

TC Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	REGIONAL
▪ TC Name:	Organized crime in Latin America and the Caribbean: Promoting research for effective public policy
▪ TC Number:	RG-T4520
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Perez Vincent, Santiago (IFD/ICS) Team Leader; Alvarado, Nathalie Tatiana (IFD/ICS) Alternate Team Leader; Mendoza Benavente, Horacio (LEG/SGO); Bonilla Merino Arturo Francisco (LEG/SGO); Bueno Londono Daniela (IFD/ICS); Rojas Gonzalez, Sonia Amalia (IFD/ICS)
▪ Taxonomy:	Research and Dissemination
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	.
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	.
▪ Beneficiary:	Argentina, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Panama, Paraguay, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	OC SDP Window 2 - Institutions(W2C)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$400,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	36 months
▪ Required start date:	July 1st, 2024
▪ Types of consultants:	Individuals; firms.
▪ Prepared by Unit:	IFD/ICS-Innovation in Citizen Services Division
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	IFD/ICS-Innovation in Citizen Services Division
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	No
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	No
▪ Alignment to the Institutional Strategy: Transformation for Greater Scale and Impact:	Environmental sustainability; Gender equality; Institutional capacity and rule of law; Productivity and innovation; Social inclusion and equality

II. Objectives and Justification of the TC

- 2.1 **Objective.** The objective of this Technical Cooperation (TC) is to inform and shape the public policy debate on criminal violence and organized crime and influence policy formulation at the local, national, regional, and global levels on this issue by producing and disseminating research and knowledge in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The components of this TC and their respective activities are framed within a collaborative work agenda between the IDB, the World Bank and CAF on this topic.
- 2.2 **Justification.** The Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region has the highest rate of violence in the world. The homicide rate in LAC is 20 per 100,000 inhabitants, approximately four times the world average (UNODC, 2024). The problem is not limited to homicides, but also includes other manifestations, such as, for example, gender-based violence, violence against children and adolescents, and victimization of businesses. In the latest round of the World Values Survey, about 50% of LAC

respondents reported feeling unsafe, compared to a global average of 25% (EVS/WVS, 2022).

- 2.3 Organized crime accounts for a large part of some manifestations of crime and violence in the region, 45% of households report the presence of local criminal groups, and 14% indicate that these groups provide order and reduce crime (Uribe et al., 2022; *Latinobarómetro*, 2020). Organized crime is linked to 50% of all homicides in the Americas, and a large fraction of these occur between and within criminal groups (UNODC, 2023). Between 20% and 50% of households consider organized crime to be the greatest threat to their personal safety in 18 LAC countries (LAPOP, 2012, 2014, 2019).
- 2.4 The experience and fear of victimization significantly affect the region's inhabitants, hindering individual and social development. IDB estimates suggest that crime and violence consume resources equivalent to 3.5% of GDP in the countries of the region (IDB, 2017). This includes only human capital lost due to homicides and incarceration, private business spending on security, and public spending to prevent and respond to crime. The impacts of crime and violence on economic growth and development exceed these costs. Numerous studies, many based on LAC data, find that crime and violence increase the cost of borrowing, discourage foreign direct investment, reduce business productivity and growth, encourage business closures, disrupt specific economic sectors such as tourism, limit employment opportunities, and affect human capital accumulation. These impacts reduce the productive capacity of economies and are exacerbated by organized crime, which erodes the rule of law and confidence in public institutions.
- 2.5 The poorest populations are exposed to the most violent crimes, such as homicides and assaults (Schargrotsky and Freira, 2021). This increased exposure to violence affects the livelihoods and possibilities for progress of the most vulnerable populations, deepening poverty, and inequality. And while the evidence is still emerging, organized crime victimization has distinct and often more severe impacts on women and other vulnerable populations. Women in LAC are particularly affected by gender-based violence, trafficking, and exploitation by criminal organizations. These impacts limit women's opportunities for social and economic participation. Additionally, studies on organized crime often ignore the active roles women play beyond victimization. Women hold increasingly significant positions within these organizations, influencing operations and strategies. Addressing these roles is crucial for creating effective strategies to combat organized crime in the region¹.
- 2.6 Despite its relevance, the phenomenon of organized crime remains understudied and poorly understood, limiting the ability of policy makers to develop effective responses.
- 2.7 This TC seeks to close existing knowledge gaps and provide a basis for the formulation of informed and effective public policies. By strengthening institutional capacities and fostering collaboration between the IDB, the World Bank and CAF, this initiative will contribute to building more robust and coordinated strategies to address criminal violence and organized crime in LAC. Consequently, the TC seeks to directly benefit institutions involved in the prevention and response to criminal violence and organized crime, including, but not limited to, ministries of security, ministries of the interior, police

¹ [Introduction to Gender and Organized Crime](#) (accessed June 3, 2024).

agencies, and organizations implementing programs on the social prevention of violence.

