BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES IN MEXICO:

Civic Responses to Crime and Violence

Edited by David A. Shirk, Duncan Wood, and Eric L. Olson

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THE JUSTICE IN MEXICO PROJECT (JMP) is the continuation of a collaborative research initiative entitled the Project on Reforming the Administration of Justice in Mexico and launched by Wayne Cornelius and David Shirk at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies of University of California, San Diego (2002–2005). In 2005, David Shirk relocated the project and its funding to the Trans-Border Institute of the University of San Diego, which became the host institution for this multi-year research project on the administration of justice and the rule of law in Mexico until 2013. Now a free standing program based at the University of San Diego, the Justice in Mexico Project continues to promote analysis, dialogue, and policy solutions to address a variety of urgent problems related to security and violence, transparency and accountability, and justice and human rights issues in Mexico and the U.S.-Mexican border region.

Focusing on these main research areas, the three-fold rationale for the Justice in Mexico Project is based on: (1) the need to decentralize analysis and reform efforts in Mexico, (2) the need for a greater emphasis on promoting effective reform and best practices, and (3) the need for a U.S.-based partner for helping to generate and disseminate analysis on Mexican initiatives.

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Building Resilient Communities in Mexico: Civic Responses to Crime and Violence

ERIC L. OLSON, DAVID A. SHIRK, AND DUNCAN WOOD[1]

INTRODUCTION

Mexico has suffered a severe security crisis over the last decade. As in several other Latin American countries, elevated levels of crime and violence—and especially the proliferation of violent organized crime groups—have presented a serious threat to the Mexican state and to ordinary citizens. During the presidency of Felipe Calderón (2006–2012), the Mexican government attempted to address these problems primarily through law enforcement and military operations to combat organized crime and reforms to enhance the institutional integrity and efficacy of police and judicial sectors. Calderón's successor, President Enrique Peña Nieto (whose six-year term began in 2012) spent much of his first year in office attempting to shift the narrative within and about Mexico from security issues to other matters, including political, economic, and social reforms to help move the country forward. However, while placing less emphasis on such matters, Peña Nieto also largely continued Calderón's approach to security by targeting major organized crime figures, deploying federal forces to address urgent local security crises, and pushing ahead with efforts to implement Mexico's new criminal justice system.

Still, for many Mexicans, there have been few improvements in their day-to-day sense of security, their confidence in law enforcement authorities, or their ability to attain access to justice. Indeed, crime and violence remains such a serious concern in certain parts of the country that ordinary citizens have taken to extraordinary measures—hiring private security guards and embracing vigilantism—to protect themselves. In recent years, the emergence of self-professed citizen self-defense groups has introduced a new dimension to Mexico's security situation. Such developments raise concerns about the course of Mexico's security

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situation over the longer term. On the one hand, there are serious questions about the capacity of the Mexican government to fulfill its responsibility to provide for basic citizen security. While not a failed state, Mexico has proved highly vulnerable to penetration and corruption by powerful organized crime groups, and the government's ability to maintain a monopoly on the legitimate use of force has been challenged by both political insurgents and violent criminal organizations.

On the other hand, while policy analysts have typically focused primarily on these issues of state capacity, there are also major deficits in Mexican society that provide a weak foundation for state efforts to promote the rule of law, including a lack of social capital, weak civic institutions, and even widespread participation in corrupt or criminal activities. Fortunately, there have also been a number of positive civic initiatives working to provide constructive solutions to Mexico's security challenges. Such efforts have worked to strengthen the capacities of ordinary Mexican citizens and civic organizations to monitor and document security concerns, to work with authorities to improve official responses, and to promote societal resilience in responding to crime and violence. Understanding such efforts can help to illuminate the mechanisms, strategies, and interventions that heal societies suffering from trauma and build more resilient communities.

This study is part of a major, multiyear effort by the Mexico Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the Justice in Mexico Project at the University of San Diego to analyze the obstacles to and opportunities for improving citizen security. Each of the authors featured in this edited volume makes a significant contribution to this endeavor through original research—including exhaustive data analysis, in-depth qualitative interviews, and direct field observations—intended to inform policy discussions on how to foster robust civic responses to the problems of crime and violence. This research was developed with an intended audience of policymakers, journalists, leaders of nongovernmental organizations, and other current and future leaders working to address these problems in Mexico. However, there are also important lessons from Mexico's experience that may have resonance in elsewhere in Latin America and other societies grappling with similar challenges. With this in mind, this edited volume offers several general observations about the role of civil society in promoting citizen security, along with concrete policy options for the Mexican and U.S. governments to consider to enhance civic engagement, encourage civic partnerships, and embolden these current efforts.

FIGURE 1: TOP POLICY CONCERN AMONG MEXICANS, FEBRUARY 2001–FEBRUARY 2014
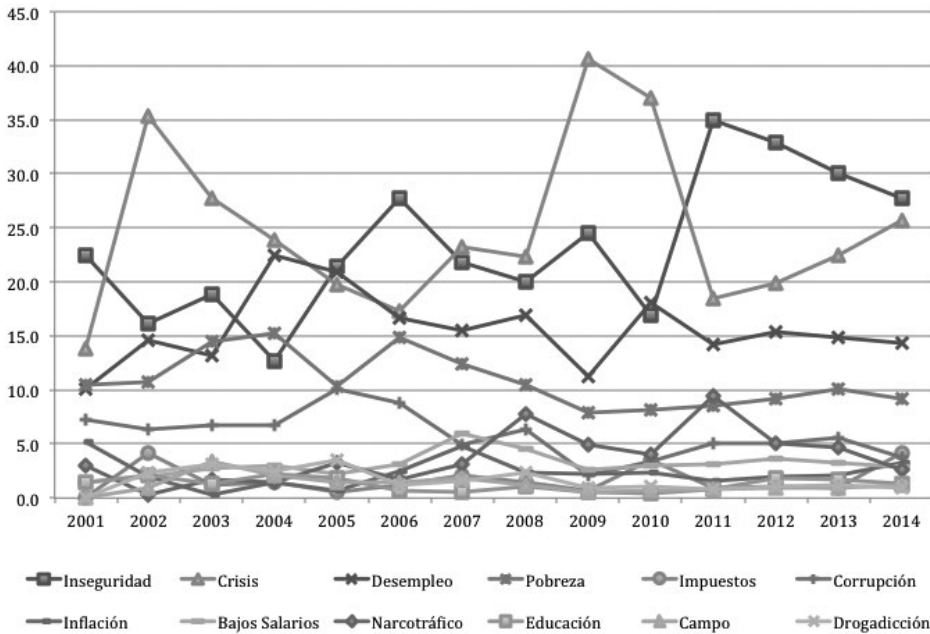
Source: Mitofsky, various years. "Cúal es el principal problema del país?" Question reads: "What is the principal problem of the country [Mexico]." The translation of the policy concerns are, from left to right of the first row: Insecurity, Economic Crisis, Unemployment, Poverty, Taxes, Corruption. Second row: Inflation, Low Wages, Drug Trafficking, Education, Rural Development, Drug Addiction.

PATTERNS OF CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN MEXICO

Citizen security is of paramount concern in Mexico. For more than a decade, public opinion surveys have consistently found that citizens rank security among their top concerns, and often as their greatest preoccupation (See Figure 1). Today, the general perception among many ordinary citizens is that the country is less safe than it was a decade ago, as a considerably greater proportion of the population has ranked "insecurity" among their top policy concerns in recent years (Figure 1).

Citizens' preoccupations about crime and violence are not simply the result of popular imagination. They reflect the fact that various forms of crime and violence have proliferated at extreme levels in many parts of Mexico in recent years. This has been most notable with regard to homicides. After decades of declining rates

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and absolute numbers of homicides, Mexico experienced a sudden and dramatic increase beginning in 2008 (See Figure 2). By 2010, the number of homicides in Mexico stood at more than double the figure for 2006. A major share—if not a majority—of Mexico's homicides from 2008 onward are believed to be "drug-related killings" or "executions" committed by organized crime groups vying for control of territory or market share. As a result, this violence was highly concentrated in key drug trafficking corridors, production zones, and transshipment points, producing dramatic increases in the number of homicides and homicide rates (per 100,000 inhabitants) in certain Mexican municipalities, notably Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana, Culiacán, Chihuahua, and Acapulco (See Table 1).

FIGURE 2: TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMICIDES IN MEXICO, 1997–2012
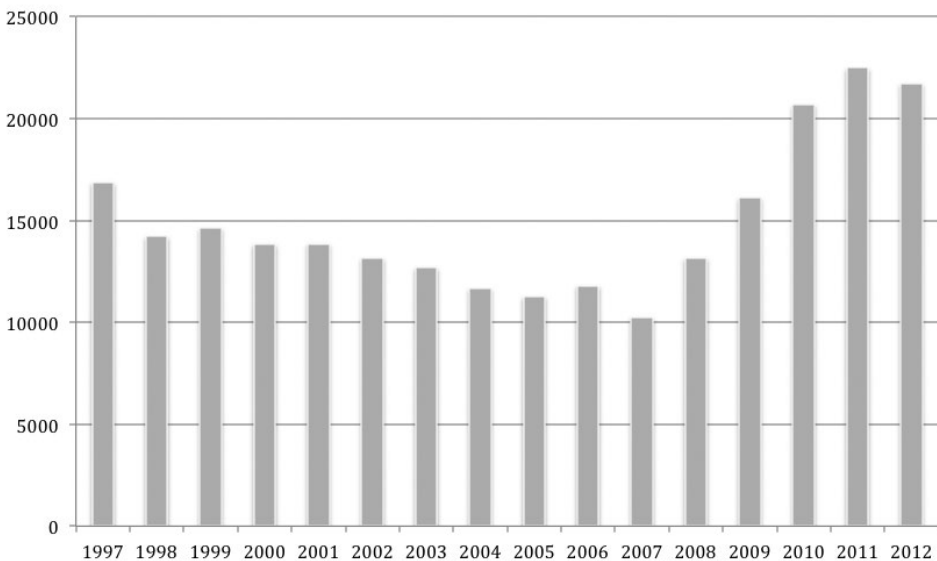
Source: SNSP.

The surge in violent crime in Mexico has resulted primarily from clashes among organized crime groups vying for control of drug production zones and trafficking routes in Mexico. This newfound competition is attributable to several factors. First, proliferation of organized crime in Mexico is partly the result of a series of economic crises beginning in the 1970s which drove many Mexicans out of formal employment and into the informal sector, which also led to significant increases in a wide range of criminal activity. The emergence of new market opportunities for Mexican organized crime groups in the 1980s, particularly in the trafficking of cocaine into the United States, was also partly attributable to changes in international drug

TABLE 1: HOMICIDES IN THE 10 MOST VIOLENT MUNICIPALITIES IN MEXICO, 2007-12

	2007			2008			2009		
	Municipality	#	Rate	Municipality	#	Rate	Municipality	#	Rate
1	Culiacán	249	30	Cd. Juárez	1,332	101	Cd. Juárez	2,230	168
2	Tijuana	176	12	Tijuana	614	41	Culiacán	476	56
3	Cd. Juárez	136	10	Culiacán	576	69	Chihuahua	414	51
4	Monterrey	67	6	Chihuahua	301	38	Tijuana	399	26
5	Acapulco	65	9	Nogales	102	49	Gómez Palacio	230	71
6	Uruapan	57	19	Durango	99	18	Acapulco	150	19
7	Iztapalapa	40	2	Mazatlán	79	19	Torreón	135	22
8	Morelia	35	5	Navolato	78	58	Nogales	123	57
9	Chilpancingo	32	14	Acapulco	70	9	Navolato	118	87
10	Hermosillo	31	4	Rosarito	68	81	Durango	115	20

	2010			2011			2012		
	Municipality	#	Rate	Municipality	#	Rate	Municipality	#	Rate
1	Cd. Juárez	2,738	206	Cd. Juárez	1,460	110	Acapulco	1,152	146
2	Chihuahua	670	82	Acapulco	1,008	128	Cd. Juárez	799	60
3	Culiacán	587	68	Monterrey	700	62	Monterrey	630	56
4	Tijuana	472	30	Culiacán	649	76	Culiacán	552	64
5	Acapulco	370	47	Chihuahua	554	68	Torreón	521	82
6	Mazatlán	320	73	Torreón	455	71	Chihuahua	451	55
7	Torreón	316	49	Tijuana	418	27	Nuevo Laredo	334	87
8	Gómez Palacio	277	84	Ecatepec	325	20	Tijuana	327	21
9	Tepic	230	61	Mazatlán	307	70	Cuernavaca	293	80
10	Nogales	196	89	Guadalupe	254	38	León	202	14

Derived from INEGI and SNSP data by Molzahn et. al. 2013.

demand and greater enforcement efforts in earlier trafficking areas, notably Miami and the Caribbean. The result was that Mexico became a primary supplier and route for the flow of drugs into the U.S. market in the 1980s and 1990s.

However, this merely explains the growth of organized crime in Mexico, and not the recent proclivity of organized crime groups to engage in widespread violence. Indeed, while drug trafficking has long and well-established roots in Mexico, for most of the 20th century Mexico's organized crime groups operated in relative tranquility. In part, this can be attributed to the high degree of impunity and even protection that Mexican drug traffickers enjoyed for decades. As many scholars have amply documented, the complicity of government officials gave Mexico's early traffickers license to operate within the country in exchange for a share of their revenues.[2] This arrangement was sometimes the result of intimidation by powerful organized crime figures offering officials a devil's bargain: "bribe or a bullet" (*plata o plomo*), but in others the result of rent-seeking by politicians, military personnel, and law enforcement eager to enrich themselves.

Thus, some scholars have argued that political and bureaucratic changes over the last few decades have been an important contributor to rise of criminal violence in Mexico. These scholars suggest that growing electoral competition and political pluralism, as well as the gradual breakdown of old forms of public security enforcement under Mexico's authoritarian regime in the 1980s and 1990s, interfered with a system of widespread protection that organized crime groups enjoyed. In some cases, political alternation brought to power new officials with an interest in cleaning house and cracking down on organized crime. In other cases, political change may have simply interrupted previously corrupt arrangements—and possibly introduced new ones—in ways that opened new opportunities for competition among rival organized crime groups.

Whatever the case, the breakdown and restructuring of Mexico's drug trafficking organizations has led many criminal organizations to turn to new predatory activities to complement or substitute revenues from trafficking in illicit drugs. For example, kidnapping provides a useful illustration of how the business model of organized crime has changed in recent years. First, it must be noted that there are enormous problems and inconsistencies with data on kidnapping, particularly in Mexico. Statistics on kidnappings are quite unreliable because they reflect only those kidnappings that are officially reported and acknowledged. Due to a lack of confidence in police—and documented involvement of police in kidnappings—victims and family members are often unwilling to report kidnappings to authorities. Reporting rates tend to vary dramatically by state, depending on levels of citizen confidence in authorities, and some states appear

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2 It must be noted that a similar pattern of "official" protection existed for U.S. organized crime groups in the 20th century, particularly during the heyday of Italian mafia organizations from the prohibition era of the 1920s until at least the 1950s.

FIGURE 3: CASES OF KIDNAPPING IN MEXICO, 1997-2013
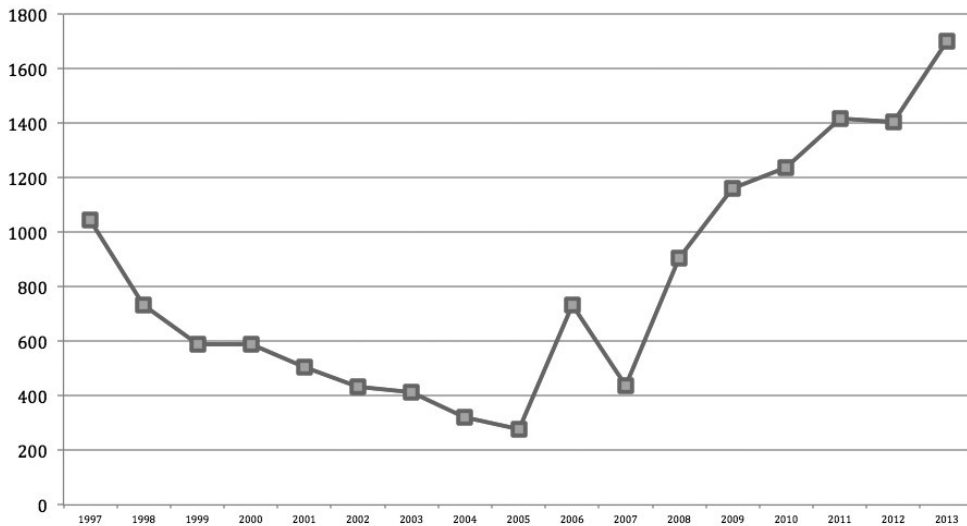
Source: Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública.

to record and report kidnappings differently, depending on the nature of the abduction.[3] Meanwhile, government data are often inconsistent, with figures for a particular state or year often shifting without explanation from one official report or table to another. However, even taking these limitations into consideration, official data still offer at least a sense of general trends.

That said, there was a dramatic increase in the number of kidnapping investigations in Mexico during the 1990s, in part due to the proliferation of so-called "express kidnappings" that effectively constituted a form of robbery (See Figure 3). A typical scenario involved taxi passengers or pedestrians being accosted by another individual or a small group, forced to withdraw money from automatic teller machines (ATMs), and often held against their will in order to make multiple ATM withdrawals. These kidnappings became very common at the height of the economic crisis that followed Mexico's 1994–95 peso devaluation, and the number of kidnapping cases appeared to decline dramatically from 1997 to 2005. However, kidnappings began to increase significantly again beginning in 2007, along with the general escalation of drug-related violence. Typical scenarios have involved

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3 For example, the data presented here includes only those cases that were investigated by state prosecutors. Thus, while INEGI reports that there were 1,073 kidnappings reported to municipal police agencies in 2008, the number that the National Public Security System (SNSP) reported as actually investigated by state prosecutors was about 20% lower, as noted in the graph provided here. Some states show discrepancies from SNSP's reporting. http://www.lapoliciaca.com/nota-roja/discrepan-pgjh-y-snsp-en-cifras-de-secuestros-2011/.

> The under-reporting of crime in turn makes it difficult for law enforcement authorities to respond effectively to the problem. … citizen distrust of law enforcement and the problem of criminal impunity become mutually reinforcing.

individuals who were abducted by organized crime groups for significant periods of time. Sometimes kidnappings are part of an effort to extract large ransoms from the victim, or their family members and associates. In other cases, often referred to as a *levantón*, a person is abducted primarily in an effort to cause the victim fear, physical harm, or even death.

The bottom line is that the level of crime and violence in Mexico has increased dramatically, and ordinary citizens are increasingly finding themselves in the crosshairs. What is more, the public feels that the government has largely failed to address the problem, as we discuss below. What is perhaps most striking and concerning about the proliferation of such violence is that authorities have been incapable of resolving the problem. Indeed, many Mexicans feel that the real problem is that authorities have neither the integrity nor the capacity to do so. Below, we examine the Mexican public's frustration with their law enforcement and judicial system.

PUBLIC FRUSTRATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

Many Mexican citizens have such low levels of confidence in judicial and law enforcement authorities—either due to perceptions of incompetence or corruption—that they are disinclined to report a crime (see Table 2). In a study released in 2011, ICESI found that 39 percent of those who do not report crimes think doing so would be a "waste of time," 16 percent distrusted the authorities, 10 percent thought the process would be too cumbersome, 9 percent said that they lacked evidence of the crime, 6 percent feared retaliation by their aggressor, 3 percent felt that an official had a hostile attitude, and 1 percent were afraid of being extorted by authorities.[4] The under-reporting of crime in turn makes it difficult for law enforcement authorities to respond effectively to the problem. Hence, citizen distrust of law enforcement and the problem of criminal impunity become mutually reinforcing. Thus, as Bailey and Chabat noted over a decade ago, low levels of confidence in Mexico's law enforcement and judicial sector institutions constitute a serious crisis of "public insecurity."[5]

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4 "Guadalajara, Número Uno En Delitos No Denunciados," *El Informador*, January 18, 2011 2011.

5 John J. Bailey and Jorge Chabat, eds., *Transnational Crime and Public Security: Challenges to Mexico and the United States* (La Jolla: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, 2001).

TABLE 2: LEVELS OF CONFIDENCE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY INSTITUTIONS

Agency	Level of Confidence			
	High	Little	None	D/K
Navy	55.0	38.3	4.6	2.1
Army	52.5	40.1	6.7	0.8
Federal Judicial Police	24.8	59.4	15.3	0.4
Federal Police	24.6	61.0	13.9	0.6
Agents of Federal Attorney General	21.6	61.4	16.5	0.6
State Judicial Police	17.4	60.5	21.4	0.7
Judges	17.2	61.7	19.8	1.4
State Police	14.9	65.4	19.1	0.6
Agents of the State Prosecutor	13.7	62.5	23.2	0.6
Transit Police	10.3	63.8	25.3	0.6
Municipal Police	10.2	67.4	22.1	0.3

Note: D/K means "Don't know."
Source: INEGI. Dirección General de Estadísticas Sociodemográficas. Encuesta Nacional sobre Inseguridad, 2010.

Perhaps the most disturbing manifestation of citizen frustration with the inability of authorities to address problems of crime and violence are the acts of vigilantism and street justice that have taken place periodically over the last several years. Such incidents have been long associated with rural, poor or indigenous communities where the absence of effective law enforcement leads a reliance on informal means of justice.[6] However, citizens have also resorted to public lynching and vigilantism in urban settings as well, as when a mob attacked three undercover federal police officers that were allegedly taking pictures outside an elementary school in November 2004. In that incident, in the community of San Juan Ixtayopan Pueblo, in the outskirts of Mexico City, a crowd of people accused the officers of planning a kidnapping, dragged them from their vehicle, and began to

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6 In 2002, for example, *The Washington Post* described a rural Mixtec community whose punishments buried one murderer alive with his dead victim, a lifelong friend killed in a drunken fight. Chris Kraul, "In Mexico, Vigilantism Rises on Surge of Crime, Public Disgust," *Los Angeles Times*, August 22, 2004 2004; Andrew Sullivan, "In Mexico Hinterland, Life Beyond the Law," *The Washington Post*, 2002.

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beat the men with metal pipes. Authorities and local police attempted to intervene and were able to rescue one of the men, but the crowd grew to an estimated 200 people and succeeded in keeping authorities at bay while they beat the two men to death—despite their on-camera appeals identifying themselves as police officers—and burned their bodies in the street.[7]

More recently, as this edited volume went to press, Mexican authorities were grappling with the emergence of citizen "self-defense groups" and militias in response to extortion, kidnapping, and gang activity. In states like Guerrero and Michoacán, such groups have formed patrols, set up checkpoints, and even taken up arms to fight against criminal organizations. In general, federal, state, and local officials have appeared to tolerate such self-defense groups as a necessary evil—if not a positive and welcome development—in the fight against organized crime. Indeed, several Mexican officials frankly admitted the state's lack of capacity to address the needs of certain communities, effectively abdicating these as ungoverned spaces.

However, in January 2014, the Mexican federal government was ultimately compelled to intervene in Michoacán when armed militias were poised to storm the city of Apatzingán, with a population of roughly 100,000 inhabitants, in an effort to rout an organized crime group known as the Knights Templar Organization. While the federal government was able to assert control of the situation—thanks in part to the deployment of thousands of troops to the area—officials were unable to achieve an agreement to disarm militia groups, many of which have questionable membership composition, dubious financial backing, and enormous firepower.

Developments such as the uprising of self-defense groups in Apatzingán call attention to the fact that too little attention has been given to the responses of ordinary people and communities in promoting citizen security. Ideally, societies that suffer traumatic experiences can identify positive ways to respond, recover, and rebuild. A growing literature has described successful efforts to do so as an indication of "community resilience." Below, we consider this concept—which serves as a central theme throughout this book—as a framework for evaluating the responses and capacities of Mexican society to rebound and recover from the country's current problems.

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7 In reaction to public outrage over the incident, President Vicente Fox fired Mexico City police chief Marcelo Ebrard. James C. McKinley and Ginger Thompson, "Lynchings of Policemen Ignite Outrage at Violence in Mexico," The New York Times, Thursday, November 25, 2004.

The Concept of Resilient Communities

The term "resilience" is generally used to refer to a system that has the ability to flourish amidst or after suffering adversity. Resilience is the capacity, to borrow from Taleb (2012), to be "anti-fragile."[8] That is, the concept of resilience goes beyond the notion of "strength" or "protected," in so far as it refers not only to warding off stresses, breakdown, and harm but actually recovering from and prospering despite harm. A rock may be "strong" in that it is difficult to break, but it is not resilient; once broken, it cannot repair itself. Resilience is a concept that has been applied in various contexts, including a substantial literature in the sciences on the ability of ecological systems to persevere in the face of change—such as drought or global warming—since biological organisms and systems often necessarily have adaptive capacities that enable them to rebound when confronted by adversity.[9] As Ahmed (2006) notes, there are actually two contending understandings of resilience in the ecological literature, one that emphasizes an ecosystem's ability to return to stasis (equilibrium) and another that focuses on an ecosystem's ability to evolve (transformation) in response to some shock or adversity.[10]

The concept of "community resilience" implies a capacity for society to withstand and recover from hazards, stresses, and shocks. The notion of resilience has also been applied in reference to societies and communities recovering from economic crises, health epidemics, terrorism, and natural- and human-caused disasters.[11] For example, Kendra and Wachtendorf (2003) employed the concept of community resilience to analyze medical professionals' responses to the 9/11 terror attacks.[12] The concept of community resilience was also widely used in

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8 As Taleb applies the notion of anti-fragility, it refers to systems or organisms that actually thrive when faced with adversity. It is a concept for which there are arguably few examples: many things can be absolutely fragile (i.e., capable of breaking), but there are few examples of absolute anti-fragility (i.e., infinitely capable of thriving from adversity). However, it is arguably the case that communities are made stronger by suffering from adversity. Victims and survivors of catastrophic experiences often find themselves bound together through a reinforced sense of mutual understanding and social trust that would not have developed in the absence of adversity. Nassim Nicolas Taleb, *Anti-Fragile: Things That Gain from Disorder* (New York: Random House, 2013).

9 C.S. Holling, "Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems," *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 4 (1973).

10 Atiq Kainan Ahmed, "Concepts and Practices of 'Resilience': A Compilation from Various Secondary Sources," in "Working Paper Prepared U.S. Agency for International Development" (Bangkok, Thailand: Coastal Community Resilience (CCR) Program, 2006), 10-11.

11 C. Folke et al., "Resilience and Sustainable Development: Building Adaptive Capacity in a World of Transformations," *Ambio* 31, no. 5 (2002); International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, "World Disaster Report," (2004); Susanne C. Moser, "Resilience in the Face of Global Environmental Change," ed. Community and Regional Resilience Initiative (Southeast Region Research Initiative, 2008); Susan L. Cutter et al., "Community and Regional Resilience: Perspectives from Hazards, Disasters, and Emergency Management," (Southeast Region Research Initiative, 2008).

12 J. Kendra and T. Wachtendorf, "Elements of Community Resilience in the World Trade Center Attack: Reconstituting New York City's Emergency Operations Center," *Disasters* 27, no. 97–122 (2003).

international relief circles in the wake of the 2004 tsunami that severely impacted Indonesia and much of South and Southeast Asia, and was also applied to disaster relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina in the United States.[13]

Across the different uses of the concept, there are some broad commonalities in the type of factors that are often associated with resilience. The list below is by no means complete, but helps to illustrate the characteristics that may lend resilience to a system or community:

- *Strength:* Having properties that enable a system to exert force (or resist external forces).
- *Self-Sufficiency:* Systems that have substantial autonomy may be better protected against external disruptions.
- *Inner-dependence:* Elements within a system are interconnected and mutually supportive.
- *Redundancy:* Duplication of functions in ways that reduces the vulnerabilities of a given system.
- *Perceptivity:* Some means of intuition, communication, or intelligence that enables a system to detect harm and opportunities.
- *Diffusivity:* An ability to transmit or disseminate warnings, information, or resources within the system.
- *Diversity:* Systems with diverse elements that can prove adaptable to different circumstances, needs, and opportunities.
- *Flexibility:* Systems that have a capacity to adjust and transform while remaining largely intact.[14]

In short, the concept of resilience emphasizes a system's ability not only to withstand adversity but to recover from it: not only to survive but to thrive. While the use of the term "community resilience" is relatively new, the idea that societies and communities may have attributes that enable them to flourish in the face of adversity is not. From classic social scientific studies of the "civic culture" to more contemporary studies of "social capital," many experts attribute great importance to the (often elusive) norms, values, and attitudes that can help to foster healthy and productive societies. The key question is how these elements of resilience can take root and flourish? What are the triggers and mechanisms for promoting community resilience? Below, we consider how the concept of community resilience has been applied as a means to address Mexico's current security challenges.

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13 F. H. Norris et al., "Community Resilience as a Metaphor, Theory, Set of Capacities, and Strategy for Disaster Readiness," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 41 (2008); D. Paton and D. Johnston, *Disaster Resilience: An Integrated Approach* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas., 2006).

14 David R. Godschalk, "Urban Hazard Mitigation: Creating Resilient Cities," *Natural Hazards Review* 4, no. 3 (2003).

Promoting Resilient Community Responses to Crime and Violence in Mexico

In Mexico, the term "resilient community" was first introduced as part of the language discussing U.S.–Mexico security cooperation under the Merida Initiative, a binational aid program proposed by Presidents Felipe Calderón and George W. Bush.[15] The first three years of the Merida Initiative, from 2007 to 2009, were focused on channeling $1.4 billion in U.S. assistance to support Mexican government efforts to combat organized crime (e.g., sharing equipment, training, and intelligence), bolster judicial sector capacity (e.g., police and judicial reform), and improve border interdiction efforts (e.g., southbound detection of firearms, ammunition, and cash). Later, as outlined in speeches and policy documents, the promotion of "community resilience" became a fourth key priority or pillar for cooperation under the Merida Initiative in 2009, the first year of the Obama administration.

While the Merida Initiative is a bilateral initiative with many progenitors, U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Carlos Pascual appears to have been a pivotal player in incorporating the notion of community resilience as a key policy objective. However, Pascual's tenure as U.S. ambassador was cut short by political wrangling, and he resigned under pressure from the Calderón administration.[16] While both the U.S. and Mexican governments continue to support programs and initiatives that help to promote community resilience, there has been little analysis of whether Pillar IV efforts have lived up to their promise. More important, there has been little attempt to systematically evaluate the responses of Mexican society—and the evolution of Mexican civil society—in response to the country's ongoing security crisis. For this reason, it is worth examining some of the civic initiatives that have gained prominence in recent years.

One thing seems clear from Mexico's experience: despite their fears and frustrations, most Mexicans are not resigned to accept the status quo. The question for individual citizens and communities is whether they will find positive ways to prevent and recover from crime and violence, or whether they will respond in ways that exacerbate the problem, whether by cowering in fear or resorting to taking the law into their own hands. Many of the most positive examples spring

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15 U.S. House of Representatives, "Merida Initiative to Combat Illicit Narcotics and Reduce Organized Crime Authorization Act of 2008 : Report Together with Additional Views (to Accompany H.R. 6028) (Including Cost Estimate of the Congressional Budget Office)," ed. Committee on Foreign Affairs (2008); United States Government Accountability Office, "Mérida Initiative: The United States Has Provided Counternarcotics and Anticrime Support but Needs Better Performance Measures," (Washington, D.C.: Government Accountability Office, 2010); Shannon O'Neil, "Refocusing U.S.-Mexico Security Cooperation," in *Policy Innovation Memorandum*, ed. Council on Foreign Relations (2012); Clare Ribando Seelke and Kristin M. Finklea, "U.S.-Mexican Security Cooperation: The Mérida Initiative and Beyond," in *CRS Report for Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2013); Diana Negroponte, "Pillar Iv of 'Beyond Merida': Addressing the Socio-Economic Causes of Drug Related Crime and Violence in Mexico," in *Working Paper Series on U.S.-Mexico Security Cooperation*, ed. Eric Olson (Washington, D.C.: Mexico Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2011).

16 "U.S. Mexico Envoy Carlos Pascual Quits Amid Wikileaks Row," *BBC*, March 20, 2011.

The question for individual citizens and communities is whether they will find positive ways to prevent and recover from crime and violence, or whether they will respond in ways that exacerbate the problem, whether by cowering in fear or resorting to taking the law into their own hands.

from great tragedy. For example, in August 2008, the abduction and brutal murder of Fernando Martí, the 14-year-old son of prominent Mexico City businessman Alejandro Martí, triggered a nation-wide series of anti-crime demonstrations involving over 150,000 people. The Mexican public was particularly outraged upon discovery of the involvement of law enforcement—including federal police officers—in the kidnapping ring. The Martí family had paid an estimated sum of $2 million to the kidnappers to secure his return, but the boy was brutally murdered and his body discovered weeks later in the trunk of a car.

In the wake of the Martí murder, public pressure led to the introduction of new security measures by President Calderón and Mexico City Mayor Marcelo Ebrard, including tougher sentences and special police units to prevent and investigate cases of kidnapping. Also, representatives from all three federal branches of government and state authorities met in a televised session to discuss a new 74-point security plan to be implemented over the next 100 days. While significant numbers of Mexicans supported these efforts, critics expressed skepticism since harsher sentences are not a significant deterrent without an effective criminal justice system. Meanwhile, Alejandro Martí, the father of the murdered kidnapping victim, launched his own nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting victims' rights, and urged authorities to do whatever they can to reduce crime. "If you can't, resign," he admonished Mexican officials.[17]

Martí's case and many others illustrate that civic engagement is a necessary component to change the culture of lawfulness on the ground and to hold government authorities accountable for their efforts. Civic efforts can also provide a vital complement to government efforts in building livable communities, help overcome the fear imposed by organized crime groups, and ensure the flow of information about criminal activities. Yet, to date, efforts to engage citizens have been largely absent from the cooperation agenda between the two countries or the strategies of either country. As a result, a missing link in the binational strategy to address organized crime has been the failure to fully engage citizens in these efforts.

Fortunately, Mexican citizens and civic organizations have made bold efforts to engage authorities, demand greater accountability, improve the effectiveness of public

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17 "Unidades Antisecuestro de SSP inician operaciones." *Vanguardia,* August 11, 2008; "México, primer lugar en secuestros a nivel mundial: ONG." *El Universal,* August 14, 2008; "Con 200 agentes de PGJDF y 100 de la SSP crean Fuerza Antisecuestros," *La Crónica de Hoy,* August 20, 2008; "Pactan; les dan 100 días," *Reforma,* August 22, 2008.

policies, and repair the damage caused by recent violence. As Lauren Villagran notes in her contribution to this book, many of these groups have been launched by victims frustrated by crime, violence, and impunity. Among the most notable examples is the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity started by Javier Sicilia, a poet who lost his son in the violence, and the movement started by Martí, discussed earlier.[18] Similarly, in several of the cities with high levels of violence, including Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez, and Monterrey, local civic efforts are making a difference in police and judicial reform, helping put together programs for youth employment, and challenging the climate of fear instilled by organized crime groups. There have been some initial attempts by government to respond to these initiatives. Nevertheless, as Villagran examines in detail, civic engagement and its potential contribution to a culture of lawfulness and security in Mexico are incipient and highly vulnerable to internal fissures and difficulties in dealing with authorities.

Despite the deep gulf between policymakers and the community in designing and carrying out the state's public security strategy, important signs exist of citizen efforts to engage their authorities and demand greater effectiveness and accountability. In several cities most under stress by organized crime violence, significant local movements have emerged to "take back" the cities in several key local examples (see Table 4). In some of these cities, these movements have helped shape policies designed to rebuild the police, reform the justice system, and design more livable cities. Often these movements have brought together an eclectic mix of business leaders, nonprofit organizations, public figures, and average citizens to build a common agenda for the city or state in question.

This is the case, for example, in Tijuana, in the state of Baja California, which has developed a series of organizations, some business-oriented, others focused on victims' rights, that have become crucial players in that city (and state's) efforts to reform its police, prosecutors, and justice system. Indeed, Tijuana has gone from the country's second most-violent city to one of the least violent ones on the U.S.–Mexico border in the space of a few years, as concerted pressure from citizens helped drive a rapid (though still far from complete) professionalization of the police and prosecutor's office and the gradual implementation of new, more transparent and efficient court procedures. In an ambitious move, several citizens' groups banded together to host a biannual exposition titled "Tijuana Innovadora" (Innovative Tijuana) as a showcase to help create an alternative vision of the city's present and future. This effort has succeeded in attracting international attention by bringing high-profile figures such as then–President Felipe Calderón, former U.S.

The key question is whether the interventions of Mexico's power brokers and corporate interests trickle down to provide better protections for the rest of society.

18 AFP, "Mexico Peace Convoy to Sign National Pact," MSN News, June 11, 2011.

TABLE 3: OVERVIEW OF KEY LOCAL CIVIC MOVEMENTS

Location	Civic Movement	Activities
Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua	Strategic Plan Juárez, Doctors' Movement, HR Movement, Others	Judicial Reform, Police Reform, City Planning, Youth Development
Tijuana, Baja California	Innovative Tijuana, Tijuana Development Committee, Others	City Planning, Youth Opportunities, Judicial Reform, Anti-Kidnapping Legislation
Monterrey, Nuevo León	Monterrey Council of Foundations, Center for Citizen Integration, Others	Police & Judicial Reform, Online Platform for Civic Action
State of Sinaloa	Independent newspapers, Sinaloa Business Federation	Civic Renewal, Anti-Corruption Activities, Reporting on Violence
State of Guerrero	Regional Police, Human Rights Network	Regional Police Force supported by communities, Accountability of Police and Anti-Corruption Efforts
State of Michoacán	Several Small Civic Groups	Police Reform, Anti-Corruption Activities

Vice President Al Gore, telecommunications magnate Carlos Slim, and U.S. talk show host Larry King to Tijuana to discuss these issues.

Tijuana's experience highlights the sensitivities of the private sector toward Mexico's public security situation, a topic that is explored in detail in this book by Lucy Conger. Conger analyzes the role of the private sector—including industry, commerce, and civil society—in responding to sharp increases in Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey, two of the country's most important northern industrial and commercial centers. In Ciudad Juarez in the state of Chihuahua, for example, a long-standing civic organization, Plan Estratégico de Juárez (Strategic Plan Juárez), initially started by concerned business leaders in the late 1990s, has become the nucleus of a series of civic groups concerned about police reform, justice reform, anti-kidnapping legislation, youth development, human rights, and city planning. Several other groups in Juárez, ranging from neighborhood organizations, human rights groups, the local doctors' association, and traditional business organizations, have also played a significant role in these debates, with a growing impact on actual policy decisions. Indeed, in the face of the worst violence in the country, Juárez has become a surprisingly hopeful story

about how citizens fight back against incredible odds and develop a new narrative about the future of their city based on a culture of lawfulness and demands for effective institutions. Conger makes special note of the role of the Mesas de Seguridad that were initiated by the federal government to create opportunities for civic dialogue and coordination in the aftermath of a tragic massacre at a birthday party, and sees these as a model for other parts of Mexico currently plagued by violence.

Similarly, Monterrey, Mexico's industrial and business capital located in the state of Nuevo León, became one of the most violent hotspots in 2011 and 2012. However, significant social action, building on its well-funded local civic infrastructure, were introduced that have apparently helped the city recuperate from its security crisis through police and judicial reform and accountability measures. In this technologically savvy city, there has been an effort driven by several young businesspeople to create an online social media platform that allows citizens both to report crimes and to interact with each other about projects to restore the city, a creative addition to the usual repertoire of social action in the city. However, Conger suggests, the most important actions appear to be taken by Monterrey's powerful boardroom players who have direct high-level access: "At the top, CEOs speak directly with the president or cabinet-level officials behind closed doors, press their demands and reach a gentlemen's agreement that responds to their needs for Monterrey." The key question is whether the interventions of Mexico's power brokers and corporate interests trickle down to provide better protections for the rest of society.

In other areas beset by violence, including Sinaloa, Guerrero, and Michoacán (among the states with the highest rates of violence), there have been some positive civic responses, though these have been more fragmented and have arguably been overshadowed by the attention to armed militia groups. Perhaps most interesting has been the Regional Police, a community funded police force in the poorest districts in the mountains of Guerrero, which has sought to maintain a degree of protection of civilians in the midst of some of the most destructive fights among drug trafficking organizations. Sinaloa, the birthplace of drug trafficking in Mexico and the center of the largest trafficking organization, has seen an increasingly combative civil society that has sought to clean up corruption in government and provide effective reporting on criminal groups in the face of significant threats. And in Michoacán, civic organizations have made a major push for reform of the police and justice system. In these three states, spontaneous efforts by average citizens to create their own online media platforms to report on violence and citizen responses have played an important role in providing information after traditional media have been threatened into silence.

TABLE 4: KEY NATIONAL CIVIC MOVEMENTS

Movement	Key Organizations	Key Activities/Demands
Victims' Rights Movement	Mexico SOS, Mexicans United Against Delinquency, Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity	Police, Prosecutor, and Judicial Reform, Anti-Kidnapping Legislation, Attention to Victims of Crime
Judicial Reform Movement	Network for Oral Trials	Implementation of judicial reforms nationally and in each state
Journalists' Movement	Loose network of media owners and journalists	Investigation of crimes against journalists, legislation to penalize attacks against journalists
Alternative Information Platforms	Several local efforts in different cities	Provide alternative information sources on crime and violence

At the same time, there have been at least four sets of national civic movements that have helped shape the public debate and public policy around rule of law issues in Mexico (see Table 5). First, as Villagran discusses in this book, several groups organized by families that have been victimized by violence have constituted important organizations that are pushing for major police, prosecutorial, and judicial reforms in the country. Movements led by poet Javier Sicilia (whose son was killed in Cuernavaca), businessman Alejandro Martí (whose son was killed in Mexico City), Isabel Miranda de Wallace (whose son was killed in Mexico State), María Elena Moreira (whose husband was kidnapped in Mexico City), and others (including those involved in the group "Mexicans United Against Crime") have captured the public imagination and driven the public debate on reforms. These prominent victims' rights organizations have met in public interviews with Mexican authorities, organized massive marches around the country, and, in some cases, worked closely on the details of policy reform at a national and state level.

A second national movement for judicial reform, the Network for Oral Trials, made up of prominent attorneys who range from corporate lawyers to human rights advocates to university scholars, helped develop the basis for the recent constitutional reform of the justice system and continue to play a decisive role in promoting its implementation nationally and in several states. As Octavio Rodriguez notes in his contribution to this book, although less publicly visible, this network has been particularly adept at shaping public policy by gaining champions within the federal Congress and state governments. In this case,

USAID funding has actually played a critical (if little known) role in helping this network develop.

Third, as Emily Edmonds-Poli notes in her contribution to this book, a growing network of journalists and media owners has begun to organize to protect local reporters and media in Mexico that are under attack from organized crime groups. These efforts have received a boost recently from U.S. government funding, through Freedom House, for an effort to provide early warning and temporary safe haven to journalists in danger (something that we believe was inspired, in part, by recommendations in our earlier report, and embassy officials consulted extensively with the researchers on this initiative), but the most important locus of this activity remains with the journalists themselves who are beginning to pressure the federal attorney general's office and local authorities to protect journalists who have the courage to report on organized crime and associated corruption.

Fourth, as Daniel Sabet notes in his chapter, there have been a number of efforts directed toward increasing the public's trust in the police that will also entail greater direct citizen oversight. Drawing on evidence from groundbreaking surveys of Mexican police officers, Sabet finds that large numbers of police view society as an obstacle to law enforcement, in part because of the uncooperative attitudes and unlawful behaviors of citizens themselves. Sabet argues that authorities must work with society in a joint effort in "co-producing" citizen security. This can be done, he suggests, by developing confidence building programs that help authorities and police to do their jobs more effectively. For example, promising confidence building efforts have been made in states such as Baja California to increase public reporting of crimes via the state's 089 telephone number emergency reporting system.

In short, this book seeks to document several of the most important civic engagement activities taking place in areas hardest hit by criminal violence in Mexico, and identify and analyze the obstacles to and opportunities for greater civic engagement. Based on this research, the researchers involved have provided detailed analysis of the different movements and initiatives described above, with the goal of offering answers to several key questions: What are the most important (largest and most influential) civic responses to crime and violence in each city/ state (for the six local studies) or around the particular issue (for the national movements)? What has led these groups to organize? What are their demands, activities, and capabilities? How articulated are they among each other? What are the primary obstacles to and opportunities for engagement with authorities? How have the organizations sought to overcome or take advantage of these? Have they influenced public opinion or perceptions in noticeable ways? How effective have they been at moving public policy? How could U.S. and Mexican government policy responses enhance the effectiveness of these civic efforts?

The Potential for More Effective U.S. and Mexican Policy Responses

Policy responses from the Mexican and U.S. governments to engage civic society have been, so far, limited. Still, there are some encouraging efforts already under way that could be augmented and expanded. For example, the U.S. government has supported "culture of lawfulness" programs for several years in Mexico through grants to the National Information Strategy Center. This program is based on the pioneering work of Roy Godson and the Culture of Lawfulness Project, which has its theoretical foundations in a growing body of policy-focused academic research on the role of attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms in fostering the rule of law in new democracies. A core assumption of this initiative is that policy initiatives and institutional reform are insufficient without "buy-in" from society at large. According to this program's mission and vision, "citizens and government officials must believe that they have a personal stake in upholding the rule of law and preventing crime and corruption. They must share the expectation that laws ought to be fair and apply to everyone regardless of socioeconomic status—and that every individual has a role in creating and overseeing the implementation of the laws."[19]

Additionally, U.S. policymakers have been gradually directing more funds to support civic projects in Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana, and Monterrey, including youth development, employment training, and civic engagement in city planning. These funds are part of the reformulated Merida Initiative strategy to support the emergence of resilient communities where the violence has been most acute. The Justice in Mexico Project has been consulted by both governments in developing this strategy under Pillar IV of the Merida Initiative, and the Wilson Center produced a short report on these efforts in 2013.[20]

Similarly, the U.S. government has provided some support through USAID to the Network for Oral Trials (which, as noted above, promotes judicial reform) and, starting in late 2011, to Freedom House to start a project to protect journalists (for which researchers for this report were widely consulted). These are generally small initiatives within the larger overall security strategy but, nevertheless, an important indication of the U.S. government's commitment to strengthening and protecting civil society as a vehicle for improving the rule of law and an important element of it security strategy in Mexico.

At the same time, the Mexican federal government and state governments have at times responded to demands from the various civic groups, although this response has been uneven. The victims' rights movements, for example, have had some success in generating sufficient publicity to gain traction for police and

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19 Vision Statement. Culture of Lawfulness Project, http://www.strategycenter.org/programs/education-for-the-rule-of-law/.

20 Negroponte, "Pillar IV.

prosecutorial reforms, both at the federal and, in some cases, state level, but they have often been frustrated by the slow and ineffective pace of implementation. Similarly, some city and state governments (e.g., the state governments where Tijuana and Monterrey are located) have appeared to show greater receptivity to citizen demands than others and been more willing to partner with civic efforts, even if only partially, while other state and municipal governments have appeared to resist these efforts. The Mexican federal government has pledged some funds to complement U.S. efforts in Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana, and Monterrey under Pillar IV, although the extent of these efforts is still unclear.

CONCLUSION

The United States has a profound national interest in having a southern neighbor that is both secure and prosperous. The rise in organized crime violence in Mexico, related to drug trafficking, has severely strained the country's resources and raised questions about the state's ability to ensure the security of its citizens. The U.S. government has been working closely with the Mexican government to provide intelligence, training, equipment, and funding to address this challenge, and these efforts have led to a series of presidential summits and cabinet-level meetings to set an overall strategy for cooperation.

Restoring security and public safety in Mexico depends not only on an effective state response to problems of crime and violence, but also on the resilience of communities affected by violence. Failure to strengthen and fully engage civil society in security efforts will further undermine public confidence in government and weaken the rule of law. Worse, as the public's trust in its authorities to guarantee its safety decreases, the tendency to rely on organized crime to "provide" this safety increases. Furthermore, citizens have a vital role to play in holding government accountable and demanding that government function effectively.

In the Mexican context, it is vitally important that both governments adopt public policies that will promote civic engagement aimed at strengthening civil society and encouraging a partnership with government to effectively address security concerns. While this is primarily the responsibility of the government of Mexico, the United States can also play a constructive role in support of this important goal and ensure that this is embedded in the two governments' joint strategy. Failure to do so will undermine attempts to effectively fight organized crime, restore public confidence in the institutions of government, and ultimately fail to ensure public security for citizens.

Restoring security and public safety in Mexico depends not only on an effective state response to problems of crime and violence, but also on the resilience of communities affected by violence.

Thus, this book offers several concrete policy options for government leaders in the United States and Mexico to build on current civic engagement efforts to strengthen the rule of law and improve security by enhancing civic responses to violence in Mexico, increasing civic engagement with the state in promoting the rule of law, as well as help shape public debate on this issue more broadly.

Overall, we hope that our findings will help to influence both public discussion and public policy for dealing with organized crime groups that have driven a tragic spiral of violence in Mexico by supplying a pathway for policymakers to unleash the potential for collaboration with citizens and civic organizations. This has been a missing link in current collaborative efforts between the United States and Mexico in addressing organized crime, and we believe that providing policy ideas can help build this link into existing strategies.

THE ROOTS OF VIOLENCE, AND CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSES

Community Resilience to Violence: Local Schools, Regional Economies, and Homicide in Mexico's Municipalities

MATTHEW C. INGRAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence diminishes well-being, and public insecurity erodes the rule of law, undermining the quality of democracy and constraining business and commercial interactions. A better understanding of the origins of violence is therefore crucial. This paper examines the concept of "community resilience" and its current emphasis in the Merida Initiative's effort to reduce violence, and incorporates measures of this concept in a subnational analysis of 2010 homicide rates across Mexico's 2,455 municipalities. Core findings include (1) homicide is not randomly distributed across municipalities, (2) homicide rates follow a spatial lag effect, suggesting violence in one community spills over into neighboring communities, (3) education has a meaningful protective effect against violence, but this is only a local, direct effect, and (4) economic *in*activity exerts an unexpectedly negative direct effect, but a strong positive indirect effect from neighboring communities; that is, when economic conditions deteriorate in nearby communities, local violence increases, suggesting homicide is committed locally but by individuals in economically depressed, outlying areas. Violence-reduction policies, then, require coordination across nearby communities and should proceed on two fronts: (a) localized improvements in educational attainment, which can be addressed within individual jurisdictions, and (b) economic development policies targeted at intermediate regions below the state level but above the municipal level, which require cross-jurisdictional collaboration, even by municipalities across state boundaries. The emphasis on educational attainment within communities nested within broader regions of economic development helps clarify how to build community resilience to violence in the Mexican context—what I refer to as a "local-schools/regional-economy" approach to violence prevention.

INTRODUCTION

Violence directly affects individual and community well-being, and is also increasingly understood to undermine democracy and constrain development (Seligson, Cruz, and Cordova 2000; Sarles 2001, 49; Mainwaring, Scully, and Cullell 2010, 31; Prillaman 2003). In Mexico, violent crime garners daily media attention, and the years since 2006 have seen a dramatic increase in homicides, tripling between 2007 and 2011, from around 8 to 24 per 100,000 (Molzahn, Ríos, and Shirk 2012; Hope 2014). Meanwhile, U.S. homicide rates have held steady at around 5 per 100,000 for the last 20 years (UNODC 2013), so the incidence of homicide in Mexico is currently four to five times worse than in the United States.

These national figures, however, obscure important subnational variation within Mexico.[1] Figure 1 reports a decile map of 2010 homicide rates across Mexico's 2,455 municipalities (see Data and Methods below for sources). In the decile map, light colors identify municipalities with low homicide rates, and the color darkens as the homicide rate increases. The darkest areas identify the municipalities with the highest homicide rates. Even a cursory glance at this kind of map reveals that there are concentrations of darker, violent areas in (1) the upper, west coast of Mexico (across the states of Nayarit, Sinaloa, Sonora, Chihuahua, and Durango), (2) the northeast (covering parts of Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas), (3) southern Mexico, and (4) portions of the Yucatán peninsula in the southeast. In contrast, there are a few areas in northern, central, and southern Mexico that are lightly colored, i.e., that have low homicide rates.

FIGURE 1: DECILE MAP OF 2010 HOMICIDES RATES ACROSS MEXICO'S 2,455 MUNICIPALITIES
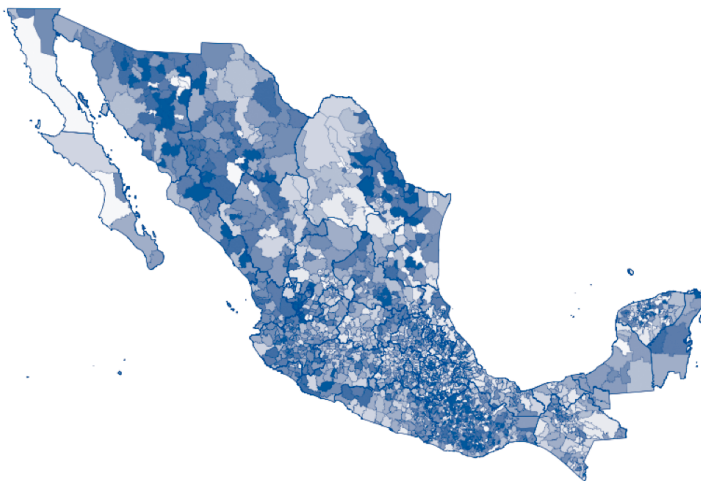
1 See also maps of subnational variation in violence at Justice in Mexico Project: http://justiceinmexico.org.

In the United States, the highest rates are reported by cities like Detroit, New Orleans, and Baltimore, but rarely exceed 40. In Mexico, more than 100 municipalities had homicide rates in 2010 that exceeded 100. To be sure, these communities each had a total population below 50,000, and most had populations below 10,000. Still, a very large number of communities lost 1% to 2% of their population to homicide in 2010.

The current crisis of public insecurity and violence in Mexico, along with the associated costs of violence to health, democracy, and development, calls out for a better understanding of the origins of violence, as well as policies that leverage that understanding in order to prevent and reduce violence. However, policies in this area within Mexico and bilaterally between the U.S. and Mexico have tended to emphasize a more reactive approach, including heavy assistance in the form of training and equipment in law enforcement's response to criminality, and punitive models of policing and law enforcement such as the deployment of the military to combat drug trafficking organizations. That is, the policy response to violence emphasizes a more effective enforcement apparatus and efficient justice-sector while neglecting a large literature addressing the root social and economic causes of crime—why crime occurs in the first place (e.g., Shaw and McKay 1942; 1969; Sampson 1987; Land et al. 1990; Baller et al. 2001; Deane et al. 2008).

Policies on both sides of the border in 2010 seemed to shift greater attention to these root, socioeconomic factors influencing crime and violence, pushing the previously more reactive, enforcement-oriented policies of the Merida Initiative to include more proactive, prevention-oriented policies, moving "beyond Merida" (Olson and Wilson 2010). For instance, in Mexico, Todos Somos Juárez received substantial local and federal support to advance a wide array of social, educational, and economic projects based in various neighborhoods of the border city of Ciudad Juárez, which up until that point had suffered an extraordinary homicide rate of about 200 per 100,000 (see Negroponte 2011; Seelke and Finklea 2013, 20–21). By April 2011, a bilateral strategy emerged in which the Merida Initiative articulated new goals addressing these underlying socioeconomic issues. The four pillars of the Merida Initiative are now: (I) disrupt organized criminal groups; (II) strengthen institutions; (III) build a 21st century border; and (IV) build strong and resilient communities, including a culture of lawfulness (DOS 2011a; 2011b; 2012; Seelke and Finklea 2013). Pillars I–III can be broadly construed to continue the previous strategy, though Pillar III's specific emphasis on border dynamics is novel. Pillar IV reflects the emerging emphasis on broader cultural, social, and economic factors underlying violence.

Pillar IV speaks most directly to the social-scientific literature on the causes of crime and violence. However, it is unclear what exactly "lawful," "strong," or "resilient" mean. This lack of clarity raises several fundamental questions. How do we know community resilience (CR) when we see it, and how should funding be directed or policies be designed in order to achieve CR? That is, what are the

properties of CR? More precisely, how can CR be measured in order to assess or evaluate whether a particular program is building it? What objective criteria should policymakers, governments, or funders use to know whether proposed or existing projects are achieving CR?

What's more, the strategy of the government of Enrique Peña Nieto since December 2012 has clearly emphasized the elements of violence reduction and crime prevention through a strengthening of the social fabric. The Interior Ministry's undersecretary for crime prevention and citizen participation, Roberto Campa, has oriented the work of his office toward this goal, with ample funds available for community-based projects specifically aimed at youth. Returning to the conceptual and measurement questions raised above, what evidence is there that these kinds of programs are building community resilience to violence, or are even have the best approach to do so?

This chapter has four aims: (1) clarify the concept of community resilience as applied to the crisis of public insecurity and violence in Mexico, (2) measure community resilience using available socioeconomic data in Mexico, (3) provide a systematic analysis of the relationship between these measures and homicide in Mexico using the tools of spatial analysis, and (4) based on the results of this analysis, identify evidence-based policy recommendations for violence prevention in Mexico. Overall, the discussion offers a clearer understanding of (a) the concept of community resilience, (b) concrete measures of community resilience (an admittedly complex challenge), (c) the causal relationship between resilience and violence, and (d) how to design policies and programs to prevent and reduce violence.

Looking ahead, the empirical analysis examines 2010 homicide rates across Mexico's 2,455 municipalities, offering a subnational and spatial study of the patterns and causes of violence. Subnational analyses of homicide can leverage within-country variation to provide a more fine-grained picture of the origins of violence that whole-nation comparative studies overlook. Further, a municipal perspective allows the identification of spatial regimes of violence that may straddle state or other administrative borders, pointing to the cross-jurisdictional dimensions of this violence. Adding the spatial perspective addresses the dependent structure of the data, explicitly accounting for the fact that geographic units are linked together, and crime in one territorial unit may influence crime in other units. Spatial models have been employed to examine the spatial structure of homicide and other crimes, including exploratory spatial analysis and both spatial error and spatial lag models, in the U.S. (e.g., Messner et al. 1999; Baller et al. 2001; Deane et al. 2008; Sparks 2011; Yang 2011), Canada (Thompson and Gartner 2014), and Europe (Messner et al. 2011). To the author's knowledge, this is one of a small number of applications of a spatial Durbin model (SDM) to the study of homicide (see Mears and Bhati 2006; Ruther 2013), and the only one in Mexico (see Ingram 2014), despite the high regard SDMs have as the leading edge or "state of the art" in spatial analysis (Ellhorst 2010).[2]

2 For research with the related methodology of network analysis, see Dell (2011).

Core findings include (1) the identification of spatial clusters or "hot zones" of homicide within Mexico, several of which straddle multiple state boundaries, raising questions about the special, cross-jurisdictional challenges of designing violence-reduction policies; (2) a spatial lag effect of violence, suggesting violence in one community spills over into neighboring communities; (3) education has a meaningful protective effect against violence, but this is only a local, direct (within-municipality) effect; and (4) economic inactivity exerts an unexpectedly negative direct effect, but a strong positive indirect effect from neighboring communities; that is, when economic conditions deteriorate in nearby communities, local violence increases, suggesting homicide is committed locally but by individuals in economically depressed, outlying areas. Communities that are most resilient to homicide appear to be those with strong, local educational attainment nested within broader regions or neighborhoods of municipalities that are economically developed. Building community resilience to violence in Mexico's municipalities, therefore, can be understood to entail two concrete policies: (a) localized improvements in education attainment, which can be addressed within individual jurisdictions, and (b) economic development policies targeted at intermediate regions—below the state level but above the municipal level, even straddling state boundaries—which require cross-jurisdictional collaboration. I refer to this combination as a "local-schools/regional-economy" approach to violence prevention.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION: COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The concept of resilience (CR) draws from a wide range of research fields, including the capacity of materials to stretch, rebound, or recover from pressure or deformation in physics, the ability of geographic areas to adapt and recover from extreme conditions in ecology, public and private preparedness for natural or man-made disasters, and the capacity to overcome adversity in individual and community psychology (e.g., Norris et al. 2008; Plough et al. 2013; Frankenberger et al. 2013). Given that resilience can have many meanings across the natural and social sciences, and even the narrower term of "community resilience" can have multiple meanings within the social sciences, several recent reviews sought to identify a concept of community resilience that could be useful across disciplines. The paragraphs below summarize the properties of community resilience as offered in three of these reviews: Norris et al. (2008), Chandra et al. (2010), and, writing for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Frankenberger et al. (2013). I then follow Norris et al. in comparing community resilience to nearby or related concepts in public health, sociology, and criminology, namely "collective efficacy," which refers to the social characteristics of neighborhoods better able to prevent and reduce violence (e.g., Sampson et al. 1997), and "social capital," which

refers to the social connectedness, engagement, and public trust of individuals and groups (Putnam 1995). Drawing on Norris et al.'s link between CR and collective efficacy, as well as Frankenberger et al.'s emphasis on social capital and the capacity for collective action, the concept of collective efficacy provides a logical bridge between CR and its applications to disaster preparedness—natural or man-made— and potential applications to preventing and reducing crime and violence as articulated in Pillar IV.

Readers should note there is a lively and ongoing debate over the meaning of CR. This contribution does not attempt to settle this debate. Rather, I build on existing notions of community resilience, collective efficacy, and social capital to offer a conceptual model of CR as applied to the shock, adversity, or disturbance posed by high levels of crime and violence, whether persistent or sudden. As noted by Frankenberger et al. (10), resilience to one type of adverse event may not translate into resilience to a different type of adversity (see also Sampson et al. 1997, 919, noting that efficacy is task specific). Thus, the present work is a step toward conceptualizing CR in the specific context of the kind of crime and violence experienced in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America. Further, there is also widespread recognition that CR is difficult to measure (e.g., Frankenberger et al., 23). Indeed, even some internal components of CR, e.g., social networks or connectedness, resist measurement (Chandra et al., 23–24). Thus, the current work can also be understood as contributing to efforts to measure and empirically assess the effect of CR on violence.

In the first review of CR, Norris et al. (2008) identify static and dynamic components of CR. The static resources or properties of a community are critical, but a dynamic notion of the adaptive, transformable nature of these capacities inheres in the concept of CR (135). That is, CR requires a set of resources but also requires creative and imaginative deployment of those resources in the face of new or changing adversities. In short, CR is a process, not a condition (see also Frankenberger et al. 2013).

For Norris et al., these two broad categories of CR break down into four subcategories of capacities: (1) economic development, (2) social capital, (3) information and communication, and (4) community competence. While the authors state that all four capacities can be adaptive to the extent that they are "robust, redundant, and rapidly accessible" (142), they appear to place the most emphasis on the last set of capacities—community competence—as being the most dynamic. First, economic development spans economic growth, stability, and equitable distribution. Economic growth and stability allow communities to dedicate resources to mitigate and rebound from adverse circumstances. Further, marginal or peripheral communities may be at the greatest risk of an adverse event, and are also the least likely to mobilize support after a disturbance (137). Plough et al. (2013, 1191) also emphasize the harmful effect of wide disparities,

and therefore the importance of equity for building resilience. Second, for Norris et al., social capital refers to the "actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network of relationships" (137). Social capital can also be conceived of as a cluster of networked, supportive relationships, paired with a "sense of community, place attachment, and citizen participation" (138–139). Thus, social capital encompasses material and nonmaterial resources, i.e., actual personal ties and involvement with other individuals, groups, and organizations, as well as a cultural-ideational sense of civic duty or loyalty to the community. This normative, cultural-ideational dimension of social capital helps understand how scholars or policymakers might think more systematically about promoting the culture of lawfulness advocated as part of CR in Pillar IV. Third, information and communication are key adaptive capacities. Having accurate and timely information about the adverse event or disturbance is crucial, and having a communication system that allows for efficient understandings of the challenge and the appropriate response is also paramount. Given that the reliability of information is also required, public trust in the source of information is perhaps the most important property of community resilience (Norris et al. 140; quoting Longstaff 2005, 55). If the government is the information source or otherwise a key actor, trust in the government is essential (see also Plough et al., noting that this trust is absent in many poorer or developing countries). Indeed, if trust in government is absent, the legitimacy of authority may suffer, leading citizens to withdraw support from other organizations or institutions, or to resort to self-help activities that might run counter to the broader goals of CR (see Nivette 2014, on the relationship between state legitimacy and crime). This trust is part of a larger public confidence regarded by other scholars as central to social capital (e.g., Putnam), and is also related to understanding culture of lawfulness. A key aspect of communication is the creation—intended or unintended—of conceptual frames, themes, or narratives, that can be either beneficial or corrosive (Norris et al., 140). These frames might be created by the government or by media, or they might emerge more organically from within communities (e.g., "Boston Strong" in the aftermath of the Boston marathon bombing, or "We are All Juárez," in the very name of the 2010 program in Ciudad Juárez; see above). Lastly, community competence includes a sense of agency, efficacy, empowerment, and a real capacity to effect change (Norris et al. 141). These are dynamic qualities that are harder to measure, but proxies can offer good measures. For instance, if the ability to process and assess information, think critically, evaluate options, and solve a new, emerging, or evolving problem makes a community competent, then a logical relationship exists between education and community competence. Similarly, resources must be available for that educated analyst to deploy against the problem. Also, horizontal rather than vertical or hierarchical patterns of authority might facilitate creativity and cooperation (Norris et al. 142). Thus, all else being

equal, education levels and economic resources should be positively related with community competence, and inequality should be negatively correlated with community competence.

Situating their discussion of community resilience specifically within the context of health security, Chandra et al. (2010) note that most definitions of CR identify two types or classes of attributes that contribute to building CR: (1) the underlying material condition of a community prior to an adverse event (e.g., physical or economic condition), and (2) the capability of community to marshal those resources in a response to an adverse event. In this regard, the first and second categories correspond with Norris et al.'s distinction between static and dynamic resources, respectively. Further, Chandra et al. disaggregate their two categories of resources into five components, and they do so more explicitly than Norris et al. In the first set of underlying material conditions, they identify:

(i) physical and psychological health, and

(ii) socioeconomic equity and well-being.

That is, a community's baseline public health condition and its underlying education, employment, income, and inequality shape its available material resources for an adverse event. In the second set of more dynamic capability, Chandra et al. identify:

(iii) effective risk communication;

(iv) integration of organizations (governmental and nongovernmental); and

(v) social connectedness.

The ability to convey information rapidly and reliably (16), coordinate the work of public and private organizations at multiple levels of government (e.g., neighborhood, city, district, state) (19), and rely on networks of personal and professional relationships (21–22) enhances the ability of a community to respond to, adapt, and recover from an adverse event. Overall, Chandra et al. and Norris et al. complement each other in noting both static/background conditions and dynamic/adaptive capabilities, though Chandra et al. are more explicit in identifying which capabilities fall into which category, while Norris et al. advocate a more interdependent, interactive conceptualization.

Perhaps most relevant to Pillar IV of the Merida Initiative might be USAID's definition of community resilience, since the agency is integrally involved in managing assistance. In October 2013, Frankenberger et al. published a conceptual framework of community resilience for USAID. Frankenberger et al. emphasize that the "distinctive aspect" of CR is the capacity for collective action (5). Further, they also stress that social capital is essential to collective action (5, 11), and that "the extent to which communities can effectively combine social capital and collective action in response to shocks and stresses is a defining feature of community resilience" (1).

In their fuller formulation of CR, Frankenberger et al. identify a set of "community assets," including social capital, which contribute to CR. They

understand social capital as the degree and diversity of connections among individuals in a community, including "strong perceptions of local embeddedness, self-regulating moral codes, and the norms, reciprocity, and trust that exist between individuals and groups" (14, citing Chaskin 2008). As noted previously, social capital is a collection of behaviors and attitudes that can be difficult to measure. Assisting social capital, ancillary community assets include other types of capital, including human, financial, natural, physical, and political (11–14). Human capital refers to the community's aggregate level of health, work, and skills, which might come from local patterns in public health and education. Financial capital refers to "patterns and trends in formal employment, petty trade, entitlements, remittances, and external financial assistance from government and/or civil society" (12). Natural capital identifies a community's access to natural resources, and physical capital identifies a community's infrastructure (e.g., utilities, transportation, communication, etc.). Finally, political capital refers to the nature of power relationships in the community, including access to power and influence. Potential measures include institutional effectiveness or performance, voter participation, minorities in positions of leadership, and transparency (13–14).

How do these concepts of community resilience as related to natural disasters link to man-made disasters or social problems? Research in sociology and criminology on the role of community context (Sampson and Groves 1989), "collective efficacy" (Sampson et al. 1997), and social context (Wang et al. 2013; Thompson and Gartner 2014) in explaining crime and violence help bridge the discussion of natural disasters and adverse events of a more social nature. According to Sampson and Groves—and following earlier research by Shaw and McKay (1942; 1969)—violence is a consequence, in part, of social disorganization, and social disorganization can be measured by its external sources, including socioeconomic status (SES) or resource deprivation, residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity. Other contributing factors include family disruption, which "may decrease informal social control at the community level" (781; citing Sampson 1987), and urbanization, which "weaken[s] local kinship and friendship networks and impede[s] social participation" (782). Thus, for Sampson and Groves, community capacity to reduce crime is shaped by macro-social and macroeconomic factors like resource deprivation, residential instability, heterogeneity, family disruption, and urbanization, but these structural factors are also mediated by informal social features of communities, including the ability to supervise teenage groups, the size and density of friendship networks, and participation or engagement in civic life.

The themes of community context, social cohesion, or collective efficacy that run throughout Sampson's work resonate with the political science literature on social capital. Putnam (1995) noted the surging, cross–disciplinary interest in the apparently positive influence of social capital, understood as "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate

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coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (67), which is remarkably similar to Sampson's definition of "collective efficacy." Putnam thus understands social capital as a bundle of individual or community properties: social connectedness, neighborliness, and public trust or confidence. Disaggregating further, social connectedness can be public and private. Public connectedness refers to participation in public institutions or associations, including elections (i.e., voting), which resonates with Frankenberger et al.'s discussion of possible measures of political capital. Indeed, voting tends to correlate with measures of associational activity, and dimensions of social capital are also correlated with each other across individuals and countries (Putnam 73). Similarly, components of collective efficacy—informal social control and social cohesion—tend to travel together (Sampson et al 1997, 920). In the case of Sampson et al., the correlations between social control and social cohesion and trust motivated the authors to collapse the two measures into a single measure, which they then labeled "collective efficacy."

Again, Sampson et al. emphasize that "collective efficacy does not exist in a vacuum"; rather, it is "embedded in structural contexts and a wider political economy that stratifies places of residence by key social characteristics" (919). That is, following Sampson and Groves, as well as other research on the structural covariates of violence (Land et al. 1990; Baller et al. 2001; Deane et al. 2008), broad demographic pressures like population change, shifts in the age structure of the population, and residential mobility can create "institutional disruption and weakened social controls over collective life," primarily because the formation of social ties and other forms of social capital takes time (919). Further, racial segregation and resource deprivation, and especially concentrated socioeconomic disadvantage, i.e., the combination of extreme poverty, unemployment or low occupational status, and low education, can wreak havoc on social control, cohesion, and trust. Sampson et al. note that existing research has "demonstrated, at the individual level, the direct role of SES in promoting a sense of control, efficacy, and even biological health itself … [a]n analogous process may work at the community level" (919). Indeed, a community's structural features may undermine any social assets it may have in terms of collective efficacy: "resource deprivation act[s] as a centrifugal force that stymies collective efficacy. Even if personal ties are strong in areas of concentrated disadvantage, they may be weakly tethered to collective action" (919).

The meaning of community resilience in the context of a persistent crisis of crime and violence now seems to come into clearer focus. Drawing on the disaster preparedness literature, Sampson's work on community context and collective efficacy, as well as broader interdisciplinary work on social capital, a definition of community resilience that is relevant and measureable in the context of studying crime and violence in Mexico consists of two dimensions: a structural one and a social one. At the structural level, population pressures,

resource deprivation/affluence, and family disruption are recognized as the primary predictors of violence (Land et al.), and along with inequality, age structure, and education establish the socioeconomic foundations of the social dimension and violence. At the social level, informal social control, cohesion, and trust—or the aggregate notion of collective efficacy or social capital—are shaped by the structural dimension and in turn also shape the incidence of crime and violence in a community. Adapting an earlier causal model of social disorganization theory (Sampson and Groves, 783, citing Shaw and McKay) and resonating with Chandra et al.'s (3) and Frankenberger et al.'s (9) models of CR, Figure 2 diagrams the conceptual relationship between the structural and social dimensions of CR, and their causal relationship with crime and violence.

