**United Nations
Development Programme**

UNDP

*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

A DECADE OF WORK
ON CITIZEN SECURITY
AND CONFLICT PREVENTION
IN LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN
2001 – 2010

A Decade of Work on Citizen Security and Conflict Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean 2001 – 2010

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AECID: Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development.

BCD: Board of Coastal Development

BCPR: Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery

BDG: Bi-National Dialogue Group

BND: Bi-National Dialogue

CAR: The Caribbean

CASAC: Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons Programme in Central America.

CIDA: Canadian International Development Agency

CPR: Crisis Prevention and Recovery

DSSC: Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses

EU: European Union

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

ICAIG: International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala.

IDB: Inter-American Development Bank

IDEA: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

ILO: International Labor Organization

ISVC: Information System on Violence and Crime

MDCC: Ministry of Development of the Caribbean Coast

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

MINUSTAH: United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

NGO: Non Government Organization

OAS: Organization of American States

OECS: Organization of Eastern Caribbean States

OHCHR: Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights

PAHO: Pan – American Health Organization

PAPEP: Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios Project

PDP-NBZ: Peace and Development Programme on the Northern Border Zone

POLSEPAZ: Integral and Sustainable Policy on Citizen Security and the Promotion of Peace.

RBLAC: Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

REDES: Reconciliation and Development

RPDD: Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue

SICA: Central American Integration system

UNDAF: United Nations Development Assistance Fund

UNDP: United Nations Development Fund

UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNIFEM: United Nations Development fund for Women

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNS: United Nations System

WB: World Bank

WHO: World Health Organization

PROLOGUE

II

This report is a joint effort between the Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) and the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) seeking to compile the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s work in the areas of Conflict Prevention and Citizen Security during the first decade of the 21st century in Latin America and the Caribbean region.

After a brief introduction about the political, social and economic reality in the region, and an overview of strategies for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, the report gathers selected efforts executed at the national and regional level in each work area analyzed.

In the area of Conflict Prevention, efforts aimed at promoting citizen participation and democratic dialogue in the region and building national capacities for conflict prevention and resolution should be emphasized. These are embodied in a wide variety of national and regional projects that have been implemented over the last decade.

In the area of Citizen Security, work is underway that involves the creation of violence observatories and/or the production of various reports that seek to establish the causes of insecurity, to progress in the social prevention of violence and crime and in decreasing risk factors. UNDP also actively works to strengthen institutional capacities for designing, implementing and evaluating national and local policies on the issue.

The areas of Conflict Prevention and Citizen Security are intimately linked to development problems facing the region. Despite their high rates of economic growth, Latin America and the Caribbean remain the most inequitable regions in the world and among the most violent. Exclusion and inequality coupled with high crime rates in the region undermine the foundations of democratic governance and constitute a large obstacle to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Therefore, although this report is limited to the presentation in part of UNDP activities, it should be noted that UNDP's work transcends the limits of this report.

III

In the last three decades, the Latin American and Caribbean region has experienced obvious progress in consolidating its democratic institutions. Within this complex process of democratization, many political, social, and economic actors have burst onto the political scene, brandishing new demands and testing the effectiveness of political systems to process and respond to these new demands.

While citizen preference for democracy in the region is relatively low as demonstrated by the first UNDP report on the State of Democracy in Latin America[1], there is a growing awareness among the citizens on the expansion of political participation and oversight of the exercise of power. In recent years, the consolidation of democratic regimes in the region has increased the societal expectations of large population segments and generated significant political changes in many countries, although it is still premature to assess the impact of these changes on the social conditions of the population in Latin America.

Even today, despite a substantial reduction of poverty in the region and slight improvements in matters of inequality, about 200 million people live in poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the region remains the most unequal in the world.

The tasks of preventing armed conflict - political and social - including that of ethnic origin, as well as the eradication of insecurity and promotion of social cohesion, are closely interrelated with democratic reforms and the institutional strengthening process. Improving democratic governance is essential for the stability and prosperity of the region in the medium and long term. For this reason, UNDP addresses these issues comprehensively, adding a wide range of actions to its work on conflict prevention and citizen security to improve democratic governance (working with political parties and parliaments, supporting the processes of constitutional reform, administrative reform, anti-corruption, local governance, among others) and reduction of economic, regional, ethnic, or gender inequality (promotion of fiscal pacts, social policies).

