Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Framework for Action*

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I. An Overview of Violence

Even a cursory review of daily newspaper headlines and conversations throughout Latin America and the Caribbean reveals that the subject of violence is foremost on the minds of citizens. Few in the region have remained unaffected by what is widely recognized as a multidimensional, multifaceted problem; nearly everyone has a story to tell, often in graphic terms. Survey after survey consistently underscores the gravity and prevalence of the concern.

These public perceptions are borne out by data--partial and fragmentary as they may be. Evidence suggests that the region may be among the most violent in the world (World Bank, 1997). For the last year (1990) in which comparable homicide data are available for regions of the world, Latin America and the Caribbean had a homicide rate more than twice that of the world average: 22.9 per 100,000 versus a worldwide average of 10.7.[1] Only Sub-Saharan Africa had a higher rate (40.1), and no other region of the world had a homicide rate in excess of 9 per 100,000. The most recent estimates for Latin America put the homicide rate at 28.4 in 1994;[2] homicide rates exceed the regional average in Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia and Jamaica (see Table 1). In addition, as Table 1 shows, homicide rates have risen over the past decade in ten out of fourteen countries where data are available. According to data from the Pan American Health Organization, the homicide rate for the region rose over 44 percent during the 1984-1994 period.[3]

Levels of domestic violence are also high in the region. Table 2 provides information on the prevalence of violence against women for those countries where there is available data. While the survey instruments used to collect prevalence data are not always comparable between countries, the findings in the table are representative of, and therefore, can be generalized to the

country or city cited. Anywhere between 30 and 75% of adult women with partners in the region are subject to psychological abuse, and between 10 and 30% suffer physical violence, the majority

Table 1. Homicide rates in Latin America and the Caribbean (per 100,000 population)

	Late 70's/early 80's	Late 80's/early 90's
Guatemala	..	150
El Salvador	..	150
Colombia	20.5	89.5
Jamaica	..	35.0
Brazil	11.5	19.7
Nicaragua	..	18.3
Mexico	18.2	17.8
Venezuela	11.7	15.2
Trinidad & Tobago	2.1	12.6
Dominican Republic	..	11.9
Peru	2.4	11.5
Panama	2.1	10.9
Ecuador	6.4	10.3
United States	10.7	10.1
Honduras	..	9.4
Argentina	3.9	4.8
Costa Rica	5.7	5.6
Uruguay	2.6	4.4
Paraguay	5.1	4.0
Chile	2.6	3.0

Source: PAHO, Health Situation Analysis Program, 1997, cited by World Bank, Crime and Violence as Development Issues in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1997.

of studies indicate. Even if the more conservative figures presented in the table are used, a large percentage of women suffer abuse, and most of this abuse is at the hands of their partners. Efforts to collect statistics on violence against women in the home are recent and as yet unable to support a comprehensive assessment of the magnitude of the problem in the region. Statistics on

Table 2. Prevalence of violence against women in Latin American and Caribbean countries

Country/City	Findings
Santiago, Chile[1 *] (1993)	33.9% psychological 10.7% physical (severe violence) 15.5% physical (less severe)
Colombia [2 +] (1990)	33.9% psychological 20% physical 10% sexual
Colombia[3#] (1995)	19% physical
San José Costa Rica [4+] (1994)	75% psychological 10% physical
Sacatepequez, Guatemala [2+] (1990)	49% abused 74% of them by an intimate male partner
Haiti [5+] (1996)	70% abused 36% of them by an intimate male partner
Guadalajara, Mexico[6*] (1997)	13% physical
Monterrey, Mexico[7#] (1996)	16% physical
Leon, Nicaragua[8#] (1995)	40% physical

Sources:

1 Soledad Larrain. 1993. Violencia Puertas Adentro: La Mujer Golpeada. Santiago: Editorial Universitaria.
2 Lori L. Heise, Jacqueline Pitanguy and Adrienne Germain. 1994. "Violence Against Women: The Hidden Health Burden." Washington, D.C.: World Bank Discussion Paper #255,
3 Profamilia and Macro International. 1995. Demographic Health Survey, III.
4 Edda Quiróz and Olga Barrantes. 1994. Y vivieron felices para siempre? San José, Costa Rica: Centro Nacional para el Desarrollo de la Mujer y la Familia.
5 Centre Haitien de Recherches et d'actions pour la promotion feminine. 1996.
6 M. Rodriguez and P. Becerra. 1997. " ¿'Qué tan serio el problema de la violencia doméstica contra la mujer? Algunos datos para la discusión. Mexico: VII Congreso nacional de Investigación en Salud Pública.
7 M. Shiroma. 1996. "Salud reproductiva y violencia contra la mujer: Un análisis desde la perspectiva de género. " Mexico: Asociación Mexicana de Población, Consejo Estatal de Población de Nuevo Leon and El Colegio de Mexico.
8 Mary Carroll Ellsberg. 1997. Candies in Hell: Domestic Violence against Women in Nicaragua. Licentiate Thesis, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, Umea University, Umea Sweden.

Paraguay [9#] (1996)	9.4 % physical 31.1% psychological
Monterrey, Mexico [10+] (1995)	45.2% abused 17.5% physical and sexual 15.6% physical and psychological.
Canada [2+] (1993)	25% physical
United States (1986)	28% physical
* in the last year # in her lifetime + period not specified in study or review article	

violence against children and the elderly are even more scant, but the little available evidence suggests that they too are serious problems, as would be expected given the high rates of domestic violence against women. Estimates place the number of children suffering severe abuse in the region, including abandonment, at 6 million and indicate that 80,000 children die each year as result of parental abuse. One of the few existing population based surveys reveals the magnitude of the problem of domestic violence against children. A full 63% of Chilean children in eighth grade (drawn from a nationally representative sample of 1,533 children) reported that they had suffered physical violence in the home; 34% of them indicated having suffered severe physical abuse, suggesting that serious abuse against children is as great or greater than similar abuse against women (Larrain, Vega and Delgado 1997).

9 Centro Paraguayo de Estudios de Población, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and United States Agency for International Development. 1996. Encuesta nacional de Demografía y Salud Reproductiva, 1995-96.
10 Marecla Granado Shiroma. 1995. "La Violencia Doméstica en contra de la Mujer", en Gobierno del Estado de Nuevo Leon, Desarrollo Integral de la Familia Nuevo Leon and El Consejo Estatal de Población de Nuevo Leon (eds.) , Foro Estatal para el Programa Nacional de la Mujer: Memoria. Monterrey: UNFPA.

Both domestic and social violence (or that violence between acquaintances or strangers) are moving to the forefront of the policy agendas of governments of the region, non-governmental organizations, regional agencies and multilateral financial institutions. In part this is due to high and in some cases increasing levels of violence. It is also due to the fact that violence concerns diverse communities: human rights organizations, women=s groups, public health advocates, and the international development community. Violence within the home and without is a *human rights issues*. The ability to live a life free of fear of violence is a basic human right.[4] Domestic and social violence are also *public health problems*, since both lead to increased morbidity and mortality. Finally, both types of violence are serious *obstacles to economic development*; empirical estimates of the economic costs of violence are presented below in Section 3.

Because of the high prevalence of domestic and social violence and their linkages (discussed later in this report), the focus of this analysis is the broader subject of violence rather than the narrower one of criminal violence. A violent act may or may not contravene existing legislation and consequently may or may not be labeled as Acriminal" by the criminal justice system. A case in point is domestic violence, some types of which even today are not considered criminal behavior in some countries of the region. Nor need all criminal acts be violent; such "victimless" crimes as prostitution and bribery usually do not involve violence (see Table 3). By including both criminal and non-criminal violence, this paper considers program options that seek to reduce all behaviors which lead to violence, whether such violence is defined as criminal or not.