FIGURE 2: CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF CR AND CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Structural Factors

- Population pressures
- Resource deprivation/affluence
- Inequality
- Education
- Age distribution
- Economic activity
- Family disruption
- Urbanization

Social Factors

- Social control of teenage groups and youth delinquency
- Social cohesion/neighborliness
- Social/Public trust
- Participation in civic life

Violence

- Crime and violence
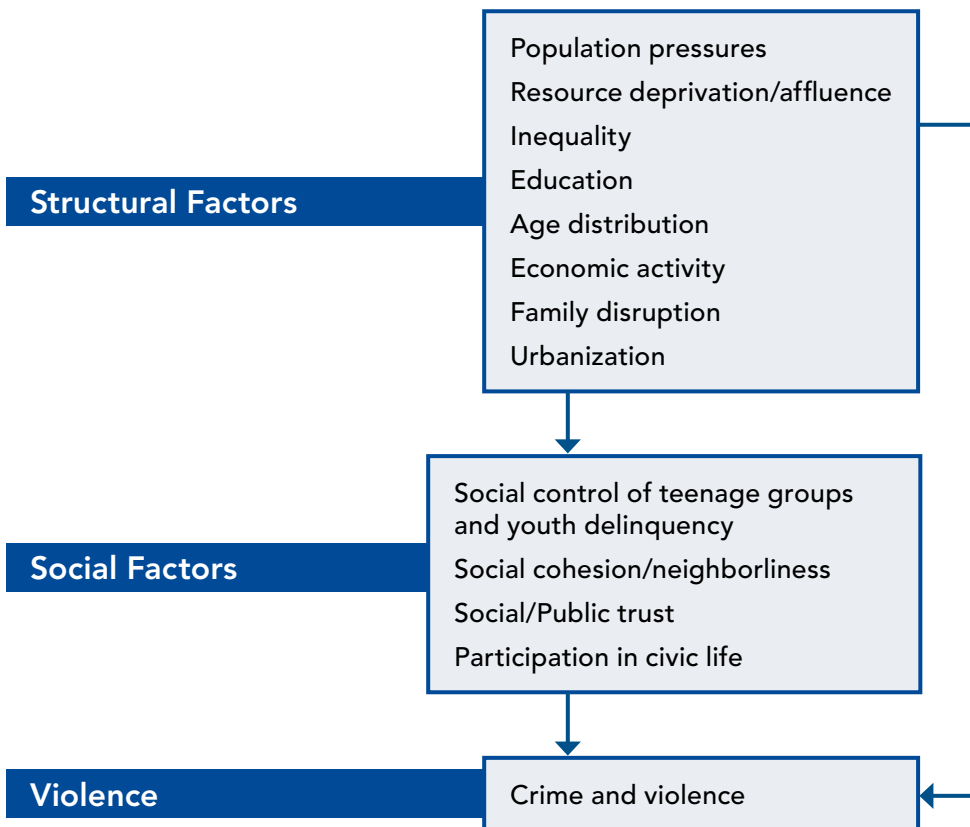
THEORY AND WORKING HYPOTHESES

How can this discussion of community resilience improve our understanding of the origins of violence in Mexico? Building on the discussion of community resilience and the general causal model represented in Figure 2, this section summarizes core explanations of crime and violence from sociology, political science, and conflict studies, pairing expectations from these fields with expectations from the discussion of community resilience to yield several working hypotheses.

First, sociologists and criminologists have found an association between a large array of demographic, economic, and social features of communities and the rate of crime in those communities. These features included measures of social distance, alienation (or anomie), social disorganization, and fragmentation, as well as measures of opportunities for crime. However, in large-N regressions seeking to explain variation in crime rates, inconsistent results were common (Baller et al. 2001, 562). Land et al. (1990) established that much of this inconsistency was due to multicollinearity among the explanatory variables, and generated three principal components from the primary predictors of interest. These three composite measures captured (1) population structure, (2) resource deprivation/affluence, and (3) family disruption (see discussion by Baller et al, 562, 568). Population size, growth, and density are all anticipated to exert an upward pressure on violence. This expectation aligns with the concern regarding population change and residential mobility in the discussion of structural factors shaping collective efficacy above, though measures for residential mobility are not available at the municipal level in Mexico. Population structure is frequently operationalized as the principal component of total population (logged) and population density (logged), both of which are available for this study, yielding the following hypotheses: (H1) population will exert an upward pressure on homicide rates; and (H2) population density will exert an upward pressure on homicide rates.

The expectation regarding resources mirrors the preoccupation with economic growth, stability, and equity in the discussion of community resilience above. Resource deprivation/affluence has been operationalized as the principal component of income (median family or per capita), inequality (e.g., Gini coefficient), percent of families that are headed by women, percent below poverty, and percent minority (e.g., percent black, in the U.S. context). Unemployment figures and labor force participation also help capture the degree of economic activity in a community. Income, inequality, and economic activity measures are available for Mexico, yielding the following hypotheses: (H3) income will have a negative relationship with homicide rates, (H4) inequality will have a positive relationship with homicide rates, and (H5) economic activity will have a negative relationship with homicide rates.

Third, sociologists' concern with family disruption is exactly the same as the concern with disrupting social or kinship networks among scholars of collective

efficacy, or the concern with disturbing social connectedness among social–capital scholars. Family disruption has been measured using divorce rates or the percent of households headed by women or single parents (Land et al. 1990; Baller et al. 2001). Divorce rates are available in Mexico, yielding the following hypothesis: (H6) homicide rates will vary positively with divorce rates.

Other predictors of violence frequently included in sociological studies of crime and violence include education and age. Education is also a core, vital concern of community resilience scholars, addressing the competence to access and evaluate information, think critically about problems associated with adverse circumstances, design creative solutions, and adapt this entire chain of activities to new problems under evolving circumstances. Education can also help individuals and communities identify and take advantage of opportunities where others may not see them, helping people avoid entering into a cycle of delinquency in the first place. The age distribution in a community can also help predict the incidence of violence (e.g., Baller et al). Violence tends to occur among younger populations; thus, all else being equal, communities with a lower age distribution (measured as the average or median age) should expect to be at a higher risk of violence. These expectations yield the following hypotheses: (H7) homicide rates will vary negatively with the level of education, and (H8) homicide rates will vary negatively with the average or median age of the population.

Additional empirical implications derive from the political science literatures on violence. Three areas of research yield testable hypotheses in this study: regime competitiveness, social capital, and the greed/opportunity and grievance perspectives on armed conflict.

First, existing research finds that electoral uncertainty can generate powerful incentives to improve public institutions, including legislative institutionalization (Beer 2003; Solt 2004), educational spending (Hecock 2006), and judicial budgets in the Mexican states (Beer 2006; Ingram 2013). Margins of victory and the effective number of parties are frequent measures for competitiveness, but turnover—actual alternation of the party in power—offers evidence that not only are political races close, the incumbent—even a long-standing incumbent—actually lost. Indeed, turnover offers evidence of both electoral uncertainty as well as the likelihood that any illegal networks of crime or corruption have at least been disturbed, if not dismantled. For instance, Snyder and Duran-Martinez's (2009) suggest that state protection rackets that may have existed prior to 2000 were dissolved by the weakening of the formerly dominant party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), in the 1990s. In Mexico this would especially be the case where the PRI held the mayor's office and was then displaced by either of the two main opposition parties, the National Action Party (PAN) or the Democratic Revolution Party (PRD). However, even if one of the opposition parties had already displaced the PRI and turnover were capturing the return of the PRI,

the same logic holds. That is, due to both the incentives generated by electoral uncertainty and the disruption of criminal networks, alternation in power should have a curbing effect on homicide rates. Thus, another hypothesis (H9) anticipates that homicide rates will vary negatively with turnover.

Second, echoing the previous discussion of social capital (Putnam 1991; 1995), participation should exert a downward pressure on criminal activity. All else being equal, I anticipate that patterns of more intense civic engagement generate the social resources to reduce or even prevent criminal violence. Empirically, cities with a greater degree of citizen involvement and engagement will experience less violence than cities with less of this social capital. In the context of this book, it may be an important indicator of the capacity of communities to respond to upsurges in violence. Disaggregated measures of civic engagement or associational life are not available across Mexico's municipalities, but a measure of voter participation is, and Putnam identifies voter participation as one indicator of civic engagement, noting also that all components of social capital tend to be correlated with each other. This expectation yields H10: Homicide rates will vary negatively with voter participation.

Third, the conflict literature generally posits explanations that highlight one of two key factors: greed/opportunity or grievance. The opportunity arguments suggest that crime is motivated by material interests and therefore material cost-benefit calculations, especially when those resources are easy to seize, i.e., "lootable wealth" (e.g., Collier and Hoeffler 2001). Thus, individuals join rebel groups or terrorist organizations when there is something material to be gained, and these gains are perhaps most attractive to individuals who are poorer or more resource deprived. In this manner, the opportunity approach to armed conflict overlaps and complements the resource deprivation argument in sociology/criminology, though an implication in the conflict literature is that rebels, insurgents, or dissidents tend to be conceptualized as "greedy criminals," a concept that carries its own normative commitments that frequently need to be examined more closely. In contrast with the greed/opportunity argument, grievance theory contends that armed conflict can have nonmaterial origins, that is, that rebellion or insurgency or political violence can be motivated by a wide range of ideational factors—including revenge, duty, a sense of injustice, or ideology—that may not respond predictably to material cost-benefit calculations. Indeed, actors motivated by deeply held grievances may appear to be engaging in highly risky or costly behavior (e.g., McAdam 1986; Ingram 2012). In this regard, the grievance explanation overlaps with the sense of frustration or injustice that can result from resource deprivation and high inequality, though the motivation for action is different. Grievance raises questions of the legitimacy of laws and justice institutions. For instance, Family (2009) finds that Mexican migrants to the United States report a greater willingness to enter the United States illegally if they perceive the U.S. immigration laws as illegitimate. At the domestic level within

Mexico, poverty and inequality can lead to similar dynamics, yielding a generalized perception among the poor or resource deprived that the existing social order or norms are illegitimate (see also Nivette 2014). Thus, H11 anticipates that homicide will vary positively with income or resource affluence (cutting against H3), where affluence operates as the target of crime and violence, and H12 anticipates that homicide will vary positively with inequality (complementing H4).

Finally, one last testable argument emerges from the conflict literature, namely, the role of rugged or uneven terrain. Fearon and Laitin (2003) first advanced the argument in a prominent piece, finding that mountainous terrain has a positive relationship with armed conflict. The logic of the argument highlighted the protective cover that uneven terrain afforded rebel groups, thus serving as geographic features that enhanced opportunities for violence. The empirical implication here is that we should see a positive relationship between areas of high variability in terrain and homicide rates (H13).

Notably, alternative hypotheses are testable regarding all explanatory variables. For instance, higher income is generally considered an advantage in reducing crime and violence, but it can be a disadvantage from the perspective of both the conflict literature (H11 above) and "relative deprivation" (Gurr 1970). The latter possibility is compelling given the implications regarding the underlying spatial relationships and the social relativity process inherent in relative deprivation arguments. Social relativity draws on social comparison work (Festinger 1954) to posit that, in estimating one's own condition or predicament, the absolute value of social or economic characteristics may matter, but the comparison of one's own position on these dimensions with the position of others may also determine whether the response to this condition is positive or negative. For instance, a person may be poor and may react negatively, becoming frustrated or depressed. However, if that person is surrounded by others who are even poorer, then the person may react positively. As discussed by Yang et al. (2013), and in contrast to the positive feedback of spatial spillovers, the social relativity perspective generates the possibility of negative feedback, i.e., of an unexpected reverse or "opposite" effect than that anticipated by theory.

The "opposite" or counterintuitive implications of the social relativity argument is especially compelling in the study of crime since it suggests specific spatial dynamics and identifies how conventional, accepted efforts to reduce crime in one area may backfire, resulting instead in even higher rates of crime. For instance, one community may see a benefit in reducing resource deprivation, improving incomes and overall economic well–being. However, as that happens in one particular community, neighboring communities may begin to perceive themselves less well in comparison to the first unit, resulting in higher crime in that unit. Notably, if the perception of resource deprivation worsens in the second unit, the first unit may also be targeted, since it is now seen as relatively

affluent. This may happen for at least two reasons: (1) potential criminals may not want to commit the crime in their own community (or may recognize they are more likely to be caught), and (2) the perception is that higher resources, i.e., better targets, exist in the first unit. These possibilities are examined in the empirical analysis below.

DATA AND METHODS

The dependent variable of homicide rates is from Mexico's national statistics office (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, INEGI), as organized by Trelles and Carreras (2012). The variable is logged to normalize its distribution. Systematic data on crime, especially different types of violent crime over time, are unavailable across Latin America and other parts of the developing world. However, homicide is one crime for which data are generally available, it has the greatest impact on well-being and the quality of life in democratic societies, and other types of crimes tend to be correlated with the incidence of homicide (Mainwaring, Scully, and Cullell 2010, 31; Bailey and Dammert 2006, 7). The municipal shapefile is from INEGI, and additional explanatory variables are from INEGI and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) office in Mexico.[3] Specifically, the population structure component consists of population (logged) and population density (logged), both derived from 2010 population estimates and 2005 area (sq. km.) data from INEGI. Aspects of resource deprivation are captured by income per capita (in U.S. dollars, logged) and inequality (Gini coefficient), both of which are from the UNDP's 2005 municipal report. Educational attainment, economic inactivity (percent not economically active, or PNEA), turnover, and participation data come from Trelles and Carreras. Education captures the average years of total education, and PNEA captures the percent of the population that is both unemployed and not actively seeking work, but still able and willing to work.[4] Turnover data comes from Trelles and Carreras, and capture whether there was a transfer of power from one political party to another in the municipal executive in the preceding five years (2006–2009). The Participation Index is the number of votes cast in the two previous municipal elections divided by the number of registered voters (*votos emitidos/lista nominal*; Flamand, Martínez Pellégrini, and Camacho 2007). Finally, INEGI provides divorce rates (per 1,000, logged) that capture family disruption, and altitude figures for localities within each municipality. The standard deviation of altitude within each municipality captures the unevenness of terrain.[5] Notably, Trelles and Carreras also use the population density measure as a

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3 The municipal shapefile and additional georeferenced census data are from INEGI, http://sc.inegi.org.mx/sistemas/cobdem, (accessed October 6, 2013). UNDP: www.undp.org.mx, (accessed October 6, 2013).

4 See INEGI metadata (accessed January 16, 2014): http://www.inegi.org.mx/est/contenidos/espanol/proyectos/encuestas/hogares/ene/metadatos/PNEA.asp?s=.

5 This measure was inspired by Alberto Díaz-Cayeros.

proxy for urbanization; thus, taken together, the population variables could be used to capture an urban/rural divide. Full descriptive statistics are reported in Ingram (2014).

There is frequently a trade-off between the elimination of multicollinearity by using composite measures (e.g., principal components) of population structure, resource deprivation, and family disruption, as suggested by Land et al. (1990), and the more nuanced inferences made possible by individual covariates. However, this trade-off can be avoided by selecting predictors that are not correlated with each other. For instance, recent analyses of crime (Sparks 2011) and mortality (Yang et al. 2013) have not used composite measures for key explanatory concepts, but rather have included the uncorrelated, individual covariates in their regressions. I do the same, having first confirmed that the variables are not correlated, as well as confirming the absence of multicollinearity in the initial OLS model with the variance inflation factor (VIF). Generally, VIF values below 10 are acceptable, but a more rigorous cutoff is 4. All VIF values in this study fall below 4.

The analysis proceeds in three stages. I first conduct exploratory spatial analysis to identify any spatial regimes in the data. Here, Moran's I (Moran 1948) and a local version of the same statistic, local indicators of spatial autocorrelation, or LISA, statistics (Anselin 1995), constitute the principal techniques. Second, spatial regressions examine the relationship among the dependent and independent variables while accounting for the dependent structure of the data. I then use the Aikake Information Criterion (Aikake 1974) and Lagrange Multiplier (LM) tests (Anselin 1988) to determine which model best fits the data and which model best accounts for spatial autocorrelation, respectively. Generally, lower AIC values identify the best models, and models with an AIC value more than 10 points lower than the comparison model should be preferred (Burnham and Anderson 2002, cited in Yang et al.). LM tests identify whether there is any remaining spatial autocorrelation among the residuals, and models with lower LM values that are not statistically significant should be preferred. Following these guidelines, post-estimation diagnostics of four separate models identify the spatial Durbin model as the one that best fits the data. Finally, given that coefficients of explanatory variables cannot be interpreted directly, I estimate direct and indirect effects, and partition these effects across higher-order neighbors to provide a more complete and nuanced explanation of the spatial dimension of homicide across Mexico's municipalities.

Throughout, a first-order queen contiguity matrix operationalizes the dependent structure of the data. Exploratory spatial analysis is conducted using GeoDa (v1.4.0; Anselin et al. 2006), and the spatial econometric analyses, including the use of the Markov Chain Monte Carlo method to calculate direct and indirect Durbin effects and partition results, are implemented in R (v3.0.2; R Core Team 2013), using the *spdep* package (Bivand 2013).

RESULTS

Exploratory Spatial Analysis

Exploratory techniques examine the first null hypothesis, namely, that there is no spatial dimension to the distribution of homicide rates across Mexico's municipalities. Stated otherwise, exploratory spatial analysis examines whether the distribution of homicide rates is spatially random. Exploratory spatial analysis, therefore, is "a critical first step for visualizing patterns in the data, identifying spatial clusters and spatial outliers, and diagnosing possible misspecification in analytic models" (Baller et al. 2001, 563). Maps are not a necessary step, but "[g]raphical displays provide an auxiliary method [to data tables] that may allow patterns to be discovered visually, quickly" (Ward and Gleditsch 2008, 11).

First, global and local tests of spatial autocorrelation capture the degree of overall structural dependence among units. Specifically, the global and local tests of spatial autocorrelation posit a null hypothesis of no spatial dependence among observations, i.e., spatial randomness, and then test whether this null hypothesis is supported. A global test is the global Moran's I, and examines whether there are any regular patterns among geographically connected units (Moran 1948; 1950a; 1950b; Cliff and Ord 1981). If there are no regular patterns of spatial association, the statistic is not significant. If there are significant spatial associations, the statistic can be positive or negative. A positive global Moran's I indicates that territorial units that are connected exhibit similar values on the outcome of interest; a negative result indicates territorial units that are connected have divergent or dissimilar values. The global Moran's I for homicide rates in 2010 is 0.10 (p<.001). The positive value suggests similar values of homicide rates cluster together (e.g., high with high). The statistical significance allows us to confidently reject the null hypothesis of spatial randomness. Standard regression techniques would not only be inappropriate, but they would also overlook a key characteristic of the phenomenon.

Building on the discussion of global spatial autocorrelation, a local test for spatial dependence is the local Moran's I, or local indicator of spatial autocorrelation (*LISA*) (Anselin 1995). A LISA statistic provides information on the correlation on an outcome of interest among a focal unit i and the units to which i is connected, j (e.g., i's neighbors, j), whether the association is positive (i.e., similar values) or negative (i.e., dissimilar values), and whether the association is statistically significant. Thus, LISA statistics serve to identify local clusters or spatial patterns of an outcome of interest. To be clear, while the global Moran's I may suggest that overall there is little spatial autocorrelation in the data, LISA values can identify smaller geographic areas where positive or negative clustering occurs.[6]

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6 The global Moran's I is the mean of all LISA values (Anselin 2005, 141).

Figure 3 reports a LISA cluster map showing the distribution of statistically significant clusters.[7] Blank areas are regions of spatial randomness in the distribution of violence, while colored areas are non-random spatial clusters. All cluster associations are significant at least at the .05 level.[8] Note also that the municipalities colored for significance constitute the core of spatial clusters. That is, the colored municipalities have a statistically significant relationship with the municipalities that border them, including those that are clear. Thus, the outer boundary of the cluster extends into the blank municipalities bordering the colored one, and the true size of the spatial cluster is larger than the colored cores (see, e.g., Anselin 2005, 146).

FIGURE 3: LISA CLUSTER MAP OF HOMICIDE RATES (LOGGED)
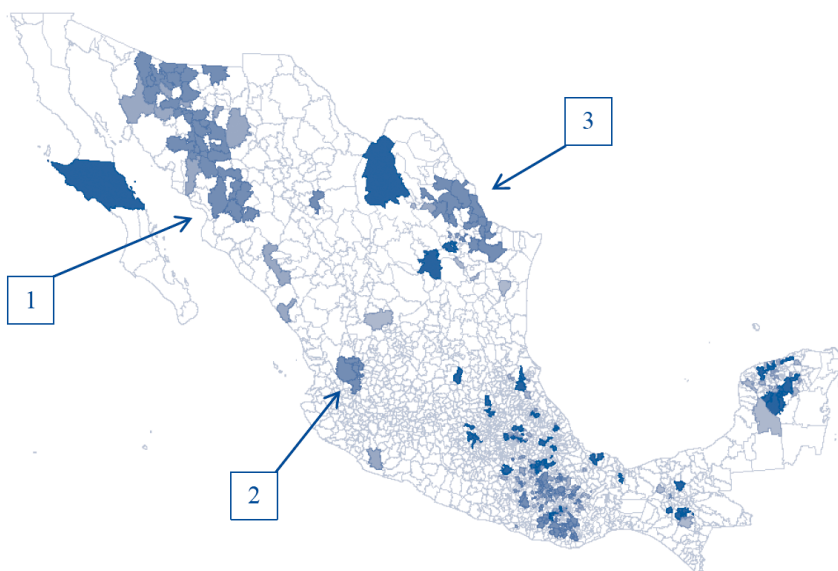
The LISA cluster map also identifies the substantive content of those clusters. According to Anselin (2005, 140), this kind of map is "[a]rguably the most useful graph" in spatial analysis. Dark blue identifies those municipalities with high levels of homicide that are surrounded by municipalities with similarly high levels of homicide (high–high). Medium blue identifies units with low homicide levels surrounded by units with similarly low levels (low–low). Light blue identifies those units with low levels of violence surrounded by units with high levels (low–high), while the lightest blue identifies those with high levels of homicides surround by units with low levels (high–low).[9]

7 LISA significance map is omitted for sake of brevity.

8 Generated in GeoDa (statistical significance based on permutation approach; 9,999 permutations).

9 This classification corresponds with the location of observations in a Moran scatterplot (Anselin 1996). If standardized LISA values are plotted along the x-axis, and the spatially weighted LISA values (LISAs for neighboring units) are plotted along the y-axis, the four resulting quadrants classify units as reflected in the cluster map (e.g., high-high in top-right quadrant, and low-low in bottom-left quadrant).

Figure 3 shows three spatial regimes that are analytically compelling (marked 1, 2, and 3 in the map). All three areas are high-violence spatial regimes. The first area straddles three states in northwestern Mexico: Sonora, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa. The second area sits at the intersection of three states in central Mexico: Nayarit, Zacatecas, and Jalisco. Lastly, the third area straddles another three states: Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas. Thus, these areas represent cross-jurisdictional clusters—spatial regimes that cross the boundaries of states. Notably, unlike studies of homicide rates at the county level in the U.S. where the south emerges as a high-violence region and the northeast as a low-violence region (Land et al. 1990; Baller et al. 2001), there is no single region in Mexico that can be similarly singled out.

A key question is whether these spatial patterns are the product of (a) "correlated relationship" (Manski 1993), i.e., common exposure to a place-specific phenomenon (spatial error structure), (b) "endogenous interaction relationship", i.e., the diffusion of violence (mixed or spatial Durbin model), or (c) "exogenous interaction relationship", i.e., a combination of the lagged outcome and lagged explanatory variables from neighboring units (mixed or spatial Durbin model). Different policy implications flow from common exposure, diffusion of the dependent variable, or diffusion of the explanatory variables. Further, if common exposure is present, then the underlying, unmeasured factor generating the outcome still needs to be identified; if diffusion is present, then the mechanism of diffusion still needs to be identified. The next section turns to spatial regressions.

Spatial Regression Analysis

Four regression models examined the data: ordinary least-squares (OLS), a spatial error model (SEM), a spatial lag model (SLM), and a spatial Durbin model (SDM). For economy of presentation, full results are reported elsewhere (Ingram 2014), and the key findings are summarized here. Substantial residual spatial autocorrelation remained after estimating the basic OLS model (LM = 741.66, p<0.001), supporting the conclusion that a spatial regression is required. In conventional spatial analysis, Lagrange multiplier tests identify whether to pursue an error or lag specification in such a regression. Here, both tests were significant, and neither robust test was significant at the .05 level (though the robust LM error test was more significant, at .10 level). Still, even if conventional model selection statistics clearly identified the superiority of an error specification or lag specification, or vice versa, the Durbin model is preferred. It should be noted that the interpretation of the coefficients in the SDM is not straightforward and is left for the section on direct and indirect effects below. For now, two findings should be emphasized.

First, based on both statistical tests and theory, the Durbin model emerges as the best among all four. Looking at LM tests and model fit statistics (e.g., AIC), the spatial Durbin model receives the best evaluations. Further, the SDM captures diffusion effects

among the dependent variables *as well as* diffusion and feedback effects among the explanatory variables. For these reasons, I focus on the results of the Durbin model.

Second, the statistical significance of the lagged dependent variable (rho, ρ) shows that patterns of homicide in one municipality can be explained by patterns of homicide in neighboring municipalities. Notably, the direction and magnitude of the coefficient across both the spatial lag and Durbin models is the same, reinforcing the finding regarding the substantive effective of homicide rates in neighboring municipalities. This is strong evidence in favor of a spatial spillover effect for the dependent variable. Specifically, controlling for all other explanatory factors, a 1% increase in the homicide rates of neighboring municipalities translates into about a .1% increase in violence in a focal municipality.

Durbin Estimates: Direct, Indirect, and Partitioned Effects

Interpretation of the parameters in the Durbin model is not the same as interpretation of parameters in OLS, or even in SEM and SLM. Indeed, interpretation of Durbin estimates can be mathematically complicated (Ellhorst 2010), but also much richer than in conventional spatial analysis (Yang et al. 2013). This is due to the fact that the model captures feedback effects among explanatory variables in neighboring units. "A change in the characteristics of neighboring regions can set in motion changes in the dependent variable that will impact the dependent variable in neighboring regions. These impacts will continue to diffuse through the system of regions" (LeSage and Pace 2010, 369). That is, the effect of an explanatory variable (X_{ir}) on y_i does not equal β_r, and the effect of the same explanatory variable in a neighboring unit (X_{jr}) on the outcome in the focal unit (y_i) does not equal zero. Rather, the *total effect* of an explanatory variable consists of the *direct effect* of the explanatory variable on y_i within the focal unit, plus the *indirect effect* of the explanatory variable (spillover effect) from neighboring units (LeSage and Pace 2010, 370). Moreover, these direct and indirect effects can vary over higher orders of neighbors, and are not the same for all units.

With this in mind, partitioned direct and indirect effects across higher orders of neighbors, including the focal unit (zero-order neighbor) is an effective way of interpreting relationships (Ellhorst 2010; LeSage and Pace 2009; 2010; Yang et al. 2013). Full estimates of average direct and indirect effects across all units and partitioned direct and indirect effects across five orders of neighbors are reported elsewhere (Ingram 2014). For ease of presentation, I graph these results, visualizing direct and indirect effects in Figures 4–9. In all figures, the graphs on the left represent direct effects (the influence of the explanatory variables within a municipality) and the graphs on the right report indirect effects (the influence of an explanatory variable in neighboring municipalities, starting with the contiguous neighbors and moving out). The horizontal, x-axis reflects the order of neighbors, moving from the closest to the farthest away, and

the vertical, y-axis reflects the magnitude of effect of the explanatory variable on the homicide rate, i.e., the slope of the relationship. The shaded areas report 95% confidence intervals, so relationships are significant where the upper and lower bounds of this interval are either both above or both below the horizontal zero line, i.e., where the confidence interval does not include zero.

The results show that direct effects are rarely significant beyond the focal unit, essentially disappearing beyond the first-order neighbors, and that a similar process of decay occurs with indirect effects. Comparing the zero-order direct effects with the total direct effects (reported in Ingram 2014, Table 3) shows that the focal unit contributes most of the effect. For instance, the focal unit contributes 99.6% (.228/.229) of the direct effect for population. Similarly, the indirect effect of the first-order neighbor (represented by the indirect effect at W_0) contributes most of the effect. For example, the first-order indirect effect of PNEA accounts for 99.8% (5.952/5.961) of the effect.

Among direct effects, population, income, and economic inactivity are statistically significant, yet population and economic activity have unexpectedly negative effects and income has an unexpectedly positive effect. However, as expected, education has a significant (at .10 level) and negative relationship with violence, and uneven terrain has a significant and positive effect on violence.

The main findings demonstrate that: (1) among direct effects, education and uneven terrain have the anticipated effects, but several common predictors of violent crime have an unexpected relationship with homicide; (2) among indirect effects, only economic inactivity is significant and meaningfully affects homicide rates in any focal unit; (3) considering the combined direct and indirect effect of economic inactivity, a social relativity process (negative feedback) marks the relationship between economic inactivity and violence, while there are no spillover effects (positive feedbacks) among explanatory variables; and (4) as expected, direct effects are strongest in the focal units, indirect effects are strongest at the first order, and the decay of these effects is identifiable.

The statistical significance of the indirect effect of economic inactivity demonstrates that this property of a particular municipality's neighbors exerts a meaningful effect on homicide rates within that municipality. Further, these indirect effects follow the theoretically expected relationships more than direct effects. Specifically, economic inactivity in a focal unit's neighbors exerts a positive influence on violence in said focal unit. That is, as unemployment increases and more people fall out of the workforce in nearby communities, homicide rates increase in a focal unit. While this result contrasts with the finding regarding direct effects here and with that of Land et al. (1992) and Baller et al. (2001) regarding economic inactivity in the U.S., the result does follow the more conventional theoretical expectation in the literature on economic activity and crime. Moreover, the opposite relationship between direct and indirect effects suggests a social relativity process underlying the economics of violence.

FIGURE 4: DIRECT (LEFT) AND INDIRECT (RIGHT) EFFECTS FOR
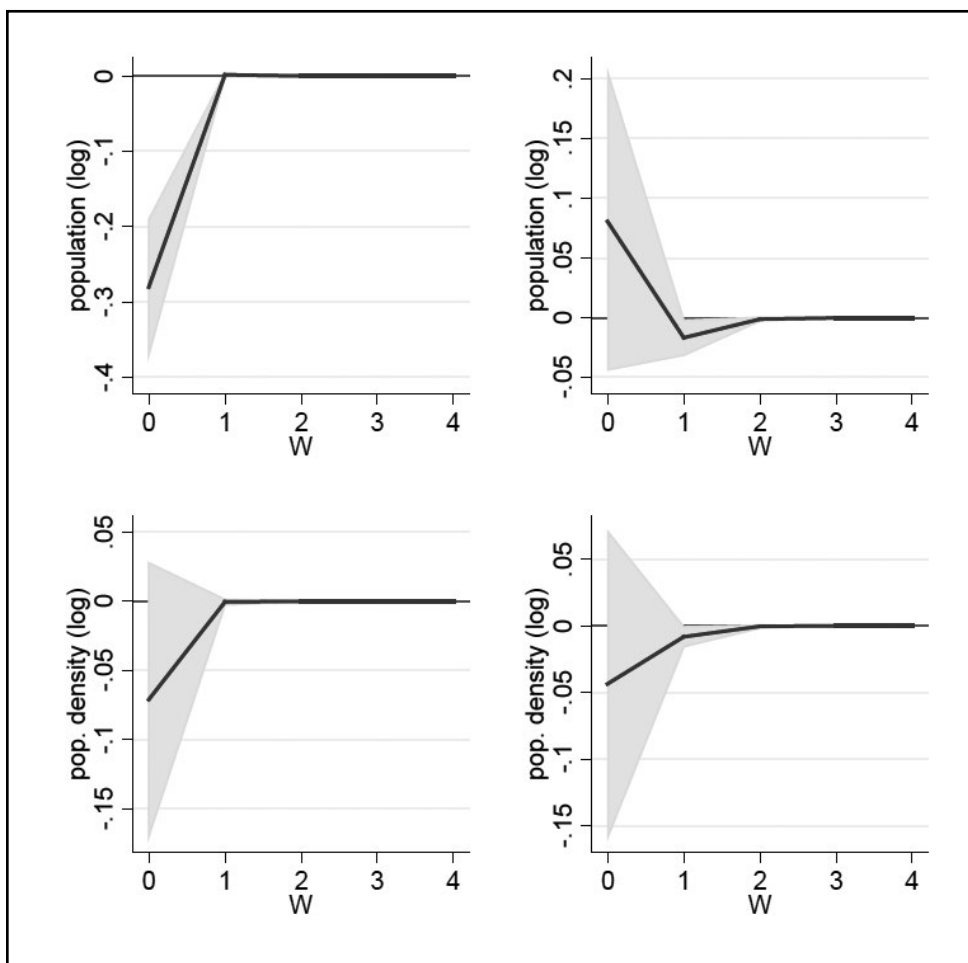POPULATION AND POPULATION DENSITY

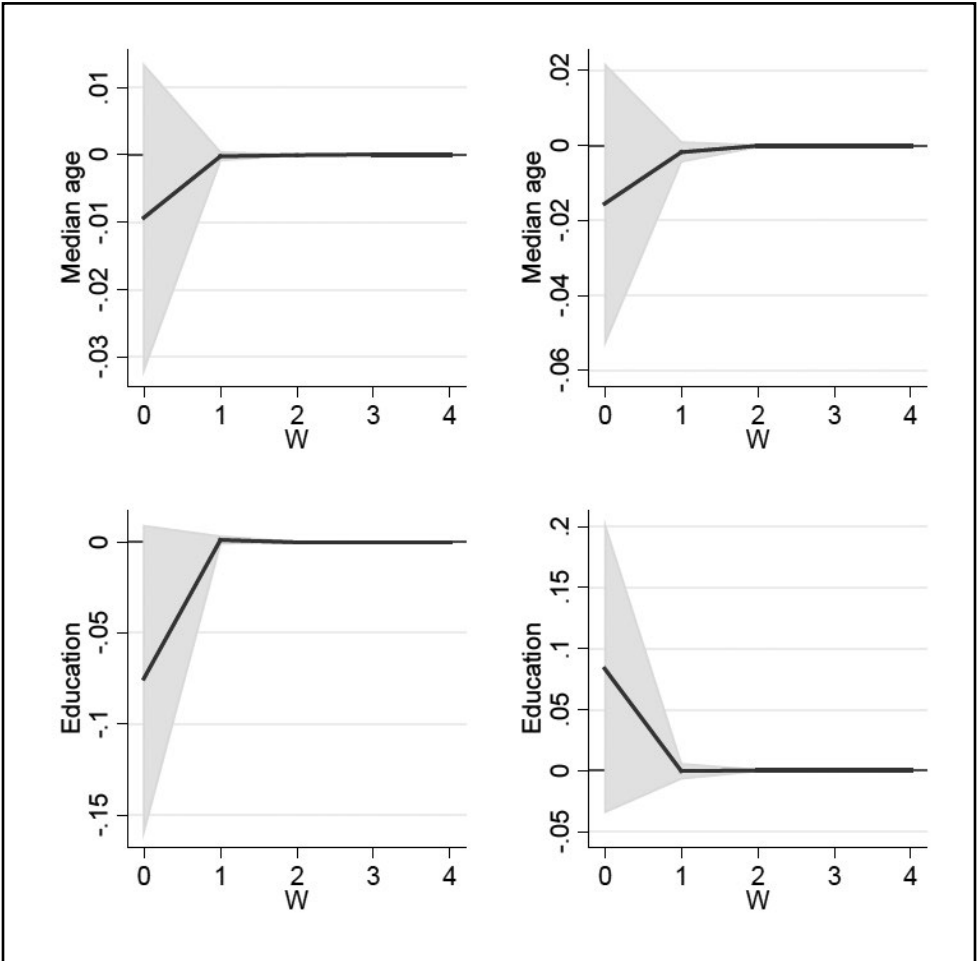FIGURE 5: DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF AGE
AND EDUCATION

FIGURE 6: DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF INCOME AND UNEMPLOYMENT
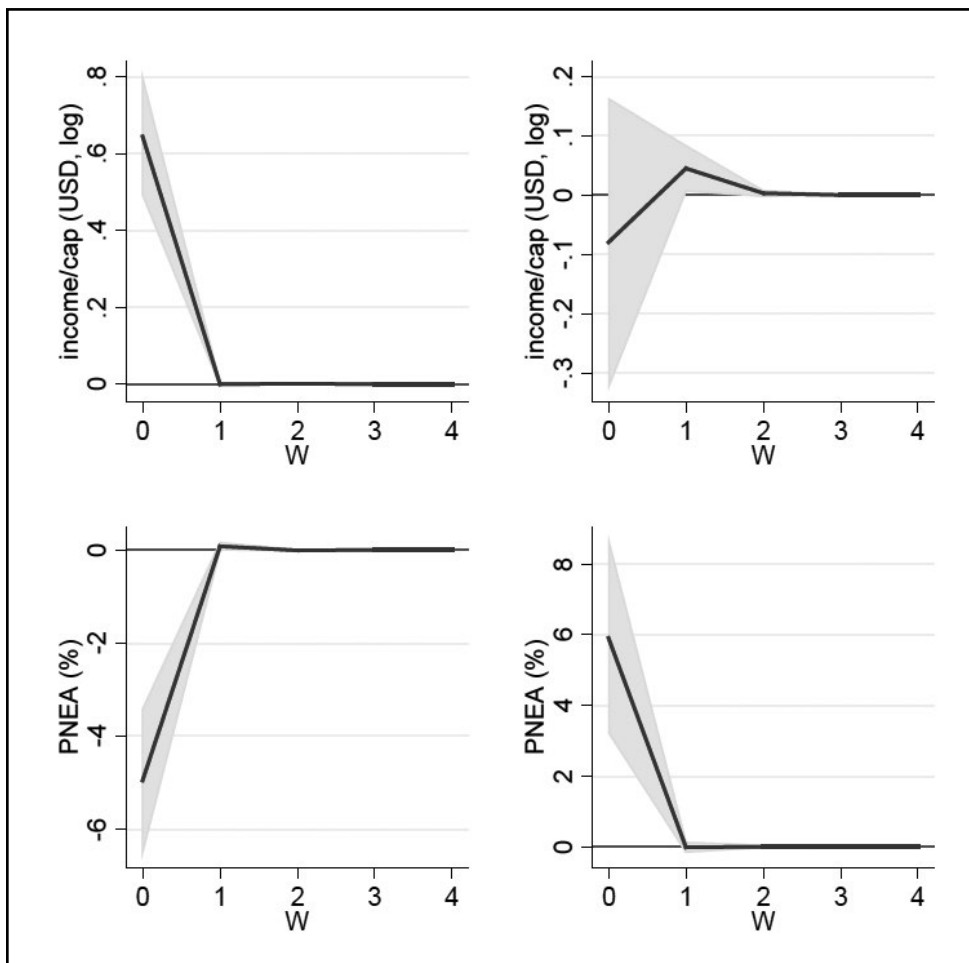
FIGURE 7: DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF INEQUALITY AND DIVORCE RATES
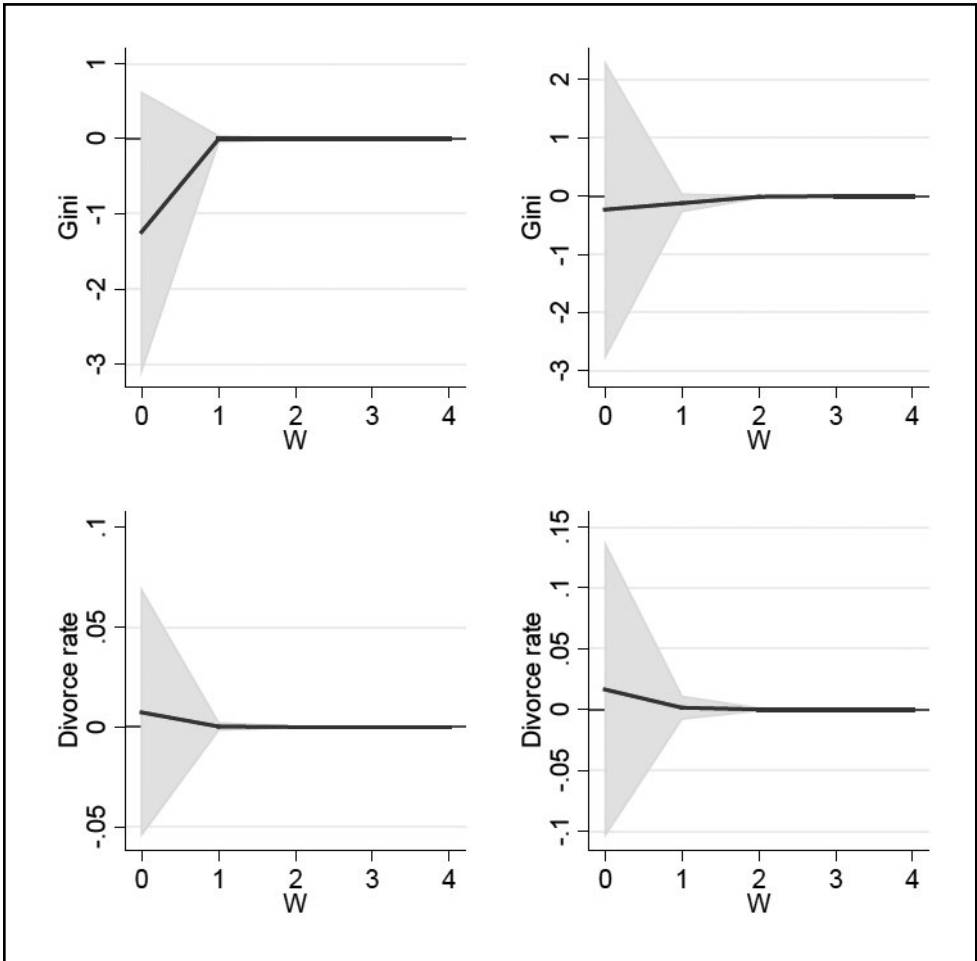
FIGURE 8: DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF TURNOVER
AND PARTICIPATION
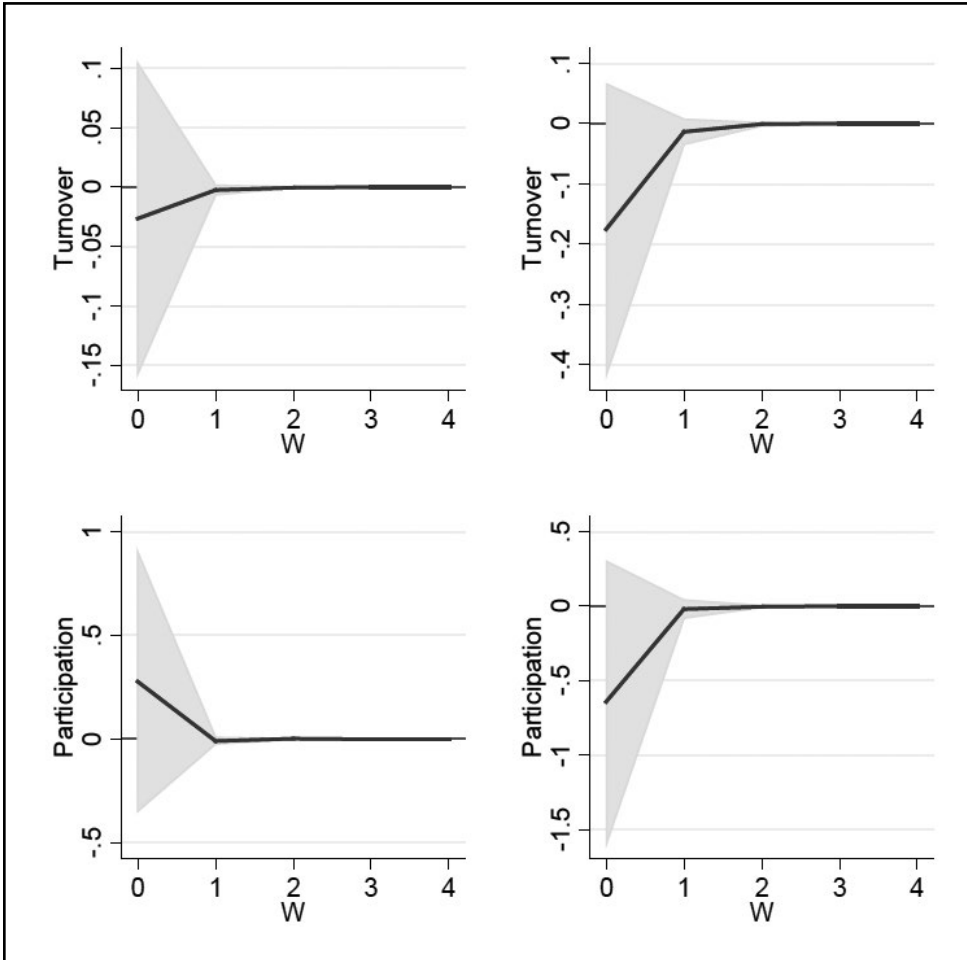
FIGURE 9: DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF UNEVEN TERRAIN (ALTITUDE, S.D., LOGGED)
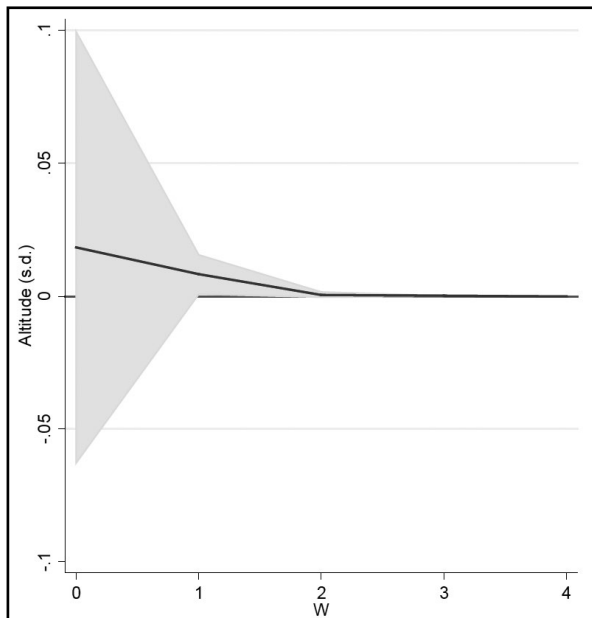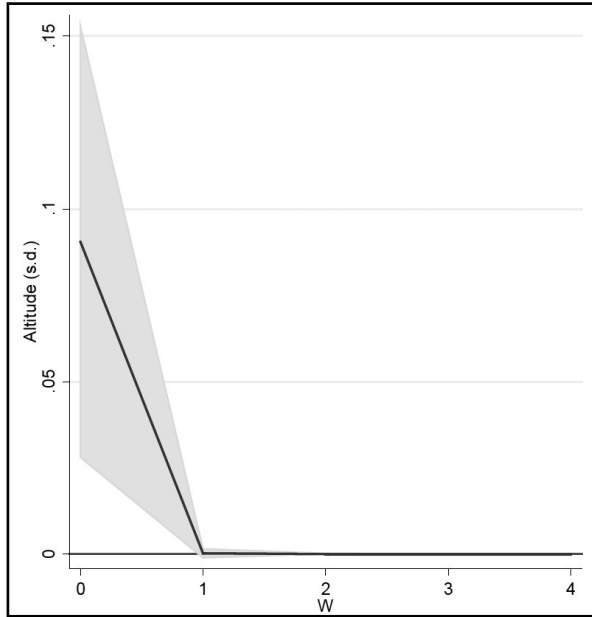
DISCUSSION

Examining the spatial dependence of homicide rates, this chapter offers a spatial
Durbin analysis of violent crime across Mexico's municipalities that incorporates
measures of components of community resilience. The methodological approach
builds on existing sociological, political science, and demographic research to offer
new insights regarding the origins of violence in a key neighbor to the U.S. and
one of the largest democracies and markets in Latin America.

The analysis yields four principal findings. First, violence is not spatially random
across Mexico's 2,455 municipalities. Spatial regimes of high and low violence exist
throughout Mexico. Particularly compelling are spatial regimes of violence that
straddle multiple state boundaries. For instance, a cluster of high homicide rates
straddles the boundaries of three states in central Mexico—Jalisco, Nayarit, and
Zacatecas—suggesting the need for state and federal authorities to coordinate and
collaborate on social, economic, and law enforcement policies.

The cross-jurisdictional spatial regimes also highlight challenges to developing
effective crime-reduction policies. That is, these intermediate regions of
violence—above the municipal level, below the state level, and crossing state
boundaries—demand cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among two or
more states, and perhaps the federal government. This kind of inter-governmental
policymaking is not always easy, especially when it involves both law enforcement
and socioeconomic policy issues.

Second, a key finding highlights the spillover of the dependent variable. That is,
an increase in the homicide rate in one municipality exerts an upward pressure on
the homicide rate in neighboring municipalities. This spillover effect suggests that
neighboring communities have a shared interest in reducing each other's levels of
violence. Thus, again, neighboring communities should develop regional policies
to reduce and prevent violence. The findings regarding the explanatory variables,
especially education and economic inactivity, help us understand how to do this.

A key strength of the Durbin model is reflected in the rich interpretation that
is possible with the decomposition of direct and indirect effects. Thus, a third
finding relates to the interpretation of spillover or social relativity processes using
the direct and indirect effects, and a fourth finding relates to the ability to detect
the persistence, decay, or reversal of effects across higher orders of neighbors. The
decomposed and partitioned direct and indirect effects run counter to much of the
literature on homicide rates in the U.S.: population, population density, income,
and inequality have an unexpected negative relationship with homicide. I interpret
the population and density findings to suggest that highly populated areas have less
violence than more rural, less populated areas. Further, this is primarily a direct
effect, and the effect does not persist across higher orders of neighbors, suggesting
the current homicide phenomenon in Mexico is occurring outside large cities,

but in adjoining areas not far from these cities. Regarding income, an increase in local, within-unit income is unexpectedly associated with higher levels of violence, but the partitioned indirect effects show that an income increase among the contiguous neighbors (reflected at W_0) leads to a reduction in violence in the focal unit (significant at .10 level).[10] The opposite direction of the low-order direct and indirect effect suggest a social relativity process, namely, that a within-unit increase in income may draw offenders from surrounding communities. Thus, when income increases in surrounding communities, violence decreases in the central unit. Again, the policy implication is that neighboring communities have a shared interest in each other's economic growth. More specifically, neighboring communities have a mutual interest in growing economically, and in doing so at relatively the same rate in order to reduce perceived spatial inequalities.

The findings regarding economic inactivity (PNEA) support this inference. Indeed, the evidence is stronger with PNEA for a social relativity process in which murder is being committed in a central unit by those in surrounding units propelled by economic factors. Specifically, an increase in economic inactivity (e.g., unemployment) decreases local homicide rates. This much is consistent with findings in the U.S., where scholars argue that economic inactivity may constrain the circulation of people, thus affording fewer targets for violent crime (e.g., Baller et al.). However, the indirect effect of the first-order neighbor (reflected at W_0) is in the opposite direction, significant, and of substantial magnitude. Again, this social relativity process suggests that deteriorating economic conditions in one's neighboring community generate higher violence in one's own community. Thus, neighboring communities should work to develop economically at similar rates.

Alongside these regional or neighborhood effects, education and uneven terrain are significant predictors of violence. Education has the expected negative relationship with violence, though this finding is only significant at the .10 level. Further, education only exerts its protective effect within a particular municipality, i.e., education only has a direct effect on violence and no indirect effects. Thus, the education–violence relationship is more of a local phenomenon, and the policy implication is that education-attainment programs can be narrowly targeted within municipalities. Finally, uneven terrain has the expected positive relationship with violence. This finding brings the armed conflict and criminology literatures into closer conversation, but as with the armed conflict research the policy implication is unclear. Is this variable capturing weak state capacity and enforcement? Or are rural, mountainous regions areas of higher drug production, and therefore, all else being equal, areas of more concentrated violence? The underlying mechanism is unclear, and deserves more attention in future research.

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10 The direction of the effect reverses again at the next order of neighbors and is statistically significant, but the magnitude of this effect is much smaller.

Alongside the limitations in interpreting the causal role of uneven terrain, other limitations that could be addressed by future research include incorporating a better measure of concentrated disadvantage, including poverty, more complete measures of social disorganization beyond divorce rates, and hierarchical models—including hierarchical spatial models—that use structural variables to estimate social dimensions of CR, and then use the social variables to estimate crime and violence (e.g., Sampson et al. 1997).

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The following paragraphs briefly restate the main conclusions from the empirical analysis and identify key policy implications that flow from these conclusions. The final paragraph summarizes the policy implications taking all the findings into considerations.

1. Homicide is distributed in a geographically non-random manner, and clusters of homicide straddle state boundaries. There are neighborhoods or regions of communities within Mexico where homicide tends to cluster. Clusters of high homicide rates straddle the borders of three or more states in at least three regions of Mexico, highlighting the need for policy coordination across jurisdictional boundaries. This kind of coordination may be especially difficult where state or municipal authorities identify with different political parties, or where authorities have different policy priorities. Nonetheless, regional and even cross-jurisdictional collaboration must take place.

2. Homicide in any one Mexican municipality is influenced by homicide in nearby municipalities. In other words, the likelihood or risk of violence in any one community cannot be explained without reference to the likelihood of violence in nearby communities. This finding advocates a regional approach to violence prevention and reduction. That is, policies should not treat communities individually or as isolated from each other, since violence in one community affects violence in nearby communities.

3. Educational attainment reduces the local likelihood of homicide. Educational attainment—measured as the average years of education in a community—has a protective effect against violence. This effect is local, not regional, so education policies can be targeted at individual municipalities and do not necessarily need to be coordinated or uniform across municipalities.

4. Economic inactivity reduces homicide locally but this effect is outweighed by the fact that economic inactivity in surrounding communities increases homicide. Economic development projects that increase employment and labor force participation should be targeted at intermediate, regional levels above municipalities but below states, even if the set of connected municipalities making up the region straddles state boundaries. Again,

cross-jurisdictional coordination is necessary, in this case with regard to economic development policies.

5. Uneven terrain increases the likelihood of homicide. This finding does not have clear policy implications. One the one hand, policymakers cannot extract communities from mountainous areas. On the other hand, it remains unclear exactly why uneven terrain increases the likelihood of violence. Is it that rugged areas provide bases or hideouts for criminals, including organized crime, and therefore a larger concentration of criminal violence? This might seem to be the case in some parts of Mexico, e.g., Guerrero or Michoacán, as evidenced by the recent crisis of violence and "self-defense" groups in western Michoacán (e.g., Archibold 2014). Future research can contribute to clarifying the relationship between uneven terrain and violence in Mexico.

Taken together, the above findings and implications support a regional approach, and more specifically, a "local schools/regional economy" approach to violence reduction. This recommendation speaks to the increasing emphasis at the federal level on strategies to "build strong and resilient communities," as articulated in Pillar IV of the Merida Initiative since 2011. Moreover, this recommendation helps identify concrete ways in which we can understand the relative importance of distinct components of the concept of CR in the specific context of the security crisis in Mexico, what "community resilience" means in violence prevention more generally, and how policies can be designed to achieve CR. Summing up the above findings and implications, violence-reduction policies should follow three guidelines.

First, policies and programs should generally not be targeted at individual communities in isolation. Rather, they should be aimed at regions of relevantly connected communities. In the case of Mexico, policies should be aimed at relevantly connected sets of municipalities. Thus, current funding competitions sponsored by the Mexican federal government via the Interior Ministry's (Secretaría de Gobernación, Segob) National Program for Crime Prevention and Citizen Participation (Programa Nacional para la Prevención y Participación Ciudadana) that reward a range of individual municipal programs independently of each other are not the best use of resources. This critique is quite apart from any issues regarding transparency (*El Universal* 2013). Similar programs in the future should reward collaborative efforts among sets of neighboring municipalities. These inter-municipal collaborations should be rewarded even if the municipalities involved straddle state boundaries. Indeed, perhaps cross-jurisdictional collaborations that should be rewarded the most are the ones that can demonstrate how collaboration would help policymakers understand how to manage cross-jurisdictional challenges in developing policies for these neighborhoods of municipalities that straddle several state boundaries.

Second, policies aimed at increasing educational attainment—measured as the average years of education in the community—can be targeted locally. The

evidence from the current study does not reveal any neighborhood effects of educational attainment, but improvements in local educational attainment have a protective effect. Thus, fomenting educational attainment can be done at the local level, and is a concrete way that scholars and policymakers can understand how to build community resilience to violence.

Third, policies aimed at economic development should have a regional focus. That is, complementing the first principle about the regional orientation of most violence-reduction policies (cf. education), efforts directed at increasing employment and economic activity more generally should be targeted at regions of relevantly connected municipalities. To be sure, economic development has been a feature of Mexico's federal anti-violence strategy, nominally at first but increasingly since 2010. Indeed, the current president famously avoids discussing security issues in favor of economic or energy topics. One indirect implication of the finding regarding economic development is that this topic can provide a bridge for discussing the prevention of violence while offering the cover of discussions about economic well-being. That is, regional economic development accomplishes violence reduction, but at that same time provides a diplomatic way for the Peña Nieto administration to address security without explicitly discussing it. However, as with other community-based programs, any economic strategy should not be directed at individual communities, treating them as if they were isolated or independent of each other. Funding and other competitions (e.g., prizes, fellowships, or recognition) should be directed primarily at policies or programs that recognize the interconnectedness of communities, and that seek to promote economic development among regions of relevantly connected municipalities. Combined, the local educational and regional economic policies constitute what I call a "local-schools/regional-economy" approach to violence prevention and reduction.

I imagine that these policy recommendations will be uncontroversial to some urban or regional planners, and perhaps even unsurprising. However, given the emphasis on formal institutional reforms to the law enforcement and the judicial sectors thus far, the neglect of the deep literatures in sociology and criminology that address why crime occurs in the first place is startling in places like Mexico. For instance, tens of millions of dollars have been invested in countless waves of police reform over the last three decades (e.g., Sabet 2012), and tens of millions more have been invested in a prominent criminal procedure reform since 2008 that is primarily geared toward redesigning the way the justice system operates—including judges, prosecutors, public defenders, and police (Ingram and Shirk 2012). Only passing attention has been given to the broader social and economic conditions that underlie why criminal behavior occurs in the first place, before people get involved in the justice system. Further, Pillar IV and Mexico's national program do not clarify the concrete ways in which CR, prevention, or participation will be achieved. Without clear, programmatic criteria and objectives, these projects risk being inefficient.

Moreover, without closer attention to the regional dynamics raised here, these projects risk being ineffective. The findings here suggest this new emphasis on the root, socioeconomic origins of crime and violence is on the right track and that policymakers should increasingly turn their attention to the social, political, and economic literatures addressing root causes of violence, but do so with a particular spatial process in mind for different policy areas, namely, the social relativity process underlying the opposing direct and indirect effects of economic inactivity, and the more territorially bounded, direct effects of education. In terms of national or international grant competitions or other opportunities for funding, the findings suggest funders should reward programs and policies addressing these regional and local dynamics, especially those programs and policies that include collaborative, cross-jurisdictional efforts to address regional, economic sources of violence like regional pockets of unemployment, low labor force participation, or other forms of economic inactivity alongside targeted policies to improve local educational attainment. In this regard, a particularly promising development is the creation of state-level comptrollers and inter-institutional commissions to coordinate among local, state, and federal authorities (*Milenio* 2013).

To be sure, these policy recommendations do not exclude other steps to improve justice institutions and continue with other efforts at institutional reform. Indeed, some concepts of CR include a broad range of inter-organizational interactions as part of the definition. That is, inter-organizational interactions—among public and private groups, formal and informal—sustain CR. However, just as social control and collective efficacy should be distinguished from forced control, i.e., efficacy "should not be equated with formal regulation or forced conformity by institutions such as the police and courts" (Sampson et al., 918), CR should also not be equated with formal justice reform. Rather, CR should be more closely associated with the "capacity of a group to regulate its members according to desired principles—to realize collective, as opposed to forced, goals" (Sampson et al., 918). Thus, building community resilience is a process that is analytically and operationally distinct from reforming justice institutions. In any case, it is reasonable to proceed on all fronts at once, with an "integral, holistic approach."[11]

Lastly, any effort to build community resilience and prevent violence must have long time horizons and proceed with long-term commitments. This may be especially hard for politicians or policymakers who tend to observe short-term incentives generated by the electoral calendar. Still, "[b]uilding resilience requires an investment of time that should not be understated, and our ability to build resilience in the short term should not be oversold" (USAID 2012, 16; also Frankenberger et al., 10).

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11 Remarks by Ariel Moutsatsos, Embassy of Mexico, at "The State of Citizen Security in Mexico: The Peña Nieto Administration's First Year in Review," January 16, 2014, Wilson Center, Washington, D.C., http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/security-mexico-pena-nieto-administration-review. (accessed Feb. 10, 2014).

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Civil Society, the Government, and the Development of Citizen Security

STEVEN DUDLEY AND SANDRA RODRÍGUEZ NIETO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper explores how civil society organizations have interacted with government authorities and security forces in four Mexican cities where violence and organized crime have been on the rise. The four cities—Ciudad Juárez, Monterrey, Nuevo Laredo, and Tijuana—have many shared characteristics, the most important of which are that they are all border cities, and that they are all facing down extremely violent criminal organizations.

Despite these similarities, civil society's ability to interact effectively with the government and security forces has varied widely. The paper is broken down by city in order to better assess each attempt individually. In each section, the authors give background to the problem, a profile of the civil society organizations present, a description of their attempts to interact with the government and security forces, and an assessment of the successes and failures of those attempts.

These attempts are ongoing, but to advance the discussion, the authors offer the following key observations from their research:

- Civil society organizations are strongest when they combine various sectors of society, stretch across political parties and have solid, independent voices.
- Municipal and state authorities are the key to more security, but civil society actors need the support of federal level politicians to achieve the highest levels of interaction and effectiveness.
- It is necessary to involve security forces directly in these interactions in order for there to be any broad, long-term security gains for the civilian populace.
- Civil society works best with government when its role is clearly defined at the earliest stages with the government and security force interlocutors.

INTRODUCTION

In 1995, the Mexican Congress passed a national security law. In it, the government stipulated that the "authorities will establish efficient mechanisms so society may participate in the planning and supervision of public security."[1] The law has gone through some alterations since, but it has essentially maintained its integrity over the years. What's more, state governments have mandated similar interactions with civil society.

The law predated much of the violence the country is currently experiencing and was supposed to open the way for more direct citizen participation in matters of security. This law, however, largely failed to promote citizen participation. There are few areas in which there are so-called "security councils," the mechanism created to channel civil society's views on these matters; even fewer where they are functioning well. In short, citizens, if they would like to interact with governments, have had to tackle these matters by combining the power of nongovernmental and business organizations and pressuring for a voice via public displays of dissatisfaction.

This paper is designed to explore how citizens have fared in their efforts and how governments have responded to them, especially in times of great stress. In the broadest sense, the paper is designed to give an overview of the interactions on security issues between Mexican civil society and the various levels of government. Specifically, it will explore civic engagement on security issues in four cities: Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana, Nuevo Laredo, and Monterrey.

These cities are vital economic motors. They are also "border cities," deriving much of their economic activity from their geography. Nuevo Laredo has the most commercial traffic on the U.S.-Mexico border; Tijuana is the most dynamic, with more people crossing than any other place. Monterrey is the country's industrial capital; Juárez remains the epicenter of Mexico's maquiladora industry.

In the last six years, these cities have each faced rapidly rising violence and crime. Homicide rates reflect this dynamic but only scratch the surface of the problem. In all four cities, there was a steady rise in car theft, armed robberies, kidnappings and extortion. In all four cities, this trend has ebbed somewhat, but remains a persistent problem, and there are worries that recent security gains may not be sustainable.

The causes of this spike in crime are numerous. However, crime watchers, public officials and criminal investigators say it is mostly related to disputes among the various factions of organized crime groups. Among them are traditional "cartels" such as the Sinaloa, Juárez, Gulf and Tijuana organizations;

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1 "General Law that establishes the Bases for Coordination of the National Security System," from the *Diario Oficial*, December 11, 1995, http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/abro/lgbcsnsp/LGBCSNSP_orig_11dic95.pdf.

non-traditional organizations such as the Zetas and La Línea; and well-organized street gangs such as the Aztecas. Deciphering the reasons behind this fighting is not the subject of this paper. The authors, however, will break down the dynamics in each city in an attempt to understand how these dynamics may affect civil society engagement with the government on citizen security issues.

The social and economic impacts of this criminal activity are enormous. The violence has led hundreds of professionals to flee these areas. Housing prices have collapsed as entire areas have been abandoned. Unemployment has risen to more than 6 percent in Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, and Baja California, turning those states into the three national leaders of unemployment.[2]

Yet the relationship between these cities and criminal activity is also complex. Some of the same reasons that make these areas appealing to legitimate businesses have made them strategic areas of operation for the illicit actors as well. The mass movements of people and cargo across the borders, for instance, provide ready camouflage for illicit goods moving north, and cash and weapons moving south. Licit and illicit businesses have run parallel and have regularly overlapped, complicating, at times, civic engagement on the issue of security and dividing some communities.

The result has been an uneven response to the violence by civil society groups in all of these cities. In the broadest sense—and with varying degrees of success— these "civilian" actors have pushed for more "security." In some cases, they have achieved some direct interaction, which has led to quantifiable results. In many cases, however, they have remained on the margins, either because of their own inability to effectively organize themselves into a coherent, collective voice, or because of the various governments' unwillingness to open the communications channels and work directly with them.

There is, to be frank, limited organized civic engagement on the issue of security. And most of what there is appears to happen because of personal and political contacts. Institutional engagement is rare. Institutional commitment is rarer still. The engagement, it seems, is more often dependent on the whims of the political leaders than the effectiveness of the civilian actors.

This paper is not meant to be a comprehensive study but rather an overview of these cities' attempts to create channels of communication between civil society and government actors that lead to more citizen security. Other papers in this series will delve deeper into some of these areas. With this in mind, the paper is divided by city and broken down to include: (1) background on the area and the criminal dynamic, (2) profile of the civil society actors involved and their means of engagement, and (3) a brief assessment of the effectiveness of this engagement. The paper concludes with some general thoughts on how to create more effective, participative and deeper engagement on the part of civil society and the government.

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2 Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), http://www.inegi.org.mx. (accessed March 15, 2013.)

CIUDAD JUÁREZ

Background

Ciudad Juárez is Mexico's maquiladora capital. Three in every ten maquiladora workers lives in Juárez.[3] It has experienced several booms in economic activity, the most recent occurring in the 2000s in which close to 300 maquiladora factories established operations. Between 1990 and 2000, the city's population grew from 798,499 to more than 1.1 million. Juárez was not prepared for the boom. The city's social services could not keep pace with the explosion in population. Schools became overcrowded. Health services collapsed. Street gangs emerged en masse. As many 300 were identified in the 1990s. That number is now closer to 900.[4]

Criminal organizations have long sought to take advantage of Juárez's strategic position along the border, its burgeoning economic activity, and its fertile recruiting ground. Its sister city in the United States, El Paso, sits at the crossroads between the eastern and western United States: a little more than a 10-hour drive to Los Angeles; a little more than a 20-hour drive to Chicago; and a little more than a 30-hour drive to New York.

The most famous of these criminal groups was the Carrillo Fuentes organization, aka the Juárez Cartel (Cartel de Juárez—CDJ). The CDJ was comprised of mostly transplanted Sinaloans who had arrived in the 1980s while drug trafficking organizations in Mexico were still relatively small. The CDJ helped change that: Using commercial, governmental and private aircraft, the CDJ made Juárez a key transit point for cocaine from South America to cross into the United States.

Following the death of its founder in 1997, the CDJ has gone through various stages, the most recent of which included the integration of an armed wing of current and ex-police known as La Línea, and a sophisticated prison gang known as the Aztecas.[5] The use of these two armed factions came as a result of increased competition for control of the proverbial "plaza"—a reference to the territory used for transiting illicit goods, and providing illicit services and items on a local level—by its rivals from the Sinaloa Cartel.[6] The Sinaloa Cartel also employed local gangs, specifically the Mexicles and the Artistas Asesinos.

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3 Cutberto Arzaluz Solano, "Ciudad Juárez antes y después de la maquiladora: una visión antropológica," lecture, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, September 2005.

4 Interview with intelligence officer from Mexican government, on condition of anonymity, September 28, 2012.

5 This integration appears to have begun around 2003.

6 Juárez and Sinaloa Cartel members share much of the same roots and for years worked together. However, in 2004, a dispute led Sinaloa to assassinate Rodolfo Carrillo Fuentes, the younger brother of CDJ head Vicente Carrillo Fuentes. The CDJ responded by killing Arturo Guzmán, the brother of Joaquín Guzmán, the Sinaloa Cartel's leader.

Beginning in 2008, the battle between these organizations played out on various levels. On one level, the CDJ and the Sinaloa Cartel were fighting to move large loads of cocaine across the border. On another level, they were trying to control the local drug and extortion markets, which had emerged to play an important role in financing the gangs who were being used as soldiers in this larger battle. Other criminal activities, such as kidnapping, exploded for some of the same reasons, and middle class areas found themselves the target of small and large criminal groups. The resulting chaos soon enmeshed small businesses, professionals, journalists and students. The victims ran the gamut. According to the National Public Security System, SNSP, there were 136 homicides in 2007; 1,332 in 2008; 2,230 in 2009; 2,738 in 2010; 1,460 in 2011; and 656 in 2012.[7]

As the following chart demonstrates, although data from the national statistics agency, INEGI, and SNSP differ, they show the same trends. By 2011, there had been a shift toward lower rates of homicide in Juarez.

FIGURE 1: HOMICIDES IN CIUDAD JUAREZ
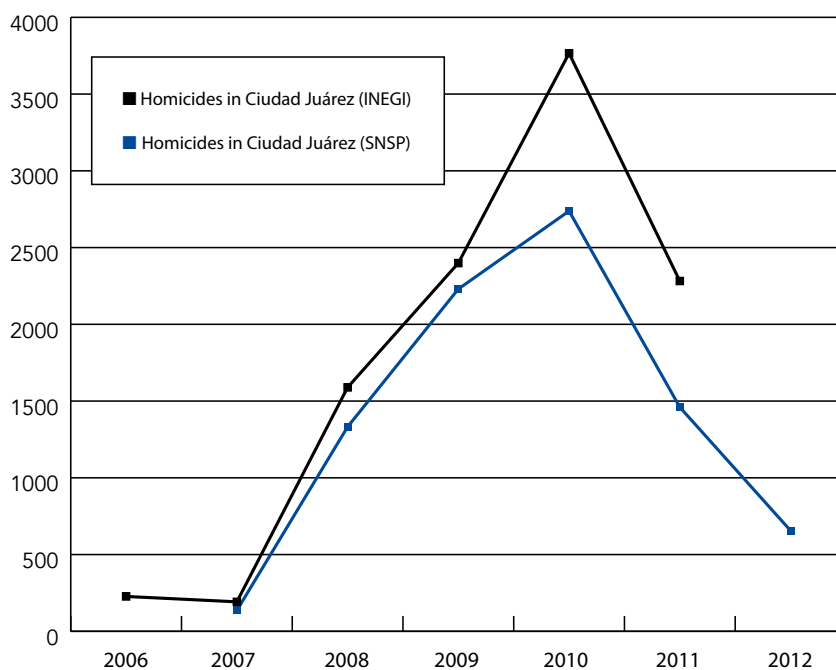
Statistics retrieved from website of the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), February 27, 2014. (http://www.inegi.org.mx). SNSP statistics from *Drug Violence in Mexico: Data and Analysis Through 2012* by Cory Molzahn, Octavio Rodriguez Ferreira, and David A. Shirk. Trans–Border Institute, University of San Diego, February 2013.

