UNDP and Citizen Security

Initiatives, Resources, Experiences from Latin America and the Caribbean

Our work

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the United Nations global network for development that promotes change and connects countries and governments with knowledge, experience and necessary resources to help countries find their own solutions to global and national challenges .

UNDP assistance in the field of Citizen Security is based on the Framework of Human Security which is understood as "the protection of the central core of all human lives against serious and foreseeable risks, in a manner that is consistent with long-term human fulfillment".

Citizen security is also closely linked to the concept of Human Development which was pioneered by the UNDP. The 1994 global human development report "new dimensions of human security" already made important linkages between citizen security and human development.

UNDP thus has been working for more than a decade on citizen security related issues. Throughout this UNDP has accrued a wide range of experiences, on issues such as small arms control, the prevention of armed violence, and the reform processes of the security sector, among others.

Strategic View on Citizen Security

Currently, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the Third Regional Cooperation Framework 2008 – 2011, consider the need to advance in the consolidation of initiatives on citizen security matters which allow participative processes with the inclusion of vulnerable groups to attain results in the social prevention of violence, crime and the reduction of risk factors, and, in the strengthening of institutional capacities for the design, implementation and evaluation of policies on the subject.

UNDP's perspective on Citizen Security is strategic and articulates all levels of government, non-government actors, private sector and media, including reinforcing the importance of cross-cutting issues such as gender and human rights.

UNDP Procurement, Financial, Project Management and other services

In addition to substantive contributions, UNDP also provides operational services in the field of procurement, financial and Project management services through its wide network of more than 140 country offices in the world for efficient and timely implementation.

The value added of UNDP in Citizen Security

1. UNDP has experience in leading talks and coordinating within the United Nations System and within the International community at a national, regional and global level.

2. UNDP in Latin America and the Caribbean has a series of tools, guidelines, methodologies, resources and experiences that allow effective intervention in the field of citizen security.

3. UNDP has experience in articulating and sourcing communities of practice among thematic experts, practitioners and academics at a national, regional and global level.

4. UNDP has substantial capabilities in its country offices with the support of the Regional Centre and Headquarters to develop, implement and monitor projects and programmes, under a results based perspective.

5. UNDP has solid experience in crosscutting themes such as gender issues.

6. UNDP offers procurement, financial, and programme management services for efficient implementation.

Regional Support

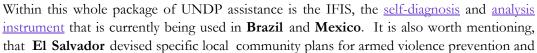The UNDP's first ever Caribbean Human Development Report on Citizen Security will be launched in November 2011. This report aims to diagnose the citizen security situation in the sub region and to propose solutions based on Caribbean and other international experiences. The Report, drafted in conjunction with all the UNDP Caribbean Country Offices and the practicing Caribbean security community, is a tool that provides recommendations for the top regional priorities on security. It identifies current Caribbean challenges and a number of successful initiatives to tackle violence in the Caribbean. For more information on the report see http://www.undp.org.tt/CHDR/about.html .

Effective Community Interventions

Regionally, UNDP has at its disposal tools and methodologies that enable situational and institutional diagnosis, development of comprehensive policies and master plans to improve citizen security. We also offer an exchange of experiences and the possibility to participate in training and education. In many cases, such as **Guatemala** and **El Salvador**, the local actions in communities, supported by the UNDP, made national change possible.

Within this whole package of UNDP assistance is the IFIS, the self-diagnosis and analysis instrument that is currently being used in **Brazil** and **Mexico**. It is also worth mentioning, that **El Salvador** devised specific local community plans for armed violence prevention and Youth violence prevention. **Jamaica** has also devised integral projects to tackle youth violence, especially with respect to arms control. In **Honduras** , UNDP not only developed interesting methodologies for intervening at the community level, but also developed some very interesting ad hoc mechanisms for micro conflict resolution. In **Belize**, local dialogue processes were developed to reach agreements in issues of decentralization, gender inclusion and governance.

