence in the country and Central America as a whole goes beyond the issue of gangs (World Bank, 2011). While this is certainly a major problem and contribute to the high rates of crime and violence, limited evidence from multiple sources suggest that approximately 15 percent of homicides in the Northern Triangle, as the area composed by Honduras, El Salvador as Guatemala is known, are gang related, and in 2006 only 10.7 percent of the murders were registered as gang crimes (World Bank, 2011). Data from the Public Prosecutor’s Office obtained by the Spanish news agency EFE also showed that, in 2015, 26 percent of the convicted murderers in El Salvador were gang members (Bargent, 2016).

According to UNODC (2012), there are approximately 20,000 street gang (or “mara”) members in El Salvador, almost twice as much as the 10,500 reported by the organisation in 2007, and representing the highest concentration of gang members per 100,000 inhabitants in Central America (UNODC, 2012). Several factors intensify the youth and gang violence problem in the country: poverty, social exclusion, lack of educational and job opportunities for youth, and the availability of arms and a culture of violence that were left after more than a decade of civil war (World Bank, 2011; Seelke, 2014; Latorre, 2015). Studies also suggest that the media has played a role in exacerbating the gang problem through a sensationalistic coverage of gangs that has led not only to a higher sense of insecurity among citizens, but that has also guided a general misperception that youth gangs were responsible for the majority of violent crime in El Salvador – as well as its neighbours, contributing to reactive hardline responses seen throughout the early 2000s (Seelke, 2009).

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75 According to UNODC (2012), El Salvador has a concentration of gang or “mara” members of 323 per 100,000, followed by Guatemala with 153 and Honduras with 149.
In 2003, in response to the increasing rates of violent crime, the national Congress passed the “iron fist” *Mano Dura* Law, emphasising repression and law enforcement and minimising prevention, rehabilitation and social reintegration efforts of gang members (Seelke 2014). The Supreme Court subsequently declared the law unconstitutional. During its 23 months of enforcement, from July 2003 until August 2004, the *Mano Dura* Law led to the arrest of more than 19,000 people accused of gang related crimes, of which 84 percent were later dismissed (Latorre, 2015).

With the elections of Elías Antonio Saca in 2004, the hardline ‘iron fist’ approach took a new radical turn. Within its Safe Country (*País Seguro*) government plan, he promoted the *Super Mano Dura* law, an anti-gang package that enhanced police power to search and arrest suspected gang members, and toughened penalties for convicted gang members (Seelke, 2014). These policies were allegedly quick fixes that led to a massive incarceration, stretching even further the low capacity of the prison system; human rights violations and police abuse; the strengthening of criminal cells, which started adopting new techniques to avoid being arrested, and were able to further organise themselves inside the prison; and, ultimately, to a significant increase in violent crime (UNDP, 2013; Seelke, 2014). The surge in homicide rates seen in the early 2000s coincides with the beginning and strengthening of the *mano dura* approach. It should be noted that these policies were adopted with strong support from society. Surveys have consistently shown a general positive view towards a hardline approach against crime in the region.

The government plan did provide some protections for minors accused of gang-related crimes and had some expression of social violence prevention. It included, for instance, plans focussed on preventing at-risk youth from joining the gangs (*Plan Mano Amiga*, or Friendly Hand Plan) and on rehabilitating youth who had already been convicted for gang related crimes (*Plan Mano Extendida*, or Extended Hand Plan) (Latorre, 2015). However, much less emphasis was given to these efforts.

**Moving (Somewhat) Towards Prevention**

In face of the drastic results of the *mano dura* policies that early on started to be seen, in 2007 a National Citizen Security and Social Peace Commission was formed (*Comisión de Seguridad Ciudadana y Paz Social*) and published an important white paper focussed on prevention and

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76 “*Mano dura* approaches have typically involved incarcerating large numbers of youth (often those with visible tattoos) for illicit association, and increasing sentences for gang membership and gang-related crimes. (…) *Mano Dura* reforms initially proved to be a way for Central American leaders to show that they were getting tough on gangs and crime, despite objections from human rights groups about their potential infringements on civil liberties and human rights” (Seelke, 2014, 9).

77 In 2012, for instance, 87 percent of those interviewed by a LAPOP-UNDP survey said that the best way to deal with crime and violence was through harsh punishment (UNDP, 2013).
radically opposed to the hardline approach being implemented in those years. That same year, the Ministry of Public Security and Justice was created. A National Violence Prevention Plan was formulated, followed by an Anti-Delinquency Plan and a law against organised crime (CSCPS, 2014).

El Salvador adopted a national policy in 2009, and began to institutionalise prevention. With the election of president Mauricio Funes, a National Policy for Justice, Public Security and Coexistence (Política Nacional de Justice, Seguridad Pública y Convivencia (Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Publica, 2010) was designed in 2009 and launched in 2010 (Latorre, 2015). The General Directorate for Social Violence Prevention and Peace Culture (Dirección General de Prevención Social de la Violencia y Cultura de Paz, PREPAZ), an executive body under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, was strengthened to facilitate its implementation, as the entity responsible nationwide for all violence prevention matters.78 A Public Security Cabinet was created to coordinate the multiple government agencies that would be responsible for different interventions at the local level.79 Their work led to the publication of the National Strategy for Violence Prevention (Estrategia Nacional de Prevención de la Violencia) in 2012, which set the framework for the implementation of National Policy. The document emphasised the territorial dimension of the policy, giving a prominent role to the Municipal Prevention Councils and the Local Public Security Committees.80

Box 8. Youth and School-Based Programmes

There are a few projects mentioned in the literature as positive youth and school-based violence prevention interventions implemented in El Salvador. Proyouth (Projovenes) was first launched in 2003 with the objective of providing development opportunities for at-risk children and youth ages 10 to 25 from 57 communities with high levels of crime and violence in 13 municipalities of San Salvador metropolitan area. The programme focussed on activities at the school, family and community levels, providing job training, cultural and sports activities, and promoting youth and community participation. It also included a component to strengthen the institutional bodies in charge of coordinating prevention actions. In its five years of implementation (2003-2008), the programme benefitted 50,000 youth, and is said to have contributed to the following results found

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78 This unity was previously known as General Citizen Security Directory (Dirección General de Seguridad Ciudadana, DGSC). It had been created in 2007 to coordinate social prevention actions at the local level. According to the new government, DGSC had failed in its mission due to an overall lack of guidelines and technical capacity in terms of social prevention, as well as lack of coordination. These were incorporated in the design of the new Genera Directory structure (Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Publica, 2010).
80 El Salvador has a centralised presidential government. Despite recent decentralisation efforts, the national government still dictates public security policies.
in the targeted communities during that period: a decline of 25 percent of youth under 18 being sent to juvenile courts; a reduction of 23.7 percent in the number of arrests by the National Police of youth under 18; a 70 percent decline in the number of cases of children maltreatment and interfami

Another programme worth mentioning is School Coexistence (Convivencia Escolar). Implemented between 2010 and 2012, the programme included sports, art and culture, conflict resolution, gender and job training for targeted groups in selected municipalities to promote values, skills and habits focussed on coexistence and modify cultural patterns that favor violent behaviour among children and adolescents in 25 municipalities. It was executed by the Secretary for Strategic Affairs (Secretarias de Asuntos Estrategicos), which responds directly to the president, and followed the framework and directives established by the National Policy and National Strategy for Violence Prevention. A USAID report on community-base interventions implemented in Central America (see Box 11 in the next chapter) highlights that school-based interventions in El Salvador, together with the “institutionalisation of various student leadership groups within the schools, along with the training of teachers and students in mediation and alternative conflict resolution”, are creating a better environment for at-risk youth” (Berk-Seligson et al., 2014c).

These efforts did not, however, prevent the new government from sustaining a tough approach on gangs. In 2010, for example, Funes administration proposed a new Anti Gang law (Ley Anti Mara), making the affiliation to a gang a crime punishable by up to ten years in prison. The law, which in many ways resembled the mano dura approach of the past, was heavily criticised by civil society groups and openly rejected by the main gangs as well, who reacted by imposing a 72-hour curfew and bus stoppage in the country, threatening to kill those who disobeyed. The gangs also publicly called for policies of inclusion and opportunities for youth, as well as better living conditions and personal development opportunities in the prisons (Hellenkamp, 2012).

The Unsustainable Gang Truce

Although the pressure from the gangs did not prevent the government from approving the law, the episode demonstrated openness for dialogue, which was crystalised two years later. In 2012, the Salvadoran government is said to have facilitated, with the support from the church, civil society representatives and also the Organization of the American States (OAS), a historic—and risky—truce involving the country’s largest gangs (Seelke, 2014; Dudley, 2013). In 2013 the Municipalities Safe from Violence initiative (Municipios Libres de Violencia) was launched. Announced as a second phase of the truce, it aimed at ensuring its sustainability. The initiative consisted in opening a space in specific violent municipalities for dialogue between all different actors, including gang members, and the provision socioeconomic and reinsertion opportunities. It also proposed that resident gang members would turn in their guns and join community activities (UNDP, 2013).
The truce led to an initial significant reduction in homicides, with rates for every 100,000 inhabitants falling 43 percent between 2011 and 2013. The initial results brought a lot of attention to the process, leading some analysts to argue that the truce had shown that gang violence was, indeed, more largely responsible for violent crime in El Salvador than researchers and the government itself had previously claimed (Dudley, 2013).

However, in 2014 the ceasefire between Barrio-18 and MS-13 collapsed, and homicide rates increased by 36 percent, according to data from El Salvador's forensic institute (Garney, 2015). In 2015, the country presented a record high rate of 116 murders per 100,000, the highest for a country not at war (Planas, 2016).

Nevertheless, one positive outcome of the truce often mentioned is that it helped to bring attention to key social issues that affect children and youth prior to joining the gangs, and to particular conditions of gang members and their families. It opened space for a heavier emphasis of investments, particularly from international organisation agencies, in early childhood development and mentoring programmes, interventions to increase retention of high-risk youth in secondary schools, and opening schools after hours and on weekends.

The new national citizen security plan launched by President Salvador Sánchez Cerén, elected in 2014, Safe El Salvador (El Salvador Seguro), places prevention at its centre and apparently moves away from all mano dura efforts of the past. It also takes a step forward by including the specific budget for its implementation, and earmarking 73 percent of those resources for prevention (Latorre, 2015). The Plan also includes a specific territorial component focussed on the 50 municipalities with the highest violent rates in the country.

It is still early to say if these will finally establish a solid prevention approach at the national level, and how these will translate at the local and territorial one. In a context where mano dura has prevailed overtime, despite several legislation and institutional bodies created to ensure otherwise, there are reasons for skepticism. Positive local and targeted experiences implemented over the years, such as the example of Santa Tecla, should provide important lessons, as we discuss next.

**Santa Tecla: Citizen Participation and Inter-Institutional Coordination**

Santa Tecla is a municipality in the San Salvador metropolitan area, and the smallest among all the cases reviewed in this study, with about 120,000 inhabitants. The city’ socioeconomic indicators are significantly above the national average (Herrera, 2009). Poverty and violence are, however, concentrated in a few areas where the territorial control of gangs and the absence of the state are clearly marked (Interpeace, 2014). This is the case of San José del Pino and Community San Rafael neighbourhoods. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, these two neighbourhoods became the stage of a territorial dispute between Ms-13 and Barrio 18, and homicide rates at the city level skyrocketed
(Latorre, 2015). By 2005, Santa Tecla had one of the highest homicide rates in the country, of 66.4 for each 100,000, higher than the national average of 62.2 for that same year.