Table 3. Crime vs. Violence: Some examples

		Legal Definition	
		Criminal acts	**Non-criminal**
Behavior	**Violent**	armed robbery assault stranger rape murder	domestic violence* marital rape* corporal punishment
	Non-Violent	burglary prostitution bribery/corruption	--

* in some countries

What triggers violence in Latin America and the Caribbean? What can be done to curb violence, both within the home and without? What can be learned from the region=s experience with violence? To help answer these questions, this paper presents a classification of types of violence, charts some of the principal socio-economic costs that result from violence, and identifies the principal contributing or risk factors. It also attempts to link policy recommendations for reducing violence to the factors that generate it. Finally, the paper outlines broad priority areas for future action to reduce violence in the region.

II. Types of Violence and their Links

A. Types of Violence

The phenomenon of violence is highly complex and multifaceted. One of the most challenging tasks is to distinguish different forms of violence and better understand their characteristics, causes and consequences. Violence can be categorized according to different variables: the

individuals who suffer the violence (women, children, young males, the elderly, the disabled, for example), the agents of violence (gangs, drug lords, youth, crowds), the nature of the aggression (psychological, physical or sexual), the motive (political, racial, economic, instrumental, emotional, etc), and the relationship between the person who suffers violence and the person who commits it (relatives, friends, acquaintances, or strangers). In this paper, for conceptual and policy reasons, we use this latter categorization to group all violent acts into two broad types and discuss violence that takes place between people related to each other by blood, marriage or common law[5]--referred to as *domestic violence*, and violence that occurs between individuals not so related--referred to as *social violence*. The former usually takes place within the confines of the household, while the latter usually takes place in the street or public places--and is consequently more visible.[6]

The most common characterizations of domestic violence have been made according to the type of violence and the identity of its victim or victims. Domestic violence can be physical, psychological or sexual. Physical violence, the most obvious type of domestic violence, includes slapping, shoving, choking, kicking, hitting, arm-twisting, intentionally inflicting burns, holding someone against their will, or cutting them with a knife or other object. In the context of domestic violence against women, psychological violence is more common than physical violence; it occurs when an individual is a victim of frequent insults, is threatened, has her personal belonging destroyed, or is subject to threats and yelling as a predominant means of seeking compliance or resolving conflicts.[7] In the case of children, the opposite appears to be the case; they are subject to physical abuse much more often than to psychological abuse. Sexual violence occurs when a household member (usually the male partner[8]) forces another household member

(usually the woman) to engage in sexual activities against her will, or sexually abuses a minor. Domestic violence may also be characterized by the person who is the object of the violence. While men are occasionally victims of domestic violence, the most common victims are women and children (there is, unfortunately, no reliable data on the elderly).

Definitions of social violence often focus exclusively on physical force. The Centers for Disease Control, for example, defines violence as **A**the use or threat of use of physical force, with the intention of causing harm to others or oneself " (Centers for Disease Control, 1989). While physical violence is the most important manifestation of social violence, psychological abuse (for example, bullying) is also important in its own right and as a frequent antecedent to physical violence.

Social violence can be categorized by geographic locale (urban versus rural violence), the motive of the violence (political, economic, social drug, random), the violent agent (youth, gangs, police, crowds), or the existing legal code (criminal versus non-criminal violence). The last categorization, while perhaps appealing to those with a law enforcement focus, is not particularly useful in designing policies to curb social violence. First, as it has already been mentioned, the same violent act may be illegal in some countries and quite legal in others. Second, there are frequently causal links between non-criminal violence and criminal violence. Children, for example, may begin to exhibit violent tendencies by mistreating or torturing animals. While not illegal in many countries, this behavior is a strong predictor of future interpersonal violence and consequently should be addressed immediately with counseling and other appropriate measures.

One distinction *is* useful in thinking about whether to pursue preventive or punitive actions

to address violence: the distinction between instrumental and emotional violence. Instrumental violence is violence used as a means to obtain a different goal. Politically motivated and drug-related violence are classic examples of instrumental violence; these are activities in which violence is used, among other things, to intimidate or ensure obedience.[9] In the case of emotional violence (also known as expressive or hostile violence), in contrast, the violent response is an end in itself. Domestic and social violence can be either instrumental or emotional.

The distinction between the two types of violence is important because rational offender models of violent criminal behavior, much favored by economists who study crime, contribute but cannot fully explain emotional violence. These models posit that potential criminals examine the expected benefits and expected costs of crime and decide to pursue criminal activities only if the expected benefits exceed the expected costs. Individuals who engage in emotional violence, however, do not carefully calculate the potential costs and benefits of violent behavior before engaging in it. As a consequence, standard punitive anti-crime measures--increasing the probability of being caught through increased police presence, increasing the probability of conviction if caught through improved detective work and judicial efficiency, or increasing the severity of the penalty if convicted of a violent offense--will not wholly deter individuals who engage in emotional violence. If one=s goal is to reduce emotional violence, in which psychosocial and cultural variables tend to prevail over rational ones, prevention, along with apprehension and punishment, should be pursued. In fact, as will be argued in the concluding section of this chapter, prevention is an efficient, under-utilized strategy to deal with almost all types of violence.

B. The Links between Domestic and Social Violence

Decades of behavioral research demonstrate that domestic and social violence form part of an integrated whole, closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Since violence is largely learned, the first opportunity for learning to behave violently comes from within the home, from one=s parents, siblings and other role models. Parental rewards for aggressive behavior, as well as parental mistreatment of children and violent parental role models, are some of the mechanisms by which children learn violence early in life (Bandura, 1973; Berkowitz, 1993).

Both children who are abused and those who observe chronic abuse have a greater propensity to behave violently--both inside and outside the home--than children without such experiences. There is substantial research suggesting that experiencing or observing chronic violence in the home may be the start of a lifelong pattern of using violence to exert social control over others and to handle interpersonal conflict. As levels of violence in the family of origin increase, the likelihood that a child will grow to engage in abusive or violent behavior also increases (American Psychological Association, 1993). Although children who are affected by violence do not necessarily grow up to repeat the type of abuse they experienced and abusive adults have nonviolent childhoods, studies document a significant connection between victimization in childhood and later involvement in some form of interpersonal violence (Dahlberg, 1998). Some authors believe that the strongest single predictor of an individual=s risk of perpetrating violence is a history of having engaged in aggressive behavior as a child (Eron and Slaby, 1994). Once a child exhibits violent tendencies, such behavior tends to persist over time and even be transmitted over generations (Huesmann et al., 1984). Thus, the link between domestic and social violence is direct, although not necessarily immediate.

The transmission of violence from one generation to the next and from the home to the streets is a compelling reason to pursue policies to reduce domestic violence, even if one=s ultimate goal is to reduce social violence. It is also a compelling reason to bridge the conceptual and programmatic gaps that exist between domestic and social violence-- that is, to bring together the now separate worlds of those (mostly men) who study and treat urban criminal and other types of social violence in the region with those (mostly women) who combat domestic violence.

The causal relationship between increased social violence and subsequent increases in domestic violence is less well established empirically. One can, however, make a plausible argument that increased social violence generates more domestic violence by lowering inhibitions against the use of violence, by providing violent role models, and by subjecting individuals to additional stress, a situational trigger for violent behavior.

III. The Socioeconomic Costs of Violence

Social violence impedes economic development. At the microeconomic level, social violence reduces human capital formation by inducing some individuals to invest not in education but in the development of criminal skills; it also dissuades some individuals from studying at night for fear of violent crime. At the macroeconomic level, it reduces both foreign and domestic investment; it may also reduce domestic savings if people have less confidence in a country=s future growth prospects.