Throughout the region, democratic systems have enabled the implementation of several consultation processes and dialogue with various social, political and economic actors, whose scope

1 http://www.undp.org.ni/files/doc/democracia.pdf

and impact vary greatly depending on the case. Nevertheless, the process of sustained dialogue among key actors in national life and national or local authorities, is effective and contributes to peaceful economic and social prosperity by reducing the costs of violence, which range from 2 to 15% Annual GDP.

The June 2009 coup in Honduras is a prime example of the strong pressures faced by democracies in the region, despite all the progress made over the past 15 years.

Although the scope of armed conflict in the region appears limited, strictly speaking, the proliferation of political and social conflicts of varying intensity and the spiraling crime rates and new security challenges, suggest that the preventive approach is more relevant today than ever.

UNDP and the CPR Practice Area in Latin America and the Caribbean

IV

U NDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

The organization has identified a multi-year global Strategic Plan and four priority areas for intervention: Poverty Reduction, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Democratic Governance and Energy and the Environment, all of particular relevance in the region.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP has 26 country offices to provide technical and financial support to member countries, which constitute the executive arm of the organization and its main asset. The region also has a Regional Service Center (based in Panama) to provide high-level technical support to countries and promote South-South cooperation. Its objective is to maximize the impact of the interventions of the Country Offices and regional initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Within this framework, the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Practice Area team, a joint venture between the Regional Bureau for Latin America and Caribbean (RBLAC) and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) provides technical services to offices and countries in three priority areas for the region: *conflict prevention and democratic dialogue, citizen security, and disaster risk reduction and recovery.*

In the last two years, there have been over 200 technical support missions by high-level experts in this area (through UNDP offices), including the mobilization of support for Haiti's recovery after the devastating January 2010 earthquake that claimed over 200,000 lives.

The Eight Point Agenda: Practical, positive outcomes for girls and women in crisis

1. Strengthen women's security in crisis
2. Advance gender justice
3 Expand women's citizenship, participation and leadership: Advance women as decision-makers
4. Build peace with and for women
5. Promote gender equality in disaster risk reduction
6. Ensure gender-responsive recovery
7. Transform government to deliver for women
8. Develop capacities for social change

The CPR practice area is part of UNDP's efforts to comprehensively combat both the causes and the consequences that lead to the crisis, which in turn then undermines the development of affected populations. In short, the CPR Practice Area in the region includes at least 160 projects in most countries of the region, implementing over 300 million dollars from a range of donors. These projects range from ambitious interagency prevention programs to intervention-focused analysis and dialogue both pre and post crisis. It is noteworthy that the BCPR has contributed a total of $40 million to projects in the region since 2004 and has provided technical support to other initiatives in the area[2].

Although the amount of resources may seem relatively modest compared to the levels of production in the region (less than 0.01% of regional GDP per year), and crisis prevention is a "result" that is difficult to assign and quantify, the information provided in this report (as well as through independent assessments in 2010) suggests that UNDP investment in this area seems to have been fruitful.

The initiatives described below are the product of a joint effort by various actors, namely governments, civil society, international cooperation, the UNDP Country Offices, other UN agencies and regional organizations (such as the Organization of American States here after referred to as OAS and the Central American Integration System here after referred to as SICA), among others. All the aforementioned actors are characterized by a partnership with UNDP among other UN agency partners. Therefore, the success (or failure) of these initiatives cannot be attributed exclusively to UNDP. Its role however modest, is worthy of documentation hence the purpose of this report.

2 Overview of the CPR Practice Area in Latin America and the Caribbean 2004-2008.

Initiatives and Results in the Work Areas

V

This report aims to document much of UNDP's work in Conflict Prevention and Citizen Security over the last decade (2001-2010). A unified presentation of both issues provides an integrated approach for these two areas from the close relationship between them and the challenges threats they face, as evidenced by situations such as that which occurred in 2010 in Jamaica or the challenges facing Guatemala, among others. The report also includes a sample of the wide range of tools and instruments produced by the CPR Practice Area in both work areas.

1.   Conflict prevention and democratic dialogue

The CPR practice area is focused on making national tools and capacities available to countries for the prevention and nonviolent management of conflict. By integrating a gender sensitive approach to conflict, development programs can facilitate the creation of opportunities and political, economic and social space in which national actors may submit their claims within a context of growing peace and social cohesion. Although prevention is beyond the scope of dialogue (and dialogue is also used in situations where there is no crisis per se), both activities are highly complementary in the Latin American context.