The consolidation of MS-13 control over the territory, followed by a series of local policies focussed on violence prevention, are believed to have been the drivers of the decline in violent crime that followed. The declining trend that started in 2005 was affected by the increase in homicide violence seen at the national level in 2011, but the city was able to quickly recover the year after, also partially because of the gang truce. In 2013, Santa Tecla registered a homicide rate of 14 per 100,000, much lower than the national as well as the Central and Latin America averages.

**Figure 11 Homicide Rates per 100,000 Inhabitants, Santa Tecla and El Salvador, 2000-2013**

![Graph showing homicide rates per 100,000 inhabitants for Santa Tecla and El Salvador from 2000 to 2013.](image)

*Source: UNODC Statistics; Observatorio Municipal para la Prevención de la Violencia del Municipio de Santa Tecla; Policía Nacional Civil; Instituto de Medicina Legal (Región Central); Digestyc 2007.*

**Institutional, Legal and Policy Framework**

With the end of the battle between the two rival gangs, in 2005 Santa Tecla municipal government launched an integrated and multi-sector Citizen Security Public Policy (Política Pública de Seguridad Ciudadana). The design of this policy started with a participatory diagnostic to identify, prioritise and propose solutions to the problems of crime and violence in the city, which was also accompanied by training and capacity building of local staff provided by international donours. Initially, the policy had five main objectives: encouraging citizen participation; promotion the coordination between the Municipal Government and national and regional institutions; strengthening the municipal legal powers related to citizen coexistence; improving public infrastructure and quality of life; and promoting a culture of respect, tolerance and solidarity.

Its institutionalisation was possible with the formal approval by the Municipal Council, the creation of an intra-institutional Unit of Coexistence and Security (Unidad de Coexistencia y Seguridad) in charge of monitoring the policy implementation, and the establishment of a local Ministry of Citizen Security (Consejería de Seguridad Ciudadana). A Citizen Security Working Group (Mesa de Seguridad Ciudadana) was also created to promote citizen participation.
The institutional, legal and policy frameworks were also continuously updated with time, based on a permanent process of review of diagnostics and assessments of the policy, and always in consultation with the communities. In 2008, the Municipal Observatory of Crime (Observatorio Municipal del Delito) was launched, providing data that helped to target interventions, and also strengthening accountability mechanisms that would allow citizen to monitor the results of the policy (Rodríguez, 2010). The Unit of Coexistence and Security became responsible for managing the observatory.

That same year, an Inter-institutional Council for Violence Prevention (Consejo Interinstitucional para la Prevención de la Violencia) was created, composed by 12 government agencies and civil society representatives. The municipal policy itself redesigned, strengthening even further in its key objectives the need to promote inter-institutional coordination and cooperation, strengthen municipal capacities and encourage responsible citizen participation (Herrera, 2009).

The policy strategic areas of areas were also modified during the years, increasingly consolidating its transversal and integrated aspect overtime. By 2010, the policy had evolved to the following key strategic areas: building a culture of citizen participation; recovering public spaces and the promotion recreational and sports activities; promoting a culture of peace through programmes that would disseminate norms of coexistence and encourage citizens pacts, in addition to the creation conflict mediation spaces; increasing processes of interagency coordination between different levels; modernisation and strengthening of institutions; capacity building of municipal institutions; improvement of management and financing, by seeking increased financial support and greater involvement of the private sector in the prevention strategy (Rodríguez, 2010; Latorre, 2015).

The establishment or revision of municipal legislation that address important risk factors also followed these changes. One of them was the prohibition to carrying of arms in public places, in 2006, and the regulation of alcohol sales. Although no impact evaluations are available to assess the specific impacts of such measures, evidence from other places, such as Bogotá and Cali, and the crime decline that followed, suggest that they may have contributed to the overall decline in homicides in the city.

**Violence Prevention Programmes**

In its early years, the policy also incorporated social prevention programmes that included the provision of scholarships, the promotion of sports clubs, and child care and school support for women who were vendors at the municipal markets. Public awareness campaigns against violence, such as “Santa Tecla United Advances Safe” and “Good Neighbours”, which involved marches led by the mayor himself, were also promoted, as well as other at the school levels focussed on the prevention of drug abuse.
Situational prevention efforts included the recovery of several parks, green and recreational areas, which also received video surveillance cameras, and were also supported by the private sector (Herrera, 2009; Latorre, 2015).

Several programmes focussed on youth employability were later also supported by international organisations. In 2009, a school-based violence prevention programme (Violence Prevention at School Centers, *Prevención de Violencia en Centros Escolares*) was launched in six facilities that had received several reports of violent incidents.

Although no evaluations are available to corroborate the impact of these interventions, their implementation illustrates the strong focus on prevention of the policy and the importance of the support provided by and cooperation established with international and civil society organisations and the private sector.

**Community Engagement and Political Continuity**

High levels of community organisation and cohesion and are also mentioned as a key factor that helped to maintain the trends in crime decline and consolidate the citizen security advances in the city. The city has 45 Community Development Associations legally registered and additional neighbourhood associations that include Working Groups (*Mesas Temáticas de Concertación*) about a variety of topics, such as youth, security and women (Herrera, 2009).

Political continuity is also mentioned as an important factor. Mayors from the same political alliance have been elected consecutively since the early 2000s (Latorre, 2015). The municipal citizen security policy has been maintained by the different administrations, although modifications in its key objectives and actions were made throughout time, adjusting to changing contexts and demands from the communities (Herrera, 2009; Latorre, 2015). This continuity in terms of prioritisation of the topic in the local political agenda, combined with the flexibility of the policy, seems to have helped to ensure its sustainability overtime.

**Reinsertion After the Truce**

Santa Tecla was chosen one of the municipalities "free of violence" in 2013, as part of the second phase of the gang truce. A series of rehabilitation and economic reinsertion initiatives were then offered to youth gang members who had been previously excluded from the programme. Among the productive projects developed and supported by the private sector was the creation of poultry and fish farms, a car wash service and a bike rental services. Youth involved in these projects started calling themselves “young builders for life and peace” (Interpeace, 2014, 11). A space for dialogue was established to ensure constant interaction and improvement of the relationship between the local government, youth participating in the projects, neighbourhood associations and the Citizen Council for Local Development (*Consejo Ciudadano de Desarrollo Local*). This space
also served as a mechanism to promote a closer dialogue with the private sector, which would help to improve basic infrastructure in the streets, and to help coordinate health campaigns promoted by the Ministry of Health and other activities.

A community policing force was also established in the neighbourhoods of San Rafael and San Jose del Pino in 2013. Through a series of joined activities, such as sports, cultural events, painting of walls and cleaning of parks, police officers started interacting with former gang members (Interpeace, 2014).

With the collapse of the truce, homicide rates also increased in the city, but at a much lower proportion than what was seen at the national level. News reports indicate that homicide rates went up from 14 to 21 per 100,000 between 2013 and 2014.

**Challenges and Lessons**

Santa Tecla’s success story also involved significant challenges. Interpeace (2014) report on the case provides a summary of them: first, ensuring coordination and cooperation among the different government agencies was very difficult in the beginning. There was resistance from local staff in contributing to something they believed should be under the responsibility of the Unit created for that purpose. Second, the community seemed initially uninterested or feared gang members’ reprisal if they got involved in initiatives related to public security. Investments in training and capacity building of municipal staff, as well as community members, with support from international organisations, and a focus on a broader perspective of public security, social coexistence and inclusion, helped to address these issues, although they still remain at some level (Interpeace, 2014).

Santa Tecla has a very specific context when compared to all case studies discussed in this report. It has a significantly smaller population, it is located in the poorest among the five countries analysed, with significant institutional challenges at the national level, and, differently from most of the others, was able to revert the local trend of crime and violence while rates at the national levels continued to increase. At the same time, its experience embodies a compilation of trends seen thus far, but applied at a more micro level. The city formulated a local transversal citizen security policy, set up the necessary legal and institutional framework to put such policy in practice and also created the mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the policy, relied on an intense and institutionalised process of citizen engagement. By investing in improving the local information systems, and maintaining a close interaction with citizens through institutionalised councils for citizen participation, the policy was adjusted over time according to the changing context and demands, but kept as a priority to the local government and its constituencies.
Guatemala

National Context

Guatemala also presents a different context than most of the previous cases. With a population slightly higher than 16 million, the country has one-third the residents of Colombia, about 13 percent of Mexico’s, and less than 10 percent of Brazil’s. It also experienced one of the longest and harshest civil wars of Latin America. The conflict led to more than 200,000 deaths and disappearances, and ended after 36 years with the Peace Accords of 1996 (International Crisis Group, 2010; World Bank, 2013). These results did not, however, bring peace to the country. In the 2000s, a steady increase in urban violence kept citizen security at the forefront of the policy debate and citizens’ concerns. With an annual average of 6,000 homicides per year, homicide rates in the late 2000s were higher than during the most brutal years of the armed conflict. In 2010, Guatemala had the fifth highest homicide rate in in Latin America and seventh highest in the world (UNODC, 2011).

The escalation of urban violent crime is attributed to several factors. The rise of Guatemala as a main trafficking route for drugs, the widespread availability of firearms\(^{81}\), the presence of several youth gangs\(^{82}\), and weak state institutions that allow for extreme high levels of impunity and police corruption are among the key drivers of violence most mentioned in the literature (World Bank, 2011; World Bank, 2013). Poverty, social exclusion, inequality, and a lack of educational and job opportunities for youth further exacerbate the problem (Seelke 2014; World Bank, 2013), with Guatemala ranking as one of the three countries with the highest rates of school desertion in Latin America, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDP, 2013). In addition to that, the country has the largest and fastest growing population in Central America and 75 percent of its residents are under the age of 35; the proportion of female-headed households has also been increasing and is estimated at about 25 percent (USAID, 2014).\(^{83}\)

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\(^{81}\) According to an USAID report (2014), there are likely between 2 and 3 million illegal weapons in Guatemala, with an approximate 5 percent annual growth. The country has the highest estimated rate of gun ownership in Central America, with approximately 16 guns per 100 people (World Bank, 2013). The proportion of homicides committed by a firearm increased from 74.9 percent, in 2001, to 85 percent in 2010. This proportion is higher than the global and regional average. According to UNODC, the global average of homicides committed by firearms is at 45 percent, while in South America it is up to 60 percent, and in Central America 70 percent (UNODC, 2011; USAID, 2014).

\(^{82}\) UNODC (2012) estimates that Guatemala has today approximately 22,000 gang members, a significant increase from the 14,000 estimated by the organisation in 2007.

\(^{83}\) Intra-family violence is also particularly high in Guatemala. A long history of violence against women and children, intensified during the civil conflict, as these groups became targets of both guerrilla and state armed actors for physical and sexual abuse, continued at high proportions in the post-conflict era. Some observers identify this as the most prevalent form of violence in the country (Adams, 2011; World Bank, 2013). From
Beginning in 2009, however, homicide rates in Guatemala started to fall, dropping from the peak of 46.5 per 100,000 to 34.6 in 2012. This trend has remained steadily over the past few years. In 2014, the government announced that the national homicide rate had fallen to 31, the lowest level in more than a decade (Gagne, 2015).