Domestic violence also damages prospects for economic development—not just the lives of its victims. Abuse affects children's performance in school and, therefore, their future

productivity and the returns on national investments in schooling. Women who suffer from domestic violence are less productive in the workplace, and this lower productivity is a direct loss to national production. There are also important multiplier effects: women who are less productive tend to earn lower incomes, and these lower incomes in turn imply less consumption spending and a consequent lower level of aggregate demand (Morrison and Orlando, 1997). In addition, both domestic and social violence make claims on scarce resources--including expenditures on police, judicial systems and the provision of social services--that otherwise could be used for other purposes.

For analytical and illustrative purposes, the costs of domestic and social violence can be divided into four categories: direct costs, non-monetary effects, economic multiplier effects and social multiplier effects (see Table 4 below).

Table 4. The Socioeconomic Costs of Violence: A Typology

Direct costs: value of goods and services used in treating or preventing violence
- medical
- police
- criminal justice system
- housing
- social services

Non-monetary costs: pain and suffering*
- increased morbidity
- increased mortality via homicide and suicide
- abuse of alcohol and drugs
- depressive disorders

Economic multiplier effects: macroeconomic, labor market, inter-generational productivity impacts
- decreased labor market participation
- reduced productivity on the job

- lower earnings
- increased absenteeism
- inter-generational productivity impacts via grade repetition and lower educational attainment of children
- decreased investment and saving
- capital flight

Social multiplier effects: impact on inter-personal relations and quality of life
- inter-generational transmission of violence
- reduced quality of life
- erosion of social capital
- reduced participation in democratic process

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* Some of these will be partially reflected in medical costs. However, if individuals do not seek medical treatment, the health impacts are included in this category.

Direct costs of violence

Direct costs capture the value of goods and services used in attempting to prevent violence, offering treatment to its victims, and capturing and punishing its perpetrators. Thus, direct costs include expenditures on police, judiciary systems (prison and detention costs, as well as prosecution and other court costs), medical treatment (emergency room care, hospitalization, care at clinic or doctor=s office, dental care, and the costs of treatment for sexually transmitted diseases), psychological counseling for victims and, in the case of domestic violence, sometimes also for abusers, housing (shelters and transitional housing for abused women and their children); and social services (job training , parole officers, domestic violence prevention/education, advocacy programs, and training for police, doctors and others).[10]

No estimates of the direct costs associated with domestic violence are available for any Latin American or Caribbean country, but the assumption is that they are significant, although somewhat lower than estimates in industrialized countries, where there is greater availability of

services. The figures available for these latter countries are high. For instance, in Canada, Greaves (1995) estimates that violence against women (which includes domestic and stranger violence against women, but excludes violence against children) imposes an annual cost of $684 million Canadian dollars on the criminal justice system and $187 million on police. The cost of counseling and training in response to violence against women is estimated to be approximately $294 million annually. Thus, the total direct costs exceed $1 billion Canadian dollars per year, a large figure even for an economy of the size of Canada. The annual direct costs of family violence in New Zealand are at least US$1.2 billion. This is more than the $1 billion earned from wool exports (1993-94), and nearly as much as the US$1.4 billion spent in unemployment benefits (Snively 1994). In the United States, a study found that rape and sexual abuse were the dominant cause of intentional and unintentional injury costs for children between the ages of 5 and 14, and the second largest cause of injury costs for children between 0 and 4 years of age (CSN Economics and Insurance Resource Center, 1997)

In the case of social violence, data are available for several Latin American countries on the amount spent on public security and justice systems.[11] In Colombia, public spending on security and criminal justice was 5 percent of the country=s GDP in 1996; private expenditures on security amounted to another 1.4 percent of GDP (CEDE-UNIANDES, 1997: 23-5).[12] In El Salvador, expenditures on government institutions, legal costs, personal injuries and prevention activities represented over 6 percent of 1995 GDP (Cruz and Romano, 1997: 32). In Venezuela, public expenditures on security were approximately 2.6 percent of 1995 GDP (IESA, 1997: 25-7). The data from Mexico and Peru are not strictly comparable, since they refer to Mexico City and Lima, respectively, rather than the nations as a whole. In Mexico City, expenditures on

public and private security measures summed to $181 million in 1995 (Fundación Mexicana para la Salud, 1997); administration of justice and prisons accounted for an additional $128 million and $690 million, respectively. Public spending by the national government on police, courts and prisons for Lima was approximately 1 percent of metropolitan Lima=s regional product in 1997, while private spending on security measures accounted for another 0.41 percent of regional product (Instituto Apoyo, 1997: 26-8).

N*on-monetary costs of violence*

Non-monetary costs encapsulate health impacts that do not necessarily generate a demand for services from medical providers, such as increased morbidity, increased mortality through homicide and suicide, abuse of alcohol and drugs, and depressive disorders.[13]

If one calculates the impact on ill health of domestic violence, the results are sobering: the World Bank estimated that rape and domestic violence cause 9 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) to be lost annually in the world, more than the total for all type of cancers affecting women, and more than double the total DALYs lost by women in motor vehicle accidents (World Bank, 1993).[14]

In a study calculating the burden of disease for women in Mexico City, Lozano (1997) found that violence against women was the third most important source of DALYs lost, after diabetes and complications from childbirth. Spousal and other forms of abuse against women was a more important source of lost DALYs than traffic accidents, congenital abnormalities, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis, cardiovascular diseases, cerebrovascular diseases, and pneumonia.

Domestic violence also has important impacts on children who suffer abuse. Several studies (Dembo et al., 1992; Ireland and Widom, 1994, and Kelley, Thornberry and Smith (1997), in the United States, for example, document the link between child abuse and later problems of substance abuse for the victim.

In the case of social violence, there are also estimates of DALYs lost. In El Salvador, 178,000 DALYs were lost in 1995 because of violent death (Cruz and Romano, 1997: 30). The number was 60,792 in all of Peru (Instituto Apoyo, 1997: 16), 163,136 in Rio de Janeiro (ISER, 1998: 42), and 57,673 in Mexico City (Fundación Mexicana para la Salud, 1997: 14). In Caracas, disabilities were not included in the calculation (only death was); even so, 56,032 potential life years were lost in 1995 because of homicide (IESA, 1997: 31). While the numbers are large, their real significance should be gauged in comparison with DALYs lost for other causes. Unfortunately, these comparisons are only available for Colombia. In Colombia, between 18 and 27 percent of all DALYs lost from 1989-95 were due to homicide--well above the worldwide average of only 1.4 percent. DALYs lost due to homicide are three times greater than those due to infectious diseases, and two times greater than those caused by cardiovascular disease (CEDE-UNIANDES, 1997: 12-16).

Economic multiplier effects of violence

Economic multiplier effects of violence include decreased accumulation of human capital, lower rates of labor market participation, reduced productivity on the job, increased absenteeism, lower earnings, inter-generational productivity impacts, and—at the macro level—lower levels of saving and investment.

There is evidence that women who suffer domestic violence have higher rates of absenteeism and are more likely to be fired or leave their jobs. For the United States, Stanley (1992) reports that 30 percent of abused women lost their jobs as a direct result of the abuse. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that 94 percent of abused women lost at least one work day per year as a result of the abuse suffered, and 50 percent of abused women lost as much as three days per month (Stanley, 1992). In Canada, 34 percent of battered women and 11 percent of sexual assault victims indicated that they could not work the day after the assault, leading to lost earnings in excess of $7 million Canadian dollars per year (Greaves, 1995). Unfortunately, there is no evidence on job loss and absenteeism for Latin American or Caribbean countries.