As noted in the introduction to this report, the region is experiencing a reality in which the lack of an institutional approach to promoting conflict prevention is giving rise to larger and more frequent tensions. Based on this new reality, despite the fact that the number of armed conflicts in the region declined from 1990 to 2010, social and economic conflicts have increased in the region, particularly disputes involving marginalized populations such as indigenous peoples.

The claims of indigenous peoples are mainly focused on their rights to the lands that they inhabit, participation in decision making processes regarding their ancestral lands, and a range of other political, economic and social rights. Few question the fact that indigenous groups have historically been marginalized in most countries of the region. Their incorporation into public life and the application of tools towards a real and effective participation (such as the 1989 Convention No.169 of the ILO or the 2007 UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Resolution 61/295), respecting their rights and traditions, is one of the great challenges facing the region.

It should be noted that the CPR Practice Area addresses the issue from the perspective of conflict prevention or post-conflict work. This is relevant in Latin America and the Caribbean because of the complexity involved in the process of political transition, which is difficult to categorize. The management and support of such processes is at the center of prevention efforts. UNDP, as a facilitator of change and in cooperation with other stakeholders, has significantly contributed to creating spaces for dialogue and reconciliation. Although relatively modest in cost and media coverage, this work built on trust with stakeholders has contributed to improving governance in some countries in the region.

Below are a few of the national efforts carried out in recent years. Nevertheless, it was impossible to record the many occasions in which the UNDP, whether in the framework of its projects, or through a Resident Representative in its role as Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system, has interceded, mediated, promoted agreements or advised actors in conflicts of various kinds (often in coordination with the United Nations Department of Political Affairs). What is collected here is more of a sample of some of the dialogue activities – whether due to their success or their scope, or for the expectations generated – that have been documented on a regional scale in one way or another.

1.1. National efforts

Argentina. The "Argentine Dialogue" was an initiative that emerged in early 2002, amid a deep socio-economic, political and institutional crisis in Argentina whose most critical point was the resignation of President Fernando de la Rua in December 2001. Within this context, the Argentine Dialogue was a space of coordination and consultation for various government and civil society actors. The role of UNDP through its country office was very important in convening and coordinating the process.

helped to create opportunities for discussion, identifying sectoral interests and ensuring the existence of incentives for the achievement of consensus.

In the same way the United Nations Development Programme provided technical assistance through a project whose objective was to contribute to the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the Ex Interior Security Secretary (Ex Mini- ster of Justice, Security and Human Rights) and the provincial jurisdictions to move and coordinate the planning and management of public security, especially in the education and budgetary areas. The achieved outcomes included an analysis on public security budgetary decision making processes; recommendations for the improvement of transparency, the control of planning and budgetary management processes and recommendations for the minimum composition of the contents in basic police formation among others [4].

The most valuable agreements of the Buenos Aires Commitment 2020 include:

- That civic dialogue should be an on-going permanent exercise and should achieve concrete results;
- To look beyond the circumstances to exchange perceptions and seek shared solutions.
- Time dedicated to meetings and consulting and participatory actions is an investment that improves democratic quality, lowers levels of conflict and aggression.
- Through dialogue, we can address the complex social reality prior to the installation of conflict.
- Shared diagnostics are found as well as aligned government decisions.
- Design and implementation of a participatory process for the construction of the "Buenos Aires 2020" vision.
- Realization of sectoral consultation rounds about the budgetary priorities for 2011.

Bolivia. The United Nations has supported various dialogue experiences in the country over the last decade with governments across the political spectrum. It also had a role in accompanying the dialogue process in crisis situations that culminated in the adoption of a new constitution in 2009. In September this year, it published the systematization of the experience and lessons learned for the future.

The process began in 2000, raising expectations that could not be resolved, since the results of that effort were not binding (this experience raises one of the weaknesses of the dialogue processes in the region, given the lack of an adequate mechanism for monitoring the agreements).

4 Finally UNDP Argentina, through this development project provides assistance to the newly created Security Ministry at a national level. Basing on the past experience, this project focuses its technical assistance on strengthening the capacities of the security ministry in strategic planning and budgetary drafting. The project anticipates the generation of information systems and the transfer of knowledge through planning mechanisms and methodologies and drafting of budgets.