

Where criminal justice is not enough: Integrated urban crime and violence prevention in Brazil and South Africa

Levels of urban crime and violence differ within countries, within regions, and even within states and provinces, as do the drivers of crime, which are influenced by historical, political, cultural, and socioeconomic factors. Despite these differences, successful strategies to reduce and prevent crime and violence have common elements, often referred to as an integrated approach to urban crime and violence prevention. Three cities in Brazil and one in South Africa are emblematic of this integrated approach to urban crime and violence prevention, which includes communities and moves beyond mere policing.

Understanding risk factors, combining prevention and criminal justice reform, and pursuing inclusive approaches that engage actors at all levels of government, in civil society, and in the private sector are crucial in fighting and preventing urban crime and violence. A transition away from a criminal justice–first approach is frequently the first step. Preventive strategies—particularly those targeting young people through education, job training, psychological support, and early childhood development—usually follow. Because the benefits of prevention materialize in the longer run, strategies that aim to reduce crime and violence more quickly are also important. Among these strategies are inclusive citizen security, public health programs such as drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and the construction of youth-friendly spaces.

Although crime rates in some cities remain very high (figure S4.1), the improvements in crime and violence in

Diadema, Belo Horizonte, and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil and in Johannesburg in South Africa highlight the benefits of complementing traditional criminal justice approaches with prevention strategies.

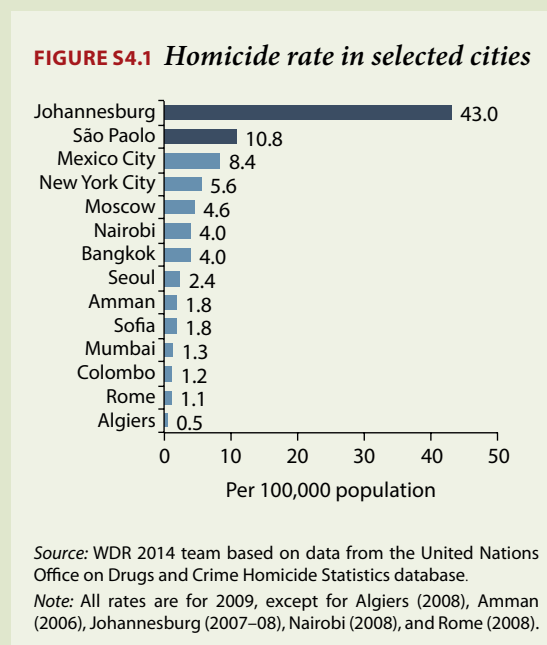
Making cities safer in Brazil

Brazil is a heterogeneous country, which is reflected in the variation in crime rates across its different regions. While the homicide rate has increased significantly in areas such as the northeastern portion of the country, over the past 25 years some regions, particularly those in the south, have experienced large declines in their homicide rates. In São Paulo, for instance, the homicide rate fell 67 percent between 2000 and 2010.

Crime reduction approaches that have shown good results in the southeast include educational programs, programs for youth, and gun and alcohol control, all of which involved inclusive citizen security components at the municipal level. The strategies of three different Brazilian municipalities are particularly noteworthy.

Diadema, a city in the state of São Paulo where violence increased 49 percent between 1995 and 1998, enacted a new public security policy in 2000. Important components of the policy included a limit on alcohol sales after 11 p.m. and monitoring of the number and legality of alcohol licenses in the city. Diadema also improved public lighting and installed security cameras in areas with high crime rates. The public security policy contributed to a decline in the homicide rate from 389 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1999 to 167 in 2003. The alcohol policy seemed particularly effective: the homicide rate fell 44 percent and the rate of assaults against women fell 56 percent compared with levels expected in the absence of the alcohol policy.

