

Call for Research Proposals

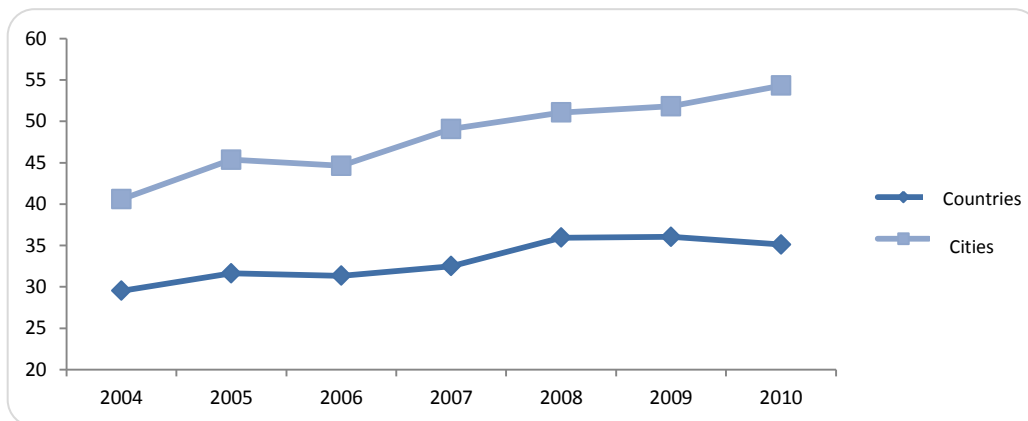
Public Policies for the Reduction and Prevention of Urban Crime in Latin America and the Caribbean (RG-T2377)

I. Background

During the past decade, most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have experienced a deterioration of security levels, reflected in high rates of homicide¹ and victimization², in an increase in the perception of insecurity³, lack of trust in public institutions in charge of public safety⁴ (particularly in the police, the criminal justice system and the prison system) and a significant increase in the incarcerated population⁵.

In sum, all these facts provide an alarming regional overview of crime and violence. The insecurity situation is particularly severe in most cities of the region, where more than 84%⁶ of the LAC population resides. Cities face numerous challenges, such as rapid urbanization, exclusion and inequality, informality, and unemployment, all of which affect the quality of life and welfare of urban inhabitants. LAC cities are among the most violent in the world⁷, with homicide rates that are high even when compared with national averages in their respective countries (see Figure 1)⁸.

Graph 1: Homicide rate per 100.000 inhabitants in some LAC cities



Fuente: UNODC, 2011

¹LAC accounts for 8% of the total world population, and in its territory occurs 20% of the homicides. Likewise, the regional average homicide rate is 25 while the world average is 6.9 per 100,000 inhabitants. (UNODC, 2011)

²LAC is the second largest region with the highest victimization level after Africa, 12% and 13% respectively. (Gallup, 2007)

³In 2011, 28% of LAC citizens considered violence as the most important concern over unemployment; while back in 2002 only 5% of the population considered insecurity as a concern. (Latinobarometro, 2011)

⁴In LAC 30% of the population trust the judiciary, 50% trust the police; which are the lowest rate in the world. (Gallup, 2007)

⁵The average prison population rate in the region between 123 and 260 per 100,000, exceeding the global average rate of 145 (World Prison Brief Online, 2010)

⁶UNPFA, 2012

⁷40 out of the 50 most violent cities in the world are located in LAC. (Consejo Ciudadano para la Seguridad Pública y Justicia Penal, ranking de las 50 ciudades más violentas del mundo, 201).

⁸For Example: Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago); Guatemala City (Guatemala), Panama City (Panama), Caracas (Venezuela), Belize City (Belize). Global Study on Homicide, UNODC, 2011.

The sharp increase of crime and violence in LAC is generally attributed to the interaction of multiple factors, in specific institutional, geographic, political, economic and social contexts. Some of the factors that contribute to this situation include the rapid growth of social and economic vulnerabilities, in particular among youth, the expansion of organized crime (evident in the increase in illegal trafficking of drugs and weapons), rapid and unequal urban development, combined with weak institutional capabilities of citizen security and law enforcement agencies.

In this context, local governments have responded by devoting significant resources to a wide variety of programs and policies meant to reduce crime. In many cases, however, it has not been possible to accurately determine the impact(s) of such programs and policies on crime and violence levels and on public perception of insecurity. The region has a significant lag, compared to other regions, in terms of the quality, availability and timeliness of statistical data on crime and violence, as well as applied knowledge about the prevention of crime and violence. Due to such gaps, Latin American governments face the challenge and the urgency of designing and implementing more effective and comprehensive citizen security policies and achieving better results.