This trend coincides with several policies that have been implemented at the national, sub-national as well as regional level, several of them supported by international donors and many implemented through civil society organisations. However, much further research and evaluation of the policies and programmes here mentioned is needed in order to fully understand the decline in crime and violence of recent years. This section provides an overview of the main policies and efforts discussed in the literature, and will later focus on the particular experience of Mixco, a city in Guatemala City Metropolitan Area that has seen one of the steepest drops in homicide rates over the analysed period.

**National Responses**

As in the case of El Salvador and Honduras, throughout the 2000s, Guatemala also adopted a more hardline law enforcement approach to reduce violence and address gang violence, in particular. In recent years, however, the government started to move towards a more integrated and prevention focussed strategy. A National Security Council was created and a National Security Policy approved in 2008, the first of this type ever established in the country. It defined the priorities, responsibilities and lines of action of the different institutions in charge of the National Security System. In 2009, a Law Against Femicide and stricter gun control legislation were also passed. In 2012, the Ministry of Interior (Ministerio de Gobernación), which is in charge of coordinating with a wide range of ministries and agencies that play critical roles in the provision of security, launched a National Pact for Security, Justice and Peace. The Pact aimed at bringing together different government institutions and sectors of society (including civil society organisations, the private sector, academia, the church) in an integrated effort to reduce and prevent violence, serving as an overall coordination mechanism across the various ministries and actors charged with crime and violence control and prevention, and putting a strong emphasis on citizen participation. The 2000 to 2010, for example, over 4,000 Guatemalan women and girls were murdered. In 2009 alone, the country registered 708 femicides, and over 630 in 2010, according to the Guatemala Human Rights Ombudsman (World Bank, 2013).

84 This includes several ministries involved in crime prevention, the police and penitentiary system (which are also part of the Ministry of Interior), and the Guatemalan justice system, which includes the Judicial Branch (Organismo Judicial), the Office of the Attorney General (Ministerio Público), and the Public Defender’s Office.
Pact is based on four pillars: Democratic Security, Inter-institutional Security, Fight against Impunity and Culture of Peace.

**Targeted Interventions**

Violence prevention efforts are concentrated in the first pillar, and include targeted initiatives at the neighbourhood, municipal, departmental and national levels, such as the programmes Safe Neighbourhood and Safe Municipality (Barrio Seguro and Municipio Seguro, respectively). These programmes focus on addressing risk factors of violence, such as youth unemployment, domestic violence, and child maltreatment.

Safe Neighbourhood and Safe Municipality were launched to address crime and violence in urban areas. Both programmes follow a comprehensive approach that includes social programmes, infrastructure investments and crime and violence prevention targeted at hotspot areas. Safe Neighbourhood is a territorial-based programme focussed on neighbourhoods with high incidences of violence that include capacity building of local public safety commissions to formulate and monitor policies, programmes and plans of public safety and violence prevention. In that sense, the programme also aims at strengthening community organisation by engaging neighbours in security matters, building local capacity, and creating a collaborative environment between citizens and law enforcement which would also help on criminal investigations (Alvarado, 2011; USAID, 2014). It includes the installation of cameras and panic buttons, the establishment of a system of alert between neighbours, and the establishment of a community prevention office. In its “consolidation/prevention” component, Safe Neighbourhoods also incorporates activities to recover public spaces and leave schools open for a longer period of time, providing a safer space for children and youth.

Safe Municipalities also includes a situational prevention component focussed on the recovery of public spaces, such as parks, street lighting, and installation of security cameras. It has a strong emphasis on citizen participation and social prevention. The programme includes actions such as the consolidation of Community Committees per neighbourhoods and municipality, the development and execution of local violence prevention plans and community policing, and the establishment of municipal committees for violence prevention.

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86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
**Box 9. Civil Society-led Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Programmes**

Guatemala has several civil society organisations that have worked extensively in the implementation of programmes focussed on youth and youth at risk. La Ceiba group has been working on gang violence prevention since the mid 1980s, assisting more than 50,000 Guatemalan youth in marginalised rural and urban communities. The organisation provides capacity-building and organisational strengthening of groups working with youth at risk, educational programmes, technical and entrepreneurial training, and conflict mediation. Among its programmes focussed on gang prevention there is University of the Streets (*Universidad de la Calle*), which offers the first direct contact with street youth identified as at risk and provides them with recreational and sports activities, environmental education, awareness campaigns, workshops and group therapy. These activities then help to build trust among the beneficiaries, allowing the beginning of a reinsertion process.

Aprede (Asociación para la Prevención del Delito, Association for the Prevention of Violence) offers educational programmes for children and youth at risk and youth programmes in prisons in coordination with the Ministry of Culture and Sports. It also provides *Life-skills development* through sports and arts; technical training in areas such as information technology, management, and graphic design; and *psychosocial assistance* support. Aprede also helps communities to develop *crime prevention strategies and campaigns* through alliances with civil society, public and private sector organisations.

The Institute for Teaching for Sustainable Development (*Instituto de Enseñanza para el Desarrollo Sostenible*, IEPADES) has worked for over a decade on gun control. Its achievements include the development of the 2009 legislative reform that established control and registration requirements to fulfill international conventions, which have been signed and ratified by Guatemala. Its gun violence prevention strategy includes activities focussed on youth, such as a painting competition among kids on their thought about gun violence.

More recently created, the Youth Movement against Violence (*Movimiento de Jóvenes Contra la Violencia*) emerged as a response to the increase in urban violence of the 2000s, and has now been expanded to other countries of Central America, becoming a sub-regional movement. It focuses on education for violence prevention, citizen-empowered prevention, and employment generation. The organisation aims to provide alternatives to involvement in gang or criminal activities, targeting youth at risk and also training young leaders to become role models to their peers. The movement helps to empower active youth to transform their communities and work as a connection between them and public authorities.

**Strengthening The Institutional Setup**

The role of local governments in security matters is not clearly defined in Guatemala’s legislative framework. The Constitution establishes public security as a national mandate, but also allows mayors to create municipal police forces and municipal courts (World Bank, 2013). However, municipal police do not have the authority to make arrests, and their role is usually limited to patrolling near bus stops and major traffic intersections, while local courts have no specific authority to address matters of crime and community insecurity (USAID, 2014). Municipal Boards for the Protection of Children and Adolescents exist since 1997 and do have some violence prevention responsibilities, however they are under resourced and lack formal jurisdiction within the justice system (World Bank, 2013).

The launch of the Pact was followed by a restructuring of the Ministry of the Interior, which led to the creation of a Vice Ministry of Prevention in 2012. The Vice Ministry has the mandate to coordinate the country’s violence prevention agenda. At the local level, security committees were created within the existing Development Councils, although these were not well articulated with prevention and social and urban development policies (Sagan, 2009). Parallel to that, the Government also created task forces (Fuerzas Tareas) with enhanced capacity and technical expertise on criminal investigation. These consisted of inter-institutional efforts, including staff from the National Police, Intelligence, Public Prosecutors, and the Army, focussed on specific types of crimes, such as homicides, femicides, extortions, kidnappings, and human trafficking.

There are also initiatives nationwide that complement and or strengthen the state's actions. The most significant instance in this regard is the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (Comisión Internacional Contra la Impunidad en Guatemala, CICIG), created in 2006 as the result of an agreement between Guatemala Government and the United Nations (Adams, 2011).

The Ministry of Interior also includes a Community Violence Prevention Unit (Unidad de Prevención Comunitaria de la Violencia, UPCV). Created in 2008 with an initial mandate of five years, its role was extended for another five in 2013. This unit has been recently in charge, for example, of the capacity building workshops on violence prevention and participatory planning provided to community leaders under the Safe Neighbourhoods programme (Donadio 2013). The unit is responsible for the development and implementation of plans, programmes, projects and policies to prevent violence at the community, municipal and departmental levels. That involves

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88 The system of Development Councils was created in 2002 through the Law to Establish Rural and Urban Development Councils (Decree 11-2002) “to organize and coordinate public administration through the formulation of development policies, plans and budgeting programs” (USAID, 2014, 7-1).
forming committees of public safety and develop plans, projects and policies to prevent violence; shaping youth meetings for the prevention of violence and developing prevention plans with youth; promoting diagnostic analysis and surveys of violence and victimisation; taking action to prevent domestic violence; and training young people and teachers at schools on issues of violence prevention and public safety (Toro, 2013).

Other government agencies involved in the violence prevention agenda and also part of the Ministry of Interior include the Center for Inter-institutional Coordination (Centro de Coordinación Institucional, CECOIN). Created in 2009, the Center was in charge of bringing together all of the national institutions related to security since the passing of the National Security System Act in 2008. CECOIN has helped to reconcile some of the differences in homicide data homicides reported by the National Civilian Police (Policía Nacional Civil, PNC) and the National Institute of Forensic Sciences (Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Forenses, INACIF), contributing to the improved allocation of resources and assignment of personnel by the National Police (USAID, 2014).

The National Civilian Police is Guatemala’s main law enforcement agency, and also responds to the Ministry of Interior. Established in 1997, in the aftermath of the Peace Accords, the PNC has gone through a reform since 2010 to improve its level of professionalism and technical capacity of the command staff and reduce corruption levels. The reform included the creation of a unit focussed on crime prevention (Subdirección de Prevención del Crime). It also established a new model of internal control and a school for police officials who would obtain a university title upon completion. The number of PNC agents went from 24,615, in 2012, to 34,099 in 2014 (Donadio, 2013). Capacity building was also enhanced, and a higher education school was created for police officials. Top police commanders also started to take part of a training curriculum that included community policing, strategies for coordination with other agencies, and crime prevention. The use of advanced technology in criminalistics and forensics was also improved (USAID, 2014).

Youth and Community Engagement

Guatemala’s more recent efforts to prevent violence and deal with youth violence, in particular, have included “second generation” anti-gang programmes focussed on at-risk youth and aimed at reducing risk factors for youth involvement in gangs (Seelke, 2014). Programmes to address violence particularly among youth include reducing vulnerability of youth at risk of being recruited

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89 In 2007, a former Guatemalan Police Chief had estimated that 40 percent of the PNC had been involved in corruption. The International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) has made important advances in that front. Over 1,700 people have been expelled from the PNC force partially due to the efforts led by CICIG (World Bank, 2013).
for gang involvement, for example through the financing of scholarships for vocational training, sports, and art; efforts to improve police and community relationships; and the support to the institutionalisation of public policies and municipal and community plans with the strong citizen participation of community commissions (World Bank, 2015). The General Direction of Extracurricular Education (DIGEEEX) programmes, financed by the Ministry of Education, are often mentioned as a case of success. The programme is responsible for providing educational opportunities to overage children and youth outside the traditional educational system and vocational training to at-risk youth (World Bank, 2013).

Finally, Guatemala has several mechanisms for citizen participation in security matters through local safety committees and councils, including the Unique Neighbourhood Committees (Comités Únicos de Barrios, CUBs), Community Development Councils (Consejos Comunitarios de Desarrollo, COCODES), and Municipal Councils for Development (Consejos Municipales de Desarrollo, COMUDES).