With respect to the impact of domestic violence on women=s earning power, evidence from a study by Morrison and Orlando (1997) indicates large differences in labor earnings between women who do and do not suffer severe physical violence. In Managua, Nicaragua, women who suffer severe physical violence earn only 57% as much as their non-abused peers, while in Santiago, Chile, this percentage is only 39%. In Chile, lost earnings for all women account for more than 2 percent of Chilean 1996 GDP, while in Nicaragua lost earnings account for approximately 1.6 percent of 1996 GDP. It is worth emphasizing that these losses capture only the impact on women=s earnings; they do not include effects on labor force participation or absenteeism.

The last type of economic multiplier effects of domestic violence is the intergenerational impacts of domestic violence on children=s economic future. Children who experience or witness domestic abuse are more likely to have disciplinary problems in school and may also be more likely to repeat grades (Morrison and Orlando, 1997). In Chile, children who reported suffering

serious abuse also did significantly worse in school than children who reported no physical abuse (Larrain et al, 1997). These effects suggest nothing less than a direct impact on these children=s human capital and their future ability to obtain adequate employment at a decent wage.

Social violence also has important economic multiplier effects. The IDB sponsored studies on the economic impact of urban criminal violence in six countries of the region: Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela. The studies disaggregate the costs of violence into four categories: health impacts (expenditures on health services incurred as a result of the violence); material losses (private and public expenditures on police, security systems, and judicial services); intangibles (amount that citizens would be willing to pay to live without violence); and transfers (value of goods lost in robberies, ransoms paid to kidnappers, and bribes paid as a result of extortion). The final cost estimates were then expressed as a percentage of 1997 gross domestic product. The estimates ranged from a low of 5.1 percent in Peru to a high of 24.9 percent in El Salvador, with an average of 14.2 percent for the six countries. The detailed breakdown of these cost estimates is presented below in Table 5. Unfortunately, these categories are neither exclusive (e.g., citizens' willingness to pay may include the value of reductions in the health impacts of violence) nor exhaustive (e.g., they do not include explicitly the cost of lowered saving and investment).

While the measurement of violence's impact on investment is methodologically complex, several researchers have specified and estimated econometric models for Colombia. Rubio (1995), Bonell et al. (1996) and Parra (1997) all find a statistically significant inverse relationship between violence and firms' investment in capital stock. Of course, the importance of levels of violence as a determinant of investment is likely to vary by sector; one sector which seems

particularly sensitive to violence in many countries is the tourism sector.

Table 5. Economic Costs of Social violence in Six Latin American Countries (expressed as % of 1997 GDP)

	Brazil	Colombia	El Salvador	México	Perú	Venezuela
Health losses	1.9	5.0	4.3	1.3	1.5	0.3
Material losses	3.6	8.4	5.1	4.9	2.0	9.0
Intangibles	3.4	6.9	11.5	3.3	1.0	2.2
Transfers	1.6	4.4	4.0	2.8	0.6	0.3
TOTAL	**10.5**	**24.7**	**24.9**	**12.3**	**5.1**	**11.8**

Source: Juan Luís Londoño (1998), AEpidemiología económica de la violencia urbana@. Mimeo.

Social multiplier effects of violence

Social multiplier effects include the inter-generational transmission of violence, erosion of social capital, reduced quality of life and reduced participation in democratic processes.

In the case of domestic violence, there is significant evidence documenting the link between a man=s witnessing or experiencing abuse as a child and later behaving violently with his wife or partner. Research by Strauss et al. (1980) in the United States documents that the rate of spousal abuse was ten times higher for men who came from violent childhoods compared to men who had non violent childhoods. Some authors question the strength of this relationship, but not its existence (Stark and Flitcraft, 1991). Other research in the U.S. and Canada shows that children exposed to domestic violence have inappropriate views on the acceptability and utility of

violence as a means to resolve conflicts (Jaffe, Wilson and Wolfe, 1989) and are at increased risk of being both a victim and perpetrator of violence (Dahlberg, 1998; Thornberry, Huizinga and Loeber, 1995). The connection between domestic violence, poor parenting and future violent behavior outside the home has yet to be examined empirically in the Latin American and Caribbean region, but it would be very surprising were such a link not to emerge.

Nor are the effects on children limited to their reproducing violent behaviors as adults. Children who are victims of or who witness abuse are more likely to have behavioral problems while still children. In the Chile study of child abuse already cited, children who said they were victims of serious physical violence also had poor interpersonal relationships, not only with their parents but also with other children (Larrain et al, 1997). In a study in the United States comparing 102 children living in battered women=s shelters to 96 children from a control group, the children from the shelters were two and a half times more likely to have serious behavioral and adjustment problems (Wolfe et al., 1985).

Of particular importance is the erosion of social capital that occurs because of the isolation experienced by victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence against women in many cases is instrumental in nature; that is, a man uses domestic violence as a means to an end--in this case, control of the woman and her contacts with the world outside the home. This simultaneously reduces a woman=s quality of life and her ability to participate in activities outside the home, including income-earning and community activities.

Social violence also has important social multiplier effects, even though they are extremely difficult to measure empirically. Moser and Holland (1997) note that community-level violence in Jamaica often translates into widespread fear and the absence of fundamental norms of

cooperation and communication—in effect, destroying social capital. In many cases, upswings in social violence are accompanied by increased reliance by the government on costly punitive policies (incarceration, suspension of habeas corpus, etc.) One crucial impact of social violence is its inter-generational transmission. If children and youth are taught by adults, by the media and by society at-large that violence is a means to a quick accumulation of wealth, it is not surprising if young people--especially young males--adopt violent conduct.[15]

For the region=s human rights organizations, social violence increasingly constitutes the most significant threat to fundamental liberties, the rule of law and democratic consolidation (Fruhling, 1995; Instituto de Defensa Legal, 1996; Gregori, 1997). Structural violence, in which police forces and/or paramilitary groups become agents of violence perpetrated on certain groups, especially street children, both prejudices democracy and generates further violence. In addition, democratic institutions face new demands and challenges created by collective insecurity that not only affect economic development but also raise serious doubts about their ability to deal effectively with crime. As a result, the political impact of social violence is very large within a regional context characterized by a weak democratic culture (Fruhling, 1995).

IV. Factors that Contribute to Violence

There is no single factor that can adequately account for the high levels of violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. In discussing the factors that contribute to or inhibit violent behavior, that is, in discussing risk and protective factors, it is useful to distinguish between factors operating at the individual, household, and community/society levels. Table 6 below lists

some of the more important factors operating at these different levels. They are described below. It is also useful to take into account social and situational antecedents of violence—those features in the social and physical environment that promote or dissuade individuals from behaving violently.

Table 6. Risk Factors for Violence

Individual	**Household**
gender age biological educational level socio-economic level employment status substance abuse early exposure to aggression	household size/density family violence history household dynamics and norms household poverty level
Community/Societal Societal inequality History of societal violence (wars) Effectiveness of institutions of social control* Availability of guns and drugs media violence cultural norms neighborhood poverty level neighborhood crime rate neighborhood environmental features (housing stock, street lighting, etc.)	

* These include the judiciary and the police, as well as important civil society organizations such as the church and community groups.

A. Individual Factors

The evidence suggests that a cluster of key factors at the individual level can shed significant light on patterns of both social and domestic violence. These factors are: gender, age, biological/physiological factors, educational level, socio-economic level, employment status, substance abuse, and early exposure to aggressive stimuli, including the experience or witnessing of physical abuse. Each risk factor has its own marginal impact on the probability of an

individual behaving violently.