- 2.8 **Strategic Alignment.** This TC aligns with the strategic objectives of the IDB Group Institutional Strategy: Transformation for Greater Scale and Impact (CA-631) of (i) bolstering sustainable regional growth; (ii) reducing poverty and inequality and (iii) addressing climate change. As detailed in the rationale (paragraphs ¶2.2-2.7 **Error! Reference source not found.**), crime and violence, and in particular organized crime, are an obstacle to these objectives. They impact firms and investment, reducing economic growth. They affect the livelihoods and progress of the most vulnerable populations, deepening poverty, and inequality. They are linked to the unchecked exploitation of natural resources and ecosystem degradation, contributing to climate change. Understanding them is a fundamental step for an effective public policy approach. In this way, the TC directly aligns with IDB Group Institutional Strategy operational focus area of institutional capacity, rule of law and citizen security. It also aligns with the priority area of "Effective, Efficient and Transparent Institutions" of the Strategic Program for Development (GN-2819-14), which includes as outcomes to strengthen institutional and policy quality and service delivery and policy implementation to improve public sector management and promote private sector development. The TC aligns with the Citizen Security and Justice Sector Framework (GN-2771-12), which identifies the "lack of uniform and regular crime data" as a constraint to the "design, monitoring and evaluation of citizen security and justice policies" as a critical area of potential improvement, and with the Fragility, Conflict and Criminal Violence (FCCV) framework, which emphasizes the relevance of working and analyzing contexts characterized by high levels of interpersonal and organized violence with links to criminal activities. Finally, it complements Bank operations addressing the issue of crime and violence, including violence among criminal groups, such as [5812/OC-UR](#) (approved in 2023, US\$8,000,000, in execution) and EC-L1294.

III. Description of activities/components and budget

- 3.1 **Component 1. Research and Knowledge Development (US\$215,000).** The objective of this component is to support the generation of research and knowledge on criminal violence in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), with emphasis on the role of organized crime.
- 3.2 The main activity of this component will be the development of joint publications between the IDB, the World Bank and CAF on this topic. These publications will address the scale, causes, and impacts of criminal violence in LAC, with a focus on the role of organized crime. The publications will also seek to assess current public policy responses, introduce measurement strategies and, if possible, evaluate selected interventions. In these publications, the team will attempt to incorporate a gender and diversity lens, by, for example, discussing the roles and impacts of organized crime on women and other diverse populations. These publications aim to inform public policy and contribute to a deeper understanding of the issues, fostering more inclusive and effective interventions. The TC will fund the process of generating these publications, which includes the selection of an academic committee to provide expert feedback, the hiring of research teams of academics who will collaborate with the staff of the three institutions to develop the publications, and the professional review, editing and layout of the various publications.
- 3.3 The component will also support the financing of specific research to address knowledge gaps arising from the joint publications' development process (¶3.2).

Among these research proposals, priority will be given to those that provide practical knowledge, connect academia with policymakers, demonstrate potential for scalability and relevance, and generate new knowledge, grounded in systematic data, bearing on the knowledge gaps above. The TC will finance the conduct of the selected research and the hiring of an academic committee that, together with the staff of the three institutions, will evaluate the research proposals and projects.

- 3.4 The component will also support coordination for the incorporation of questions on crime victimization in regular household surveys conducted by national statistical agencies in LAC, to generate information that, in the first instance, complements the joint publications developed and, in a more structural manner, helps to overcome the deficit in regular, reliable, and comparable crime statistics. This will include the review of the current efforts of statistical agencies to measure crime victimization; the production of a questionnaire; and active efforts to promote the incorporation of this questionnaire by the authorities of these agencies.
- 3.5 The component will be executed by the IDB, working in coordination with the World Bank and CAF, and in collaboration with the academic committees and research teams. The outputs of this component will include periodic joint publications on criminal violence and organized crime in LAC, which may be complemented by supporting research and the generation of primary data. The expected results are the generation of relevant and updated knowledge on criminal violence and organized crime, the development of effective strategies to measure and address violence, and the strengthening of institutional capacity to measure, monitor and address criminal violence and organized crime.
- 3.6 **Component 2. Knowledge Sharing and Dissemination (US\$185,000).** The objective of this component is to organize periodic events with policy makers, researchers, and other experts to debate and exchange knowledge on the causes, consequences and public policy response to criminal violence and organized crime in LAC, disseminate relevant research and report on ongoing research projects.
- 3.7 These events, which will take the form of workshops, round tables, and conferences, depending on the opportunity, will serve to identify priorities, guide TC activities and joint work with the World Bank and CAF, providing direct feedback to the research and knowledge generation projects (described in the first component). In addition, knowledge sharing and collaboration among the different actors involved will be promoted. These meetings will strive to provide a platform for sharing knowledge and best practices, seeking that the perspectives and participation of people from all four IDB regions (CAN, CCB, CID and CSC), women, and other diverse groups are considered in developing effective strategies to combat organized crime in the region.
- 3.8 This component will finance the planning and execution of these events, including logistical and administrative coordination, identification and selection of participants, preparation of agendas and support materials, rental of space and necessary equipment, translation and interpretation services when required, and travel and lodging expenses for participants.
- 3.9 The component will be executed by the IDB, working in coordination with the World Bank and CAF. The outputs of this component will include periodic knowledge sharing and discussion events, agendas and support materials for the events, and reports of results and feedback from the events. The expected outcomes are the promotion of knowledge sharing and best practices among the different actors, the identification of priorities and orientation of TC activities, the provision of direct feedback to research

and knowledge development projects, and the strengthening of collaboration between the World Bank, IDB, CAF and other key actors. Events will be organized periodically during the three years of the TC. The operations plan will include initial planning and coordination of events, execution of events, and review and evaluation of completed events.