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7 Cory Molzahn, Octavio Rodriguez Ferreira, and David A. Shirk. Drug Violence in Mexico: *Data and Analysis Through 2012*. (San Diego: Trans-Border Institute, University of San Diego, 2013), http://justiceinmexico.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/130206-dvm-2013-final.pdf.

Civil Society Responses

It was in this context that civil society groups began clamoring for more security. They organized around their professions and their industry. Some were successful businessmen, but they were not the wealthiest Juarenses, an element that may have contributed to their more direct participation. Put simply, the wealthiest could and did leave the area, extracting their families and maintaining their businesses from afar. The most prominent groups were Juarenses por la Paz (JPP) and the Comité de Médicos Ciudadanos. JPP began meeting every Monday as early as 2008. From the start, they saw themselves as interlocutors with the government. In part, this was due to their contacts. One of the leaders of the group leading the interaction, for instance, was the then-mayor's cousin.[8]

The committee, meanwhile, was trying to organize a more public stance, searching for ways to shame authorities into taking action. It spearheaded a march in late 2009. The groups also tried to formalize programs in concert with the government, specifically the program "Crime Stoppers," which they later tried unsuccessfully to implement with the municipal government. In the end, little was actually achieved in that first phase.

The turning point for Juárez civil society-government interaction came via a tragedy and a president's gaffe. On Jan. 31, 2010, gunmen burst into a private party for youths in the Villas de Salvárcar neighborhood of Juárez, killed 15 people and injured another 10. In response to the event, President Felipe Calderón said the murdered youths must have been a rival gang. The president's misstep led to a visit in early February during which a mother of one of the victims famously told Calderón that he was not welcome in the city.

The exchange was a spark. Calderón committed resources in the name of what the government deemed "Todos Somos Juárez," or, "We are all Juárez." Other disparate pieces coalesced around various social issues that the program would entail. These so-called "Mesas" or "Working Groups," included health, education, and security groups, among others. Over time, the "Mesa de Seguridad" would become the most effective civil society engagement with the government in all of Mexico. Their efforts are now considered a model, and some of the first participants travel the country to tell their story in an effort to help replicate their actions and, they hope, some of their results.[9]

At the heart of the Mesa are businesspeople and white-collar professionals. The chambers of commerce and other academic and professional associations also take part in meetings. Specific examples of members include entrepreneurs such as Miguel Fernández and Jorge Contreras; medical professionals Arturo Valenzuela and Leticia Chavarría; the human rights lawyer and former prison director Gustavo de la Rosa Hickerson; and the political science professor Hugo Almada.

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8 Miguel Fernández Iturriza, interview with the authors, September 24, 2012.

9 Arturo Valenzuela, interview with the authors, September 25, 2012.

Nearly all of the Mesa's participants had previous experience in civic and business groups. Fernández and Contreras were founding members of Juarenses por la Paz. Valenzuela is now a member as well. In addition, Valenzuela and Chavarría helped create the Comité Medico Cuidadano.

Their reasons for joining the Mesa varied, with some of the Mesa's participants motivated by an economic rationale. "We got involved in the issue because we thought that there would be no development without security," Juárez businessman Jorge Contreras explained.[10]

Contreras is also the public safety commissioner of a group called Economic Development and one of the most active members in the Mesa, but his and numerous others involvement with these issues began with Juarenses por la Paz.

The genesis of Juarenses por la Paz predates the Mesa (and the most violent period) and serves to illustrate an important point about personal contacts in these matters. In 2006, a local businesswoman introduced Contreras, Fernández, and Pablo Cuarón to Alejandro Gertz Manero, a former head of the federal police in the Vicente Fox administration. Gertz Manero later introduced the group to Luis Cárdenas Palomino, the number two at the Public Safety Ministry's office (Secretaría de Seguridad Pública, or SSP, an entity that has since been absorbed by the Interior Ministry). Cárdenas Palomino became the direct contact of this nascent organization when it needed to deal with kidnapping and extortion cases.

"Back then, we were in contact with several victims of extortion in the Pronaf area [a commercial, retail and tourist sector], and the instruction of Luis (Cárdenas Palomino) was to not pay," Contreras recounted. "Instead, they sent an intelligence officer and then arrested the gang, and this gave us more confidence in the federal government."

When the violence accelerated, these three would form the core of Juarenses por la Paz, which would later form the core of the Mesa.

Others became involved for personal reasons. Their friends and colleagues were victims of kidnapping and extortion and their professional space was being violated regularly.

"There was all kinds of violence, even in private clinics, where armed groups would come to look for their victims," Chavarría explained. "That's when we formed the Comité de Médicos Ciudadanos, and we demanded that the authorities deal with the problem."

The Comité and Juarenses por la Paz converged in 2009, at the insistence of Oscar Cantú, the owner of the city's most prominent newspaper, *Norte de Ciudad Juárez*. Cantú also called for a series of meetings with the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez, churches, and business leaders.

"We began to gather in the AMAC (Asociación de Maquiladoras) and started talking about the problem of violence in early 2009, and began looking at the

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10 Jorge Contreras, interview with the authors, September 2012.

Palermo (Italy) case, the case of Colombia, and began to see what ideas they had," Valenzuela said.

(Cantú later left the group he had helped create because, according to Valenzuela, he had close ties to the former Chihuahua governor and the state prosecutor, neither of whom inspired much confidence in the group.)

It was this same group that organized Juárez's first public display of anger toward the violence in December 2009. The march was a small but significant step forward, the organizers said, the first broad citizens' demand that the government address the issue.

"Juárez requires a new form of government–society relationship, where new types of dialogue open spaces for citizens and government to do what it takes to get Juárez out of this violent state," Hugo Almada, a university professor, said in his speech following the march.

A month later, a representative of the federal government's Interior Ministry, Laura Carrera, visited Juárez in search of the organizers. Carrera said the president was planning a visit to the city. After the January massacre of the students and the president's gaffe, the timetable was accelerated. The government's participation in the formation of the Mesa was critical, its members say. This included Interior Minister Fernando Gómez Mont, the attorney general's delegate in the area, César Peniche, and Federal Police Commissioner Facundo Rosas. Rosas remained in Juárez for months and played a crucial role in the Mesa's early establishment.

The Mesa is, in essence, a place for citizens to interact with government officials. These interactions occur during regular meetings between the two. The meetings happen in hotels or government offices that can accommodate large groups. The citizens manage the meetings, controlling the agenda, minutes, facilitation, and other aspects. Each meeting begins with crime indicators. Then they go through, one by one, the accords they have reached with the government on security issues to check on the status of these accords. In order to facilitate the work, the Mesa is broken down into 14 committees: crime indicators, public trust, Emergency Response Center, car theft, kidnapping, and extortion, to name a few. These committees meet monthly.[11]

The Mesa has engendered informal contact and better relations with regard to specific criminal activity. Contreras says he talks on the telephone with police on a daily basis and interacts regularly via e-mail with the Attorney General's Office, the state prosecutor and a U.S. security consultancy. Sometimes the interactions are related to specific cases. Initially, these were kidnapping cases. Now they are more related to extortion. In many of these cases, Mesa members serve as intermediaries between the security forces and the victims. This is because the victims still do not trust the security forces. They do, however, trust the Mesa members.

Not all relationships are the same. Contreras and others said that while they had a working relationship with Juárez public safety director Julián Leyzaola, they

11 Arturo Valenzuela, interview with the authors, September 25, 2012.

did not interact with Leyzaola's boss, Mayor Héctor Murguía (who held office from 2010–2013). To deal with this issue, the Mesa designated a former Murguía associate to be the liaison with the mayor's office.

Effectiveness

The Mesa has had more indirect than direct results. Its specific programs include Crime Stoppers, which later stalled because Murguía stopped funding it,[12] and a crime database. Efforts to improve the "9-1-1" emergency system failed. The newly created "Citizens Defense Committee"—which was designed as a way to channel information of abuses by security forces directly to their superiors—was unable to establish a direct line of communication with the municipal or the state police. In terms of campaigns, perhaps the most successful has been the effort to get citizens of Ciudad Juárez to place license plates on their cars. Authorities say that the statistic dropped from 40 percent without plates to 7 percent in just two years.[13]

The main result of the regular interaction between government and civil society, Mesa participants say, has been the resolution of specific cases, especially kidnapping and extortion cases, in which suspects have been arrested, tried, and jailed. These direct interactions have resolved more than 100 kidnapping cases and many more cases of extortion. The positive results of these civilian–government interactions have given other Juárez businesses more confidence to go to the security forces with their problems, leading to more arrests and greater security, Mesa participants say.

The Mesa has also served as ad hoc mediator between government forces. When one of Murguía's bodyguards was killed by two federal police, the Mesa brought representatives of both sides to the monthly meeting. The two reconciled at that meeting. An unintended consequence of the Mesa's regular interactions is that security forces have been pushed toward greater cooperation. One regular government security participant in the Mesa said his working relationships with other security forces have never been better, in part because of the Mesa.[14]

However, the Mesa's power to mediate conflicts is limited. The municipal police tactic of arresting suspects en masse has created considerable tension in Juárez, but it is something the Mesa was not able to curb despite some very vocal members' attempts.[15] The Mesa has also steered clear of sensitive political issues,

12 Miguel Fernández Iturriza, interview with the authors, September 24, 2012.

13 Mesa de Seguridad, "Comunicado de Prensa Periódico Norte de Ciudad Juárez 10 Marzo del 2012," March 13, 2012, http://www.mesadeseguridad.org/?p=657.

14 Interview with Mexican government security official, on condition of anonymity, September 27, 2012; InSight Crime, "Police Use Brute Force to Break Crime's Hold on Juárez," February 13, 2013, http://www.insightcrime.org/Juárez-war-stability-and-the-future/brute-force-breaks-crimes-hold-on-Juárez.

15 Various members of the Mesa noted the lack of traction on this issue in interviews.

such assertions regarding former Gov. José Reyes Baeza and his attorney general, Patricia González, and their alleged relationship with organized criminal groups.[16]

Still, in the end, Mesa members, including former Mesa leader Valenzuela, consider that the exercise of interaction recorded in Juárez between civil society and government is as relevant as "the fall of the Berlin Wall." Thanks to the interaction, he says, both parties were able to appreciate the other's point of view. "I've seen the authorities completely change because of their contact with civil society, because of listening and just being in the same room—having common goals placed on a chalk board—which gives a sense of team," said Valenzuela. "In Juárez, just as the Berlin Wall fell, Mexicans dissolved the huge wall that existed between society and government, and we sat at a table for the first time. ... Then others, who were scattered about, joined, and trust was built, and a team was formed."

MONTERREY

Background

Monterrey is Mexico's third-largest metropolitan area and the country's industrial capital. Sitting 90 miles from the U.S. border, it is an important production and banking center for numerous U.S. companies such as Callaway Golf and Caterpillar. It is home to the Tec de Monterrey, which some consider the "MIT of Mexico." While the center of Monterrey houses the state government, "Monterrey" is usually a reference to Greater Monterrey, an area encompassing 12 municipalities of more than 4 million people.[17] It is spread over a large area nine times the size of New York City, but has a unified economic and social dynamic, complicating the construction of both political and security policies.

For years, the city was known as a safe haven for both legal and illegal actors. Cemex, the cement giant, has its home here, as does Cervecería Cuauhtémoc, Femsa (the biggest beverages supplier in Latin America), Grupo Maseca (Gruma, the world's biggest tortilla producer), and Banorte.[18] They have long shared space with famous drug traffickers such as Juan García Abrego, the former head of the Gulf Cartel, who was captured near Monterrey in 1996.

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16 González's brother was killed after suspected members of the Sinaloa Cartel kidnapped and tortured him. A video of the interrogation in which González's brother says he is a member of La Línea was published on a blog. Steven Dudley, "How Juarez's Police, Politicians Picked Winners of Gang War," InSight Crime, February 13, 2013, http://www.insightcrime.org/Juárez-war-stability-and-the-future/Juárez-police-politicians-picked-winners-gang-war.

17 INEGI, *Delimitación de las zonas metropolitanas de México*, 2005, http://www.inegi.org.mx/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/geografia/publicaciones/delimex05/DZMM-2005_31.pdf.

18 Secretaría de Desarrollo Económico de Nuevo León, "Algunos de los principales grupos empresariales de Nuevo León," July 2007, http://sg.nl.gob.mx/DataNL/files%5CDNL00000395.pdf.

However, beginning in 2007, things shifted for this city. New criminal organizations, with different modus operandi, began operating in Monterrey. The Beltrán Leyva Organization, then a violent and well-armed wing of the Sinaloa Cartel, established operations in San Pedro Garza García, one of the country's wealthiest municipalities. More important, the Gulf Cartel ceded the city to its hyper-violent praetorian guard, the Zetas.

The Zetas have a particular way of operating. Their core was former military officers and their strategy has centered on a military-like effort to control territory and extract "rent" (known as "*piso*" in the underworld vernacular) from the illegal and legal businesses in that territory. The size and economic importance of Monterrey has made it the crown jewel for this organization. Beginning in 2007, the Zetas began extorting licit and illicit businesses throughout Greater Monterrey. And for three years, their dominance was unchallenged, except in San Pedro, where the Beltrán Leyva Organization had arranged for their own type of monopoly that was more about protecting themselves than extracting rent from their wealthy neighbors.[19]

In 2009, relations between the Zetas and the Gulf Cartel soured, and in 2010, the two groups split definitively. The split put Monterrey back in play and violence quickly increased to astounding levels. The subsequent fight has been concentrated in the poorer areas where the Zetas control the local drug distribution points, but the violence also occurs on the main avenues, which the Zetas have blocked on numerous occasions to protest captures of leaders or to distract authorities, and middle class districts.

The peak of the violence came in August 2011, when a Zetas cell burned a casino in Monterrey as retribution for not paying the regular quota. Fifty-two people died in the blaze, which engulfed the building at a torrid pace. The case also revealed the corruption within the Monterrey and Nuevo León governments, which had allowed for these casinos to flourish via legal loopholes and payoffs to numerous authorities.[20]

Civil Society Responses

The response of civil society was slow at first. And while it has been formally channeled through specially created institutions engendered by various nongovernmental organizations and business leaders, it failed to produce a regular civil society-government interaction of the type that distinguishes the Mesa de Seguridad in Juárez. However, over the past two years there has been a significant upswing in collaboration.

19 For a full account of this process, see Steven Dudley, "How the Zetas Took Monterrey," InSight Crime, December 16, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/zetas-monterrey/how-the-zetas-took-monterrey.

20 Steven Dudley, "Arson Attack on Monterrey Casino Part of Battle over Gambling Industry," InSight Crime, August 26, 2011, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/arson-attack-on-monterrey-casino-part-of-battle-over-gambling-industry.

The most noteworthy organization channeling citizens' appeals on security matters is Citizens in Support of Human Rights (CADHAC). CADHAC's leader, Sister Consuelo Morales, has won international recognition for her work and liaised with other nationally recognized leaders such as Javier Sicilia, the poet whose own personal tragedy pushed him to create a national movement calling for greater accountability and alternative ways of tackling the problem of organized crime in Mexico. Morales had worked with indigenous communities and street children in Mexico City; she returned to Monterrey in 1992 and helped found CADHAC in 1993.[21]

CADHAC is the only organization that regularly interacts with government officials. This interaction focuses almost exclusively on the review of "disappearances," habeas corpus, and kidnapping cases. CADHAC has had at least 10 meetings since they began in 2011, in which officials from the state prosecutor's office, family members of victims represented in 50 case files, and CADHAC staff reviewed the files of research and exchanged data that could be useful to ascertain the whereabouts of victims and perpetrators.

Morales says Nuevo León State Attorney General Emilio de la Garza Santos and his top assistant, Javier Enrique Flores, have participated in these meetings and have designated coordinators who follow the progress of each case. These coordinators work closely with representatives of the victim's family and a CADHAC staff member. Interestingly, according to Morales, Javier Sicilia helped pressure the authorities into participating in this process.[22]

The other principal actor in civil society and security matters is the powerful business community in Monterrey. In 2011, with violence increasing, the largest employers in the area formed the Council of Civic Institutions of Nuevo León (CCINLAC). It groups together more than 100 institutions and individuals, including chambers of commerce, professionals, charitable organizations, service industry companies, sports teams, and others.

The CCINLAC spearheaded a forum for government-civil society interaction. Beginning in 2011, nine municipal governments in Greater Monterrey responded to citizens' calls for more accountability by implementing something called, "Mayor, how are we doing?" The program is a list of broad commitments, which include numerous citizen security issues such as a "minimum three police for every 1,000 inhabitants."[23] These programs were hammered out in a series of behind-the-scenes meetings between the Nuevo León state government and the business sector, represented by CCINLAC. In theory, some 40 civil society organizations, including the CCINLAC, review these commitments monthly to ensure compliance. In reality, very few of these organizations are directly interacting with government actors.

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21 "Consuelo Morales, Mexico," Human Rights Watch, August 13, 2012, http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/08/13/consuelo-morales-mexico.

22 Consuelo Morales, telephone interview with authors, October 2012.

23 "Alcalde ¿cómo vamos?" official website, http://www.comovamosnl.org/.

Effectiveness

In Monterrey, the commitment is impressive and—in sheer numbers, economic power and variety of its participants—the civil society coalition seems on paper to be far superior than its neighbors. In practice, however, getting traction with government officials proved difficult at first and putting into motion programs such as the "Mayor, how are we doing?" were very hard. Indeed, despite the impressive array of groups interacting with the government, Monterrey took time to develop a functioning model of civil society-government interaction.

Trouble began almost immediately after the grand coalition was formed and announced. The CCINLAC, for instance, felt obliged to present its concerns about public security to the public via news conferences. But this very public approach soured its relations with the government almost immediately.

"There was a lot of effort expended on being cordial," explained Miguel Treviño, the former director of CCINLAC. "We had a lot of meetings with state government officials to design 'transformations.' … But we have an obligation to lobby and our partners were wondering how we see the daily situation. … (So) when we started with press conferences to publicize the 'Green Light Indicators,' the relationship changed, with ups and downs. Later there was outright anger because of what we were saying."[24]

The "Green Light Indicators" were a very specific set of expectations that the civil society organizations developed. The indicators were both crime-related (lowering property-related crime such as car theft), and indicators related to the violation of human rights and corruption cases. Treviño says that when the government realized that the economic achievements were not the only measure they were using to guide their public pronouncements, they backed away from the partnership.

Others are not so harsh in their evaluations. Lorenia Canavati works for Evolución Mexicana. Evolución was cofounded by a former federal congress-woman, Tatiana Clouthier, the daughter of the late National Action Party (PAN) presidential candidate, Manuel Clouthier. It is now an active member of CCINLAC, and Canavati says it is too early to judge. She says the interaction with the government is in its infancy, and that her organization had begun with its first workshop with the nine participating mayors in September 2012.

Still, it will be a long road, beginning with the commitments themselves. Perhaps the most complicated of these commitments with regard to security is the "creation of a transparent police." The municipal police units in Greater Monterrey (and nationwide) are a tremendous source of tension in the communities they serve. Many members have long worked for the Zetas and other criminal organizations (in this area and others they were referred to as "poli-Zetas"). And the creation of a system to purge them and then restock them with trustworthy officers has proven

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24 Miguel Treviño, telephone interview with the authors, October 2012.

very difficult and time consuming. Federal officials estimate that only one in every five candidates will pass the various new tests the government has implemented to secure a solid police force. However, the number of applicants is far less than sufficient.[25] Tec de Monterrey researchers recently estimated the statewide deficit to be close to 12,000 officers.[26]

Determining civil society's role in this matter is extremely complicated. And the sensitive nature of political actors in the state has virtually excluded civil society from this and other processes. The CCINLAC, for instance, had no interaction with the government on security matters aside from its limited participation in the "Mayor, how are we doing?" campaign and its attendance of National Public Security System meetings.

However, in 2012 a new effort to coordinate with civil society and in particular with the private sector began to produce results.

First, CADHAC and prosecuting authorities improved their communication and cooperation. Morales says that since they began working with the government, 24 people have been arrested in cases involved 11 victims. The two sides have also worked together to develop protocol on these cases. "This is a way to create accountability," Morales said.

Second, and far more important, the private sector has pushed local authorities to create a new police force, and has contributed funds and other resources to make it possible. The Fuerza Civil, discussed at greater length in Daniel Sabet's chapter, has proven a rapid success story with 3,000 new recruits joining the force by September 2013. This was a nationwide effort, with locally based firms using their communications department to help local authorities recruit new officers in urban centers across Mexico, and providing a large part of the financing for the advertising and recruitment procedures.

This new effort in Monterrey has been lauded by the Peña Nieto administration and is now held up nationally as a model for local reactions to upsurges in violence. Tying in nicely with the federal government's mantra of "coordination" in response to public security challenges, the Monterrey and Nuevo León reaction highlights the need for closer communication and cooperation between all levels of government and civil society and the private sector.

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25 Interview with Mexican security force official who did not have permission to speak for attribution, September 19, 2012.

26 Patrick Corcoran, "Police Purge Leaves Monterrey Unguarded," InSight Crime, October 19, 2011, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/police-purge-leaves-monterrey-unguarded-as-cartel-battle-rages.

NUEVO LAREDO

Background

Nuevo Laredo is the Mexico–U.S. border's most important commercial crossing point. Between 10,000 and 12,000 cargo trucks cross the border each day, or an estimated 35 percent of all truck traffic that crosses the border. Another 14,000 passenger cars and 1,000 railroad cars join that truck traffic daily to make Laredo—Nuevo Laredo by far the more important commercial crossing point along the 1,951 mile border with about $500 million in daily trade.

The city connects Mexico to Interstate 35, one of the United States' most important arteries. I–35 splits the United States in two and connects to the east-west arteries that dissect the United States into a grid of vast proportions. The city is also the crossing point for most traffic coming and going between Mexico City and Monterrey, and the border via Mexico Federal Highway 85.

The border dynamic engendered in Nuevo Laredo stretches east to Matamoros. The space between Matamoros and Reynosa is known as the Frontera Chica. It has traditionally been the domain of the Gulf Cartel, a one-time contraband operation that morphed into a large, international drug trafficking organization. The Gulf's founder is Juan García Abrego, but its progenitor was Osiel Cárdenas.

Cárdenas, a one-time car thief, took control of the group by force. His nickname, "*el mata-amigos*," or "friend-killer," speaks volumes about his tactics. To consolidate his control of the cartel and expand to new areas, Cárdenas lured several members of Mexico's special forces into his organization in the late 1990s. This new guard christened themselves Zetas for the radio handles commanders of these forces use in the armed forces. The Zetas were small at first, but brutally effective. Cárdenas and the Zetas took complete control of Nuevo Laredo and expanded into new territories such as Michoacán, which gave the Gulf Cartel access to a Pacific port to complement its already burgeoning smuggling business on the eastern side.

However, the dynamic changed after Cárdenas was arrested in 2003. Zetas leaders demanded, and Gulf leaders granted, increasing amounts of autonomy to their guards. This helped the organization expand its purview. The Zetas were nearly self-sufficient, living from a wide array of activities, most of those related to collecting *piso*. The reasons for this were simple. Drawing from their military roots, the Zetas controlled territory better than any other organized criminal group. This dominance led them to displace the traditional operators of the *piso* business, the police. Soon, the group was extorting both legitimate and illegitimate businesses. They also began to delve in local drug dealing. These multiple revenue sources gave them even more autonomy.

For a variety of reasons that are not the subject of this paper, tensions rose between the Zetas and the Gulf Cartel leaders. Following the extradition of

Cárdenas to the U.S. in 2007, the Zetas essentially began operating on their own terms. And in 2010, following a deadly altercation with the Gulf Cartel, the Zetas announced their independence. War with the Gulf Cartel followed. The longtime relationship between the Gulf Cartel and the Zetas make this fight even more complicated. The two groups know each other's modus operandi, their financial and military strategies. They know how they choose their safe houses, whom they bribe, and how they move their merchandise. It has made for a fratricidal squabble that has cost thousands their lives, mostly along the northern border area from Nuevo Laredo to the east.

Among the territories in dispute is Nuevo Laredo. It has been under nearly constant siege since 2004, when the Sinaloa Cartel attempted to take control of this important corridor. The bloody battle that followed lasted over a year, but the Gulf Cartel, because of the Zetas, prevailed. The Zetas' prize for their work was Nuevo Laredo. The plaza became the Zetas' headquarters where they would establish near absolute control over local police, politicians, and the press. The area seems to have had little peace mostly due to the Zetas' modus operandi, which is, put simply, hyper-violent. The group's default response to internal and external conflicts is violence.

The fight between the Zetas and the Gulf Cartel has renewed rivals' interest in controlling Nuevo Laredo. The Gulf Cartel has allied with one-time foes from the Sinaloa Cartel and the Caballeros Templarios, itself a product of Gulf Cartel–Zetas interventions in Michoacán. Government forces are also focused on debilitating the Zetas, Mexico's most violent and chaotic criminal group. As evidence of the impact of these efforts (which some would argue are in concert), the entire original Zetas' leadership has been captured or killed since 2008.

The Zetas have responded to these challenges by aligning themselves with former foes, such as the Beltrán Leyva Organization and the Juárez Cartel. But the group also has internal problems. Its top leader, Heriberto Lazcano, was killed by naval forces in October 2012. Other top leaders, most notably Iván Velázquez Caballero, alias "El Talibán," were captured in 2012. El Talibán's core group remains strong and was mounting a challenge to the Zetas' heir apparent, Miguel Treviño, alias Z-40, when Treviño was captured in July 2013. Treviño and his brother and now the supposed head of the Zetas, Alejandro "Omar" Treviño, alias "Z-42," were born in Nuevo Laredo.

As a result of this multilayered battle, Nuevo Laredo is going through one of its worst periods of violence since the fighting began in 2004. Official statistics do not tell the whole story. For 2011, the last year for which official statistics are available, the government's statistical agency, INEGI, reported 192 murders in Nuevo Laredo. The Consejo Ciudadano para la Seguridad Pública y la Justicia Penal, a Mexican nongovernmental organization, said that murders reached 288 during 2012.[27] This does not include reported disappeared and other deaths during confrontations

27 *El Manaña*, "Nuevo Laredo está entre las más violentas," February 8, 2013, http://www.elmanana.com.mx/notas.asp?id=320405.

between Zetas and security forces, after which the Zetas are known to carry away their dead and wounded. In sum, the real total could be much higher.

The capture of Z-40 may also lead to more violence and upheaval. It is not clear that Z-42 has the ability to hold the organization together. Most analysts expect internal and external groups to challenge his leadership and attempt to fill the power void left by Miguel Treviño, Lazcano, and Velázquez.

The Zetas' militaristic style leaves little room for civil society. Threats are direct. Retribution is swift and often public. The Zetas' control of the local security and political forces also makes public interaction with the state less desirable at best and dangerous at worst. Those civil society actors who do interact with the government do it gingerly, on a personal level, without public notoriety or fanfare. These relationships are fragile and largely ineffective, however, because mistrust, suspicion and the potential for deadly consequences override the urgency to act in concert.

Civil Society Responses

In Nuevo Laredo, there are several civil society groups such as the Human Rights Committee of Nuevo Laredo, the Casa del Migrante, the Municipal Committee for Citizen Participation, and various business associations of brokers, builders, maquilas, and others. Many of these business associations are part of the Council of Institutions of Nuevo Laredo (CINLAC).

Among these, the Human Rights Committee is the only organization that interacts with the government on a regular basis. The committee was founded in 1997. To date, it has documented dozens of citizen complaints, especially against the Mexican army and navy. The committee meets with the defense and navy ministers, as well as other federal officials. The sides talk through human rights policy and violence related to the war on drugs. It confronts the government about forced disappearances that it blames on security forces.

Raymundo Ramos Vázquez, a former editor of the city's daily, *El Mañana*, is the head of the committee. Ramos says the main reason for limited interaction between the government and citizen groups is fear. He says the local community is afraid of Zetas' retribution and that it has no faith in the local authorities' ability or willingness to act if the criminal group commits a crime, adding that the police and the mayor's office have been known to work directly with the Zetas.

Ramos knows a lot about this issue. Journalists have been some of the most affected parts of civil society. Since 2002, two have been killed in Nuevo Laredo. Dozens more have been threatened. In May 2012, *El Mañana* became the first paper to publicly state it would not cover violence.[28] In reality, it had been the paper's de facto position for years. To cite one example, on May 4, 2012, nine bodies

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28 "Opinión Editorial," *El Mañana* (Nuevo Laredo), May 13, 2012, http://www.excelsior.com.mx/node/833926.

were hung from a bridge on the Federal Highway 85, and another 14 were found in different parts of the city.[29] The next day, the paper focused on the presidential elections, ignoring the brutal public display of violence.[30]

Aside from the nearly constant attacks on journalists, there were also attacks on civil society. In 2005, Alejandro Domínguez Coello, who was the president of the Chamber of Commerce and the newly appointed public safety director, was murdered just a few hours after reluctantly assuming his security post. The reasons for Domínguez's murder were not clear. Domínguez was promoted to the post by PRI Gov. Tomás Yarrington. Yarrington, for his part, was indicted in 2012 in the United States for allegedly laundering money for the Zetas and the Gulf Cartel. The former governor has also been accused of participating in the murder of former gubernatorial candidate Rodolfo Torres Cantú in 2010. The Domínguez murder cast a dark cloud over civilian participation in security matters.

"[The murder of Domínguez Coello] was the worst message to civil society," Ramos said.[31]

The police are at the heart of the security problem in Nuevo Laredo. Domínguez's successor disappeared months after he resigned from the job and has not been seen since.[32] In 2011, another police chief, the former military officer Manual Farfán, was ambushed and killed, along with his secretary and two of his bodyguards.[33] And in February of 2012, another police director, Roberto Balmori Garz, disappeared the weekend that his two brothers, one of them a federal prosecutor, were found dead.[34]

In reality, Balmori had little to do. The federal government had disbanded Nuevo Laredo's police two years earlier. Six hundred officers, both patrol and transit, were told they had to go through lie-detector tests and other exams to gain re-entry. In the first few months, only four took the tests. One passed.[35] For a while Nuevo Laredo remained without any police officers or transit cops. Army troops patrolled the streets. The state government had a small presence via several prosecutors but little else.

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29 Hannah Stone, "Threatening Banners, 23 Dead as Zetas Fight Rivals in Nuevo Laredo," InSight Crime, May 7, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/threatening-banners-23-dead-as-zetas-fight-rivals-in-nuevo-laredo.

30 *El Mañana's* May 5, 2012, home page included a story about the insecurity in Mexico and three stories about the presidential elections, http://www.elmanana.com.mx/default.asp?f=5/5/2012&s=1.

31 Raymundo Ramos, interview with the authors, October 2012.

32 Alfredo Corchado, "Unorthodox Nuevo Laredo police chief's 2006 disappearance just now comes to light," *Dallas Morning News*, February 23, 2012, http://www.dallasnews.com/news/nationworld/mexico/20130223-unorthodox-nuevo-laredo-police-chiefs-2006-disappearance-just-now-comes-to-light.ece.

33 Randal C. Archibold, "Police Chief is Shot Dead in Mexico," *New York Times*, February 3, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/04/world/americas/04mexico.html?_r=0.

34 Jason Buch, "Police chief of Mexico border city missing, brothers killed," *San Antonio Express News*, February 19, 2012, http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Police-chief-of-Mexico-border-city-missing-4290394.php#ixzz2MZo3FxR3.

35 Interview with public official who requested anonymity, February 27, 2013.

Aside from the army, Nuevo Laredo was also virtually abandoned by the federal government. The city is traditionally an Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) stronghold. While President Felipe Calderón (National Action Party, or PAN) visited Ciudad Juárez four times in 2010 alone, he did not visit Nuevo Laredo once during his six-year term, an amazing fact given the enormous economic importance of the area. For its part, the federal prosecutor's office representative reportedly arrived to the city and, after sensing the institutional void, departed after just a few weeks.[36]

"The only ones who concern themselves with the security issue is us. Outside of that, there's no one, no authority. Not the businessmen. Not the church. Not the universities. Not the unions," Ramos explained. "They prefer to run than confront the issue."

The irony is that in Nuevo Laredo there is a Municipal Committee for Citizen Participation, which predates many of the other efforts around the country. This nongovernmental organization was founded in 2002. Using its 189 "community committees," it does diagnostics—producing reports on domestic violence and petty crime—but willfully ignores the larger issue of organized crime. Instead, it focuses on violence prevention, advocating for workshops and lectures in schools and neighborhoods, and, in some cases, providing the infrastructure and logistics to make these events happen.

Fernando Ríos, president of the committee, says his group interacts with various federal government agencies, such as the undersecretary of crime prevention and citizen participation (which is part of the Interior Ministry), and the local office of the attorney general.[37] But these meetings are to discuss issues related to crime prevention, not assess the violence related to drug trafficking or organized crime.

"We don't talk about it because we don't want to seem like we are challenging or replacing any state authority," he explained to the authors. "We are simply a civil society organization participating in preventative measures. We are not an operational group."

Ríos is a former police chief himself. He held the post before Domínguez's death. His survival, he says, was due to his "understanding of the limitations" in his post. He did not elaborate. He advocates for more citizen participation but is careful to keep it confined to "citizen" activities, which he defines in more pedagogical than bellicose terms. He insists that the strength of the Zetas (he notably never says their name out loud) is overblown, and that civil society is active and engaged.

"Nuevo Laredo is not a war zone," he said. "These problems are being dealt with, so that Nuevo Laredo can obtain the peace it needs."

For its part, CINLAC brings together almost all the business sectors of the city, including dentists, construction company owners, and Rotarians, among others.

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36 Ibid.

37 Fernando Ríos, interview with authors, February 28, 2013.

According to Ramos, CINLAC does interact regularly with the government but does not touch public safety issues or organized crime–related violence. It focuses on questions of infrastructure, energy, and communications costs. This may, in part, be due to an "absentee landlord" effect. Numerous business leaders have taken their families to live in Laredo or San Antonio, Texas.[38] By one unofficial count, as many as 500 of 800 owners of the customs brokers companies have left the city.[39]

The only regular interlocutor with the government on security matters in Nuevo Laredo is Raymundo Ramos. He says this interaction began to gain momentum only after the murder of two siblings at a military checkpoint in 2010. He has since met regularly with the Defense and the Interior Ministries. Calderón also met with the parents of the slain children, which Ramos says opened the way for continued dialogue with the army.

"For example, if there's a report about army abuse, I can talk directly with the general in the military garrison. If it's the navy, then they send someone from Mexico City (to speak to me)," Ramos said. "We've got the space to speak with the federal government."

Effectiveness

The only space in which civil society groups dialogue with authorities on security issues is from a human rights perspective. And within that context, it is the presumed violations of the state that concern these interlocutors. Political parties, as a rule in Nuevo Laredo, do not touch security issues. The media completely avoids it. The business sector has minimal engagement. The church is mute. There is, in sum, no one who touches citizen security issues regarding organized crime–related violence in Nuevo Laredo. On the contrary, it is studiously avoided, even by those sectors that are most impacted by it or work directly with potential aspects of it.

What is more, even the limited space created by the Human Rights Committee to speak of alleged state repression is limited and in danger, according to Ramos. Ramos says his interactions with the Interior Ministry and the Defense Ministry are centered on resolving cases rather than talking about institutional changes. In addition, the committee has currency with the federal and not the municipal or state governments. Nonetheless, he was concerned that this space could close with the change of administration from the PAN's Calderón to the PRI's Peña Nieto, with whom he has no contact or interaction.

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38 Pablo Camacho, professor, Texas A&M University-Laredo, interview with authors, March 1, 2013.

39 Interview with public official who requested anonymity, February 27, 2013.

TIJUANA

Background

Tijuana is the gateway to California, the eighth-largest economy in the world and the primary destination for Mexican migrants. The fluidity of that border crossing has long made it one of the most important areas to traffic illegal drugs and contraband. For years, this illegal drug trade was controlled by the Arellano Félix family. In the 1990s, the family's reach extended to its native Sinaloa and beyond. It was led by Benjamín, who was considered the strategist, and Ramón, who was considered the muscle. Various other brothers, sisters, and nephews contributed.

Its violent tactics put it at odds with other criminal groups who competed with the group for territory and influence along the western border area. In the early 1990s, the Arellano Félix Organization, or Tijuana Cartel, as it became known, began a long, drawn-out battle with what would become the Sinaloa Cartel and its leader, Joaquín Guzmán. The fight between the two groups included gunbattles in an airport and a nightclub. The gunfight at the Guadalajara airport in 1993 cost an archbishop his life and pushed the cartel's leadership into hiding.

These were some of the first public battles between drug trafficking groups and set the stage for what would be an arms and paramilitary war. The Tijuana Cartel fought this war by drawing from street gangs in Tijuana and California, the most famous of which was the Logan Street Gang from San Diego. The cartel hired foreign military trainers, and bought sophisticated communications equipment and weaponry. As this paramilitary army grew, so did its costs. In order to pay for it, the leadership allowed individual commanders to draw rent from other illicit activities such as extortion, petty drug dealing, and kidnapping.

For a time, the plan worked. The cartel kept its rivals at bay, expanded in various parts of the country, and increased its local revenues. But things changed quickly after Ramón was killed in 2002, and Benjamín was arrested a year later. Its traditional leadership decimated, the armed cells the group had created began breaking away, seeking business opportunities of their own on the local and international front. New alliances were made and rival groups, such as the Sinaloa Cartel, sought to take advantage.

The resulting chaos led to a violent and unpredictable period in which hundreds, if not thousands, of professionals fled the city, businesses beefed up their security operations, and citizens of all stripes scrambled to take cover. As it was in Ciudad Juárez, kidnappings were a particularly important catalyst for civil society and business organizations that began concerted efforts to push security forces to act on their behalf and not on the behalf of the criminal organizations. With the help of the city's most important business organization, this effort gained some traction and produced results.

Civil Society Responses

In Tijuana, there have been three main actors who participate in civil society-government security interactions. The first was the local chapter of a national business association known as Coparmex. The association combines everything from natural gas providers to large food transport companies. It is one of the oldest in Mexico and operates nationwide. In the 2000s, as Tijuana was slipping into a period of prolonged violence, one of its leaders was Roberto Quijano, a lawyer, who had also led a lawyers association in the state. Coparmex was one of the few voices of a desperate business sector that was being extorted to near extinction and facing down the nearly constant threat of kidnappings.

Along with other business associations, Coparmex sought an audience with both the governor of Baja California and then-President Vicente Fox to address the problems. Soon, the state prosecutor, Antonio Martínez Luna, joined the meetings and they became somewhat more regular. Later, Martínez began to meet with other business sector representatives to exchange crime statistics. This was part transparency, part political ploy: Some statistics came from the Tijuana mayor's office, which was controlled by a rival party and wanted to undermine the state government's efforts.

Coparmex also pushed for the little-used Citizens' Public Security Council (Consejo Ciudadano de Seguridad Pública) to take a bigger role. Space for councils, as noted earlier, had been created on a federal level in 1995. And in 2000, Baja California passed a similar law. Eventually, this would become the second actor to take on a significant role in spurring civil society-government interaction. But in the mid-2000s, there were few active councils around the country. In fact, Tijuana is the only place in which the authors found an active council.

To lead the council, Coparmex got Alberto Capella, another local lawyer. Capella took the job in 2006. However, he found neither the municipal nor the state government receptive to the increasingly urgent security situation and so, in late 2006, he organized a series of marches. The marches took place in various parts of Baja California and had the effect of pushing the issue into the public sphere in an unprecedented manner. By the end of these marches, Baja California Gov. Eugenio Elorduy had united with Capella and the council.

The council is not just about marches. It is made up of eight citizen representatives: five citizen presidents from the state's municipal councils, plus three others from various parts of civil society such as universities or chambers of commerce. The group meets every three weeks to discuss the current situation and active programs.[40] Since Capella became its head, it has produced eight public safety reports and held close to 100 meetings.[41] It has also had a fluid relationship

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40 José Carlos Vizcarra, interview with the authors, September 2012.

41 Marco Antonio Carrillo Maza, *La participación ciudadana en Baja California: a 10 años del Consejo Ciudadano de Seguridad Pública*, (Vizarra, Olmeda, Alvarado editores, 2012).

with government security forces. Capella, for instance, was named Tijuana's public safety chief in 2007. Like Domínguez, his civilian counterpart in Nuevo Laredo, Capella was attacked by gunmen. Unlike Domínguez, he survived, in part, he says, because of the security training he had received prior to taking office.

In 2008, retired army Col. Julián Leyzaola replaced Capella as the city's public safety minister. Leyzaola's appointment was part of a broader militarization of the Tijuana security forces. These military forces form the third actor responsible for increased interaction between the government and civil society in Tijuana. This was in part because, relative to the local and state police, the army was considered a neutral actor in Baja California. Both police units were deeply enmeshed in criminal activities, including directly participating in kidnappings and extortion schemes. This was not the first intervention by the Mexican military in Tijuana's security affairs. In January 2007, Calderón had sent over 3,000 army troops to Tijuana.[42] Under the leadership of Gen. Sergio Aponte Polito, the army created a "unified command," in which it took the lead in security matters in Baja California. In the years that followed, both Aponte and Leyzaola played major roles in lowering the threat and violence level in Tijuana, according to interviews.

They were also open to interacting with civil society. After Aponte arrived in Baja California in 2006, business leaders met regularly with him. Because it was a unified command structure, all the security forces were present at many of these meetings, including the municipal public safety minister, the prosecutor's office, and the federal police's investigative unit, as well as the Citizen's Security Council. In these meetings, the various pieces of the security team explained their strategy to the civil society representatives and asked for public support during their operations. Unlike the Mesa in Juárez, however, Tijuana participants did not directly intervene in these law enforcement activities.

"From citizens' point of view, we were always representing the business sector, but our participation was to listen," said Quijano. "We did not want to, nor should we, get involved. That was not our intention. We saw the information, results, crime statistics. But the involvement of civil society was merely as spectators. Occasionally they asked our opinions. General Duarte is a gentleman. But from the army's perspective, civilians are not part of the strategy."

The business leaders and council members did, however, express their support for the army's presence and for specific programs. The council even prepared the terrain for the army's arrival, Capella noted, organizing a public campaign designed to "*concienciar*" (raise the awareness of) the population.

"We created 30 billboards that said, 'We want the army in the streets,' " Capella said. "We sold the idea."

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42 José Román, Gustavo Castillo, and Antonio Heras, "Miles de fuerzas federales en el operativo Tijuana," *La Jornada*, May 3, 2007, http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2007/01/03/index.php?section=politica&article=003n1pol.

They also sold specific strategy points, the most important of which was an anonymous tip line established by the army. The line's effectiveness was contingent on public participation and on the security forces responsiveness. By several accounts, both were present during the most conflictive years in Tijuana. The participation of the public, however, was not a given. The council tried to change that fact with a public campaign.

After the violence fell, businessmen organizations like Coparmex helped create two organizations to show their gratitude. The first, Tijuana Agradecida, or Grateful Tijuana, gives outstanding police monetary rewards and medals. The second, Patronato de los Militares, provides scholarships for military personnel that do outstanding work in Tijuana.

More recently, a third organization called Tijuana Innovadora, roughly translated as Innovative Tijuana, emerged. Unlike the other two, Tijuana Innovadora focuses on providing training and conferences to civil society, and hosting large social events as a means of revitalizing the city.

Effectiveness

The civil society representatives interviewed for this case study consider their participation critical to resolving the issue of violence in their city. If nothing else, this increased connection between civil society and the armed forces provided Tijuana citizens a filter through which they could determine which security force structure was trustworthy. This is a critical first step in that it led to the resolution of specific cases, particularly kidnap for ransom cases. This had a domino effect on the rest of those afflicted: Suddenly, they saw a state actor that acted on their behalf.

Within this context, the most important direct impact may have been the creation of an effective anonymous tip line. Tip lines have been very hard to create and maintain in Mexico. Criminal groups use numerous means to undermine them, such as direct infiltration, and diversion (by flooding the center with calls), among other tactics. But with the business sectors' backing, the tip lines have obtained and maintained a high level of acceptance and use in the city.

Finally, the interactions in Tijuana seemed to have had a political impact. As political actors saw security actors, such as the army and the police, interacting with civil society and business sector members, they realized the need to do it themselves. As Quijano points out, it was Aponte who opened the doors to these civil society actors, which pushed the Baja California governor to do the same. This led to a better overall relationship between these various actors.

CONCLUSIONS

The experiences of four cities along the Mexico-U.S. border tell us a lot about how civil society interacts with authorities on security matters during times of stress. As noted, it is not easy, and many attempts have not succeeded. These failures came despite legislation that promotes engagement, powerful and charismatic actors who participate in it, and dire circumstances that demand it. Still, rather than dwelling on what does not work, it is important to conclude with what does.

To begin with, it seems important to combine various sectors of the society. From businessmen to professionals to university professors, the larger the combination of actors, the greater chance of mobilizing enough political force and will to gain access. These protagonists seem to have greater success if they are already participating in business associations or chambers of commerce. They also seem to draw strength from personal circumstances, e.g., they frequently have business associates, friends or colleagues who have been impacted by the violence. Juárez is a classic example of how this combination of actors can lead to powerful, direct results. What is more, as the case of Juárez also illustrates, these civilian actors do not necessarily have to be the wealthiest members of the community. In fact, it is likely they will not be, since the wealthiest can and do leave the areas most affected.

Second, the existence of strong civil society groups and business associations is a necessary precondition for successful interaction between government and civil society. The civilian sector needs organized voices and the necessary contacts that can channel grievances and get the authorities' attention. However, strong civil society and business associations do not guarantee that these interactions will lead to results. Monterrey is an unfortunate example where the strength of civil society has not translated into clear results.

Third, there has to be political will at the highest levels. This means the presidency. The limited success in the cases of Juárez and Tijuana both occurred, in part, due to the participation of federal authorities. Local authorities, it seems, respond to the federal government's lead, party differences notwithstanding. The federal authorities also bring money, human resources, and security forces. However, the federalist nature of Mexico can also make for roadblocks, and partisan politics seems more often than not to trump goodwill.

Fourth, the security forces' leaders must take an active role in civil society interactions with the government. In both of the successful cases, there were top-level security forces' involved and participating in meetings between the civil society groups and the government. These leaders are providing information about strategies and responding to the civil society's needs. Direct interaction also breeds confidence, and confidence breeds information, which leads to results, further engendering that confidence.

Finally, there needs to be a clear understanding of what civil society's role is in fostering security. There are some topics that it simply will not be able to broach. Of course, these are tricky balancing acts. Police reform may be difficult to dissect, but police conduct, especially as it relates to human rights abuses, is an absolutely essential part of the civil society agenda. Just how civil society approaches these touchy issues—and in what forum, as the Monterrey example illustrates—could make the difference between a successful interaction and a failed experiment.

Understanding and Addressing Youth in "Gangs" in Mexico

NATHAN P. JONES

INTRODUCTION

Academic and policy analysts have identified Mexican street gangs as a potential looming security threat as Mexico continues its struggle against large drug trafficking organizations (DTOs).[1] However, interviews for this chapter indicated that a security-centric lens on "gangs" only exacerbates youth involvement in gangs, while "social integration" and/or human rights approaches are more effective and less costly.[2]

There is a surprising dearth of scholarly literature on youth gangs in Mexico, particularly in the English language.[3] The Mexican government has released few reports on the issue and has little in the way of descriptive statistics on the gang phenomenon in Mexico because it fails to gather systematic information.[4] Like the early iterations of the Merida Initiative, the Mexican government's response to gangs has been security-centric. However, research in Mexico for this report indicated that the gang phenomenon in Mexico is incredibly diverse, not easily categorized and would be more cost-effectively addressed through a "social policy"

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1 Eduardo Guerrero Gutiérrez, "Pandillas y Cárteles: La Gran Alianza," Nexos, June 2010, http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=13690; Patrick Corcoran, "Street Gangs to Replace Cartels as Drivers of Mexico's Violence," InSight Crime, January 18, 2012, http://insightcrime.org/insight-latest-news/item/2097-street-gangs-to-replace-cartels-as-drivers-of-mexicos-violence; Patrick Corcoran, "Mexico Report Tackles Kidnapping-Drug Trafficking Nexus," July 30, 2012, InSight Crime, http://www.insightcrime.org/insight-latest-news/item/2962-mexico-report-tackles-kidnapping-drug-trafficking-nexus.

2 Gerardo Sauri, of the Mexico City Commission on Human Rights, interview with author, October 16, 2012; Héctor Castillo Berthier, general director of the Circo Volador Program, interview with author, October 17, 2012; Manuel Balcázar, interview with author on *maras* in Chiapas, October 17, 2012.

3 Some Mexican scholars have addressed the issue. José Manuel Valenzuela Arce, Alfredo Nateras Domínguez, and Rossana Reguillo Cruz, eds., *Las maras. Identidades juveniles al límite* (Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Colección Estudios, 2007).

4 A notable exception to this dearth of information on gangs in Mexico was published during the writing phase of this report. See Manuel Balcázar Villarreal et al, *Pandillas en el Siglo XXI: El reto de su inclusión en el desarollo nacional* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Seguridad Pública Federal, 2012).

approach.[5] Indeed, even the word gang or *pandilla* brings with it connotations that lead to false understandings and counterproductive policies.[6] This lack of information about this diverse youth gang phenomenon makes further analysis on this issue all the more necessary.

This report seeks to (1) understand and define the gang issue in Mexico, (2) establish the regional histories and sociologies of what is known about these gangs, (3) understand the causes of youth gang involvement, (4) briefly describe U.S.-Mexico bilateral efforts on youth gang prevention via the Merida Initiative, (5) identify a sampling of existing civil society groups and programs geared specifically toward addressing youth gangs in Mexico and Central America, and (6) provide policy recommendations for the U.S. and Mexican governments on how to best support civil society and strengthen relevant state institutions.

There are numerous programs and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Mexico that are addressing youth gang involvement. This chapter profiles three government-supported NGOs operating in Mexico with strong indications of success, Youth: Work Mexico (International Youth Foundation), Circo Volador, and Cauce Ciudadano. To manage youth gang involvement, the Mexican government's primary goal should be to "scale up" these types of programs and address areas of weak governance that allow gangs to flourish.

METHODS

For this project the author conducted in-depth interviews with scholars such as Héctor Castillo Berthier, government officials such as Gerardo Sauri of the Commission on Human Rights in Mexico City, civil society representatives who work with at-risk youth in Mexico such as the head of the Circo Volador program, and graduate students such as Manuel Balcázar who conducted fieldwork on *maras* in Chiapas. Their insights provided an invaluable context for archival research that included Mexican government and NGO reports, presentations from the Mexican Attorney General's Office, news reports, and scholarly books and articles. The chapter drew upon the author's previous academic research and fieldwork on Mexican drug trafficking networks in Mexico City, Tijuana, Guadalajara, and elsewhere.

YOUTHS IN STREET GANGS IN MEXICO

There is significant regional variation in street gangs in Mexico. Categorizing them is difficult, but given the context of sophisticated organized crime violence in Mexico, it is important to make distinctions between organized crime and

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5 Gerardo Sauri.

6 Ibid.; Héctor Castillo Berthier.

largely youth-based street gangs and understand the history of gangs in the region, including the United States and Central America. Before we can delve into the histories and sociologies of youth gangs in Mexico, we must establish a working definition of this highly "fluid" concept.[7]

Gang Definitions

In a recent report, the Organization of American States "eclectically" defines youth gangs as:

> …a spontaneous effort by children and young people to create, where it does not exist, an urban space in society that is adapted to their needs, where they can exercise the rights that their families, government, and communities do not offer them. Arising out of extreme poverty, exclusion, and a lack of opportunities, gangs try to gain their rights and meet their needs by organizing themselves without supervision and developing their own rules, and by securing for themselves a territory and a set of symbols that gives meaning to their membership in the group. This endeavor to exercise their citizenship is, in many cases, a violation of their own and others' rights, and frequently generates violence and crime in a vicious circle that perpetuates their original exclusion. This is why they cannot reverse the situation that they were born into. Since it is primarily a male phenomenon, female gang members suffer more intensively from gender discrimination and the inequalities inherent in the dominant culture.[8]

This definition is useful for its subtlety and its view of youth in street gangs through a human rights lens instead of a purely security-centric lens. Security-centric views of gangs can increase social stigmatization and thereby serve to exacerbate social marginalization. The academic literature on gangs identifies social and cultural marginalization as a primary cause of gang inception and individual gang involvement.[9]

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice programs provides another useful definition of youth gangs, which helps to exclude other criminal actors.

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7 James C. Howell, "Youth Gangs: An Overview, *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, August 1998; Phelan Wyrick, "Gang Prevention: How to Make the 'Front End' of Your Anti-Gang Effort Work," *United States Attorneys' Bulletin* 54, no. 3 (May 2006), http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Content/Documents/Front-End.pdf.

8 Organization of American States, Department of Public Security, "Definition and Classification of Gangs: Executive Summary" (Washington: Organization of American States, 2007), http://scm.oas.org/pdfs/2010/CP24469E-4.pdf.

9 James C. Howell and John P. Moore, "History of Street Gangs in the United States," *National Gang Center Bulletin* 4 (May 2010), http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Content/Documents/History-of-Street-Gangs.pdf; Valenzuela Arce, Nateras, and Reguillo, *Las Maras*.

A group must be involved in a pattern of criminal acts to be considered a youth gang. These groups are typically composed only of juveniles, but may include young adults in their membership. Prison gangs, ideological gangs, hate groups, and motorcycle gangs are not included. Likewise, gangs whose membership is restricted to adults and that do not have the characteristics of youth gangs are excluded.[10]

Spanish media often refers to gangs as *pandillas* or *maras* interchangeably. Those that distinguish between the two terms usually point to the transnational and more recent character of Central American *maras* versus the local character of *pandillas*.[11] This term, along with *pandillero*, or gang member, has stigmatizing negative social connotations. Thus, human rights advocates tend to prefer the term "youth groups" or *grupos juveniles*.[12]

Within youth gangs are smaller cliques or *clicas*, which are loosely affiliated with larger gangs and help to account for their "horizontal" and "leaderless" character.[13] A 2007 Organization of American States (OAS) report on gangs provides a useful distinction between youth gangs and youth groups: "gangs differ from other juvenile relational models in that they have clearly defined fixed and drastic internal rules whose breach can entail punishments that may even result in death."[14] The report goes on to describe how gangs are "basically [an] urban" phenomenon, and thrive on conflict with state institutions, civil society, and other gangs. This increased rivalry and sense of being different from the rest of society helps to consolidate gang identity; distinguishing them from other youth groups.[15]

The OAS report provides a useful typology of gangs that includes five gang categories: (1) "scavenger (short-lived) gangs," (2) "transgressor" or "youth gangs," (3) "violent gangs," (4) "criminal gangs" and (5) "female gangs," which it identifies as severely understudied.[16] An example of scavenger gangs are school gangs, which are "small to medium sized (15–40 members)" and engage in minor criminal acts "within and around their neighborhood and school." "Transgressor or youth gangs" tend to be larger with "40–80 members" and are engaged in constant protection of their neighborhood from rival gangs. They tend to be more hierarchical and have "ranking standards" and "initiation rites." "Violent gangs" tend to be large, having "100–500 members," and are considered the second stage of gang evolution. They control broader territory dominating neighborhoods through cliques. Criminal

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10 Howell, "Youth Gangs."

11 Clare Ribando Seelke, "Gangs in Central America," Congressional Research Service, 2009, 3–4.

12 Valenzuela Arce, Nateras and Reguillo, *Las Maras*; Manuel Balcázar; Héctor Castillo Berthier.

13 Seelke, "Gangs in Central America."

14 OAS, "Definition and Classification of Gangs," 6.

15 Ibid.

16 OAS, "Definition and Classification of Gangs."

gangs, which have between 50 and 200 members, are considered a third stage of gang evolution because they engage in more complex criminal activities. Transnational *maras* with a presence in southern Mexico are an example of this gang type.[17]

Gangs, not "Cartels"

Given the context of drug-related organized crime violence in Mexico, it is important to distinguish between youth gangs and "cartels," which are more appropriately referred to as drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) or organized crime groups (OCGs), given their inability to control prices.[18] Youth gangs sometimes referred to as street gangs typically control local turf for extortion and drug distribution. They engage in less profitable criminal activities than larger, more sophisticated organized crime groups that focus on drug and arms trafficking and are more geographically dispersed.[19] The youth gang literature also identifies lower levels of hierarchy in youth gangs than in drug trafficking organizations as a distinguishing factor.[20]

Much has been made about the potential alliance between cartels and street gangs. While gangs and organized crime often share common members, most Mexican gangs do not have extensive transnational connections or connections to large Mexican DTOs. One 2009 report on gangs in Monterrey estimated that there were more than 1,600 youth gangs in the metropolitan area and only 20 of those were involved in retail drug sales.[21] In Monterrey, for example, it was argued that the Zetas controlled local street gangs, but the degree and extent of that control is unknown.[22] Also, the presence of the Zetas appears to be weakening in the city according to a report from Southern Pulse that suggests that the Gulf Cartel now controls three-quarters of Monterrey.[23] This may help to delink the gangs and organized crime in the city because the Gulf Cartel is known more for trafficking rather than extortion and kidnapping emphasis of the Zetas, though their business model may be changing following competition with Los Zetas.[24]

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17 Ibid.

18 Colleen W. Cook, "Mexico's Drug Cartels," Congressional Research Service, 2007, www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34215.pdf.

19 Steven Dudley, *Transnational Crime in Mexico and Central America: Its Evolution and Role in International Migration* (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute and the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, 2012), http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/RMSG-TransnationalCrime.pdf.

20 Seelke, "Gangs in Central America," 3.

21 Salvador Frausto Crotte, "Pandillas de Nuevo León," *El Universal*, March 2, 2009, http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/580515.html.

22 " 'Zetas' Usan a Pandillas Para Extender Su Control," *El Universal*, May 8, 2010, http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/678889.html.

23 Steven Dudley, "Two Mexico Cartel Rivals, Once Reeling, Now Resurging," InSight Crime, February 3, 2013, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/2-mexico-cartels-once-reeling-now-resurging.

24 Nathan P. Jones, "The State Reaction: A Theory of Illicit Network Resilience," dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 2011.

Loose "Alliances?"

It should be noted that some youth gangs like Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) have been reported to form alliances with DTOs such as Los Zetas.[25] Central American *maras* also have established relations with prison gangs, e.g., Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) has a historic affiliation with the Mexican Mafia or La Eme prison gang. The nature and extent of these alliances is hotly debated. Most analysts believe that the relations are ad-hoc and operate on an as-needed basis motivated by profit. Recent reports also indicate that Mara Salvatrucha and other gangs prey upon Central American migrants on their way to the U.S. through Mexico through kidnapping, extortion or by providing information on the migrants to larger criminal organizations.[26] There are also reports that Los Zetas are heavily involved in human trafficking along these routes,[27] providing circumstantial evidence of ad hoc cooperation on these shared profit schemes.

REGIONAL GANG VARIATION

Gang structures and sociologies *generally* vary by region in Mexico. Southern Mexican states such as Chiapas and Oaxaca have a significant Central American *mara* presence, while northern Mexican gangs are heavily influenced and in some cases cross-fertilized by U.S. gangs. Central Mexican gangs tend to be characterized as "youth groups," often with minimal criminal activity. It should be noted that these are generalizations based on region and the various gang types may be found beyond these generalized descriptions, e.g., Mexican government reports mention the presence of MS-13, a Central American *mara*, "in 20 of 32 Mexican states."[28]

Southern Mexico and the *Maras*

Some scholars such as Max Manwaring[29] and policy makers now argue that transnational street-gangs known as *maras* threaten the sovereignty of Central

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25 Diana Washington Valdez, "Zetas Cartel-Mara Salvatruchas Alliance in Mexico Unites Brutal Gangs," *El Paso Times*, April 15, 2012, http://www.elpasotimes.com/news/ci_20399497/alliance-unites-brutal-gangs.

26 Dudley, *Transnational Crime.*

27 Dudley, *Transnational Crime.*

28 Procuraduría General de la República (PGR), "Medidas de Acción y Prevención Contra el Fenómeno de las Pandillas en México," March 2010, http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCoQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fscm.oas.org%2Fpdfs%2F2010%2FCP23852-9.ppt&ei=RFaJUKaUF6TC2wXe3ICYCg&usg=AFQjCNEOpXkIds3kRJQAZ_eNa9-eTcqj6g&sig2=_qaH-W9WWhhskjtFSCXKdA.

29 Max G. Manwaring, "A Contemporary Challenge to State Sovereignty: Gangs and Other Illicit Trafficking Organizations in Central America, El Salvador, Mexico, Jamaica and Brazil," Strategic Studies Institute, December 2007: 59.

American nations.[30] Many Central Americans migrated to the United States during the civil wars of the 1980s and 1990s. In some cases they went as children without family structures. When these new immigrants arrived in the United States, existing Mexican street gangs rejected them.[31] Some of these immigrants banded together to form street gangs for protection, such as the infamous MS-13 gang. Many of the members of these gangs were eventually deported back to Central America. Once in their home countries the deportees reformed gangs, which would become the first "super-gangs," or transnational street gangs. These gangs are now highly dispersed and victimize society through crimes like kidnapping, extortion and gang-related homicides.[32]

According to a Mexican Attorney General's Office (PGR) presentation to the Organization of American States (OAS) in January 2010, Central American *maras* such as MS-13 and Barrio 18 are present "in 20 of 32 (Mexican) states," but primarily along the southern border with Guatemala.[33] The degree of the presence varies by locale. Interviews indicated that *mara* presence is heaviest in the southern state of Chiapas, where Central American *mara* members are likely to flee to avoid the mano dura or "strong hand" policies of Central American governments.[34] *Maras* in southern Mexico are a largely urban phenomenon with a "symbolic presence" in rural areas having to do with the fact that they are pushed out of urban centers. This makes targeting urban centers for youth programs all the more advantageous.[35]

Central American governments beginning in 2003 implemented *mano dura* or "iron fist" policy responses.[36] The strategies involved "zero-tolerance" practices of arresting tattooed or suspected *mara* members without due process of law and holding them for up to 12 years at a time on the suspicion of gang membership. The strategy was "incarceration heavy" and may also have included extrajudicial killings. While they initially appeared to improve security, the strategies resulted in overflowing prisons, leading to riots and the release of many gang members for lack of evidence.[37] The policies also led to retaliatory violence from *maras* and increased

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30 Ana Arana, "How the Street Gangs Took Central America," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 4 (May–June 2005): 98; Manwaring, "A Contemporary."

31 Howell and Moore, "History of Street Gangs."

32 Arana, "How the Street Gangs Took Central America."

33 Procuraduría General de la República, "Medidas de Acción."

34 Mano Dura or "Iron Fist" policies were established in El Salvador (2003) and other Central American countries. These policies were characterized by "zero tolerance" of gangs and gang members. Gang members could be arrested for tattoos or "flashing signs" and specialized anti-gang police units were established. The policies typically stigmatized the gang members and the specialized units were accused of human rights violations. Manuel Balcázar; Mo Hume, "Mano Dura: El Salvador Responds to Gangs," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 6 (2007): 1.

35 Manuel Balcázar.

36 Arana, "How the Street Gangs Took Central America," *Foreign Affairs*; Ana Arana, "How the Street Gangs Took Central America," *The New York Times*, June 7, 2005, http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/international/20050501faessay84310_arana.html.

37 Arana, "How the Street Gangs Took Central America," *The New York Times*.

social marginalization, which prevented their "reform and ultimately meaningful reintegration into society."[38] It became clear to Central American governments that arrest and imprisonment alone could not solve the problem and alternative social programs were necessary to divert youth from *maras*.[39] Due to these criticisms, Central American governments shifted to *mano extendida* (extended hand) and *mano amiga* (friendly hand) policies, which tend to focus on alternatives and incentives instead of purely punitive measures.[40] Evidence of the effectiveness of these programs is difficult to find, as is evidence of their ineffectiveness.[41] This stems from the piecemeal nature of their implementation and rising regional violence as a confounding variable. Indeed, the northern triangle countries of Central America (El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala) now have some of the highest homicide rates in the world.[42]

U.S. and Central American gangs tend to draw a large portion of attention in Mexican media and government reports. This may have to do with their established structures, reputations for violence, ease of identification, and the tendency of media and government to focus on potential national and transnational security threats. Indeed, some are establishing relationships with large sophisticated Mexican "cartels," further blurring distinctions between youth gangs and sophisticated transnational DTOs.[43] In contrast, there are thousands of small youth gangs and youth groups in Mexico that are not so easily characterized and have no connection to transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). Treating these groups with the same security-centric focus could be counterproductive, serving to disenfranchise young people through police repression.[44]

Gangs in Northern Mexico

Northern Mexican gangs are heavily influenced and structurally modeled on U.S. street gangs. These include gangs that formed in the United States border region and are present in Mexico such as Barrio Azteca, which formed in El Paso and has a strong presence in Ciudad Juárez. Also included are prison gangs like the Mexican Mafia, also known as La Eme. The Mexican Mafia is a highly sophisticated U.S.-based prison gang, which taxes and exerts authority over the majority of Southern

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38 Arana, "How the Street Gangs Took Central America," *Foreign Affairs*, 98; Oliver Jüterasonke, Robert Muggah, and Dennis Rodgers, "Gangs, Urban Violence, and Security Interventions in Central America," *Security Dialogue* 40, no. 4–5 (2009): 373–397.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Angela Me, Enrico Bisignos, and Steven Malby, *2011 Global Study on Homicide: Trends, Contexts, Data* (Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011).

43 Washington Valdez, "Zetas Cartel-Mara Salvatruchas."

44 Gerardo Sauri; Manuel Balcázar.

California Latino street gangs.[45] The Mexican Attorney General's Office (PGR) has identified it as having a presence in Mexico. Given its business–oriented nature and connections to highly profitable drug trafficking organizations, this "presence" likely consists of intermediaries between prison gangs and Mexican DTOs designed to facilitate the flow of drugs into the highly profitable U.S. consumer market.[46] In reality La Eme is not a youth gang, but a sophisticated organized crime group.[47]

Numerous U.S. street gangs have a significant presence in Mexico, particularly in the northern border region. Examples include collaboration between the Barrio Logan gang (San Diego) and the Arellano Félix Organization (Tijuana Cartel), and the alliance of the Carrillo Fuentes Organization (CFO) and the El Paso–based Barrio Azteca.[48]

When the Arellano Félix brothers (Tijuana Cartel) found themselves in conflict with Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán of the Sinaloa Cartel they relied on David Barron Corona, one of their bodyguards, to recruit from his San Diego-based Barrio Logan street gang and La Eme prison gang to build their enforcer squads.[49] Over time the enforcers for the Tijuana Cartel, who were also members of La Eme and Barrio Logan, grew in number; thus institutionalizing the relationship.[50]

Barrio Azteca began as a street gang in El Paso, Texas and expanded into its sister city, Ciudad Juárez. It also became an important prison gang. During the conflict between the Juárez Cartel (CFO) and the Sinaloa Cartel beginning in 2008, Barrio Azteca played an important role fighting with the Juárez Cartel. Likewise, the Sinaloa Cartel utilized the Artistas Asesinos and the Mexicles to counter the Juárez Cartel and Barrio Azteca.[51] Gangs such as Barrio Azteca are

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45 David Skarbek, "Governance and Prison Gangs," *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 4 (2011): 1–15; David Skarbek, "Prison Gangs, Norms, and Organizations," *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 82, no. 1 (2012): 96–109.

46 "FBI Informant Details Mexican Mafia's Control Over Prisons," KGTV San Diego, February 9, 2010, http://www.10news.com/news/22516591/detail.html.

47 Skarbek, "Governance and Prison Gangs."

48 William Booth, "U.S. to Embed Agents in Mexican Law Enforcement Units Battling Cartels in Juarez," *The Washington Post*, February 24, 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/23/AR2010022305560_pf.html; William Booth, "Mexican Azteca Gang Leader Arrested in Killings of 3 Tied to U.S. Consulate," *The Washington Post*, March 29, 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/29/AR2010032903373.html. (accessed May 2, 2010); Washington Valdez, "Zetas Cartel-Mara Salvatruchas"; Robert Caldwell, "Cartel Secrets," *San Diego Union Tribune*, July 1, 2007, http://ww.uniontrib.com/uniontrib/20070701/news_lz1e1cartel.html; Solomon Moore, "War Without Borders: How U.S. Became Stage for Mexican Drug Feud," *New York Times*, Dec. 8, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/09/us/09border.html?_r=1&pagewanted=print; Doug Farah, "Cartel Hires Mercenaries To Train Security Forces," *The Washington Post*, Nov. 4, 1997; Sandra Dibble, "Split Within Arellano Félix Cartel Leads to More Violence," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, January 4, 2009, http://www3.signonsandiego.com/stories/2009/jan/04/n52766113653-arellano-f233lix-drug-cartel-split-sm/; Nathan P. Jones, "The State Reaction."

49 Drug Enforcement Administration, Lecture Series, "Harrod, Scharf and Zieglar," 2008.

50 Jones, "The State Reaction."

51 Washington Valdez, "Zetas Cartel-Mara Salvatruchas."

known for their sophistication in terms of the type of weapons they sometimes utilize and their use of the Náhuatl language to encrypt communications to avoid law enforcement detection.[52]

Not every gang in northern Mexico has a strong connection to U.S. gangs nor are they as dangerous. Indeed, a 2010 report by Mexico's Public Safety Ministry argued that most gangs in Baja California were not as dangerous as their U.S. counterparts and were principally dedicated to graffiti.[53]

Gangs in Central Mexico

Mexico has low-level youth gangs with minimal criminal activities. Indeed, these low criminality groups may be the largest part of the so-called "gang" problem, a term that may do more harm than good. Central Mexican gang sociology differs greatly from that of U.S. gangs. Due to the drug consumption market in the United States, gang membership is often an occupation that entails working in drug sales and protecting "turf" for the purposes of drug sales.[54] In Mexico, drug consumption has not been high—though this appears to be changing—and thus Mexican youth gang members often have had to seek legitimate employment or engage in other petty crimes to sustain themselves and their families.[55] Expert interviews in Mexico indicated that the number of gang members presently involved in retail drug sales and enforcement was a very small proportion of the overall membership (3–4%), even in *colonias* or neighborhoods where both gangs and drug sales are present.[56]

"Youth groups" with common identifiers, but very loose connections, are particularly relevant in Central Mexico. For example, *reggaetoneros* in Mexico City are sometimes referred to as "gangs." In reality their only connections are their love of *reggaeton* music, associated dance, fashion, occasional vandalism, and confrontations with police they view as repressive to their ostensibly legal activities.[57] This category is not limited to *reggaetoneros*, but includes *los darketos* or "goths," *los emos*, *los punketos*, etc.[58] These groups are included here because they are

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52 Alexander Meneghini, "Barrio Azteca, Más Poderosos Que Zetas," March 17, 2010; Verónica Sánchez, "Liga PGR a narco con 214 pandillas," April 19, 2010, http://www.reforma.com/nacional/articulo/550/10 99846/?grcidorigen=2.

53 Public Safety Ministry, "Pandillas: Análisis de su presencia en Territorio Nacional," August 2010.

54 José Manuel Valenzuela Arce, interview with author on the sociology of gangs in Tijuana versus those in the United States, February 2011.

55 "Growing Drug Abuse in Mexico Adds to Crime and Violence — Frontera Norte Sur," Mexidata.info, February 1, 2010; Sylvia Longmire, "Mexico's Rising Drug Use and Addiction — Who Is to Blame?" October 12, 2009, http://mexidata.info/id2430.html.

56 Héctor Castillo Berthier.

57 Gabriel Stargardter, "Mexico Shudders at Rise of Rebellious Reggaetoneros," Reuters, August 20, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/08/20/entertainment-us-mexico-reggaetoneros –idUSBRE87J0JH20120820.

58 Héctor Castillo Berthier.

the social groupings that may be most prone to gang involvement or conflated with gangs. These groups are also the most easily prevented from joining gangs through cost-effective preventive action by the state and civil society. Further, the same development programs that are likely to reduce *mara* and northern Mexican street gang involvement are likely to benefit these groups as well.