Males are more aggressive than females in all human societies for which evidence is available, and this is the only difference in behavior between the sexes that emerges before age two, indicating that there are biological roots to male aggression (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974). The risk of violent behavior is greater still if a person has suffered from brain abnormalities or has a neurological dysfunction, both of which increase the risk of aggressive responses. Other dysfunctions with a physical origin include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learning disabilities, poor motor-skill development, prenatal and perinatal complications, minor physical anomalies and head injury (Ospinas, 1998; Buka and Earls, 1993).

Policymakers often assume that biological and physiological factors are exogenously fixed and not amenable to policy interventions, but this is frequently not the case. Learning disabilities, for example, can be addressed via specialized educational programs, and prenatal and perinatal complications often can be avoided with appropriate maternal and child health interventions. Nor are all learning disabilities themselves the result of inherited biological traits: the quality of prenatal care and parent-infant interactions have strong impacts on the development of cognitive and emotional abilities to intercept of prevent violent responses (Karr-Morse and Wiley, 1998).

Another very important individual-level factor is early exposure to violence. Consistent evidence supports the claim that, in both social and domestic violence, early exposure to violence including previous experience with chronic abuse as a child—suffering or witnessing abuse--exercises a significant effect on the likelihood of committing abuse as an adult (Huesmann et al., 1984). The combination of neurological trauma and early experiences of mistreatment and neglect are powerful predictors of criminal behavior in adulthood.

B. Household Factors

Contributing factors at the household level are similarly relevant to a comprehensive analysis of social and domestic violence. The most central factors are: household size and density, family violence history, household dynamics and norms (especially whether the prevailing norms are more authoritarian than egalitarian or democratic), and household per capita income. Chilean fathers with four or more children were three times more violent towards their children than similar fathers with one child (Larrain et al 1997). A possible explanation for this finding is the increased density or crowding experienced by large families which leads to frustration and is conducive to violent conduct. In this same study, children with parents who are violent to one another also suffered significantly more physical abuse than children with non-violent parents. Violent families tend to perpetuate themselves. Other dysfunctional behaviors in the dynamics of families and households, such as ineffective parenting skills, including poor monitoring and supervision of children, are linked with antisocial, aggressive and delinquent behavior (Dahlberg 1998; Farrington 1991). A cross-cultural study of 90 societies showed that societies with high levels of domestic violence were also societies with authoritarian household norms, where men are dominant and where there is social acceptance of the use of physical violence (Levinson, 1989). Feminist writers and activists have emphasized unequal gender relations as a central factor in explaining domestic violence against women. In the U.S., for example, a national Family Violence Survey in 1975 found that violence against wives was most likely to occur when wives were both economically and psychologically dependent on dominant husbands (Berkowitz, 1993).

Gonzales and Gavilano (forthcoming), in a study of domestic violence against women in

Lima, Peru, find that household poverty increases the likelihood of psychological and overall levels of violence, but not of physical and sexual violence. The finding that--holding other factors constant--domestic violence against women is more likely to occur in poorer households suggests two possible explanations. The first is that poverty itself causes increased violence. The second is that poverty (or low socio-economic level) is not itself a direct cause of violent behavior, but instead is associated with greater stress caused by uncertainty, precarious economic conditions and overcrowding. Stress, in turn, is more likely to result in violence for those people with a predisposition to behave aggressively (either because of nature or nurture) than for those without this predisposition. Frustration and stress, in other words, are situational triggers for violence (Berkowitz, 1993). But if poverty is associated with but not causally linked to violence, violence, as the previous section shows, impoverishes people and societies.

C. Community and Societal Factors

Wider community and societal factors interact with both individual characteristics and household factors. The most salient of the wider societal factors include income inequality, media violence, availability of guns, post-war effects, weak institutional controls (particularly the frailty of police and judicial systems), cultural norms, and, possibly, neighborhood poverty levels and violence history.[16]

A well-known study of crime rates in the 125 largest U.S. metropolitan areas found that crime was more a function of the disparity of incomes than the proportion of poor people in the communities (Blau and Blau, 1982). A recent cross-regional study on the correlates of violence carried out by the World Bank bears out the strength of the relationship between high income

inequality and violent behavior (Fajnzylber et al., 1997). More so than in the case of poverty, income inequality increases notions of deprivation and frustration, which can be powerful antecedents of violent behavior.

Neighborhood poverty levels, however, do seem to be associated with greater violence. For domestic violence, there is empirical evidence on this score only from the United States (O'Campo et al., 1994). In the case of social violence, poverty may trigger violence, especially when associated with high income inequality, high unemployment and low education among youth (PAHO, 1996). Yet poverty may also be the result of violence, since violence diminishes human, physical and social capital (see prior section on economic multiplier costs of violence).

The underlying conditions of poverty and inequality in the region can become an even more serious contributing factor to social and domestic violence because of the role of the media in popularizing the consumption patterns of the wealthy and thus heightening the poor's sense of deprivation. The media also influences the level of violence by providing often prized models of violent behavior that viewers learn and emulate; these, in turn, tend to stimulate and fuel aggressive behavior. Repeated exposure to rewarded violence in the media is consistently associated with increased incidence of aggression, especially in children (Huesmann and Eron, 1986). The violent media is a situational trigger for aggressive behavior. Other situational triggers include the easy availability of guns, as well as environmental conditions that facilitate crime, such as the lack of privacy in homes and the absence of streetlights.

Societies that have recently emerged from civil conflicts are particularly vulnerable to sustained outbreaks of violence. In post-war El Salvador or Guatemala, for example, the widespread availability of weapons and attenuation of inhibitions against the use of violence tend

to exacerbate such already powerful contributing factors to social and domestic violence as inequality, the negative role of the media, and high levels of poverty. A comparison of homicide rates in a large number of countries before and after they had participated in wars found a significant increase in homicide rates, regardless of whether nations were victorious or not, and whether their postwar economics improved or worsened (Archer and Gartner 1984). In addition, though it is hard to derive precise measures of institutional performance, it is clear that the effectiveness of police and judicial systems may be especially compromised in societies that have recently emerged from conflicts, which in turn influences the incentives and anticipated costs of engaging in violence.

Culture is also an important determinant of behavior. Violence is woven into the cultural fabric of many societies and becomes a part of a set of norms that guide behavior and help shape group identities. Thus, for example, hitting children is often culturally accepted and frequently inculcates in these same children the belief that violence is an acceptable way of resolving conflicts. Gender stereotypes reinforce the notion of the Aright@ of a husband to control his partner=s behavior, and such control may be exercised via the use of domestic violence. At the community level, norms regarding participation in community organizations and mutual self-help have important implications for community cohesiveness and consequently for the level of violence as well. The existence of social and cultural determinants of violence has important implications for violence prevention and intervention programs. In particular, violence prevention initiatives which do not address cultural norms are at greater risk of not achieving their stated goals.

A high crime rate in a neighborhood may itself generate more violence. An increase in

violent crime lowers the inhibitions against violent conduct, both via a demonstration effect (criminals provide an example for those so inclined to emulate their behavior) and the erosion of social norms and community cohesion which regulate inter-personal relations (Fajnzylber et al., 1997). Finally, neighborhood environmental features such as population density, design of housing units and availability of street lighting matter as well.

The existence of risk factors at different levels of aggregation does not imply a lack of interaction between factors at different levels. For example, at the individual level factors such as biological and physiological dysfunctions and experience with physical abuse can make an individual more predisposed to behave violently. Households and communities that have low income and high density levels are more likely to aggravate such a predisposition to violence by increasing frustration and stress levels. Conversely, high income and low density at these levels would diminish the likelihood that an individual's predispositions would lead to violent behavior. Frequently, particular situational stimuli trigger social or domestic violence, activating such individual factors as previous experience with physical abuse.