Engaging with Youth and Vulnerable Communities

UNDP is engaged in initiatives to reduce risk factors, especially in young populations, with the purpose of nurturing proper conditions for Human Development and Human Rights compliance, all within the context of the MDG Acceleration Framework. Special emphasis is placed by the UNDP on increasing opportunities for inclusion, promoting the culture of peace, reducing risk factors on juvenile violence, gender violence prevention and attention, implementing actions to reduce the demand and use of firearms, improving the use of urban public spaces, preventing drug and alcohol abuse, developing the capacities of stakeholders to deploy effective security programming tools including the human rights based approach, and a gender perspective to create the social conditions that allow sustainability of results.

There are several interesting experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean that can be highlighted. In **Jamaica**, UNDP developed plans and campaigns to prevent armed violence among youth. In **Bolivia**, the democratic dialogue tool is used to facilitate talks with the indigenous population. Engaging with Youth through Art classes and Communications training is also part of the portfolio for **Panama**. **Honduras** has also developed important experiences of Preventing Violence in Schools while **Costa Rica** has been a pioneer in the region incorporating the culture of peace in its school curricula. **El Salvador** has consolidated its experience in dealing with vulnerabilities at a local level.

Proven crime reduction and implementation strategies

In the framework of preventing armed violence, small arms and light weapons control, prevention of conflicts, the reform of the Justice and Security Sector and the Rule of Law, there are several initiatives taking place in the region. Regarding arms control, technical assistance and tools are provided to control the illicit traffic of small arms and light weapons (SALW) including parts and ammunition.

For more information, the legislative guide is available here, also available is the guide for the establishment of national commissions on the matter. UNDP provided assistance for the legislation in **Costa Rica**, **Panamá** and **Venezuela** as well as for the restructuring of projects such as CASAC, the Central American Arms Control Project. **Jamaica** has also made substantial progress in matters of arms control through awareness campaigns and developing a framework for prevention.

In **El Salvador,** the UNDP developed inter-institutional training on Criminal Justice including Gun-free zones, and several initiatives of "Safer Cities" or "Municipalities Free of Violence". In **Guatemala**, a whole new ad hoc Criminal institution was created (CICIG) to combat the impunity and infiltration of organized crime in government structures.

Knowledge packages to communicate promising practices

UNDP's work is done in coordination with multiple stakeholders, such as government institutions, civil society, UNS agencies and other International cooperation agencies. UNDP aims to further deepen and strengthen the debate on citizen security and justice issues, promote dialogue and spaces for participation and thus generate action and development of new policies. UNDP promotes spaces for the production and exchange of knowledge using methods such as guided tours, knowledge fairs, and virtual platforms. Through these spaces successful experiences are shared and used by countries in the region. UNDP has developed various documents and critical expertise in the implementation of effective knowledge fairs. We also have the experience in systematizing and transferring national and regional experiences.

UNDP's main flagship event was the Knowledge Fair *Compromiso Centroamérica*, and the our Regional Centre team has been working as a broker of experiences in several other contexts. **El Salvador** also has a permanent forum for the exchange of experiences in armed violence prevention.

Through Communities of Practice and the methodology of "Sharing Knowledge", it is possible for UNDP not only to share experiences, but to replicate them in different contexts, respecting the particularities of each scenario. Also available is a UNDP network of experts and centres of excellence to meet the demands of UNDP Country Offices.

Capacity Development of the Police

UNDP's initiatives in this area look at the improvement of institutional capacities and mechanisms such as the prevention and fight against impunity, as well as the design, implementation and evaluation of efficient Policing policies and programmes. These include social participation processes, a rights-based approach and a gender perspective in Policing.

UNDP's work also includes the strengthening of government citizen security initiatives (including Ministries and their programmes), the strengthening of policies to fight crime, the training of public officials and relevant stakeholders, the modernization of the Police and the Penitentiary System - including its research capacity, the staff performance, service discipline and the fight against corruption.

