COMMON GROUND AND CROSSCUTTING THEMES ON FUNDING PUBLIC SECURITY INITIATIVES IN LATIN AMERICA

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Preface

The extent of crime and the quality of policing in Latin America are matters of profound and immediate importance. When crime is brazen and pervasive, when policing is abusive and corrupt, they stifle the lives of all citizens, particularly those in poverty. They corrode the integrity of government; they sabotage economic development; they threaten the viability of society itself.

Precisely because crime and policing affect so many aspects of society in Latin America, they are of interest to a wide range of donors in the region. By reducing crime and reforming police, donors hope to reduce poverty, strengthen democracy, expand the economy, and fuel social enterprise.

Yet, until the last few years, donors in Latin America have been reluctant to engage directly in programs of crime reduction and police reform. The fields are so undeveloped that the actual impact of any specific program is uncertain at best, and the risks on many levels are great.

All of these factors point to the value of collaboration among donors on this topic. By working more closely together, donors can support each other's ambitions and speed the development of these fields, while reducing and managing the risks.

To encourage more donors to take up these challenges, and to strengthen the collaboration among them, our three institutions joined together to organize the meeting and discussions in Buenos Aires in September 2002 that gave rise to this publication. We have been working together specifically on the issues of citizen safety and police reform in Latin America since 1998, and we are greatly encouraging by the growing interest in these issues among many donors since that time. We hope that this publication will encourage more donors to join this effort, taking these fields in new directions while making a real difference to the lives of so many citizens across the continent.

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Introduction

A growing number of multilateral and private philanthropies are turning their attention to public security reform in Latin America. Many of these donor organizations have made public safety a priority and increased their engagement in and support for a wide range of initiatives, from small seed grants for community-based crime prevention projects, to large, often long-term efforts to establish or restructure law enforcement institutions. This heightened level of activity reflects a growing consensus that public security plays a central role in developing and sustaining democracy, particularly in countries undergoing democratic transitions, such as those moving from military rule to democratic governance.

In September 2002, representatives from 13 donor organizations of varying size, mandate, and regional focus gathered in Buenos Aires to begin a collective discussion of public security and police reform initiatives in Latin America.[1] Their conversation was guided by the following philosophical and pragmatic questions:

- How has democratization and the new concern for public security in Latin America affected the conceptualization of human rights?
- How have these developments affected the strategies of donors who share these concerns?
- What goals underlie current support for public security initiatives?
- How are programs developed and grantees selected?
- What are the common problems that donors face?
- What opportunity is there for closer cooperation between donors in this enterprise?

This paper reports on both the discussion at that meeting and observations made in strategy papers submitted by the participating organizations. It begins by describing four major program areas in public security reform: reducing crime; reforming police institutions and practices; reforming the criminal justice sector; and engaging civil society in the reform process. The second part of the paper examines three devices that donors use to improve the likelihood that the approach they select will be effective: establishing measurable outcomes; selecting appropriate recipients; and finding a balance between directive and responsive programming.

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[1] Representatives from the following institutions participated in the meeting: the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Foundation, the World Bank, the United Kingdom Department for International Development, the Unites States Agency for International Development, the Canadian Embassy in Buenos Aires, the British Embassy in Buenos Aires, the John Merck Fund, the Tinker Foundation, the Open Society Institute, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and the Ford Foundation. The meeting was sponsored by the Ford Foundation and organized and facilitated jointly by the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales, Buenos Aires, and the Vera Institute of Justice, New York.

PART I. The expanding world of donor support

The public security sector encompasses a large and diverse array of activities, with players drawn from both the public and private sphere. As reports produced by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Bank note, its activities include the work of agencies that provide security for state institutions as well as those that protect communities and individuals within the state. Thus, state-funded police forces and independently financed structures such as private security companies, neighborhood watches, and civilian agencies responsible for oversight may all be included within its sphere. The field is also shaped by the sometimes permeable border between police, military, and paramilitary activities.

The democratization of most Latin American countries during the 1990s helped to expand the scope of public security reform. Donors who had formerly refrained from supporting the police or other law enforcement agencies under military rule discovered a wide range of funding opportunities and partners under the emerging democratic governments. The political transformation changed many donors' approach to human rights work as well. Rather than fund civil society organizations to monitor and criticize the state for violations and abuses, they began seeking ways to strengthen the state's own ability to protect rights and provide remedies. Many organizations now view public security initiatives as opportunities to engage with law enforcement agencies rather than isolate them.

The donor community's new willingness to cooperate with police authorities is not uniform, however. While some donors perceive it as a positive reflection of a new and broader conception of democracy, others worry that engagement represents a "retreat" from earlier, more robust commitments to human rights. The lack of unanimity on the effectiveness of this approach provides additional grounds for engaging in conversation across the community of donors.

As the number of public security initiatives has increased, so have the variety of ways in which donors pursue these goals. Typically, these fall into four general categories:

1. reducing crime,
2. reforming police,
3. reforming the criminal justice sector, and
4. engaging civil society.

Each of these approaches has its own logic and set of assumptions, to which we now turn.

1. Reducing crime

Programs that seek to advance public security by reducing crime can be divided into four conceptual categories.