With this background, this call for proposals aims to contribute to the generation of knowledge through more and better research on and impact evaluations of policies and programs meant to prevent and reduce insecurity in LAC cities. In addition, this initiative is part of a broader research project led by the IDB, over the next two years, on Public Policies for the Reduction and Prevention of Urban Crime in LAC. The papers resulting from this call will be used as inputs for the research project and the final report publication in 2015.

II. Project Objectives and Requirements

The objective of this call for proposals is to generate new applied knowledge, through funding research projects that use rigorous methods (experimental or quasi-experimental design) to assess the impact(s) of strategies aimed at reducing and preventing crime and violence in LAC cities⁹.

To this end, this call for proposals aims to fund 6 to 8 research papers in the following thematic areas:

1. **Social prevention:** Social prevention interventions target vulnerable and at-risk groups and aim to reduce violent and criminal behavior, and prevent low-risk behavior from becoming high-risk. Social interventions also include the prevention of domestic violence and violence against women.

Topics: (i) activities to prevent youth violence, in particular violence related to gang involvement, exposure to armed violence, and common crime, (ii) addiction treatment programs, (iii) social programs (e.g. conditional cash transfer programs, education, health and psychosocial programs, social inclusion and equality programs, reentry and employment programs, art, sports and civic culture programs), (iv) violence against women prevention programs and support services, (v) impacts of domestic violence; (vi)

⁹ "The classification of an area as 'urban' is a purely administrative decision and varies considerably between countries of the region. Depending on the case, the definition applies numerical census or qualitative criteria or a combination of both these. In LAC region, a common, albeit partial, criterion considers urban to be settlements of more than 2,000 or 2,500 inhabitants". (UN-Habitat, 2012).

institutional strengthening of victim services agencies, and (vii) activities to promote citizen participation and instill values of civic coexistence in communities.

2. Situational prevention: These interventions aim to reduce opportunities related to environmental factors that favor criminal and violent behavior.

Topics: (i) interventions to prevent crime through urban development programs in excluded areas and neighborhood upgrading; (ii) crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED); (iii) local laws and regulations addressing certain situations that make violence more likely, such as restrictions on alcohol consumption and carrying weapons; and (iv) incorporation of a crime prevention perspective into local infrastructure/physical space interventions, such as urban upgrading, neighborhood improvement programs, and the restoration of public spaces.

3. Preventive police: These interventions aim to strengthen the capacity of police to address crime in a preventive manner, by identifying opportunities or conditions for crime and deterring its occurrence. These interventions also aim to improve levels of public trust in the police.

Topics: (i) institutional management, strategic planning, organizational structure, human resources management, performance assessment methods; (ii) operation and effectiveness of police control and accountability mechanisms; (iii) impact of the modernization of information and crime data analysis systems; (iv) evidence about the strengthening of the police career path and training curricula, including specialized training, modernization of training academies, and professionalization in community policing, problem-oriented policing and hot-spot strategies; (v) training in the use of new technologies.

4. Prevention and the criminal justice system: Interventions in this area focus on preventing violence by through appropriate law enforcement measures, such as detection, prosecution and conviction of persons who committed crimes.

Topics: (i) effective use of new information and communication technologies to facilitate access to and exchange of information among the institutions of the justice system; (ii) impact of specialized training of criminal justice personnel; (iii) technical capabilities related to criminal investigation; (iv) provision and use of integrated criminal justice services (including at the community level), (v) promoting the use of alternatives to incarceration, (vi) establishment of conciliation, mediation and arbitration or alternative dispute resolution centers.

5. Prevention of recidivism through rehabilitation programs in the correctional system: Interventions in this area aim to prevent recidivism by offering opportunities for rehabilitation and social integration for incarcerated and post-sentence people.

Topics: (i) corrections system management, planning human and financial resources; (ii) training and professionalization of correctional staff; (iii) impact of rehabilitation programs, and programs supporting transition into employment and social inclusion; (iv) rehabilitation programs aimed at psycho-social health, addictions, etc., (v) basic and vocational education programs in the corrections system, (vi) information systems for improving individualized attention to inmates, (vii) participation of and strategic partnerships with the private sector (especially in employment reentry issues).