**Box 10. School-Based Violence Prevention Programmes**

School is a well-known key actor and space for violence prevention strategies. If adequately equipped with the appropriate training for teachers, curriculum that can help build social emotional skills, and an overall positive and encouraging environment, schools can act as a strong protective factor to prevent youth from engaging in violence behaviour. Following that approach, the Ministry of Interior’s Community Violence Prevention Unit (UPCV) has been implementing since 2011 the Safe Schools Program (Escuelas Seguras) in at least five Guatemalan municipalities, including Guatemala City itself, Mixco and Villa Nueva. The programme promotes a series of strategies for social and situational prevention by providing courses on public safety and prevention aimed at students and their families and teachers, recreational and sporting activities, and the development of school violence prevention plans. The programme also included the installation of cameras around school areas and more regular PNC patrol.

Another relevant programme being implemented in Guatemala since 2008 is Open School (Escuelas Abiertas). Under the coordination of several different institutions, including municipal governments, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and the National Youth Council (Consejo Nacional de la Juventud, COMJUVE), Open Schools allows young people to use the educational establishments outside school hours to attend cultural and sporting workshops (Toro, 2013).
Challenges

Despite the aforementioned advances in the institutional environment, with the progressive creation of new institutions, legislation and programmes to improve citizen security, and with a heavier focus on prevention, several challenges have prevented their effective operationalisation. Among them is the lack of a reliable and coordinated system to collect and manage information about violence and the weak coordination across the different institutions and sectors responsible for crime and violence prevention. In addition, the most of the innovative or promising prevention strategies focussed on youth have been financed by donours and have not been scaled up (World Bank, 2013).

Box 11. Assessing the Impacts of Comprehensive Violence Prevention Programmes

The Central America Regional Security Initiative (Carsi) led by USAID finances a series of programmes to address citizen security in the sub-region. In 2014, the initiative concluded a multi-year, multi-country evaluation of CarSI’s programmes delivered at the neighbourhood level in Guatemala, Panama, El Salvador, and Honduras. Although focussed on the impacts of CarSI’s interventions, specifically, the evaluation offers important insights as the programmes financed represent a general trend in violence prevention efforts being implemented in Guatemala and Central America. The community-based violence prevention approach evaluated includes activities such as municipal-level committees planning, programmes focussed on at-risk youth (e.g. outreach centres, job skills training, mentorships), the development or strengthening of crime observatories and data collection systems, and crime prevention through environmental design (e.g. improve street lighting, graffiti removal and cleaning of public spaces).

In Guatemala, the study looked at 21 treatment neighbourhoods that received the interventions and 19 control areas that did not, to assess the outcomes in the targeted areas. Overall, the analysis found that the results in the benefitted neighbourhoods improved more (or declined less) than they would have if the programmes had not been implemented, with a significant reduction in the expected level of crime victimisation and violence. The survey data indicated that Guatemala had a decrease in reported murders (60 percent) and greatest decline in the perception of insecurity (22 percent). 43 percent of respondents reported less awareness of extortions, 19 percent reported less awareness of robberies, and 17 percent less saw youth evolvement in gangs as a problem. From the qualitative findings, the authors highlight an overall consensus among interviewees that schools are playing an important role in crime prevention through the institutionalisation of various student leadership groups within the schools, training of teachers and students in mediation and alternative

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90 According to the World Bank (2013), even the most basic indicators, such as homicides, are highly unreliable in Guatemala. Different institutions follow different methodologies to collect and record crime data, which is also not disaggregated by sex, age, location, type of crime, etc.
conflict and the provision of school-based on-site psychologists. Churches were also mentioned as having important role in crime and violence prevention, especially through their youth group programmes. At-risk youth who benefitted from CARSI interventions highlighted vocational training as the most useful activity provided. Finally, leaders of the different community-based councils and groups involved in violence prevention efforts reported an increased positive engagement with the National Civil Police.
Source: Berk-Seligson et al., 2014a, 2014b.

Mixco: A Case for Further Research

Mixco is a city of almost 500,000 inhabitants located in the Guatemala City Metropolitan Area. As in the case of Guatemala City itself, Mixco suffered from increased levels of crime and violence during the 2000s. Between 2001 and 2008, homicide rates in the city increase by more than 116 percent, reaching a peak of 83.2 per 100,000 inhabitants and becoming the second most violent city of the country in 2008.

With a continuous trend of rapid urban growth, Mixco moved from being a suburban area from which workers would travel everyday into Guatemala City to become an integrated part of the capital. That process increased the pressure on the local government to respond to increasing infrastructural and services demands (USAID, 2014). These changes and accompanying challenges were also common to Mixco neighbouring cities in the Guatemala Metropolitan Area. In order to boost their capacity to respond to them, in 2012 six of these cities – Mixco, Amatitlán, Villa Nueva, San Miguel Petapa, Santa Catarina Pinula, and Villa Canales – formed the Mancomunidad del Sur (Commonwealth of the South). Through the signing of memorandums and development of joint guidelines for planning strategies, the group aimed to coordinate efforts towards common development goals, implementing local economic development initiatives and infrastructure projects with a supra-municipal scope.

Increased rates of crime and violence, particularly in Mixco and Villa Nueva, the two largest cities in the group, were one of the common challenges that the Mancomunidad del Sur aimed to address. In 2013, the group designed a crime and violence prevention strategy focussed on four key goals: (i) the provision of basic infrastructure and recovery of public spaces with a strong citizen participation component, through the implementation of the programme Safe Neighbourhoods; (ii)

the development of an integral citizen security strategy to reduce levels of crime and violence, which includes joined patrolling of the PNC and municipal polices, the establishment of cameras throughout the cities and monitoring video surveillance centres, and community violence prevention commissions; (iii) the promotion of entrepreneurial activities, such as job training and job fairs; and (iv) workshops, recreational activities and training targeted at youth.\textsuperscript{93}

While crime rates homicide rates were falling across the country, homicides in Mixco were declining at higher levels and at a steady pace, differently from what was observed, for example, in Villa Nueva. Data from Mancomunidad del Sur indicates that this trend continued in the following years, with the total number of homicides in Mixco falling an additional 16 percent from 2011 to 2013.\textsuperscript{94}

\textbf{Figure 12. Homicide rates per 100,000 Inhabitants, Guatemala (country), Mixco, and Villa Nueva 2000-2012}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Guatemala (Country)</th>
<th>Mixco</th>
<th>Villa Nueva</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>38.45</td>
<td>23.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>56.73</td>
<td>27.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>70.14</td>
<td>35.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>74.96</td>
<td>37.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>75.93</td>
<td>43.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>80.07</td>
<td>64.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>66.33</td>
<td>48.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>45.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>79.71</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>61.97</td>
<td>55.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 2014, Mixco received the certificate of “Safe Municipality”, becoming the first Central American city to be part of a group of 355 cities worldwide that have been granted this recognition by Colombia’s Research and Development in Violence Prevention and Promotion of Civic Coexistence (CISALVA) at University of Valle. The certification process considered the

\textsuperscript{93}“Acciones Municipales en la Prevención del Delito y la Violencia – Mancomunidad Gran Ciudad del Sur”, Retrieved April 10, 2016 from https://issuu.com/mancomunidadgranciudadaddelsur/docs/5_acciones_en seguridad_ciudadana .

\textsuperscript{94}Ibid.
implementation of 41 initiatives related to health, education, infrastructure, social development and safe road network programmes were promoted.

There is very little information available to allow a precise account of what has driven such improvements in citizen security in Mixco. However, a brief overview of efforts carried out at the local level provides some insights for further research.

**Strengthening and Improving Law Enforcement and Community Engagement**

In 2012, the mayor of Mixco launched the Safe Mixco programme (*Mixco Seguro*). The programme focussed on addressing issues of impunity, corruption, and transparency and, according to USAID (2014), has been successful in improving security and reducing reports of abuse by the police. The programme was accompanied by the remodeling of the security Monitoring and Control Center, which also monitors the security cameras that have been installed throughout the city, in an attempt to encourage citizens to report crimes.

The general process of improvements in the PNC previously mentioned in this chapter are reflected in their interventions at the local level, which were further strengthened by the creation of the Municipal Police (USAID, 2014). The Guatemalan military also provided support to PNC security efforts in the city, assigning two military detachments permanently to Mixco as part of the municipal Safe Mixco initiative. In 2014, the city launched its own Citizen Security Plan (*Plan de Seguridad Ciudadana*), which also consisted of an intense law enforcement operation, in partnership with the National Civil Police and the army, in at targeted hotspot territories.95

Mixco Seguro also works closely with community committees. COCODES and COMUDES are very active in the city. They help to organise training and recreational activities for youth and women, and also support other crime prevention programmes by reporting of crimes and forming neighbourhood watch groups that conduct local patrol. Other community groups with less of a formal structure have also formed in the city, and have been well accepted by the municipality. These formal councils and more informal groups also lead drug and alcohol awareness campaigns, as well as others related to environmental and health concerns. Several coordinated activities to

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address issues of crime and violence have been carried out. There are also efforts to gather support from the local business community for special projects (USAID, 2014).

**Box 12. Key Events Influencing Homicide Reduction in Mixco**

The USAID (2014) analysis of homicides trends in Mixco, Guatemala City and Villa Nueva looked at specific events that could have impacted homicide rates in the three cities in order to isolate their effects, namely: the 2008 Femicide Law, the 2008 National Security System Law, the 2009 Firearm Law, the 2010 Municipal Police Law, and the appointment of Claudia Paz y Paz as Attorney General in 2010, a woman highly recognised for the history of prosecution of organised crime, corruption and human rights violations. The estimator used by the analysis found that the coefficients associated with three of these events were highly significant in Mixco. Specifically, the Firearm Law was associated with a 1.9 percentage-points reduction in the homicide rate over the 2009-2013 period, the Municipal Police Law of 2010 was associated with a 1.9 percentage-points, and Claudia Paz y Paz was associated with a 2 percentage points reduction (USAID, 2014).

Added to the national initiatives described in the beginning of this chapter, all these local efforts that also coincide with the crime decline in the city may indicate a potential influence in the homicide decline trend in Mixco. The local government has made citizen security also a local responsibility bringing the topic to the centre of the political agenda, strengthening its cooperation with the national government, and engaging citizens in their discussions and implementation. Citizen participation seems to be key in the promotion of such activities, especially those focussed on more vulnerable groups. However, all these crime and violence prevention programmes and initiatives still need to be evaluated.

**Synthesis of Main Lessons in Urban Violence Prevention Policy**

**Introduction: Context Matters**

There is no simple recipe for reducing and preventing violence. The case studies in the previous sections show how prevention is ultimately a complex, and often messy process involving much trial and error. Yet some lessons emerge quite clearly from these experiences.

Context certainly matters, and the elements discussed below will not apply equally to every city. For example, the type of violence faced by Medellín – entwined with a decades-long civil war – is very different than violence experienced in Rio de Janeiro, where violence is rooted in historical exclusion of certain groups, or the rise of drug trafficking-related violence in Mexico. State capacity to respond also differs widely; Santa Tecla and Mixco can hardly be expected to respond on the scale or depth that Bogotá has.