V. Policy Responses

Policymakers concerned both about the large socioeconomic costs generated by domestic and social violence and the fact that increases in violence tend to escalate over time will want to take action to reduce levels of violence. Actions should be targeted at the various factors that contribute to the problem. Precisely because the phenomenon of violence is multicausal, a

combination of actions at different levels--individual, household and community--is generally necessary. This should not preclude the possibility that policy responses targeted at specific risk factors (such as weapons exchange programs or campaigns against the abuse of alcohol or drugs) can by themselves prove effective; they are also far easier to implement successfully. Governments must carefully weigh the costs and benefits of *integrated versus targeted programs*.

Policy choices can further be divided into *preventive policies* and what might be called *treatment or remedial measures.* Ideally, one would like to have data on the costs and benefits of integrated versus targeted programs, and of preventive versus remedial policies in different settings in order to choose the more cost-effective strategy. Unfortunately, in the region there is little or no information available on program costs even from a simple accounting perspective to evaluate program options, to say nothing of knowledge of benefits generated by different types of programs.

Experts in industrial countries, where there is more evidence on program costs and benefits, agree that preventive strategies are generally more cost-effective than treatment strategies. Bruner (1996), for example, examined the potential returns to investment in family centers in high risk neighborhoods in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and found that such centers would be cost-effective if they lead to a five percent or greater reduction in expenditures on remedial social services--a highly plausible assumption. For the state of Michigan, Caldwell (1992) estimated the costs of adult criminality resulting from child maltreatment and inadequate prenatal care to be 175 million per year. Providing comprehensive parent education to each family expecting its first child would cost only 43 million per year, and would have other collateral benefits besides reducing adult criminality--including reducing expenditures on protective

services, foster care, health costs of low birth weight babies, and reducing expenditures on the juvenile justice system (Caldwell (1992), discussed in National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, 1998). Thus, comprehensive parental education is a highly cost-effective intervention.

Prevention may be especially cost-effective in situations where very high levels of violence take place alongside weak capacity of key social control institutions such as the judiciary and the police, as currently occurs in much of Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, since research has shown that violent behavior is often rooted in the nature of biological endowments and social learning in the formative years, it is essential to direct prevention activities to a very young target population and their parents.

It is important to recognize that prevention and treatment are not either/or options; rather, they are located along a policy continuum. At the treatment end of the continuum are more conventional treatment policies that typically involve the police, courts and prison system. The explicit aim of these policies are to control the behavior of individuals who engage in violence (Fruhling, 1997). Moving along the continuum, there are secondary preventive measures that are targeted at particularly high-risk groups, such as young males who have witnessed or been victims of violence; these measures attempt to modify behaviors that put these individuals at-risk to commit or be victimized by violence.

At the other end of the continuum are primary prevention policies that attempt to change attitudes, social norms and behavior in the general population; they often target more than one risk factor and attempt to influence the behavior of particular age groups or other classes of individuals, such as parents and young children. At the prevention end of the treatment-prevention

continuum, another useful distinction is between prevention focused on the situational antecedents of violent behavior and prevention focused on the social determinants of violence. The first is focused on potential victims and seeks to reduce the likelihood that violent behavior will take place (by making violent crime more difficult, more risky, or less rewarding), while the second targets potential aggressors and seeks to reduce the probability of producing violent individuals (by emphasizing good parenting and positive social learning interventions with young children and/or subgroups in the population at high risk of engaging in violent behavior).

To best illustrate what can be most effectively done to address violence, it is instructive to examine in some detail four common contributing factors and explore which policy responses make the most sense. The four were selected because they are fairly representative and prominent in the region, and because they highlight how sets of policy options can be brought to bear on different factors that contribute to violence. They are: the learning of aggression, substance use, poverty and inequality, and availability of weapons.

A. The Learning of Aggression

Factors at different levels promote the learning of aggression. At the individual level, they include physical abuse/exposure to abuse and to aggressive models, as well as low educational attainment. At the household level, they include ineffective parenting and authoritarian household norms. At the societal level, they include the often negative role of the media and cultural values that accept and/or promote violence.

Because it is easier to prevent the learning of aggression in the first place than to promote its unlearning, preferred responses include promoting the social development of young children and high-risk groups, as well as the prevention of domestic violence. The educational system has the potential to modify cultural values that promote the utilization of violence. Curricular reform that reduces sex-role stereotyping at schools (by, for instance, teaching about female contributions in history class, eliminating sex-role stereotypes in textbooks, and promoting girls= participation in sports) is an important step in achieving gender equity and in reducing violence, as is the promotion of civic values.

Educational resources directed to teaching non-aggression in schools can be very effective, especially in high-risk communities. Innovative educational programs in the United States and Canada that teach children non-violent conflict resolution skills (see Jaffe, Sundermann and Schieck in Morrison and Biehl, forthcoming) have generated positive results. Schools are also an ideal vehicle for identifying children and families at Ahigh risk@ of violence who can benefit from available services. Complementary investments include good parenting programs which can reinforce at home the lessons learned in schools and early childhood development interventions that give both mothers adequate health care and support and young children the nurturing and

positive role models needed for healthy child development.

Informal community educational activities, which teach citizens about legal sanctions against violence, effective community-based prevention strategies, and social services available to victims of violence, are also appropriate. Non-governmental organizations are important in undertaking these efforts, as are community associations of various kinds. Women=s groups might be particularly instrumental in carrying out informal educational activities to address domestic violence. Similar activities can be productively directed at men--the likely aggressors in such circumstances--as has taken place in the 1990s in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Mexico. These programs have both a remedial component, teaching violent men to control violent behavior, and a preventive one, helping to delink the notions of masculinity and violence.

Mass-media educational campaigns represent a potentially effective response by providing non-violent role models and by reinforcing non-violent responses. Along these lines, the Inter-American Development Bank, in collaboration with governments and women=s groups throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, developed and distributed an educational video that seeks to raise awareness about the problem of domestic violence. Educational efforts can also involve the commercial media, encouraging them to produce and disseminate more positive images of inter-personal interactions (male-female and adult-child). Illustrations of non-violent resolution of conflicts are helpful, especially in entertainment programming such as soap operas. The results of many studies carried out in the United States point to the role of more positive portrayals of women and of the non-violent resolution to conflicts in reducing both domestic and social violence (Pan American Health Organization, 1996; Shifter, 1997). The involvement of the

media, including the commercial media, in violence prevention campaigns can help counteract the commercial media=s negative effect on the learning of aggression.

B. Substance Abuse.

Alcohol and drug abuse is a well-established risk factor for social and domestic violence at both the individual and community levels. On the preventive side, a range of viable options can be considered. The mix of measures carried out in the DESEPAZ (ADevelopment, Security, and Peace@) program in Cali, Colombia seems especially promising. The program employed an epidemiological approach by thoroughly documenting violent incidents, including information on alcohol levels and the precise location of the incidents. This information enabled the municipal administration to develop specific measures aimed at countering violent behavior. These measures included: adding street lighting; undertaking a range of measures to open a dialogue with gang leaders; and limiting the availability of alcohol by prohibiting its sale during certain time periods. The homicide rate in Cali dropped substantially after the implementation of these measures, demonstrating that municipal governments have tools at their disposal to reduce levels of social violence (Guerrero, 1997). In addition, broad-based well-designed media campaigns targeted to youth and other specific groups can highlight the risks and reduce the attractiveness of alcohol/drug consumption.

As additional preventive measures, it is useful to consider a range of policy options that seek to deal with, albeit indirectly, some of the conditions that give rise to alcohol and drug use. They include: employment programs targeted at sectors of the population most at risk (World Bank, 1997); integrated community services (such as slum upgrading, recreational facilities, or

teen centers) that can help renew social capital and foster positive norms and support, especially for young people (Moser and Holland, 1997); and many of the efforts dealing with the learning of aggressive behavior described above. The idea is to provide at-risk young males with alternatives that are incompatible with drug/alcohol abuse and violent behavior, including both paid work and sports. In addition to relevant municipal and national government agencies, the business sector and multilateral organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank can be helpful in supporting targeted employment programs for at-risk youth.