The term *banda* was used to describe these youth groups in Mexico City in the 1980s. Many members of so-called *bandas* were excluded from work and school—essentially giving them what is now described as *nini* status (the so-called *ninis* are those who neither work nor attend school: *ni trabajan*, *ni estudian*)—and were subject to extortion from local police. Often the term *pandilla* or gang, with its concomitant negative connotations, is used to describe them. Today the term *tribu urbano* or urban tribe is also used to describe these youth groups. Human rights workers and academics interviewed for this project prefer the term *grupos juveniles* or youth groups, because it is not a stigmatized term.[59]

Gangs in central Mexico tend to be low on the criminality scale. For example, a 2009 study of Guadalajara found 144 gangs comprising 3,710 members across 65 neighborhoods. Of those, 86 gangs were dedicated to public disorder and graffiti, 12 to car and auto-parts theft, 10 to consumption of drugs and alcohol, 10 to selling/consuming drugs/alcohol and auto theft and 6 to robbing passersby and businesses.[60] Similarly, a study produced in Mexico City found 351 youth *bandas* and gangs in 2007. The delegation of Iztapalapa had about 30 criminal gangs with an average age of 25 that were more frequently linked to organized crime than other regions of the city.[61]

CAUSES OF YOUTH GANG INVOLVEMENT IN MEXICO

The existing literature on youth gang involvement in Mexico identifies many important socioeconomic and psychological factors that contribute to youth gang involvement, including unemployment, a poor educational system, lack of parental involvement, lack of after-school activities, poverty, etc.[62]

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59 Héctor Castillo Berthier.

60 Public Safety Ministry. "Pandillas," 13.

61 Ibid., 17.

62 James C. Howell, "Gang Prevention: An Overview of Research and Programs," Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, December 2010., https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/231116.pdf.

Profile of a gang member

There is an extensive literature profiling gang members and their social characteristics.[63] Among those characteristics identified by the literature and interviews are: aged 12–24,[64] unemployment, lack of education, a family member who is a gang member, "aggressive or violent … experience multiple caretaker transitions … associate with other gang-involved youth,"[65] come from single parent homes, suffer abuse in homes, drug consumption, traumas, and living in poor urban environs with a lack of public services and utilities especially when a large proportion of the population is in poverty.[66] For example, in some cases, Mexican citizens in rural areas do not have birth certificates due to the cost of traveling to attain one or other barriers created by weak state capacity and poverty, making it impossible for some to enter the formal economy.[67]

Economic contributors to youth gang activity

Mexico's economy has shown impressive macroeconomic stability. Following the "unholy trinity" of the 2008 financial crisis, the so-called swine flu epidemic and tourist fears due to drug violence, Mexico's economy contracted by 6 percent.[68] However, Mexico has since had modest but consistent growth and has become a $1.8 trillion economy.[69] In 2011, GDP growth was over 4 percent, outpacing Brazil's 2.7 percent.[70] Mexico continued to outpace Brazil's economic growth in 2012 climbing at 3.5 percent compared with Brazil's 0.9 percent, but slowed in 2013 with 1.2 percent economic growth compared with Brazil's 2.5 percent,

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63 J.P. Sullivan and R.J. Bunker, "Drug Cartels, Street Gangs, and Warlords," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 13, no. 2 (2002): 40–53; Stergios Skaperdas and Constantinos Syropoulos, "Gangs as Primitive States," Papers (1993); A. Valdez, *Gangs: A Guide to Understanding Street Gangs*, 1997: 394; Avelardo Valdez, Alice Cepeda, and Charles Kaplan, "Homicidal Events Among Mexican American Street Gangs," *Homicide Studies* 13, no. 3 (2009): 288; Arana, "How the Street Gangs Took Central America"; J.P. Sullivan, "Maras Morphing: Revisiting Third Generation Gangs," *Global Crime* 7, no. 3–4 (2006): 487–504; Skarbek, "Prison Gangs"; Valenzuela Arce, Nateras, and Reguillo, *Las Maras*; USAID, "Central America and Mexico Gang Assessment," 2006.

64 Howell, "Youth Gangs," 2.

65 Howell, "Gang Prevention."

66 USAID, "Central America and Mexico Gang Assessment."

67 Manuel Balcázar.

68 "Country Statistical Profile: Mexico - Country Statistical Profiles: Key Tables from OECD - OECD iLibrary," October 25, 2012, http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-mexico_20752288-table-mex.

69 CIA, "The World Factbook," https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html. (accessed February 17, 2014.)

70 Elisabeth Malkin and Simon Romero, "Group of 20 Meets in a Mexico Outperforming Brazil," *The New York Times*, June 17, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/18/world/americas/group-of-20-meets-in-a-mexico-outperforming-brazil.html.

according to the OECD. Mexico's economic ministers have suggested that drug violence costs the Mexican economy 1.2 percent of total GDP, which makes Mexico's economic resilience all the more impressive.[71] More recently Mexican Health Minister Mercedes Juan López has suggested that the material costs of the "drug war" alone cost the state 1.3 percent of GDP and if other factors, such as health costs, insurance, private security, and lost productivity are taken into account, the costs may be as high as 8 percent to 15 percent of GDP.[72] While Mexico has made impressive economic strides, poverty remains a problem; "comparing incomes alongside access to health care, education, social security, housing, and food, finds that just over 45 percent of Mexicans are considered poor."[73] Because poverty contributes to many of the underlying social conditions that lead to gang involvement, Mexico has a long road and a great deal of social investment needed to mitigate the gang issue.

Despite positive economic growth, unemployment in Mexico, especially youth unemployment, remains a serious problem contributing to gang involvement. In 2012 the Mexican overall unemployment rate was 5 percent,[74] while youth unemployment for young males aged 15-24 was nearly double at 9.7 percent.[75] The overall youth unemployment rate for 2012 was 9.4 percent.[76] It should also be noted that the underemployment rate is likely close to 25 percent.[77]

Los Ninis

The so-called *ninis* have been identified as a potential contributing factor to insecurity and a drag on the Mexican economy. Unemployed and uneducated youth are also an obvious potential contributor to gang membership, as youth seek alternative sources of "belonging" during idle time and engage in petty crimes to

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71 "Mexico says drug violence cuts 1.2 pct pts off GDP," Reuters, September 1, 2010, http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/09/01/mexico-drugs-idUSN0119285420100901.

72 Patricia Rey Mallen, "Violence Costs Mexico 15% Of Its GDP In Health Care, Security Expenses And Material Losses," International Business Times, November 15, 2013, http://www.ibtimes.com/violence-costs-mexico-15-its-gdp-health-care-security-expenses-material-losses-1471578.

73 Shannon O'Neil, "Mexico Makes It," *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 2 (April 2013): 52–63.

74 "Country Statistical Profile: Mexico - Country Statistical Profiles: Key Tables from OECD - OECD iLibrary," (accessed February 17, 2014), http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-mexico_20752288-table-mex.

75 Yolanda Morales, "OCDE Destaca a México Como País Con Bajo Desempleo," *El Economista*, June 11, 2013, http://eleconomista.com.mx/finanzas-publicas/2013/06/11/ocde-destaca-mexico-como-pais-bajo-desempleo.

76 "Youth Unemployment Rate - Employment and Labour Markets: Key Tables from OECD - OECD iLibrary," http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/youth-unemployment-rate_20752342-table2. (accessed February 17, 2014).

77 CIA, "The World Factbook," https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html. (accessed November 5, 2012).

sustain themselves and their families. However, the reality of *ninis* is complex and being a *nini* is not a permanent state.[78]

Luis Miguel González of *El Economista* identifies a youth unemployment rate of 12.3 percent in Mexico in 2011, indicating that 1.6 million young people between the ages of 16–29 neither work nor study. González also notes that unemployed youth are more likely to be pulled into criminal activity, suffer from mental health issues and be vulnerable to illness.[79] Suicide is also a major problem for young people in this age group. According to INEGI, suicides among 15–24 year olds account for 23.2 percent of all violent deaths.[80]

U.S.-MEXICO BILATERAL EFFORTS ON YOUTH GANG PREVENTION: THE MERIDA INITIATIVE

The Merida Initiative is a U.S.-Mexico partnership that has been an important framework for bilateral cooperation since 2007. It was initiated as partnership to counter organized crime partnership and was security-centric, focusing on military equipment. The United States initially provided $1.4 billion over three years to Mexico and lesser amounts to Central America.[81] The initiative has four pillars: (1) "disrupt capacity of organized crime to operate," (2) "institutionalize capacity to sustain rule of law," (3) "create a 21st century border structure," and (4) "build strong and resilient communities."[82] Pillar IV, "building resilient communities," was added in the Merida 2.0 phase and is particularly important in addressing youth gang involvement.

The initial military equipment was slow to be delivered and U.S. and Mexican government officials have since acknowledged that local and national capacity-building and development efforts characterized by pillars II and IV are where

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78 Rodolfo Tuirán and José Luis Ávila, "Jóvenes que no estudian ni trabajan: ¿Cuántos son?, ¿quiénes son?, ¿qué hacer?" *Este País*, March 1, 2012, http://estepais.com/site/?p=37606.

79 Luis Miguel González, "¿Cuánto Cuestan Los Ninis?" *El Economista*, February 10, 2012, http://eleconomista.com.mx/caja-fuerte/2012/02/10/cuanto-cuestan-ninis.

80 INEGI, "Causas de defunción: Porcentaje de muertes por suicidio con respecto al total de muertes violentas por sexo u grupos quinquenales de edad, 2000 a 2012, http://www3.inegi.org.mx/sistemas/sisept/default.aspx?t=mvio23&s=est&c=22659. (accessed February 17, 2014.)

81 Colleen Cook, Rebecca G. Rush, and Clare Ribando Seelke, "Merida Initiative: Proposed U.S. Anticrime and Counterdrug Assistance for Mexico and Central America," http://www.wilsoncenter.org/news/docs/06.03.08%20CRS%20Report.pdf; U.S. Embassy in Mexico, "The Four Pillars of Merida," http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/7abril/The%20Four%20Pillars%20of%20Cooperation%20Final.pdf. (accessed October 25, 2012); Diana Villiers Negroponte, "Merida Initiative & Pillar IV—Addressing the Causes of Mexican Criminal Violence: What Role for the USAID?" Mexico Institute AL DÍA column, December 15, 2010, http://mexicoinstitute.wordpress.com/2010/12/15/al-dia-merida-initiative-pillar-iv-%e2%80%93-addressing-the-causes-of-mexican-criminal-violence-what-role-for-the-usaid/.

82 It should be noted that Pillar IV was added later in the Beyond Merida or Merida 2.0 phase. U.S. Embassy, "The Four Pillars of Merida."

resources now need to be allocated in order to address Mexico's long term security issues.[83] This has led to a re-evaluation of the Merida Initiative, which is sometimes referred to as "Beyond Merida" or "Merida 2.0."[84]

The government of Mexico acknowledges it must fund its own social and development programs to expand state capacity in a sustainable fashion. Pillar IV of the Merida Initiative is primarily funded by the Mexican government and through programs such as the Todos Somos Juárez (We are all Juárez) program. It has devoted 3.38 billion pesos in Ciudad Juárez, making the city a testing ground for Merida Initiative funded concepts and programs.[85]

Most Merida funds for development on the U.S. side are administered through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and help to fund important initial projects. The Mexican government has been particularly interested in "proof of concept" from USAID-funded programs.[86] Proof of concept is understood to mean that the Mexican government is interested in seeing effective program concepts tested and measured for success so that these programs can be scaled up and expanded throughout the country. Measuring success of small-scale development programs is particularly difficult, leading some to question the effectiveness of development programs to combat or prevent youth gang activity; however, as Jütersonke et al. point out, "absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence."[87] The work of USAID, NGOs, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) have been valuable insofar as they have demonstrated the efficacy of various programs and provide the technical know-how in establishing pilot programs. Beyond the government of Mexico, the private sector in Mexico, particularly in Monterrey, has demonstrated a willingness to fund and operate programs that would benefit youth prone to gang activity. Awareness that these are pilot programs, which will have funding and support from domestic actors, bodes well for their long-term sustainability and effectiveness.[88]

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83 It is now estimated that funding is closer to $1.8 billion. Cook, Rush, and Seelke, "Merida Initiative: Proposed U.S. Anticrime and Counterdrug Assistance for Mexico and Central America"; Clare Ribando Seelke and Kristin Finklea, "U.S.-Mexican Security Cooperation: The Mérida Initiative and Beyond," Congressional Research Service, August 16, 2010, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a528272.pdf; Randal C. Archibold and Damien Cave, "U.S. Braces for Mexican Shift in Drug War Focus," *The New York Times*, June 10, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/11/world/americas/us-braces-for-mexican-shift-in-drug-war-focus.html.

84 Seelke and Finklea, "U.S.-Mexican Security Cooperation."

85 U.S. Embassy in Mexico, "Cd. Juárez Action Plan 'Todos Somos Juárez: Reconstruyamos La Ciudad,'" May 2010.

86 Telephone interview with USAID official, October 2012; USAID, http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/usaid-history.

87 Jütersonke, Muggah, and Rodgers, "Gangs, Urban Violence," 14.

88 Interview with USAID official.

EXISTING YOUTH GANG PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN MEXICO

Given the nature of youth gang involvement, programs and groups which may not be specifically geared toward preventing youth gang participation, have important salubrious effects. Effective schools and sports programs often divert students away from gang involvement. Job training programs, drug rehabilitation, counseling and family counseling are all examples of programs and services that can address the root causes of gang involvement. Programs and groups run by former gang members like Homeboys United and Cauce Ciudadano may provide gang members with a psychological means by which to exit gang life.[89]

Programs that address gang involvement can be divided into three general types: prevention, intervention, and suppression. Prevention is generally far cheaper and safer than intervention and suppression because the latter two can result in retaliation from gang members.[90] Intervention on the other hand focuses on attempting to remove gang members from gang life and reintegrate them into society. Groups such as Homeboy Industries provide valuable job training and social services to gang members attempting to exit gang life.[91] The group serves as an example of a successful intervention program that can be more broadly applied. Suppression focuses on law enforcement activities designed to capture and punish gang members. Suppression is the least cost-effective type, but often gets the lion's share of funding given the tendency to view these problems through the security lens. It should be noted that a comprehensive gang strategy should include varying degrees of all three types with "hard-core" gang members being targeted for suppression and intervention and potential youth initiates being targeted for prevention.

Drug rehabilitation programs

Drug rehabilitation centers help would-be and former gang members end drug use. From 2002–2008, drug abuse in Mexico rose, especially in the northern region among males 18–24, but has since stabilized.[92] Drug rehabilitation centers have proliferated in the last decade in Mexico. Drug rehabilitation center financing from the Merida Initiative was funded through the State Department's Bureau of Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and supported the training of 600 new

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89 Cauce Ciudadano, *Cauce Ciudadano, Quiénes Somos?* http://www.cauceciudadano.org.mx/quienes_somos.html. (accessed October 30, 2012.)

90 Interview with USAID official.

91 Homeboy Industries, *Homeboy Industries*, http://www.homeboyindustries.org/. (accessed August 12, 2013.)

92 Lauren Villagran, "As Mexico's Traffickers Ship Drugs North, They Leave Addicts in Their Wake," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 25, 2013, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Americas/2013/0125/As-Mexico-s-traffickers-ship-drugs-north-they-leave-addicts-in-their-wake.

counselors trained in a "standardized curriculum developed with support from the Organization of American States (OAS) Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission and Merida assistance." According to INL, plans to train 5,000 new counselors are under way. "Mexico's 2012 budget for addiction-related activities (including alcohol and tobacco) is approximately $84 million."[93]

Drug rehabilitation centers in Mexico have been criticized for various shortcomings including: 1) A lack of professionally trained staff, 2) being at risk of high-profile *narco* and gang attacks as a result of being perceived as recruitment centers for rival gangs, 3) overcrowding, and 4) having an insufficient number of locations to meet the rising needs of Mexican society.[94] It is clear, based on INL and Mexican government statements, that the lack of drug rehabilitation centers with trained personnel has been identified and plans to address it are under way.[95] The success of those plans will depend upon the effectiveness of implementation.

Violence in Ciudad Juárez

No city has been harder hit by drug violence in Mexico than Ciudad Juárez. In 2007 the Sinaloa Cartel was fighting the combined forces of the Gulf Cartel and its armed wing Los Zetas for control of the lucrative point of entry in Nuevo Laredo.[96] Seeing no end in sight, the Sinaloa Cartel shifted its aggression from Nuevo Laredo to Ciudad Juárez and began a bloody struggle with the Carrillo Fuentes Organization (Juárez Cartel) to control the city. The struggle exploded with increased homicide rates in 2008. Homicide rates in Juárez remained high until early 2012, when, according to the Chihuahua state prosecutor's office, there was a 59.8% drop in murders over the same six-month period in 2011.[97] The cartels involved in the struggle for the city utilized local gangs like the Artistas Asesinos and the Barrio Azteca. The use of violent low-level enforcers exacerbated rates of crime and violence. Juárez became the "murder capital" of Latin America, a distinction it lost in

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93 Ibid.; Department Of State, "Country Reports - Honduras through Mexico," March 5, 2013, http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2013/vol1/204050.htm.

94 Marc Lacey, "Gunmen Kill 19 at Drug Rehab Center in Northern Mexico," The New York Times, June 11, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/12/world/americas/12mexico.html; Anne-Marie O'Connor and William Booth, "Mexican Drug Cartels Targeting and Killing Children," *The Washington Post*, April 9, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/mexican-drug-cartels-targeting-and-killing-children/2011/04/07/AFwkFb9C_story.html; "Attack at Tijuana Rehab Center Kills 13," KPBS, July 4, 2011, http://www.kpbs.org/news/2010/oct/25/witness-attack-tijuana-rehab-center-kills-13/. (accessed November 5, 2012).

95 Department Of State, "Country Reports - Honduras through Mexico."

96 John Burnett, "Nuevo Laredo Returns To Normal As Violence Slows," NPR, January 23, 2009, http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=99742620.

97 Alejandro Martinez-Cabrera, "Juárez Slayings Decreased 59.8% First Half 2012," *El Paso Times*, July 14, 2012, http://www.elpasotimes.com/news/ci_21074666/juarez-slayings-decreased-59-8-first; Geoffrey Ramsey, "Despite Shake Ups to Mexico's Underworld, Juarez's Uneasy Peace Will Stand," InSight Crime, October 25, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/juarez-uneasy-peace.

2012 to San Pedro Sula of Honduras.[98] There was a silver lining in Juárez's high levels of violence. It attracted government and NGO resources and made Juárez the center for finding solutions for Mexico's drug related violence.

Todos Somos Juárez

In response to rising violence in Juárez, many NGOs entered the city. The federal government of Mexico initiated a program known as Todos Somos Juárez or "We are all Juárez." Todos Somos Juárez was announced after a Jan. 30, 2010, birthday party massacre of 15 people, mostly youths,[99] in Villas de Salvárcar, Juárez. Drug traffickers claimed to believe rivals were in attendance at the party.[100] The Juárez program was in many ways intentionally modeled upon the city of Medellín, Colombia's response to organized crime-related violence in the 2000s that emphasized large infrastructure projects to increase the number of safe spaces for youth in the city.[101]

Todos Somos Juárez is an example of an overarching government and civil society partnership in Mexico that can bring together societal support for youth gang prevention programs. While it was a federal program, it included state and local government representatives and invited the public to participate in 15 open workshops on a range of topics.[102] It also institutionalized "tables" where local citizens could participate, provide feedback, and identify issues of contention. Human rights activists have criticized these tables because the government generally controls them, steering funding toward high-profile infrastructure projects, thus limiting the real impact citizen participation could have. Despite this, institutionalizing citizen participation in governance appears to have had a real impact in galvanizing the city's response to violence. Todos Somos Juárez was beneficial to overall gang prevention and employment programs because it provided an overarching framework for government and civil society cooperation.[103]

Juárez has seen a significant reduction in violence. There has been an extensive debate on whether this can be attributed to Todos Somos Juárez or other factors

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98 Geoffrey Ramsey, "Honduras: Home to the New Ciudad Juarez?" InSight Crime, January 17, 2012, www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/honduras-home-to-the-new-ciudad-juarez.

99 Lorena Figueroa, "Juárez families, neighborhood scarred by 2010 massacre," *El Paso Times*, January 29, 2013, http://www.elpasotimes.com/juarez/ci_22470601/i-am-stillin-disbelief?source=pkg.

100 Jorge Ramos, "Todos somos Juárez ha sido un éxito: Calderón," *El Universal*, February 18, 2012, http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/831056.html.

101 Ana Lagner, "Esperanza para Juárez, estrategia Medellín," *El Economista*, June 10, 2011, http://eleconomista.com.mx/sociedad/2011/06/10/esperanza-juarez-estrategia-medellin.

102 "'Todos Somos Juárez' Program, Explained," Justice in Mexico, March 2010, http://justiceinmexico.org/2010/03/18/%e2%80%9ctodos-somos-juarez%e2%80%9d-program-explained/.

103 International Youth Foundation, *Youth: Work Mexico*, http://www.iyfnet.org/youth-work-mexico. (accessed October 29, 2012.)

such as the dominance of the Sinaloa Cartel in its conflict with the Juárez Cartel.[104] Some have also credited the "get-tough" policies of Julián Leyzaola, the Juárez public safety chief who previously presided over a similar reduction of violence in Tijuana, but who in both cities was accused of human rights abuses.[105] Most analysts believe the reduction of violence in Juárez can be explained by all factors to greater or lesser degrees coalescing, although many point to the potential negative long-term consequences of zero-tolerance policies.[106]

Youth: Work Mexico and Entra21

One of the specific programs implemented in the backdrop of Todos Somos Juárez was *Entra21*, which was developed in Latin America and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) to train young people with relevant skills for the job market.[107] Entra21's Juárez iteration began with an assessment of local employers and the work skills they needed from young people. Relationships with local employers were developed and employers committed to offering program participants internships. If these internship reviews were positive, the understanding was that participants would be offered jobs with the employer.[108]

Youth: Work Mexico also identified significant dropout rates as students moved from primary to secondary school (the equivalent of moving from elementary to middle school). More than 3,000 students dropped out at this critical juncture.[109] By meeting with parents and conducting focus groups, Youth: Work Mexico identified numerous reasons for this dropout rate.[110] For example, each *colonia* has a primary school but not necessarily a secondary school. This meant that parents had to send their children out of their local neighborhoods on public transportation in an insecure city. Many parents and students were afraid to do this. Further, public schools require a tuition payment, which while small and symbolic, posed a barrier for some parents.[111]

Youth: Work Mexico implemented by the International Youth Foundation through a USAID grant, began immediately instituting summer camp programs in Ciudad Juárez in 2010, designed to target these students who were not registered

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104 Ramsey, "Honduras"; Martinez-Cabrera, "Juárez Slayings Decreased."

105 William Finnegan, "In the Name of the Law: A Colonel Cracks Down on Corruption," *The New Yorker*, October 18, 2010, http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/18/101018fa_fact_finnegan #ixzz12ONN9dAn.

106 Manuel Balcázar.

107 International Youth Foundation, *Youth: Work Mexico*.

108 Carlo Arze, head of Youth: Work Mexico in Ciudad Juárez, telephone interview with author, October 9, 2012.

109 Ibid.

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

for school. The goal was to convince parents to register their children and overcome the barriers that prevented them from doing so. They negotiated with local schools to extend registration deadlines and were successful in registering a significant proportion of these students, preventing them from becoming *ninis*. Of the summer program participants in 2010, 2011, and 2012 that had just completed primary school and not enrolled in secondary schools, 87% were able to register late and were placed in secondary school the next year.[112]

Youth: Work Mexico, as "a youth to youth initiative," serves as an example of best practices for youth gang prevention in Mexico and beyond. First, it allied with and incorporated existing youth groups in Juárez. Second, it incorporated existing youth gangs and turned them into positive social forces, which promoted their program and engaged in outreach work. Third, it was culturally sensitive. When recruiting in potentially violent neighborhoods it was careful to ask permission from local gang leaders to avoid unnecessary violence.[113]

Circo Volador

Another program that helps to prevent gang involvement by addressing root social causes is the Circo Volador program. This program began in the 1980s as an outgrowth of the youth research of Héctor Castillo Berthier, professor of sociology at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico (UNAM). Due to his previous research on youth in Mexico City, the Mexican government tapped Castillo to understand, and work to eliminate, violence among gangs in Mexico City. In his initial research, he identified music as a common denominator among youth in the city. In an attempt to establish youth outreach, Castillo established a radio show for young people to express themselves in Mexico City. The show was canceled due to a young person cursing the Mexican president, but the networks of youth contacts created by the radio show participation allowed further research.[114]

Later Castillo found an abandoned space and asked his network of contacts what it should be used for. The youth contacts suggested a physical space for theater and art, which they renovated themselves. The program goal became to take an illicit skillset and turn it into a productive, employable skill. For example, youth engaging in graffiti could be converted to artists and graphic designers. Radio shows produced histories of neighborhoods. The production of the shows required interviews by young people of neighborhood residents. According to Circo Volador program leaders, this had the salubrious effect of connecting the

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112 Ibid.

113 Ibid.

114 Sedesol, *Histórico Sedesol*, comunicados, Tijuana, Baja California, November 13, 2010, http://www.sedesol2010.sedesol.gob.mx/index/index.php?sec=10&clave_articulo=386; Héctor Castillo Berthier; Circo Volador, *Centro de Arte y Cultura*, http://circovolador.org/index.php/circo-volador/historia/46-cvhistoria. (accessed October 29, 2012.)

neighborhood youth to older residents and the resulting dialogue brought the two groups closer together.[115]

Today the Circo Volador program has expanded beyond Mexico City to 10 cities. The Social Development Ministry (Secretaría de Desarollo Social, or Sedesol) of the Mexican government provides funding for organizer salaries. The program begins with a diagnostic stage that takes two to three months and includes an initial intervention. The communities selected have generally high levels of violence, high poverty, and are located in highly marginalized areas without basic services like water and electricity.[116]

The initial intervention by Circo Volador uses cultural activities to build trust in the community such as: movies, Internet radio shows from local youths, and art and music exhibitions. Organizers ask questions like: What skills do local youths have that can be professionalized? How do youths view violence? As victims or as aggressors? How does the community view youths? Often the answers indicate that there is segregation between youths and adults that allows young people to become a scapegoat for the social ills of the larger community.[117]

A one-year intervention process follows the diagnostic and initial intervention. This includes workshops to professionalize existing skills. The skillsets are used to discuss themes of violence and to unite the community. Radio shows create histories of the neighborhood, uniting neighborhood generations and changing "perceptions on both sides of the age spectrum."[118] Participants have also created comic books that explore issues of violence in relationships. These types of projects generate self-reflection for youths that in turn changes their self-image and relationship with the community.[119]

Cities and neighborhoods are identified using Sedesol's Levels of Social Violence Index and are typically high in homicides, assaults, and arms in addition to lacking infrastructure like pavement, water, electricity, etc. Circo Volador has a total of 70 employees nationwide. A four-person permanent team is based in each of the following cities: Tijuana, Juárez, Tapachula, Playa del Carmen, Federal District, and San Luis Potosí. Circo Volador aspires to self-sufficiency in funding by soliciting donations from local businesses and institutions using the logic that the program reduces crime and creates a safer neighborhood. However, the program is still heavily dependent upon Sedesol funding.[120]

The program emphasizes safety when working in violent locales. First, all employees are trained to avoid "being a hero" and to remove themselves from

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115 Héctor Castillo Berthier.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid.

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

danger. Second, because local drug dealers observe the program by planting spies in workshops, program organizers make it clear that they are not interested in eliminating drug dealing; rather they only want to address youth issues. Program organizers consistently find that in a neighborhood with over 100 youth, typically only three to four are involved in local dealing; corroborating the notion that less than 3–4% of the population stigmatizes the vast majority of youth uninvolved in the drug trade.[121]

Cauce Ciudadano

Cauce Ciudadano is another example of a Mexican NGO successfully working with at-risk youth in Mexico City. Led by ex-gang member-turned–activist Carlos Cruz, its mission is to "prevent, reduce and eliminate violence generated by young people, as well as play the same role in various development circles including family, school, and neighborhood."[122] The organization provides life-skills training to young people "to strengthen protective factors, reduce risk factors, and promote healthy lifestyles for them to lead full lives free of violence," as well as boost "individual and community resilience."[123] These life skills include: "health promotion," "resilience," "the prevention of psychological and health problems," and the promotion of "social responsibility by linking personal responsibility" to broader responsibilities to "family, school and society."[124]

Cauce Ciudadano provides important training to "civil society organizations" and "members of government agencies working with young people." One example of Cauce Ciudadano's collaboration with another NGO and private sector entity is its work with the Ashoka NGO, which collaborated with Danone to provide life skills training to the door-to-door and street sales staff of Danone products in Mexico City.[125] This project focused on women working in the informal sector, aiming to incorporate them in the formal sector with jobs that provided "full social benefits." Employment and life skills training of women resulted in improved family structures and likely reduced the probability of gang involvement within these families. Cauce Ciudadano also conducts career training, provides conflict

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121 Ibid.

122 Cauce Ciudadano, *¿Quiénes Somos?*

123 Ibid.

124 Cauce Ciudadano, *¿Quiénes Somos?*; Cauce Ciudadano, *Trabajo de Calle*, accessed October 30, 2012, http://www.cauceciudadano.org.mx/trabajo_calle.html. (accessed October 30, 2012.)

125 Cauce Ciudadano, *¿Quiénes Somos?*; Carlos Cruz - Cauce Ciudadano Partner with Danone Semilla. mov, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bzwuTeo_Jw&feature=youtube_gdata_player; Carlos Cruz and Cauce Ciudadano presentation, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okfnIsfS2ak&feature=youtube_gdata_player; Education Ministry, Cauce Ciudadano, "La Secretaría de Educación Pública y Cauce Ciudadano A.C. convocan a organizaciones de la sociedad civil a participar en la implementación del proyecto 'Equidad: El respeto es la ruta' 4a etapa," http://mujeroaxaca.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/ConvocatoriaOSC.pdf. (accessed October 30, 2012.)

mediation directly with local gangs and youth groups to convert gangs and youth groups into positive social forces within their communities.[126]

Gang Prevention and Intervention Programs in Central America

The Washington Office of Latin American Affairs (WOLA) has profiled youth gang prevention programs in Central America that can serve as examples for Mexico. In Guatemala, "Ceiba Group" is an NGO that provides mentors and after-school programs for at risk-youth. The group also provided training to local youth to become mentors in addition to opening centers, which provide safe public spaces for library and Internet services.

Paz y Justicia in Honduras is run by the Mennonite Church and works with homeless youth to "cultivate" leadership in an effort to prevent gang initiation. The NGO also provides tattoo removal funding in conjunction with the Catholic Church.[127] The NGO has served roughly 320 youth and has limited police involvement in intervention programs to raise youth trust levels.[128] These programs, like the Mexican programs profiled in this report, emphasize human rights, life skills, and youth to youth strategies in their gang prevention efforts.

Measuring success of these programs in the context of reduced violence is impossible given the small scale of the implementation of these programs and the weak state capacity of Central American governments. Policy makers rather should seek to achieve a "tipping point" or "critical mass" of these type of development programs, while strengthening critical institutions such as the judicial, law enforcement, penal, and educational systems.[129]

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The framework of the Merida Initiative should be continued and built upon with an increased emphasis on development capacity building in Mexico and

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126 Cauce Ciudadano, *Capacitación Para El Empleo*, http://www.cauceciudadano.org.mx/empleo.html. (accessed October 30, 2012); Cauce Ciudadano, *Trabajo de Calle*.

127 A fundamental weakness of this report is a lack of information on the significant role of the Catholic Church in gang prevention in the region. This lack is attributable to the time and resource constraints of the report and the fact that many Catholic Relief Service programs, while very effective in gang prevention activities, have a very limited media profile, are highly localized and are difficult to contact. This should not be construed as a failure to recognize the critical role these groups play in gang prevention throughout the hemisphere; Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), "Atreviéndose a querer: Respuestas comunitarias a la violencia pandillera juvenil en América Central y comunidades de inmigrantes centroamericanos en Estados Unidos," August 27, 2009, 39, http://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/Citizen%20Security/past/Atreviendose_a_querer.pdf.

128 Ibid, 37–40.

129 Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: from Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0654/2005048867-t.html.

Central America. In many ways, this is occurring and should be deepened. It must also be recognized that Merida funding is a small fraction of what the Mexican government is spending on these types of programs and reforms.

Through Merida Initiative funding, USAID has supported NGOs and local civil society groups that have on a small scale successfully engaged in youth employment training programs. These programs like Youth: Work Mexico, Circo Volador and Cauce Ciudadano should be "scaled up," and expanded to more cities throughout Mexico. Initial statements and plans from the new Peña Nieto administration indicate it plans to do just this by expanding the Todos Somos Juárez model to 251 cities with over $9 billion in funding from the Mexican federal government.[130]

Circo Volador and Youth: Work Mexico currently function in Ciudad Juárez and are expanding to other cities such as Tijuana, where they recently graduated 112 youth.[131] Though Youth Work: Mexico is still in the implementation phase and is yet to be formally evaluated, it has successfully applied best practices in the Mexican context as evidenced by similar procedures used by Circo Volador and Cauce Ciudadano. These programs should be applied in large cities throughout Mexico, especially those hardest hit by drug violence like Monterrey, where private sector funding is available and likely to be supportive.[132] Where private sector funding may be lacking, federal government funding for projects is critical.

Below is a list of recommended policies for the Peña Nieto administration to address youth in street gangs in Mexico.

1. **Emphasize development funding.** Current funding to address drug related violence in Mexico is heavily weighted toward the security apparatus including the military, the police, the penal system, and the judiciary. While these are critically important governance sectors, development funding to prevent Mexican youth from entering the judicial and penal system is also a cost effective use of resources. Localized programs such as Todos Somos Juárez can serve as models for the wider emphasis on development funding and as previously mentioned, initial indications from the Peña Nieto administration indicate that an expansion of this program is forthcoming.[133]

2. **Employment training programs with life skills components.** Youth: Work Mexico, Circo Volador, and Cauce Ciudadano all incorporate methods that train youth in valuable skills, but also address underlying psychological and social issues, like traumas and self-esteem, that make young people

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130 "Mexico unveils new strategy in war on drugs and for preventing crime," Associated Press, published in *The Guardian*, February 13, 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/feb/13/mexico-strategy-drug-war. (accessed February 14, 2013.)

131 U.S. Consulate, Tijuana, "112 Graduates from Youth Employability Program in Tijuana-USAID," January 11, 2013, http://tijuana.usconsulate.gov/grad_usaid.html.

132 "Lorenzo Zambrano, Cemex, y La Lucha Contra La Violencia Del Narcotráfico," *The Wall Street Journal*, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB128708875386747251.html. (accessed May 23, 2012).

133 Associated Press, "Mexico Unveils New Strategy."

susceptible to gang involvement. Likewise addressing these issues makes young people valuable to employers, further reducing their propensity to become involved in gangs. Increased program funding for these and similar programs can be administered via grant programs through Sedesol or other government agencies. To expand these types of programs they must be "scaled up" and adopted by government agencies. This will first require long-term funding of institutions and programs. Second, leaders of these NGOs must be utilized to "train the trainers." Third, the Mexican government must have a willingness to accept localized failures and to adjust these programs and the metrics by which they are assessed to local and institutional conditions.

3. **Institutionalized police–youth dialogue forums.** Interviews with officials of the Mexico City Commission for Human Rights indicated that there were moments in Mexico City where dialogue between youth and police was encouraged and resulted in salubrious policy proposals. One such time followed the News Divine nightclub tragedy where police arrived to arrest underage drinkers at an overcrowded club and the ensuing stampede resulted in the death of nine youths and three police officers.[134] Unfortunately these moments of dialogue required tragedies and were not institutionalized into regular local forums to increase dialogue between police and youth in the city. Regularized forums for dialogue would improve the relationship between youth and local police by eliminating the mutually held negative perceptions and providing a forum for youth civic participation that will yield valuable policy prescriptions. Mexico City's public safety chief recently announced the creation of a new unit to address youth crime and gangs. This unit could provide an institution to lead and organize youth, civil society, and police dialogue and serve as a model for Mexico.[135]

4. **Education.** The Education Ministry (Secretaría de Educación Pública, or SEP) should establish an anti-gang curriculum to provide children with the necessary tools to make appropriate decisions about gang membership, particularly in Mexico's south where *mara* presence is strongest. Further, extending the hours of the school day and number of days of school could help occupy more youth time.[136]

5. **National surveys on youth gang involvement in Mexico.** According to an OAS report on youth gangs:

    > In Colombia and Mexico, there is very little legislation on gangs and, therefore, a paucity of specialized institutions for

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134 "Criticism Surrounds Prison Sentencing in 'News Divine' Case," Justice in Mexico, August 19, 2012, http://justiceinmexico.org/2012/08/19/criticism-surrounds-prison-sentencing-in-news-divine-case/.

135 Gerardo Jiménez, "SSPDF anuncia ante embajada de EU grupo para combatir pandillas," *Excélsior*, October 6, 2013, http://www.excelsior.com.mx/comunidad/2013/06/10/903396.

136 Balcázar et al., *Pandillas en el Siglo XXI*, 187.

tackling the problem. In addition care delivery mechanisms
are insufficient, isolated, and poorly coordinated. This
situation requires enactment of new legislation consistent with
a rights–based approach.[137]

Thus, the country's national statistics agency, the National Institute of
Statistics and Geography (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía,
INEGI), should be funded to begin gathering systematic nationwide
data on gangs and youth group involvement. Because this data is likely
to be tightly correlated with statistics on development, INEGI should
work closely with Sedesol to develop the type of data to be gathered and
implement these surveys.

6. **Increased funding for the study of youth gangs in Mexico.** Through
    grants to academic institutions the Mexican government should offer
    graduate and postgraduate funding for academics studying the youth gang
    and youth group phenomena in Mexico. Anthropological, sociological, and
    political science fieldwork–based research will be particularly valuable to
    supplement quantitative data produced by INEGI.

7. **Safe public spaces.** Invest in the construction of safe social spaces for
    young people including after-school programs, recreational centers, and
    spaces for music concerts and art. Merida Initiative funding has been
    utilized in Juárez to build "prep schools" that also serve as after–school
    and sports recreational centers in poor *colonias*. These infrastructural
    development projects expand state educational capacity and provide
    adolescents with after-school options, giving them alternatives to criminal
    activities and or victimization.

8. **Drug rehabilitation programs.** Increasing funding for drug rehabilitation
    programs to address gang intervention is necessary. These programs and
    centers must professionalize treatment providers and institute accountability
    and transparency mechanisms, while protecting the privacy of patients.

9. **Create a Mexican National Gang Alliance.** Mexican government
    funding could support conferences and information sharing between civil
    society, relevant law enforcement institutions, and government officials. In
    the United States, the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations
    (NAGIA) brings together "22 state and regional gang investigator
    associations."[138] Gang expert interviews in Mexico indicated that Mexico
    currently suffers from an "atomization" of agencies with knowledge of the

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137 OAS, "Definition and Classification of Gangs," 12.

138 National Alliance of Gang Investigators' Associations, *N.A.G.I.A.*, http://www.nagia.org/. (accessed
November 1, 2012.)

gang phenomenon.[139] Unlike the law enforcement focus of the U.S. NAGIA, the Mexican version should emphasize civil society participation.

10. **Gang Truces and Peace Zones.** The recent and apparently successful gang truces in Central America suggest these strategies might be effective in addressing Mexico's *mara* and gang problems. El Salvador has created peace zones in which local gangs agree to cease all gang and criminal activity in designated municipalities. This is the second phase of the gang truce in El Salvador between the largest *maras*, MS-13 and Barrio 18, that appears to have successfully reduced homicides.[140] Due to the apparent success, other Central American nations such as Honduras are attempting to replicate them. While tentative and experimental at best, the peace zone concept might be applicable to Mexico, especially in southern states such as Oaxaca and Chiapas that have the strongest *mara* presence.[141] Civil society groups, in particular the Catholic Church and other religious groups, have played a critical role in the negotiations of these truces in Honduras and El Salvador and could play an important role in the establishment of truces with *maras* in Mexico. There has been significant internal debate in both the Salvadoran government and the Catholic Church on whether or not the gang truce is a good idea.[142] Some fear legitimizing the gangs as political actors, while others fear the government is admitting that it is powerless to stop the gangs.[143]

Because of the role of higher-level organized crime groups such as cartels in Mexico being responsible for a higher percentage of homicides, a gang truce might not have the same impact on homicides in Mexico as it did in El Salvador. This does not mean that it might not be an effective strategy for reducing localized violence and diverting gang members into job training programs and the legitimate economy. There are localized examples of non-aggression pacts between street gangs throughout Mexico, e.g., eight gangs signed a non-aggression pact before local authorities in León, Guanajuato. A program called León is with the Young, which included sports, recreational activities, and self-employment workshops designed to steer the young away from vandalism and drugs, complemented the pact. While this may seem small in the context of León's 991 gangs, this is an example of programs

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139 Manuel Balcázar.

140 Geoffrey Ramsey, "Guatemala, Honduras May Replicate El Salvador Gang Truce," InSight Crime, May 24, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/guatemala-honduras-may-replicate-el-salvador-gang-truce.

141 Tom Boerman, Central America researcher, interview with author, January 30, 2013; Elyssa Pachico, "El Salvador Gangs Accept Proposal to Create 'Peace Zones,'" InSight Crime, December 5, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/el-salvador-gangs-accept-peace-zones.

142 Steven Dudley, "5 Things the El Salvador Gang Truce Has Taught Us," InSight Crime, March 12, 2013, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/5-things-el-salvador-gang-truce-taught-us.

143 Ibid.

that can and should be scaled up to include more gangs and services over time.[144] Similar gang peace pacts have been made in Guadalajara and Monterrey.[145]

CONCLUSIONS

While Mexico's gang problem appears significant, there are examples of government, private sector, and civil society efforts to address it that appear, at least qualitatively, effective. There are examples of successful gang programs and best practices at the local level in Mexico, but they are slow to be expanded nationally. Interviews indicated Mexico suffers from an "atomization" of efforts addressing the gang phenomenon.[146] The dizzying complexity of gangs in Mexico also makes formulating policy difficult. While media may portray youth as violent *pandilleros*, *mareros* and *narcos*, many so-called gang members are in reality youth group members of "urban tribes" linked only by music and fashion. Addressing these youths through security-centric and "zero-tolerance" policies only serves to disenfranchise them and exacerbate the problem of social marginalization. The complexity of this issue means that addressing youth gang involvement will be tied to other issues such as education reform, after-school, and employment programs.

Todos Somos Juárez has succeeded in providing a successful framework for civil society, private sector, and government cooperation on efforts relating to the gang phenomenon. As it stands now, it is simply too small and localized to have an impact on the broader issues of drug related violence and gang involvement in Mexico. Todos Somos Juárez and the successful programs like Youth: Work Mexico, Cauce Ciudadano, and Circo Volador should be funded for more rapid expansion throughout Mexico. One city is insufficient; Todos Somos Juárez should be expanded to more cities in Mexico with appropriate accountability and transparency mechanisms. Under the framework of programs like Todos Somos Juárez the policy recommendations suggested here can be implemented. Indeed, the new administration in Mexico appears intent upon ongoing implementation of this strategy.[147] Continued support for the deepening and sufficient funding of these policies must continue to ensure their successful implementation.

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144 "Pandillas firman un pacto en León," *Vanguardia*, February 10, 2013, http://www.vanguardia.com.mx/pandillasfirmanunpactoenleon-1480299.html.

145 Mendoza Navarro, "Pacto de Paz Entre Pandillas," *El Occidental*, March 13, 2013, http://www.oem.com.mx/eloccidental/notas/n2913493.htm; "Rayados apoyan pacto de paz de pandillas," Mediotiempo.com, November 17, 2011, http://www.mediotiempo.com/futbol/mexico/noticias/2011/11/17/rayados-apoyan-pacto-de-paz-de-pandillas.

146 Manuel Balcázar.

147 Shannon K. O'Neil, "Refocusing U.S.-Mexico Security Cooperation," prepared statement before the Senate Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere and Global Narcotics Affairs, Council on Foreign Relations, June 18, 2013, 4, http://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ONeil_Testimony.pdf.

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MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES TARGETED BY VIOLENCE

The Victims' Movement in Mexico

LAUREN VILLAGRAN

Before, the violence existed. Ciudad Juárez has always been stigmatized for its femicides, but (the violence) has risen to another level. Before, there was violence but it was on a smaller scale. Later you began to see shootouts, crime scenes just feet away. Dead people.

Before, there was a maxim: Those who died needed to die, people involved in the business. That changed in 2008 when the violence began to climb and that rule was broken. Now it does not matter who is in the way.

In March 2010, my family and I became part of the violence. My younger brother— because of a mix-up, because of the crossfire—became part of it. They came looking to kill the other man he was with, the target of the attack. We had to live through this. I was not prepared. (The shooting) happened between my mother's house and my house, in the street, in the light of day—the way these things happened then. The way they still happen.

I had to take care of the paperwork, identify the body, go to the funeral home. The government does not respect the suffering of people. They take your information. They tell you to prepare yourself for what you may see: perhaps the body has been quartered. I identified my brother. His body was not very damaged, just two bullets.

I did not want to denounce the crime. What is the point if they are not going to do anything? Those were the days of 10, 12 homicides per day. I said, 'I just want you to give me the body for the burial.'

—Juan Carlos, Ciudad Juárez, Excerpts from telephone interview, August 2012

INTRODUCTION

After a more than six-year assault on drug trafficking organizations and organized crime in Mexico, the human toll has risen to more than 70,000 dead and more than 27,000 disappeared. The dead and missing are the physical victims of the country's fight against organized crime. But for every human life lost or person missing, many others suffer the mental and emotional pain of the loss; the increased risk of threats and violence inherent to association with someone killed or kidnapped; and the "double victimization" often meted out by the justice system itself, at times unwittingly, at times with intent to abuse power.

Today, numerous organizations work on behalf of victims in Mexico, providing moral support, attention to mental and physical health, guidance for denouncing crimes, and protection for human rights. Yet the power of civil organizations to help victims heal their wounds inevitably falls short when it comes to victims' primal need: justice. Which is why many civil organizations and networks dedicated to protecting victims have made reform of the justice system and a law to protect victims their top goals—both of which have been passed into law but have been inadequately implemented in practice.

These organizations are led and supported in a large part by victims themselves. Victims have become the most visible advocates for the changes they want to see in Mexico, and they have galvanized the nation to reconsider how society views victims of violence and revamp how the country's justice system operates. As the number of victims in Mexico has grown dramatically, the breadth of organizations *of* victims and *for* victims have brought together those who have experienced violence firsthand or who have survived the loss of someone close and provided a common front to defend their rights and articulate their goals.

Rifts exist. Although unified in their personal suffering and desire for justice, victims' organizations in Mexico are at times disparate and divided by politics, resources, and beliefs about the best path forward. Still, taken together this paper argues they represent a burgeoning social movement. Their respective goals— around justice and protection for their rights as victims—remain more closely related than their frequent inability to reach common ground would suggest. That they encompass widespread and growing groups as drug violence goes on, that many regions of the country have seen victims' organizations spring forth in recent years, and that their ultimate goal—justice—is unified even if their means are not always, suggests the makings of a movement. Mexico has a long history of civic engagement by and on behalf of victims, from the dirty war of the 1960s and 1970s forward. But this paper purposefully focuses on the organizations that have emerged in response to the rapid buildup in organized crime in Mexico over the past two decades. The civic initiatives that have emerged during this time set an important example in a country where people are often driven to angry and violent responses to crime, violence, and injustice. A February 2012 legislative study calculated at least 50 cases per year of *linchamientos*, or public lynchings, of presumed criminals (some of whom are innocent) as a result of rising violence and intractable impunity.[1]

What is certain is that crime victims in Mexico have never been as visible—or as vocal—as they are today. Previously, victims of violent crime faced stigmatization by society and the government, which often prevented them from turning to authorities. High levels of impunity for criminals and a perception of inefficacy,

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1 "Alerta estudio por aumento de casos de linchamientos en México," Notimex/*Milenio*, February 19, 2012, http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/e20b3f03d115db8b6dbe7311d7cd4cf4.

inefficiency, and collusion on the part of the state provide powerful disincentives. What is more, denouncing a crime has in the past further exposed victims to retaliation on the part of the perpetrators, which may also be the authorities. Hence Mexico's dismal track record for reported crimes, which amount to only 22 percent of total crimes committed.[2] A belief that "bad guys kill each other" or that victims "must have had it coming" was widespread in Mexico until the numbers of dead and missing began to rise sharply during the drug war, and more and more lives have been stung by the horrors of violent crime. As civilian casualties of both the government's assault on organized crime and the warring between rival drug cartels have risen, so has society's indignation.

MEXICO'S CRIME VICTIMS

What defines a "victim" in Mexico? How many victims are there? What are the issues and challenges that crime victims face in Mexico? The answers to these questions have direct implications for public policy in Mexico, as the country debates how to put the 2013 victims' law to work and create the legal framework necessary to support a 2008 reform of the justice system.

The 'Black' Number

Mexico's impunity rate hovers between 96 percent and 98 percent.[3] As a result, the belief that crimes will go uninvestigated and unpunished is widespread in Mexico and contributes to the dismally low reporting of crimes. The 78 percent of crimes that go unreported is known as the *cifra negra*, or what's known in Mexico as the "black number." México Evalúa defines the *cifra negra* as the "body of crimes committed that do not form part of those registered by authorities."[4]

   In order to get a better sense of the true scope of criminal activity and victimhood, civic organizations initiated a victims' survey in 2002 through the Citizens' Institute of Studies on Insecurity (ICESI). The study, which was taken over by the government statistics agency INEGI in 2010, aims to capture the incidence of "common" crimes among adults 18 years of age and older. The survey does not cover incidents related to organized crime or drug trafficking; possession of firearms exclusive to the military, human trafficking, or other crimes associated with the drug war. The 2012 National Survey on Victimization and Perception

2 Catalina Palmer Arrache, *Victimización, incidencia y cifra negra en México: Análisis de la ENSI-6* (Mexico: Instituto Ciudadano de Estudios sobre la Inseguridad [ICESI], 2009).

3 Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity, "Seguridad Ciudadana y Derechos Humanos en México" (paper presented before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States, 2001).

4 Leticia Ramírez de Alba Leal, *Índice de Víctimas Visibles e Invisibles de Delitos Graves* (Mexico City: México Evalua, 2011), 9.

of Public Security by INEGI reported the number of households with at least one adult victim of crime at 9,261,721—or nearly 31 percent of Mexican households.

Between March and April 2012, two-thirds of Mexicans perceived the country as unsafe; only half of respondents in the INEGI survey said the authorities did a "very effective" or "moderately effective" job at combating insecurity. The survey further reports that the top three reasons cited for why a crime was not reported were the inefficacy of authorities, lost time, and no confidence in the authorities.

Counting Victims

Because few people report crimes and social stigmatism prevents many victims from speaking out, one critical contribution of the victims' movement has been the gathering and analyzing of crime data. Another has been the collection of previously undocumented cases of victims. Both efforts have served to provide the public and government with a picture of the true scope of the problem. México Evalúa tackled the question with its 2011 Index of Visible and Invisible Victims of Serious Crimes, an index it designed as an initial effort to measure the extent of the issue. The report states in its introduction:

> Until now, neither federal nor local authorities have been able to adequately measure the criminal phenomenon, given that complete information is not available to know who, when, how, where, and why violent crimes are committed in certain areas of the country, nor how many people are affected directly or indirectly by these crimes, since these crimes take their toll on numerous victims, both visible and invisible. The visible victims are those who are usually taken into account in registries and public policy and the invisible ones are the people who suffer the effects of crime but whom we neither take into account nor measure. [5]

Drawing on information supplied by the National System of Public Security (SNSP)—a compilation of statistics gathered by local *ministerios públicos*, or public ministries, which handle crime investigations—México Evalúa extrapolated an estimation of the number of victims of crime in Mexico in recent years. The SNSP numbers correlate to *reported* crimes, and as such México Evalúa warns that its estimations necessarily fall short because they do not take into account the untold number of unreported crimes. (The report presumes that the rate of reporting has held relatively steady over the roughly 18-year period covered.) Yet its findings have provided some of the first "hard" data on victimhood in Mexico.

Crime has grown nearly without pause over the past 18 years in Mexico, increasing through the consecutive presidencies of Ernesto Zedillo (1994–2000), Vicente Fox (2000–2006), and Felipe Calderón (2006–2012), México Evalúa

5 Leticia Ramírez de Alba Leal, Índice de Víctimas.

reports. The monthly average of serious crimes—specifically homicide, extortion, kidnapping, and armed robbery—during Zedillo's six-year term totaled 6,308. That number climbed to 7,629 during the Fox administration. During the Calderón government, the monthly average of these crimes surged nearly 75 percent to 13,331, compared with the previous six years. Homicides, kidnapping, and extortion all spiked after Calderón deployed tens of thousands of soldiers in December 2006 and charged them with the task of combating crime, especially drug trafficking organizations.

México Evalúa totals the number of visible and invisible victims of serious crimes between 1997 and 2011 at 12,993,010—of which 3,208,213 are "visible" victims while 9,784,797 are the "invisible" victims. The vast majority are victims of armed robbery (91.9 percent), while smaller percentages are victims of homicide (6.5 percent), extortion (1.3 percent) and kidnapping (0.3 percent).

It should be noted that victimhood affects Mexican families in uneven ways. For example, 9 in 10 homicide victims are male. Mexico's statistics agency INEGI registered 261,649 incidences of homicide between 1990 and 2009. A third of those cases were married men killed during their productive years, meaning that in just two decades almost 90,000 women became widows; 180,000 children lost their fathers; and given that the active workforce in Mexico is still predominately male, many of those families lost their primary breadwinner.

Estimating the Uncounted

The Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (Movimiento por la Paz con Justicia y Dignidad, MPJD) inspired many "invisible" victims to come forward. Ignited by the poet Javier Sicilia, who lost his son Juan Francisco Sicilia Ortega to violent crime in 2011, the movement was perhaps the first to give voice to the forgotten and unseen victims of the drug war—many of whom lack the economic resources and political clout that are often prerequisites for securing justice in Mexico. The "voice" came in the form of widespread media coverage examining the human cost of the security crisis in Mexico, as well as case-by-case documentation of unsolved crimes. The movement's "Caravans for Peace" drew attention to the thousands of invisible victims of the drug war and other violence. The first caravan in June 2011 reached 11 cities, including violence-wracked Ciudad Juárez, Torreón, and Monterrey, while the second caravan in September 2011 covered 18 cities, including Xalapa, Oaxaca, and Acapulco. In 2012, the Caravan launched its first international tour from the San Diego border to Washington, D.C.

The movement's documentation commission spearheaded an effort to register case studies along the way—the qualitative data, in essence, to show Mexican society who the victims are. The commission collected hundreds of stories in a format resembling a police report, noting the victims' age, sex, occupation,

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AN MPJD CASE REPORT

Seventeen-year-old Gabriela Arlene Benítez Ybarra went missing from her home in Xalapa, Veracruz, sometime between 7:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. on June 13, 2011. Her mother, Barbara Ybarra, said goodbye to her daughter before leaving for work in the morning but when she returned to pick up a forgotten item, Gabriela was not in the house. Barbara called her phone but received no answer and assumed Gabriela had gone out. Later, with still no sign of her daughter, Barbara went looking for her at school; she spoke to the gardener in the park where Gabriela often jogged; she visited her boyfriend's house. No one knew anything. That night, Gabriela did not come home.

Barbara told the Documentation Commission of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity: "The investigations ran their course, but [the authorities] never did anything. They did not investigate. The hypothesis was that the perpetrators were a local gang, someone close to the house. There has been no progress." The authorities charged with looking into the disappearance tried to criminalize Gabriela, suggesting, without evidence, that perhaps she was involved with organized crime.

On September 23, 2011, Gabriela was found murdered. The body appeared in a place the police said they had searched before. "I believe the body was planted in this place to cover up the true perpetrator," Barbara said.

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residence, and civil status; the date and time of the crime; and a report of the events as dictated by the victim or a survivor in the case of disappearance or homicide.

All told, the documentation commission collected information on some 700 cases. Roberto Villanueva worked as part of the commission during his participation in the northern and southern caravans as a representative of the National Center for Social Communication A.C. (CENCOS). The documenting of cases had the dual goals of getting victims on record and giving them a face and a name, he said. Many of those who spoke out had never denounced the crimes they now chose to report. In an October 2012 interview, Villanueva said: "As a movement initiated by victims, the victims themselves were the ones to call out to other victims. They came; they spoke. … We wanted to demonstrate that an organized society has no reason to fear, that there are more of us who want peace."

Through the commission's work, a familiar snapshot emerged of the dead and disappeared: The majority of victims were male, under 30, often either a student or blue-collar worker. Yet the reports to the commission of murders, disappearances, and kidnappings cut across socioeconomic and generational lines. The constant among all of them was impunity: Few cases have been resolved.

'Double Victimization'

It is important to mention that crime victims are only part of the equation. The government has a responsibility to protect its citizens, yet abuses of power are prevalent throughout the system—*doble victimización*, or "double victimization," has become a central theme for victims' organizations in Mexico. The Mexican government continuously plays the alternate roles of protector and aggressor, in ways both subtle and overt. Criminals create victims; at times, so does the system.

Those accused and sentenced of a crime are frequently subject to a lack of due process and even various forms of torture and inhumane treatment, which are pervasive in both the civilian and military justice systems. On the civilian side, Mexican police agencies and prosecutors frequently abuse the rights of crime suspects as a means to extract forced confessions or simply to inflict extralegal punishment. "Perp walks" featuring bruised and battered crime suspects illustrate that many of the most serious human rights violations in Mexico take place inside of civilian police barracks. The Calderón administration regularly paraded captured suspects of organized crime before television media, all but confirming their "guilt" before a trial had taken place.

The Calderón administration's counter-drug offensive, which deployed some 50,000 troops to fight organized crime in cities and communities in hard-hit areas around the country, frequently had the unintended consequence of increasing violence and human rights violations as takedowns of top criminal bosses sparked fresh battles for territorial control. The deployment of soldiers who lacked training in community policing into the streets also opened the door to human rights violations by the military such as forced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and torture.[6] In 2012, the Defense Ministry (SEDENA) ranked No. 1 among all government agencies in terms of complaints for human rights violations filed with the National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH).[7] The federal Attorney General's Office (PGR), federal police, and the Navy Ministry (SEMAR) also ranked in the top 10 agencies with the highest number of reports of human rights violations.

The Calderón administration acknowledged these violations but maintained that any misconduct was isolated and neither a systematic nor structural problem.[8] Yet the MPJD disagrees and has made returning soldiers to their barracks a central tenet of the movement's platform. The Washington Office on Latin America

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6 Maureen Meyer, "Abused and Afraid in Ciudad Juarez: An Analysis of Human Rights Violations by the Military in Mexico" (Washington: Washington Office on Latin America; Mexico City: Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center: September 2010): 1.

7 Liliana Álvarez, "Sedena, autoridad con más quejas ante la CNDH." AnimalPolitico.com, August 4, 2012, http://www.animalpolitico.com/2012/08/sedena-autoridad-con-mas-quejas-ante-cndh/.

8 Felipe Calderón, "El Presidente Calderón en la Entrega del Premio Nacional de Derechos Humanos," Dec. 9, 2011, http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/2011/12/el-presidente-calderon-en-la-entrega-del-premio-nacional-de-derechos-humanos-2011/.

and the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center (Centro Prodh) offer a similar recommendation in their September 2010 report, *Abused and Afraid in Ciudad Juarez: An Analysis of Human Rights Violations by the Military in Mexico.*

> Effectively withdrawing the military from public security tasks is an essential element to disentangle public security and national security responsibilities within Mexico's security bodies and to ensure the resources and energy necessary to strengthen civilian law enforcement institutions.

The report goes on to recommend that military abuses be investigated and prosecuted by civilian, rather than military, authorities—another point on which the MPJD agrees. As noted previously, not all victims groups feel the same way. The new administration of Peña Nieto has made no public statements on how the government plans to utilize troops nor has it released a timeline for their withdrawal from crime-fighting responsibilities.

In the end, though, the public typically has little sympathy for crime suspects— equating custody with guilt—but, whether guilty or innocent, if you are arrested and accused of a crime, you will probably be a victim, too. The number of reports of torture and poor treatment by authorities registered with the CNDH rose from 392 in 2007 to 1,669 in 2011, according to statistics compiled by Amnesty International. Over that five-year period, reports of torture and poor treatment filed with the CNDH totaled to 4,841, most of them complaints against state and municipal police.[9] Amnesty International reports that it knows of no case in which any government agents or agencies accused of torture has been convicted. When the state is unaccountable, society is the victim and no suspect—guilty or innocent—is safe.

Not Guilty, but Condemned

Rights violations extend to a more subtle, yet no less damaging, injury: the stigmatization of victims. This comes most often in the form of accusations that a victim was somehow involved in criminal activity or perceptions that the violence was deserved. From the outset, the Calderón administration made claims that more than 90 percent of those killed in the drug war were criminals—claims that were quieted late in the administration only after survivors' repeated outcries. Such stigmatism damages survivors' search for justice and their ability to seek support in their communities.

Of the poor treatment victims often encounter as they seek justice in a crippled system, the businessman Eduardo Gallo, whose 25-year-old daughter was kidnapped and killed in 2000, explains: "You confront the fact that on the one

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9 Amnistía Internacional, "Culpables Conocidos, Víctimas Ignoradas: Tortura y Maltrato en México," 2012.

hand you were a victim of crime. Then you are a victim of the attorney general's office that sees your case. Then you are a victim in the courts of the abuse that also happens in the judicial branch—not as much in the federal arena but without a doubt in the state arena. Or you become a victim of other things that come up along the way." Among those "other things" is the stigmatism associated with being a victim in Mexico, especially of violent crime.

When someone is targeted by organized crime, comments such as *algo tenía que ver*" or "*solo se matan entre ellos*" inevitably arise—meaning, loosely translated, "they must have had something to do with organized crime" or "criminals only kill other criminals." Such characterizations were part and parcel of the government's communications and the media's representation of events during the Calderón administration.

That was until January 31, 2009, when gunmen descended on a party of young people in Ciudad Juárez, massacred 15 people and injured a dozen others. Calderón's first public response to the tragedy was to characterize the youth as gangsters. Yet it was false: The 11 youths murdered in the neighborhood Villas de Salvárcar were hard-working high school students and athletes. The public protest against Calderón's statement prompted the interior minister to issue an apology 10 days later.[10]

Yet, sadly, there was nothing extraordinary about the government stigmatizing the victims of violent crime. A similar case occurred with the death of two students of the prestigious Institute of Technology and Higher Studies of Monterrey (ITESM), who were shot dead by soldiers in crossfire near campus on March 19, 2010. When authorities prematurely labeled the dead boys criminals, the outcry from students' friends and family was immediate. The CNDH would later reveal that soldiers moved the bodies of Javier Francisco Arredondo Verdugo and Jorge Antonio Mercado Alonso, and weapons were planted with the aim of altering the crime scene to suggest the students were gunmen.[11]

By lumping perpetrators and victims together, the Mexican government— and perhaps society at large—sidesteps the difficult questions at the root of the problem of crime: *why* men and women choose to join criminal gangs, traffic drugs, humans, and contraband, work as assassins, kidnap, torture, and kill. When perpetrators and victims are the same, when the "why" questions go unanswered, society has less reason to look inward, to mourn, and to repair—in whatever way possible—its loss.

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10 "Masacres en México: recuento de la violencia." CNN.com, September 16, 2012, http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/11/24/villas-de-salvarcar.

11 Juan Alberto Cedillo, "El Tec recuerda a dos estudiantes asesinados en 2010 durante un tiroteo," CNN.com, March 15, 2012, http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2012/03/15/el-tec-recuerda-a-dos-estudiantes-asesinados-en-2010-durante-un-tiroteo.

THE VICTIMS' RIGHTS MOVEMENT: A TIMELINE

The above issues illustrate the precarious position of victims in Mexico's recent upsurge in crime and violence. Victims are often afraid to come forward, and often go unheard or unsatisfied when they do. In the worst cases, victims find themselves abused by the very system that is meant to protect them. Meanwhile, individuals accused of a crime find themselves victimized as well, as human rights violations have proliferated in the drug war. In response to these challenges, millions of victims have begun to clamor for justice, recognition, and reparation on what has reached the scale and importance of a nationwide movement. Three critical issues have contributed to the crescendo, each generating new organizations led by victims themselves: the hundreds of women murdered in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua City beginning in the 1990s; kidnappings, often but not exclusively of the wealthy, also beginning in the 1990s; and the deaths and disappearances that have been a consequence of the drug war—with all three waves of violence related to organized crime. The following represents a timeline of the founding of some of the most influential organizations promoting victims' rights in Mexico, although dozens more are working in many regions of the country.

1997: 'Mexico United Against Crime'

On May 6, 1997, Josefina Ricaño de Nava's son, Raul Nava, a young engineer and director of the family banana company, Grupo Navafruit, was kidnapped.[12] Six months passed before his body was discovered. This personal tragedy served as motivation for the creation of Mexico United Against Crime (México Unido Contra la Delincuencia, MUCD) a year later in conjunction with other victims of violent crime. In its early years, the group organized around two missions: providing orientation to victims and making demands of authorities on behalf of victims. MUCD assumed a leadership role in uniting victims under a single banner with a 2004 march dubbed "Let's rescue Mexico" that drew hundreds of thousands of citizens dressed in white onto the streets and central plaza of Mexico City.

MUCD has largely advocated for public policies that attack the roots of insecurity—police corruption and a lack of economic and educational opportunity—as well as supporting campaigns that encourage more victims to report crimes. MUCD provided an early push for gathering data on victims through a partnership with Consulta Mitofsky to carry out a quarterly poll called the "Survey of Citizen Perception of Security in Mexico." Today, the organization states its objective is to "be a link between society and authorities to join forces in

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12 Blanche Petrich, "En el estrado, solitaria voz: 'solapar, ¿no es traición a la patria?' " *La Jornada*, August 27, 1998, http://www.jornada.unam.mx/1998/08/27/en.html.

favor of security, legality, and justice."[13] The organization has also been vocal on the issue of drug decriminalization.

MUCD became both a refuge and channel for social activism for others like Ricaño de Nava, including Gallo and Dr. María Elena Morera, whose husband was kidnapped in 2000 and survived. (She would later found another victims' group, Common Cause.) Gallo would personally search for and deliver to authorities the perpetrators of his daughter's murder—a response that has defined several of Mexico's most high-profile kidnapping cases (see breakout).

Although MUCD has in recent years been criticized for its handling of funds and the participation of executives who have been implicated in scandal, the organization remains a player in the national dialogue for improved public security in Mexico.

2002: 'Justice for Our Daughters'

Justicia para Nuestras Hijas is a nonprofit organization dedicated to seeking justice for the hundreds of women raped, tortured, murdered, or who have disappeared in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua. The serial femicides that drew widespread international condemnation during the past decade continue, although news of the women's murders has in recent years been overshadowed by the death toll of the drug war. The organization describes its founders as mothers who live in the city's *barrios*, who take public transportation, have a primary school education, and earn minimum wage.

The mission of Justice for Our Daughters is "to find the girls and women who have disappeared in Chihuahua state and to propel access to justice for the victims and their families."[14] The organization lists among its goals raising public awareness of the issue, accompanying victims through legal processes, providing legal and psychological counseling, as well as offering workshops to inform and empower the mothers of victims.

Justice for Our Daughters in Chihuahua and other Ciudad Juárez-based organizations engendered one of the first waves of civil defenders of victims' rights, at the same time that MUCD was uniting the call against violent crime and kidnapping in Mexico City. Their outcry for justice has been echoed on a national scale by the organizations that have followed. The organization works to protect the human rights of victims, search for the missing women, document cases, provide guidance to families seeking justice, and lobby the government at all levels to keep the disappearances on the political agenda.

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13 Mexico United Against Crime, "Mission," http://www.mucd.org.mx/Misión-c8i0.html.

14 Justicia para Nuestras Hijas, "Misión," http://justiciapnhijas.wix.com/justicia-para-nuestras-hijas-desaparecidas/mision.

JUSTICE IN THEIR OWN HANDS

Eduardo Gallo and Isabel Miranda de Wallace both lost their children at the hands of brutal kidnapping rings. They also both took the decision to investigate the crimes on their own.

After police found the bodies of three of Paola Gallo's kidnappers and detained a fourth in the days and weeks after her death, the investigative authorities of Morelos state closed the case. Gallo protested that the evidence did not add up; more people had to have been involved. The district attorney told him, "You're not a police officer; you're a father."[15] Gallo, who had directed a national hotel chain and now worked as a consultant, left his job behind and became his own private detective. He was determined to solve the case himself.

Gallo studied the case, went door to door in Tepoztlán—the small pueblo south of Mexico City where Paola was kidnapped—interviewing locals, and discovered that people knew exactly who belonged to the band of criminals. With the support of a district attorney, Gallo delivered his first capture eleven months after his daughter's death: Francisco Zamora, alias Apache Dos, the man who pulled the trigger. Gallo would later deliver to the state two more individuals involved in the crime ring.

Miranda de Wallace assumed the reins of the investigation into the death of her 31-year-old son Hugo Alberto Wallace Miranda following a July 2005 kidnapping. It was "desperation and impotence" that drove her to investigate on her own, she said in a 2010 press interview. "I had lost one of my children, my most precious possessions, and no one seemed to care."[16] Indeed, during the negotiations for Alberto's release, the family went to the authorities and the kidnappers found out—suggesting official complicity and putting her son's life at risk. The case became famous when the family posted billboards with the faces of two of the suspected authors of the crimes. Miranda de Wallace would ultimately seek and find five of the six kidnappers responsible. (Authorities would apprehend a sixth five years later.)

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15 John Carlin, "Héroes Mexicanos: Eduardo Gallo," *El País*, August 26, 2004, http://elpais.com/diario/2004/08/26/opinion/1093471207_850215.html.

16 Diana Amador, "Madres Mexicanas que han convertido su dolor en estandarte," CNN.com, May 10, 2010, http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2010/05/10/isabel-miranda-de-wallace-mi-hijo-victima-de-un-sistema-inoperante.

2005: A 'Stop' to the Violence

After the kidnapping and death of her son (see breakout), Isabel Miranda de Wallace founded *Asociación Alto al Secuestro*, or Stop the Kidnapping, to promote an anti-kidnapping law. The General Law to Prevent and Punish Crimes of Kidnapping (*La Ley General para Prevenir y Sancionar los Delitos en Materia de Secuestro*) took effect in February 2011. Alto al Secuestro, much like MUCD, provides support to "direct and indirect" victims of violent crime.[17] Additionally, Alto al Secuestro has supported the creation of other citizens' groups whose objective is to promote security and respect for victims' rights.

2008: México SOS

Businessman Alejandro Martí's 14-year-old son, Fernando Martí, was kidnapped in June 2008. Martí runs a sporting goods business bearing the family name and a chain of upscale Sports City gyms. The armored BMW that delivered Fernando to school each day was stopped by a team of men dressed as agents of Mexico's now defunct Federal Investigation Agency, or AFI. The armed men kidnapped Fernando, a chauffeur, and a bodyguard. The family paid a ransom of more than 5 million pesos to no avail. The kidnappers killed Fernando and abandoned his body in a car in Mexico City in July 2008. The bodyguard survived and became a witness to the investigations. Twenty-two suspected members of a band of kidnappers that included federal agents have been detained, although only one had been sentenced as of 2012.

Martí founded Fundación México SOS in November 2008 with the goal—like the organizations that preceded it—of "putting an end to the crisis of insecurity" and "crisis of governability" in Mexico.[18] México SOS backed in 2009 the anti-kidnapping law and that same year, along with the nonprofit RENACE, which provides pro bono advocacy to defend people unjustly accused of crimes, organized the first national forum on security and justice to promote judicial reform. The organizations held a second forum on the subject in 2010. Also that year, México SOS co-founded the watchdog group National Citizen Observatory to keep tabs on the work of lawmakers and create a united front from which to demand accountability.

2011: Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity

The movement was formed in 2011 as a response to the outrage over the murder of Sicilia's son in March of that year. The MPJD describes itself as a "movement of victims' movements" that has drawn numerous civil organizations into its fold. Its

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17 Asociación Alto al Secuestro, http://www.altoalsecuestro.com.mx/index.htm.