Nevertheless, common trends and challenges can be easily identified in all these cases, which suggests that certain principles, policies and practices implemented at the local level to prevent
violence can be adapted from one context to another. This section does not attempt to compare the ten cases discussed in this study, but rather to highlight these commonalities identified among them. It is certainly not a comprehensive list; the complexity of dealing with crime and violence in urban cities in Latin America today certainly requires more than that. However, they shed light into the most salient practices that emerge from the literature.

This section is divided into five broad areas: Institutions, Coordination and Management; Strengthening Information Systems and Designing Policy based on Evidence; Balancing Prevention and Control; Targeting High-Risk Areas and Groups; and Inclusion and Accountability for Sustainable Citizen Security. Each of them is subdivided into items and discussed based on the examples found, some of them being more present in one case than in others. The section concludes with a diagram that provides an overview of the elements of success – and challenges, or failures – found in all these cases, according to the literature reviewed.

**Institutions, Coordination and Management**

*Establishing Prevention as A National Priority*

As a multi-faceted problem, crime and violence require a multi-sector, multi-level response, with different sectors, levels of governments and stakeholders working together to address its roots causes. Some of the most critical elements in the successes of different Latin American cities in reducing violence have to do with their ability to ‘institutionalise’ violence prevention: that is, create and support the institutions and coordination mechanisms necessary to ensure that the whole of government works together for prevention. In most cases, this was partially done through the development of a national policy to provide the overall framework for aligning local and state strategies, channeling resources, and promoting accountability.

None of this happened overnight. All of the countries in which the cities we studied were located needed multiple attempts, sometimes over a decade or more, to achieve enough of a national consensus and political will to produce a national strategy that would ensure that prevention remained a priority. Colombia is one of the best examples of this learning process. Although the country is often mentioned as the main reference point of innovation in citizen security policies over the past two decades, the establishment of the National Citizen Security and Coexistence Policy, the first of its kind in the country’s history, only happened in 2010, concentrating its efforts in specific municipalities, aimed at empowering local communities, and including specific actions and responsibilities targeted at local governments.

It’s noteworthy that, throughout the 2000s, each one of the five countries analysed put forward a national policy that would highlight the importance of investing in prevention. In some of these cases these national policies have yet to translate into effective actions led by the federal government, but that story is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the single fact that this
has become a trend in Latin America, where military and *mano dura* approaches prevailed for so long, and still tempt citizens and policy makers alike, should not be understated.

Ensuring that prevention stays at the top of the agenda also requires adequate resourcing of the different institutions. In Brazil and Mexico, for example, the establishment of national policies with a focus on prevention was accompanied by special funds (FNSP and Subsemun, respectively) that provided resources for local governments to invest in citizen security. That contributed to mainstream the violence prevention agenda, strengthening the role of municipalities in prevention. It should be noted, however, that there is also a learning curve in the establishment of these funds. In Brazil, for example, the Federal Government recently announced that its new Pact for the Reduction of Homicides has changed the rules of funding to ensure that not all resources go to regular management or surveillance cameras and patrol, but are rather focussed on better targeted prevention programmes. The replacement of Subsemun with Fortaseg in Mexico, in 2016, also includes new regulations apparently based on lessons learned with the implementation of the fund over the years.

**Institutionalising Prevention at The Local Level**

While the establishment of legal frameworks at the national level contributes to set the prevention agenda, the design of local citizen security prevention policies strategies or plans, based on local diagnostics and tailored to the local context and capacity, is crucial for an integrated effort with a strong focus on prevention. Medellín’s Public Policy for Citizen Security and Coexistence and the others that followed in the city; Santa Tecla’s Citizen Security Public Policy; Mixcos’ Safe Mixco programme, Citizen Security Plan and the different bylaws promoted by the local government; or Pernambuco and Recife’s Pact for Life programmes all helped to not only place security as a key priority for the local governments, but also to put forth a vision for the city policies in these matters. Rio de Janeiro, on the other hand, offers an example of how the absence of such vision and plan could also eventually affect the desired outcomes and their sustainability; it wasn’t until 2015, more than five years into the implementation of the UPPs, that the government would establish, through two different decrees, a Pacification Policy and the Pacification Police Program, recognising the need of further institutionalising the programme and providing a broader framework for both the police and social components of the programme.

National legislation can certainly serve as an incentive for the development of such local plans and strategies. The most recent national policy in Colombia, for example, requires that local governments design the Integrated Security and Coexistence Municipal Plans; the new National Pact for the Reduction of Homicides, recently announced in Brazil, also requires that municipalities have a detailed diagnostic and action plan. Thus the link between national and state and local policies and strategies seems to be an important element.
Creating Coordination Mechanisms Across Government Levels and Institutions

The establishment of the necessary legal frameworks at the national and local levels can do very little if the institutional structures to implement and monitor them are not set up. Given the multi-sectoriality of the integrated efforts to address crime and violence seen in the cases studied, such structures were also fundamental to establish a clear division of labour, resource channels, and coordination across institutions, sectors and the different levels of governments. Coordination mechanisms at the local level to include the constant participation of civil society, including the private sector, are also very important, but these will be discussed further in this chapter.

At the national level, the creation of permanent executive bodies with the capacity to coordinate and oversee the implementation of integrated citizen security policies or strategies was an eventual step in all the cases, with some of them further strengthening the role of prevention, specifically, over time. This was the case, for example, of Colombia’s Presidential Advisory Board on Safety, created in 2012; of Mexico’s National Center for Crime Prevention and Citizen Participation National Center for Prevention and later the Subsecretary for Prevention and Citizen Participation of 2010; and of Guatemala’s Vice Ministry of Prevention established in 2012. It is important to note, however, that while these are examples of the evolution of the role of prevention at the national agenda, with stronger executive bodies being created for their execution, it is still too soon to tell how effective they are, or will be.

The establishment of adequately-resourced and staffed municipal government structures to coordinate the same different institutions at the local level – police, justice, as well as those responsible for delivering the social and situational prevention (health, education, urban, youth and women’s secretaries or units etc.) – is also important. The creation of a Security and Coexistence Council in Bogotá in 1995, later transformed into the Sub-department of Citizens’ Security and Coexistence, for example, helped to centralise the management and coordination of different inter-institutional coordination bodies, such as the Security Councils and the Epidemiological Monitoring Committee. The strategic and participatory management model of social urbanism’s approach in Medellín also had a top-level monitoring strategy, based out of the mayor’s office, working directly with the Integral Urban Projects task forces, which coordinated the different actions at the local level. Others, such as Cali, established monitoring systems with multi-disciplinary committees in a joint effort of oversight by different agencies to improve coordination. In Santa Tecla, the Municipal Council created the Unit of Coexistence and Security to monitor the implementation of its citizen security strategy and to oversee a municipal crime observatory. In Juarez, the massive multi-government effort of Todos Somos Juarez required the coordination at the local level among all institutions, analysing together the crime data and actions at the Security and Justice Board, and also included weekly meetings with all the different ministries at the national level, with the President himself, to report on their actions.
When combined with improved information systems, which were also gathering data from these different sources and qualifying them, these coordination mechanisms have a higher chance of ensuring effective management systems that help to streamline processes and improve targeting and allocation of resources (information systems and targeting will be discussed in more detail below). Pernambuco’s PPV Management Committee, later replicated at the city level, is one of the best examples of that. The Committee's five-hour long, weekly meetings involving all different state secretariats would review all the crime-related data for each integrated area of the city, followed by a review of the social and situational prevention actions carried out in that same area, and measure all of them against specific monthly targets for several indicators. Based on the results, the meeting would agree on immediate actions to be taken, which would then be reviewed at the following meeting.

This results-based management model had been partially inspired by the Minas Gerais state model, which was also directly linked to the crime decline in Belo Horizonte city, and also previously implemented in Colombia. The General Coordination Group initially created to manage Fica Vivo in Belo Horizonte was later scaled up and institutionalised into the state Secretariat of Social Defense, which was responsible for the integration, for the first time, of all institutions and agencies in charge of public security in the state. The institutional nature of the reforms and interventions implemented in Belo Horizonte and Minas Gerais, specifically related to its management for results system, and the institutional partnerships created among different agencies and stakeholders in programmes and the interaction they fostered among different government departments, are all mentioned in the literature as key factors of the crime decline in Belo Horizonte and Minas Gerais.

While coordination across institutions and sectors is seen as one of the key elements in the successful implementation of integrated and multi-sector citizen security policies and programmes, it is also mentioned as one of the key challenges in most of these cases. Bringing together different institutions, with different mandates, capacity and resources, to share information and coordinate with one another, under one single goal and plan, is a difficult endeavor. This makes the institutionalisation of such mechanisms specifically focussed on the citizen security policies and goals even more important. Having strong leaders leading these meetings themselves, for example, seems to have been a good strategy used in several cases to ensure that these structures would not die down with time (e.g. Cali, Pernambuco, Ciudad Juarez), although eventually some of them did. As Eduardo Machado, sub-secretary of the Urban Security Secretary of Recife simply put it, when referring to one of the key challenges of the city PPV: “A real Pact is built around one single agenda and set of priorities, but it requires that all stakeholders involved understand that you need to walk together to achieve those goals”.

Finally, the existence of such intra-institutional coordination mechanisms can also help sustain these policies and programmes over different administrations, as long as they are sufficiently
funded and staffed, have an enough strong bureaucratic system in place, and are accompanied by reliable information systems, as it will be discussed later.

**Reforming Key Institutions**

Since the focus of this study was violence prevention, we touched very superficially on law enforcement initiatives that were part of the crime reduction in the selected cities. However, it should be mentioned that in nearly all cases, reforms of police and justice sectors seem to have been an essential element of the overall crime decline. National police reforms, such as the one implemented in Colombia, which was also followed by special measures at the local level, such as in Cali, where the local government offered special benefits and education to police officers; State Police and Prison system reform, in Minas Gerais/ Belo Horizonte, and Recife/Pernambuco; or National and local reforms in places such as Ciudad Juarez and Monterrey, where a complete restructuring of local police forces was carried out, seemed to have been key to restore confidence of the population in law enforcement agents and improve rates of homicide clearance and capture.

Similar trends seen in all these reforms include the increased presence of police patrol, especially in hotspot areas, and the provision of additional training to police officers in fields such as human rights. In Rio, Juarez and Monterrey, news officers, yet fresh from the vices of the established system, were also brought in. A results-oriented policing, which introduces a results orientation culture that rewards innovation and performance accountability, was also seen as a trend in the cases where strong information and monitoring systems were in place, and police actions were being monitored and measured against specific indicators (e.g. Colombian and Brazilian city cases).

Most important, however, was the fact that in each one of these cases, some sort of community policing approach was implemented. While in the case of the UPPs that was the defining principle of the forces being trained and permanently placed in the favelas of Rio, in other places, such as Belo Horizonte, Recife, Mixco, or the Colombian cities, changes in curriculum and tactics, encouraging foot patrolling and a closer interaction with communities, is a clear trend. It should be noted, however, that cases of police abuse were still registered, reinforcing the need for more training in these approaches and of stronger accountability mechanisms to ensure that these are registered and addressed properly.