Finally, to deal in a forward-looking, preventive way with the spreading use and distribution of drugs throughout the hemisphere, it is important to strengthen the capacity of such institutions as the police and the judicial systems to carry out their professional roles and functions. Many national governments in Latin America and the Caribbean, through their Justice Ministries, have already placed judicial and police reform high on their agendas. In response, the Inter-American Development Bank is underwriting a number of institutional reform efforts in the region dealing with judicial (Jarquin and Carrillo, 1997) and police reform, while the World Bank is concentrating on judicial reform. Legislative measures at the national level, together with the work of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States and the United Nations= Vienna Convention, can help set up regional and international norms that can promote greater cooperation to confront collectively the drug problem.

C. Poverty/Inequality

High levels of poverty and inequality are among the most stubborn and intractable problems that

contribute, directly or indirectly, to social and domestic violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. Inequality, in particular, is the highest recorded in the world and has not diminished in the last two decades (IDB, 1998). No wonder the region suffers the high rates of violence it does. As it has been mentioned earlier, poverty and inequality contribute to feelings of deprivation, frustration and stress, all powerful antecedents of violence. Violent behavior, on the other hand, impoverishes people and likely consolidates inequality. Policy responses are chiefly preventive and have a long-term time frame.

Sound macroeconomic measures, coupled with policies pursued by both private and public sectors, can be helpful in generating quality employment. Possessing a good and steady job should significantly reduce an individual=s likelihood to engage in either social or domestic violence, especially in the absence of effective welfare systems. Jobs for women, in particular, can have desirable multiple benefits. They can help combat inequality, reduce fertility (which is associated with both inequality and violence) and shift the balance of power in family relationships, perhaps serving as protection against violence in the home, or at least providing women with some degree of economic autonomy should they need to leave a dangerous relationship. Complementary are measures that facilitate women's participation in the workforce, as improvement in access to water, electricity and transport to reduce women's time spent in unpaid housework; in the quality of schooling for girls; and in women's access to credit and technical assistance (IDB, 1998).

In addition, social investment funds, such as that implemented in Jamaica and a variety of other countries, can help replenish depleted social capital in a community. Programs might include support for the equipment and rehabilitation of sports facilities, teen centers, training centers, and conflict resolution activities (Moser, 1996).

What at least preliminary studies reveal is that particularly with respect to levels of inequality, greater access to education and health services may be a most effective, long-term remedy (Birdsall and Sabot, 1994; IDB, 1998). Recent World Bank research found that education tends to have a delayed effect in reducing crime, which often materializes not when the young are being educated, but when they become adults (Fajnzylber, 1997). Policymakers grappling with the problem of violence and thinking in the long term might consider a number of institutional reform measures, including allocating more resources to quality primary education, universalizing secondary schooling, increasing the quality and salaries of teachers, and giving local schools greater autonomy in governing their own affairs (Puryear and Bruner, 1995). These institutional reform measures should seek to remove sex stereotypes in teaching and, more generally, ensure gender equity in access to quality instruction.

In addition, in response to high levels of inequality that tend to produce resentments and poor communication between communities and public sector representatives, practitioners might consider community policing, mindful, however, of the potential difficulties in implementing decentralized policing models in the region's predominantly hierarchical institutional police culture (Neild, 1998). One interesting example is Viva Rio, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where a preventive strategy based on more effective relations between the city=s police force and community residents was developed in the early 1990s (Sussenkind, 1997; Fernandes, 1997). Another is a community policing pilot project in San Jose, Costa Rica. A year-end evaluation recorded a decrease in both crime and the perception of insecurity as well as an improvement in

the police's image (Chinchilla and Rico 1997). Community policing is a promising policy option that, by building confidence and giving community residents better, more effective protection, could in some ways reduce sharp inequalities in services--and address the consequences of such inequalities.

D. Availability of Weapons

Clearly, one of the major risk factors, particularly in social violence, is the availability of weapons. Weapons incite violence and aggravate violent episodes. In a number of cases their availability is the direct result of many years of war and internal conflict. The problem is perhaps most marked and pervasive in Central America, especially El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua--countries emerging from internal conflicts. In these countries, special programs have been carried out, with varying degrees of success, to control the availability of weapons. They have typically been conducted within the framework of political agreements of peace among former combatants, but it is important to sustain this effort beyond the peace process and devise incentives for residents to turn in their arms (Cruz and Romano, 1997). The program developed in Bogota, Colombia under the municipal administration of Antanas Mockus to buy back weapons in exchange for cash represents a promising effort in this regard. This program illustrates the value of collaboration between the public sector and civil society (i.e., the Church) in implementing a successful campaign , as well as the importance of symbolic messages to change a culture of violence—i.e., the melting of guns into baby spoons (Mockus, 1998). Another interesting experience in handgun control is that of Cali, where the carrying of handguns was prohibited on certain high-risk weekends. Guerrero (1997) argues that this measure was at least partially responsible for lowering Cali's homicide rate.

National legislation, along with international agreements and instruments related to the control of small arms -- such as that proposed by Mexico and adopted at the OAS General Assembly in June 1997 --

can also be helpful in setting national and region-wide norms in an attempt to curb their availability. More effective and responsible law enforcement activities, through a reformed and more professional police force, can also result in fewer available arms.

VI. Next Steps

The anti-violence agenda in the region faces both research and practical challenges. As this paper has documented, violence has been the subject of substantial research from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. The knowledge that has been generated in the past four to five decades in the industrial countries can be synthesized, transferred and utilized. Future research on violence in the region needs to be opportunistic and practical. New research on the causes of violence should be undertaken only to fill in key conceptual gaps (such as the relationship between social violence and domestic violence) or to identify location-specific risk factors for violence. Additional research *is* needed on three themes that will contribute directly to the design of anti-violence interventions: on magnitudes, costs, and evaluations of pilot interventions and "best practices."

There is a need to substantially improve the collection of reliable and comparable statistics on the incidence and prevalence of violence and to expand the range of measures used to establish its magnitude. Homicide is an important but no the only or best indicator of the level of violence in a society. Underrecording and underreporting of violence are serious problems, especially in the case of domestic violence.

Research on costs and consequences of violence, some of which is underway, combined with better

data on magnitudes can serve to both justify and identify priority areas for intervention. But the critical, difficult, and to date largely missing component for the design of effective interventions is practical knowledge of what works. There is urgent need to investigate and document best practices, evaluate pilot projects in operation, and launch a range of pilot initiatives with strong evaluation components in a variety of sectors.

In the area of antiviolence programs, a main challenge is in prevention, remaining cognizant, however, of the fact that there is a continuum that reaches from prevention to treatment. The emphasis in the region has been to combat violence with punitive action through the police and the courts, and to provide some treatment to the victims of violence. While effective punishment is a powerful crime deterrent, a host of other prevention measures, of comparatively low cost and high potential returns, have been woefully lacking. There are only a handful of prevention programs, many of them in Colombia, which has taken the lead in investing in anti-violence action.

Prevention measures can reduce risk factors for violence, increase protective factors, and address either situational or social determinants of crime and violence. Situational measures can increase risks and reduce benefits of violent behaviors as well as minimize environmental stimuli for aggressive actions. Prevention can be directed to the whole population (primary prevention) or can be targeted to high-risk groups such as children who have experienced abuse, unemployed youth or single parent households (secondary prevention). Prevention needs to be mindful of the conceptual links between domestic and social violence and intervene as early as possible in people's lives.