18 México SOS "¿Qué es México SOS?" http://mexicosos.org/content/¿qué-es-méxico-sos.htm.

goal is to "actively open channels for holistic attention for victims that contemplates justice in all its forms, not just at an individual level, but collectively."[19] Among its demands are investigations into unsolved assassinations and disappearances, and the naming of victims, ending the strategy of direct confrontation with the cartels in favor of a focus on citizen security, combating corruption, and impunity as well as the economic roots of crime.

MPJD has been especially outspoken against the deployment of the military to fight organized crime—a position that represents a departure from those of MUCD, Alto al Secuestro, or México SOS, which have been relatively quiet on the issue of the use of force; some outspoken victims in the country's northern region have rejected this idea and instead welcome military interventions. But MPJD shares those organizations' concern for high levels of impunity and official corruption in Mexico.

Up to the Present: Victims' Networks

Fuerzas Unidas por Nuestros Desaparecidos y Desaparecidas en México (FUNDEM), or United Forces for Our Disappeared in Mexico, has sister organizations of similar names in the states of Nuevo León and Coahuila, as well as partner human rights groups. Founded in 2011, FUNDEM unites victims through social media, especially Facebook, Twitter, and blogs. It is a "movement of the family members of disappeared people, and defenders of human rights."

Much like FUNDEM, the "Mothers Searching for Their Children" network created in October 2012 maintains a Facebook page where people who have lost loved ones can post pictures and information. The *Red de Madres Buscando a Sus Hijos* is loosely organized, but several of the mothers and fathers who utilize the page arrived together for the official publication of the victims' law at the presidential residence in January 2013, where they silently held up photos of their missing sons and daughters. Thousands of people have used the network in its short existence, with postings from regions across the country. These networks have endured, as violence and impunity have endured, into 2014, as communities and online spaces to share photos of the missing, organize marches and protests, and make demands of government.

LESSONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

These experiences suggest a growing consciousness and engagement among crime victims in Mexico, which is promising. Crime victims appear to be moving beyond fear or fatalism to create mechanisms to pressure the state for justice. The experience of Mexico's victims' rights movement illustrates several important

19 MPJD, "Seguridad Ciudadana y Derechos Humanos en México."

lessons and achievements that provide an important stepping stone for on-going efforts to promote the rule of law in Mexico. It is important to recognize the profound sense of loss and sadness felt by many victims, who have had to work through their grief and suffering to channel these feelings constructively. Not all victims have the wherewithal and resources to make this transition from victim to advocate. It is also important to note that the victims "movement" is unified by experience, but not by political objectives. This has certainly been true of other contemporary social movements—women's suffrage, civil rights, gay rights, etc.—and does not necessarily detract from the importance or quality of Mexico's victims' rights movement. It does, however, suggest that the achievements and long-term gains of the movement will be significantly defined by as much by its internal tensions as by the responses of Mexican authorities.

Evolving Approaches to Change

The leaders of victims' organizations founded in the past decade have their roots in loss, are united in a shared sadness, and are mutually driven to action through a commitment to end the violence that has so deeply marked their lives. Yet they are by no means homogenous in their demands or the ways in which they want to see those demands met. The "victims' movement" in Mexico today can be defined as much by what unites the organizations as what divides them.

From marches in the capital, to caravans across the country; from roundtable discussions with legislative and executive powers, the generation of policy proposals, and direct lobbying of the legislative and executive branches of government; to the documentation of victims' stories and reports on government transparency and accountability; to creating online networks to share support and information, the varied groups creating the movement in real time have taken a wide range of approaches in their campaigns. Their priorities vary, too. While there is unanimous indignation at the justice system's deep failings and at official corruption, the organizations differ on the security strategy they want from the government, and the use of the military to fight organized crime is especially divisive. No easier is the question of how to define who, exactly, is a victim.

Here are two leaders stating their very different approaches:

"We believe that if the country is not properly structured legally and conceptually to move this issue forward, it's not going to work," said Martí, director of México SOS, in an October 2012 interview. "I believe that among the citizen movements in favor of rule of law or justice or against the insecurity, every day we are understanding better that going into the streets to shout is worthless. … We decided it was better to pressure, influence, and include the government."

Eduardo Vazquez Martín, a spokesman for the MPJD, said in a January 2013 interview: "What does it mean that the movement has presented around 400

cases—30 or 40 emblematic ones—to the president of the republic, to the attorney general, to the Interior Ministry, to the secretary of public security and not one has been resolved? What does that tell you? That the state is incapable. … The nation realizes that it is truly alone, and that it must rebuild its institutions, its society, its community bonds. … That is what the movement has revealed with its actions: The state does not exist."

Milestone Accomplishments

A Victims' Law

On Jan. 9, 2013, crowds filled a conference hall of the presidential palace, Los Pinos, for the public unveiling of the publication of the General Law of Victims—a law backed by Sicilia's Movement for Peace, blocked by Calderón in the waning days of his administration, and revived by President Enrique Peña Nieto less than two months after taking office. Sicilia was there, as were numerous congressional representatives, members of the new administration's Cabinet, and the president himself. Once the doors were closed on the packed hall, dozens of mothers and fathers and relatives of the disappeared or murdered quietly pulled out photos of their loved ones and held them aloft.

Sicilia spoke. He praised the passage of the law but warned that the movement would not rest until it saw action—justice—for Mexico's numerous victims. Peña Nieto had the final word and, while he said he wanted his administration to maintain a permanent dialogue, he never spoke directly to the victims present that very day. Meanwhile, Martí did not attend, and México SOS simultaneously released a statement criticizing the law. Emphasizing their skepticism and independence, mothers and fathers holding photos of their disappeared professed that they did not belong to the MPJD and doubted the law would change anything.

Yet, when it came time to reform the law, the most active victims' organizations, including MPJD and México SOS, came together to propose the revisions that would satisfy disparate groups. The victims' law, perhaps more than any other issue, reflects the plurality of the groups that make up Mexico's movement for the defense of victims of violent crime. Their divisions could be described as political, although they may also be said to reflect different understandings of who in Mexico is a victim and how much responsibility the government should bear for its role in their victimization.

The General Law of Victims, revised in May 2013, aims to provide a new layer of protection for victims of violent crime and human rights abuses in Mexico. The law establishes a National Registry of Victims, which would be the first formal list naming the people who have been killed or who have gone missing as a result of the drug war. It creates a National System of Attention to Victims in which federal, state, and municipal governments will assume the costs of paying mental

and material damages, lost opportunities, and assistance. The law also provides for a fund from which reparations should be made to victims, both direct and indirect (visible and invisible). In a coup for the movement, it defines "victim" so as to create legal entity with specific rights under the law. The law defines "direct" victims as "those persons that have suffered directly some economic, physical, mental, or emotional damage or harm, or in general someone whose legal property or rights have been put in danger as a consequence of a crime or violations of their human rights…" It goes on to define "indirect" victims as those "family members or persons in charge of a victim who have a close relationship with him."

The law had its genesis in a series of dialogues on security that began in 2010. Facilitated by the Center for Civic Collaboration (CCC—part of the international network of Partners for Democratic Change), the first Dialogue for Citizen Security with a Focus on Human Rights included the participation of some 80 nongovernmental organizations and had the goal of finding points of commonality on which to base a legislative agenda. Six civil and academic organizations served as the core group that convoked the process: CIDE, a public university; the Institute for Security and Democracy, INSYDE; FUNDAR, a center for research and analysis; México SOS; the Juárez Observatory for Public Security and Social Security, an umbrella group of civil organizations in Ciudad Juárez; and the Network of Public Security Experts.

Three lines of desired legislative action emerged: a reform that would add citizen advisers to the national security council; judicial reform; and a law to protect victims. The third of these became the priority. Additional dialogues in 2011 brought lawmakers, academic experts, and victims to the table, as well. The CCC helped facilitate the technical aspects of creating a legislative proposal for a victims' law—ensuring that the victims themselves had a say in the law that would affect them personally. Simultaneously, the Calderón administration prepared its own proposal for a victims' law. A third proposal came from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). But the law that gained momentum in Congress and passed both the House and Senate in April 2012 was the law created through the joint work of victims, civil society, academics, and lawmakers—the General Law of Victims. According to the reforms executed in May, states are required to create secondary laws in harmony with the federal law. As of August 2013, only Morelos had passed a law that squares with the federal statute; Nuevo León, Baja California, and Jalisco have presented initiatives.[20]

In many respects, the law reasserts rights that victims of crime in Mexico are already supposed to have—rights that are rarely enforced and routinely violated, or are in other cases inadequate to victims' needs. Still, the law consolidates and

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20 "Leyes de víctimas locales deben tener una amplia participación social y seguir lineamientos de la Ley General," Cencos, August 6, 2013, http://cencos.wordpress.com/2013/08/06/leyes-de-victimas-locales-deben-tener-una-amplia-participacion-social-y-seguir-lineamientos-de-la-ley-general.

articulates victims' rights in a way that is currently lacking. Octavio Amezcua Noriega, defense director of the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH), has argued "the current system of rights and obligations in Mexican law does not offer the regulatory framework necessary to provide an integral solution for victims."[21] Sicilia called the law "a first step toward justice," but added, "like any first step, it's not enough." It is—more than anything—a call to action. Without action by Congress and the new administration to make the law effective, and the full participation of Mexican institutions to make it functional, Sicilia said, "the General Law of Victims will be only dead letter."

"The most important thing is that all those involved—the movement, the lawmakers, the legislative power—do not lose the ultimate objective of all this … that victims in this country possess the best possible legal framework," says Sylvia Aguilera, executive director of the CCC, during an October 2012 interview. "It's urgent."

Judicial Reform

"What is needed is an integral reform of the system," said Ernesto Canales, cofounder of RENACE, in an October 2012 interview. "We cannot think that by augmenting the rights of victims and leaving the current system in place we'll be protecting (victims). The essential thing is having a credible system, one that merits citizen confidence." RENACE, which participates in several other civil society networks including the National Citizen Observatory, is also directly advocating for a complete overhaul of the Mexican system of justice.

The constitutional judicial reform of 2008 set the stage for Mexico's 31 states and the Federal District (Mexico City) to overhaul their criminal justice systems. The reforms included five courses of action, as outlined by the Justice in Mexico Project's 2011 report *Assessing Mexico's Judicial Reform*:

- The introduction of adversarial procedures including oral arguments.
- A shift in focus to the rights of the accused (i.e., the presumption of innocence, due process, and an adequate legal defense).
- An emphasis on the rights of victims and restorative justice.
- A shift in the role police agencies play in criminal investigations (i.e., allowing for the investigatory work of the Ministerio Público to be questioned and for police to collect evidence).
- Tougher measures for combating organized crime.

Further changes are needed to make the 2008 reforms more effective, according to Canales, and several initiatives pending in either the House or Senate could set the country on the path to making the 2008 reforms a reality.

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21 "La Ley General es una solución para reparar a las víctimas," El Universal, January 28, 2013, http://blogs.eluniversal.com.mx/weblogs_detalle17766.html.

Still, there are challenges. Although the 2008 reform set a deadline of 2016 for Mexican states and the federal government to realize the changes it dictated, only a handful of states have made real progress. Chihuahua, Nuevo León, Mexico State, Zacatecas, Morelos, and Oaxaca are ahead of the pack largely because they passed their own state-level judicial reforms before 2008.[22] The stipulated eight-year time frame for implementing the reform has been challenged as unrealistic; while some states have made advances, the federal government has made no progress at all. The federal criminal code has not been reformed, and all federal crimes are still being investigated and tried under the old system. However, in 2012, the number of states with approved new codes of criminal procedure doubled. All told, 22 of 33 jurisdictions had new codes of criminal procedure on the books at the close of that year.[23]

Critics have also cited certain elements of the reform that run contradictory to its stated goals. As one of the measures to combat organized crime, the law provided for the *arraigo* procedure, or sequestering of suspects for a period of 40 days (which can be extended another 40 for a total of 80 days in custody without formal charge, and without providing those held the right to legal representation) while prosecutors build a case. The United Nations Committee Against Torture (CAT) has condemned the use of *arraigo* in Mexico. In a recent report, the CMDPDH also condemned the practice as violating human rights. The *arraigo*, which the Mexican government has promoted as an indispensable tool for fighting organized crime, has been used to detain more than 8,595 people between June 2008 and October 2012, according to CMDPDH. Due to opposition, some states have begun retiring or eliminating the *arraigo* from state legislation.

The victims' law is needed to assuage a grieving national consciousness. Yet Canales points out the paradox of defining "victim" in a system functioning so poorly that the determination of innocence and guilt is a real challenge. "If we only try to protect victims, without modifying the system, how do we know how many more victims there are, unacknowledged by the system?" Canales asks. "If the system cannot discern who is a victim and who is not a victim, what do we gain by protecting some when we do not have the certainty that the system is functioning right?" A law to protect victims must logically go hand-in-hand with full-scale judicial reform.

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22 David A. Shirk, "Criminal Justice Reform in Mexico: An Overview," *Mexican Law Review* 3, no. 2 (2010): 222. http://biblio.juridicas.unam.mx/revista/pdf/MexicanLawReview/6/arc/arc1.pdf.

23 Matthew C. Ingram, "Criminal Procedure Reform in Mexico: Where Things Stand Now," Wilson Center Mexico Institute (January 2013). http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/Ingram_CrimProReformMexico_Jan_2013.pdf.

Dispelling Stigmatization

This, perhaps, has been one of the victims' movement's most important, if intangible, accomplishments thus far: dispelling the myth of complicity that underpins the victimization. The willingness of victims in recent years to speak out—the mother of the teen murdered in Villas de Salvárcar who, with a voice filled with anger, told Calderón at a news conference that he was not welcome in Juárez; the poet Sicilia's emotional outcry over the senseless killing of his son; the many survivors who have publicly demanded that the memories of their loved ones not be marred by accusations of involvement in crime—has helped reshape the way Mexico views victims of violent crime. Stigmatization remains prevalent, yet many people, authorities in particular, must now think twice before making such assumptions publicly. The reformed victims' law specifies "no criminalization." It states, "Authorities should not aggravate the suffering of the victim, nor under any circumstance treat him as suspicious or responsible for committing the crimes he is denouncing."

The movement's efforts to bring the stigmatization to light opened the door to public efforts to attend to victims' needs. In October 2011, the Calderón government created a new agency called ProVíctima dedicated to serving victims' legal, social, medical, and psychological needs under one roof. Previously, agencies such as the Attorney General's Office had areas dedicated to providing attention to victims, but negotiating the labyrinthine bureaucracy often proved frustrating, confusing, and inefficient for those who had suffered violent crime personally or suffered the loss of a loved one. ProVíctima was set up without a dedicated budget—prompting critics to question the administration's commitment to the effort—although human resources and capital that backed victims' offices in other agencies were eventually transferred to the newly created entity. In January 2014, ProVíctima was transformed into (or replaced by) the Executive Commission for Attention to Victims, as per the victims' law, which establishes the creation of a commission to provide the holistic attention to victims that ProVíctima currently provides. The seven-member commission will operate the National System of Attention to Victims. ProVíctima had critics, and the more than 22,000 people who sought help through the agency through December 2013—the last statistic available—will now likely face yet another bureaucratic hurdle as the system changes.

CONCLUSION

Important challenges lie ahead. For all its plurality, the multifaceted victims' movement in Mexico has grown steadily over the past 20 years. Disparate voices have succeeded in placing the needs of victims squarely in the center of Mexico's national agenda. The growth of the movement has helped victims draw attention to, if not fully eradicate, the unjust stigmatization of them and their families, and

it has solidified the outcry over how the justice system can victimize them doubly. Victims' groups have become a force of civil society with which the government must reckon, instrumental in the creation and passage of key legislation including the 2008 justice reform and the 2013 victims' law.

Yet these important achievements serve to highlight the gulf between what has been won on paper and what has yet to be won in practice. Tens of thousands of homicides related to the drug war still unresolved; tens of thousands of people still missing; a justice system incapable of investigating and resolving more than a fraction of outstanding cases; institutional corruption—these are monumental challenges and their resolution lies at the heart of victims' demands.

"The people's pain cannot wait," Martí said. "We cannot wait."

Must the diverse organizations of the victims' movement reach firmer common ground and consolidate to successfully drive Mexico's efforts to reform its broken justice system, make the victims' law functional, and root out corruption? Or can disparate voices and approaches to effecting change ultimately provide the checks and balances needed for effective reform? It may be too early to answer these critical questions. But one fact is sadly certain: as drug-related violence continues, the number of victims will grow. The victims' movement, as a subset of Mexico's maturing civil society, will continue to exert critical pressure for transforming the system into one that respects victims' rights, addresses the social and economic roots of crime, promotes the rule of law, and ensures justice. Their collective outcry must be met, too, with effective programs to treat victims' medical, psychological, and legal needs—assistance that can transform them from victims into *survivors*.

The Effects of Drug-War Related Violence on Mexico's Press and Democracy

EMILY EDMONDS-POLI

INTRODUCTION

The Mexican government's multiyear war against drug trafficking and criminal organizations has had many unintended effects. One of them is that Mexico is the most dangerous country in the Western Hemisphere for journalists. As a percentage of the total drug war–related deaths, the deaths of journalists and media workers make up a very small number, yet their significance is undeniable. Not only do they contribute to the country's overall insecurity, the deaths also threaten the quality of Mexico's democracy by curtailing freedom of expression because journalists are truly the "eyes and ears of civil society."

Both freedom of expression and access to alternative sources of information, two functions of an independent press, are essential for democracy because they allow citizens to be introduced to new ideas, engage in debate and discussion, and acquire the information they need to understand the issues and policy alternatives. In other words, freedom of expression and information are essential for civic competence and effective participation.[1] Furthermore, an independent press is indispensable for monitoring government activity. Without it, citizens may never learn about their leaders' accomplishments and transgressions, thus compromising their ability to punish, reward, or otherwise hold politicians accountable for their actions.

Violence against journalists compromises Mexicans' right to free expression, which is guaranteed to all citizens by Articles 6 and 7 of the 1917 Mexican Constitution, and also limits the independence and effectiveness of the national press.[2] These developments simultaneously are linked to and exacerbate Mexico's

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1 Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 96–98.

2 These rights are also protected by international law. For example, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948 reads: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression," and the Organization of American States' Declaration of Principles of Freedom of Expression says that "the murder, kidnapping, intimidation of and/or threats against social communicators … violate the fundamental rights of individuals and strongly restricts freedom of expression. It is the duty of the state to prevent and investigate such occurrences, to punish their perpetrators and to ensure that victims receive due compensation." U.N. declaration: http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml. (accessed February 25, 2013). For OAS declaration, see Principle 9: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/mandate/Basics/19.FREEDOM%20EXPRESSION.pdf. (accessed February 25, 2013).

already weak rule of law, and the threat they pose to the quality of Mexican democracy should not be understated. The purpose of this report is to outline the scope of the problem, assess the causes and consequences of violence against journalists, and evaluate the response by Mexico's government and society. It also offers some policy recommendations for national and international actors.

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

While there is consensus that violence against journalists in Mexico is very high and has increased significantly over the past several years, there are competing sets of statistics that seek to prove the point. For example, the Foundation for Freedom of Expression (Fundalex), a Mexican human rights organization, reports that between January 2000 and August 2012, 98 reporters were killed.[3] Mexico's chapter of Article 19, an international organization that defends freedom of expression and information, claims that during the same time period, 72 journalists were killed and 13 were disappeared.[4] Meanwhile, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) says that 88 reporters have been killed and 18 have gone missing between 2000 and 2013.[5] Mexico's National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH), the only government institution that actively collects and publicly releases data on this issue, claims that 81 were killed and 16 disappeared in that same time period. The Attorney General's office (PGR) reports that 90 were killed and 19 disappeared between 2000 and 2012.[6]

The discrepancies among organizations' tabulations can be attributed to the fact each differs in its criteria for determining whether the victim of a particular crime was a member of the media. In some cases, it is enough that the victim be employed (or formerly employed) by a media outlet or have worked as a freelancer to be classified as an attack on the press.[7] For others, like the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the murder or attack must be directly attributable to the victim's work as a journalist. In March 2014, the CPJ reported that 23 journalists and four media workers (e.g., drivers, interpreters) have lost their lives in the line of duty

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3 Fundalex is a Mexican civic organization dedicated to promoting freedom of expression. www.fundalex.org, accessed October 7, 2012, http://www.vanguardia.com.mx/asciendea98elnumerodeperiodistasasesinadosdesde2000-1356908.html

4 Article 19 is an international human rights organization that defends and promotes the freedom of expression and information. http://www.articulo19.org/portal/index.php. (accessed October 7, 2012).

5 Reporters Without Borders, World Press Freedom Index 2014, accessed March 1, 2014, http://rsf.org/index2014/en-americas.php.

6 "Protegidos 213 periodistas y derechohumanistas por amenazas," *Milenio*, February 6, 2014.

7 Article 19 discusses the number and methodological discrepancies between Mexican organizations (e.g., CNDH and itself) in its 2011 annual report *Silencio forzado: El Estado, cómplice de la violencia contra la prensa en México*, http://www.scribd.com/doc/86373076/Silencio-forzado-El-Estado-complice-de-la-violencia-contra-la-prensa-en-Mexico. (accessed October 1, 2012.)

in Mexico since 2000. The same organization has strong reason to believe that an additional 38 deaths were motivated by the victims' profession in the media.[8]

The Justice in Mexico Project considers the deaths of "journalists and media-support workers employed with a recognized news organization at the time of their deaths, as well as independent, freelance, and former journalists and media-support workers." Using these criteria, it appears that 110 journalists and media-support workers lost their lives between 2000 and 2014.[9] Among the latter were several high-profile murders that occurred in the state of Veracruz in 2012 and 2014. The first was Regina Martínez, an investigative journalist for *Proceso*, a highly respected and influential muckraking weekly, who was murdered in her home in the capital city of Xalapa on April 28, 2012. Four days later, the dismembered bodies of three photojournalists who covered organized crime and violence were found in black plastic bags in a canal on the side of the highway in Boca del Río.[10] On June 13, Víctor Manuel Baez Chino, an editor for *Milenio*, and director of the news website Reporteros Policiacos, was kidnapped, tortured and murdered, apparently by Los Zetas, in Xalapa.[11] Finally, on Feb. 5, 2014, Gregorio Jiménez de la Cruz, who covered crime and security for *Notisur* and *Liberal del Sur*, was abducted in Coatzacoalcos. His body was found six days later in Las Choapas.

While Veracruz is currently a hotbed of drug-related violence, this is a relatively new development. Until 2011, it was more common for journalists (as well as other victims) in northern Mexico to be targeted.[12] Overall, the most homicides have occurred in the northern states of Chihuahua and Tamaulipas, though the number of murders in Guerrero and Veracruz is almost as high. Figure 1 shows the geographic distribution of the murders between 2000 and 2012 and the years in which they occurred. CPJ's investigative work provides a more nuanced look at the characteristics of the victims. For example, 85 percent of the victims killed during that same time period were males, all but three (89 percent) were murdered (as opposed to being killed while on a dangerous assignment), and just 15 percent were

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8 The CPJ is a highly reputable U.S.-based nonprofit organization that monitors, complies data, and publicizes information about global abuses against the press. Its reputation for factual accuracy is very strong, in part because of its efforts to verify the motive for attacks on members of the media. See: www.cpj.org.

9 Cory Molzahn, Octavio Rodríguez Ferreira, and David Shirk, *Drug Violence in Mexico: Data and Analysis through 2012* (San Diego: Trans-Border Institute, University of San Diego 2013): 30. Figures for 2013-2014 provided by USD's Justice in Mexico project, March 4, 2014.

10 The victims were Guillermo Luna Varela of *Veracruznews*, Gabriel Huge of *Notiver*, and Esteban Rodríguez, a photographer who had worked for the local newspaper AZ but left his job after receiving death threats. There are unconfirmed reports that a fourth victim, Irasema Becerra, may have also been a media worker. http://justiceinmexico.org/2012/05/04/three-journalists-killed-in-veracruz-four-journalists-murdered-in-five-days/.

11 "27 Journalists Killed in Mexico since 1992/Motive confirmed," http://cpj.org/killed/americas/mexico/. (accessed October 7, 2012.)

12 "Norte, peligroso para la prensa," *El Universal*, August 10, 2011.

freelance journalists. The vast majority (74 percent) covered crime or corruption for print media outlets, and in all but three cases a criminal group is suspected of committing the murder.[13]

While the data are illustrative, they do not show another important fact: Journalists all over Mexico, but especially in the states mentioned above, as well as Michoacán, Oaxaca, Coahuila, and Sinaloa, suffer a significant amount of harassment and aggression by authorities and criminal organizations. Many of these attacks are designed to be warnings to reporters and media owners. For example, in July 2012, there were three attacks on newspaper supplements owned by the daily *El Norte* outside of Monterrey, Nuevo León. All three attacks involved the use of guns, explosives, and fire, which resulted in severe damage to the buildings. On that same day, explosives were used on the offices of the daily *El Mañana* in Nuevo Laredo, the third such attack in Tamaulipas since the beginning of that year.[14] By one estimate, there were 41 armed attacks perpetrated against media property or personnel between 2000 and July 2012.[15] Table 1 disaggregates the different types of attacks on media personnel during 2011.

FIGURE 1: JOURNALISTS KILLED BY MUNICIPALITY IN MEXICO, 2000–2012

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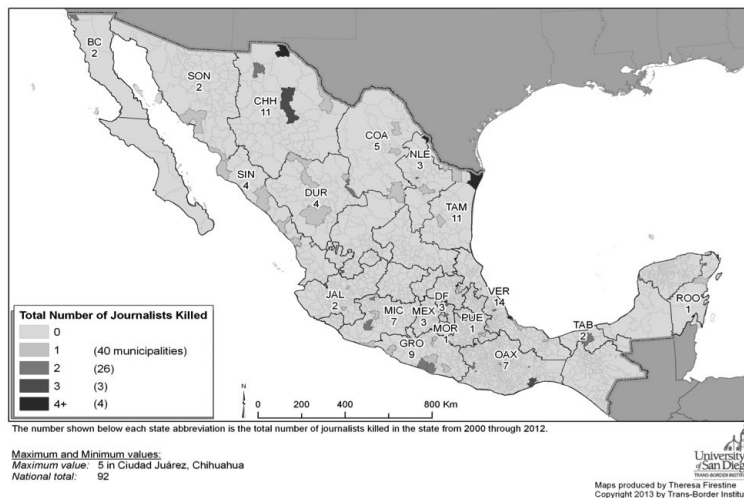
13 Calculations based on victims killed between 2000 and 2012. The perpetrators in the other three cases were the military, government officials, and unknown assailants. http://cpj.org/killed/americas/mexico/. (accessed March 2, 2014.)

14 "Mexico's El Norte attacked for the third time this month." http://cpj.org/2012/07/mexican-daily-attacked-for-the-third-time-this-mon.php#more. (accessed September 30, 2012.)

15 This figure is higher than that reported by the Special Prosecutor's Office for Crimes Against Journalists, which claims that between 2000 and 2012 there were approximately 30 such attacks. http://www.articulo19.org/portal/index.php. (accessed October 14, 2012).

TABLE 1: TYPES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS, 2011

Type	Number
Physical Attack or Destruction of Property	73
Intimidation	24
Threats	20
Forced Displacement	17
Illegal Detention	13
Murder	11
Charges of Defamation, Slander, Libel	8
Cyber Attack	4
Disappearance	2
Total	172

Source: Article 19, *Silencio forzado: El Estado, cómplice de la violencia contra la prensa en México: Informe* 2011, 13.

Who are the Perpetrators of Violence Against Journalists?

According to Article 19, between 2009 and 2011 there were 565 attacks on journalists in Mexico, and a majority (54 percent) of these were perpetrated by public officials. More specifically, state police were involved in 77 incidents, the armed forces in 41, municipal police in 37, and the federal police in 36 incidents. In other words, one out of every three crimes against journalists in this three-year time span was committed by law enforcement.[16] But interestingly, criminal organizations were responsible for all of the murders during those three years.[17] Tables 2 and 3 outline the scope and kinds of crimes committed by public employees and organized crime.

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16 Article 19, *Silencio forzado*, 25. This evidence coincides with the findings of a recently issued report by Human Rights Watch. See Tracy Wilkinson, "Mexican forces involved in kidnappings, disappearances, report charges," *Los Angeles Times*, February 20, 2013, http://www.latimes.com/news/world/worldnow/la-fg-wn-mexico-human-rights-report-20130220,0,7241124.story?track=rss (accessed February 21, 2013.)

17 These are likely conservative estimates because responsibility has yet to be established for almost a fifth of all crimes against journalists committed during this period. Article 19, *Silencio forzado*, 25-26.

TABLE 2: PRESUMED PERPETRATOR OF VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS, 2009–2011

Presumed Aggressor	Number
Public Employee (Police, Military)	303
Undetermined/Unknown	100
Organized Crime	77
Parties/Candidates/Partisan Groups	27
Private Citizen	26
Other	18
Union/Social Group	14
Total	565

Source: Article 19, *Silencio forzado: El Estado, cómplice de la violencia contra la prensa en México: Informe 2011, 24.*

TABLE 3: TYPES OF CRIME AGAINST JOURNALISTS COMMITTED BY PUBLIC EMPLOYEES AND ORGANIZED CRIME, 2009–2011

	Attack on Person or Property	Threat	Intimida-tion	Murder	Kidnapping or Illegal Detention	Disappear-ance	Charges of Defa-mation or Slander	Cyber Attack	Total
Public Employee	142	53	53	1	40	1	11	2	303
Organized Crime	30	21	6	12	7	1	0	0	77

Source: Article 19, *Silencio forzado: El Estado, cómplice de la violencia contra la prensa en México, Informe 2011, 25.*

Impunity

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that since 2006 only one of the perpetrators of violence against the media has been brought to justice. In her testimony before a congressional panel in July 2012, Laura Borbolla, the special prosecutor for crimes against journalists, reported that although 74 suspects had been identified (but not necessarily arrested), and 31 criminal investigations were under way, only one had resulted in a guilty verdict and prison sentence.[18] According to the CNDH, the rate of impunity in criminal cases involving violence against media workers is well over 90 percent. While this is similar to the general rate of impunity for violent crimes committed in Mexico, many journalists run a much higher risk of becoming victims than the average Mexican citizen because of the dangerous nature of investigative reporting on crime and corruption.[19] In 2012, Mexico ranked among the worst in the world according to the CPJ's Impunity Index.[20] Such a high rate of impunity means that current laws and law enforcement present almost no deterrent to crimes against journalists, and therefore effectively perpetuate the problem. As a result, there are areas in Mexico (e.g., Durango, Tamaulipas, and Veracruz) where investigative reporting has essentially stopped.

Mexico in Comparative Perspective

Although Mexico is currently the most dangerous country in the Western Hemisphere for journalists, it ranks 10th worldwide and is one of three Latin American nations on the CPJ's list of the 20 deadliest countries for journalists. The other two countries in that group are Brazil (ranked 11th) and Colombia (8th).

With 29 confirmed murders since 1992, Brazil has experienced an increase in the frequency of violence against journalists since 2011. Over the past three years, 17 journalists were killed in Brazil—in almost all cases because of their reporting on crime and corruption.[21] From 1990 to 2000, Brazil had fewer than 10 such murders, so the increase in violence against journalists is quite significant.

Colombia's story is a bit different. Although it has the highest number of journalist deaths in Latin America overall, the vast majority of deaths occurred between 1993 and 2003, when the country was in the grips of a civil war against

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18 "Violencia golpea a los periodistas; 67 muertos desde 2006," *Vanguardia*, http://www.vanguardia.com.mx/violencia_golpea_a_los_periodistas%3B_67_muertos_desde_2006-1332341.html. (accessed October 1, 2012.)

19 Kari Larsen, "Mexico: A deadly beat," CNN, March 2, 2012, accessed October 5, 2012, http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/02/world/americas/mexico-journalists/index.html

20 The Impunity Index identifies countries where the murder of journalists generally go unpunished and calculates the number of unsolved journalist murders as a percentage of a country's population. In 2012, Mexico ranked 7th worst. https://www.cpj.org/reports/2013/05/impunity-index-getting-away-with-murder.php. (accessed March 1, 2014.)

21 Of the 17, CPJ has confirmed the motive was retribution for reporting on sensitive topics. http://cpj.org/killed/americas/brazil/. (accessed March 1, 2014.)

paramilitary organizations and drug traffickers. As in Mexico, these victims were overwhelmingly local correspondents who covered crime and corruption, but unlike the Mexican print journalists who have been targeted by organized crime groups, the Colombian journalists killed were predominantly radio broadcast reporters killed by paramilitary or government forces.[22]

Because of its experience with combating drug trafficking and organized crime organizations, Colombia is often identified as a good case for comparison with Mexico. With regard to violence against journalists, there are some other important similarities, such as Colombia's impunity rate of nearly 90 percent, and the compromised nature of the country's rule of law at the time the majority of the murders occurred. In this sense, Colombia's experience could be instructive for Mexico, so we will return to this topic in the final section of the report.

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE VIOLENCE

The simplest explanation for the rise in violence against journalists is that their efforts to report on violent crime and corruption threatens to bring unwanted attention to cities where drug trafficking and criminal organizations do business and are currently in a war against government forces. Thus it is not surprising that the highest rates of violence against the press occur where turf wars among organized crime groups are most intense. The aggression represents a change from the past when drug lords coveted press coverage of their good deeds because it endeared them to society, while also relishing reports on their bad deeds as a means to inspire fear in their rivals. After 2000, criminal organizations began to pressure the media to omit stories about their activities while at the same time publishing incriminating stories about their enemies and exposing corrupt government officials working for their competitors. In this way the media became an important tool in the efforts of organized crime groups to establish control over a particular geographic area and trade route, or "plaza," and in some places, ceased to be an independent watchdog working on behalf of Mexican society.

Self-Censorship and Superficial Coverage

Of course the ability of drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) to thrive as economic organizations has always been facilitated by their close ties to government officials, and journalists who seek to expose these corrupt links are also regularly the targets of violence. In many areas, local (and state) governments,

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22 Since 2009, 10 journalists and media workers have died work-related deaths, and while only four have confirmed motives, there is strong reason to suspect that all occurred as a result of the journalists' efforts to report on political issues (e.g., land disputes, paramilitary activities) or government corruption. See http://cpj.org/killed/americas/colombia/. (accessed March 1, 2014.)

together with criminal organizations have established control of press coverage in order to prevent federal authorities from intervening in the plaza and disrupting business. The practical effect of these alliances is widespread self-censorship by the press. Editors and reporters frequently decide that the cost of publishing certain stories is simply not worth the potential benefits. This problem is particularly acute at the local level, where journalists are more easily targeted for their actions by local authorities with ties to criminal organizations. As a result, it is not uncommon for high profile incidents (attacks on military bases, gunfights in the streets, assaults with military grade weapons, etc.) to go unreported in the local press. Some believe that this development suits the federal government just fine. In the words of an editor from Reynosa, "Don't think the federal government doesn't know what we are suffering. … If there is no news coverage, then the federal government can pretend it doesn't know. If the citizens are kept ignorant, then the pressure for federal intervention is less."[23]

The most common methods used to gain control of the press are threats and use of force. But in some cases, organized crime groups ensure control by serving as *de facto* editors who assume the role of giving a story a green light or preventing its publication. So while local journalists often cover standard crimes, the press is forbidden from publishing stories about DTO activity. For example, because the success of DTOs depends in part on their ability to penetrate society, it is necessary for them to develop extensive spy networks made up of street vendors, taxi drivers, and others who monitor people and movement in a particular plaza. These facts are widely known, but no journalist would dare publish a story explaining this system, let alone names or details of the role the network plays in a DTO's business operations. Similarly, it is common knowledge that criminal organizations have successfully established footholds in many local governments through campaign financing. Yet reporters would be foolish to discuss this or details of how criminal organizations use threats and coercion to force city officials to carry out their orders.[24]

This is not to say that the Mexican press stays completely silent on drug trafficking. Many media organizations, particularly at the national level, regularly publish stories on a range of related topics (violence, drug seizures, arrest of major leaders, etc.). However, much of the coverage parrots official government reports and narratives, or focuses on reporting the facts without also providing analysis of the deeper causes and consequences. In most established democracies, the media eagerly participates in debates on important and controversial issues. Yet in Mexico, this practice seems to be the exception rather than the rule. There are a few news outlets, mostly national and based in Mexico City, that make a great effort to report on the realities of the

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23 Carlos Lauría and Mike O'Connor, *Silence or Death in Mexico's Press* (New York: Committee to Protect Journalists, 2010), 17.

24 Ibid., 16; Tyler Bridges, "Coverage of Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in Latin America and the Caribbean," Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, 8th Austin Forum on Journalism in the Americas, September 17 and 18, 2010.

drug war. For example, *Proceso*, an influential national weekly magazine, regularly publishes investigative reports on violence and corruption, despite several attacks on its personnel. Similarly, *Reforma*, a Mexico City daily newspaper, has provided consistent coverage of many facets of the drug war and, until recently, documented and published a tally of drug-war related deaths.[25]

The societal effects of self-censorship and superficial coverage are not marginal. When citizens lack information about the general state of affairs of their city, they are more likely to be in danger of becoming victims themselves. This clearly exacerbates Mexico's already serious problem of public insecurity. On a broader level, widespread self-censorship threatens the quality of Mexico's democratic governance, since a liberal democracy requires freedom of expression and access to competing sources of information in order for citizens to hold governments accountable for their actions and performance.

Co-optation of Journalists

Once criminal organizations have successfully established control over the local media, they maintain their influence through continued threats or use of force and coercion, but also with bribes. The use of bribes to prevent coverage of kidnappings, extortion, gunfights, assaults, and other activities, or to publicize the misdeeds of criminal organization enemies, is common in Mexico. Some journalists unwillingly participate in these schemes because they fear for their lives and the safety of their families, so they join forces with criminal organizations, trading selective or positive coverage for the material and security benefits that go along with membership in the organization.[26] The fact that journalists are poorly paid in Mexico increases their vulnerability to bribery. The least that print journalists in Mexico can be paid is $13 a day, or approximately $400 a month, but many state and local level reporters earn as little as $11 a day. Furthermore, at least half of Mexican journalists are self-employed, which means that they lack healthcare coverage and other benefits.[27]

It must also be said that the co-optation of journalists is facilitated by the fact that this practice was in place long before criminal organizations began to use

25 Other outlets that have not shied away from covering the drug war include: Noticias MVS (radio), *Zeta, Contralínea* magazine, and Internet publications such as Reporte Indigo, Sinembargo, Animal Político, and Aristegui Noticias.

26 This phenomenon has opened the media up to the criticism that the recent increase in journalist deaths is the result of their role in the drug war. See "Police arrest two journalists in Mexico allegedly linked to organized crime," Knight Center Journalism in the Americas Blog entry, November 21, 2102, http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/blog/00-12145-police-arrest-two-journalists-mexico-allegedly-linked-organized-crime. (accessed February 20, 2013.)

27 Elia Baltazar (founder of Periodistas a Pie, a journalists' advocacy group), broadcast interview on MVS, October 12, 2012, http://ww2.noticiasmvs.com/podcasts/el-defensor-de-la-audiencia/las-agresiones-contra-los-periodistas-tambien-son-laborales-943.html. (accessed October 12, 2012.)

it. During the era of Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) dominance, self-censorship and outside editorial control were common, and many journalists were already accustomed to doing business in this way. Furthermore, as in the past, many media owners in local markets have close ties to local leaders and depend heavily on the government for a substantial portion of their advertising revenue. This dynamic gives corrupt local governments and their criminal allies added leverage over journalists with an interest in publishing the truth.

Victimization of Journalists

That some journalists willingly become complicit in the activities of organized crime should not obscure the fact that their options are generally limited and that refusing to comply almost certainly invites negative and dangerous attention.[28] And for those who are victimized and survive, the damage is far more complex than bodily injury or material harm. In many cases repeated exposure to extreme violence and threats of violence have led to elevated stress, depression, insomnia, substance abuse, and other symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress. In fact, a recent psychiatric study of 104 Mexican journalists provides preliminary evidence to suggest that the emotional distress they experience is in some ways worse than that of traditional war correspondents:

> Unlike the war group, who travel in and out of danger, or local journalists
> in other countries working in safer environments, most Mexican journalists
> studied here both work and live in areas where violence is endemic. There
> is no respite from danger, short of backing off from covering drug-related
> news, and even this does not guarantee the journalists immunity from the
> violence that surrounds them in areas where drug cartels hold sway.[29]

Mexican journalists have few specialized resources to help them address job-related mental health problems. As a result, many have little recourse but to change jobs, move to other cities, or simply resign themselves to living in fear of what might happen to them or their families. Of course not all of these avenues are open to everyone. Even those willing to leave their jobs or cities must have the resources to make such a life change, and the reality is that only a small number of journalists do. According to RSF, between 2000 and 2012, 20 reporters left their home states for Mexico City, but once there, none found work as journalists. Similarly, during that same time period, 15 reporters threatened or victimized by attacks sought

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28 Indeed, at a recent conference of Latin American journalists, one of the clearest takeaway points was: "Aggressive journalists need to understand that their work will likely prompt harassment from government officials put on the spot." Bridges, "Coverage of Drug Trafficking," 2.

29 Anthony Feinstein, "Mexican Journalists: An Investigation of Their Emotional Health," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 25 (2012): 482.

asylum abroad, but only a small number have been able to continue their careers as journalists.[30] Like many immigrants, they have little choice but to work in menial jobs in their new countries.

There is little doubt, then, that the recent increase in violence has taken a tremendous toll on the Mexican media and on society. As a group, journalists appear to be particularly susceptible to danger in the war between the government and organized crime. Perhaps it is no surprise then, that Mexican college students no longer see journalism as a viable profession. Enrollment numbers in journalism programs have dropped dramatically in recent years, prompting at least one to shut down.[31] In the words of a university official in Veracruz, "It's not that they're just killing reporters, they're killing the drive to become one."[32] This phenomenon prompts the question of what happens when a country loses the one entity whose purpose is to monitor and report on the performance and activities of elected and appointed officials. Without an effective watchdog in society, both the government and criminal organizations are free to do what they will. If the public, particularly at the local level, is unable to learn about, much less do something about, the crime and corruption in their cities, the result is a threat to the rule of law and the quality of democracy in Mexico.

STATE AND SOCIETAL RESPONSES

Although the Calderón administration's militarized anti-drug strategy was directly responsible for much of the escalation in violence, it is important to point out that rates of drug-related violence were already on the rise before he took office in 2006. Indeed the first spike in violence against journalists occurred in 2004, when, after two years without any deaths, four reporters were killed. In 2005, there were two more deaths, and in 2006, seven Mexican journalists lost their lives. This conspicuous increase and subsequent national and international attention prompted both the Mexican government and society to respond. The following section describes the efforts to protect members of the Mexican media.

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30 "Cerca de 15 periodistas fuera de México buscan refugio," Grupo Fórmula, September 19, 2012, http://www.radioformula.com.mx/notas.asp?Idn=271428.

31 The University of Veracruz has experienced very high rates of attrition since 2011 when violence against journalists began to increase in that state. The University of Morelia said it would not offer the journalism major during the 2012–13 academic year because it failed to matriculate enough students to sustain the program.

32 Tania Lara, blog summary for October 29, 2012, *Journalism in the Americas Blog*, http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/en/node/11907.

State Responses

In general, it must be said that the Mexican government has been slow to acknowledge or act to curb the recent increase in violence against the press.[33] Neither the current nor past two presidents have made it a policy priority. Calderón's response, like that of Fox before him, was initially counterproductive and later, only lackluster. Indeed, the former had a tendency to suggest that by reporting on the drug war and publishing violent images or narco-messages, the media gave Mexico a bad image that frightened foreign observers and investors. The Peña Nieto administration has adopted a similar approach. Shortly after his inauguration, he reportedly told the press that they should "achieve a balance between good and bad news," so as not to project the wrong image of Mexico.[34] This type of attitude, combined with weak political will to protect the rights and obligation of the press to express itself freely, effectively gives license to federal and state authorities to ignore the problem, and thereby reinforces the problem of impunity. For that reason, it must be said that the state-led efforts discussed below would not likely have come about were it not for the pressure exerted by domestic and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and foreign governments on the Mexican government to address the problem.

Over the past several years, the Mexican government has initiated three attempts to protect journalists from violence: the creation of a special prosecutor inside the Attorney General's office (Procuraduría General de la República, PGR), a constitutional amendment, and a law to protect journalists. In many ways, these initiatives are appropriate and on paper they even look progressive. However, to date, their overall impact has been minimal because they are only recently implemented and they lack important provisions that would make them more effective.

Special Prosecutor for Attention to Crimes against Free Expression (FEADLE)

President Fox was the first to create a new position inside the Attorney General's office to handle crimes against journalists, in February 2006. The Special Prosecutor's Office for Attention to Crimes Against Journalists (Fiscalía Especial para la Atención de Delitos cometidos contra Periodistas, FEADP) was directly

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33 The government's slow and ineffective approach is in many ways no different from its failure to investigate the thousands of kidnappings, disappearances, and other human rights abuses perpetrated during the Fox, and especially, Calderón administrations. Wilkinson, "Mexican forces involved in kidnappings."

34 Jorge Ramos, "FCH fustiga a medios que difunden narcomensajes," *El Universal*, February 25, 2012, http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/661689.html. (accessed October 13, 2012); "EPN 'sugiere' a medios equilibrar las malas noticias con buenas," SDPnoticias.com, December 7, 2012, http://www.sdpnoticias.com/nacional/2012/12/07/epn-sugiere-a-medios-equilibrar-las-malas-noticias-con-buenas. (accessed February 20, 2013.)

under the supervision of the assistant attorney general for attention to human rights abuses, and the position was initially designed to address and prosecute crimes only against journalists. This meant that it was powerless to investigate crimes against others persecuted for exercising free expression (e.g., bloggers and social media users). Other weaknesses included a lack of authority to investigate a case unless the crime involved military firearms, insufficient budget, and the absence of a clear chain of command. Offenses linked to organized crime did fall under federal jurisdiction, but those against journalists were not seen as distinct, and so were sent, together with all others with ties to organized crime, to the attorney general's office charged with investigating organized crime (Subprocuraduría de Investigación Especializada en Delincuencia Organizada, SIEDO), and not to the FEADP.[35]

In order to address some of these problems, the Calderón administration restructured and renamed the office. Currently, the Special Prosecutor's Office for Attention to Crimes Against Free Expression (FEADLE) answers directly to the attorney general and enjoys wider jurisdiction over all types of crimes against free speech and expression. However, the FEADLE continues to be limited in its impact because the office is not permanent (the attorney general can eliminate it at any time) and lacks an autonomous and reliable budget. Not surprisingly then, the office suffers from insufficient resources, including trained employees to do basic tasks such as compile case information into a central database.[36]

There are other problems as well. For example, there are no clearly delineated criteria to determine the FEADLE's jurisdiction. Consequently, this office handles some cases of crimes against journalists, while others are given to different offices in the PGR, and still others are handled by state or local police forces. The lack of a coherent protocol for assigning cases leads to varied applications of the law, and could potentially lead to differential access to justice. Because of these and other shortcomings, the FEADLE has been largely ineffective in its task: Between 2006 and 2010, it successfully prosecuted just one case.[37] The activity of the special prosecutor's office has improved somewhat since 2010. In the past two years, it has investigated 81 cases, identified 55 suspects, and issued 23 subpoenas. However, so far none of these cases has ended with a successful conviction. Furthermore, only recently has the PGR made an effort to streamline and coordinate its efforts with the FEADLE. As a result, the two offices are still in the process of learning how to work together and have only

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35 "Creación de nueva fiscalía para periodistas es insuficiente," Article 19, http://www.libertad-expresion.org.mx/noticias/creacion-de-nueva-fiscalia-para-periodistas-es-insuficiente/. (accessed February 1, 2013.)

36 While members of the FEADLE have consistently said the office lacks resources, at least one study suggests that the budget has been consistently under-utilized, with surpluses every year between 2006 and 2010. Article 19, Silencio forzado, 58.

37 For an in-depth look at the structure and performance of the FEADLE, see the work done by Article 19, "Justicia pendiente para periodistas en México," http://www.animalpolitico.com/blogueros-altoparlante/2012/07/17/justicia-pendiente-para-periodistas-en-mexico. (accessed September 30, 2012.)

just begun to train personnel within the PGR on how to handle cases involving violations of the right to free expression.[38]

The ineffectiveness of the FEADLE is clearly a function of persistent organizational weaknesses like those discussed above, but until recently, the office was also severely hampered by the fact that federal authorities had no legal jurisdiction over cases of ordinary violent crime. Consequently, the only way for the federal government to participate in an investigation or prosecution was at the request of local or state authorities, and even then, its role was secondary, since local police maintained control over the pace and direction of its cases.

In the case of violence against journalists (and arguably in many other cases of drug-related violence), this division of responsibilities is particularly problematic because the perpetrators are often closely linked to those local or state authorities in charge of investigating and charging suspects with crimes. Under these circumstances, it is highly unlikely that victims will ever achieve justice for the crimes against them. Since federal authorities tend to be better trained, have more resources at their disposal (at least in theory), and are removed from the environments in which the crimes take place, it is thought that the best hope for justice lies with them.

In line with this logic and in response to complaints by the national and international press and human rights organizations (e.g., Article 19, FSN, CPJ), Calderón proposed a constitutional amendment to make a federal offense, "violations of society's fundamental values, national security, human rights, or freedom of expression, for which their social relevance will transcend the domain of states."[39] Between 2009 and 2012, there were several unsuccessful attempts to approve this and another related bill. For example, in 2009 the Chamber of Deputies approved an initiative to add crimes against freedom of expression to the federal penal code, but the bill never made it out of the Senate. The proposed constitutional amendment met a similar fate in the fall of 2011. Finally, in the spring of 2012, the Mexican Congress approved both of these measures designed to defend the rights of journalists and human rights defenders.

Constitutional Amendment and the Law to Protect Journalists

The amendment to Article 73, section 21 of the Mexican Constitution grants federal authorities the power to investigate and try crimes against journalists, persons, and property intended to limit or undermine the freedom of expression and information, and marks an important step forward for Mexico. The amendment also allows federal authorities to take on any case falling under state

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38 "PGJE se coordinará con FEADLE para investigar delitos contra Libertad de Expresión," *La Jornada Michoacán*, January 8, 2014.

39 Lauría and O'Connor, *Silence or Death*, 9.

jurisdiction. However, secondary legislation is needed to ensure that federal law enforcement agencies have the resources and training necessary to effectively investigate and try crimes against freedom of expression.[40]

Similarly, the Law to Protect Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (Ley para la Protección de Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas) aims to promote cooperation between the federal and state governments in order to prevent and protect the integrity, freedom, and security of those at risk because they denounce human rights violations or practice freedom of expression. It is a welcome change because it widens the definition of a crime to include omission or acquiescence that harms the physical, psychological, moral, or economic integrity of human rights defenders, including journalists, and individuals (e.g., citizen journalists), or anyone closely related to them (nuclear and extended family, partner, colleague, employer, etc.). However, like the constitutional amendment, this law has important shortcomings that are likely to limit its effectiveness. For example, it does not define the circumstances under which federal authorities are required to take on a case, nor does it require state or municipal authorities to cooperate with federal investigators. Again, secondary legislation will be necessary to implement these changes or efforts to punish subnational authorities for failing to protect or defend freedom of expression.

Task Force to Protect Journalists (Protection Mechanism)

Importantly, the Law to Protect Human Rights Defenders and Journalists also establishes a Task Force for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (Mecanismo de Protección para Defensores y Periodistas) within the Interior Ministry (Segob). It is comprised of a Governing Group (Junta de Gobierno), an Advisory Council (Consejo Consultivo), and a National Executive Coordinating committee (Coordinación Ejecutiva Nacional, CEN). The Junta de Gobierno was to be made up of nine permanent members, initially composed of five representatives of federal ministries—Segob, PGR, SSP (Public Safety Ministry), SRE (Foreign Ministry), and CNDH—and four representatives from the Advisory Council. The Consejo is made up of nine representatives of civic and human rights organizations elected to four-year terms. Four of the advisers must be journalists, and the council elects one member as president by a simple majority vote. The CEN is responsible for coordinating efforts between all constituent bodies of the task force. In addition, it oversees a reception and reaction unit that evaluates cases and makes recommendations about risk prevention.[41]

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40 Frank Smyth, "Mexico must back up federal measure to protect press," CPJ, http://cpj.org/security/2012/08/mexico-must-back-up-federal-measure-to-protect-pre.php#more; Article 19, "Mexico: Constitution amended, federal authorities given powers to prosecute crimes against free expression," http://www.article19.org/resources.php/resource/3330/en/mexico:-constitution-amended,-federal-authorities-given-powers-to-prosecute-crimes-against-free-expression.

41 Gerardo Herrera Pérez, "Protección a defensores y periodistas," *Cambio de Michoacán*, July 31, 2012, http://www.cambiodemichoacan.com.mx/editorial.php?id=6914. (accessed October 5, 2012.)

The objective of this task force is to establish a national protocol for authorities to follow once they have been notified that someone is at risk. This includes a clear methodology for evaluating risk, and the following detailed steps for state and federal governments to follow to prevent further harm.[42]

1. A journalist (or human rights activist) files a complaint and requests government protection.
2. The reception, rapid reaction, and risk evaluation units determine whether the subject is in imminent danger within three hours of receiving the complaint.
3. In cases of imminent danger, the state government must implement urgent security measures within nine hours (e.g., relocation, deployment of bodyguards, provision of equipment such as bulletproof vests, secure satellite phones, etc.).
4. Inform the CEN of measures taken to protect the individual.

After a false start, the protection mechanism is now up and running. The advisory council members were elected in October 2012, and two months later Congress set aside funding for the initiative.[43] Since its creation, the mechanism has been used to provide body guards, satellite phones, home surveillance, and other preventive measures, including relocation, to 210 media personnel and three NGOs threatened with violence because of their work.[44] Yet complaints by journalists have raised questions about whether the protection mechanism is nimble enough to provide protection in a timely manner. Even with the time limits built into the protocol, authorities do not always respond quickly. For example, RSF reports that several journalists have been forced to wait days (rather than hours) to receive protection, while others have received protection only for a limited period of time.[45] Given that much can happen within the nine-hour window, and that most attacks occur without warning, it is no surprise that reporters do not feel well protected.

Another problem that impedes the effectiveness of the protection mechanism is that in order for the security process to be effective, there must be strong coordination between the federal agencies that mandate the measures and state

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42 Víctor Ballinas and Andrea Becerril, "Crean un mecanismo para proteger a defensores de derechos y a periodistas," *La Jornada*, April 25, 2012. (accessed October 5, 2012.) http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2012/04/25/politica/007n2pol; "La implementación de la Ley de Protección para Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas," http://www.libertad-expresion.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/1208BriefingMecanismoPBI-copia.pdf.

43 "A paso lento, mecanismos para proteger a periodistas y defensores de DH," http://www.animalpolitico.com/2012/07/a-paso-lento-mecanismos-para-proteger-a-periodistas-y-defensores-de-dh/; "Organizaciones civiles se retiran del mecanismo oficial para proteger a periodistas," http://www.animalpolitico.com/2012/09/07/organizaciones-civiles-se-retiran-del-mecanismo-oficial-para-proteger-a-periodistas/; "Integran consejo consultivo para proteger a periodistas y defensores," *Milenio*, October 21, 2012.

44 "Protegidos 213 periodistas y derechohumanistas por amenazas," *Milenio*, February 6, 2014.

45 "Una periodista obligada al exilio atestigua las fallas en la protección de periodistas," http://es.rsf.org/mexico-una-periodista-obligada-al-exilio-27-05-2013,44683.html. (accessed March 1, 2014.)

authorities that must implement them. The level of cooperation needed for smooth implementation is not a foregone conclusion because state and local authorities often have close ties to the very criminal organizations threatening journalists. Finally, while the creation of the protection mechanism represents an improvement over the past, neither it nor other aspects of the new laws address the root of the problem: widespread and widely recognized impunity for crimes against journalists. It is exactly this problem that leads many members of the media to argue that it is useless to report crimes against them because they simply do not trust the authorities to protect them. Until problem of impunity is more effectively addressed, it is difficult to see how Mexico will make significant progress in solving this problem.[46]

Congressional Committee for the Protection of Journalists

It is worth mentioning that since the LX Legislature (2006–2009), there has existed a congressional committee charged with monitoring crimes against journalists and ensuring the accountability of all three levels of government in preventing and investigating these crimes. The Special Committee for the Protection of the Media and Journalists (Comisión Especial para dar Seguimiento a las Agresiones a Periodistas y Medios de Comunicación) is made up of 16 deputies. It meets regularly when Congress is in session, but much of its activity centers on attending seminars, conferences, etc., rather than on committee work. Its highest-profile meeting occurs in July, when it hears annual testimony from the FEADLE's special prosecutor on the activities of that office. In the past, the committee has used this occasion to publicly criticize the special prosecutors and lambast the ineptitude and inefficiency of the office. Yet, these efforts have had almost no measurable effect on increasing the accountability of the FEADLE, or indeed, demonstrating that the committee itself has met its obligations. Indeed, although the committee successfully lobbied for a budget increase for FEADLE in 2011, and played a role in helping to pass the legislation discussed above, it has failed in its most basic function of collecting and disseminating information about crimes against journalists. For example, the webpage created to report the activities of the commission and maintain an up-to-date database of crimes against journalists is deficient in almost all aspects of its presentation, providing almost no useful information at all.[47]

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46 For more on the problem of impunity, see IFEX-ALC's Annual Report on Impunity 2013, http://ifex. org/alc/es/impunidad2013/2013/en/pdf/report_2013.pdf. (accessed February 15, 2014.)

47 "Comisión Especial," Chamber of Deputies, http://www3.diputados.gob.mx/camara/001_ diputados/010_comisioneslxi/002_especiales/009_agresiones_a_periodistas_y_medios_de_ comunicacion/002_comision_especial. (accessed March 5, 2014); Article 19, *Silencio forzado*, 61.

State and Local Governments

Although the efforts of the federal government have been slow and remain incomplete, the new laws discussed demonstrate some progress in establishing an institutional framework that could become more effective in the future. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for most state and local governments, which continue to show ineptitude, or worse, complicity in crimes against journalists and freedom of expression. One of the most infamous cases is that of Lydia Cacho, an award-winning investigative journalist who in 2004 published a book on a child prostitution ring that she claimed operated with the complicity of local police and politicians. After the publication of the book, she was harassed, received death threats, and was illegally arrested by state police. Even after a criminal defamation suit against her was dismissed in 2005, her work on international human trafficking has prompted continual harassment, including death threats. State and local officials have been unable or unwilling to put a stop to this treatment, and in fact, are suspected of playing a role in it.[48]

Moreover, a number of human rights organizations have documented cases in which local and state authorities failed to properly investigate crimes against journalists, and even went to the trouble of obscuring important details or falsifying evidence in order to give the appearance of a thorough investigation that determined the crime had nothing to do with the victim's work.[49] One such case is that of Bladimir Antuna García, a crime reporter for *El Tiempo de Durango*, whose body was found in 2009 with a note that said: "This is what happened to me for giving information to the military and for writing too much."[50]

More recently in the state of Puebla, two reporters were detained, robbed, and abandoned by four policemen.[51] Two days later, the governor, Rafael Moreno Valle, demanded a public apology and then filed charges against two different journalists for "abusing freedom of expression" when they used insulting language to describe state officials. To the extent that this move was nonviolent, it represents an improvement over the kinds of treatment other reporters have received at the hands of state governments. However, the fact that charges of libel should have been filed by the defamed individuals (rather than the state government) together with the reporters' accusations that they were threatened

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48 "Mexico must investigate threat against Lydia Cacho," http://cpj.org/2012/07/mexico-must-investigate-threat-against-lydia-cacho.php. (CPJ, accessed October 17, 2012.)

49 Lauría and O'Connor, *Silence or Death*, 10-13.

50 Ibid., 34.

51 The reporters later filed charges against the state police officers. "Denuncian a cuatro policías estatales por abuso de autoridad vs. reporteros," *Milenio*, October 21, 2012, http://puebla.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/b5717446ffbebd6243d28adfcfb0293f. (accessed October 22, 2012; "Indagan presuntos abusos contra periodistas en Puebla," *El Universal*, October 21, 2010, http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/878049.html. (accessed October 22, 2012.)

and harassed for publishing comments critical of the government, suggests that nothing has really changed.[52]

Unfortunately, there are hundreds of examples that demonstrate the unwillingness and incapacity of subnational governments to protect journalists who insist on exercising their right of free speech. This is particularly true at the state level, where many governors see the law as infringing on states' rights and have therefore pledged not to comply with it. As long as state and local governments are complicit in many of the crimes against the media, and as long as Mexico's legal system and rule of law are compromised, it will be very difficult to bring about real change.

Reaction of Media Outlets

In response to the increase in violence against journalists, many media outlets have taken measures to protect their employees. Some of these measures are very basic, such as installing reinforced doors, bulletproof windows, and surveillance cameras on their property. Others go further and provide bodyguards or safety training to at-risk reporters. But not all outlets have the resources or willingness to pay for such protections.[53] Therefore the most common effort has been the no-cost practice of publishing articles without bylines in order to protect the identity of the writer. Similarly, some journalists alternate beats so that individuals are not easily identified as crime or investigative reporters. While both of these strategies are logical and have some preventive effects, overall, they have not succeeded in protecting journalists, especially in smaller cities and communities where local reporters are well-known and not easily kept from public view.

These problems notwithstanding, some outlets have managed to continue reporting on violent crime by presenting the highest profile events in smaller formats without photographs on the back pages, or using the *nota roja* to present basic reports on violent crime.[54] Others, such as *El Siglo de Torreón*, have sought to cover the issue from alternative angles, such as focusing on the damage that drug trafficking does to the community.

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52 Elvia Cruz y Rodrigo Soberanes, "Gobierno de Puebla acusa a periodistas de "abuso de libertad de expression." *CNNMéxico*, October 23, 2012, http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2012/10/23/gobierno-de-puebla-acusa-a-periodistas-de-abuso-de-libertad-de-expresion. (accessed October 24, 2012.)

53 There is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that some media owners' so-called efforts to protect their journalists involves hiring freelancers to cover the most-dangerous assignments.

54 The *nota roja* is essentially a tabloid style police blotter that appears in many newspapers and television shows. It provides basic information and often photographs (rather than investigative reporting) about violent crimes.

Media Partnerships to Protect Journalists

A more sophisticated version of this same kind of strategy is for media outlets to make agreements among themselves to send at-risk reporters to a new city where they are unknown and then protect their professional identity when they publish sensitive stories. While in theory this should be an effective method of protecting journalists, the practice has rarely been used because the media in Mexico are not a unified group of actors. Indeed, there is a rather acrimonious divide between some media owners, many of whom have strong ties to local and national governments accused of participation and/or complicity in the crimes and corruption uncovered by reporters, and media workers, some of whom have actively challenged their employers to provide better wages and working conditions. Fueling this tension are also the aforementioned instances of owners encouraging reporters to accept bribes from government or criminal groups in exchange for favorable coverage because this saves owners money on salaries and ensures that the owners will remain in good standing with the local government. Clearly these owners are disinclined to expend extra resources of any kind on their employees.[55]

In addition to the divide between owners and media workers, there is also tension between local and national level journalists that prevents them from acting as a unified front. There is a common perception in Mexico City that journalists in the provinces are poorly educated and not professionally trained, and are therefore more susceptible to corruption than correspondents from national publications. Ironically, until 2010, there was relatively little national coverage of the problem of violence against journalists in Mexico, and consequently, few recognized the emerging pattern of increased violence against the press. The spike in deaths began to change this, but according to Alfredo Quijano, the late director of *Norte de Ciudad Juárez*, "There are few effective independent networks linking journalists in the capital city and the states and provincial cities."[56]

Media Agreement on the Coverage of Violence

One exception to this rule was the Agreement on the Coverage of Violence (Acuerdo para la Cobertura Informativa de la Violencia) reached in March 2011 by 46 media groups (which together own more than 700 newspapers and radio and television stations). The accord was designed to bring media outlets together in their efforts to protect their journalists and avoid glorifying drug trafficking organizations by portraying them in a positive light or by publishing propaganda

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55 It should be noted that there are a number of media owners who have themselves become targets of criminal organizations and effectively exiled from Mexico. Several editors have also been forced out of their jobs because they refused to bow to pressure to censor articles that criticize local authorities and their failure to more effectively address drug violence.

56 Bridges, "Coverage of Drug Trafficking."

such as narco-banners that contain messages for their enemies. Furthermore, the agreement sought to create standards for photographs showing violent images (e.g., decapitated bodies), to provide more in-depth analysis and context in accompanying stories, and not to reveal information that would compromise police investigations. See Figure 2 for a complete list.[57] Calderón and others who feared that gruesome photographs desensitize society to the effects of violence praised the accord. However, some of Mexico's most independent and influential outlets (e.g., *Reforma, La Jornada, Proceso*) refused to join, arguing that an agreement that promoted standardized coverage amounted to censorship that could ultimately minimize the effects of coverage of drug-war related violence.[58] To date, the agreement seems to have produced no substantive change in the way drug violence is covered or improved protection for the media.

FIGURE 2: EDITORIAL GUIDELINES REACHED IN THE AGREEMENT ON THE COVERAGE OF VIOLENCE, MARCH 2011

1. Take a stand against the violence perpetrated by organized crime
2. Do not become an unintentional spokesperson for organized crime. Avoid using the language and terminology used by the criminal groups
3. Present the information in all its complexity
4. Be explicit in assigning responsibility for a crime
5. Do not presume that an individual is guilty without evidence
6. Protect the rights of victims and minors involved in the violence
7. Encourage citizens to play a role and report on crime
8. Set up protective measures for journalists
9. Express support when a reporter or media outlet is targeted or under threat
10. Do not interfere with the fight against crime

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57 "A Death Threat to Freedom: A Report on Violence Against Mexico's Press," World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), September 2012.

58 Ken Ellingwood, "Mexico news companies agree to drug war coverage guidelines," *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 2011. (accessed October 15, 2012.)

Self-Censorship

By far the most common and effective response from the media is self-censorship. Scaling back or eliminating coverage of sensitive topics is both logical and justifiable because it is the one strategy with the best chance of removing journalists from the line of fire. The decision not to print particular stories or to stop investigating specific types of crime stories happens every day all over Mexico. But the most dramatic examples of self-censorship have come when owners and editors have publicly stated their intention to stop covering the news. For example, on Sept. 18, 2010, *El Diario* (Ciudad Juárez) responded to the murder of one of its reporters (the second in two years) by publishing an editorial titled: "What do you want from us?" which directly addressed the criminal organizations, letting them know that they were seen as the city's de facto authorities, and asking them to lay ground rules for what and how they should publish so as not to lose any more personnel.[59] More recently in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, an editorial in *El Mañana* appealed to its readers for understanding because "for a certain amount of time, as deemed necessary, we will refrain from publishing any information related to the violent conflict plaguing our city and other parts of the country … because of the lack of a proper environment for the free exercise of journalism …"[60]

On the surface, self-censorship, especially if it is limited to one or two topic areas, may not appear to pose a problem to society. Yet the cumulative effect of refusing to investigate or publish stories about a specific type of crime all together, or of silencing the media in a particular geographic region is to increase the danger by creating "information blackouts." A 2010 study by the Mexican Foundation of Investigative Journalism (MEPI) that examined crime coverage in 13 regional newspapers published in Mexico's most violent cities over a six-month period found that "in 8 of the 13 cities studied, the media only reported 1 of every 10 drug-related acts of violence." Another of MEPI's findings was that the worst restrictions were found in those states controlled by the Zetas and the Gulf Cartel: "The news media in those states, which comprise about one third of the country, publish or broadcast reports on only a maximum of 5 percent of all drug trafficking related violence."[61] Under these circumstances, it is impossible for citizens to have a true sense of the security problems in those cities. Equally important, citizens lack crucial information that will inform their opinions of government, which therefore impedes the accountability process—two crucial aspects of responsive and representative democracy.

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59 "Rocío Gallegos: What do you want from us?" World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers, http://www.wan-ifra.org/rocio-gallegos-what-do-you-want-from-us. (accessed October 21, 2012.)

60 "Opinión Editorial," *El Mañana*, May 13, 2012, http://www.elmanana.com.mx/notas.asp?id=285418.

61 MEPI Foundation, "Mexico: The New Spiral of Silence," November 2010. Reprinted in Bridges, "Coverage of drug trafficking."

Societal Response

Although Mexico's community of journalists was initially slow to respond, there are a few encouraging signs that it and other societal groups have stepped up their efforts to call attention to the problem and work toward solutions. For example, over the past two years there has been a notable increase in the news coverage of violence against journalists, and more editorials calling for better protection and an end to impunity. There is also growing unity among journalists: In August 2010, a group of reporters organized a public demonstration in Mexico City, titled "Not One More" ("*Ni Uno Más*") to show solidarity with the victims and demand better preventive measures by the government. More recently, in the wake of news about the murder of Gregorio Jiménez de la Cruz, media workers in 20 Mexican cities and along the U.S.-Mexico border took to the streets to protest the dangerous conditions facing journalists, especially in the state of Veracruz. None of protests attracted more than 1,000 supporters, and so far have not produced any tangible improvements, but public denunciations of this kind raise the profile of the problem within Mexican society and raise the costs of government inaction.

NGOS

By far the most vocal about the scope and consequences of the problem are Mexican NGOs whose missions are or include monitoring and protecting freedom of expression. Some of these groups are national (e.g., Red de Periodistas de a Pie, Animal Político), while others are national chapters of international organizations (e.g., Article 19, Committee to Protect Journalists). All have actively and consistently called attention to the problem through press releases, blog posts, and investigative reports that generally include scathing critiques of the Mexican government's response and accusing it of indifference, ineptitude, and complicity.

Some of these NGOs have also been active in advocating specific solutions. For example, as noted earlier, Article 19's investigation revealed that most of the violence against journalists was perpetrated by state authorities rather than organized criminal groups. The same group advocated a constitutional amendment to federalize crimes against free expression and provided legal and technical advice to the Mexican Congress on how to implement this change.[62]

Another important example is Periodistas de a Pie (PdP), a Mexican NGO founded in 2007 in order to defend the public's right to information and freedom of expression and to improve the quality of Mexican journalism. In the process of carrying out this mission it has also taken on the task of protecting journalists

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62 Article 19, "Mexico: Constitution amended, federal authorities given powers to prosecute crimes against free expression," http://www.article19.org/resources.php/resource/3330/en/mexico:-constitution-amended,-federal-authorities-given-powers-to-prosecute-crimes-against-free-expression. (accessed October 28, 2012.)

working in dangerous conditions. To this end, it organizes conferences in order to disseminate information, and sponsors online courses and workshops designed to teach investigative reporting strategies for reporters working in high-risk areas. PdP works closely with other national and international organizations to sponsor events and workshops that train reporters how to use data analysis and sophisticated investigative techniques.[63] It also regularly joins the Austin Forum on Journalism in the Americas, an annual meeting and workshop organized by the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas at the University of Texas at Austin to promote the development and training of media personnel in the Americas and the Caribbean.[64]

Citizen Journalists

Social media users have stepped in to fill the news void that has resulted from limited reporting and widespread self-censorship. There are numerous websites, blogs, Facebook pages, and Twitter accounts set up expressly for the purpose of disseminating information about drug-related violence. This phenomenon is strongest in northern Mexico, where sites that denounce organized crime and the government or report on local violence in their cities began to crop up as a way to counter public denials by government officials that violence was escalating. Now many citizens claim that blogs like "El Blog del Narco" and social media outlets provide the only trustworthy information about such matters. For example, a social media activist using the handle "Chuy" uses Twitter to inform citizens of "narco blockades" and firefights in Reynosa, Tamaulipas. His tweets about cartel activity help people avoid violent hotspots and conduct their daily lives a little more securely. But Chuy sees his role as more than just providing safety tips; he is also a committed government watchdog: "Thanks to Twitter we have documentation, with video, audio, and images of violent events. It's a registration [countering the] opacity and denial of local and state government" who at one time attempted to attribute the escalation in tension to the "psychosis of the residents."[65]

Unfortunately, but perhaps not surprisingly, the fate of those who use social media to report the activities of criminal groups is not unlike those of professional journalists reporting for traditional outlets. Nuevo Laredo has been particularly dangerous, with at least four murders of social media activists in 2011 and 2012. All four victims were brutally murdered and found with notes attributing their deaths to the use of social media to report crime or denounce organized criminal groups' activity. In September 2011, two bodies were found hanged under a pedestrian bridge

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63 Periodistas de a Pie, http://periodistasdeapie.wordpress.com/. (accessed October 22, 2012.)