Finally, police reforms in most of these cases were also accompanied by judicial reforms, which also helped to improve investigation and clearance rates.

**Ensuring Political Leadership and Commitment**

One might expect that certain types of political structures would be more conducive to giving local governments the space they need to devise and implement prevention policy and strategies. For
example, Federal systems, such as in Brazil or Mexico already give substantial autonomy to state and municipal governments. However, this does not seem to have been a factor. In all the cases covered here, regardless of national political structure, mechanisms were put in place for municipal governments to take responsibilities on urban violence prevention. That comes with the understanding, increasingly consolidated in Latin America over the past two decades, that preventing violence is possible, cost-effective, and can and should be led by processes at the local level.

This relates directly to another element identified, which is the role of the local government leader. This was especially clear in the case of the three Colombian cities, with strong and determined mayors driving the process, and in Pernambuco, the state where Recife is located, whose former governor is considered one of the key elements responsible for the successful implementation of Pact for Life Program.

A strong political leadership is not only essential to set citizen security as a priority agenda and ensure resources for the operationalisation of related efforts, but the leader’s personal involvement in driving the overall citizen security policy or plan and monitoring its results, and in pushing all the necessary institutional changes, can serve as a key motivational factor for all agencies involved and can also help to streamline internal procedures. Sustained political commitment is even more important when considering violence prevention strategies, as these sometimes may take significant amount of time to mature and show an impact. From all the cases studied here, Bogotá and Medellín are certainly the best examples of this type of commitment. In these two cities, a combination of situational and social development policies over several administrations led to the decades-long sustained decline in homicide rates (Llamas and Serra-Hoffman, 2011).

On the other hand, a policy, strategy or plan cannot rely so much in a specific leader, otherwise they run the risk of loosing steam or being abandoned with political transitions, as the cases of Pernambuco and Cali also show. That is one other reason why the establishment of legal frameworks, permanent government structures, strong information systems that allow policy to be driven by evidence and not politics, and solid accountability systems is so necessary for sustained crime and violence efforts.

This last point also relates to the issue of political continuity, which also stood out so clearly in cases such as Santa Tecla, where the same political alliance has been elected consecutively since the early 2000s, allowing the maintenance of the municipal citizen security policy by the different administrations; or Cali, where the lack of continuity also showed its effects, after mayor Guerrero’s departure. It is thus clear that, while a strong leadership is essential, it should be accompanied by the necessary institutionalisation of the policy to be able to survive political changes. Strong accountability mechanisms that can promote ownership of these processes by civil society can also contribute to the sustainability of these policies, as it will be further discussed.
Violence is never everywhere all the time, but concentrates in specific geographic locations and among certain populations. Braga (2015: 329) notes that “crime is concentrated at a small number of high-risk places during high-risk time and generated by a small number of very risky people.” The cities profiled here share a common element of basing prevention strategies on diagnostics of where and when crime occurs, and who commits it.

The creation of Crime Observatories, Mortality and Injury Surveillance Systems, or Information Systems like IGESP, in Minas Gerais, served several important functions in the formulation and implementation of policy. First, it allowed for a more dynamic assessment of where violence was occurring, who was affected and how, and the risk factors that were driving it, which, in turn, allowed municipal governments to target resources to where they could be most effective. It also facilitated real-time feedback that could help them redirect interventions to respond to changing patterns of violence and crime. In addition to directing policing efforts, the information from Observatories could also be the basis for targeting resources to the ‘softer’ interventions – social programmes in vulnerable neighbourhoods. But beyond these immediate benefits, Observatories also created processes for improved coordination across different institutions and with civil society, ultimately strengthening the state’s relationship with citizens.

These information systems centre on collection and analysis of geo-referenced data on crime and violence. The level of data collected varies but usually includes basic information about the type of violent incident (homicide, assault), the location and time of day, as well as descriptive information about the victim(s), perpetrator(s), and their relationship; weapon(s) used. More sophisticated systems also bring in information about the context, such as whether the incident was related to gang activity, domestic violence, or whether there was any confrontation with the police.

Improved information systems also allow governments to strengthen management and create a results based culture. By seeing and monitoring the evolutions of crime in specific locations, specific goals and targets can be created (e.g. Recife), and sectors be held accountable against their achievement.

Crime Observatories are not just a tool for collecting information; they are also a process of bringing together different stakeholders to compare and analyse that information, and help ensure that it feeds into more coherent policy and programming decisions. This is critical, because different agencies come at the problem of prevention from various angles, and each has information that the others may not. For example, the police have more access to public forms of violence, such as assault in public places, or gang activity, whereas the health sector is closer to forms of violence that may carry social stigma, such as domestic or sexual violence.
By providing a mechanism for citizen monitoring of violence incidence, and of state performance, Crime Observatories ultimately can serve as tools for improving the state-society relationship. This was the case in Cali,\textsuperscript{96} where the first Crime Observatory in Latin America was established. The Crime Observatory was managed by a multi-disciplinary committee, with officials from the police forces, the judiciary, forensic and health and human rights representatives. The Committee met once a week to compare and analyse the information from the various sources, and prepare a report that would be discussed at the Municipal Security Council, which also met weekly and was presided over by the mayor himself. This process of collecting and validating information across various agencies, and disseminating it to policymakers, is credited with helping produce a stronger culture of monitoring and evaluation and transparency, and with it, stronger involvement of the civilian authorities in the provision and supervision of security services (Abuelafia, 2010a). Bogotá followed the Cali model. In the words of Andres Villaveces, an epidemiologist and senior violence prevention specialist who has for decades studied the Colombian case, “by changing the infrastructure used to collect data and also how you use it, these efforts changed the way of governing”.\textsuperscript{97}

Eventually the Observatory model made its way to be enshrined in national policy in Colombia. The 2011 National Citizen Security and Coexistence Policy (\textit{Política Nacional de Seguridad Ciudadana y Coexistencia}, PNSCC) drew on city-level diagnostics for the prioritisation of 20 municipalities where national and local efforts would be mostly concentrated (Alta Consejería Presidencial para la Seguridad 2011, 2012). The diagnostic also formed the basis for the coordination of more than 17 national agencies with their municipal counterparts in the prioritised cities.

Other cities in the region adapted the Observatory model on a smaller scale. In Santa Tecla, a Municipal Crime Observatory was launched in 2008. The Observatory sits under the intra-institutional coordination body, the Unit of Coexistence and Security (\textit{Unidad de Coexistencia y Seguridad}), and provides data for the monitoring of the city Citizen Security Public Policy (\textit{Política Pública de Seguridad Ciudadana}). The Observatory also allows for citizen participation via a Citizen Security Working group.

Finally, in some cases the improvement of data collection and analysis was accompanied by partnerships with academia, which also served as an incentive for recurring evaluation and implementation of evidence policies, as the Colombia and Belo Horizonte case shows.

\textsuperscript{96} Cali’s surveillance system was replicated in the Department of Valle, the state in which the city is, and further expanded under the name of ‘crime observatories’ by the CISALVA Institute at the University of Valle (Gutierrez-Martinez et al., 2007).

\textsuperscript{97} Andres Villaveces was interviewed by the authors in January of 2016.
Balancing Prevention and Control

Integrated and comprehensive citizen security strategies must combine prevention and control measures. This balance in interventions was seen in the successful cases of crime reduction discussed in this paper, as the needed police reforms above discussed clearly showed. Hence although our focus was on the prevention policies, which can be more easily implemented and should be promoted by local governments, repressive measures are also necessary.

In Belo Horizonte, the fall in homicide rates in the first months of Fica Vivo, when the social prevention measures had barely started, for example, point to the importance of policing and repressive interventions for the reduction of homicides. The security brought by these interventions allowed the subsequent social interventions (Silveira et al., 2010). In Medellín and Rio de Janeiro, where territories had been completely taken by armed groups, contributing to further exclude already vulnerable populations, policing interventions to regain these territories were also necessary before social and urban renewal interventions could flourish in these areas. The evaluation of the different “stick and carrot” policies implemented in Bogotá by Sanchez et al. (2003), as described in chapter 3.1, also point into that direction, with the deterrence and incapacitation of criminals playing a key role in the overall decline.

While the initial gains with control measures is certainly necessary, violence prevention measures, addressing the underlying risk factors present at the societal, community, family and individual levels is what will allow such gains to be sustainable overtime. The UPPs, in Rio de Janeiro, had the explicit objective of re-establishing state presence in the favelas and connecting urban residents with state services. But while the initial incursions met with community support, the programme faced important challenges as the social component struggled to keep pace with the control measures, and to maintain credibility with favela communities. Balancing control and prevention also means giving equal attention, resources and staff dedicated to both types of measures.

Targeted territorialised policing interventions, coordinated with the justice sector, in hotspot areas, followed by a set of social prevention initiatives targeted particularly at at-risk groups to reduce risk factors prevalent in the community and strengthen protective ones, is thus what seems to compose the most effective comprehensive strategies that will ensure a ‘virtuous cycle’ on the long run.

Our emphasis on prevention, however, lies not only on the fact that these are more cost effective, but also because these social, economic and urban policies promoted by the municipal administrations are fundamental to the prevention of crime and violence and can complement the coordinated actions of the criminal justice system (police, justice and penitentiary system), all guided by common goals: peaceful resolution of urban conflict, crime prevention and the reduction of recidivism.
Targeting High-Risk Areas and Groups

Targeting High-Risk Geographic Areas

Because violence is not everywhere all the time, governments don’t need to be everywhere all the time, either. The cities profiled in this paper all used information systems to determine the geographical areas and times of day where violence is mostly likely to occur.

In Mexico and Brazil, the federal governments adopted strategies to channel resources toward certain priority cities. Brazil’s PRONASCI Public Security and Citizenship (Programa Nacional de Segurança Pública com Cidadania, PRONASCI) programme launched in 2007, with the objective of transforming hotspots areas into “territoires of peace” by providing resources to local government to implement specific violence prevention programmes (World Bank, 2013). 98 Similarly, in Mexico, the National Program for the Prevention of Crime (Programa Nacional de Prevención del Delito, PRONAPRED), identifies priority municipalities via a formula that takes into account crime rates and social-risk factors, and within them, smaller high-risk “polygon”, areas with 10,000 to 15,000 inhabitants.

At the city level, territorial approaches focus on determining specific neighbourhoods that need more attention, and on coordinating the actions of various agencies within those areas. Pernambuco’s government divided the city into 26 Áreas Integradas de Segurança, (AIS) and established the division of responsibilities between the civil and military police in these areas. Within the AIS, 80 hotspots were identified for more focussed attention.