- 3.10 The total cost of this TC will be US\$400,000 and will be financed with ordinary capital (OC SDP Window 2 – Institutions (W2C)). The following table includes the main activities and their costs:

Indicative Budget (US\$)

Component	Description	IDB/Fund Funding	Total Funding
Component 1. Research and Knowledge Development	Academic Committee	US\$30,000	US\$215,000
	Research teams	US\$84,000	
	Proofreading, editing and layout of publications	US\$26,000	
	Research assistance and activity management support	US\$75,000	
Component 2. Knowledge Sharing and Dissemination	Execution of workshops and conferences	US\$120,000	US\$185,000
	Activity management planning and support	US\$65,000	
TOTAL		US\$400,000	US\$400,000

IV. Executing agency and execution structure

- 4.1 The executing agency will be the Inter-American Development Bank through the Innovation for Citizen Services Division (IFD/ICS). The Bank will play the executing role responding to the regional nature of this TC. The IFD/ICS team will be responsible for the administration, planning, control, and supervision of the financial resources allocated, as well as all activities related to the contracting of firms and consultants and the adequate organization, management and evaluation of the products contemplated within the TC. The Bank will execute this operation and carry out the contracting, given the regional nature of the TC and the need for close coordination with the international institutions and participating government entities to enhance synergies and collaboration among them.
- 4.2 The Citizen Security and Justice Cluster of the Innovation for Citizen Service Division (IFD/ICS) has extensive experience in supporting countries to reduce crime and violence. It also provides support to strengthen the institutions in charge of security and justice, focusing on human capital and enhancing technological innovations to improve transparency, efficiency and access to security and justice services for citizens on equal terms and with greater inclusion. All of the above with a focus on the application of evidence-based solutions that can be adapted to the different specific contexts of the countries in the region.
- 4.3 **Procurement.** The activities to be executed under this operation have been included in the procurement plan (Annex IV) and will be executed in accordance with the Bank's established procurement methods, namely: (i) contracting of individual consultants, as established in AM-650 (Supplemental Workforce); (ii) contracting of consulting firms for services of an intellectual nature as per GN-2765-4 (policy for the Selection and Contracting of Consulting Firms for Operational Work Executed by the Bank) and its

associated operational guidelines (OP-1155-4); and (iii) logistics and other non-consulting services, as per the IDB Institutional Procurement Policy (GN-2303-28). From July 1, 2024, the contracting of all relevant services will be carried out in accordance with the new Policy GN-2303-33 and its associated guidelines.

- 4.4 The monitoring and supervision activities of this project will be the responsibility of the technical cooperation team leader, who will implement, due to the nature of the proposed activities and objectives, a monitoring scheme for the execution of the TC, in accordance with the methodology for monitoring TCs under execution established in the document The Technical Cooperation Monitoring and Reporting System (OP-1385-4). It will also be the responsibility of the TC team leader to prepare and send reports on the progress and execution of this TC.

V. Major issues

- 5.1 Risks identified in this TC include the lack of accurate information on criminal violence and organized crime in LAC, which could affect diagnoses and analysis. The possible lack of timely collaboration with researchers and experts in the field is also recognized. In addition, there are risks related to the coordination with local stakeholders, and the World Bank and CAF, which could generate delays and implementation problems.
- 5.2 To mitigate these risks, several strategies are being implemented. Relevant data are being collected and analyzed to better understand the problem. In addition, links are being established with researchers and experts in the field to ensure their continued participation. A joint agenda is being coordinated with the World Bank and CAF, and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being sought to formalize collaboration and ensure alignment of objectives and activities. The TC team will also ensure appropriate coordination with the official liaison entity in beneficiary countries, especially when activities require access to sensitive information or high-level engagement. These actions are designed to effectively address identified risks and promote project success.

VI. Exceptions to Bank policy

- 6.1 There will be no exceptions to the Bank's policies.

VII. Environmental and Social Aspects

- 7.1 This Technical Cooperation is not intended to finance pre-feasibility or feasibility studies of specific investment projects or environmental and social studies associated with them; therefore, this TC does not have applicable requirements of the Bank's Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).

Required Annexes:

[Results Matrix_72869.pdf](#)

[Terms of Reference_91665.pdf](#)

[Procurement Plan_31616.pdf](#)