64 The theme of the 2012 Forum was "Safety and Protection for Journalists, Bloggers, and Citizen Journalists." http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/austinforum.

65 "Residents turn to social media to fight Mexico cartel violence," CNN, March 5, 2012, http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/05/world/americas/mexico-narco-bloggers/index.html. (accessed October 14, 2012.)

with a notice that read, "This is going to happen to all of those posting silly things on the Internet." Several days later, the decapitated body of María Elizabeth Macías Castro, a well-known blogger known as "La Nena de Laredo," was found with the head next to a keyboard and a note that read in part, "I am here because of my reports." Both notes were signed with the letter Z, suggesting that Los Zetas were responsible for all three deaths. Just two months later, the body of a man identified as "El Rascatripas," an administrator of Nuevo Laredo en Vivo, a website used by residents to denounce organized crime, was found tortured and beheaded with a note that indicated that he was killed for denouncing drug cartels in the site's chat room.[66] These crimes suggest that citizen journalists are equally or more vulnerable as mainstream ones to the violence of criminal organizations and authorities; so far, the measures taken by the Mexican government have done nothing to protect them.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear from the preceding discussion that the scope of the problem of violence against the Mexican media is vast and that existing preventive and protective measures are inadequate. The only real solution is to end impunity for these and other crimes, a change that will not come quickly or easily, as long the government lacks the political will and capacity. That said, there are some steps that Mexico's government and society and the international community can take to move in the right direction:

Recommendations for the Mexican Government

- First and foremost, the president must be clear about the seriousness of the problem and demonstrate determination to solve it. Otherwise, the message communicated to the bureaucracy and politicians at all levels of government is that there will be no consequences for failing to enact or enforce laws and procedures that aim to protect the media and free expression.
- The executive must also strengthen the FEADLE and provide sufficient resources and capable people in order to successfully investigate and prosecute crimes. This should include making the FEADLE a permanent office and providing specialized training for attorneys, judges, and law enforcement agencies. There is also a need to introduce accountability for performance so that state prosecutors take their job seriously. These measures will help the FEADLE build a reputation for efficacy, otherwise it will not be an effective deterrent nor will it inspire the confidence of the journalists and citizens it is meant to protect.
- Effort must be made to ensure that the protection mechanism works

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66 It was later determined that the victim was not El Rascatripas, but because the killers either mistook his identity or were willing to accept anyone as a stand-in, the murder is still classified as the death of a citizen journalist.

effectively. There are already some encouraging signs that this is beginning to happen.[67] But this group must also develop strong links to state governments where protocols will be implemented. One way to encourage these links is to provide resources, support, and incentives for states to comply with the new law. For example, states that cooperate with federal law enforcement initiatives could be made eligible to receive added fiscal transfer revenue to offset any costs or to strengthen their own law enforcement efforts.

- The congressional committee needs more resources, authority, and training to be of any use, especially if it is going to live up to its responsibility to collect data and disseminate updates and information about cases and government actions via the Internet. To this end, its functions should be streamlined with those of the FEADLE and the protection mechanism so as not to duplicate mission and spread resources too thin.[68]

- The federal government should establish a fund to provide life insurance for journalists and reparations for victims' families, since in many cases the journalist is the primary breadwinner of the family. This type of initiative worked well in Chile and Colombia and could have similar results in Mexico.[69]

- Once federal authorities show that they have the will and capacity to deal effectively with the problem through FEADLE and the protection mechanism, state and local governments must be convinced to do their part to support these institutions. Again, tangible incentives will be necessary to elicit compliance. For example, state and local governments might become eligible to receive additional federal support for their policy initiatives in exchange for their cooperation on legal processes. Alternatively, negative incentives (e.g., a reduction in federal transfer revenue) might be used to force mayors and governors to support the new institutions.

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67 For example, the organization announced in February 2013 that it would audit all of the security contracts signed by the Calderón administration to uncover why funds went missing and equipment allocated to journalists in danger was never delivered. "Auditarán el mecanismo de protección a activistas," *El Universal*, February 20, 2013, http://www.libertad-expresion.org.mx/noticias/auditaran–el–mecanismo–de–proteccion–a–activistas/. (accessed February 25, 2013.) As noted earlier, the protection mechanism has intervened to provide protection for over 200 journalists and human rights workers. "Protegidos 213 periodistas y derechohumanistas por amenazas," *Milenio*, February 6, 2014; "Instala Senado comisión para dar seguimiento a agresiones a periodistas," *Milenio*, February 7, 2013, accessed February 25, 2013, http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/c2786e10952498759b7205a3a76d6bb3.

68 In February 2013, the Mexican Senate created a special committee to review cases of violence against journalists and violations of freedom of expression. It is not clear whether the work of this committee will support or duplicate that of the existing committee in the Chamber of Deputies. "Instala Senado comisión."

69 The Senate committee appears to be in the process of establishing just such a program. Juan Arvizu, "Senado gestionará apoyos para periodistas agredidos," El Universal, February 9, 2013, http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/203882.html. (accessed February 25, 2013.)

Recommendations for Mexican Society

Mexican society also has a responsibility to protect its journalists and demand that freedom of expression be respected. We have already seen a number of efforts to do both, but it is imperative that society continues to apply pressure on the government, or else the latter is unlikely to respond in a meaningful way.

- Media owners must begin or continue to protect their employees by taking measures to strengthen security, but they must also provide greater support for training specifically designed to help journalists working in dangerous areas. There are many existing resources that might prove helpful here. For example, NGOS such as PdP, Article 19, and the Knight Center regularly offer workshops designed to give journalists knowledge and tools to help keep them safe. Media outlets could pay for the travel and registration fees of employees interested in participating in these opportunities. There are also a number of low-to no-cost resources. For example, a number of international NGOS have published manuals on war reporting designed to help journalists minimize the dangers they face.[70]
- Editors must be more creative in how they publish delicate information so that their journalists are better protected. Colombia provides an excellent example: during the most violent time period for journalists in Colombia, sensitive stories were published simultaneously in multiple outlets in order to reduce the risk to those journalists closest to the violent actors.[71]
- Journalists need to strive for unity in order to keep this issue in the public eye and put pressure on the government to solve the problem. Public protests and marches are important, but there are other measures that could bring more tangible results. For example, national and local press could create a network committed to publicizing the problem of violence against journalists and its dire consequences for democracy in Mexico. Additionally, members of the national press can cover stories that are too dangerous for locals, but still support local journalists by employing them as stringers or co-authors. Here again, Colombia might provide a model of best practices.
- Mexican NGOs must continue to place pressure on the government by issuing independent reports, helping legislators draft new laws and policies, and helping to keep visibility of the problem very high. They should continue to serve as excellent resources for journalists (with workshops, manuals, etc.) and maintain strong links with larger, better-endowed international organizations with an interest protecting journalists and free speech (e.g., Knight Center, CPJ, RSF).

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70 Lauría and O'Connor, *Silence or Death*, 19.

71 Ibid.

- Citizens must fill the void and continue to serve as watchdogs and demand that the government respect the constitutional right to information and free expression. The key here is to get the middle class involved in the fight against drug-related crimes. This group is crucial because while it does not have enough resources to fully insulate or protect itself (e.g., by leaving the country or hiring private body guards), unlike the working and lower classes, it does have resources (e.g., education, disposable income, paid vacation/time off) to dedicate time and energy to solving the problem.

Recommendations for the International Community

While the problem of drug-related violence against journalists is clearly a domestic problem in Mexico, there are a number of measures that international actors should take to help raise awareness because the more Mexico becomes known as a dangerous place for the media and a country where freedom of expression is compromised, the costlier it becomes for the Mexican government to ignore the problem.

- Foreign governments must do their best to help members of Mexico's media who find themselves in danger by providing asylum when appropriate, and by continuing to raise the issue in diplomatic talks and pressuring the Mexican government to strengthen laws that protect the freedom of expression.
- International media must not let this issue fade, but instead provide regular coverage and updates on the situation. Foreign journalists and editors should also lend support and resources to Mexican colleagues who find themselves in dangerous situations. For example, non-Mexican publications might purchase stories investigated and written anonymously by Mexicans that would be too dangerous for news outlets to publish in Mexico.
- International NGOs must continue to serve as important impartial sources of information. Organizations such as CPJ, RSF, and Article 19 should continue to support and share resources with Mexican organizations, and keep reminding the world that Mexico is the most dangerous country in the Western Hemisphere for journalists because this puts pressure on the government to address the problem.
- International organizations and foundations, such as the Annenberg Foundation and the Open Society Foundation, can support these efforts by continuing to provide grants, fellowships, and training to Mexican journalists.

The Private Sector and Public Security: The Cases of Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey

LUCY CONGER

INTRODUCTION

Between 2008 and 2012, murder, extortion, and drug and human trafficking rose to unprecedented levels in the important northern manufacturing and industrial cities of Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey. Private sector leaders and organizations confronted their grim reality and staged protests, made concrete demands of authorities, and launched a host of civic initiatives aimed at reducing crime. This research focuses on the civic response to the extreme spikes in violence and crime—the actions of the conventional "private sector," made up of business leaders, captains of industry, and associations of businesspeople, and from private citizens who formed civil society organizations focused on activities designed to combat delinquency.

Civil society is weak and thin in Mexico. The robust civil society sectors in the United States and in other Latin American nations such as Chile boast about 20 times more civic organizations per capita than Mexico. Generally speaking, civic participation in Mexico is also poorly developed. Political observers, civil society advocates, and philanthropic organizations attribute the narrow and fragile civil culture to a widespread lack of trust in the society at large, a conservative culture, a tradition of governmental hostility toward independent actors, and a low level of philanthropy that would make civic organizations viable. In this context, it is unusual that business associations and civic groupings would "step up to the plate" and protest publicly, press authorities for action, and launch civic initiatives to combat crime at a time when most citizens were overcome by terror and intimidated by the threats of extortion, kidnapping, and violence. Yet, in both Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey, businesspeople, professionals, and civic activists came together to make common cause against crime.

The private groups that arose to battle for improved citizen security are distinctive because they are hybrids. In both Juárez and Monterrey, the most important and successful private, civic groups working on security issues were organizations that brought together business leaders and business and industrial

organizations with civic organizations that included medical associations, human rights defenders, academics, and other activists. Umbrella organizations like these that cut across sectors are highly unusual in Mexico. The two cities are "isolated cases" in that business and civil society groups were able to work together, especially in a country where the government is "not an impartial arbiter," says Miguel Fernández, CEO of the expanding Transtelco fiber optics cable firm and president of the Plan Estratégico de Juárez, a participatory citizen initiative to improve the quality of life in the city.[1] Insecurity was so pervasive "it was at the point of destroying the city, and that placed it in the interest of everyone" to take action, says Fernández.[2]

The hybrid civic organizations created in Juárez and Monterrey to respond to the security emergency blur the lines of the conventional understanding of "private sector." Their leadership and composition went outside of commerce and industry to tap talents in universities and nongovernmental organizations and also included, in the early stages, representative groups such as neighborhood associations and market vendors. In this paper, "private sector" may refer to the narrow definition of commerce and industry and, more broadly, may also denote the combined forces of the business sector and civil society organizations working together.

The paper focuses on the nature and results of the civic engagement and activist postures adopted by the private sector in Juárez and Monterrey since 2008. The private sector has successfully established dialogues with authorities, has been met with varying degrees of receptivity and response and has created its own mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on government actions to combat crime. Private sector activism in both cities is based on creating trust among citizens that encourages citizen reporting of crimes, and centers on pressing specific demands with local and state officials, staffing crime report hotlines and web platforms, and creating channels of communication that relay citizen intelligence about delinquency to the authorities. The results of this activism are most evident in drops in crimes such as extortion, kidnapping, auto theft, and other robberies. Another significant result of the organizations and initiatives of the private sector in Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey is the demonstration effect for other cities and authorities across Mexico of how civic participation can be catalyzed and function as a constructive force for improving citizen security. Indeed, the private sector leaders of both cities are consulted often by business associations and civic groups in other states of Mexico for their know–how on participation and combating crime.

The achievements of business groups and civil society are important in the context of the horrific spate of violence and crime unleashed in Juárez and Monterrey and other regions of Mexico in recent years. The results that can be expected from the private sector are limited, however. The structural problems that either fuel or

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1 Miguel Fernández, telephone interview with author, February 27, 2013.

2 Ibid.

facilitate the expanding wave of crime require intervention by the state. A classic example is the police force. "Here we have no career as a policeman, we don't know what that is," says Jorge Tello Peón, former executive secretary of Mexico's National Public Security System (SNSP).[3] Police agents are disdained by society and return the favor, and are condemned to dangerous jobs with low pay and few benefits. The private sector has pressed hard for cleaning up the police force in both cities with limited success. This is a campaign that, ultimately, demands an overhaul of personnel, training, upgraded equipment, and investigative techniques and the leadership and commitment of authorities in municipal, state, and federal governments. Where the private sector can be effective regarding structural problems of impunity and the criminal justice system is in raising its voice to define the problems, propose actions and demand a response from government.

CIUDAD JUÁREZ

The recent history and rapid growth of Ciudad Juárez have been shaped by the city's strategic location on the border with Texas and the commercial possibilities implied by being a gateway to the United States. The city has long been a magnet for migrants and legal and illicit trade crossing the border. The Bracero Program drew workers to the United States, and many of them ended up in Juárez when the program closed in 1965. The creation and rapid expansion of the assembly plant industry over the past 40 years shaped the recent, burgeoning growth of Ciudad Juárez. The population tripled from 1970, reaching about 1.2 million in the last decade. Disadvantaged workers, mostly women and young workers, flooded into the city pursuing jobs in the "maquiladora" manufacturing plants. The influx of workers from the bracero and maquiladora programs "contributed to the gradual process of social disorganization in Ciudad Juárez (because) chronic income vulnerability, repeated economic recessions, and weak family structures laid the foundations for the onset of violence."[4] Many of the children of working mothers were raised with little education and minimal parental supervision and became easy recruits for drug cartels that have been on the scene since at least the 1980s.

The Security Crisis in Ciudad Juárez

Despite its modern history of rapid economic growth, a large influx of migrants, and a heinous reputation for femicides, Ciudad Juárez had remained a place where businesses could thrive and their owners could live a pleasant existence just

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3 Jorge Tello Peón, interview with author, October 16, 2012.

4 Carlos Vilalta and Robert Muggah, "Violent Disorder in Ciudad Juárez: A Spatial Analysis of Homicide," HASOW (Humanitarian Action in Situations other than War) Discussion Paper 1, September 2012:8. This summary of the city's recent social evolution draws heavily on the Discussion Paper: 6–8.

across the river from El Paso, Texas. That changed drastically seven years ago. As drug cartels fought for control of the vital Juárez transit point, a conflagration of violence overtook the city.

Drug traffickers of the Juárez and Sinaloa cartels and criminal bands waged war over the next three years, and Juárez became the most violent city in the world. The murder rate soared to between 178 and 224 murders per 100,000 inhabitants in 2009 and 2010. Violence also increased across Mexico between 2008 and 2010, and homicide became the leading cause of reduced life expectancy among males ages 20–44. Nowhere was the toll worse than in the state of Chihuahua. The killing in Ciudad Juárez and throughout the state lowered the life expectancy of males by 5.2 years.[5]

The terror of kidnapping also reached a peak in 2010. "There were 10 kidnappings a day, that's when we began to organize," says Jorge Contreras, a manufacturer who became a leader in several of the Juárez civic organizations.[6] Businessmen hired bodyguards. The city began to empty out as families moved across the border or to central Mexican states. Several thousand businesses closed, shops and restaurants shut their doors and nobody dared go out at night.

Beginning in 2005, Juárez had fallen prey to the violent rivalry between the Juárez Cartel and its violent arm, La Línea, and the Sinaloa Cartel, the powerful organization headed by legendary trafficker Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán. Murders tripled between 2007 and 2008, when more than 1,600 people were killed.[7] The government sent 2,000 army troops to Juárez in March, 2008, as part of a Chihuahua joint operation.[8] But violence grew worse.

Telephone extortion calls began to sweep through neighborhoods, and became commonplace. As 2008 wore on, doctors and lawyers were kidnapped. Businessmen, too, were carried away by criminal bands seizing people for ransom. Organized crime then began demanding protection money from businesses in central Juárez and the tourist district. "Kidnapping and extortion had been unknown in Juarez," recalls Contreras, who presided over a non-profit economic development agency when the crime wave began.[9]

As killings increased in 2010, the army was withdrawn and 4,500 federal police were sent in to try to bring order in the city. It was not until the July 2011 capture of José Antonio Acosta Hernández, aka "El Diego," leader of La Línea, the armed wing of the Juárez Cartel, that the murder rate began to come down. In custody, Acosta reportedly confessed to having ordered 1,500 murders. Months later, a large

5 Guillermo Julián González-Pérez, María Guadalupe Vega-López, and Carlos Enrique Cabrera-Pivaral, "Impacto de la violencia homicida en la esperanza de vida masculina en México," *Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública* 32, no. 5 (2012):335–42, http://www.scielosp.org/pdf/rpsp/v32n5/v32n5a03.pdf.

6 Jorge Contreras, interview with author, September 27, 2012.

7 Borderland Beat, "Murders in Ciudad Juarez Top 2009 Total," Nov. 20, 2010, http://www.borderlandbeat.com/2010/11/murders-in-ciudad-juarez-top-2009-total.html.

8 Wikipedia, "Operation Chihuahua," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Chihuahua.

9 Jorge Contreras.

contingent of federal police was withdrawn, and state and municipal forces began to take responsibility for security in the metropolitan area. Acosta's arrest is widely considered among Juárez activists to mark a turning point in the crime surge. After the arrest, Juárez began to see the beginning of a gradual decline in high-impact crime, a decline that is attributed to many different factors.

The Strategic Plan of Juárez

When the security crisis struck, Juárez could draw on the background of experience, relationships, and strategic thinking developed by a citizen-led Strategic Plan, a nongovernmental organization operating since 2001. The Strategic Plan of Juárez (Plan Estratégico de Juárez) is the effort of a plural, multiparty group of citizens with the goal of creating a participatory comprehensive development plan for the city. Between 2002 and 2004, 14,000 citizens took part in the planning process. "People are eager to participate when they see you are non-partisan," says Lucinda Vargas, an economist and director general of the Plan Estratégico.[10] Many of the business and civic leaders formed through the planning work went on to become active participants in the Mesa de Seguridad, the civic organization that became the leading force in citizen-government collaboration on security beginning in 2010.

The initial implementation of the plan began in 2005 and 2006, but some of the projects ran up against the political agenda. "The relationship between society and government failed," recalls a professional leading the effort who asked that this comment be not for attribution.[11] The plan pulled back and after a rethink focused instead on promoting a set of cross-cutting policies to promote governability, a broad social pact for the city, and ad hoc initiatives to combat insecurity and impunity. The Plan released its Pact for Juárez in 2007, a proposal dedicated to creating the conditions for a governable Juárez. The pact was firmly based on the concept of co-responsibility between government and citizens for planning and managing the city to improve the quality of life for residents. The pact called for respect for law and order, and its *Manifiesto* demanded the elimination of corruption in public administration and pledged to create an ad hoc mechanism to promote security and social peace.[12]

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10 Lucinda Vargas, interview with author, September 28, 2012.

11 Not-for-attribution interview with author, September 28, 2012.

12 Plan Estratégico de Juárez, "Manifiesto por la Gobernabilidad de Juárez," http://www.pactoporjuarez. org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Manifiesto.pdf.

Comité Médico Ciudadano

The direct civic response to the surge of violence and crime in Ciudad Juárez took form in December 2008 when some 200 doctors organized a march to protest the lack of security. The march sparked the formation of the Citizens' Medical Committee (Comité Médico Ciudadano), which aimed to create social networks that would encourage civic participation to combat insecurity. A surgeon and talented communicator, Dr. Arturo Valenzuela, began delivering a talk on the "pathology of kidnapping," and showed his audiences at schools, churches, and in professional and business associations the alarming increase in crime rates. His talks concluded with a call to action: his insistence that Juárez residents had it within their power to promote a culture of law and order. They could start by moving past their distrust of authorities and filing complaints about crimes, he argued. On an ad hoc basis, four doctors posted a call-in number to receive reports of kidnappings. Residents called in because they knew the responder would be a doctor, and the informal service was able to resolve 35 cases that were reported and offered advice about the logistics of rescue for non-reported cases.

Juarenses por la Paz

As the medical committee (CMC) was evolving, another group—Juarenses por la Paz (JPP or Juárez Residents for Peace)—had begun working to identify solutions for combating crime. Created in 2008, JPP was a heterogeneous group of business people, lawyers, and other professionals. The two incipient groups met, and began an exchange about how to improve security.

In early 2009, a local newspaper editor, Oscar Cantú, organized a meeting that brought together longstanding business and community organizations and academics with these new activist groups. Leaders of two of the assembly plant associations, the wholesale market organization, church pastors, and women's groups met with heads of Juarenses por la Paz and the Comité Médico Ciudadano. The encounter proved catalytic, allowing each group to see that other people of good will shared the same concerns and were focused on addressing the same problems, participants recall. This heterogeneous group began studying organized crime and crime-fighting practices from Palermo, Italy, and the turnaround by the former cartel center of Medellín, Colombia. The encounters led to the creation of a non-profit monitoring group, the Juárez Observatory for Public Security and Social Security. The Association of Maquiladoras (AMAC) played a visible role in this effort by offering its offices for the new group's meetings.

From the time JPP became active in 2008, the group launched a program to track crimes. JPP defined a set of security indicators that tracked the incidence of high-impact crimes that most affected citizens, including homicides, kidnapping,

auto theft with and without violence, extortion, and robberies of business with violence. JPP provided information to authorities about where the crime problems were concentrated. This worked as a means of ensuring that police do their job, of monitoring the work of government to see results, and of developing ideas for strengthening institutions. Anonymous citizen reports of kidnapping and extortion and intelligence-sharing between authorities and civic groups are the main instruments for working to reduce these high-impact crimes. To encourage citizens to report crime, JPP introduced Crime Stoppers to Juárez and administered this hotline, which functioned well during 2009 and 2010 when the service had cooperation from the then-mayor. "No other organization in Juárez had worked on security," says Fernández of the Plan Estratégico de Juárez.[13] Their experience and leadership would prove invaluable later when the federal government invited civil society to collaborate in a broad anti-crime campaign.

Solution for Juárez

By 2009, extortion had reached epidemic proportions and spread into middle class neighborhoods, terrorizing residents. Members of JPP met with the state attorney general, Patricia González, to demand action. Her response was to recommend paying protection money and letting the authorities trace the money. To members of the JJP, this seemed like a recommendation to acquiesce to the demands of organized crime, with little or no chance of recovering the funds handed over to the extortionists. Whether this was a sign of indifference or even corruption on the part of the attorney general, it solidified the existing disaffection of civil society with the state government.[14]

As frustration mounted, the CMC called for a protest demonstration. The organizers—doctors, human rights leaders, and academics—decided it was essential that the protest place specific demands before authorities. In December 2009, the "Solution for Juárez" march gathered 2,000 people outside the city hall. This was a significant show of civic activism at a time when the city was living a reign of terror.

The six demands called for federal, state, and municipal authorities to join in a pact between government and society that would install a permanent assembly to develop a rescue plan and a sweeping social policy to attack the causes of violence and provide aid for victims of crime, to complete restructuring of security forces

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13 Miguel Fernández.

14 González's term ended with a cloud of controversy. In late 2010, days after González left office, she was accused of having ties to the Juárez Cartel. In a widely circulated internet video, González's brother Mario made a videotaped confession at gunpoint, in which he claimed that he was the contact between his sister and the Juárez Cartel. William Booth and Nick Miroff, "Mexican Drug Cartel Forces Lawyer's Video Confessions," *Washington Post*, October 30 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/30/AR2010103004757.html.

with an emphasis on intelligence, and overhaul the justice system to combat impunity and resolve crime. "The violence is not exclusively a public security problem, but rather an authentic crisis of governance and cannot be resolved exclusively with traditional strategies in the hands of police and the army," the protesters said. The marchers demanded that President Felipe Calderón visit Juárez to set in motion the crime-fighting pact. After the march, federal authorities met with leaders of the Observatory and promised a visit by Calderón, although no date was set.

Less than eight weeks later, tragedy struck. On Jan. 31, 2010, 20 gunmen burst into a party of students and killed 15 people. Calderón mistakenly claimed the slayings were the product of a dispute between drug gangs, implying the youths were criminals. The president was soon forced to admit his error. The massacre at Villas de Salvárcar, perpetrated by a criminal gang seeking to murder rivals, was a grievous case of mistaken identity. The tragedy galvanized the government into action, and on Feb. 17, the president and his entire Cabinet came to Juárez, heard the stinging criticisms of mothers of the slain students, and heard the desperation and demands of civil society leaders. This meeting broke down the conventional barriers between government and society, say Juárez participants.

We Are All Juárez and the Mesa de Seguridad

Calderón then launched the "We are All Juárez" (Todos Somos Juárez) program aimed at implementing an anti-crime strategy that coordinated all levels of government, brought in civic groups, and included social actions to foster crime prevention. Todos Somos Juárez called for representatives of the federal, state, and municipal governments to develop and implement programs with local civil society participants grouped together in six task forces focused on security, labor, health, economy, education, and social development. The president sent his top security adviser, Tello Peón, to Juárez, where he met with citizens as the security task force—the Mesa de Seguridad—was being organized. An intelligence expert, Tello Peón had the authority to make demands of the army and police and came with a mandate from the president to listen to citizen demands. Ultimately, the task forces designed a total of 160 measures to attack crime and and its social roots and to improve living conditions in the city.

The security task force, the Mesa de Seguridad, is widely considered the most successful of the Todos Somos Juárez initiatives. It included officials from all three levels of government, representatives of the security forces including the army, federal and municipal police, and the attorney general's office together with 24 citizen delegates drawn from the bar association, human rights commission, assembly plant associations, and civic groups including the CMC, Juarenses por la Paz, a youth group, a citizen observatory, the strategic plan project, and the

university. It was not a natural combination. "The looks were like at a poker game," recalls Valenzuela of the Citizens' Medical Committee and a prominent civil society participant in the Mesa.[15] Still, a breakthrough in collaboration was achieved between these disparate personages. "We took a leap of faith, we were in a situation so extreme that many people let down their defenses and were willing to enter into this dialogue," says Vargas, director of the Plan Estratégico.

Both sides of the table were committed to working together. The visit of Calderón and the persistence of Juarenses por la Paz in working with authorities had established the dynamic of dialogue that assured the composition of the Mesa de Seguridad was decided correctly. Calderón assigned Facundo Rosas, at the time the federal police commissioner, to visit Juárez monthly with the pledge that civil society had a direct line to the Cabinet if the security agenda was not progressing well. A good working relationship was established with Rosas. "Trust exists with a person, not with the authority in general," says Valenzuela.[16]

The diverse private sector groups in the Mesa de Seguridad include two bar associations, business chambers of merchants and restaurant owners, two maquiladora associations, the economic development organization, the human rights commission, youth for Juárez, JPP, the medical committee, Plan Estratégico, Observatorio Ciudadano, and the Autonomous University of Chihuahua. Because of its experience tracking crime and promoting citizen denunciations, JPP became a leader in the Mesa, and its president, Abel Ayala, was named technical secretary of the Mesa.

Within the Mesa de Seguridad, 12 committees were set up with responsibility for oversight of investigative police and prosecution, the immediate response center, secure corridors, a culture of legality, vehicle identification, reports on crimes in bars, citizen intelligence, crime indicators, kidnapping and extortion, preventive police, communication, and liaison with the attorney general. A representative of government participates in each commission alongside the private sector delegates.

In 2010, the Mesa de Seguridad demanded that Calderón assign an additional 200 investigative police to the Juárez attorney general's office. The intention was to develop an intelligence strategy to complement the army's ongoing effort to control territory in the city. At the time, violence was charging toward new record highs, and the attorney general's office had 34 staff assigned to that unit, but only one agent actually conducted investigations. The federal government responded by sending 40 officers. All were assigned to investigation. Today, Juarez has 76 police investigators who investigate crimes and have been important in developing an anti-kidnapping unit that advocates say is effective. Professionally trained investigators are scarce in Mexico, so security analysts consider this a positive development.

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15 Dr. Arturo Valenzuela, interview with author, September 28, 2012.

16 Ibid.

Turning the Tide of Crime and Violence

By the end of 2010, murder had reached a record level of 2,000 in the year. In March 2011, the city government took action to improve policing. Retired Lt. Col. Julián Leyzaola was hired to take charge of the Juárez police. A controversial figure, he came from a stint in Tijuana where he led the police and presided over a decline in crime. Leyzaola built the Juárez municipal police force to 2,000 agents and saw to it that at least half the force was active on the street. He also began cleaning up the force. In April, crime began to subside.

The monthly crime indicators report is a prominent feature of the Mesa's work. Developed by an engineer and assembly plant manager, the indicators document the rates of violent and high-impact crimes since peak levels in late 2010 and the first half of 2011. The indicators track homicides, kidnapping, extortion, and violent and non-violent car thefts. Every month, the authorities meet with the Mesa and together they review the latest statistics and analyze the results in reducing these crimes. "What you measure you can improve," says manufacturer Contreras of the Mesa.[17] Government representatives in the Mesa "have an interest in coming and presenting good numbers and if not, they lower they heads," he says.

Murders dropped to 42 during the month of July 2012, an 81 percent improvement in 12 months. By September, the Juárez murder rate had fallen further, to one a day, an amount that "is still high for our goals," said then-Mayor Héctor Murguía.[18] Reported kidnappings reached 14 in May 2011, and have fallen ever since, including three months with no incidents. Kidnapping figures are considered incomplete, however, because many victims do not report the crime. Another underreported crime, extortion and protection rackets, is on a slightly downward trend, but increased between November 2011 and April 2012. During July 2012, the crime report registered 108 violent car thefts, a 64-percent improvement over the previous year. By year-end 2012, Juárez had seen the lowest rates of high-impact crimes in three years. The Mesa tracking tool showed that no kidnappings were reported in December, and the city experienced the lowest rates of homicides, auto theft, and reports of extortion since 2009. While there have been periods of fluctuation, trends in 2013 suggest that the city has sustained lower rates of violent crime.

A strategy devised by a Mesa committee has been highly effective in attacking the pervasive problem of unlicensed cars. In 2010, 40 percent of all cars circulating in Juárez had no license plates, making it easy for criminals to attack and escape without a trace. A campaign dubbed "My Car in Order for a Safe Juárez" (*Mi auto derecho por un Juárez seguro*) was launched in 2011. The campaign called for citizens to get plates for their cars and to take other precautions such as checking the registry to be sure a car they might buy was not stolen, to avoid buying stolen car parts, and to put serial

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17 Jorge Contreras.

18 Héctor Murguía, interview with author, September 28, 2012.

numbers on their car parts to dissuade theft. In 2012, the percentage of unidentified cars had dropped to 7 percent, according to a survey of 5,000 cars.

A Mesa committee has created a facility for receiving grievances about omissions or abuse by authorities. This service, called Center of Citizen Trust (Centro de Confianza Ciudadano), includes features that reduce fear of filing a complaint about mistreatment by any security force. The center is staffed by citizens and is located within the state attorney general's office in Juárez, and thus is readily accessible for people involved in court cases. Led by Gustavo de la Rosa, a member of the state human rights commission and former head of the penitentiary system, the center provides legal advice and follows up on complaints. While federal police were operating in Juárez from April 2010 to October 2011, a good relationship was forged between the Mesa de Seguridad and the internal affairs division of the federal police. Cases were brought against 89 federal police, 42 of whom were sentenced.

A successful strategy aimed at driving away extortionists was carried out through coordination between the Mesa, federal police commissioner Facundo Rosas, and the regional federal police chief, Luis Cárdenas Palomino. More than 200 shopkeepers and restaurateurs agreed to stand up to the criminal gangs by refusing to give in to extortion demands. Banners were hung on strategic avenues that said, "Here, the only tax we pay is property tax" and "For a Juárez on its feet, never again on its knees." Two hundred police were assigned to secure the perimeter of the central commercial and entertainment district called Pronaf and to patrol the area. When a business was approached by an extortionist, the owner would call the police, and a patrol car would pull up and detain the suspect. The intensive patrolling operation lasted several months, and resulted in the arrest and sentencing of many extortionists, greatly reducing the crime. Today, Pronaf is open for business, and its restaurants and night life attractions are drawing customers again. New businesses are opening in the area which just two years ago was largely abandoned.

In mid-2011, Leyzaola launched an operation to detain people judged to have a "suspicious appearance," many of them poor youths. In the past 15 months, 70,000 people, nearly 10 percent of the urban population, have been detained and fined. This measure is criticized by some civic activists who point out that only 3 percent of the detainees have been charged with a crime. They consider the detentions to be indiscriminate. Still, Leyzaola is considered to have been a factor in reducing crime, and is said to enjoy the support of some in the business community.

Murguía, mayor of Juárez from 2010–2013, took a narrow view of the role of the Mesa in addressing crime and improving security. "The Mesa (de Seguridad) is not operational; no citizen task force can substitute for the decision of governments to work together, the true heroes are the police," the mayor said in an interview in his offices on Sept. 28, 2012. The mayor's security strategy was centered on two fronts: breaking the city into six districts and deploying properly equipped police units to patrol those areas, and creating community centers that offer sports, music

classes, and other activities for youth and families. Coordination between the levels of government was also important. "When a house if burning, you can't fight over who takes the bucket," he said. Murguía was controversial because soon after his first term ended in 2007, his former police director was arrested by U.S. agents for bribing an undercover cop to allow him to transport drugs. Murguía was later elected to a second, non-consecutive term in office.

Murguía did an apparent about-face in February 2013, when he called for "institutionalization" of the Mesa de Seguridad. The mayor invited the Mesa to regular meetings with the city council, attorney general and police chief, and the Mesa agreed. "We see the permanence of Todos Somos Juárez, the Mesa de Seguridad is institutionalized, we don't have legal status, the relationship between society and government becomes formalized," says Valenzuela of the Mesa. The scope and terms of Mesa participation in municipal security remain to be seen.

Since taking office in October 2010, the governor of Chihuahua, César Duarte, took a number of important decisions that supported the drive against crime and improved the climate for civic-government engagement. He replaced the controversial attorney general, Patricia González. His appointee as attorney general for the northern district which includes Juárez, Jorge González Nicolás, has achieved a high rate of convictions in high-impact crimes, and leaders of the Mesa praise his work. Duarte backed the creation of an anti-kidnapping unit that has proven effective. The governor set up monthly meetings with state judges to press for convictions and sentencing and convened the state legislature, which improved an initiative that allows life sentences. "The three powers (of Chihuahua state) built the initiatives and today we have a new structure," he said in a speech before President Enrique Peña Nieto in December 2012.

In early 2013, Duarte proposed that town councils send their nominees for municipal public safety chief to the state legislature for approval. The State Council for Public Security was reconstituted and its membership is now evenly split between representatives of government and citizen delegates. The council regularly reviews the statewide indicators on crime and discusses measures for confronting delinquency. The governor also put teeth into the council by pressing for a law requiring that the attorney general's office and other security agencies adopt the council's proposals. Citizen representatives are pressing for measures to strengthen institutions, including a code of ethics for the attorney general's office. "It's not very comfortable to press for a code of ethics, we are going to affect interests," says Contreras, now a member of the council.[19]

Businessmen across Chihuahua state decided for a self-imposed tax of 5 percent on the payroll of companies to raise funds to support crime-fighting actions. The monies collected in Juárez throughout 2012 were to be invested locally to finance a Citizen Observatory to geo-reference the location of crimes, study the origins

19 Jorge Contreras.

of violence, and support a center for citizen reports on crime and on abuse by authorities. A statewide survey of perceptions of security will be conducted. The tax was to be applied for three years, through 2014, and the funds administered by a trust run by entrepreneurs.

Results: Juárez

After becoming the most violent city in the world, Ciudad Juárez has experienced a steady and significant decline in homicides since 2010. The number of murders decreased from 3,622 in 2010, to 2,086 in 2011, then fell by 60 percent to 797 in 2012 and dropped to 481 in 2013.[20] During 2013, the murder rate averaged 36 per 100,000 inhabitants, slightly lower than the murder rate in the same year in New Orleans, where murders have fallen sharply since 2008.[21] Other violent crimes, such as kidnappings and violent carjacking, have also declined since mid-2011. The conclusion of the turf war between the Juárez and Sinaloa cartels is widely considered to have been a leading factor, but not the only one, in the reduction of violence. The positive results are considered the product of efforts of Leyzaola to reduce corruption and the activities led by citizen and citizen-business groups. The Mesa de Seguridad, and several social initiatives of other Todos Somos Juárez task forces, are considered by analysts to have improved conditions for reducing violence and high-impact crimes. Of all the task forces created by Todos Somos Juárez, the Mesa de Seguridad is widely recognized as the most successful and enduring.

An essential underpinning to the success of the Mesa de Seguridad was its origin as part of Todos Somos Juárez. Calderón's backing for the multifaceted Todos Somos Juárez program meant that federal officials would attend meetings and work with civil society, and government spending increased significantly. Many of the leaders who stepped into the fray of the crisis of violence were already known and experienced civic leaders, and were quickly incorporated into the Mesa. Other task forces of Todos Somos Juárez also worked effectively. The education and social development mesas have led campaigns that lengthen the school day in 60 primary schools in high-risk neighborhoods and position schools so that youth identify with them by offering sports and music programs. Parks and public spaces were improved and citizens now feel safer to move about in their neighborhoods. Community centers were built in depressed areas to provide

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20 Elyssa Pachico, "Juarez Murder Rate Reaches 5-year Low," InSight Crime, Jan. 4, 2013, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/juarez-murder-rate-reaches-5-year-low; Mesa de Seguridad y Justicia, Comité de Indicadores, Diciembre de 2013: Slides 2, 5, http://www.mesadeseguridad.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Indicadores-Diciembre.pdf.

21 Ibid.; Brandy Zadrozny, "The Year in Murder: 2013 Marks a Historic Low for Many Cities," The Daily Beast, Jan. 1, 2014. http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/01/01/the-year-in-murder-2013-marks-a-historic-low-for-many-cities.html.

TABLE 1: SECURITY PERFORMANCE IN CIUDAD JUÁREZ, JANUARY–DECEMBER 2013

Crime	Percentage of the Objective	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13
Homicides	Current	26	25	45	46	38
	Goal	25	25	25	25	25
	%	96%	100%	56%	54%	66%
Violent Car Theft	Current	78	42	52	39	41
	Goal	50	50	50	50	50
	%	64%	100%	96%	100%	100%
Car Theft without Violence	Current	329	384	356	265	277
	Goal	189	189	189	189	189
	%	57%	49%	53%	71%	68%
Reported Kidnappings	Current	2	3	3	4	4
	Goal	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Extortions "Cobro de Piso"	Current	7	5	8	7	1
	Goal	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Robberies of Businesses without Violence	Current	81	87	92	105	79
	Goal	52	52	52	52	52
	%	64%	60%	57%	50%	66%

Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Total	Average
52	33	45	38	35	44	54	481	40
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	240	20
48%	46%	33%	40%	43%	34%	28%	50%	50%
45	60	59	48	37	37	37	575	48
50	40	40	40	40	40	40	540	45
100%	67%	68%	83%	100%	100%	100%	94%	94%
273	253	302	286	269	273	264	3531	294
189	189	189	189	189	189	189	2268	189
69%	75%	63%	66%	70%	69%	72%	64%	64%
2	0	1	0	0	0	0	19	2
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%
8	1	3	3	4	4	2	53	4
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
82	62	103	113	89	94	75	1062	89
52	52	52	52	52	52	52	624	52
63%	84%	50%	46%	58%	55%	100%	59%	59%

activities for adults and children. These and other measures have helped lower the incidence of crime. The economic task force worked to promote the city and stimulate investment and employment.

Local ownership of the mounting insecurity problem was decisive in tackling the crime surge. Duarte and the Mesa de Seguridad were the leading local actors. Shortly after taking office in October 2010, the governor called in a diverse group of people to brainstorm about the lack of security. The group included representatives of civil society, leading business organizations—the chambers of commerce (Canaco), manufacturing (Canacintra) and the maquiladora association—and educators and legislators. This meeting of the minds was motivated by "desperation" and fear over kidnappings, recalls Gabriel Flores, then a business leader and now a state legislator.[22] Coordination between the federal and state governments and with the federal police force improved. "Things were so bad we had to work together, and the political will that was put behind coordination created a sense of hope," says Flores.

Duarte agreed to put in place a private sector initiative and set up a state council for public security with a membership split evenly between official delegates and citizen representatives. The business sector was granted incentives by the federal and state governments, and tax deferments on investments in Juárez. In accordance with federal law, the real estate industry stopped denominating contracts in U.S. dollars and switched to Mexican pesos, a move it hoped would stimulate sales. Restaurants and shops soon followed suit.

Civic leaders of the Plan Estratégico and the Mesa de Seguridad emphasize the "invisible but indispensable advances" achieved by mixed government-civic groups and their collaborative initiatives. First among them is to trust in authorities and engage in a dialogue. The dialogue is a vehicle for citizens to express their needs and demands for security to the responsible authorities and to follow up on unresolved crimes and cases of abuse. In this sense, the Mesa became a mechanism for monitoring the government response and for holding the authorities accountable. The Mesa established commitments for citizens and authorities alike. Intelligence-sharing has become a fruitful area of public-private collaboration. The Mesa and other civic groups created a trustworthy channel that encouraged people to denounce kidnappings and extortion. The stream of complaints provided useful on-the-ground intelligence about kidnapping, extortion, and protection money rings for police, and civil society worked to help victims by following up on the cases. Even though the local police force has a hotline (Centro de Respuesta Inmediata) for receiving anonymous complaints, residents prefer to contact citizen groups to denounce crime.

The Mesa de Seguridad serves as a bridge between government and civil society and has also facilitated inter-institutional coordination. During the Calderón

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22 Gabriel Flores, interview with author, September 27, 2012.

administration, the different military and security agencies failed to coordinate their actions, but the Mesa succeeded in bringing them together. "We always convene the army, navy, intelligence office, and federal and state police," says a businessman involved in the Mesa. The people responsible for dealing with car theft in the federal, state, and municipal police forces and the army did not know each other until civil society brought them together to combat carjackings in a year when 17,000 cars were stolen in Juárez.

When the Mesa staked out clear positions and followed them up, it got a response from authorities that led to improvements in security. The demand for beefing up the investigative police unit led to a doubling of its agents and put muscle into the nearly nonexistent investigations up to that time. The Mesa pressured the government to act to reduce abuses by army troops and federal police and the government followed up on specific grievances that were filed. After the Mesa set up the Center of Citizen Trust, it became easier to register complaints, and the Center has pursued cases of abuse that have led to the jailing of 50 federal police. Collaboration with government by business associations and civil society organizations is rooted in three conditions, says Contreras. These are: acceptance by authorities of citizen participation, respect for the rule of law, and establishing best practices in institutions which transcend the terms of mayors and governors.

Police reform has proven to be one of the most difficult areas of implementation. The municipal police remains a small force, and recruitment is far behind schedule. Cleaning up the police force has moved slowly, say members of the Mesa. The confidence tests to screen for drug use, links to organized crime, and skills and abilities to perform on the job are proceeding at a glacial pace. An obstacle to the screenings is that the state has only two professionals trained to administer lie detector tests, and both are based in the capital city of Chihuahua, 215 miles south of Juárez. At best, the police could be tested two at a time. "Political will has been lacking regarding the confidence tests," says Valenzuela of the Mesa. Building up a reliable, professional police force remains a serious challenge and one of the greatest concerns of the Mesa. "The majority of our effort is to make demands, we process information, see that it is complete and demand commitments for improvement in the municipal police force," he adds.

Critics point to glaring social problems that persist in Juárez. The government does not engage in long-term planning, and has not yet provided basic services to many neighborhoods. In some cases, Todos Somos Juárez has made improvements in individual schools or communities, but these are isolated cases rather than a general trend. Ciudad Juárez built up over the last 40 years of rapid growth a cumulative social debt with its work force and youth that remains an urgent problem, and attending to community needs must be part of the security strategy.

MONTERREY

Like Juárez, Monterrey also grew rapidly in the last 50 years as migrants from small towns and rural areas of Mexico flocked to the city seeking to land working-class jobs with the enormous corporations that drive the economy of Nuevo León state. Monterrey is considered the industrial capital of Mexico, and is the headquarters of huge Mexican multinational corporations such as Cemex and Femsa and to enormous Mexican conglomerates such as the diversified manufacturers Grupo Alfa and Cydsa.

The weight of Monterrey's giant corporations and the links between their executives have created an unusually cohesive business sector in Mexico's industrial capital. The heads of the dozen or so biggest corporations meet regularly and discuss their concerns. Each company takes responsibility for studying an issue such as security, energy, education, post-hurricane reconstruction, or institution-building. The company reports back about its assigned topic to the so-called Group of Businesses of Nuevo León, which then decides which policies and activities to support.

The bonds that tie this group together go far beyond business interests. The links are familial and intimate; many of the heads of the multinationals are cousins, relatives or are related through marriage. The strength of the city in the national economy and the power of Mexico's leading multinationals headquartered there carry leverage with the national government and open doors in Mexico City. Beyond that, the Monterrey executives and the president in office and cabinet officials are well known to each other. This has meant that when violence and crime struck Monterrey, businesses got and will get a hearing immediately with the highest-ranking federal officials.

Monterrey's Security Crisis

Monterrey industries and the city's prosperity benefited for decades from a prevailing climate of security. For many years, the crime rate was so low in Monterrey that people barely discussed it. "Businesses were focused on growth," says Javier Treviño, a former Cemex executive, state government official deputy governor, and now a federal deputy.[23] Some business leaders say the city was a "paradise" of security. Until 2006, the city was considered the safest in Latin America by business publications.[24]

The longstanding peacefulness began to break apart in in 2007 when violence increased notably. Murders and kidnappings related to drug trafficking hit a

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23 Javier Treviño, interview with author, September 11, 2012.

24 William Booth and Nick Miroff, "Mexican drug cartel forces lawyer's video confessions," *Washington Post*, Oct. 30, 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/30/AR2010103004757.html.

new high; over 100 people were killed in the metropolitan area, including more than two dozen police officers, and 88 people were reported as kidnapped and disappeared.[25] Also that year, armed robberies of stores, bank robberies, and carjacking increased and extortion by phone calls became common.

In 2008, members of the Beltrán Leyva trafficking group started settling in Monterrey and setting up business. They soon forged ties with local political leaders and businessmen. About this time, the Beltrán Leyva group had developed a partnership with the Zetas, based on the Gulf Coast, and the Zetas had already begun to move into Monterrey.[26] Organized crime sought to reap maximum benefit from Monterrey's longstanding assets, its wealthy market, and the city's proximity and transportation links to the U.S. border. Murders in the city doubled during 2008, to more than 5,300, fueled by rivalries stemming from the splitting off of the Beltrán Leyva group from the Sinaloa Cartel in early 2008, the state attorney general reported.[27]

During 2007 and 2008, the number of youths joining gangs in Monterrey doubled to over 26,000, the state Ministry of Public Security reported, although specialists considered this a low estimate. In the same period, the number of gangs in metropolitan Monterrey rose to nearly 2,000, and in Escobedo municipality alone tripled to 492 in 2008, according to a study by the Autonomous University of Nuevo León.[28]

After the killing of Zeta lieutenant Sergio Peña Mendoza in January 2010, the Zetas broke off from the Gulf Cartel, and Monterrey was a leading battleground between the rivals. Brutal killings, roadblocks, and kidnappings became common. In 2010, the number of homicides in Monterrey and the state of Nuevo León tripled to 828. The Zetas had penetrated police forces, and during 2010, Monterrey fired more than 400 officials—nearly half the force—and two other municipalities in the metropolitan area fired some 200 officials each.[29]

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25 U.S. State Department, "Mexico 2008 Crime and Safety Report: Monterrey," Jan. 30, 2008, https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportPDF.aspx?cid=6242; Borderland Beat, " 'Narco' Offensive Strikes Monterrey"; "In Two Years the Number of Gang Members Doubles in Monterrey, Mexico," translation of story by Diego E. Osorno, *Milenio*, March 15, 2009, posted by Kristin Bricker, March 23, 2009, http://narcosphere.narconews.com/notebook/kristin-bricker/2009/03/two-years-number-gang-members-doubles-monterrey-mexico.

26 Steven Dudley, "The Zetas and the Battle for Monterrey: Part I — How the Zetas Took Monterrey," InSsight Crime, December 16, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/zetas-monterrey/how-the-zetas-took-monterrey; "Mexico's Monterrey still ranks as top city, despite violence," *Los Angeles Times* blog, August 15, 2012, http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/08/mexicos-monterrey-still-ranks-as-top-city-despite-violence.html.

27 "Mexico gang killings more than double in 2008: Drug cartels are fighting increasingly bloody battles among themselves," Associated Press, December 8, 2008, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/28119385/ns/world_news-americas/t/mexico-gang-killings-more-double/.

28 Borderland Beat, " 'Narco' Offensive."

29 Steven Dudley, "The Zetas in Monterrey: Part III — The Battle for Monterrey." InSight Crime. December 16, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/zetas-monterrey/part-iii-the-battle-for-monterrey.

The slaying continued in 2011 as the rivalry between the Gulf Cartel and the Zetas raged on. The security chief of a Monterrey prison and the top intelligence official of the state were murdered in February, and during the first half of the year, 78 security officials were killed. The afternoon of August 25, 2011, eight gunmen carrying automatic weapons and gasoline burst into the Casino Royale in Monterrey, poured gasoline, and set the gaming machines afire. Fifty-two people died in the brutal attack. Among the five suspects initially rounded up by authorities, one was a state policeman who confessed to being a Zeta.[30]

In 2012, gruesome and widespread violence continued to plague Monterrey. The mutilated bodies of 49 people were dumped in the state, a prison riot in the municipality of Apodaca provided cover for the escape of 30 prisoners, and murders on the streets continued. The State Department reported experts' estimates of one or two kidnappings a day in the city of Monterrey and noted that the underreported crime would be much higher if the metropolitan area as a whole were considered. The prime targets were "mid-level Mexican business executives and entrepreneurs," and 16 U.S. citizens were also kidnapped during the year, three of whom were confirmed dead.[31]

Illuminate Nuevo León

In August, 2008, alarmed civic leaders organized a march called "Let's Illuminate Nuevo León", and 25,000 adults, children, and youth, dressed in white and carrying candles marched to a central plaza to protest violence and crime. Their demands: a police reform and improved security. The Illuminate Nuevo León protest in 2008 was an unprecedented event for conservative, business-focused Monterrey, and marked a watershed in civic life because it showed that mobilizing citizens was possible. The protesters placed four specific demands before authorities. First, they demanded the governor dedicate three hours a day to security matters. They also called for a cleanup of the police force, a revamping of the process for denouncing crimes to make it reliable and, lastly, a reform of criminal investigation offices and courts. "The march drew a sharp line, and showed the only way to defend citizens was with institutions," recalls a businessman who presides over a leading civic group.[32]

Illuminate Nuevo León placed demands on institutions even though the state government and the nine municipal governments of metropolitan Monterrey had demonstrated their inability to act in a way that could protect citizens. Recent cases

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30 Steven Dudley, "The Zetas in Monterrey: Part II — The Zetas and Monterrey Math." InSight Crime, December 16, 2012, http://www.insightcrime.org/zetas-monterrey/part-iii-the-battle-for-monterrey.

31 Department of State, OSAC, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, "Mexico 2013 Crime and Safety Report: Monterrey," https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=13553.

32 Interview with businessman, October 16, 2012.

of corruption and fraud in a Monterrey municipality had been exposed by civic
groups, but authorities took no action. "There comes a moment when the only
thing you can do is to act with a civic conscience," says a businessman–activist.[33]

The Crime Stoplight and the Consejo Cívico

One month after the march, the Crime Stoplight (Semáforo Delictivo) was
launched. It is a civic intervention to monitor the trends in murder, carjacking,
thefts in homes and businesses, and family violence in each municipality of greater
Monterrey, including Monterrey itself, which is the state capital. Designed in
consultation with security experts, the Crime Stoplight draws its information from
the attorney general's office. The Crime Stoplight is a tool for holding government
accountable because it identifies progress and setbacks in combating crime in each
metropolitan township.

As the presence of organized crime groups expanded in Monterrey during 2009,
violence and crimes continued to mount. In early 2010, the private sector decided
to back the revitalization of a civic group that had languished over the years. The
Consejo Cívico (formerly known as the Civic Council of Institutions of Nuevo
León, called CCINLAC) was reconstituted and began working to demand effective
public policies to restore security. At the outset of this new phase, the Consejo
Cívico began operating as a repository of the business chambers of bankers,
employers, and manufacturers. Among those groups, the employers' association
(Coparmex) had been assigned responsibility for coordinating with the state
attorney general's office.

The Consejo Cívico is a hybrid organization, a non–partisan association that
brings together business chambers, professional associations, civic and charity
organizations, neighborhood organizations, human rights groups, and sports clubs.
It has become the standard–bearer of a security agenda shared by the private sector
and civil society, and has grown to count 100 organizations as members. As a
representative group, the Consejo Cívico has become a legitimate spokesperson for
the needs and concerns of civil society. The group serves as a bridge for building
dialogues between the private sector and civil society organizations and the
government and business.

The major lines of Consejo's actions are to act as a watchdog and demand
accountability in the security and the penal and justice systems, serve as an
interlocutor with state and municipal security agencies, promote civility and a
culture of peace and legality, combat corruption through collaborating with local
academic institutions to advocate reforms, and set up a state anticorruption agency.

The Consejo also manages the public release of the crime-monitoring Stoplight.
The results of the Stoplight are released at a monthly news conference delivered

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33 Interview with businessman–activist, October 16, 2012.

jointly by two of the city's leading business chambers, Coparmex and CAINTRA, and the Consejo. The study causes some friction with state authorities and "has had an impact as a way of ranking the municipalities," says a former civic leader.[34] Based on the Stoplight, the Consejo Cívico sets goals for reducing crime. "We put pressure on municipal and state authorities so they meet the goals, and we make specific assessments each month," says Sandrina Molinard, manager of government evaluation with the Consejo.[35]

In talks with the government, the Consejo Cívico and business groups sharpened their focus and centered increasingly on police reform. Following meetings with the state government, agreement was reached on a five-point pact to regain security by reforming the police, implementing the federal judicial reform, investing in social programs, and promoting a civic culture and respect for the law.

The ranking government official for each area was put in charge of implementation of the reforms, and the Consejo Cívico was assigned a direct role in oversight of each of the transformations in the five-point security pact. Cleaning up and professionalizing the police force were the first priorities in the pact. Confidence tests of state and municipal police, including lie-detector tests, were to be applied to determine the honesty of police agents. The chief of public security for Nuevo León was placed in charge of implementing the police reform, and the Consejo Cívico was responsible for oversight. The Consejo has taken steps to make the confidence tests of police transparent. In the past, mayors received the tests, stuffed them in drawers, and took no action on the test results. The Consejo Cívico maintains a web platform containing confidence test results, which are cross-checked with information published in the media.

An external evaluation of how the police were organized found that no reliable information existed about security forces in the state; there were no protocols, no shared radio frequencies between state and municipal police, and no proper list of agents on the payroll. "At that time, the perception had been that the problem was one of (the government) not wanting to act, but we learned it was a problem of not being able to act," says Manuel Zavala, president of Consejo Cívico and a restaurateur.[36]

Fuerza Civil

Nuevo León set out to create a new police force, Fuerza Civil, beginning in late 2010. Two urgent needs were to recruit quickly a cadre of new agents and give them proper training in a short time. A private sector alliance with the state government was put into action rapidly to give momentum to this effort. Six of Monterrey's biggest companies put their human resources staff at the disposal of

34 Interview with former civic leader, October 16, 2012.

35 Sandrina Molinard, interview with author, October 16, 2012.

36 Manuel Zavala, interview with author, October 16, 2012.

government to develop the recruiting and screening protocols and devise the career path and incentives to draw in applicants. "We established a consortium with businesses to carry out the vetting and recruiting of clean entry-level police," says a Nuevo León security official.[37]

Five universities offered their talent to prepare training programs for the police. The goal was to recruit and train 1,900 police during 2011. Despite the offer of a high salary of more than U.S. $1,000 per month—nearly double the entry level elsewhere in Mexico—plus a benefit package including housing, insurance, and a pension, few people applied for the dangerous job of patrolling Monterrey which, at the time, was experiencing its most violent year ever. The first recruits completed a compressed 3-month training, and Fuerza Civil was launched in June 2011 when 422 graduates were deployed in the city. By year's end, Fuerza Civil had 900 agents, most of them from out of state. The goal was to recruit and train another 2,000 police by the end of 2012, and recruitment is taking place nationwide. Currently, the Fuerza Civil numbers about 2,500 agents and meeting the goal of recruiting 18,000 by the close of 2012 appears remote. Many former cops in Monterrey do not apply because they are waiting for a change in leadership and commitment at the top, says a security source. Turnover has been high, between 20 and 30 percent, because the officers don't adapt to confinement in the barracks for 20 days at a time. Some of these difficulties are typical start-up problems. A more intractable problem is that the commanders of the Fuerza Civil are drawn from the conventional police force, says a security analyst.

The state legislature levied a 50-percent increase (from 2 percent to 3 percent) in the payroll tax on businesses to raise funds for the force. Although business backers remain committed to the Fuerza Civil, the tax increase was challenged by a number of companies seeking an *amparo*, or staying order.

As Fuerza Civil was being formed, the state government led an effort to establish coordination between all agencies involved in security. A coordinating group was formed that included the chiefs of the Nuevo León contingents of the army and navy, the state police, attorney general's office, state intelligence agency, and mayors of the townships with the highest crime rates. "Building trust with the private sector was the most important thing, especially because of the great desperation of the community," says Treviño, deputy governor of the state from 2009 to 2012.[38] "We brought the private sector into the coordinating meetings so they could see first-hand the magnitude of the problem," he adds. "My vision was that we have to align efforts, focus on a few issues and we can get things done."

The support provided by businesses to the creation of Fuerza Civil demonstrates the potential of business-government cooperation. A Monterrey-based phone company, Axtel, created a call center for the recruitment process, and Super

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37 Interview with Nuevo León security official, October 17, 2012.
38 Javier Treviño.

Seven convenience stores made space available for the recruitment posters. The transportation company, Senda, offers discounts for home visits made by the police now in the Monterrey force. Corporations donated equipment including patrol cars. "The key to success is called willingness to do things and to break paradigms," says state security spokesman Jorge Domene.[39] In December 2012, a Consejo Cívico initiative was approved and a new state law called for creating a council on police development that is to include one citizen representative, the first time such a body has been opened to civil society.

An outgrowth of this dialogue was that the private sector overcame its distrust of government to such a degree that businesses also committed to investments in urban programs aimed at rebuilding the social fabric such as building parks, supporting training for youth, and cultural activities, backing addiction prevention programs and strengthening a culture of law and order. Some government officials say the private sector should be investing more to support interventions in poor, crime-ridden communities, but they recognize the efforts so far are moving in the right direction. Civil society leaders involved in the meetings with government on security report that the relationship is one of ups and downs.

Measuring Progress

An important tactic of the Consejo Cívico has been to create instruments that measure progress in combating crime. The Consejo Cívico is a prime mover in the Crime Stoplight, or Semáforo del Delito, which relies on figures from the State Attorney General to monitor monthly the crime rate. In 2011, as the number of auto thefts in Monterrey equaled that of greater Mexico City, which has nearly five times more inhabitants, the Consejo Cívico asked the government to set a goal for reducing carjacking. The number of thefts dropped over the next year from more than 2,000 to 800 as all nine municipalities and the state focused on the goal. The Consejo Cívico made a harsh pronouncement about the continuing high rate of homicides when it presented the Stoplight on January 13, 2012. "Although homicides dropped 27 percent in 2012 compared with the previous year, the numbers are still in a range similar to those of 2011 which was the worst year in history in Nuevo León (and) the rate of murders in the state remains one of the highest nationally," the Consejo said in a press conference.[40]

Another tool for tracking levels of insecurity was the quarterly survey, "Metropolitan Pulse," which monitors citizens' perceptions about crime and

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39 Jorge Domene, interview with author, October 17, 2012.

40 "Bajan homicidios, se disparan delitos patrimoniales," Info7.mx, January 21, 2013, http://info7.mx/a/noticia/370901.

their confidence in municipal institutions and police forces.[41] Sponsored by
the CAINTRA and COPARMEX business chambers with and the Consejo
Cívico and Centro de Integración Cívica (CIC), eight surveys were published
between August 2011 and May 2013. Perceptions of insecurity are a highly
reliable indicator of real conditions of insecurity, say experts in monitoring and
evaluation. (Other analysts blame the high perception of insecurity in Mexico
to media sensationalism.) The survey gathered public opinion from each of the
municipalities, and reported in July 2012, that 39 percent of metropolitan residents
thought security had worsened in the previous quarter. In January 2013, the survey
showed a slight increase in the number of residents who thought their municipality
is "not very safe" (45.5 percent) and strong improvements in those who ranked
their city "unsafe" (31.5 percent, a seven-percent drop from July 2012) and "safe"
(23 percent, an increase of nearly five percent).

The survey also reported on the level of trust in municipal police, experiences
with bribing officials and opinions of the degree of commitment of authorities
to combating crime. Commissioned jointly by the Nuevo León chapters of
CAINTRA, Coparmex and Consejo Cívico, the poll was designed and carried out
by the graduate school of public administration (EGAP) of the Monterrey Tec.

Center for Citizen Integration

Richly endowed in human resources, technology, and capital, Monterrey's
leading corporations are well positioned to contribute to improving the business
environment, and can mobilize their assets for the benefit of citizen security.
Cemex rose to this challenge by backing the creation and operation of a nonprofit
organization that assembled an innovative technology platform to help fight crime
and rebuild a sense of community relying totally on citizen reporting.

The Center for Citizen Integration (CIC in its Spanish acronym) web platform
seeks to bring together the collective knowledge of citizens and put it to use for
improving Monterrey's communities. Commissioned by Cemex CEO Lorenzo
Zambrano, an IT whiz, the CIC platform (http://www.cic.mx) is called 'Tehuan'
after the word for 'us' in the Nahuatl language of the Aztecs. Citizen reports are
received on Tehuan and staff members channel them to local authorities almost
in real time so they can respond to the grievances. Reports to Tehuan cover the
categories of shootings and other "situations of risk," theft, traffic accidents, broken
streetlights and other faulty public services, community events, and citizen-led
initiatives. The vision for the CIC was presented to and embraced by the inner
circle of powerful Monterrey companies.

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41 "Pulso Metropolitano de Seguridad, CAINTRA Nuevo León. http://www.caintra.org.mx/
portal/?p=3162.

FIGURE 1: CITIZEN REPORTS OF ROBBERY AND RISK (ROADBLOCKS, SHOOTINGS, ETC.) IN GREATER MONTERREY IN 2013

Source: Centro de Integracion Ciudadana. http://cic.mx/ (accessed February 4, 2014.)

Early in 2010, the platform was piloted with small networks of trusted citizens who filed reports in real time from cell phones and e-mail accounts. A year later, the platform was upgraded to integrate reports from Twitter accounts and to aggregate citizen reports and display crimes and hazards on maps that can be accessed online or from a smart phone. The platform was subsequently adapted to receive reports from e-mails, SMS, and Facebook, and apps for smart phones and computer tablets have been released. All reports are confidential unless the sender releases his or her name. Today, CIC is building new services and tools it may share with its main constituents — citizens, sponsoring businesses, and local authorities.

CIC was launched publicly in October 2011. "CIC intends to be a facilitator with public authorities to address citizen needs," says Mauricio Doehner, vice president of corporate affairs with Cemex.[42] The platform now has over 43,000 followers and receives over 2,000 reports a month. CIC has established working

42 Mauricio Doehner, interview with author, October 16, 2012.

relationships with the local municipalities of Monterrey, San Pedro, Guadalupe, and San Nicolás, and the Nuevo León state government. The San Pedro mayor's office went a step further and signed a collaboration agreement with CIC, signaling that the platform is now an official trusted source of aggregate citizen reports. CIC works hand in hand with San Pedro to follow up on all citizen reports and complaints about the municipality.

Talks are under way with other municipal officials to set up similar arrangements. "Our value proposition is simple, we are a cost-free medium where government can both learn of citizens' most-pressing needs and engage with citizens to work to resolve their needs," says Patrick Kane, executive director of CIC.[43] Observing the CIC connection with active citizens, the public electricity commission (CFE) studied CIC's approach and decided to create its own Twitter account as the vehicle for delivering on-demand customer service.

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43 Patrick Kane, telephone interview with author, February 26, 2013.

FIGURE 2: RANKING OF MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICES IN GREATER MONTERREY

Municipal Effectiveness in Public Services (last 90 days)
Average response time (days)
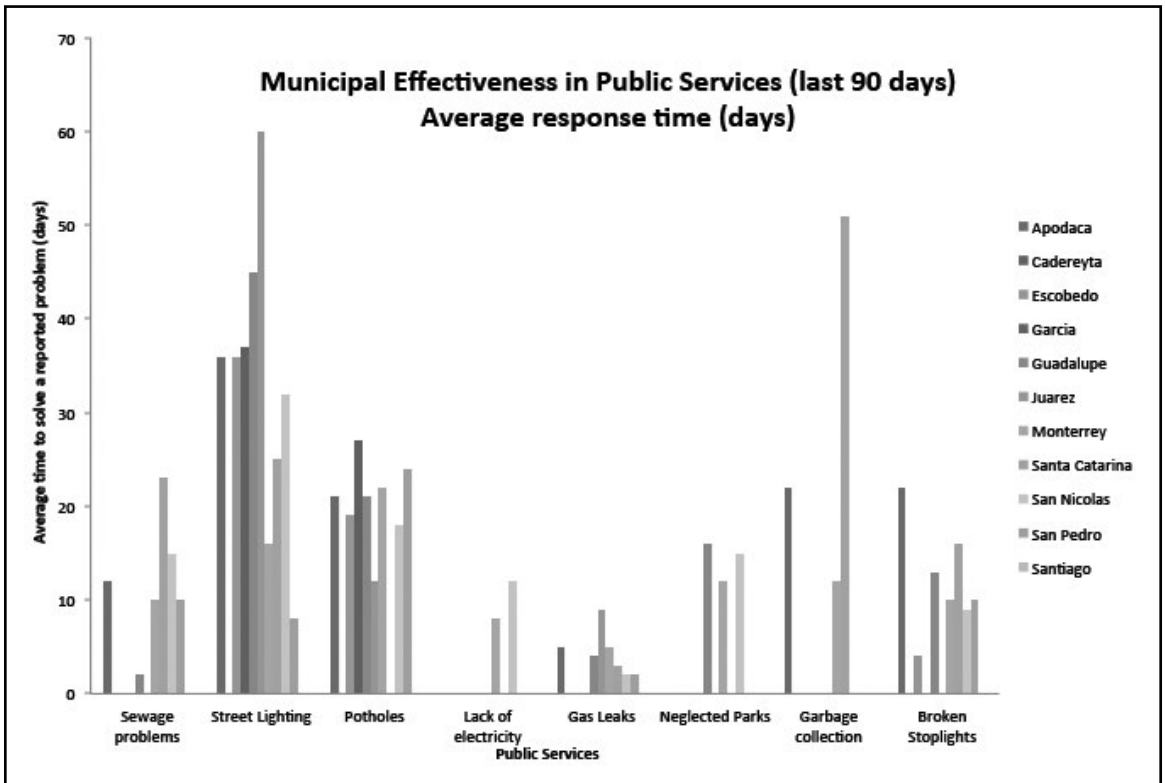
Source: Centro de Integración Ciudadana (CIC) http://cic.mx/tehuan-beta (accessed March 13, 2014.)

CIC also provides legal counsel for citizens who wish to file a formal complaint to authorities and offers psychological counseling for victims of violence. The legal services function to help inform and convince victims of kidnapping, extortion, and theft to overcome their distrust of the justice system and to file crime reports with the police. During 2012, half of all kidnappings addressed by CIC were formally filed and processed with authorities. By late 2012, the percentage of kidnapping cases handled by CIC and filed with police rose significantly, suggesting CIC is trusted by citizens who also now feel more confident about approaching authorities, says Kane. It is expected that the proportion of kidnappings that are reported could continue to rise, he adds. Last year, CIC provided legal counsel in almost 500 cases of crime and over 1,500 sessions of psychological counseling to victims of violence and their families.

Monterrey is an especially apt proving ground for CIC. The city boasts cellphone penetration of 100 percent, and a high percentage of the mobiles are smart phones. The surge of crime and violence fuels the impulse to let complaints be heard, and CIC is trusted because it is a citizen-run effort. The posted testimony of an extortion victim who was helped by CIC psychological counseling drew an endorsement from a citizen: "An incredible initiative!" writes Jess Baez in a post to the site. "We all complained and felt that there was nothing we could do, now we have a way to pressure the authorities—good CIC! Thanks for sharing, and may people begin to trust that there is a place where we can get help and above all prevent this (type of) crime."

CIC is designed to act as a model for promoting citizen participation, and creates an environment of confidence because it is an all-citizen organization. The advisory board is made up of a wide range of civil society leaders, and although seed capital was provided by Cemex, the financial backing now comes from a growing number of private companies and individual donations.

The intention of CIC is to scale up. The core technology is designed to be replicable beyond Monterrey. "The bottleneck to scale beyond Monterrey is not technical but strategic and operational—what is required is finding committed organizations that will use technology wisely to promote citizen participation," says Kane.[44] Talks are underway with civil society groups and businesses interested in applying the CIC model elsewhere. "In Mexico, citizen participation is in its infancy, that is our bet for the long term," says Doehner.[45]

Ranking of Mayors

When the new mayors of Nuevo León took office in October 2012, 34 businesses and civic organizations embarked on a priority program to monitor and rank mayors. "Mayor, how are we doing?" (Alcalde, ¿cómo vamos?) is a platform of 10 concrete civic demands that will be measured during the three-year terms of the nine mayors of greater Monterrey. The actions to be measured include:
- Cleanup of the police force.
- Decent pay for honest police.
- Expanding the force to reach minimum coverage of three police per 1,000 residents.
- A drop in crime statistics.
- Elimination of casinos and nepotism.
- Improvements in public areas, including more sports centers, sidewalks, reforestation of parks.

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44 *Ibid.*
45 Mauricio Doehner

Consejo Cívico will track changes in police staffing to be sure they are registered on Mexico's national anti-crime data base, Plataforma México. This initiative is funded with donations from local backers.

When the first comparative rankings were released in February 2013, "there was a lot of competition among them, they all wanted to be the best, they take it seriously," says Molinard of Consejo Cívico.[46] The rankings include the Consejo's kudos for good performance and reproaches for laggardly progress and create incentives for mayors to fulfill their promises to their communities and outdo one another.

Results: Monterrey

Monterrey is by no means in a position to lower its guard on combatting violence. Crime continued to rise through 2011, which was the most violent year on record for the state. Killings in Nuevo León increased by 192 percent in 2011. The rate of vehicle theft rose steadily from 606 per 100,000 residents in 2007 to 803 in 2011, a rate that is twice the national average.

A trend toward a decline in crime became identifiable beginning in March 2012, and held up through the year to October. State security spokesman Domene points out that by October 2012, the murder rate had dropped to 18 homicides per 1,000 inhabitants. Car theft dropped from 1,363 vehicles in March to 687 in September, and violent robberies declined from 1,294 in March to 866 in August, Consejo Cívico reported.

It is difficult to be sure that Monterrey has turned the corner on crime. Many positive steps have been taken. Inter-agency coordination, civic activism, and collaboration between government, business, and society are cemented and will be assets in the continuing campaigns to reduce violence. Government and business have taken the initiative to create an all-new, honest, well trained professional police force. The war between rival cartels has changed, although analysts are not convinced that one cartel can claim victory. The presence of army troops and police is preventing bands engaged in extraction of rents through extortion and theft from aligning with organized crime, analysts say.