At the programme level, specific neighbourhoods are targeted. For example, Guatemala’s Safe Neighbourhood and Safe Municipality programmes focus social programmes, infrastructure

98 The programme’s two main interventions - Women of Peace (Mulheres da Paz) and Protect (Protejo), which aimed at identifying and proactively assisting youth living in the most dangerous neighbourhoods – were short lived, and by 2012 not much was being said about the Programme. Safer Brasil (Brasil mais Seguro) was then launched with a pilot in Alagoas, back then the most violent State in the country. Parallel to that, the federal Government also approved new legislation creating a national information system for public security data (Sistema Nacional de Informações de Segurança Pública, SINESP), “with the objective of pressuring states to integrate all police, health and justice sectors databases, systematizing the methodologies on data collection used across the country, and promoting the use of evidence in the design of citizen security policies” (World Bank 2013, 14). The Youth Alive Program (Juventude Viva), which had the specific objective of reducing violence against afro-descendant youth, was also created in 2012, allowing State and local governments to apply for funds for violence prevention policies and projects focussed on youth. None of these efforts have been rigorously evaluated so far. It is worth mentioning, however, the enactment of breakthrough legislation, The Maria da Penha Law, in 2006, to prevent and reduce domestic violence. Although the figures on domestic and gender-based violence have not declined since then, it helped to put a stop to a long-run increasing trend of female homicide (Cerqueira et al., 2015).
investments and crime and violence prevention in smaller, hotspot areas. Safe Neighbourhood is a territorial-based programme focussed at neighbourhoods with high incidences of violence that include capacity building of local public safety commissions to formulate and monitor policies, programmes and plans of public safety and violence prevention. In that sense, the programme also aims at strengthening community organisation by engaging neighbours in security matters, building local capacity, and creating a collaborative environment between citizens and law enforcement which would also help on criminal investigations (Alvarado, 2011; USAID, 2014). It includes the installation of cameras and panic buttons, the establishment of a system of alert between neighbours, and the establishment of a community prevention office. In its “consolidation/prevention” component, Safe Neighbourhoods also incorporates activities to recover public spaces and leave schools open for a longer period of time, providing a safer space for children and youth.99

**Upgrading Public Spaces**

Several cities used infrastructure upgrading as part of their overall strategy for violence prevention. Taken by itself, improving public spaces would have little impact, but as part of a broader package of re-establishing state presence in traditionally under-served areas, it helped send a message of inclusion and integration to populations who had not always considered themselves part of the bigger city. The impact was even more powerful when communities were involved in the decisions about prioritisation of locations for the improvements. In some cases, the upgrading had a strong symbolic component, as in Medellín, where the now-famous Spanish Library (Biblioteca Espanola) was built in what was previously one of the most dangerous comunas. In Bogotá, the government organized music concerts and sporting events in newly-recovered areas of the city, to draw people to neighbourhoods they would have previously avoided.

Guatemala’s Safe Municipalities also includes a situational prevention component focussed on the recovery of public spaces, such as parks, public illumination, and installation of security cameras. It has a strong emphasis on citizen participation and social prevention.

**Targeting Specific Risk Factors**

Many of the cities profiled here undertook campaigns aimed directly at known risk factors for violence, especially alcohol use and firearms. Usually, this meant working with different stakeholders to get their support for enforcing city by-laws on alcohol use or firearm possession. In some cases, the impacts were dramatic.

In Bogotá, data from the Crime Observatory indicated that the vast majority of homicides were committed with firearms, especially on weekends and between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. Successive mayors led high-profile campaigns to ban and confiscate firearms in the city through various mechanisms, including voluntary disarmament campaigns; a gun buy-back programme that had the church and the private sector as key partners; and a ban on concealed firearms during selected time periods, especially on weekends and public holidays, using police checkpoints and traffic stops (Villaveces, 2013). By 2001, Bogotá’s residents had handed in some 6,500 firearms. Confiscation of illegal guns increased more than 160 percent, going from 6,000, in 1995, to 16,000 in 2003 (Llorente and Rivas, 2005). Similarly, the Cali municipality banned weapon-carrying permits in public spaces on specific dates, such as public holidays as well as paydays. In Mixco, a Firearm Law passed in 2009 was associated with a 1.9 percentage-points reduction in the homicide rate over the 2009-2013 period, according to an evaluation by USAID (USAID, 2014).

Limiting access to alcohol during certain hours brought dramatic drops in homicide in some cities. Getting buy-in from the private sector was a key part of the success of these initiatives. In Cali, Mayor Guerrero made a deal with bar and nightclub owners to implement a new law restricting alcohol sales after 2am. If homicide rates did not decline, the law would be suspended. In just two weeks, levels had declined enough to make his point, and the measures stayed in place.

**Targeting At-Risk Populations**

In all the cities profiled here, local governments put a strong focus on engaging youth at risk of violence, especially young men. Throughout the Latin American region, and globally, most victims and perpetrators of violence are males aged 15-29. Most of the victims in virtually every country in the region, as well as perpetrators, are young males ages 15 to 29. The homicide rate for male victims at that age group is more than four times the global average rate in both Central and South America (UNODC, 2014).

Many of these youth programmes focussed on providing healthy outlets for channeling youth’s energy into productive activities. For example, Bello Horizonte’s Fica Vivo prioritises youth between 12-14 years old, especially those involved with criminal activities. The programme provides educational and cultural activities, professional training, sports, psychological support, and workshops to discuss violence prevention. The programme partners with local schools to offer these activities on the weekends. In Monterrey, the city government partnered with the private sector to provide job training for young people.

Some of the youth programmes were meant not only to engage youth, but to help address stigma against young people. In Bogotá, the municipality trained some of the most socially excluded youth – sex workers, or homeless youth, for example, as “civic guides.” These guides were empowered to educate the public on a variety of topics that would promote good and responsible behaviour for safety and coexistence in public spaces (Martin and Ceballos, 2014). Similarly, in Cali, gang
members who gave up their weapons were offered job training and employment opportunities as contractors with the city government for services such as gardening and cleaning of buildings. They also received support from a team of educators who worked as role models and provided guidance in group activities and discussions (Abuelafia, 2010b).

In other cases, youth were given clear roles in the design and monitoring of programmes in their communities. Mexico’s Todos Somos Juarez (We Are All Juarez) programme included youth in the citizen boards, which met regularly to give input into programmes and to monitor their impact. These involvements led to the state building community centres that could be used for cultural and training activities.

**Inclusion and Accountability for Sustainable Citizen Security**

Everyone is affected in some ways by violence; cities with more success were able to bring more people to the solutions, making security everybody’s responsibility. Coordination mechanisms that provide permanent spaces for dialogue civil society and government officials, institutionalising citizen participation throughout the policy process, allow policies to be more demand driven and best tailored to the local contexts, ensuring ownership from community members and thus becoming more likely to be sustainable overtime. Strong community participation throughout the policy cycle also allows the government to update and improve policies and programmes based on results and changing contexts and demands, and encourages citizens to trust government agencies and collaborate with them. Moreover, citizen engagement and transparency of information, through formal social participation and social control mechanisms, helps to bring legitimacy to government actions implemented at the local level. It also contributes to better policy design, as local residents are in the best position to help government officials understand the social dynamics of crime and violence at the territorial level, as well as the local potentials that can make them resilient.

Most of the cases discussed involved community-based approaches to violence prevention whereby local residents of targeted neighbourhoods play a key role, from the development of local plans to improve citizen security, to the execution of specific activities included in such plans and their overall monitoring and supervision. Placing communities at the centre stage by acknowledging their key role to prevent crime and violence helps to promote and ensure social control, social cohesion and trust among neighbours, all key elements to build a resilience environment against violence (Beato and Silveira, 2014).

**Building Trust**

One of the most long-lasting and devastating impacts of chronic violence is the impact on governance and trust in public institutions. People quickly lose trust in a state that they don’t feel protects them. In the cases studied here, governments made concerted efforts to bring in a broad circle of stakeholders to help design and implement their own solutions to the specific problems
they were facing. These coalitions included not only the ‘hotspot’ neighbourhoods, but also the private sector, and civil society groups.

Establishing mechanisms for broad participation is a messy process; bringing together people and groups with often very different interests, perspectives and ideas is certainly a challenge. They seem to have worked more effectively when brought into the state institutional infrastructure, as this gave them important legitimacy and resources. Regular meetings through permanent “institutionalised” spaces for dialogue, such as the Security and Justice Board in Juarez, the local Government Committees of Medellín, the Community Government Councils of Cali, the Council for Violence Prevention in Santa Tecla, or the Unique Neighbourhood Committees and Community Development Councils of Mixco, helped to establish trust between the different actors. The increased sense of accountability helped to foster a feedback system of information sharing that, in the case of Juarez, eventually even led to the solutions of several cases.

**Strengthening Accountability and Making Space for The Private Sector**

Generally speaking, these policy changes had the effect of increasing the accessibility of state institutions to neighbourhoods where the state had largely been absent, and in many cases where other forms of informal authority had reigned. This allowed not only for an increase in trust, but also opened up space for feedback loops from communities to provide input into prevention strategies. It also offers the chance for state interventions to support the more natural and authentic mechanisms of social control already present in many neighbourhoods. Several cities also set up programmes to communicate city priorities, with civil society monitoring. Bogotá’s “Bogotá, Como Vamos?” programme, Monterrey’s “Alcalde, Como Vamos?”, led by the private sector, civil society and academia representatives, monitor specific commitments made by the authorities. In Bogotá and Monterrey, the initiatives also include surveys measuring citizens’ perception of security, victimisation rates and their confidence on municipal authorities and the police forces.

**Medellín Social Urbanism Integral Urban Projects** had the permanent involvement of community residents, from the decision-making process on how and where to allocate the resources, to the implementation, supervision and monitoring of interventions. It also involved a strong management information system, with the design of strategic indicators for the interventions, allowing the constant, two-way flow of information between the local government, communities and local project managers. In Cali, the mayor and his cabinet would meet with leaders and residents of different communities weekly.

The Security and Justice Board of Ciudad Juarez also became a permanent for dialogue between civil society and government official. Although still “informal”, it is perhaps the most recognized mechanism for coordination and monitoring of citizen security related activities at the local level. While Boards created for others sectors seem to have lost strength overtime, the permanence of this one seems to be related to the power of some of its members and their personal or economic
reasons to be part of it. In other words, the presence of strong business people and white-collar professionals, along with other civil society groups, all with economic (seeing violence and extortion, in particular, affect business), or personal reasons (having been a victim or having a family members been a victim of violence) to be there. These efforts also aimed at reinforcing civil society’s cooperation with local authorities, part of the reason attributed by some analysts to the exponential and quick decline in extortion and kidnapping rates.

These institutionalised spaces have some basic characteristics in common: they are permanent spaces where government authorities and citizen can meet, regularly, to discuss specific indicators and actions related to the citizen security plan/strategy. Increasingly, though, the participation of the private sector has become more and more a crucial actor in those efforts.

In several cities, the business community was a key protagonist in putting crime and violence prevention on the policy agenda. First and foremost, private sector partners were often key in financing prevention activities. In Colombia, the national ‘wealth tax’ increased the tax burden on the country’s wealthiest taxpayers, with the proceeds going directly to the national counter-insurgency effort. In Monterrey, an increase in the payroll tax paid by businesses from 2 percent to 3 percent helped finance the vetting, professionalisation and expansion of the police force. In Rio de Janeiro, the private sector provided key support in the beginning, setting up a fund that would help finance the programme in its first years, and later by funding specific initiatives (e.g. job training) in UPP target areas.

The private sector also played a role in many cities by financing individual initiatives. In Monterrey, private companies funded upgrading of public spaces, programmes for youth, and cultural events. In smaller cities, such as Santa Tecla and Mixco, local businesses also support youth employability programmes and upgrading of parks and other public spaces. In Santa Tecla, programmes for the reintegration of youth after the gang truce included poultry and fish farms, car washes and bike rental services.