Homicide rates also increased significantly in the late 1990s in Belo Horizonte, Brazil's third-largest city. Crime in the city often occurred in slums and was frequently perpetrated by young men. Following a public outcry, city officials in 2002 piloted the Fica Vivo (Stay Alive) program in the city's most violent slums. The program involved the city council; the municipal, federal, and military police; the



public prosecutor's office; private businesses; nongovernmental organizations; and local communities. Preventive actions, including support for education, job training, and youth sports and arts programs, aimed to reduce violence through the combination of crime control and social development programs. Information sessions about violence, drugs, and sexually transmitted diseases were also offered. Thirty months after the implementation of Fica Vivo, homicides had fallen by 47 percent and attempted homicides by 65 percent.

The homicide rate jumped in the state of Rio de Janeiro, as well, more than doubling between 1980 and 1997 from 26 to 59 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Crime began to drop in the 2000s as a result of 2003 national gun control legislation and a small-arms buyback campaign. By 2008, homicide rates in the state and in the City of Rio had fallen to less than 34 per 100,000 inhabitants.

However, drug trafficking persisted in Rio's *favelas*, the informal settlements of Brazilian cities. In 2008, an initiative combining criminal justice and prevention was launched in response. The initiative relied on elite police units to clear *favelas* of drug traffickers. Once they were gone, UPPs (Police Pacification Units) entered the *favelas* and focused on building trust between the community and the police, while also providing a continued security presence. The UPPs helped accelerate the decline in the homicide and violent crime rates. A second phase, UPP Social (UPPS), links residents of those *favelas* that have been cleared of drug traffickers with social assistance. Dialogue is encouraged among residents, service providers, government agencies, and the private sector to help ensure that community needs are met. To ensure the sustainability of the approach, this phase also involves efforts to formalize services such as electricity, gas, cable, and Internet; rehabilitate youth formerly involved in criminal activity; and revitalize the urban area. By 2012, more than 25 UPPs had been established. The government plans to serve 165 communities through the establishment of 45 UPPs and UPPSs by 2014.

Combining prevention and criminal justice in South Africa

In the past, South Africa took a more reactive approach to crime, relying heavily on the criminal justice system. This reactive approach led to one of the highest rates of incarceration in the world but did little to stem crime. For instance, the country's homicide rate was 39 per 100,000 in 2007–08, higher than Brazil's rate of 26. A shift to a multi-sector preventive approach to crime reduction appears to be making some progress, however. In 1996, shortly after the end of apartheid, the South African government launched a National Crime Prevention Strategy, which advocated a greater focus on prevention. In recent years, the South Africa Police Services have used Community Police

Forums to put this proposal into action. Consisting of schools, businesses, and civil and religious institutions, the forums facilitate partnerships and joint problem identification and problem solving between the police and the community. The partnerships are designed to lead to the development of multistakeholder community safety plans.

Johannesburg adopted a strategy in line with the rethinking of crime prevention taking place in the rest of the country. Indeed, the homicide rate in Johannesburg was even higher than in South Africa as a whole in 2007–08, reaching almost 43 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. The Joburg City Safety Strategy, part of Johannesburg's development plan, is designed to cut the city's high crime rate. The strategy prioritizes actions that are critical to economic development and foresees a gradual broadening of the boundaries of crime reduction and prevention interventions. Key programs include targeted surveillance, patrols, closed circuit television, and other tools to deter criminals and increase people's perception of safety.

Reforms continue along these lines. In 2012, South Africa undertook a review of the criminal justice system in an effort to increase conviction rates, speed trials, improve the rehabilitation capacity of the prison system, and promote released prisoners' reentry into society. The country is also increasing the budget for and expanding locations of the police, courts, and prisons. Civil society organizations, such as the Open Society Foundation and the Center for Justice and Crime Prevention, have helped launch safety audits in poor communities and have assisted with the design of crime prevention programs tailored to the local context. The private sector is also heavily involved. For example, Business against Crime, a coalition of South African companies, collaborates with the government to develop public-private partnerships to reduce crime.

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