III. Selection Criteria

- a) Association with the objective and subject of the Call: proposals will be evaluated according to the extent to which research responds to one or more of the thematic areas prioritized in the Call for Proposals. It would be taken into consideration the rigorousness of methodologies and research design in order to generate value added to the state of the art in the field and contribute to expand the analytical and empirical knowledge in the region.
- b) Potential for replication: this criterion defines the extent to which research provides a set of lessons learned that can be applied to future interventions and how other institutions within the same sector in other sectors or across sectors can adapt the proposed impact evaluations. The IDB seeks to identify initiatives with a high potential for wide-scale use and adoption.
- c) Institutional capacity: this refers to the technical and academic researchers to conduct rigorous evaluations of citizen security issues at the urban level. It will take into consideration the experience in applied research and technical soundness of the research team.
- d) Geographic representation: selected projects should be implemented in one or more cities of Latin America and the Caribbean. Proposals will be selected taking into account a balanced representation of different sectors, countries¹⁰ and geographic regions¹¹, based on the proposals received.

IV. Proposal Submission

- a) Who can apply: this call is addressed to academics and researchers who had previously participated in academic studies or conducted research on issues specific to citizen security. Researchers submitting proposals must have a track record of empirical analysis and manage tools of rigorous impact evaluations.
- b) Document proposal: all research proposals should include the following sections:
 - *Purpose and theoretical framework*: this section should introduce the research question and include a brief discussion of the problem, the theoretical framework to be used, and the relevant literature.
 - *Methodology*: this section should identify the methods and techniques to be employed, explain how the data will be obtained, and, if applicable, and describe the type and size of the sample to be used. This section should also define the activities to be carried out in relation to the objectives of the research.
 - *Work Plan*: this section should include the activities to be conducted within a specific timeframe that meets the terms stated in the project schedule below.
 - *Preliminary Budget*: specifying the terms and necessary resources for the study. The preliminary budget should break down the items financed by the IDB and, if

¹⁰ Complete list of IDB borrowing countries: <http://www.iadb.org/es/acerca-del-bid/paises-miembros-prestatarios,6005.html#.UkuW7dJQGS0>

¹¹ Sub regions: Central America, Mexico, Panama y Dominican Republic; Caribbean; Andean Group and Southern Cone.

applicable, those financed by the research institution or team of researchers. The budget should indicate amounts allocated to professional fees, overhead, and other important research expense categories.

- *Researchers*: The proposal should identify the senior researcher and co-researchers, and describe their individual functions in connection with the schedule of activities proposed. It should also include the Curriculum Vitae (maximum of 3 pages per researcher) of the searcher team.
- c) Format and language: research proposals and annexes should be presented in PDF or Word format. Proposals will be accepted in English and Spanish only. Proposals should not exceed 20 pages (without including the CV of the researchers).
- d) Proposal submission: research proposals and annexes should be submitted to the following e-mail address seguridadciudadana@iadb.org no later than **November 22nd, 2013 (COB 18:00 ET)**. Incomplete proposals or proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

V. Coordination and Schedule

The project will be coordinated by Daniel Mejía (danielme@iadb.org), Research and Knowledge Coordinator of the Citizen Security Cluster at the IDB.

An Advisory Committee will oversee the project. The members are:

- Nathalie Alvarado, Coordinator of the Citizen Security Cluster, IDB
- Fabiana Machado, Researcher, Research Department, IDB
- Daniel Mejía, Research and Knowledge Coordinator of the Citizen Security Cluster, IDB and Professor at Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.
- Daniel Ortega, Coordinator of Impact Measurement, CAF, Development Bank of Latin America and Professor at IESA, Venezuela
- David Weisburd, Professor at George Mason University, USA and Hebrew University, Israel

The tentative Schedule of activities is as follow:

- **October 18th, 2013**: Dissemination of the call for proposals.
- **November 22th, 2013**: Deadline for submission of research proposals.
- **December 11th, 2013**: Announcement of preselected research proposals.
- **February 7th, 2014**: Inception Workshop in Washington D.C. to discuss proposed methodologies and data requirements for the selected proposals. The participation of the project's senior researcher will be financed by the IDB. After this workshop, and due agreement between the IDB and the researchers, the formal contract will be signed.
- **July 15th, 2014**: Deadline to submit Progress Report.
- **September 15th, 2014**: Deadline to submit the final version of the research paper.
- **Date to be defined (October or November, 2014)**: International Seminar to present findings.

VI. Financial Contribution

This Call for Proposals will finance between 6 to 8 research papers in the areas described above. Each selected proposal will receive financial support from the IDB of up to **US\$ 30,000**, according to the scope of work proposal. Projects with additional funding from other institutions will also be taken into consideration. The final draft will be published as IDB working papers, while the author (s) may also publish them in academic journals.

The payment schedule is as follows:

- 30% within 15 days of the formalization of the agreement between the IDB and the corresponding research team or institution.
- 30% within 15 days following the approval of the Progress Report.
- 40 % within 15 days following the approval of the Final Report.

VII. Contact information

For additional information and/or questions related to this Call for Proposals, please contact the IDB team at the following e-mail address: seguridadciudadana@iadb.org