Strong child abuse prevention programs through community organizations (including local churches) as well as in primary and secondary schools could turn out to be among the more modest interventions with large dividends in terms of crime prevention. Other low-cost, high-productivity interventions include

mother/child health, early childhood development, alcohol and substance abuse prevention programs, and situational crime prevention measures, including gun control or exchange programs, street lighting and other public security measures, and restriction of alcohol sales during certain high-risk periods. Well-crafted and targeted media campaigns, including commercial media programming, can significantly help reinforce civic values, alter prevailing views of acceptable behavior between the genders, and aid in the prevention of domestic and social violence. Table 7 below gives a non-exhaustive list of actions to prevent violence by sector, which suggests the potential viability of sectoral as well as integrated programs in violence prevention.

Antiviolence interventions, whether they are closer to the prevention or the treatment end of the policy continuum, need to have an identified target group (e.g., elementary school students, youth gang members), a setting in which the target group can be reached (e.g., schools, detention centers), and a method or strategy to accomplish violence reduction (e.g., instruction in non-violent conflict resolution, vocational training) (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 1993). Municipalities are a promising setting for antiviolence action, especially for multisectoral activities which require coordination that can be accomplished more easily at municipal rather than national levels. Given the scant history of violence prevention and treatment initiatives in Latin America, it is also essential that all activities have a serious evaluation component that—at a minimum—allows measurement both of program impact on participants (versus a well-defined control group) and of program costs.

Anti-violence interventions need to give priority to poor neighborhoods, both because they tend to experience greater violence than better off ones and because the social capital of the poor is especially vulnerable to erosion by violence. Particularly important are investments in early childhood development and in economic opportunities for the poor, both women and young males, to prevent violence, reduce

inequalities, and promote economic growth. The multiple benefits of violence prevention on human well-being and human rights, as well as its likely positive impact on the reduction of poverty and inequality, place investments in these programs squarely within the agenda of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Table 7. Actions to prevent violence classified by sector

SECTOR	
Education	- educational programs that teach conflict resolution skills - non-sexist curricula and school texts - cognitive-behavioral interventions* (anger management, cognitive self-control, moral reasoning and social perspective-taking) - improved school climate (teacher management, school policies and rules, school security, reduce bullying) - technical education programs, which both reduce drop out rates and improve labor market insertion opportunities - increased cooperation with health clinics, police, social service agencies. - peer mediation programs
Health	- increased access to reproductive health services - improved identification of victims in health care settings - improved record keeping of violence victims - home visitation of new mothers - violence prevention information for women who use medical services (especially reproductive health services) - programs to reduce substance abuse - healthy baby/healthy mother programs - peer mentoring on dangers of a violent lifestyle
Justice	- decentralized, alternative centers for dispute resolution - inclusion of violence prevention activities in sectoral judicial reform projects - laws or regulations preventing sale of alcohol during certain hours/days - international and national agreements to control gun availability - reform of justice system to reduce levels of impunity - training of judiciary on issue of domestic violence

Police	- community and problem-oriented policing - police training including domestic violence and human rights training - increased cooperation with other agencies - gun repurchase programs - higher clearance and conviction rates to reduce levels of impunity - affirmative action in police recruiting - improved information gathering, record keeping and reporting
Social services	- workshops for couples on non-violent conflict resolution - social skills training - reliable, quality child care services - mentoring programs for ¨high risk¨ adolescents - good parenting programs (including setting of limits, mediation and non-violent conflict resolution) - integrated community services (i.e., recreation centers)
Media	- communication campaigns to change norms about violence - reduction of violent programming, especially children's programming - training of journalists in crime reporting - media literacy programs
Housing/Urban Development	- inclusion of security concerns in housing construction and neighborhood upgrading programs (street lights, space configuration, parks, etc.) - infrastructure for sports, recreation - infrastructure for neighborhood organizations
Civil Society	- training to NGOs to cooperate/monitor police reform efforts - private sector support of violence prevention initiatives - subsidization/financing of NGOs to provide early childhood development; programs for ¨at risk¨ youth - church and other community group involvement to change prevailing norms about violence

Sources: Dahlberg (1998); National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (1993); Rosenberg and Mercy (1991).

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NOTES

[1] Murray, Christopher and Alan Lopez (eds). 1996. The Global Burden of Disease: A Comprehensive Assessment of Mortality and Disability from Diseases, Injuries and Risk Factors in 1990 and Projected to 2020, Volume 1. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press. Also: Murray, Christopher and Alan Lopez. 1996. Global Health Statistics: A Compendium of Incidence, Prevalence and Mortality Estimates over 200 Conditions, Volume 2. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press.

2. Data on Latin America and the Caribbean were provided by the Health Situation Analysis Program of the Division of Health and Human Development, Pan American Health Organization. The figures are based on mortality by cause of death, supplied by PAHO member countries. These data are maintained in PAHO's Technical Information System data base. The homicide rate for Latin America in 1994 was 53.1, while it was 20.5 for the Caribbean.

[3] Data source is the same as for endnote 2.

4.The Inter-American Commission on Women of the Organization of American States (OAS) was instrumental in stressing the human rights dimension of domestic violence. The Belem Convention, which commits signatory governments to work toward the elimination of domestic violence, arose from the efforts of the OAS and many activists in the region.

5. Violence between individuals who formerly belonged to the same household--especially between ex-spouses or ex-cohabitators--is also classified as domestic violence.

[6] This classification scheme focuses on *interpersonal* violence. This paper deals only indirectly with vandalism and other forms of violence against property insomuch as they may foster interpersonal violence; note, however, that some policy interventions designed to reduce interpersonal violence may also lead to reductions in violence against property.

[7] Note that this categorization implicitly subsumes what some researchers term "economic violence"--the controlling or denying of access to resources--under the heading of psychological violence. The elderly, disabled and women are especially vulnerable to this type of violence.

[8] While sexual abuse of women and children are certainly the most common manifestations of sexual abuse in the region, there are also female perpetrators, male victims and same-sex incidents.

9. At the same time, sustained use of instrumental violence may lead to increased emotional violence, as individuals become accustomed to solving problems violently.

10. Some of these categories are taken from Laurence and Spalter-Roth (1996).

[11] Some extremely small percentage of national expenditures on security go towards provinding police and judicial services for cases of domestic violence. Since this percentage is extremely low in all countries of the

region, we treat police and judicial expenditures as if they were exclusively for the issue of social violence.

12. Counting all expenditures on law enforcement and criminal justice systems as Adirect costs of violence@ will overstate the true direct costs, since some of these expenditures would exist even were there no violence. In addition, the very existence of law enforcement and criminal justice may prevent some (instrumental) violence.

13. Care must be exercised here to avoid double counting. If an episode of morbidity generates a demand for medical services it is no longer considered a non-monetary cost and should be included in the category Adirect costs@.

[14] DALYs capture not only the years lost due to premature mortality, but also the years affected by disability or sickness.

15. In Colombia, young people aged 18 to 24 were asked in a survey, AWhat groups do you think are doing well in Colombia?@ (A quién cree Ud. que le va bién en Colombia?). The (non-mutually exclusive) responses were: politicians (41 percent); rich people (25 percent); opportunists/Avivos@ (18 percent); dishonest people (17 percent); people with contacts (15 percent); lucky individuals (14 percent); those who work (13 percent); and those who study (13 percent). With study and work ranking last, it is no surprise that Colombian youth frequently resort to violence to achieve their goals. See Cuellar de Martínez (1997) for the full results from this survey.

16. Three other societal factors--the overall crime rate, the amount of social capital, and cultural values about the use of violence--are likely important, but their impact is very difficult to quantify.