In some cases, the private sector helped monitor the state’s efforts for prevention and control. In Monterrey, the private sector was the driving force behind a multi-stakeholder effort to bring down levels of violence. The Civic Council acted as a watchdog organisation, publishing a monthly newsletter tracking different crimes. Together with other civil society organisations, the Council began publishing quarterly surveys of citizen’s perceptions of security in the city. As part of the professionalisation of the police force, the Council oversaw the administration of lie detector tests for state and municipal police officers after allegations that the organized crime group the Zetas had infiltrated the forces. More than 4,000 officers were fired based on the test results.

Finally, the private sector, along with academia, can contribute with expertise in managing, monitoring and evaluating projects. In Monterrey, the Civic Council managed the monthly release of information of the Crime Spotlight, and based on the results tracked helped to set up goals for
the reduction of crime and develop priority strategies. It also helped to make use of new technologies to increase transparency and accountability. The online social media platform Center for Citizen Integration allows civil society organisations to report on indicators like crime, or give feedback on public infrastructure improvements, providing mechanisms for citizens to evaluate the performance of different agencies and the mayor.

Diagram 1 below summarises the discussion presented in this chapter, providing an overview of what seem to be key elements of success for sustained crime decline, based on the experiences of the Latin American cities studied here.
Diagram 1. Suggested Elements of Success of Integrated Efforts to Prevent Crime and Violence
Conclusions

It is something of a paradox that Latin America is home to the world’s highest murder rates, and also to some of the most cutting-edge innovations to prevent violence. Cities have always been, and will remain, at the frontlines of such innovations. The experience of cities from Bogotá to Santa Tecla shows that while violence has become a salient feature of the urban environment, it is not inevitable. What’s more, upward trends can be stalled, and even reversed, with smart, integrated, participatory and inclusive policies, which can and should also be led by local governments.

The cities profiled here highlight some important lessons that can be applied to other contexts. First, having a composite picture of where the violence is occurring, who is affected and the risk factors driving it, is essential to targeting scarce resources to where they can be most effective in comprehensive territorial approaches. Second, building the institutional coordination mechanisms that lay out a clear division of labour between different levels and sectors of government and resourcing channels, and connecting these within a guiding national policy framework, makes for a more coherent response to violence. Combining targeted ‘quick win’ interventions such as recovery of public spaces, or controls on alcohol or firearms, with more long-term and targeted programmes like youth employment or re-integration, was important in building momentum for prevention. And finally, engaging a wide range of stakeholders – from cabinet ministries to community organisations, the private sector and academia – helps ensure that prevention programmes meet the needs of the most vulnerable group.

These policies and programmes do not fall into place naturally or automatically, and they do not happen overnight. In all cases, the process of building consensus and dialogue across stakeholders was messy, non-linear and plagued with periodic setbacks. In some cases, gains were reversed with the re-imposition of hardline (mano dura) policies. In others, a change in leadership nearly derailed progress made over several years. It is still quite early to say much about the long-term sustainability of many of the approaches covered here. Yet one important factor seems to be the extent to which policymakers were able to ‘institutionalise’ prevention by setting up the government bodies and coordination mechanisms that would outlast political cycles.

Going forward, more research and investments in impact evaluations to establish the necessary outcomes of specific interventions will be crucial to consolidate a citizen security approach with a stronger focus on prevention in the region. As reiterated throughout this study, most of the cases analysed, which are considered by the literature to be among the most relevant in Latin America, provide a series of policies and programmes that “coincided” with the great and sustained crime decline. Having robust analyses of specific interventions will ensure better allocation of resources, and a more promising and safer future for citizens in the region.
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Appendix 1. Methodological Considerations for Data Collection

Methodological Considerations

To elaborate each chart illustrating the evolution of homicides, at the regional, subregional, national, subnational or municipal level, whenever it was possible we used the same source for one entire period inside a time series as well as for all geographic aggregations in the same chart (i.e. data comparing homicide rates in a city and the country for 10 years).

The first option for data gathering was to look for first hand official data available on the internet, preferably produced by public health institutions. When that option was not available, police records were then used. The UNODC Statistics Online system was the first step for most searches and much of their information was used (since UNODC itself uses official sources), mainly data at country level, for which the system had fairly updated information. In cases where official records were not available disaggregated at city level or for the entire time series, we consulted available literature.

Global and Regions

In order to compose homicide rates charts for regions and subregions, we used the counts of intentional homicide as updated by UNODC Statistics in April 13, 2015, which supersede data published in the Global Study on Homicide, 2013. The rates for Brazil presented in UNODC dataset has been updated with data from Datasus, a system of the Brazilian Health Ministry, which presents the complete series of interest. We have calculated the rates considering the population data from International Data Base (IDB), an agency of the U. S. Department of Commerce, as updated in July 9, 2015. This choice was based on availability of disaggregated data for the complete time period of interest. Both datasets (homicides by UNODC and population by IDB) were also used to compose the rates for Latin America and Caribbean and the comparison between the countries of interest in this study.

Despite the fact that the April 13, 2015 update on UNODC Statistics supersede data published in the Global Study on Homicide 2013, important differences between the two sources need attention. The range of countries that has data available for 2013 is much shorter than in the 2012 study. Therefore, the decrease verified in the rates for the most regions between 2012 and 2013 could be explained by the lower level of dataset filling.

Colombia and Cities

Colombian cities present worldwide homicide decline phenomena, not only by their very high homicide rates peaking in the decade of 1990, but also for how fast they decrease. In order to grasp a long enough time spam, we had to rely on different sources for data so that a bigger picture could
be presented. For the country tow series were combined: from 1990 to 2005 there was no available primary information, so we present data from the report of the Presidential Program for Human Rights and made available by Acnur (Dinámica Espacial de las Muertes Violentas en Colombia 1990-2005. Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y DIH. Vicepresidencia de la República. http://www.acnur.org/t3/uploads/pics/2551.pdf?view=1). From 2006 to 2014 there was first hand information from the Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses da Colômbia, published every year in the periodical named Forensis and available at: http://www.medicinalegal.gov.co/forensis1;jsessionid=AE67A01D1FC24A6EB4C13958C1061ED3

For each city the series used were complete, however diverse from each other as well as from the country. In the case of Bogotá, data was retrieved from the report Vivir en Bogotá: condiciones de seguridad 2014. Veeduriadistrital, Bogotá, published by the ombudsman office of the district, in march 2015 and available at http://www.veeduriadistrital.gov.co/sites/default/files/VIVIR%20EN%20BOGOTÁ.%20CONDICIONES%20DE%20SEGURIDAD%202014_0.pdf


For Medellín, we were able to collect data from the municipal secretry of government, Sistema de Información para la Seguridad y la Convivencia (SISC) – Secretaria de Gobierno de Medellín and available at: https://www.Medellin.gov.co/irj/portal/ciudadanos?NavigationTarget=navurl://3ba1dde38616fc5bd67d2886146f02d6

Information for youth homicides were provided upon website request, by the Grupo Centro de Referencia Nacional sobre Violencia of the Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses – INMLCF.

**Brazil and Cities (Including IVJ and IHA)**

The main data source for Brazilian cities, states and country is Datasus (a system of Brazilian Ministry of Health), because of its extensive series and disaggregation. We have used the homicide data by the victim’s place of residence, which can be considered a better option for the municipal level as compared to by place of occurrence. That is because it is not uncommon that the death registration location refers to the hospital address where the victim died after being attacked somewhere else. And it is very common big cities hospitals take victims from neighbouring smaller towns. To elaborate the graphic on the proportion of homicide among Brazilian youth, we have
worked with the definition from the Brazilian Statute of Youth of 2013, which considers youth those aged 15-29.

The Adolescent Homicide Index (IHA) represents the number of adolescents killed by homicide before completing 19 years for each group of 1,000 individuals in the initial group of 12 years in the year in question.

We have presented the Youth Vulnerability to Violence Index 2010 (base year 2007) and 2014 (base year 2012). The Youth Vulnerability to Violence Index Base Year 2010 was not used in the comparison because this use a different primary source for population data that prevent the full comparability of information. The Youth Vulnerability to Violence Index utilises this vulnerability range: Up to 0,300 - Low; More than 0,300 to 0,370 – Medium-Low; More than 0,370 to 0,450 - Medium; More than 0,450 to 0,500 - High; More than 0,500 - Very high.

Mexico and Cities

Information on homicides, both for the country and cities, for the general population and youth, were retrieved at the website of the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía/INEGI. The following path was made: Consulta Interactiva de Datos; Registros administrativos; Estadísticas de mortalidade; Defunciones por homicidios. Search was made considering "Entidade y município de ocurrencia" or State and municipality of the event.

For population information had two sources. For 2000, 2005 and 2010 it was retrieved from Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía/INEGI: "Consulta Interactiva de Datos"; "Censos y conteos de población y vivienda". From 2011 on, information was retrieved from Consejo Nacional de Población/CONAPO: PROYECCIONES DE LA POBLACIÓN 2010-2050 http://www.conapo.gob.mx/en/CONAPO/Proyecciones. Since it was not possible to find population estimates for the city levels, before 2011, the rates for cities before that are only available for years when population census or counts were conducted.

El Salvador

Rates for the country were retrieve from UNODC Statistics Online system. Data for the city of Santa Tecla from 2005 to 2012 were calculated and published by the Observatorio Municipal para la Prevención de la Violencia del Municipio de Santa Tecla, using homicide information from the Policía Nacional Civil y Medicina Legal (Región Central) and population counts from the Censo de población y de vivienda de la Digestyc 2007. For the year 2013 the rate was published by the Regional Office for Latin America of Interpeace on the report Santa Tecla: un terreno fértil para reducir la violência (San Salvador, El Salvador, 28 de marzo de 2014).
Guatemala

Appendix 2. Additional Figures for Regional and Youth Homicide Data

Figure 13. Regional Homicide Rates per 100,000 for Selected Countries and LAC, 2000-2013

Figure 14. Percentage of youth (15-29) homicide victims, Bogotá, Cali and Medellín - 2004–2015
Figure 15. Percentage of youth (15-29) homicide victims, Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro, and Recife 2004 – 2015

Figure 15. Brazil’s Youth Vulnerability to Violence Index, Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro, base year 2007 and 2012

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Figure 16. Brazil’s Adolescent Homicide Index (IHA), Brazil and Selected cities, 2005-2012

![Graph showing Brazil's Adolescent Homicide Index (IHA) for Brazil and selected cities from 2005 to 2012. The graph highlights the trends over time and the comparison between Brazil and selected cities like Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, and Recife.](image)

### Brazil’s Adolescent Homicide Index (IHA) for Brazil and Selected cities, 2005-2012

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<td>7.12</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>7.39</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17. Percentage of youth (15-29) homicide victims, Mexico and Juarez - 2000 – 2015

![Graph showing the percentage of youth (15-29) homicide victims in Mexico and Juarez from 2000 to 2015. The graph highlights the percentage trends over time.](image)

### Percentage of youth (15-29) homicide victims, Mexico and Juarez - 2000 – 2015

- Mexico (Country)
- Juarez
Figure 18. Percentage of youth (15-29) Homicide Victims, Mexico and Monterrey - 2000 – 2015