

## VIOLENCE PREVENTION: A CRITICAL DIMENSION OF DEVELOPMENT

The Conflict, Crime and Violence team in the Social Development Department (SDV) has organized a day and a half event focusing on “**Violence Prevention: A Critical Dimension of Development**”. As the issue of violence crosscuts other agendas of the World Bank, the objectives of the event are to raise World Bank staff’s awareness of the link between violence prevention and development, its relevance for development, and to present the rationale for increased attention to violence prevention and reduction within World Bank operations.

Violence has become one of the most salient developmental issues in the global agenda. Its negative impact on social and economic development in countries across the world has been well documented. Studies have shown that in about 60 countries, over the last ten years, violence has significantly and directly reduced economic growth. It has hampered poverty reduction efforts and limited progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. About half of these 60 countries currently experience violent conflict or are in post-conflict transition. The other half experience high levels of violent crime, street violence, domestic violence, and other kinds of violence.

Violence takes many forms: from the traditional protection racket by illegal organizations to the rise of international illegal trafficking (arms, humans, drugs), from gang-based urban violence and crime to politically-motivated violence fueled by socio-economic grievances. All these forms of violence concur to erode the well-being of all – and more acutely of the poorest – and to stymie development efforts. Social failure, weak institutional capacity and the lack of a legal framework to protect and guarantee people’s safety and rights create a climate of lawlessness and engender dynamics of state-within-state behavior by increasingly more powerful criminal organizations.

There is now a greater understanding of the interrelationship between these different forms of violence. Common violence – defined in opposition to politically-motivated violence – has often increased in post-conflict countries after large-scale armed conflict ended. Such cases include Somalia, Liberia, Guatemala and El Salvador. Conversely, countries with high levels of common violence have shown tendencies toward sporadic socio-political instability, as in the cases of ethnic violence in Kenya and in South Africa, or urban riots in Brazil and Haiti. The case of Colombia, where long lasting civil war has been accompanied by high levels of urban violence and persisting illegal activities, further suggests the interplay and interconnectedness of various types of violence.

These examples highlight that types of violence are linked to each other, and suggest that compartmentalizing different types of violence and the approaches to address them may not be the best strategy. Ultimately, violence impedes the emergence of the very conditions necessary for the successful implementation of development operations. Much of the literature shows that approaches to reducing and preventing violence need to be comprehensive in nature and must encourage the participation of a wide range of actors.

Governments across regions are increasingly requesting the World Bank’s support in addressing these problems more effectively. The challenges of preventing violence and reducing crime require seamless coordination among different actors within the state (national and municipal), civil society and local communities, as well as donors. The Conflict, Crime and Violence team engages in violence prevention activities as well as encourages development activities to adopt a violence prevention lens, in order to avoid exacerbating grievances in society and/or deepen social marginalization that feeds into violence.

The “**Violence Prevention: A Critical Dimension of Development**” event will be an occasion to showcase:

- (i) How violence prevention crosscuts important development priorities, such as fragile countries, governance, gender and youth inclusion, post-conflict reconstruction and urban development.
- (ii) What we know about what works and does not work in violence prevention.
- (iii) How this agenda can be translated into concrete policy advice and operations, and how the World Bank can move forward in addressing crime and violence.

This seminar will also aim to share experiences with external organizations and experts to present, analyze, and discuss issues related to violence, its impact on societies, and the best approaches to prevent it. The event includes speakers from the World Bank, from organizations working on violence-related issues, and from governments and municipalities.

As part of the event, the Conflict, Crime and Violence team has organized the Photo Contest *Imagining Peace: The World Bank Contribution to Peace-Building and Prevention of Violence*.

## **PHOTO CONTEST - IMAGINING PEACE: The World Bank Contribution to Peace-Building & Prevention of Violence**

***Have you ever thought that your project might have a violence prevention impact?***

As part of the “Violence Prevention: A Critical Dimension of Development” event, the Conflict, Crime and Violence Team (CCV) in the Social Development Department (SDV) has launched the Photo Contest *Imagining Peace: The World Bank Contribution to Peace-Building and Prevention of Violence*. The contest was organized to raise awareness of the contribution of World Bank operations to peace-building and violence prevention.

*Imagining Peace* features photographs taken by World Bank Group staff and consultants working on projects and activities that contribute to sustainable peace and that decrease or prevent violence. Photos address the theme of violence prevention and peace-building by showing the positive impact of development interventions. The objective was to illustrate how development programs may directly or indirectly address violence prevention and peace-building through images that show the relationship between development and the reduction of violence and conflicts.

### **Selection**

A jury of five (5) members selected the three winning photographs from the shortlist. The jury was composed of:

- Mr. Ian Bannon, *Sector Manager, Post Conflict and Social Development Unit in Africa Region, The World Bank*
- Ms. Marina Galvani, *Art Curator, Institutional Art Program, The World Bank*
- Mr. John Heffernan, *Director, Genocide Prevention Initiative, Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC*
- Mr. Alastair J. McKechnie, *Director, Fragile & Conflict-Affected Countries Group, The World Bank*
- Mr. Raju Singh, *President, International Photographic Society, International Monetary Fund*