Coordination between the army, federal police, and local police was set in motion early in the Monterrey crisis, largely thanks to the decision of Calderón to send his then-security adviser, Tello Peón, to the city. An intelligence expert on loan from Cemex, he had a clear sense of what could be done and catalyzed communication between the army and federal and local police forces. The state government remains highly dependent on federal operations, say some analysts.

The importance and close-knit nature of Monterrey's business establishment is a driver of the responses by federal and state governments to the crisis in the city. The top executives were close to Calderón, they monitored actions of the state government and they set the agenda with specific demands such as confidence

46 Sandrina Molinard.

TABLE 2: RATING OF SECURITY ACTIONS IN NUEVO LEÓN, APRIL–MAY 2013

Ratings from 0 to 10									
	Apo-daca	Esc-obedo	Garcia	Gua-dalupe	Juarez	Mon-terrey	San Nico-las de los Garza	San Pedro Garza Garcia	Santa Cata-rina
Action 1. Transparency in vetting of policemen/women	8	9	8	4	8	5	5	10	9
Action 2. Honest, well-paid police-men/women	7	9	8	7	8	9	7	9	8
Action 3. Three police policemen/women for every 1,000 residents	6	3	10	6	9	9	2	10	5
Action 4. Number of crime indica-tors in green (okay, or improving)	4	5	4	1	6	4	3	5	4
Average rat-ing of secu-rity actions	7	6	7	5	8	7	4	8	6

Source: Alcalde, Como vamos? Evaluación Bimestral, June 19, 2013. http://www.comovamosnl.org/docs/3evaluacion.pdf (accessed March 13, 2014.)

tests and certification for police and they invested in equipment that supports new government efforts. Between October 2011 and August 2012, review and evaluations to clean up the police forces quadrupled. Businesses leveraged their influence with government and succeeded in getting large contingents of army, federal police, and investigators deployed to Monterrey. The giant businesses also have a good relationship with President Enrique Peña Nieto, who took office on Dec. 1, 2012. Some of the executives are said to enjoy friendships with members of the president's transition team that date back to school days. There is every reason

to believe the understanding between the federal government and Monterrey captains of industry could improve, says a corporate security adviser. "Security is beginning to be built to a great extent due to pressure of the businessmen," says Alejandro Hope, formerly an official in Mexico's intelligence agency, CISEN, and now security director of IMCO, an applied research institute.[47]

Monterrey has launched a pioneering response to combating crime. Police reform is a universal need and demand nationwide in the context of Mexico's crisis of violence. Monterrey is the only city to create an all-new police force, the Fuerza Civil. Many opinion leaders in Monterrey consider the force an improvement over the former state police, although some say Fuerza Civil is a militarized unit. "The police force is increasingly credible, there are better confidence control centers and a better control by commanders," says security analyst Hope.[48]

The state government led by Gov. Rodrigo Medina has come to rely on support from the business sector, so much so that it has a vision of how businesses could be of help in the near term. "The most important thing with the private sector is that it join in with initiatives that can arise," particularly by lending human talent and technical know-how to government efforts, says Nuevo León security spokesman Domene.[49]

The private sector has flexed its muscles in a previously unknown fashion in Monterrey through protest and through setting a concrete agenda and following up on its demands with state and federal officials. Civil society has been strengthened by financial support from the business sector. Civil society, academia, and business talent working together have created accountability mechanisms for government with tools to monitor perceptions and statistics about crime and disseminate the information regularly.

When the wave of violence swept across Monterrey, the social fabric had not broken down to such a great degree as in Juárez. Corporate social responsibility programs are being directed to improving community services, opportunities for youth, and cultural activities in high-conflict areas. However, a wide range of sources in academia, political analysts, and civil society believe that a much more extensive urban intervention is required and that corporations need to put up more money and resources to address social needs and crime prevention.

KEY LESSONS

Today, the Mesa de Seguridad in Ciudad Juárez is considered a model for citizen participation and private sector civic engagement for confronting organized crime and violence. Its success in promoting a pluralistic dialogue with government is evident, and the concrete achievements in presenting initiatives to authorities,

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47 Alejandro Hope, interview with author, October 3, 2012.

48 Ibid.

49 Jorge Domene.

acting as a watchdog, and generating citizen crime watch intelligence are clear. Other Mexican cities including Acapulco, Aguascalientes, León, Mazatlán, Monterrey, and Torreón have consulted the Mesa for advising about how it confronted crime in Juárez. National victims' groups also look to the Mesa for lessons that can be replicated elsewhere.

Juárez stands out in Mexico not only for the terrible violence it suffered but also because the city offered a rich experience in participatory planning and civic engagement by the private sector. The Plan Estratégico mobilized reflection and initiatives by citizens about how to lift up the city in every aspect and improve quality of life for all residents. Businessmen created and supported non-profit groups that taught values and ethics in schools, for example. In addition, many of the residents who became active in the Mesa de Seguridad already knew one another and many had worked together in the past. This unusual depth of experience in private sector involvement in civic affairs undoubtedly contributed to making the Mesa work well. Even so, civil society in Mexico still lacks a familiarity with civic action, and citizens need to learn how to be citizens, says Vargas of the Plan Estratégico.[50] In this sense, "The problem of Juárez is not of Juárez, it is a Mexican problem," she adds.

Meanwhile, the power and reach of Monterrey business leaders have been important factors in catalyzing action on security issues and in bringing about some of the principal improvements achieved there in fighting crime. Business leaders may be focused on a local issue, but their influence is national. They make specific requests of the federal government, such as legal reforms and a cleanup of the police force. During the current security crisis, the Monterrey corporations and the federal, state, and municipal government have cooperated on several fronts. "The view of the businessmen is that it's not useful to do battle with government," says a source familiar with one of the biggest Monterrey multinational corporations. The top corporate leaders of Monterrey have been important participants in a variety of actions aimed at improving security. "Their taking on responsibility has been fundamental and it would be unjust to not recognize it," says Zavala of Consejo Cívico.

The leading businesses in Monterrey relate to and pressure the government both from above and below. At the top, CEOs speak directly with the president or Cabinet-level officials behind closed doors, press their demands, and reach a gentlemen's agreement that responds to their needs for Monterrey. The business chambers have legitimacy because they are representative and include small and medium businesses as well as the dominant corporations within their sector. The local chapter of the Mexican Employers' Confederation (Coparmex), for example, represents employers of 80 percent of the contractual labor force in Monterrey.

The major businesses finance the intermediate organizations, the associations of small, medium, and large enterprises in the sectors of manufacturing, commerce,

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50 Lucinda Vargas.

and industry. These groups in turn expose the governor and local authorities by publicly denouncing corruption and questionable public debt, and the associations make demands for business-friendly policies. "It's a pincer movement they (big business) make on the government," says a corporate security source.[51] This pressure tactic is not always well received. "The worst way to communicate between government and the private sector is in the pages of newspapers; mechanisms of communication are needed," says federal deputy Treviño.[52]

In the context of the security crisis in Monterrey, corporate interests have built up another type of representative organization, the hybrid civil-society group; Consejo Cívico brings together business interests with civil society groups, universities, conventional charities, and a host of non-profit social programs. The business chambers communicate among themselves, and each chamber decides what will be its central issue for policy and action. In this constellation, although it is not a business chamber, the Consejo Cívico has become the representative organization and leading civic mechanism for private sector security concerns. The Consejo works in close coordination with representative business chambers, especially the employers' association and manufacturing chamber, Coparmex and CAINTRA, respectively. These associations provide visibility and valuable financial and technical support to the Consejo's efforts. For example, the Coparmex membership includes all the private security experts and firms in Monterrey. The business associations support the Consejo Cívico with technical information which is then used to develop proposals in dialogue with the governor and mayors of the metropolitan area.

The creation of Fuerza Civil is a major innovation and is a collaborative public sector-private sector project. The new police force is widely thought to represent a significant improvement over the former police force. Its formation is a long-term investment in combating crime. In the short term, a number of problems must be resolved. The state needs to do more to organize the Fuerza Civil, say civil society advocates. Bringing in recruits from other states means the police have no roots in the community, so there are natural barriers to creating an optimally functioning neighborhood police force. Another adverse circumstance is that the members of Fuerza Civil are separated from their families for a month at a time and must live in barracks. The mid-level command positions have yet to be filled. The training period should be longer.

The state and municipal governments have been open to meeting with and listening to the private sector and civil society since their collaboration on security began in earnest in 2009. Consejo Cívico membership has grown to 100 organizations. Like the Mesa in Juárez, the Consejo Cívico serves as a bridge for building dialogues between the private sector and civil society organizations and the government. "In this process, we've helped with transformation because it is not possible for states to transform themselves," says Consejo Cívico president Zavala.

51 Interview with corporate security source, October 16, 2012.

52 Javier Treviño, September 11, 2012.

CONCLUSION

The northern cities of Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey have been overtaken by two
of the worst waves of violence in Mexico's contemporary history of savagery.
The darkest days of the two cities elicited bravery and commitment among their
hometown residents, professionals, and business people. The citizens who rose to
the challenge to confront crime and impunity created vibrant civic organizations
composed of business persons and civil society organizations working together.
These hybrid groups, new on the Mexican scene, have placed specific demands
before authorities, generated their own information to monitor government
actions and, ultimately, worked in coordination with government to stem
the threats to security from organized crime and from weak and often
corrupt institutions.

Reducing crime is the product of many forces and requires the efforts of diverse
government institutions and private sector groups. The turnaround in Juárez, for
example, is attributed to the dissolution of the violent La Línea arm of the Juárez
Cartel following the 2011 capture of its leader, improved coordination between
army troops and federal police, local ownership of the crime problem by the private
sector and the municipal and state governments, and the president's support for the
comprehensive security and social programs of Todos Somos Juárez.

The response by the private sector including businesses, industries, and
civil society in both cities shared common elements. Private businesses and
manufacturers large and small demonstrated their willingness to devote company
resources and time to addressing the problem of a lack of security in their cities.
Civil society leaders who are typically dedicated to issues such as education, health,
and human rights showed their ability to focus on citizen security and to devise
reporting and information systems that would track efforts to combat crime, set
goals, and hold authorities accountable for their performance.

A fascinating aspect of civic engagement by the private sector was the creation
of hybrid organizations. With the cities under siege from organized crime, business
and industry joined forces with nongovernmental organizations and representative
groups such as community associations. The two parties—business associations
and civic groups—in the Mesa de Seguridad and Consejo Cívico benefited from
the presence of the other. Private sector interests gained a wider audience among
citizens and greater legitimacy by working with civil society, and civic groups
gained added clout from the financial backing they could get from businesses
and the more fluid access to government enjoyed by the private sector. "It is
indispensable to have the participation of (various) sectors, you cannot work with
one part of society and leave out the other, they must be complementary and the
complementarity fosters greater trust," says Plan Estratégico president Fernández.[53]

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53 Miguel Fernández.

In both cities, citizen-led groups set up mechanisms to build trust in government authorities and created user-friendly centers, hotlines, or web platforms to receive anonymous reports of crimes and abuse by authorities. These new private sector services were understood immediately by citizens who aired their grievances and allowed civil society to amass information about the incidence of crime. Over time, assistance was provided to citizens willing to make formal crime reports, and city residents gained enough confidence to file their cases with the authorities.

Private sector groups, particularly the hybrid organizations, gained credibility and became trusted and respected mouthpieces for residents of the troubled cities. These organizations have gained the ear of public officials from the municipal to the federal levels. There have been and continue to be ups and downs in the access and receptivity coming from government.

Civil society, professional groups and private sector associations are most effective when they receive backing from government institutions. In Juárez, the Mesa de Seguridad and its member civic groups, gained strength from the support provided by Calderón and his Todos Somos Juárez crime-fighting initiative. A notable achievement of the Mesa was to serve as a bridge between different divisions of government and to prod them into coordinating efforts on security issues for which they shared responsibility. Peña Nieto has sent initial positive signals indicating he will support civic participation within the framework of his new security strategy. In Monterrey, the Consejo Cívico agenda of forming a new police force secured federal support at least in part through the access to the highest levels of government enjoyed by its powerful business establishment. The relationship with government is also bolstered by business contributions of technical expertise and donations of equipment to the local government.

Private sector engagement in civic affairs can certainly bring about positive results, and the building of trust among people is a compelling antidote to the pervasive fear that undercut a sense of community in both cities. It is beyond the capability of the private sector to confront powerful forces such as organized crime, impunity across the justice system, and corruption in the police. Fixing structural issues requires a vision and multifaceted commitment from all levels of government. Mexico faces a particular problem for addressing long-term problems.

Promoting civic participation by the private sector—businesses, professionals, and civic groups alike—is a permanent challenge in Mexico. Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey show that under the worst of circumstances, citizens will come together and work to improve their communities. It appears that the extreme emergency in both cities galvanized private sector activism. These two case histories of private sector engagement in citizen security set examples that could encourage citizens elsewhere in Mexico to organize demands and press authorities to reduce crime.

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ENGAGING AND STRENGTHENING JUDICIAL SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

Civic Engagement and the Judicial Reform: The Role of Civil Society in Reforming Criminal Justice in Mexico

OCTAVIO RODRÍGUEZ FERREIRA

INTRODUCTION

Mexico has historically featured a relatively weak civil society, due to the influence of corporatist structures controlled by the Mexican state. Yet, with regard to the criminal justice system, as other reports in this series have discussed, Mexican civil society has recently shown some encouraging signs of engagement and activism in response to significant rule of law and security concerns. Specifically, with regard to judicial reform, Mexican civic activists were very engaged in the historic 2008 constitutional and legal reforms that produced one of the most important changes in Mexico's contemporary history. This reform, which established the foundation for the country's New Criminal Justice System (Nuevo Sistema de Justicia Penal, NSJP), brought about significant changes to the Constitution on matters of criminal law, access to justice, alternative and restorative justice, the prison system, pretrial detention, presumption of innocence, criminal investigation, due process, public security, asset seizure or forfeiture, special detention regimes, labor conditions in public security, and legislative faculties of Congress in public security and addressing organized crime.

Through these amendments, Mexico joined a wave of progressive reforms that has spread throughout Latin America toward a more effective, democratic, and transparent criminal justice system. While the NSJP was reached by the agreement of political parties and hard negotiations in Congress, civil society played a significant role in the process, not only demanding a more just system, but also in pushing for the discussion, keeping the issue in the national agenda, and pursuing its final approval.

This report focuses on the role played by organized civil society in the judicial reform process, highlighting the efforts of certain organizations that became particularly influential and emblematic of civic activism in the area of criminal justice reform. To analyze how organized civil society became such an important player in the game, the author first walks through the reform process itself, then analyzes the social dimension of the NSJP, and ends with a look at how the

NSJP and society have influenced one another. Through a qualitative approach, the author obtained primary and secondary materials in an effort to analyze and measure the influence of civil society in the reform process. Specifically, the author gathered information on civil society organizations (CSO) that were considered to be among the most involved, visible and influential in the creation of the NSJP.

From those organizations, the author interviewed key experts and civic leaders to learn more about their efforts to promote judicial reform.[1] Through the insights pulled from interviews and analysis of articles and official documents focused on Mexico's judicial reform, the author developed a system to measure the influence of civic organizations on the NSJP. The influence of each CSO is shown finally through a diagram that aims to present the level of influence of each organization in a more clear and visual way to better understand the overall influence of civil society in the NSJP.

OVERVIEW OF THE JUSTICE SYSTEM REFORM

Contextual overview of the judicial system reform

The NSJP was incorporated into the Mexican legal framework on June 18, 2008, with the publication of a constitutional reform in the Official Journal of the Federation (*Diario Oficial de la Federación*, DOF). The reform consists of amendments to Articles 16 to 22, 73, 115, and 123 of the Constitution of the United Mexican States (Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, CPEUM) and contains provisions regarding criminal justice and public security.

The systemic change of 2008 is not new to Mexico. Starting in the 1980s, political reforms began to set the path for the modernization of the justice system. By the 1990s, institutional and legal reforms gave greater autonomy to the Supreme Court (Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, SCJN) and created an organism of control and oversight for the exercise of judicial functions within the judiciary, known as the Federal Judiciary Council (Consejo de la Judicatura

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1 Specifically, the author wishes to thank the following interviewees for their contributions: Ernesto Canales, president of Renace and founder of the National Network of Civil Organizations in Support of Oral Trials and Due Process (Red Nacional de Organizaciones Civiles de apoyo a los Juicios Orales y el Debido Proceso [La Red]); Orlando Camacho, president of the Foundation México SOS; Miguel Sarre, professor at the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, ITAM) and member of La Red; Ana Laura Magaloni, professor at the Center of Economic Research and Teaching (Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, CIDE) and member of La Red; Eduardo Reyes, communications director of the Center of Research for Development (Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo, A.C., CIDAC); Roberto Hernández, filmmaker and founder of Lawyers with Cameras (Abogados con Cámaras [LWC]); Francisco Riquelme Gallardo, board member of the Mexican Bar, College of Lawyers (Barra Mexicana Colegio de Abogados, BMA); Julio Hernández Pliego, vice president of the National and Illustrious College of Lawyers of Mexico (Ilustre y Nacional Colegio de Abogados de México, INCAM); and Moisés Castro, board member of the National Association of In-House Counsel Attorneys (Asociación Nacional de Abogados de Empresa, Colegio de Abogados, ANADE).

Federal, CJF).[2] In the early 2000s, the government of President Vicente Fox (2000–2006) presented a formal initiative to reform the system into an adversarial criminal justice system, an initiative that did not get political consensus and was rejected by Congress (Edmonds-Poli and Shirk 2012, 269).

This first attempt to reform Mexico's justice system, however, inspired some states to enact their own reforms at the state level.[3] Following the national momentum, and at a time of siege due to the threat of organized crime during the government of President Felipe Calderón (2006–2012), an initiative was presented that drew on the previously proposed reforms (Edmonds-Poli and Shirk 2012, 269), but contained new provisions designed to strengthen the strategy undertaken against organized crime. Congress finally approved the reform package in 2008 and set a period of eight years for its full implementation nationwide. As such, the NSJP is supposed to be fully operative throughout Mexico by 2016.

The traditional and the new criminal justice system

Mexico developed a judicial system that throughout its history became inefficient, inoperative, and unable to meet societal expectations (Shirk 2012). Criminal procedures in the traditional justice system were notorious for being long and slow, biased, partial, not respectful of human rights, and not particularly compliant with standards of due process. Such flaws have added to the general perception of it being an opaque system, prone to corruption, obsolete, authoritarian, enormously costly, and largely unjust. In general, the judicial system was viewed poorly by the public, and not well trusted; citizens did not want to be involved with it in any way (Reyes 2013).

Orlando Camacho (2013), president of the Mexican foundation México SOS, considers that the traditional Mexican judicial system is obsolete, encourages double victimization (of the victim and the accused), and is prone to widespread corruption. He argues that police training has been lacking, and that the image of public security institutions and the perception of criminal investigations have been severely damaged over the time, which raises potentially serious implications for due process in general. One of the major problems, Camacho says, is the disproportionate treatment of victims and victimizers, and the prosecution and the defense. Finally, he believes that a perverse system has been created in Mexico where many attorneys make a living without promoting the ideals of a society ruled by law. Many believe that the traditional system is brutally unjust, yet society became accustomed to it as the standard practice.

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2 Scholars suggest that this reform proposed by President Ernesto Zedillo was intended to reduce political influence of the SCJN and establish new criteria for the selection of judges (Edmonds-Poli and Shirk 2012, 269).

3 Among the states that passed their reforms prior to the 2008 reform were Nuevo León, Chihuahua, Oaxaca, Estado de Mexico, Morelos and Zacatecas (JMP 2010).

Experts on Mexico's justice system tend to agree. One of the most prominent figures of the NSJP, Ernesto Canales (2013), believes that the traditional justice system has always been surrounded by uncertainty, corruption, deplorable conditions, neglected by the authorities, and an overall obstacle to the healthy development of the country. In his words, having a criminal case is like being "in no man's land, believing that any kind of arbitrary decisions could happen." The system is perceived to serve only the rich and the powerful, and used as political control by authorities.

Professor Miguel Sarre (2013), member of the National Network of Civil Organizations in Support of Oral Trials and Due Process (Red Nacional de Organizaciones Civiles de apoyo a los Juicios Orales y el Debido Proceso [hereafter La Red]), argues that there is no worthy aspect of the traditional system to highlight or exemplify. Rather, he points to its flaws, particularly the exorbitant cost involved in conducting criminal investigations. Sarre also highlights that a serious problem is the fact that the prosecutor who conducts the criminal investigation is not the prosecutor who then tries the case—meaning a new attorney who is unfamiliar with the case is brought on to try the case—which results in a duplication of efforts.

According to Ana Laura Magaloni (2013), another member of La Red, the traditional system lacks any kind of democratic control or checks and balances. In her opinion, the system has only worked well when used as an instrument of political pressure. She explains it as follows:

> The traditional justice system is understood as the system of criminal persecution of an authoritarian country, and works for an authoritarian paradigm. ... The rationality of the system is to convert criminal persecution in a credible threat to the detractors of power ... and that required great margin of decision[4] and much political influence in the system, and lack of any control proper of democracies.

Roberto Hernández (2013), director of the documentaries *El Túnel* (The Tunnel) and *Presunto Culpable* (Presumed Guilty) says that a criminal case under the traditional system is a trial without evidence and without a judge.

According to Canales, among the most important issues that could explain the malfunctions of the traditional system, are:

1. The judge's absence during the presentation of the evidence, and thus not knowing the accused and not being familiar with the circumstances of the case;
2. The prosecutor's predominant role in the trial, meaning, for instance, that the prosecutor's power to decide what evidence is introduced and integrated in the case could decide the course of the trial; and

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4 The exact word used by the interviewee was "*discrecionalidad.*"

3. The judge's inability to contradict or question the evidence provided by the prosecutor in the proceedings.

Canales and his organization Renace developed one of the first sets of statistics with a scientific approach to study what happens in a criminal case in the traditional trial. What they found was a startling low level of crime reporting in Mexico, with only 15% of victims actually reporting a crime to authorities, and of all cases that actually reach trial, a guilty verdict is reached in 90% of the cases.[5]

Given the serious flaws and inefficiencies in the traditional system, the 2008 constitutional reforms and the new criminal justice system break significantly from the notorious system described above. The NSJP establishes adversarial criminal justice with equal parties and an impartial and independent judge, introduces oral and public hearings, and incorporates alternative justice systems. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on transparency and credibility within the judicial processes, and the introduction of a dynamic procedure that is less prone to the fabrication of cases (Sarre), provides checks and balances critical to the functioning of a democratic system, establishes a system of due process, is able to professionalize its operators, and removes the menacing power of the state (Magaloni).

With the introduction of oral and public hearings, the accumulation of enormous records that amasses under the traditional system is also addressed with the introduction of videotaping and electronic filing of all proceedings during the trial under the new system. In addition, due to the inclusion of alternative justice systems in the NSJP, many cases can be solved before they reach trial, which results in the court system not being overwhelmed and saturated with too many cases, working at a more efficient pace, and allowing judges and court staff to adequately manage all cases (Rodríguez 2012).

Another important feature of the new system is the existence of different judges for different stages of the trial. A judge—*juez de garantías* or *juez de control*—oversees the constitutional rights of the accused during the detention and investigation, and decides on the application of precautionary measures. A trial judge or panel of judges—*juez de juicio oral*—then takes over and leads the trial until the sentencing stage, where a third and final judge—*juez de ejecución de sentencia*—oversees and resolves all issues related to the execution and enforcement of the sentence.

Criminal investigations are modified as well under the NSJP, given that the prosecutor loses some of his or her de facto powers and has to build solid cases with sufficient evidence that will likely be contradicted in court by the defense attorney, who must be aware of and be present at every stage of the investigation.

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5 Canales (2013). ICESI victimization surveys suggest that no more than a quarter of all crimes (roughly 22% in 2008) are actually reported; 39% of those who do not report crimes indicate that it is a waste of time. The next largest proportion (16%) indicate that they do not trust the authorities and 10% say that the process of reporting a crime is too cumbersome. A third (33%) of those who reported a crime said that no result was obtained from reporting the crime (Shirk 2012). According to Guillermo Zepeda (2004), one or two out of every 100 crimes result in a sentence.

A single piece of evidence is no longer enough to sentence an accused individual.[6] All evidence must also be collected and preserved in a uniform fashion so it can be presented in trial and thus open for contradiction by the defense. Overall, this raises the bar for better-quality investigations and evidence gathering. Additionally, all detentions and apprehensions must be carried out according to due process with respect for human rights, and are subject to being judicially challenged if needed. Such changes aim to make the investigation phase in the NSJP more transparent and compliant with meeting fundamental rights of those involved.

There is also a relevant part of the reform that deals with public security issues, principally organized crime. This so-called "special regime for organized crime" includes measures of special confinement and prison conditions, certain process rules, a special detention regime called *arraigo*,[7] asset disposition by the authority called *extinción de dominio*, and certain exceptions to the due process rights granted by the same reform. Critics have questioned this "special regime" in the reform given that it limits some of the overall beneficial provisions of the NSJP, despite doing so with the big picture goal of combating organized crime and its influence.

The purpose of the NSJP is to restructure the way criminal justice has traditionally been conceived in Mexico. This reform is moving the criminal system toward a more democratic and transparent practice, which is more respectful of human rights and more efficient. Nevertheless, provisions regarding organized crime are more vague and obscure, and in some cases contradict the overall purpose of the NSJP. While the system tends to be more respectful of constitutional rights, the special regime for organized crime limits them; whereas the process tends to be more democratic and transparent, the special regime makes it somehow opaque and authoritarian.

In addition to provisions made under the special regime for organized crime, the NSJP has a number of other concerning areas. Among the main weaknesses of the new system identified by experts and members of the civil society[8] are:

1. The lack of a broad understanding of the reform, where a large segment of society is still not aware of the existence of the new system.
2. The limited knowledge on the part of state authorities responsible for implementing the new system's provisions.

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6 In the past, a sole confession, even if the defense attorney was not present, could be considered to adjudge the culpability of the accused.

7 *Arraigo* is a special detention measure that allows suspects to be detained during the preliminary investigative phase of a case, before probable cause is established or the detainee is made aware of the charges being brought against him.

8 This list was generated based on responses during the interviews.

3. The fact that the federal government has somehow neglected the system.[9]
4. The little to no planning for a successful implementation.
5. The lack of coordination among key actors involved in the planning, implementation, and execution of the NSJP.
6. The poor strategy for the socialization of the NSJP.
7. That in some cases, states have mixed the two judicial systems (traditional and accusatorial), causing serious confusion.
8. The abuse of alternative justice when there is not enough judicial oversight.

As pointed out by Magaloni, arguably the biggest drawback to the new system, though, is that it breaks from the norm in Mexican legal and political culture, and thus is difficult to implement in a society where there is a culture of arbitrariness.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE REFORM OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN MEXICO

An informed civil society becomes very important in reform processes, particularly in the case of Mexico given that the country has a history of authoritarianism and corporatist control; the state has created, organized, licensed, funded, subordinated, and controlled "interest" groups (and most of the mass media); and there has been a long embedded view of cooptation, repression, and domination rather than bargaining (Diamond, 13). The regime, however, eventually came under pressure from "social, economic, and demographic forces," and "successful socioeconomic development" produced a "profusion of authentic civil society groups that demand political freedom under law" (Diamond, 13–14).

A snapshot of civil society in Mexico

The democratic consolidation of Mexico over the 20th century slowly led to the compilation of social demands that created an organized society that started to

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9 While the federal government has given resources and support through the creation of the Technical Secretariat of the Coordinating Council for the Implementation of the Criminal Justice System (Secretaría Técnica del Consejo de Coordinación para la Implementación del Sistema de Justicia Penal, SETEC), the institution has limited powers. It was as though the federation left the states with little or no guidance on the federal procedures that could ultimately have important bearing on their own criminal codes (JMP 2010). However, in February 2014 the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (Cámara de Diputados) finally approved a national procedural code that will finally set the basis for the implementation of the NSJP at the federal level. Moreover, the new legislation is a national code that will apply to both the federation and the states in an effort to unify procedures and to help the states that have not made significant progress to fully implement the NSJP.

include its concerns in the political agenda of the country, setting the groundwork for the Mexican civil society of today.[10]

"[C]ivil society and NGOS have become fundamental structural agents reformulating how cultures and economies can do something national. What we are seeing now is a process of reorganization of Mexican society resting on two forms: *asociaciones políticas* and NGOS. *Asociaciones políticas* are groups organized to participate in the dissemination of ideas on some aspect of politics, such as multinationals or the law. They are very close to NGOS, but they are recognized by the state. The growing influence of NGOS in Mexican political and social life during the last fifteen years can be seen in different spheres of society. Slowly but steadily NGOS are reformulating the complex relations between the state and civil society." (Thelen 1999, 694)

Ilan Semo (Thelen 1999, 697) suggests that Mexican NGOs are reshaping the relations between the state and society, despite still lacking a tradition of autonomous forms of organization. Nonetheless, the emergence of organizations gave a new dimension to Mexican society—showing the limits of traditional institutions and experimenting with forms of organization that enrich the capability of civil society to react to problems and conflicts—yet they are finding ways to link political and ideological pluralism with a pluralist form of social action.

Nevertheless, thus far there is a critical lack of analysis on civil society in Mexico in general, and especially on the role it has played in the justice system reform, since both the reform and the consolidation of civil society are quite new,[11] and some of the current debate in this regard has been focused mainly on society's criticism against public policies, or on society's lack of action, or on the perceptions among judicial system operatives and the general public.[12]

In short, there has been a tendency to ignore or at least underplay the importance of civic actors that have contributed to the reform effort. This is a

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10 In Mexico, the exact number civil society organizations is unclear, but estimates range from 20,000 to 35,000, a small number in terms of population size, but with substantial growth and recognition in the public arena. Regarding their distribution by area of focus, 45% are concentrated in social support and/or aid services, about 18% in community development, and 8% in health; the rest focus on education, research, the environment, and human rights. Most of the organizations concentrate in the 20 most populous cities of Mexico. (Mexican Centre for Philanthropy, A.C.; Citizens' Initiative for the Promotion of a Culture of Dialogue, A.C.; Social Administration and Cooperation, A.C. 2011, 29).

11 There is a consensus among scholars that Mexican civil society is still very young, and it has "been marked by the political and social dynamics created by institutions as well as the unwritten rules of the party that governed for more than 70 years" (Mexican Centre for Philanthropy, A.C.; Citizens' Initiative for the Promotion of a Culture of Dialogue, A.C.; Social Administration and Cooperation, A.C. 2011).

12 Caballero (2010) states that the reform has not had much impact on society, that organized civil society has focused more on questioning certain policy issues than on the reform process, and that the challenge is to influence public opinion. Studies such as the *Justiciabarómetro* survey of operators of the judicial system conducted by the Justice in Mexico Project summarize the findings on the profile and opinions of judges and lawyers working in the Mexican criminal justice system. The survey includes a variety of questions on demographic characteristics, professional profile, perceptions of judicial system functioning, perceptions of lawfulness, corruption, due process, and the criminal justice reform of 2008 (JMP 2011).

potentially dangerous tendency, given that civic actors and organizations—private attorneys, bar associations, and legal scholars—should be primary protagonists in shaping the implementation of the reforms. Therefore, it is fundamental to generate more studies to gauge the involvement of society in the reform and to have a better sense of the actual role of civil society and the organizations that are generating social capital while advocating for the justice reform.

The role of civil society in reforming criminal justice

The prevailing opinion amongst experts and members of civil society is that civic engagement has been a clear and key factor for the achievement of the NSJP. Ernesto Canales (2013) believes the reform was generated from the particular to the general, or from the ground up, which is unlike most of the reforms in Mexico that are generated at the upper levels of government and society downward, or, using Canales's language, from the general to the particular. Canales mentions that it was a movement, initiated completely by the citizenry, that united to create a voice that could not have been ignored or not heard—a movement that made politicians and decision makers meet the demands of the society. Most important, says Canales, is that it was a campaign of persuasion, and not confrontation.

Indeed, organized civil society was instrumental in the approval process of the judicial reform, and exemplified how civil society could and should operate in other areas (Magaloni 2013). As Magaloni mentions, the context in which the judicial reform was approved was extremely complicated given the security situation of the country and the corresponding political discourse under Calderón administration; however, civil society managed to develop a strong presence and was able to achieve its approval. Since the reforms were initially conceived, civil society has been incredibly influential in pushing authorities to finally consider, approve, and implement the changes to the judicial system (Sarre). Without civil society, the NSJP reforms would not have been developed, enacted, or achieved, considering the role civil society played in promoting it and in keeping it on the radar of policy makers (Camacho), bringing together not only members of organized civil society, but also businesspeople and academics into the discussion (Reyes).

Nevertheless, the influence of civil society in the actual implementation of the NSJP has been less apparent. The presence of civil society is much weaker in the implementation, says Magaloni, as the processes are slow, happening in different regions of the country—which makes the effort to monitor them more expensive— and are difficult to track and follow due to the various personal activities of all the members of the organized civil society. Sarre also recognizes the decreased role of civil society in the implementation process, noting that government and academia are instead largely those currently more active in this stage.

MEASURING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE JUSTICE REFORM

It is clear that civil society was a key factor for the achievement of the NSJP. As previously mentioned, many organizations became main actors of this change, directly or indirectly involved in the reform process with different backgrounds, scopes, geographical location, and activities, but contributing in some ways to the implementation efforts nationwide. Though, in order to develop this analysis, the author identifies some organizations from the vast array that have influenced and promoted the NSJP, for being considered amongst the most influential, while taking into account their geographic presence, size, prestige, visibility, and the type of activities they carry out.

As previously mentioned, the purpose of this research is to show the presence of each CSO through a diagram that represents their level of influence on certain indicators, which encompass the diverse activities civil society conducts vis-à-vis the NSJP. This analysis took a qualitative approach by asking a representative of each CSO to evaluate the level of involvement or influence the organization has in each of the four chosen indicators: policy and legislation influence, public education, analysis and evaluation, and technical assistance.

The question was asked to the representatives of each CSO in the following way: "Using a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 means low and 7 means high, how much does … [the CSO] … focus on the following topics, and what concrete actions have been developed in each of them?" The indicators labeled as "topics" in the question were explained in the following way:

1. **Policy and legislation**. This criterion is met if the organization conducts regular activities before political actors to gain support for the NJSP; if they try to influence legislation; if they make public appearances or presentations before Congress or other political institutions; and/or if they meet regularly with authorities to lobby in favor of the reform.
2. **Public education**. This criterion is met if the organization has an outreach agenda regarding the NSJP; appears before media outlets; publishes editorials in newspapers and magazines; organizes discussions and forums; and/or has had advertising or social media campaigns related to the reform.
3. **Analysis and evaluation.** This criterion is met if the organization has an academic research agenda for the NSJP; develops studies and analyses; and/or publishes journal articles, books, or reports related to the reform.
4. **Technical assistance.** This criterion is met if the organization provides training or practical education for the NSJP, and/or any kind of technical assistance for the reform.

TABLE 1: INDEX OF KEY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS INFLUENTIAL TO THE NEW CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Organization	Place and date of creation	Main activities
Renace A.C.	Monterrey, 1994	Organization that provides legal assistance in cases of evident injustice; specialized in cases of prison inmates. Their activities are divided in the following areas: 1) Legal aid; 2) Psychological Aid; 3) Addictions; 4) Administration; 5) Outreach relations with funders and partner organizations.
México SOS A.C.	Mexico City, 2008	Organization that promotes rule of law by generating political influence and reaching the society for more awareness. The organization has three main axis: 1) legal, where they study and generate law initiatives; 2) institutional strengthening, to overcome weak and corrupt institutions that do not generate confidence amongst society; and 3) efficient social participation (civic engagement) to provoke the awakening and commitment of society in a common agenda of security and justice.
Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo A.C.	Mexico City, 1984	Think tank that develops research and policy recommendations for the development of Mexico in the areas of rule of law, democracy, economy, and social development.
Red Nacional de Organizaciones Civiles de Apoyo a los Juicios Orales y el Debido Proceso	Mexico City, 2005	Network of experts, CSO and civic leaders that offer concrete solutions to the problems caused by the ineffectiveness of the justice system. It is focused on monitoring and promoting the adequate implementation of the reform at the federal and state level.
Lawyers with Cameras	Mexico City, 2010	Organization composed by filmmakers and researchers Layda Negrete and Roberto Hernández. As organization and individuals, they currently focus most of their efforts in academic research, though their documentaries El Túnel and Presunto Culpable have a high level of public education and policy influence.
Barra Mexicana Colegio de Abogados A.C.	Mexico City, 1922	Bar Association that seeks to ensure the prestige of the legal profession; defends the collective interests of the group; monitors the professional practice of lawyers, the correct application of law and respect for justice; and strengthens the legal culture.
Ilustre y Nacional Colegio de Abogados de México	Mexico City, 1760	Bar Association that defends collective interests of the group; promotes the study of the legal science; monitors the practice of the legal profession, the administration of justice, and the enforcement of the rule of law; and provides advice to authorities when requested.

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Renace

Renace has been very involved in the NSJP reform and implementation from the beginning, so much so that Renace's founder, Ernesto Canales, can be considered the father of the NSJP. Even more, the organization can claim credit for the reform's success in the state of Nuevo León, the first state to implement the new judicial system, which it actually did before the 2008 federal constitutional reforms. Renace's objective of creating change to the justice system in Mexico began with the experiences its own members and the organization as a whole had had in the traditional criminal justice system. As described above (See Table 1), through their work mainly with prison inmates, Renace employees noticed serious cases of injustice, which initiated their campaign to address the judicial system. They gathered academics and experts from different countries to analyze the situation, began a reform to the criminal justice system, and ultimately advocated to create the first adversarial justice system in Mexico, which took root in the state of Nuevo León. Renace's actions in Nuevo León inspired other states to follow suit and, thanks to the strong influence of Renace and Canales, the NSJP was eventually included in the Mexican Constitution.

Renace continues to deepen its role in implementing the reform and the NSJP, particularly by overseeing and evaluating the NSJP for failures and human rights violations, which is specifically useful given that the feedback provides recommendations for states to continue moving toward a more transparent, efficient system that obeys human rights. The organization is also advocating for obligatory bar association of all legal professionals in Mexico. Overall this exemplifies the high level of policy and legislative influence such civil society organizations can have. Renace was not only fully involved in drafting the reform, but it continues to keep itself involved through its active participation to define and advocate for legislation relevant to the success of the NSJP. In addition, Renace produces text books on the judicial reform, participates in the generation of related curricula, has always been very active in giving legal aid to low-income citizens and prisoners, and has developed a training program for reinserting released prisoners into society. Renace also trains system operators, and has ventured into the training of police officers in the NSJP. The organization also works on training CSO in different states on the contents of the NSJP, its relevance, and its association with complex issues such as public security.

México SOS

Despite not being part of the initial reform that Renace spearheaded, México SOS immediately became part of the network of support for the NSJP after the organization was founded, with the goal of pushing the system's implementation

forward above all else. SOS promoted the reform through public forums with the purpose of keeping it on the public agenda and on the authorities' radar. SOS also participated in the Agenda Mexico 12.18,[13] and continues to focus on identifying exemplary models throughout the country—states with good practices in implementing the system, such as the northern Mexican state of Baja California—to use as examples for others to follow while undergoing the transition.

SOS has also supported and lobbied for relevant legislation within the justice system, such as the law that supports the victims of kidnapping and the controversial "geolocation" law,[14] and was a strong advocate for the Unified Criminal Code that was finally approved by the Chamber of Deputies in February 2014 (Cervantes 2014). The organization has also been a key actor for the political reform and the law for victims, among others.

Both in general and with regard to the NSJP, SOS identifies itself as one of the organizations with the strongest effective traditional and social media presence. This area—including blogs, Facebook, and Twitter—has been rapidly growing. SOS has also organized and participated in countless forums in universities and states, and regularly contributes to online and print newspapers.

Despite its strong presence in the security and justice fields, SOS recognizes that evaluation and analysis of the NSJP are not its strengths nor are they its focus. Similarly, the organization does not consider itself to have a significant role in NSJP technical assistance, which is logical given that technical assistance is not one of SOS's goals. However, SOS has gathered experts to generate studies and promotes training efforts for NSJP, fields that have been indirectly influenced by this particular CSO.

CIDAC

The Center of Research for Development (Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo, A.C., CIDAC) does not consider itself as an advocating entity; however it does believe it has indirectly influenced the reform process, especially given that CIDAC's content and materials are routinely used by actors involved in the reform, most notably state governments.

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13 Agenda 12.18 is a document that proposes certain measures in order to achieve more security and justice in Mexico. Among the points they pushed for with regard to justice are: the creation of a unified criminal legislation, autonomy of prosecutors, creation of a new police for criminal investigations, transformation of the prison system, establishment of alternative justice, and evaluation of the NSJP (México SOS 2012). Two major reforms in 2014 met some of these efforts, the approval of the National Procedural Criminal Code (Código Nacional de Procedimientos Penales CNPP) for the national unification criminal procedural standards (Cervantes 2014) and the political reform (*reforma política*) that gave autonomy to the PGR from the executive branch, thus 'granting' prosecutorial independence (Notimex 2014).

14 The *ley de geolocalización* sets regulatory frameworks for telecom companies to collaborate in criminal investigations and allows the PGR to track phones without judicial order. This legislation was approved by Congress in 2012 and then ratified by the SCJN in 2014 after resolving a constitutional controversy (Torres 2014).

Specifically in the fields of rule of law and justice, CIDAC is considered to have experienced three different stages: 1) The first stage was led by CIDAC researcher Guillermo Zepeda and focused almost entirely on analysis and research. It resulted in the production of a comprehensive diagnostic analysis of the reality of the states in the implementation process, as well as corpus of studies of the criminal system and the security situation. 2) The second stage focused more on communicating and disseminating the content already produced by the organization. This stage was henceforth more about the "socialization" of content—the presentation of findings and indicators in a more visual and friendly fashion—that Reyes mentions. In CIDAC's words, the direction it followed was a risk the organization wanted to take; it sees itself as a pioneer in this regard. Ultimately, this stage led CIDAC to find that the NSJP was widely unfamiliar and unknown throughout Mexico, even by those who ought to have knowledge and familiarity with the reform. 3) The third stage is considered more as a continuation of the second, in which CIDAC tries to maintain the "socialization" effort, but is generating its own indicators in the process, describing it as a more product-oriented phase.

CIDAC has played a strong role as a social educator in this process, providing information on the NSJP to educate the public on the new system. The organization has produced videos, released specialized content through social networks, dedicated a website to make indicators publicly available in a more "friendly" way, and even exercised a certain level of citizen activism. It has also organized and participated in forums in universities and throughout the states, and serves as a source for media reports on the topic. A clear example of their influence in the field of socialization or public education is the campaign *#NoMás* (*#NoMore*) by their project "*Esto es la Justicia.*" Through a series of videos, CIDAC informs and educates society about various topics related to the NSJP, including videos such as "*No más ya ni modo*" (*No more anyways*) that addresses restorative justice, "*No más coyotes*" (*No more coyotes*) that addresses the problems of corruption and unethical behavior of private attorneys, and "*No más tortura*" (*No more torture*) that addresses the problem of torture by prosecutors and investigative police (CIDAC n.d.).

As previously mentioned, the first stage of CIDAC strongly focused on the analysis and evaluation of the judicial reforms. While its production of content since then has been lower, the organization has instead turned its concentration to the socialization of the materials—that is to say to the dissemination of the content for public knowledge. Like México SOS, CIDAC does not see itself playing a role in NSJP technical assistance, nor is that one of its focuses.

La Red[15]

In the same way that Renace can claim credit for the reforms in Nuevo León, La Red can claim it for the national reform. La Red is believed to be *the* decisive factor for the creation of the constitutional reform, as it advocated for it against the status quo, even against major political players such as President Calderón himself, the Supreme Court, and certain opposition in the Congress. Sarre and Magaloni concur that it also faced opposition from bar associations and part of academia, though it finally garnered enough support that it won a seat at the table with political actors, actors who certainly would not have taken the initiative to push for, discuss, and eventually approve such an important and necessary reform without the advocacy and pressure from La Red. Along with La Red's significant influence on policies, the group has also contributed to the shaping of relevant legislation, both by supporting proposals from other organizations and pushing for its own initiatives to be completed.[16] Other relevant activities of La Red are its official positions on certain policies, legislative initiatives, and reforms.[17]

Since 2007, La Red has organized forums to discuss different aspects of the NSJP by gathering stakeholders and major figures from the social and political arena, including the president, renowned politicians, and prestigious academics.[18] The organization also has a strong presence in the media through public campaigns.[19]

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15 Created by a group of more than 70 organizations from different regions of Mexico, such as Coparmex, Grupo Azteca, UNAM, ITESM, Grupo Reforma, INACIPE, CIDE, Renace, México Práctico, IMEJ, México SOS and Causa en Común, among others. It does not have a rigid and pyramidal composition. Its main leader is Ernesto Canales and there are groups that are linked to different sectors: to businesspeople, to academics, to politicians, and to civil society and other CSOs. However, this division is more voluntary and informal rather than an actual institutional organization. Most of its funding comes from its founders and donors such as Canales, but they have also received grants—from USAID and Open Society Initiative, among others—for concrete projects. Notwithstanding, La Red does not regularly operate under its own funding; the costs it generates are relatively minimum.

16 "Seminarios para la discusión del anteproyecto del Código Federal de Procedimientos Penales de la Secretaría Técnica del Consejo de Coordinación para la Implementación del Sistema de Justicia Penal" (2010); "Propuesta de reforma a la iniciativa de Código Federal de Procedimientos Penales del Presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos" (2011). La Red was also a key actor for the approval of the CNPP, which unifies criminal procedural legislation nationwide.

17 La Red generated, for instance, a position on the Nuevo León reform initiative of August 24, 2012: "Posicionamiento de la Red Nacional de Organizaciones Civiles de Juicios Orales y Debido Proceso frente a la iniciativa de reforma del Poder Ejecutivo del estado de Nuevo León al nuevo sistema de justicia penal."

18 "Para escapar de la trampa de papeles: Juicios Orales" (2006); First (2009), Second (2010), and Third (2011) National Forum on Security and Justicie (Foro Nacional sobre Seguridad y Justicia); and the First (2011) and Second (2012) Local Forum on Security and Justice in Nuevo León (Foro Local sobre Justicia y Seguridad en Nuevo León).

19 An example of a campaign is "Sin nuevas reglas no hay justicia."

La Red itself does not have a strong research agenda—though it has published books and memoranda, and participated in the publication of studies[20]—nor has it been active in the field of technical assistance, as that is also not one of its areas of specialization.

Lawyers with Cameras

Abogados con Cámaras (Lawyers with Cameras, LWC) was registered as a CSO in 2010, but its members and founders Layda Negrete and Roberto Hernández have been active promoters of criminal justice reform in Mexico for more than a decade. They became known for the documentaries *El Túnel*, which describes criminal courts in Mexico City and compares them to ones in Chile, and *Presunto Culpable*, which shows the limits of the traditional justice system in Mexico and which reached an estimated 1.7 million viewers in movie theaters and 13.5 million on television. The material put together by LWC is mostly visual, though it feeds from actual data gathered and generated by Negrete and Hernández, which is then presented through real-life case studies. Even though these documentaries do not promote the reform directly, they do generate attention and support for it.

As individuals, Negrete and Hernández are among the most influential people in the justice system reform. Their influence, though indirect in legal and political terms, is that they were able, says Hernández, to define the problem of Mexican justice, leaving it not only at the authorities' but also at the general public's reach. Hernandez believes that through their documentaries they defined the problem "in a more sophisticated way," one that could easily be adopted by the citizenry and policymakers. Since one of the major problems in Mexico is a lack of reading, studies and reports regarding relevant issues do not get the attention they should. The documentaries were able to put the problems of Mexican justice in a far-reaching and popular channel, television. LWC told the story of the problem, and that somehow enabled political interpretation, generation of legislation, and even methods for measurement.[21]

Hernández considers that is difficult to describe an organization such as LWC, since it is very "thin" and has in fact no staff. This on the one hand has the advantage that LWC does not require major financial support to function; on the other hand, this causes to be less efficient in generating products.

It could be said that the work of LWC is strongly focused on public education because its work is constantly referenced and cited and its number of viewers grows

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20 This is exemplified by the publication from ITAM y La Red: *Las reformas de la reforma procesal penal en Chihuahua* (Ríos Espinosa and Cerdio 2012).

21 Nonetheless, because of *Presunto Culpable*, Negrete and Hernández faced a great deal of criticism and negative campaigns from authorities, legal experts, and media outlets. They still have cases pending in Mexican courts, particularly in regard to damages for showing people in a documentary without their consent.

every day. It has a strong component of policy influence, since it tries to influence policy and legislation by exposing the flaws of the traditional system. More recently, LWC is holding dialogues with political actors promoting the reform, in particular lobbying for the adoption of indicators to measure different aspects of the system.

The work of LWC has indeed relied on actual research; aside from its documentaries, Negrete and Hernández have a strong research agenda that analyzes issues regarding due process and the justice system in general. While their deliverables are not numerous, most of their time is dedicated to academic research.

The organization is not particularly focused on providing training or continuing education, nor is its intention to do so.

BMA

In words of Francisco Riquelme Gallardo (2013), board member of the Mexican Bar, College of Lawyers (Barra Mexicana Colegio de Abogados, BMA), this organization has been active for several years in the justice reform process. At the initial stages of discussion of the initiative, the organization participated in various meetings with the President's Legal Advisers Office, and both chambers of Congress, achieving to include adequate changes to the initial and subsequent projects of reform. It has also maintained the discussion and the monitoring of the implementation process through a great number of events organized by the BMA's Criminal Law Commission since 2007. The organization also played a significant role in the adoption of the unified criminal code through technical opinions about the initiative that were presented to both chambers of Congress.

BMA does not have a formal research agenda, but has analyzed the topic of the adversarial system and the Mexican reform itself through some of its publications, especially in articles featured in its magazine *La Barra*.

On the academic and public education area, BMA has constantly participated in partnerships to organize courses about the adversarial system, and have created a master's program in Criminal Law with focus in the adversarial system. The Criminal Law Master's Program has a practical approach that provides basic tools for members of the bar and outside private attorneys to understand the new adversarial system. Though despite their next step is to implement litigation workshops, BMA has not been very active in providing technical assistance to practitioners on adversarial litigation.

INCAM

According to Julio Hernández Pliego (2013), vice president of the National and Illustrious College of Lawyers of Mexico (Ilustre y Nacional Colegio de Abogados de México, INCAM), the organization participated in several meetings during the

drafting of the project to reform the criminal justice system. After the reform was approved in 2008, INCAM met frequently with representatives of the executive branch and of both chambers of Congress to monitor the implementation process. Additionally, the organization has been involved in the implementation of secondary legislation, especially in the initiative of a unified criminal code, which was approved in 2014.

INCAM is constantly participating and organizing forums and conferences about the new system, and partners with other institutions in the discussion of various issues regarding the reform. Most recently INCAM has been participating in litigation skills discussions and trainings with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) and Universidad Panamericana.

Despite not having a defined research agenda, at the Criminal Law section of INCAM, its members analyze constantly court decisions and legislation regarding the new adversarial system, as well as other relevant issues.

ANADE

The National Association of In–House Counsel Attorneys (Asociación Nacional de Abogados de Empresa, Colegio de Abogados, ANADE) is a Bar Association with a corporate law approach, meaning that its members are both independent corporate attorneys and in–house counselors; thus, as an organization it focuses on all areas of law as they relate to private companies. Despite the profile of the association to always seek the best advice for companies, it has been increasingly consulted by various government agencies to give technical opinions on legal issues.

In the words of Moisés Castro (2013), member of the board and the Criminal Law Commission of ANADE, the organization's focus has always been on the impact that the NSJP may have on companies and corporate legal practice. As well, the organization does not have a technical approach for the analysis and promotion of reform, though given its size and magnitude, the Mexican government has requested ANADE's support in different aspects of the implementation process. It has been particularly active in matters relating to victims, crime, precautionary measures, and procedural issues that could have a direct impact on the interests of its members. ANADE's technical opinions, however, are intended to inform broader legislation and decision–making by the government, thus complementing the work of the other two largest bar associations in Mexico, INCAM and BMA.

Notwithstanding, the purpose of ANADE is not to influence public policy. Yet in some cases their technical opinions have somehow helped promote legislation and public policies, as was the case of the procedural criminal code for the Federal District (Distrito Federal, DF), which establishes the NSJP for Mexico City, in which it was very active and involved in the process of drafting and discussion.

As for public education regarding the NSJP, ANADE has been involved in its

promotion and dissemination, primarily within the business sector. Since 2008, ANADE's Criminal Law Committee has conducted forums and discussions, and participated in events organized by various government agencies such as the Supreme Court and SETEC. It has also published a number of op-ed articles related to the matter, particularly in the magazine *Abogado Corporativo.*

Though its members individually made efforts to analyze the NSJP and the reform itself, ANADE has not developed an agenda of research and analysis, nor is that an approach the organization is interested in pursuing.

Although it has organized some courses and workshops to explain the principles of oral advocacy, ANADE has not been particularly active in this area. This is because its members, as corporate attorneys, do not seek to have oral advocacy skills for the NSJP; rather they seek to understand the implications of the system in their field of expertise.

Overall influence of CSOs in the reform process

According to the data gathered from the series of interviews and from documental research, the author developed a diagram that shows the level of influence each CSO has in the chosen indicators; the measures are from 1 to 7, where 1 means low and 7 means high, and zero represents no influence or specialization whatsoever. Based on this scale the author generated a diagram for each, which are presented below:

TABLE 2: AREAS OF INFLUENCE OF KEY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE NEW CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Renace

Policy/Legislation

Technical assistance

Public education

Analysis/Evaluation

México SOS

Policy/Legislation

Technical assistance

Public education

Analysis/Evaluation

CIDAC

Policy/Legislation

Technical assistance

Public education

Analysis/Evaluation

La Red

Policy/Legislation

Technical assistance

Public education

Analysis/Evaluation

LWC

BMA

INCAM

ANADE
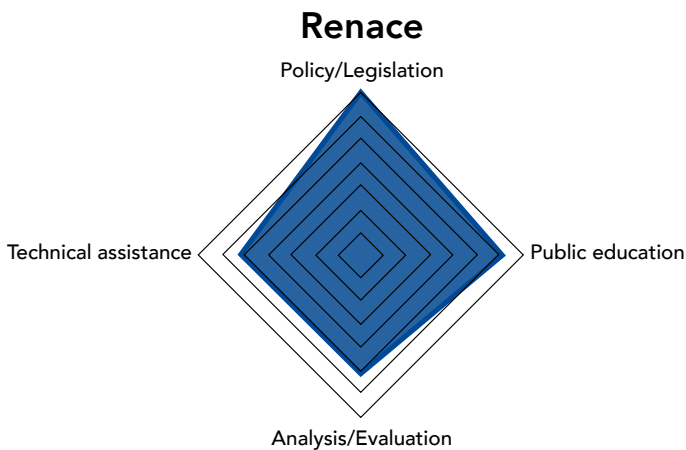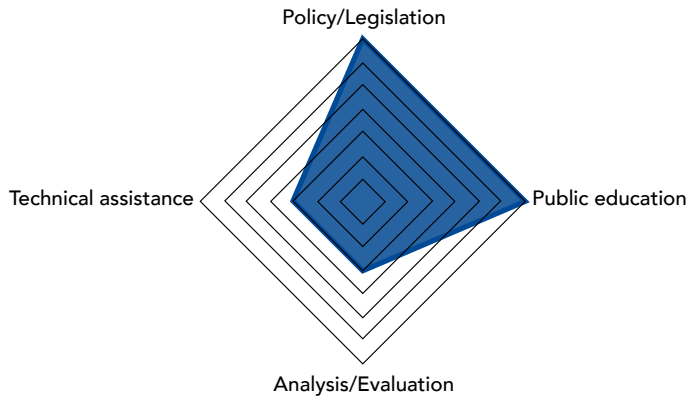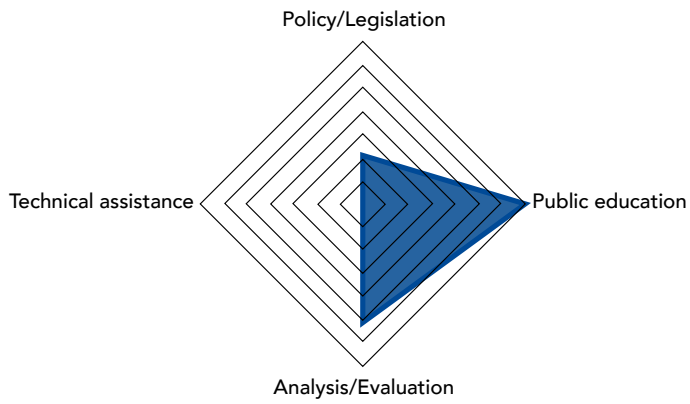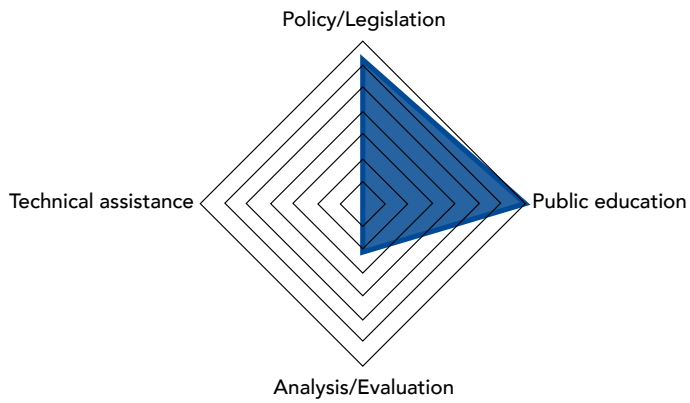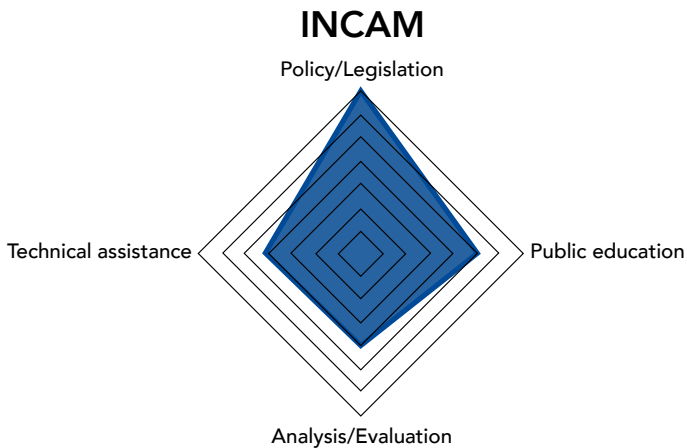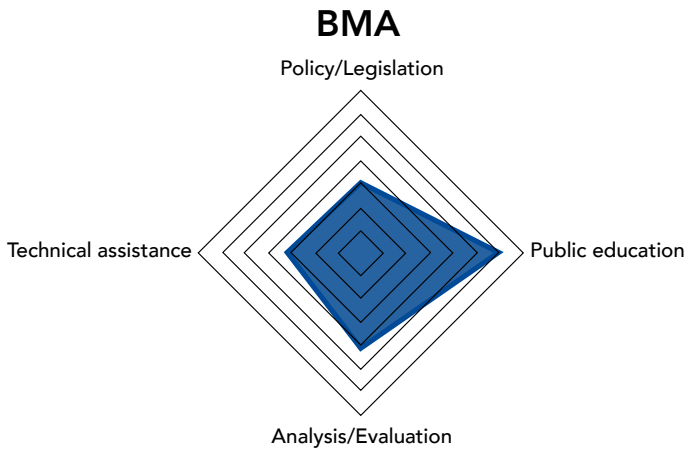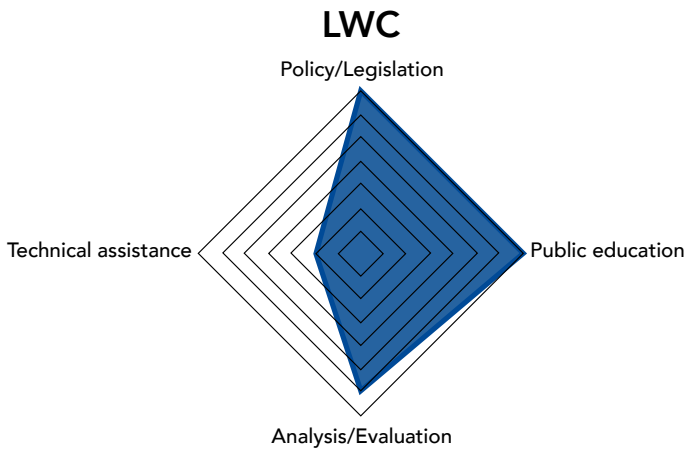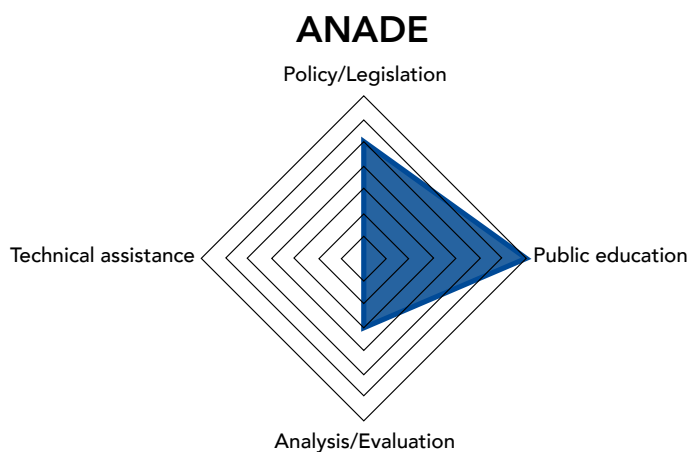
In order to present, all combined, the level of influence of the analyzed CSO, the author calculates the average number for every indicator divided by the number of CSO included in the study.

TABLE 3: AVERAGE INFLUENCE OF KEY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE NEW CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Organization	Policy / Legislation	Public education	Analysis / Evaluation	Technical assistance
Renace	7	6	5	5
México SOS	7	7	3	3
CIDAC	2	7	5	0
La Red	6	7	2	0
LWC	7	7	6	2
BMA	3	6	4	3
INCAM	7	5	4	4
ANADE	5	7	3	0
Average	5.5	6.5	4	2.1

Therefore the combined level of influence of the above-mentioned CSO in the NSJP could be represented as follows:

TABLE 4: DIAGRAM OF AVERAGE INFLUENCE OF KEY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE NEW CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
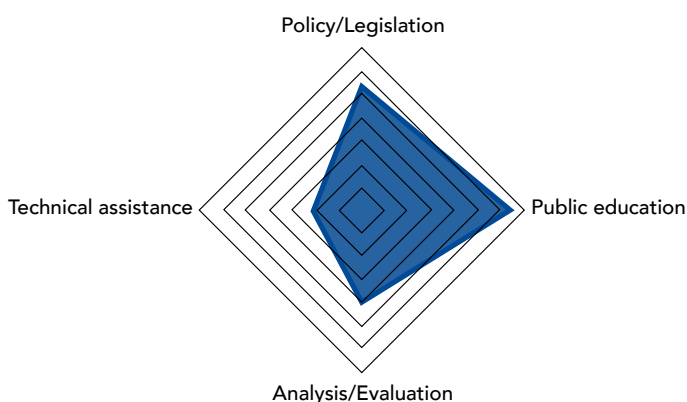
Even though this analysis is far to present the general picture of the influence of civil society in the NSJP, it rather looks at individual organizations' impacts taken collectively. Nonetheless, the analysis did find that the level of involvement of these organizations somehow represent the general influence of civil society in all the processes of the NSJP. Considering that the diagram was generated based only on the information of a small number of CSO, it probably does not show fairly the level of influence of civil society in general, but does represent a trend that this research found, a very high impact in policy and legislation; an enormous influence through public education, especially through forums, traditional and social media; moderate influence in the generation of academic analysis and evaluation, with academia more involved in that regard; and finally a relatively weak involvement in technical assistance, especially in training, in which governments and academic institutions have been taking the lead.

There are many other associations and individuals that are and have been extremely influential to the reform, such is the case of academic institutions, whose contribution is vast, and would therefore deserve a separate analysis. However, for the purposes of the report, it was necessary just to mention and highlight the tremendous work of several universities throughout Mexico, which are still very active in the promotion of the reform and are the main leaders of the training of operators and students in the new accusatorial system.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A healthy state must have a participative society and strong institutions. A vigorous civil society will ensure that the state respects rights and is transparent in its actions; at the same time, strong institutions will prevent civil society organizations to introduce obscure interests in the political agenda.

Even though Mexican civil society is quite young and still developing, its role in the reform of the criminal justice system was fundamental. Through political influence, public education, and research, civil society has managed to advance the NSJP in several states and keep the reform on the public agenda, advocating for action to ensure all states comply with constitutional reforms and meet the deadline for implementation by 2016.

Moreover, civil society played a significant role in the approval of the CNPP that unifies criminal procedural legislation nationwide and that could help the federation to finally take significant steps toward the implementation of the NSJP, supporting at the same time other states that have not been able to do significant progress in this regard.

Nonetheless, this research found many issues that should be considered and addressed in order to foster civic participation and strengthening civil society. While some of those have been mentioned already, the author recaps these and some others, and offers some final considerations aiming to define a concrete catalogue of recommendations for governments and civil society moving forward.

Be proactive rather than reactive

It is clear that civic engagement was the key factor in drafting, discussing, and enacting the reform. Collaborating in an unprecedented way, CSO, civic leaders, academics, and businesspeople were able to initiate one of the most important changes that Mexico has experienced in its contemporary history. This movement showed how it is possible to provoke political and social change by means of organization instead of relying on the government to enact the changes, which Mexican society was accustomed to before. A solid civil society that evolved slowly throughout the 20th century finally managed to reach the levels of participation that a healthy democracy requires. Yet there is a lot to do, especially given that civic engagement is still rather young in Mexico and needs to strengthen and further consolidate.

One of the most important lessons learned from civil society's involvement in judicial reform is that it moved from being reactive to government actions, to proactive, pushing the government to take such actions and thus, generated the momentum for a reform when authorities were not necessarily considering such a change. Therefore, is recommended that organizations throughout Mexico should take a more proactive role moving forward, especially in those states were reforms

are still taking place, especially now that a unified legislation has been approved and there is just need to fully implement the system.

Address shortcomings of the reform

As much as this reform represents a triumph of civil society, it is important to keep in mind that the federal government was able to include in the reform proposal a component designed to combat organized crime, which in its very nature is contrary to the spirit of the reform. Measures such as *arraigo* and *extinción de dominio* have been viewed as contrary to human rights and due process. It is important to note that organizations such as SOS consider such measures as necessary until better strategies are put in place (Camacho 2013), though other experts—Magaloni and Sarre—argue that no measure contrary to due process in any circumstance should be carried out in democratic regimes.[22]

There is a role for civil society in trying to address the downsides of the reform. If civil society had the strength to get the reform approved, it has the power to address the issues that are considered contrary to due process, especially since the Peña Nieto administration (2012–2018) seems to be more receptive to discussing and addressing the shortfalls of the reform than the Calderón administration.

Increase social awareness

In 2008, the NSJP became a reality nationwide, but while some states had started the process before (i.e., Nuevo León, Chihuahua, Oaxaca, Estado de Mexico, Morelos and Zacatecas), the majority was not prepared for such a change. There are many issues that have to be addressed, one of which is the lack of awareness by society in general and even by certain authorities. When the citizenry is not informed about a political or reform process and the government is not particularly committed to the public's education on the topic, it creates a great opportunity for civil society to engage and to foster and enhance the processes of reform and political change. "Civil society participation … inevitably prevents hasty, *ad hoc* implementation of reform proposals," (Grajzl and Murrell 2009, 3) and it is therefore necessary to take action in promoting the change to the public and pressuring political actors to make the changes.

Change is ineffective if the public's knowledge on the topic is lacking. As Hernández says, it is important that the people are aware of the problem, and that the problem itself is defined so concrete actions con be developed. Therefore, there

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22 Jesús Murillo Karam has marked his arrival as attorney general of Mexico with a commitment to stop the abuse of *arraigo*. Unless and until Mexico's Constitution is amended, Murillo recognized that its articles would continue to provide for law enforcement's recurrence to *arraigo* for use in extreme cases. In the meantime, however, he clearly stated his intentions to largely eliminate the use of this form of preliminary detention (JMP 2012). This situation has been received very positively from experts and critics (Magaloni).

is a significant need for a broader "socialization" campaign of the "problem" of the Mexican justice, but also for the reform to reach the general public, as well as law students, professionals, and authorities with various levels and depth of content. Social media and video campaigns, such as those modeled in CIDAC's *#NoMás* series, or more informational yet visual products such as *Presunto Culpable* by LWC, appear to be a largely effective tool in this regard.

Dialogue with opposition

Despite great advances being made with the new judicial system, critics, opposition, and movements against the NSJP have become more vocal and present as its implementation continues to advance. Known as "Counter Reform," these movements intend to modify the reforms already in place, such as in Chihuahua (Ríos Espinosa and Cerdio 2012), which was one of the first states to implement the system, and thus became a role model for other states to follow. Some of these movements against the reform even have political support. The increasing discontent with the new system is natural and at some point is needed in a democratic system, especially since pushback can create informed dialogue and citizen involvement. Nevertheless, there is the reality that such opposition could have stemmed from the public's lack of knowledge of the reform or from inadequate implementation of the new system.

The risk of a pushback of the reform seems less feasible thus far with the approval of the CNPP that mandates all states to comply with the NSJP. However, there is always a possibility that the legislation can be amended in a negative way, and thus is necessary to keep an open dialogue with the voices in favor of and against the system so that any change or modification to the system is the result of a concerted decision and not a political maneuver.

Above all, it is important to welcome the voices questioning and criticizing the reform, provide a space for dialogue when the objections and claims arise, and try to avoid any political agenda that would detract from the discussion. We should remember that this is a new system, unknown to most of the country, and that it will take time and patience to fully and correctly implement it.

Promotion of civic engagement

Authorities have been receptive and welcoming of civil society participation in many cases; however, they have not been particularly supportive of its operative work. It is true that government officials have been open to civil society insight and have in fact used materials various organizations have produced, yet they have not been active or involved in promoting and seeking a broader level of civic engagement. Once authorities commit to increase their support to civil

society, another challenge arises in that there must be better communication
and collaboration among all actors involved in the reform process—civil society,
government, and academics. As Sarre explains, there was collaboration between
civil society and the authorities to approve and enact the reform, as well as
collaboration between authorities and academia for implementing the NSJP, and
particularly on how to provide technical assistance. However, there is not a defined
system or network of collaboration among the three. According to Sarre, "the
triangle is not complete."

It is therefore important that authorities, which have not been supportive
enough of civil society along the way, increase communication and collaboration
efforts with civil society and academia, and for them to seek channels for
communication with authorities and amongst each other during the subsequent
stages of the implementation.

Strengthen local civil society

Even though civil society was one of the main motors of the judicial reform, its
involvement in the implementation processes has been rather slow. This is because
the processes are more widespread, and occurring at different paces and times in
different regions. CSO with national presence and that played a central role in the
promotion and approval of the reform might not have the reach or manpower to
assist and monitor state level reforms. At the same time, most local organizations
that are physically present in the locations where the reforms are occurring do not
have the resources or means to assist in implementation. Civil society has not been
a strong participant in this phase for these reasons, which does not bode well for
the articulation and communication of efforts among actors. Despite civil society's
shortcomings in this respect, academia has excelled in this regard, taking over the
lead on implementation because it requires more technical knowledge, knowledge
that is clearly abundant in universities and academic institutions.

There is no doubt that civil society has been active and effective in almost
all aspects of the reform process. However, its rather weak presence in the
implementation stage is attributable to the widespread nature of the reforms given
that each and every state and municipality must comply nationwide. There is also
a lack of resources among civil society organizations. Since national CSO cannot
bear all the responsibility, it is vital that regional and local CSO and networks
play a bigger role during this stage. As previously mentioned, authorities must be
supportive as well, helping to engage organizations at all levels and to promote the
creation of stronger and more collaborative regional and local networks. This must
be done to be able to implement the system in a timely and proper way. Trainings
of local CSO—such as the ones conducted by Renace—appear to be a very good
practice in this regard.