Initiatives in the judicial system supported by UNDP include: allowing vulnerable groups greater access to justice, improving research capacity, rehabilitation and re-socialization of youth in conflict with the law, effective enforcement of justice system initiatives, and the use of alternative mechanisms for conflict prevention.

Examples of such initiatives are **the development of protection programs for justice operators and investments in forensics training in Guatemala**, the **high level officers' training program in Citizen Security in El Salvador and in Panama** and the ***ad hoc*** dispute resolution institutions created in **Honduras**. **Nicaragua** has also been **systematizing the experience of its police force** to make it a tool that supports other Police forces interested in community policing and Nicaragua's approach to youth and gender issues.

Provision of victim support and Social Services by the Police

Victim support and rehabilitation are very important pillars for developing safer communities and many times forgotten in the process of ensuring security. **Nicaragua** has important experiences in the development of tools for equitable access to justice with strong gender components. Specific gender issues are its care for victims of domestic violence, and the strong support provided for the model protocol for rehabilitation and human rights assurance of inmates. **Guatemala** has pioneered efforts to support victims of armed confrontations and has invested in further developing the capacity of its police officers in forensic anthropology. **Panama** has supported national efforts for legislative reform.

Media campaign and Public education

UNDP assistance in public education and media campaigns include the development of spaces for training, discussion and exchange between different institutions and actors in partnership with academic institutions with input from experts and strongly based on national and international best practices. The curricula is adapted according to the target audience, whether government officials, police or other participants. There are standard and virtual versions of UNDP training programs. The UNDP Virtual School has over 34 training programmes, and these programmes have already developed over 4,000 professionals, in all areas of Citizen Security.

The UNDP is currently developing courses for Media personnel, Security Personnel and Local Government. Click on the link for the general course and specialized online course on Citizen Security.

The UNDP courses are meant to provide practical tools to identify key actors to develop joint initiatives and local networks. These courses have been taught in **Brazil**, **Panamá**, **El Salvador** and **Uruguay**.

In terms of integrating UNDP's course work with the National curricula, **Costa Rica** and **Honduras** have very strong programmes in Peace Education while **El Salvador** and **Guatemala** have invested in promoting schools as "safe havens".
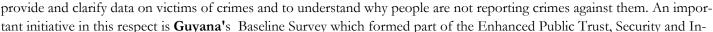
The Caribbean Human Development Report on Citizen Security has conducted an awareness campaign through a Poster contest, in which the poster that best represents the region in matters of Security and Development will be used in the design of the final report. The winner, announced in July 20111, is Timothy Bootan, a 21-year old Citizen of Trinidad and Tobago.

Crime Observatories

UNDP has had important roles in the identification of expert networks and drafting of guidance notes for the implementation of violence observatories to assist in decision making.

UNDP has consolidated its experience in this area in **Honduras**, which is the model observatory for the Central American Region. In addition, UNDP assistance is ongoing in the development of the Observatory in **Panama** and its local subsidiaries. We are also supporting similar initiatives in the **Dominican Republic** and **Haiti. Jamaica** has also developed interesting assessments at a local level.

UNDP was also actively involved in the execution of Victimization Surveys, such as the one that was developed for the **Human Development Report of Central America**. These surveys help to provide and clarify data on victims of crimes and to understand why people are not reporting crimes against them. An important initiative in this respect is **Guyana'**s Baseline Survey which formed part of the Enhanced Public Trust, Security and In-

Development of Policies, Plans and Strategies

UNDP's work on Citizen Security includes local and national initiatives to facilitate the development of sustainable public safety plans formulated through consultative processes and with the aim of providing decision-makers with tools that include gender perspectives and a human rights approach.

To understand more about how these processes can work, check out **Polsepaz** (Spanish acronym for *Integral and Sustainable Citizen Security Policy and the Promotion of Peace*) **in Costa Rica** here. During the last year, UNDP also assisted in the development of National Plans in **Panama**, **El Salvador** and **Honduras.**

In parallel, there were several local initiatives and plans under development at the local level in several countries such as **México**, **Honduras** and **El Salvador**.