Welcome international support

The weaker involvement of Mexican civil society in the implementation processes, particularly with training, has been supplemented by a number of international organizations, particularly from the United States, many of them funded by the Merida Initiative. Some international organizations have been very active in this regard, such as the Conference of Western Attorney Generals (CWAG) that has been training prosecutors—largely, but not exclusively—in oral litigation skills; the American Bar Association through its Rule Of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) has partnered with Mexican institutions to conduct similar trainings; and many academic institutions from the United States, such as the University of San Diego through its Justice in Mexico Project, or Emory University, among others, which have partnered with their Mexican counterparts—the Autonomous University of Baja California (Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, UABC) and Universidad Panamericana (UP), Tec de Monterrey, among others—to develop technical assistance courses, and to train public defenders, prosecutors, judges, and even private attorneys on the new judicial system, particularly on oral trials.

International support has proven to be instrumental in the reform. Moving forward, it is therefore important from the Mexican perspective to welcome and embrace this support, setting aside cultural sensitivity to the matter. After all, it is best to learn from those who already have experience in the field who can share their best practices despite if they come from Chile, Colombia, or the United States.

Sensitive international approach

Contractors for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)—initially PRODERECHO and later Management Systems International (MSI)—have been active in all stages of the reform, including the implementation processes. While international support—largely coming from the United States—has been instrumental to the implementation processes, the approach often has not been the most adequate and has sometimes been perceived as aggressive, which led to certain criticism from some sectors.

International governments and institutions have to be aware that many of the problems affecting their relationship with Mexico could be addressed if a better justice system is in place. It is therefore not only necessary that there be a continuous effort to keep promoting the development of the system, but also that efforts and support continue to increase over the coming years until a strong, stable, and efficient justice system is rooted. The better the judicial system, the more likely it will be able to help address some of the other problems—e.g., corruption, public security crises, criminal organizations—Mexico faces at this time.

Nevertheless, it is important for international support for the NSJP to remain as respectful and supportive as possible, and avoid being aggressive and patriarchical, as that could affect Mexicans' outlook and trust of foreign support, particularly that from the United States.

More federal involvement

As mentioned before, the NSJP has somehow been neglected by the federal government, which has given little support to institutions in charge of the implementation oversight, such as SETEC. As Castro mentions, there has been a lack of political will on the part of federal authorities, and their attitudes have been contradictory — on the one hand they have promoted the reform, but on the other they have not taken the necessary steps for its correct implementation, and the institutions responsible for promoting the process have serious difficulties. Overall, there is still a lack of funding, promotion, and training.

Additionally, for several years the lack of a federal code to incorporate the reform at the federal level left the states with no guidance for the implementation, which was a major obstacle to the final consolidation of the system, and needed to be addressed. Nevertheless, our interviewees see the benefits of the approach taken by the Peña Nieto administration with regard to the NSJP, specifically his inclusion of it on the list of priorities for the federal government (JMP 2012). Also, in December 2012, President Peña Nieto sent a positive message with regard to security and justice when he unveiled the "Pact for Mexico" (Pacto por México), an agreement he signed with representatives from Mexico's major political parties that itemized a list of policy and reform priorities set forth in several areas related to security and justice issues (Molzahn, Rodríguez Ferreira and Shirk 2013). Likewise, with civil society playing again a significant role, the initiative of President Peña Nieto for a unified legislation for the country was approved by the Chamber of Deputies in February 2014, setting the basis for a definite implementation of the system at the federal and state levels.

It was important for the federal government to be part of the effort, however late; it showed the will to change and to generate the guidelines some states need for their own implementation processes. Whether it was the best solution or not, the national code will indeed serve as a model for and solve discrepancies among states in the implementation process. In these respects, the federal judiciary and the Supreme Court have to take a more proactive role, and SETEC has to be granted more functions and duties in order to positively increase its influence and control on the judicial system reform. Nonetheless, the code's approval is just the first step, and the federal government has to take a more proactive attitude in the actual implementation of the new system at the federal level and to keep supporting the states in implementing it in their own jurisdictions.

Oversight and evaluation

One of the main issues remaining for the entire implementation process to succeed is to define performance indicators to measure the development of the process and the system in general. Oversight and evaluation have been a concern for all actors and stakeholders in the reform, but have not been clearly addressed or advanced. While SETEC has developed a method to evaluate the performance of the system[23]—an important and exemplary step others should follow—the levels of evaluation for the system nationwide are weak or even nonexistent.

Moreover, it is not yet clear if the methodology followed by SETEC is the most adequate to measure and evaluate, and there does not seem to be a coordinated effort by actors involved to set forth a generalized methodology to evaluate the performance of the NSJP. That is why civil society, authorities, and academia have to become more involved in analyzing the current evaluation systems, such as the one developed by SETEC, and develop an adequate and standardized way to evaluate the system that could be replicated by all the states. Such efforts would lead to similar indicators with similar values used in the review process, and therefore allow for easier cross-references and evaluations from those overseeing the system.

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Co-Production and Oversight: Citizens and Their Police

DANIEL M. SABET

INTRODUCTION

There is a natural tendency to look exclusively to law enforcement for solutions to problems of crime and insecurity. As noted throughout the papers in this series, however, the role of ordinary, everyday citizens in addressing Mexico's security crisis is often underestimated and underemphasized. This analysis looks at two important roles that citizens can play to help respond to Mexico's security challenges. The first is through the "co-production" of public security; in other words, citizens can work with police to "co-produce" a more secure environment. Co-production might entail preventive measures, such as putting locks on doors and alarm systems in cars, but it also means reporting crime, providing information to police, and serving as witnesses.

The second role for citizens examined here is oversight of public officials and law enforcement agencies. In theory, citizens elect representatives who are responsible for ensuring a police force that acts in the public interest. Nonetheless, despite almost two decades of competitive local elections in many major Mexican cities and a similar period of promises to reform law enforcement, the incentives within Mexico's police forces still do not appear to favor honest, professional policing.[1] The failure of elected officials to align incentives within the police suggests the need for a more direct role for citizens in monitoring and overseeing law enforcement agencies.

This study finds reasons for both pessimism and optimism. On the one hand, there is plenty of evidence that citizens distrust their police and are generally unlikely to report crimes or provide information to law enforcement. On the

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1 Elena Azaola, "The Weaknesses of Public Security Forces in Mexico City," *Police and Public Security in Mexico*, Robert A. Donnelly and David A. Shirk, eds. (San Diego: University Readers, 2009); Elena Azaola Garrido and Miguel Ángel Ruíz Torres, *Investigadores de papel: Poder y derechos humanos entre la Policía Judicial de la Ciudad de México* (Mexico City: Fontamara, 2009); Diane E. Davis, "Undermining the Rule of Law: Democratization and the Dark Side of Police Reform in Mexico," *Latin American Politics and Society* 48, no. 1 (2008): 55–86; Neils Uildriks, *Mexico's Unrule of Law: Implementing Human Rights in Police and Judicial Reform under Democratization* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2010); Daniel Sabet, *Police Reform in Mexico: Informal Politics and the Challenge of Institutional Change* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2012).

other hand, improvements to call centers, the creation of anonymous emergency numbers, and sustained campaigns to encourage reporting are unquestionably welcome developments. Police now generally recognize the need for greater citizen cooperation.

This analysis also finds good and bad news when it comes to citizen oversight. On the negative side, this study documents how preexisting oversight tools, such as citizen public security committees, have generally not resulted in effective oversight. Nonetheless, in recent years a new oversight model has emerged: citizen observatories. Observatories are essentially citizen-led organizations that compile, analyze, and disseminate information to the public about the public security situation. As such, they offer a means to fill the information gap that currently exists, particularly at the local level. Despite the promise of these new mechanisms, they have been slow to develop and to date there are only a handful of successful examples. There is a legitimate fear that the observatories are just the latest fad, whose oversight functions could be undermined by continued dependence on government support.

CO-PRODUCTION: REPORTING CRIME

Safety and security are not the type of public goods that can be "produced" by police officers and "consumed" by citizens. Instead it is necessary for citizens to play a role in the "production process," or for these goods to be "co-produced."[2] As mentioned above, there are several ways in which citizens can contribute to the public good of security, including by reporting crime, providing information to the police, serving as witnesses, and taking preventive measures. Despite the common perception promoted by U.S. television shows that crimes are solved by brilliant detective work and cutting edge technology, research clearly shows that the vast majority of cases are resolved because the victim, witnesses, or accomplices come forward with information.[3] This is to say nothing of the role of citizens in working with police to prevent crime from occurring in the first place, for example, through youth outreach programs or neighborhood watch groups. To put it in the most basic terms: because the police cannot be on every street corner, law enforcement agencies cannot be effective without the support of citizens.

The good news is that police in Mexico appear to recognize their dependence on citizens. Evidence from the Guadalajara Justiciabarómetro, a survey conducted in

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2 Elinor Ostrom, "Crossing the Great Divide: Coproduction, Synergy, and Development," *World Development* 24, no. 6 (1996): 1073–87; Stephen Percy, "Citizen Participation in the Coproduction of Urban Services," *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (1981): 431–446.

3 Jan M. Chaiken, Peter W. Greenwood, and Joan Petersilia, "The Criminal Investigation Process: A Summary Report," *Policy Analysis* 3: 187–217 (1977); Colleen Cosgrove and Mary Ann Wycoff, *Investigations in the Community Context* (Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 1997); William Bieck and Tim Oettmeier, *The Houston Police Department: Integrating Investigative Operations through Neighborhood Oriented Policing* (Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 1998).

metropolitan Guadalajara in 2009 of 5,422 police, is illustrative. When asked to select the most effective factor in combating crime, the most common response was greater community participation, which was mentioned by 45% of the survey respondents.[4] This dwarfed other potential factors, including increasing the number of police (14%), investing in more equipment (13%), and even ending corruption (26%).[5]

One of the most important forms of co-production is simply reporting crimes when they occur. This could mean a witness to a crime coming forward with information or a crime victim filling out a police report. It should go without saying that it is unrealistic to expect the police to effectively respond to crimes and crime problems of which they have not been made aware. As such, state and local governments are constantly developing new programs to try to encourage more widespread reporting. In the paragraphs that follow, I use the northwestern state of Baja California as an illustrative example to discuss some recent efforts to encourage greater crime reporting.

Mexico has seen dramatic improvements in the quality of its call centers in recent years. As late as the mid-2000s, different jurisdictions each had their own emergency number and callers would often receive a busy signal when trying to reach under-resourced emergency call centers.[6] Today, however, citizens can call a standardized number throughout the country: 066. Moreover, Mexico's 227 call centers, distributed across the 31 states, the Federal District, and the country's larger municipalities, are in many cases well-funded, high-tech operations. For example, Baja California's Center for Control, Command, Communication, and Computing (C4) has been certified by the U.S.-based Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Over the course of the 2011–2012 fiscal year, its 113 operators received over 4.7 million calls, and the state contended that it could match callers with the appropriate first responder in just 32 seconds.[7]

Parallel to these emergency call centers, each Mexican state also has a 089 call center exclusively dedicated to receiving anonymous calls, such as Baja California's State Center for Anonymous Reporting, which was created in 2009. These call centers offer citizens a means to provide the police with information without the

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4 Marcos Pablo Moloeznik, David A. Shirk, and Ma. Eugenia Suárez de Garay, *Reporte Global: Resultados de la encuesta de la policía preventiva de la Zona Metropolitana de Guadalajara 2009* (San Diego: Justice in Mexico Project, 2009), www.justiceinmexico.org.

5 Ibid. Of course, corruption is a probably an important factor in discouraging greater citizen-police collaboration.

6 Assertion based on interviews with police officials and observation of call centers in various jurisdictions in 2005.

7 The majority of these calls are not legitimate crime reports but also include requests for information and kids playing practical jokes. As such, the challenge is not just to encourage people to use these services, but to ensure that the right people use them. Gov. José Guadalupe Osuna Millán, *Quinto Informe de Labores* (Mexicali: Gobierno de Baja California, 2012).

risk of having their identity discovered.[8] Callers are provided with a case number so that they can follow up on their call. During the 2011–2012 fiscal year, the Baja California state government claimed that calls to the 089 number led to 3,201 arrests.[9] Although the vast majority of these were for misdemeanors and violations of city ordinances, 469 were for more serious federal crimes. The state government also claimed that these calls led to the rescue of 38 minors from domestic violence or physical or sexual abuse, five female trafficking victims, and two kidnapping victims. Since the 089 system was introduced, calls have increased dramatically each year. In Baja California they went from 5,198 in 2007, to 11,335 in 2008, to 19,993 in 2009, and to 32,654 in 2010.[10]

Simply having these different resources is insufficient if citizens are not informed or distrustful. Given the potential for unawareness and distrust, many jurisdictions have launched campaigns to encourage reporting. For example, Tijuana initiated its Tijuana 3D campaign in 2011, which stands for Define, Denounce, and Defend. The initiative included a massive dissemination campaign entailing the use of phone calls, text messages, televisions and radio spots, and billboards, most of which use the catch phrase: "Report it: because the worst crime is staying quiet."

These initiatives have benefited from the support of the business community, and private sector funding has helped pay for much of the awareness-raising campaign. Additional initiatives have sought to encourage the participation of the private sector. The Chamber of Commerce in Tijuana works with the police to publicize a most wanted list for burglars targeting commercial establishments in a program known as Target the Criminal (*Ponle dedo al ratero*), and Programa Alerta 066 Negocio Seguro (Program Alert 066 Safe Business) offers businesses a means to link their video surveillance cameras to the police. State and city governments have also tried to encourage crime reporting and improved information flows by organizing neighborhood-watch-style groups throughout the urban areas. In Baja California, as of 2012 the state claimed that there were 10,000 citizens participating in Public Security Citizen Networks throughout the state.[11]

These examples from Baja California suggest that there are new tools, programs, and campaigns to promote information sharing and crime reporting, and some evidence suggests that citizens are taking advantage of these opportunities to positive

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8 The need for a secure anonymous means to report crime was highlighted by several cases of organized crime infiltration of regular dispatch centers. Julian Cardona, for example, profiles one case in Ciudad Juárez where a man who called a drug hotline to report suspicious activity was later found tortured with a note threatening future hotline callers. Julian Cardona, "Army feeble as murders surge in Mexico drug war city," Reuters, July 8, 2009.

9 Osuna Millán, Quinto Informe.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid. While such mechanisms offer considerable potential to promote co-productive activities, as will be discussed below, they generally seem to far short of expectations. Official numbers tend to overstate public involvement and include individuals that might have simply showed up for a meeting.

effect. Nonetheless, there is also evidence that co-production activities are still falling short. In the above-mentioned Justiciabarómetro survey in Guadalajara, 59% of surveyed police *disagreed* with the statement that "society cooperates with the police in preventing crime" (See Table 1).[12] There was also a sense of frustration with citizens, as suggested by the 84% of surveyed officers who felt that citizens were only happy with the police's work if the police actually solved their problem.

TABLE 1: POLICE VIEWS OF CITIZEN SUPPORT IN CIUDAD JUÁREZ AND GUADALAJARA

	Ciudad Juárez (2011)		Guadalajara (2009)	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
Society cooperates with the police in preventing crimes	71%	29%	59%	41%
People are only content with our work if their problem is solved	16%	84%	16%	84%

Source: Moloeznik, Shirk, and Suárez de Garay, *Reporte Final*; Moloeznik, Shirk, and Suárez de Garay, *Reporte Global*

When this survey was repeated in Ciudad Juárez in 2011, the results were similar: 71% of surveyed police disagreed that society cooperates with the police in preventing crime, and 35% of the total were in complete disagreement.[13] A similar percentage of 69% also disagreed that society cooperates with the police in locating, identifying, and arresting criminals. Only 27% felt that they were well received in attending to calls, and most (54%) felt that it depended on the situation. Similarly, 84% agreed that citizens are only happy with police work if the police solve their problem. These survey results suggest, at least from the perception of the police, that citizens are not doing enough to help "co-produce" public security.

Furthermore, while calls to 066 and 089 call centers might be increasing, victimization surveys still suggest that only a small percentage of crimes are actually reported. Mexico's national victimization survey, a massive survey of 90,000 households (ENVIPE, the Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública 2012) asked respondents if they had been a victim of a crime in the last year and if they reported that crime. According to the

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12 Moloeznik, Shirk, and Suárez de Garay, *Reporte Global*.

13 Marcos Pablo Moloeznik, David A. Shirk, and Ma. Eugenia Suárez de Garay. *Reporte Final: Diagnóstico Integral de la Policía Municipal de Ciudad Juárez* (San Diego: Justice in Mexico Project, 2011).

respondents, only 12.8% of crimes were actually reported to the police.[14] Changes in the methodology prevent an easy comparison over time; however, previous iterations of the survey suggest that the percent of crimes being reported has not changed in recent years.[15]

There are several very good reasons why citizens are still not reporting crimes. For example, when the question was put to the respondents, 63.7% placed the blame on the authorities. They considered reporting to be a waste of time, feared the *length* of time required, distrusted the authorities, or feared being extorted. The remaining 36.3% did not report the incident because they considered the crime to be of low importance; they lacked evidence; or they feared retribution among less common reasons.

The concern that reporting a crime requires considerable time appears to be well substantiated. In most states reporting a crime requires a trip to the public ministry to formally file a police report. Doing so took less than an hour in only 19.8% of cases. By contrast, 33.9% of those who reported a crime estimated that the process took 1–2 hours, 20.6% estimated 3–4 hours, and 23.2% estimated that it required more than 4 hours (See Table 2).

TABLE 2: TIME REQUIRED TO REPORT CRIME ACCORDING TO THE VICTIM

	Less than 1 hour	1–2 hours	3–4 hours	More than 4 hours
National average	19.8%	33.9%	20.6%	23.2%
Baja California	23.6%	47.5%	22.1%	6.3%

Source: INEGI, ENVIPE, 2012

There were also varying degrees of satisfaction with the process: 31.6% rated their treatment by the authorities as good or excellent, 29.4% as fair, and 39.0% as

14 INEGI, Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública 2012 (ENVIPE). Tabulados básicos.

15 The current survey is conducted by the country's statistical agency, INEGI, while a previous version of the survey was conducted under the auspices of the Instituto Ciudadano de Estudios sobre la Inseguridad. A change in methodology consistent with United Nations recommendations led to a dramatic increase in crime numbers and a dramatic drop in the number of crimes reported. Nonetheless, the data prior to the ENVIPE suggest that reporting is fairly steady. These earlier surveys found that 23% of crimes were reported in 2004, 21% in 2007, 22% in 2008, and 22% in 2009. ICESI, *ENSI-7 Resultados primera parte: Nacionales y por entidad federativa*, 2010. Instituto Ciudadano de Estudios sobre la Inseguridad.

bad or very bad.[16] In the worst case scenario, there is evidence that public ministry officials in specific locations have even actively discouraged reporting so as to keep crime statistics low in their jurisdiction.[17]

Only a relatively small percentage of respondents seem to have benefited directly from having reported the crime: 6% stated that they had regained their lost items, 4.7% reported that a suspect had been arrested, and 4.3% stated that their case was resolved in mediation. The survey found 16.3% of cases were still being processed; in 61.8% of cases citizens reported no progress (See Table 3). As such, long time periods to report crime, the possibility of poor treatment, and the low probability of obtaining a benefit create strong disincentives for reporting.

TABLE 3: OUTCOME OF CRIME REPORTING ACCORDING TO THE VICTIM

	Nothing	Still being processed	Recovered goods	Criminal tried	Parties came to an agreement	Other	Not specified
Average: all crimes	61.8%	16.3%	6.0%	4.7%	4.3%	2.5%	4.5%
Car theft	52.5%	17.2%	20.5%	.2%	.5%	2.1%	7.0%

Source: INEGI. ENVIPE, 2012

Of course, a widespread perception of police corruption further reduces the incentive to report. According to data from the most recent Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) survey from 2012, 20.5% of respondents in Mexico reported having been asked to pay a bribe by a police officer in the past year prior to the survey. While this is a statistically significant decrease from the previous iteration of the survey in 2010, it is nonetheless the highest reported rate in the 26 Western Hemispheric countries that participated in the study. Not surprisingly, as shown in Figure 1, there is a strong relationship between the percent of people who have been asked to pay a bribe and the average confidence in the police force in a given country.

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16 This does appear to be a slight improvement over previous iterations of the survey. The 2010 victimization survey found that only 16% of cases took less than an hour, while 31% took 1–2 hours, 23% took 2–4 hours, and 30% took more than 4 hours. In that same year a lower 40% rated the process poorly, compared with 32% who rated it as ordinary and 28% as good or excellent.

17 Catalina Pérez Correa, "Front Desk Justice: Inside and Outside Criminal Procedure in Mexico City," *Mexican Law Review* 1, no. 1 (2008): 3–32.

FIGURE 1: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PERCENT WHO HAVE HAD A BRIBE SOLICITED AND CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE (1–7) ACROSS 26 COUNTRIES IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE
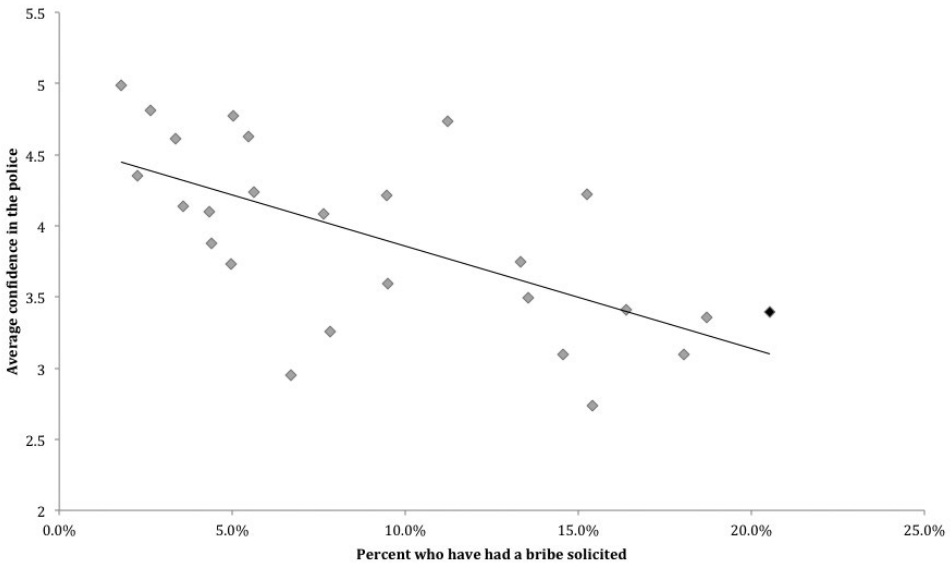
Note: Mexico is presented in black.
Source: AmericasBarometer 2012; Latin American Public Opinion Project.

Returning to the ENVIPE data specific to Mexico, when respondents were asked to rate their level of confidence in the police, 65.6% reported little or no confidence in the municipal police and 58.2% little or no confidence in the state police (See Table 4). Respondents expressed somewhat greater confidence in the federal police and judges and much greater confidence in the army and the navy.

A further look into the data suggests three ways to increase the percentage of crimes reported. In recent years, Baja California has permitted municipal preventive police, typically the first responders to calls for assistance, to fill out and accept a formal crime report. Partially as a result of this change, according to the ENVIPE 2012 victimization survey, 26% of crimes are reported to the police in Baja California, the highest in the nation. In some states, such as Guerrero, the percentage of crimes reported goes as low as 6% and as mentioned above the national average is only 12.8%. Next to Chihuahua and Nayarit, reporting a crime required the least amount of time in Baja California, with only 6.3% of crimes requiring more than four hours to report, compared with the national average of 23.2% (See Table 2).

TABLE 4: RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE DO YOU HAVE IN THE FOLLOWING:"

	Much (%)	Some (%)	A little (%)	None (%)
Traffic police	6.9	22.7	43.7	25.7
Municipal preventive police	7.8	25.6	44.0	21.6
State police	10.8	28.9	40.5	17.7
Federal police	18.6	32.7	33.0	13.5
Ministerial or judicial police	10.6	24.1	37.4	25.8
Public minister or prosecutors	9.9	23.9	39.2	24.5
Army	46.0	30.2	16.1	5.8
Navy	50.5	28.4	12.8	3.7
Judges	12.8	25.5	35.9	23.0

Source: INEGI. Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública, 2012

Another interesting source of variation is presented by the type of crime. Most crimes have a high "dark figure" (*cifra negra*), or the percent of crimes that are not captured in formal police reports. This figure is estimated through victimization surveys like the ENVIPE and for most crimes it ranges between an estimated 82.6% and 96.6% (See Table 5).[18] However, the dark figure for vehicle theft is only estimated at 36.2%. Much of this dramatic difference is driven by the greater probability that the police will be able to recover a stolen vehicle. In fact, in 20.5% of cases where the vehicle theft was reported, the victim was able to recover their vehicle (See Table 3). By contrast only 3.1% of those who reported a house theft were able to recover their lost items. This suggests that a more effective police response would increase crime reporting. In fact, for those who currently report a crime, most report doing so out of a sense of justice and a hope that the criminal would be punished (40.2%) rather than a hope that they will recover their lost goods (28.5%) or have their damages compensated (11.8%).

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18 The dark figure is based only on those crimes that lead to a formally filed police report. As such, the percentages presented here are not directly comparable to the 12.8% figure presented above.

TABLE 5: UNREPORTED CRIME ACCORDING TO THE ENVIPE VICTIMIZATION SURVEY ACROSS DIVERSE CRIMES

Type of crime	Dark figure
Car theft	36.2
Partial car theft	94.9
House burglary	88.2
Theft or assault in private or public transportation	94.8
Other robbery	89.7
Fraud	92.0
Extortion	96.6
Verbal threats	89.0
Injury	82.6
Other	94.0

Source: INEGI. ENVIPE, 2012

Interestingly, the high reporting for car theft also appears to be driven by the need for a police report to submit an insurance claim. Across all crimes, only 6.7% of crime reporters did so primarily for insurance purposes. In fact, Mexico's insurance penetration is comparatively low, which offers another potential answer to the low proportion of crimes reported, particularly for issues such as house theft.[19] As such, it seems likely that greater expansion of insurance coverage would also lead to an increase in crime reporting.

In summary, there is both evidence of new tools, programs, and campaigns to promote crime reporting, but fundamental obstacles remain. Distrust in the police is still high, and it will probably remain high as long as petty corruption is tolerated. Furthermore, the process to formally report crime remains a difficult one that requires considerable time. Baja California's experience suggests that crime reporting can be dramatically increased by making the process easier and through awareness raising campaigns. While it might seem obvious that improved police effectiveness will increase reporting, it is also important to note that greater insurance penetration would create a stronger financial incentive to report crimes.

CITIZEN OVERSIGHT

As suggested above, crime reporting is either the product of a vicious or a virtuous cycle. If the police are distrusted and viewed as ineffective, then there is little

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19 Fitch Ratings, "Latin American Insurance Review and Outlook 2010: Good Growth Prospects with Challenges Ahead," May 18, 2010.

incentive to report crime. However, the failure to provide police with information and support will only ensure continued ineffectiveness. By contrast, if the police are trusted and viewed as effective, then people will report crime and provide information: further increasing police effectiveness. If a country or community is trapped in the vicious cycle, the question then becomes how to extract itself. The promises of elected leaders and their appointed officials to clean up and reform the police have clearly been insufficient in the Mexican case, suggesting the need for greater direct citizen involvement and oversight.

In one sense, Mexican citizens have several tools at their disposal to monitor and oversee their police and law enforcement agencies. Many police forces or local governments have units or departments for receiving complaints from citizens about mistreatment or police misconduct. Victims of human rights violations can file a complaint with the national or state human rights commissions. Citizens can also lodge anonymous complaints by calling the above mentioned 089 number. As was also discussed above, there have been governmental efforts to form neighborhood committees, which, in theory, should offer residents an organizational tool to monitor and advocate for better services in their neighborhoods. In addition, since legislation in 1995, Mexico has experimented with citizen public security councils, or committees, at all three levels of government. These committees, which draw upon the participation of important civic leaders, should in theory also offer a means for citizens to monitor and oversee the police.

One can point to success stories where such tools have in fact helped increase accountability. For example, Baja California's state Citizen Public Security Council can claim several achievements in the area of oversight since its founding in 1999. Over the course of its existence, the council has organized citizen evaluation committees, conducted annual analyses of the state's security situation, drawn public attention to major law enforcement failings, met regularly with public security officials, promoted neighborhood watch groups independent of government (*vecinos vigilantes*), and even led protest marches against insecurity.[20]

Nonetheless, such success stories seem to be the exception rather than the rule. This is not to say that citizen public security committees have been ineffective; rather, such committees are typically far more successful at encouraging co-production than meaningful oversight.[21] "Successful" citizen committees tend to marshal community resources to support the police or conduct campaigns to encourage legal compliance or crime reporting. While extremely important, these functions are not the same as oversight. In fact, many of the committees'

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20 Marco Antonio Carrillo Maza and Jesús Fuentes Orozco, *La participación ciudadana en Baja California: a 10 años del Consejo Ciudadano de Seguridad Pública* (Mexicali: Consejo Ciudadano de Seguridad Pública, 2012); Sabet, Police Reform in Mexico.

21 Sabet, *Police Reform in Mexico.*

governing legislation do not even contemplate an oversight role.[22] Despite their name, the citizen public security councils have typically been made up of equal parts government and citizen councilors. The objective of this design was to engender cooperation between government and civil society, but it has also created dependence on the current government and undermined the potential for oversight. As such, administrations that are not ideologically committed to citizen participation are able to marginalize these bodies. As Ramos García writes in his study of public participation in public security, "… social participation has been temporary and conditioned by the priority policies of the government in office."[23]

Other oversight tools have also failed to produce meaningful accountability to citizens. Complaint mechanisms often boil down to the word of a citizen versus the word of a police officer. International experience shows that when used in isolation, reactive investigations based solely on citizens' complaints have been an ineffective anticorruption tool.[24] Research in Mexico has also found that neighborhood groups are often neglected and ignored by governing administrations and that they are better designed for the authorities to mobilize citizens than for citizens to hold officials accountable.[25]

Recently there has been a push for a new type of citizen oversight model: the *observatorio ciudadano.* Translated as either citizen observatory or citizen monitor, the *observatorio* offers a tool to generate reliable and accurate information about security outcomes over time. Unlike the citizen public security councils, whose mission is broad and somewhat ambiguous, the observatories' goal is (at least in theory) more focused: to identify, develop, and track reliable and accurate indicators of police and criminal justice system performance. While fairly new to Mexico, observatories emerged in Colombia in the 1990s and have since expanded throughout much of Latin America with financial support from foundations, development aid organizations, and development banks.[26] They have emerged as

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22 Ibid.

23 José María Ramos García, *Inseguridad Pública en México: Una propuesta de gestión de política estratégica en gobiernos locales* (Mexico City: Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2006): 189.

24 Kutnjak Ivkovic, for example, notes that complaint-based accountability mechanisms are entirely reactionary and less effective than preventive or proactive methods, such as sting operations. She also notes that while citizens are willing to file complaints for a wide range of police abuses, corruption complaints are relatively infrequent even in environments with high levels of corruption. Sanja Kutnjak Ivkovic, *Fallen Blue Knights: Controlling Police Corruption* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

25 Héctor Padilla Delgado, "Democracia y gobernabilidad en una experiencia local: El caso de Ciudad Juárez visto desde la perspectiva de la clase política," *Transición democrática y gobernabilidad: México y América Latina, Julio Labastida Martín del Campo*, Antonio Camou, and Noemí Luján Ponce, eds. (Mexico City: Plaza y Valdes, 2000); Andrew Selee, *Democracy Close to Home? Decentralization, Democratization, and Informal Power in Mexico* (University Park, Pa.: Penn State University Press, 2011); Daniel M. Sabet, "Stuck in the Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 1–4, 2005.

26 CISALVA (Instituto de Investigación y Desarrollo en Prevención de Violencia y Promoción de Convivencia Social), *Guía Metodológica para la Replicación de Observatorios Municipales de Violencia* (Cali: Centro Editorial CATORSE SCS, 2008).

a promising tool precisely because of the lack of reliable indicators with which to evaluate the success or failure of public security agencies and policies. The original observatories viewed crime as similar to a public health problem that could be addressed through an "epidemiological approach" involving diagnosing the malady and developing and systematically testing treatments.[27]

The need for better statistics has particular resonance in Mexico. There have always been problems with state and national level data, but the greatest concern has been at the local level.[28] Individuals or organizations interested in municipal level data have largely been dependent on what information the local government decided to share with the public through press releases and annual reports. Given that these forums were typically used to celebrate the accomplishments of a given administration, data was often "cherry picked" rather than presented in a comprehensive and objective way.[29] As such, citizens have had limited information by which to diagnose their problems or hold local government officials accountable for security outcomes.

This manipulation of information is perhaps surprising given the existence of local citizen public security committees in many state and municipal jurisdictions and provided the existence of transparency laws that, in theory, allowed citizens to request such information. In very few cases, however, had the citizen councils made an effort to systematically make crime data available to the public. One important exception was the above mentioned Baja California state Citizen Public Security Council during the 2001–2007 administration of Governor Eugenio Elorduy Walther. During this administration, the governor gave the council access to the state's raw data for the development of a series of independent annual analyses. Nonetheless, the Baja California experience was in many ways the exception that proved the rule. While the council included an exceptional group of citizens, this oversight was only possible because of the governor's ideological support for citizen oversight.

Even if information is not selectively "cherry picked," existing data sources present numerous challenges. Relying on *denuncias,* or formal crime reporting to the public ministries, is the most consistent and reliable source of information, but as discussed above, it is often inaccurate given the large amount of crime that is not formally reported. The problem with relying on formal filings is illustrated by the

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27 Ibid.

28 Individuals could generally find national level crime data and some state breakdowns either through the country's statistical agency INEGI or the National Public Security System. The data was confusing and difficult to access, but it was at least available.

29 To offer one example, in its 2008 annual report, the city of Mexicali presented data on only six public security indicators with only simple comparisons with the previous year. All of the graphs showed dramatic improvements, leaving the reader wondering if the previous year had been a statistical anomaly and if the administration chose to exclude indicators that did not show positive change. Rodolfo Valdez Gutiérrez (mayor), *Primer Informe de Gobierno* (Mexicali: Ayuntamiento de Mexicali, 2008).

issue of extortion. A recent report from the National Citizens Observatory found that reports of extortion had gone up 20% over a previous three month period.[30] What was not clear from this statistic, however, was whether actual extortion had gone up by 20% or if people were responding to campaigns and simply reporting a higher percentage of cases.

To offer another example, the sum of crimes reported in the municipalities of a given state should equal the total crimes in that state; however, in practice the National Citizens Observatory has found that there are often divergences.[31] The observatory looked at six types of crimes across four months and measured the number of months and crimes where there were differences between municipal and state totals. If there was complete disagreement on all crimes for all months, then there could be 24 possible differences. The authors found no inconsistencies in Baja California and Chihuahua, but they uncovered inconsistencies in 17 out of 24 reportings in Sonora, and 8 out of 24 in Tamaulipas and Coahuila—just to offer a few examples from Mexico's northern border states. They also looked for omissions in municipal reporting, and found, for example, that the municipality of Cuauhtémoc in Chihuahua was not providing data on kidnapping, extortion, and homicides. In fact, even the most basic statistics like homicides and traffic accident deaths have proven to be problematic, as data from the health secretariat or statistical agency has not always matched up with that of law enforcement agencies.

Given the failure of local government to make crime data systematically available and given the problems in existing data sources at all three levels of government, there appears to be a clear need for the citizen observatory model. In the Colombian experience, the observatory provided a platform whereby officials from different agencies along with technical experts in civil society and from the academic community could sit together and iron out any methodological differences and data collection problems. Then this more reliable and accurate data would be made available to the broader public for use in policy making.

Unfortunately, despite initial enthusiasm, the model has had a hard time getting off the ground in Mexico. While "observatories" for different causes had started to pop up in Mexico in the mid-2000s, the first clear call for public security observatories was in the landmark 2008 National Agreement for Security, Justice and Lawfulness, an agreement between all three levels of government and different sectors of society to work together to address Mexico's security crisis. Nonetheless, there was disagreement about the meaning of the 2008 agreement. On the one hand it issued a call to civil society: "Participate in the creation and strengthening of mechanisms to monitor and evaluate authorities to eradicate corruption and

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30 Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano, "Reporte periódico de monitoreo sobre delitos de alto impacto," 2012.

31 Ibid.

increase effectiveness and social recognition."[32] But on the other hand, it only specifically mentioned the creation of one observatory, and gave the Public Safety Ministry responsibility for the observatory. It also tasked the observatory to narrowly oversee the agreement rather than to oversee public officials and law enforcement more generally.[33]

The lack of clarity in the agreement coincided with at least two disagreements about how the observatories should operate. First, should the observatories only "monitor" government, compiling and analyzing information, or should they go a step forward and attempt to influence policy? Second, should they offer a collaborative platform between citizens and government officials—like the citizen public security councils and the Colombian-style observatories—or should they be autonomous citizen initiatives?

Despite the potential of observatories, several years after the signing of the national agreement, only a handful of observatories were functioning effectively and they were only just starting to produce useful results. Two worth profiling include the National Citizens Observatory (Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano) and the municipality of Ciudad Juárez's Observatory for Safety and Coexistence (Observatorio de Seguridad y Convivencia). The National Citizens Observatory exemplifies the struggle that monitors have faced to get off the ground. Informally created after the signing of the National Agreement, it struggled to consolidate itself into a formal organization. Disagreements over its functions, its relationship with the government (particularly the Public Safety Ministry), and its leadership structure led to continual delays. It was not until July 2011 when it emitted its first analysis of high-impact crimes, including homicides, robbery, car theft, extortion, and kidnapping.[34]

In theory, the national observatory was to serve as a model for and support state-level observatories; however, difficulties in consolidating the national observatory slowed development at the local level as well. By 2012, however, the national body had worked with the Consejo Cívico de las Instituciones Laguna (Civic Council of Institutions of the Laguna) in the Laguna area of Durango and Coahuila to develop a local analysis of high-impact crimes. The report documented dramatic increases in several high-impact crimes, which were well above the national average.[35] The study also drew attention to the lack of formal reporting of kidnapping and extortion, demonstrating a clear lack of trust in the authorities, even as other jurisdictions have successfully encouraged greater extortion reporting.

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32 "Acuerdo Nacional por la Seguridad, la Justicia, y la Legalidad," Article 9 (LXX).

33 Ibid, Article 2 (XXVI).

34 Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano, "Reporte Periódico de Monitoreo sobre Delitos de Alto Impacto, 2011.

35 Consejo Cívico de las Instituciones Laguna and Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano, "Monitoreo de Incidencia Delictiva en La Laguna," 2010.

In fact, the citizen monitor model has the greatest potential for impact at the local level. Here crime data can be used to not only evaluate government and law enforcement performance but to better design civil society and governmental interventions. Ciudad Juárez was one of the first municipalities to establish an observatory in 2008: the Citizens Observatory for Security and Coexistence. Following the path of its Colombian predecessors, it adopted an epidemiological approach and benefited from the participation and support of the federal Health Ministry and the Pan American Health Organization, among others. The lead civil society actor in the initiative has been the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez, which has housed the observatory and covered its personnel and administrative costs. While autonomous, the observatory collaborates closely with government and other actors. The observatory also worked with the city's traffic police to analyze data on traffic accidents and the Municipal Planning Institute (IMIP) to geo-reference these data. As a result of collaboration, in 2012, the observatory published three polished, geo-referenced diagnostic studies on violent deaths, traffic accidents, and crime. Interactive maps based on these three studies can be accessed on the observatory's website.[36] With a strong empirical base, the members of the observatory are (as of this writing) participating with government officials in the development of a master plan for road safety.

These two observatories have taken different approaches toward relations with government actors. The National Citizens Observatory opted to be entirely independent and separate from government. Its expenses are covered entirely by private donations and it analyzes and critiques existing data sources rather than working with government officials in generating data. As one of its representatives stated in an interview, "Given our social history and taking into account our political and civic culture, today we think that we are better off as entirely autonomous and citizen based." By contrast, at the local level, the Ciudad Juárez observatory is working closely with a wide array of government actors.

Several emerging observatories are more closely tied with government. The incentives to create local level observatories have increased with changes in the Municipal Public Security Subsidy (SUBSEMUN), which provides dedicated federal funds to municipal governments to professionalize and develop law enforcement capacity. Since its inception in 2008, the subsidy has come with a long list of required conditions that municipalities must meet in order to access the funds, and as of 2012, it became a requirement for municipalities to establish local citizen observatories. The measure provides a shot in the arm for the development of citizen monitors, but it also risks creating observatories that suffer from the same structural dependence as the citizen public security committees. Interview respondents expressed their hope that emerging observatories would maintain some

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36 Observatoria de Seguridad y Convivencia Ciudadanas del Municipio de Juárez, http://observatoriodejuarez.org/.

financial and political autonomy. For example, in the state of Chihuahua, businesses have consensually agreed to a small tax increase that will be used to fund the state observatory and prevention programs in the state. As such, it is the business community that is funding the initiative and the government merely serves as the vehicle for collecting and distributing the funds.

Observatories can also differ in the degree to which they focus on collecting and analyzing data versus influencing decision making. Interview respondents for this study generally felt that the backbone of the observatory initiative has to be ensuring accurate and reliable data. Only once this information is in hand can decisions be based on solid empirical evidence rather than just the political whims of existing office holders. Nonetheless, the term "observatory" has become somewhat fashionable and not all groups that carry the name are necessarily committed to this mission. Furthermore, a singular focus on data reliability and accuracy does not ensure that the resulting information is taken into account in policy development. As one interview respondent provocatively asked, "We're developing indicators for what?" From this point of view, it is essential that the observatory take the extra step and attempt to influence policy. In this sense, the observatory in Ciudad Juarez represents something of a model: they identified a problem of traffic deaths, generated data to inform decision making, and are leading an effort to involve citizens in developing a traffic safety plan for the city.

In short, ideally a citizen observatory will maintain financial and political autonomy but still be able to work with government to ensure improvements to data collection and to ensure that information generated actually informs policy. To achieve this ideal, however, observatories have to wrestle with how to maintain their autonomy both financially and politically. As of this writing, several nascent observatories are wrestling with these issues, including Cancún, León, and San Luis Potosí at the municipal level, and Queretaro, Chihuahua, Colima, and Baja California at the state level. While the observatories offer considerable potential they confront numerous challenges. As one interviewee noted, "…factors like the lack of capacity (in public institutions as well as civil society), a lack of knowledge about successful methodologies and experiences, political volatility, institutional closure, and the lack of professional competency have appeared to undermine in general the efforts and results of [these initiatives]."

CONCLUSION

While law enforcement will be central to any solution to Mexico's security crisis, the police simply cannot be effective without the support of citizens. Unless there are police on every street corner, law enforcement agencies will depend on citizens to provide information and report crimes. Unfortunately, to date, distrust of the police along with other factors has produced a situation where only an estimated

12.8% of crimes are reported. This analysis suggests that some steps are being taken to change this status quo, including improving call centers, providing a means for anonymous reporting, and undertaking promotional campaigns. Nonetheless, such efforts will also have to be complemented by initiatives to reduce the length of time required to report crime, to increase police effectiveness, to reduce corruption, and to expand insurance penetration. Despite these challenges, the experience of Baja California suggests that reporting can be increased through such a multipronged approach.

Increasing trust in the police will also entail greater direct citizen oversight. Given the disappointing impact of citizen public security councils, there is optimism that citizen observatories will offer a new form of citizen oversight that will provide citizens and government officials with the information needed to properly diagnosis crime problems, test treatments, and hold government officials accountable. While the observatory model holds out promise, there are to date only a handful of successful examples and concerns persist that such bodies will lack the autonomy to provide reliable information or effective oversight.

Conclusion: Toward a More Comprehensive and Community-based Approach to Public Security

DAVID A. SHIRK, DUNCAN WOOD, AND ANDREW SELEE

As Mexico continues to struggle with the twin problems of organized crime–related violence and the imposition of the rule of law, the government of President Enrique Peña Nieto has continued to employ similar tactics to that of his predecessor, Felipe Calderón. Tackling surges of violence head–on, the Mexican government has used security forces to eliminate or capture leading figures in the organized crime world. The most dramatic of these was, of course, the arrest of drug trafficker and fugitive Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán in February of 2014. It follows other high-level arrests, including that of Miguel Angel Treviño (aka Z–40) the year before; the Peña Nieto administration is conveying that the targeted disruption of organized crime groups remains a central axis of the government's strategy.

At the same time, despite such spectacular law enforcement successes, it is ever clearer that this tactic will not be enough. In addition, community-based approaches are of critical importance in securing a long-term solution to the challenge. In the short-term, the effective exercise of legitimate force by the state may be needed to stabilize a given situation and address immediate threats to public security. But in the long term, a more integrated and comprehensive approach to making society more resistant to crime and violence and better able to react to spikes in criminal activity is essential to ensuring the enduring rule of law.

These two points were made abundantly clear in early 2014 with the outbreak of violence in Michoacán, brought on by the activities of self–defense groups (*grupos de autodefensa*) in response to a collapse in the state-level security apparatus and the rising power of the Caballeros Templarios, or "Knights Templar," organized crime group. In the absence of an adequate state response, communities in Michoacán felt that they had little choice but to arm themselves and take on organized crime directly. The crisis highlighted not only the weakness of state- and local-level institutions in Michoacán, but also the fact that society has been seriously weakened through migration, poverty, lack of investment in infrastructure, education, and social services, and by a generalized anomie. The continuing breakdown of law and order in the state of Michoacán and several other parts of the country highlights both the problem of organized crime and the need for a strong government that is supported by resilient communities.

COMMUNITIES IN SEARCH OF SECURITY

As security expert Phil Williams noted at a security roundtable hosted by the United Nations Office of Drug Control Policy in Mexico City in the fall of 2013, politicians and the public approach matters of "security" with divergent objectives because the concept of security varies depending on one's point of view. When we address the question at the global level, for international organizations and great powers the matter of security often hinges on topics like reducing nuclear proliferation or other forms of conflict among states, such as cyberspying or defending territorial waters. Such threats violate the basic notions of state sovereignty that have governed the international system since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.

At the national level, a country's leaders are typically more concerned with internal threats against the state, which the great sociologist Max Weber described as threats to a state's "monopoly on the legitimate use of force," such as the powerful organized crime groups that Mexico has faced in recent years, or insurgent forces that seek to topple the government.

Yet, while the above issues occupy much of the real estate on the front pages, they often have little meaning or importance for ordinary people and communities. As bad as rates of violent crime have become in Mexico, the average person is still more likely to die from car accidents or preventable illnesses—particularly self-inflicted diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cirrhosis, or diabetes—than a bullet from a drug trafficker. From a "human security" or "citizen security" perspective, then, most Mexicans (and U.S. citizens, as well) should be more afraid of a cheeseburger and a soda than organized crime groups.

Yet, for a significant segment of the population—for certain communities—this is certainly not the case. Those sitting comfortably at the chic restaurant tables of the Condesa-Roma District in Mexico City face far fewer threats to their immediate existence than those living in Mexico's most marginalized communities, where crime and violence is too often the most proximate cause of death. This is one of the most important aspects of violence in Mexico. As is made clear by several authors in this collection, while there are certainly random victims of violence, in the aggregate the violence is not randomly distributed.

For example, violent crime has become *the* major security threat for men aged 18–40 over the last decade, as illustrated by the Mexico Health Atlas unveiled recently at the UCSD Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies by Alberto Díaz Cayeros, Melissa Floca, and Micah Gell-Redman.[1] As a result, far too many young, poor Mexican men will not have the "luxury" of death by disease because their lives will be cut short by violence. As posited in another study by José Merino, Jessica

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1 Atlas of Governance of Public Health in Mexico, Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, https://usmex.ucsd.edu/research/atlas.html.

It would be foolhardy for the Mexican state to ignore the problem of violent crime, and especially the community-based roots and societal factors that shape this problem. As the authors in this volume have clearly illustrated, the state is not enough, and a greater focus on civil society and communities is needed to turn the tide.

Zarkin, and Eduardo Fierro, young Mexican men—and a growing number of Mexican women—are three times more likely to die a violent death than in Honduras, the most violent country in the hemisphere.[2]

In short, as illustrated by numerous studies and analyses, including the Mexico Peace Index published recently by Vision of Humanity, Mexico's security situation has seriously deteriorated on a wide range of measures over the last decade, especially those which affect the vulnerable populations noted above.[3] As a result, it would be foolhardy for the Mexican state to ignore the problem of violent crime, and especially the community-based roots and societal factors that shape this problem. As the authors in this volume have clearly illustrated, the state is not enough, and a greater focus on civil society and communities is needed to turn the tide.

TURNING TO COMMUNITY RESILIENCE IN THE PEÑA NIETO ADMINISTRATION

With Mexico's transition to a new administration under Peña Nieto in December 2012, many watched and wondered whether the return of the former ruling party to the presidency could improve Mexico's security situation. While it would be naive to think that a change in administration could reverse long-term trends in just a few hundred days, the situation was widely considered urgent and expectations were extremely high at the outset of his term. Peña Nieto had made several bold promises while on the campaign trail in 2012, including the claim that his administration would cut violence by 50 percent during his first year in office.[4]

To be sure, it would have been much wiser to temper expectations. Mexico's elevated rates of violent crime started rising well before Calderón took office in December 2006. In an effort to address the problem, Calderón launched

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2 José Merino, Jessica Zarkin, and Eduardo Fierro, "Marcado para morir." Nexos. July 1, 2013. http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=15375

3 *Mexico Peace Index*. New York: Institute for Economics & Peace, 2013. http://visionofhumanity.org/sites/default/files/Mexico%20Peace%20Index%202013.pdf

4 "Peña Nieto quiere reducir en un 50% el número de homicidios," ADNPolítico, http://www.adnpolitico.com/gobierno/2012/10/13/pena-nieto-quiere-reducir-en-un-50-el-numero-de-homicidios.

an all-out war on drugs that many security experts believe exacerbated the violence by splintering Mexico's cartels into smaller, less predictable, and more dangerous organized crime groups. As a result, Peña Nieto inherited a country with a serious security threat or, really, dual security threats—both in terms of national security and citizen security.

Among the flashy policy measures Peña Nieto announced at the start of his term—a National gendarmerie and a consultancy for Colombia's top cop—there was little in the way of substance. Indeed, for most of the last year, it has seemed as though Peña Nieto has had no security strategy. Yet, there are, in fact, some very perceptible and consequential shifts in his approach. As Alejandro Hope has pointed out in a recent article in *Nexos* magazine, the Peña Nieto administration has made a deliberate effort to shift the narrative away from problems of crime and violence. An important part of this effort has been to limit commentary and access to public information on security matters. Whereas the Calderón administration was obsessed with security, Peña Nieto has been obsessed with *not* being obsessed with security. An aggressive media campaign has tried to make Mexico the new darling of international investors, as the BRIC countries have begun to lose their luster.

In addition to his efforts to change the narrative, Peña Nieto has also made an effort to re-centralize control over security policy. When he came into office, the president promised more coordination of security matters with state governors than under his predecessor. With two-thirds of Mexican governors coming from his Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), that was an easy promise to keep. The question that many have posited is whether that coordination implied a return to the "bad old days" when PRI governors coddled drug traffickers and "controlled" organized crime by lining their own pockets with bribes. It may be too soon to tell, but a 2013 U.S. indictment of former PRI Gov. Tomás Yarrington underscores this question.[5] On the other hand, greater centralization could also play the role of enhancing accountability and ensuring coherence in security strategies, something that is sorely needed.

This points to another, perhaps unexpected change under Peña Nieto: continuity in the U.S.–Mexican security relationship across administrations. Over the last year, U.S.-Mexico security cooperation has experienced significant setbacks. At the outset, the Peña Nieto administration insisted that Mexico's cooperation with the United States on security matters would be reined back and managed through the single "ticket window" (*ventanilla única*) of Mexico's Interior Ministry. Yet, over the last year, pressure from other federal and state-level agencies has seemingly led to a softening of this policy of centralization. Many aspects of cooperation have continued, in part because of the close ties and tremendous interdependence

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5 Cory Molzahn, Octavio Rodriguez Ferreira, and David A. Shirk, *Drug Violence in Mexico: Data and Analysis* Through 2012, Justice in Mexico Project (San Diego: University of San Diego Trans-Border Institute 2013), http://justiceinmexico.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/130206-dvm-2013-final.pdf.

that has developed between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agencies working toward common objectives. Indeed, such cooperation helped Peña Nieto take down the head of the Zetas, Mexico's most notorious and violent drug cartel, as well as key leaders in the Gulf Cartel.

Ultimately, the key question is whether the current government's efforts have actually been accompanied by a decrease in violence. The answer is a qualified "yes." While violence appears to have declined somewhat under Peña Nieto, it definitely did not go away. Last year, the Justice in Mexico Project's annual report on drug violence in Mexico found that violent homicides probably reached a peak in 2010 and 2011, and began to decline significantly in 2012.[6] Thanks to a significant drop in violence in places like Tijuana, Monterrey, and Ciudad Juárez, the number of homicides in Mexico dropped by the thousands. This trend has continued in 2013, and in the final analysis will likely result in a slight reduction in Mexico's overall homicide rate compared with the previous year, perhaps as much as 20 percent, but not quite what Peña Nieto had hoped for (See Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: OFFICIALLY REGISTERED INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES 2006–2013
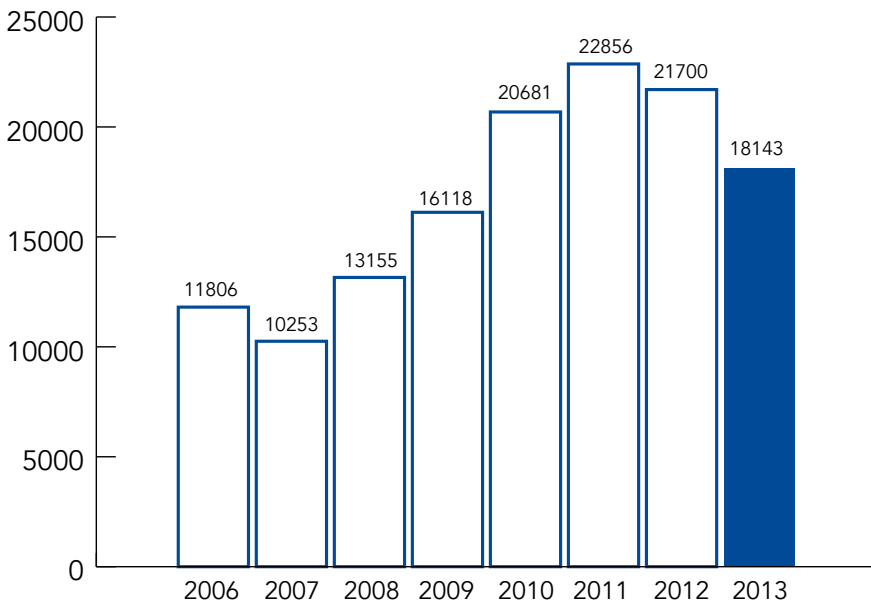
Source: Data from Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública (SNSP) compiled by Justice in Mexico (www.justiceinmexico.org).

6 "Mexico ex-governor Tomas Yarrington faces cartel charges," BBC, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-25198417.

Regardless, now is certainly not the time to celebrate. As Eduardo Guerrero has made clear, violence remains a persistent problem in Mexico.[7] Moreover, violence has increased dramatically in certain categories and especially in certain parts of the country. Kidnapping and extortion are a growing concern, and rising crime and violence from organized crime groups and self-defense forces in Michoacán and Guerrero have become a mounting preoccupation in the Peña Nieto era.

Also, while Peña Nieto has tried earnestly to shift the narrative away from drugs and organized crime, there is no getting around these issues. The best available estimates suggest that organized crime accounts for between 45 percent and 60 percent of all homicides in Mexico.[8] Moreover, even if the global drug prohibition regime were to collapse entirely over the coming years—as both activists and world leaders have increasingly called for—Mexico's organized crime groups will continue to present a serious threat through kidnapping, racketeering, and other violent forms of organized crime.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

One area where the Mexican government faces an immediate challenge is in bolstering the limited capacity of the Mexican state to address the security threats it presently faces. While economic development and education are needed to move Mexico forward in the long run, the country faces a real and present danger in the form of organized crime. Unfortunately, Mexico's judicial sector is exceedingly weak. Police salaries of $7,000 to $8,000 a year are below the average for public sector employees, and Mexico largely gets what it pays for: police that are under-trained, poorly motivated, and highly corruptible. In the fall of 2013, the Peña Nieto administration made an important start by channeling millions of dollars into state and local police forces through federal grant programs. However, further monitoring and analysis will be needed to ensure that these funds are being used properly and effectively to improve crime prevention and police response capability.

Also, Mexico's courts remain woefully inefficient in processing criminal cases, and the slow pace of reforms passed in 2008 means that only 633 of Mexico's 2,400-plus municipalities have adopted new procedures that will help to modernize the criminal justice system. With a constitutionally imposed deadline to implement these reforms by 2016, Peña Nieto pushed forward an initiative in early 2013 to introduce a uniform code of criminal procedure in all 31 states and the Federal District. This measure was approved in the Mexican Congress in February 2014, though there are many aspects of the secondary legislation that need to be resolved before the new code can be implemented, as well as lingering questions about whether a single code is the best approach to deal with Mexico's widely

7 Eduardo Guerrero, "Después de la Guerra," Nexos, December 1, 2013.

8 Molzahn, Rodriguez, Shirk, Drug Violence.

Engaging with society, and harnessing the insights, knowledge, and capacities of the Mexican population, particularly those directly affected by organized crime, will be essential to achieve success by any meaningful measure.

varying state and local legal contexts. What no one has quite figured out is how to effectively monitor and measure the impact of judicial sector reform in Mexico, since there are few good metrics, almost no baseline indicators, and many different variables at play.

Nonetheless, in the long run, a more comprehensive approach to addressing the macro-level causes of crime and violence—such as promoting job growth, investing in education, and fostering social development programs (e.g., after school sports programs)—will go a long way toward reducing the threats to both the Mexican state and ordinary Mexicans. Improving security in Mexico—security for all Mexicans—requires action on addressing the long-term socioeconomic problems that keep nearly half of its people living in poverty and create incentives to enter the informal economy and illicit markets.

In its first year in office, the Peña Nieto government pushed forward a wide range of long-languishing reforms to fiscal, energy, and education policy that even his political opposition believes are necessary to move Mexico forward. Better education and more jobs are both key to keeping people out of the illicit economy that sustains Mexico's criminal underworld. More government revenue, properly collected and expended, will bring Mexico better police, courts, and—ultimately—security. The devil is, of course, in the details, and many knowledgeable observers rightly claim that the government's reforms have been too diluted by the legislative process to provide the medicine that Mexico urgently needs to cure its woes on these fronts. Whether he has the right solutions to Mexico's security crisis, Peña Nieto has at least begun to refocus the country's efforts on fixing the macro-level problems that contribute to the un-rule of law in Mexico.

Increased investment, higher employment levels, and greater prosperity will clearly be crucial in building a more secure Mexico, but it will not be enough in the short- to medium-term. Engaging with society, and harnessing the insights, knowledge, and capacities of the Mexican population, particularly those directly affected by organized crime, will be essential to achieve success by any meaningful measure. The government of Enrique Peña Nieto has explicitly recognized this through the creation of the Department of Crime Prevention and Citizen Participation within the Interior Ministry. The undersecretary in charge of the ministry, Roberto Campa, is a well-respected academic who has been able to effectively convey the government's message that preventing crime and violence is just as important as addressing the phenomena once they have occurred.

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However, as might be expected, there were significant start-up challenges for the new agency. During the first year of the government, the SubSecretaría de Prevención y Participación Ciudadana (Department of Crime Prevention and Citizen Participation) spent only a fraction of its assigned budget, and appeared to lack any rigorous methodology for choosing projects or for evaluating impact. While it is extremely important that Campa's Programa Nacional para la Prevención Social de la Violencia y la Delincuencia (National Program for the Social Prevention of Violence and Crime, or PNPSVD) evolve into a more significant element in the government's strategy, at the time of writing it remained underdeveloped and has yet to make a real impact. If it is to be successful promoting community resilience, the Peña Nieto administration will need to work to sustain its focus on and support for prevention, and should work to develop a more clearly articulated strategy of community engagement in this area.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECURITY STRATEGY

A priority of this work has been to help to understand the interaction between society and public security. In many parts of Mexico, and on many occasions over the past seven years, a weak social fabric has been identified as a major contributing factor in the breakdown of public security and rising levels of violence. The most commonly cited case of this is, of course, Ciudad Juárez, and the breakdown of law and order that preceded even the narco-battles of recent years. While this principle has been widely discussed by scholars of Mexican public security, the definition of "community resilience" has not been a central feature of the focus on Mexico, nor has attention centered on the relationship between community resilience and their reaction to breakdowns of public security.

As we explain in the introduction, drawing on the literature from sociology and ecology, the concept of resilience goes beyond the notion of "strength" insofar as it refers not only to preventing stresses, breakdown, and harm but, more important, to the capacity to adapt to stress and adversity, and return to health. In this sense we treat communities in an organic fashion, viewing them as capable of adaptation and evolution. Drawing on the work of Godschalk (2003), several dimensions of resilience are identified, including strength, self-sufficiency, inner-dependence, redundancy, perceptivity, diffusivity, diversity, and flexibility. Based on the evidence in this book, of these elements self-sufficiency, inner-dependence, perceptivity, diffusivity, and flexibility appear to be especially important.

However, it is clear that communities do not develop these qualities in isolation from public authorities. Although civil society and the private sector mobilization is crucial in building community resilience, it can rarely be successful in the absence of either a government that facilitates their activities, or one that responds

Although civil society and the private sector mobilization is crucial in building community resilience, it can rarely be successful in the absence of either a government that facilitates their activities, or one that responds to their initiatives.

to their initiatives. Throughout this volume the accounts of community resilience emphasize that a responsive government is needed to maximize the positive effects of civic activism. By the same token, the collection of accounts in this book show that civic engagement is a key function for government, and that government strategy enacted in the absence of engagement with the community is unlikely to solve public security challenges beyond the short term.

Continuing in this vein, Matthew Ingram's chapter draws on literature from the disciplines of public health, sociology, and criminology to examine how some municipalities and neighborhoods may be better able to prevent and reduce violence. His emphasis on education and prosperity is put in comparative perspective, showing that each community exists not in a vacuum but rather in a local context that is defined by relative prosperity and unemployment levels. This is a significant contribution of the book, establishing concrete policy implications for decision-makers. In addition to strengthening local programs aimed at improving employment levels and educational standards, Ingram's work points to the importance of studying conditions in neighboring communities. Rather than solely focusing on the problems of the community or neighborhood that is afflicted by violence, therefore, a more organic understanding of the relationship between communities and those that surround them is required. Whereas improved education is a positive factor for all communities, improving prosperity and employment levels in one community may actually be counterproductive if similar programs are not enacted in surrounding municipalities.

Specifically, Ingram argues that when income and prosperity increases in surrounding communities, violence decreases in the central community. Inversely, deteriorating economic conditions in neighboring communities may generate higher levels of violence in the central community. Taken together, these insights have two main policy implications. First, adjacent communities have "a mutual interest in growing economically, and in doing so at relatively the same rate." Second, public policies should be mixed in nature, both aimed at the regional, rather than merely the local level, and targeted at specific communities.

These general observations about the importance of community-based approaches to address public security challenges are supremely helpful when placed alongside the remaining chapters of this volume. Steven Dudley and Sandra Rodríguez Nieto suggest five specific policy implications in Chapter 3. First, they argue, it is important to involve multiple stakeholders in society in the security process. As they point out,

"the larger the combination of actors, the greater the chance of mobilizing enough political force and will to gain access" to the policy-making process. Second, they make the point that, in order for civil society to have an impact, it must first exist and be strong enough to interact effectively with government. Third, a strong and active civil society must be matched by political will from the highest levels of government, or its potential to help public security will remain untapped. Fourth, there should be a dynamic interaction between the official security forces and civil society, for information exchange, confidence building, and effectiveness. Lastly, the role for civil society must be defined clearly. As the authors emphasize, there will be some topics that remain outside of the purview of civil society, but sensitive issues such as human rights and police behavior should be addressed openly.

Building on these observations and proposals, Nathan Jones argues in Chapter 4 that the Mexican government must address the socioeconomic causes of youth gang involvement. This can be done, he argues, by investing in economic development, employment training, and education. In addition, drawing on the experience of Central America, Jones argues that increased positive government engagement with gangs is required to both better understand the phenomenon and to provide nonviolent options for conflict resolution. Facilitating dialogue between gangs, between gangs and civil society, and between youth and police would greatly help this effort.

Beyond these general observations about the causes of pubic insecurity, it is clear that civil society mobilization has been a key component in shaping the response of Mexican society to the violence that has afflicted it over the past eight years. In Chapter 5, Lauren Villagran examines the role that victims' movements have played in Mexico in raising the profile of and consciousness of unreported crimes. Villagran points out that the victims' movement is impressively diverse, employing a wide variety of tools to raise public awareness of violent crime and to pressure the government to respond. Of central importance in this story is the development, approval of, and reform to a General Law of Victims in Mexico. The active engagement of different victims' groups was crucial to the writing, passage, and reform of the law and, just as important, to changing public perceptions of the victims of crime. Ending the stigmatization of victims in Mexico has been a major achievement for the victims' movement, and radically alters the ways in which they are viewed by their peers and by the authorities.

The policy lessons from Villagran's account center on the need to consult with society and to directly involve those affected by crime in the design of legislation aimed at helping them. Though this may appear to be stating the obvious, it is still a novel

The policy lessons from Villagran's account center on the need to consult with society and to directly involve those affected by crime in the design of legislation aimed at helping them.

The clear implication here is for government to consult more closely with business throughout the country, and for business to actively engage with civil society.

concept in Mexico. The traditionally paternalistic attitude of Mexican governments has meant that public policy has been made without meaningful input from society.

Emily Edmonds-Poli's chapter highlights the multiple challenges to freedom of expression encountered by journalists covering drug-related violence in Mexico. Focusing on the need for coordination between media owners, journalists, and government, Edmonds-Poli offers a number of concrete policy proposals. First she calls on the government to take the issue of threats against journalists seriously, and to devote sufficient resources and attention to existing mechanism for their protection. Second, she calls on the media industry to take measures to ensure a more secure working environment for journalists and to pressure the government more effectively to ensure that authorities pay attention. The role of civil society groups as watchdogs is fundamental here, to complement and bolster government efforts. Last, Edmonds-Poli recognizes the importance of pressure from foreign governments, international media, and global civil society in pressuring the Mexican government to do more to ensure journalist protection.

One of the most important actors in mobilizing public and governmental responses to organized crime has been private enterprise. Lucy Conger's account of the role of the private sector in both Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey highlights its crucial role in financing and coordinating crime prevention strategies. One of the most important elements has been the capacity of top CEOs to speak directly with senior government officials and to call on them for support. If such support is not forthcoming, business can employ a strategy of shaming government (particularly at the local and state level), through public campaigns denouncing corruption and shady practices to force its hand. Conger's chapter also points to the central importance of the private sector as an alternative to the government in engaging with communities and mobilizing civil society groups. In particular, the "Consejo Cívico" and "Mesa de Seguridad" models have been instrumental in coordinating diverse interests and points of view. The clear implication here is for government to consult more closely with business throughout the country, and for business to actively engage with civil society.

Octavio Rodríguez's contribution to this volume centers on the role of civil society in pushing and shaping the justice reform process. Rodríguez suggests constructive directions for both civil society and government, as well as for international actors. Civil society must adopt a more proactive approach, engaging with policy makers preemptively rather than waiting to be consulted and must directly address the shortcomings of the reform as it stands today. Civil society

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groups must also work harder to raise social awareness of the reform process so that those who come into contact with the justice system are conscious of their options, and what is lacking in the current system. For government, Rodríguez proposes promoting civic engagement, welcoming dialogue with those critics and opponents of the reform, and the strengthening of civil society as an essential bolster to government efforts. At the international level, Rodríguez recognizes the importance for both civil society and government to engage with foreign governments and nongovernmental organizations, but calls on those actors to be aware of Mexican sensibilities and to respect national efforts while at the same time pushing for their improvement.

The final substantive chapter of this work focuses on the interaction between the police and civil society groups. Daniel Sabet emphasizes the importance of community engagement and the "co-production" of security in society. A central concept here is building trust in the police by closer consultation with society and greater transparency. At the same time, Sabet argues that citizen observatories, although there are only a handful of successful examples to date, should be strengthened and spread throughout the country as a check on police abuse, incompetence, and corruption.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Understanding public insecurity as a result not only of the breakdown of law and order due to organized crime, but also due to a weakened social fabric and lack of economic opportunities, has become a mainstream idea in Mexico. This book, while embracing this perspective, argues that resilient communities are not only better able to prevent the breakdown of security but also to react more effectively when that happens. Thanks to insights drawn from the social and environmental sciences, we have argued that stronger communities will be more effective allies for the authorities in trying to maintain or re-establish the rule of law.

A call for the strengthening of civil society is a common factor throughout the chapters in this volume. Whether victims' movements, journalist protection groups, civic councils, private sector associations or citizen observatories, government efforts to counter organized crime will benefit from closer collaboration with fortified community-based organizations. This consultation, however, will not be easy or smooth. Governments, whether municipal, state or federal, will come in for criticism

from these groups, and will need to work hard to establish trust in their relations.

Transparency and a willingness to accept errors and criticism will assist greatly, but ultimately it will be the reduction of corruption and collusion with organized crime by authorities and the effective reduction of crime that will convince civil society that the government is a reliable partner. The successful implementation of judicial reform across the length and breadth of the country by 2016 would be a major step in the right direction, as would the reform of police forces. A closer dialogue with the military is not an issue that has been addressed in this book, but the increase in human rights complaints against the armed forces during the Calderón presidency points to the need to consider this option, as difficult as it may be given the military's traditionally closed attitude.

International actors have a clear role to play in encouraging this process of civic engagement. Sponsoring studies, training both public officials and citizens groups, and encouraging forums for dialogue are some ways in which foreign actors may constructively engage in Mexico. However, the openness of the Calderón years to diverse foreign interaction has been replaced with a desire on the part of the Enrique Peña Nieto administration to centralize control of public security and of engagement with foreign governments. The single window for security assistance may be a useful tool in making such aid more effective; however, it will limit the ability of agencies such as USAID to work with a wide variety of government actors at multiple levels. Fortunately, the Peña Nieto administration has shown some appreciation for the need to take a more open approach and to be adaptive in response to complex and dynamic problems. In part because of the important role that international cooperation has played for officials, agencies, and community organizations working at the subnational level, it seems likely that any bilateral effort to foster resilient communities necessarily requires a fairly decentralized, locally inclusive approach.

Ultimately, the explicit recognition by the current Mexican government of the need to strengthen the fabric of society to improve crime and violence prevention is an encouraging sign. What is now needed is a more dynamic interaction with society and stakeholders to improve that process and to help heal communities already affected by the breakdown of the rule of law. Ultimately, the key to resilience is to empower communities to demand more from their representatives. We hope that the insights drawn from the research in this book will serve to inform future efforts to promote the development and strengthening of resilient communities both in terms of U.S.–Mexico efforts and in other contexts.

Resilient communities are not only better able to prevent the breakdown of security but also to react more effectively when that happens.

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THE JUSTICE IN MEXICO PROJECT (JMP) is the continuation of a collaborative research initiative entitled the Project on Reforming the Administration of Justice in Mexico and launched by Wayne Cornelius and David Shirk at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies of University of California, San Diego (2002–2005). In 2005, David Shirk relocated the project and its funding to the Trans-Border Institute of the University of San Diego, which became the host institution for this multi-year research project on the administration of justice and the rule of law in Mexico until 2013. Now a free standing program based at the University of San Diego, the Justice in Mexico Project continues to promote analysis, dialogue, and policy solutions to address a variety of urgent problems related to security and violence, transparency and accountability, and justice and human rights issues in Mexico and the U.S.-Mexican border region.

Focusing on these main research areas, the three-fold rationale for the Justice in Mexico Project is based on: (1) the need to decentralize analysis and reform efforts in Mexico, (2) the need for a greater emphasis on promoting effective reform and best practices, and (3) the need for a U.S.-based partner for helping to generate and disseminate analysis on Mexican initiatives.