Addressing Social Factors. An increasingly common approach to public security programming—what DFID describes as "social crime prevention"—focuses on improving the social factors that affect public security in a particular community or that influence individuals to become offenders. These factors can include the political, economic, and cultural conditions related to the incidence of crime and violence. Employment programs, community services, youth recreation programs, and drug addiction programs are all examples of projects that address environmental factors that may affect crime rates and that seek to strengthen the informal social control created by family, community, school, and work.[2]

This kind of programming may indeed have long-term beneficial effects on crime—as well as for poverty reduction and human development more generally. In practice, however, its impact on public security is often diffuse and difficult to attribute directly to specific interventions. Moreover, even when such programs have the desired effect, they may miss many potential offenders, serve some people who would not have become offenders, and reach others who nevertheless become involved in crime.

Targeted Action. A second approach to crime reduction seeks to have a more specific and immediate impact on the opportunities and incentives to commit crime. These situational crime prevention programs—referred to by the Inter-American Development Bank as "secondary preventive" programs—focus on the act and setting of crime itself. They may try to reduce the opportunities for offending by, for example, improving street lighting, creating neighborhood watch groups, or discouraging the purchase of stolen goods.

The Program for Development, Security and Peace (Programa Desarrollo Seguridad y Paz, DESEPAZ) in Cali, Columbia, is one such initiative. Drawing on epidemiological analyses of crime and violence, it aims to contain and prevent violence by both improving police efficiency and educating citizens and providing them with useful information. By thoroughly documenting violent incidents and related information, such as trends in alcohol consumption, local security councils (Consejos Municipales de Seguridad) implemented measures to counter violent behavior. These included bans on carrying handguns and limits on alcohol availability during national holidays and other high-risk periods. In DESEPAZ's initial year of operation, Cali experienced its first drop

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[2] Lawrence Sherman discusses this approach to crime reduction in *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising*. United States Department of Justice, p. 2-7.

in homicide rates in 12 years. While the correlation does not prove that the program caused the reduction, the early findings inspire hope that the project is succeeding.

Institutional Reform. A third type of crime reduction program strengthens the capacity of formal justice institutions—police, courts, and correction systems—to produce public safety. These programs usually are designed to improve the ability of courts and correctional systems to convict and punish offenders. In many cases, they seek to prevent future crime by incapacitating offenders and deterring others with a demonstrated threat of arrest.

There is concern, however, that this kind of intervention may also have unintended adverse consequences. Such programs can impose a high financial and social cost on society, and, in some cases, risk increasing future offending. For example, efforts to increase incarceration frequently result in children growing up fatherless, motherless, or in foster care.

Other programs in this category take a slightly different approach by encouraging "problem-oriented policing," which focuses on a specific and recurring crime problem and intervenes to remove the root cause. Drug courts that invite prosecutors, judges, and defense lawyers to experiment with problem-solving innovations are one such example.

Combating Police Criminality. Because police themselves may commit violent crime, exacerbating disorder in society at large, police criminality and the connections between police, organized crime, gang, and drug activity, have also become important targets of funding. The Tinker Foundation and the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, for example, are sponsoring a project to gauge criminal behavior by security agencies in Argentina. Other programs in this category seek to curb excessive use of police force by providing assistance to victims and witnesses or by strengthening prosecutors. Reductions in police abuses can also be sought by providing support for formal police oversight institutions within government. A less common strategy rewards the use of nonviolent practices to reduce crime.

2. Reforming policing

As a primary entry-point into the justice sector, the police occupy a key position. As Martin Abregú, Ford program officer for the Southern Cone, points out, most people in most countries in Latin America come into contact with the state only as victims of crime or when accused of crime. When this contact is combined with corrupt or illegal behavior by the police, or rude or intimidating treatment, the result can undermine confidence in the entire system. Trust in the police is particularly low in the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society, where many donors focus their activities. Many donors interested in crime reduction therefore focus specifically on reforming the police.

In much of Latin America and the Caribbean, police forces have either inherited or adopted military structures. Consequently, they have rigid hierarchies that resist experimentation or reform that does not come from the top of the organization. Such institutions are also frequently less receptive to cultural change and reorienting towards public service.

Some policing reform efforts seek to break through this resistance and improve the public's perception of the police by promoting new oversight structures, such as investigative and monitoring units, internal affairs units, and advisory councils. In Peru, for example, the Open Society Institute is supporting the creation of an internal discipline unit staffed by civilian investigators. OSI is also working to establish municipal security committees chaired by the local mayor and staffed by representatives from the police, church, private sector, and human rights organizations. A paradox that these initiatives, and others like them, face, however, is that the trust they seek to create is in some respects a necessary condition for their success. OSI's support is short term and Peru's Ministry of the Interior will assume financial responsibility of the office within several years. But according to George Vickers, regional director for Latin America, ensuring that the internal discipline unit is created early on and given enough financial stability to establish itself is essential to Peru's current reform efforts.

A second approach to changing police culture focuses on training. The Ford Foundation, for example, supports introducing social science and public policy courses into police training in several states in Brazil. By organizing the courses at a local civilian university—where police study alongside civilian students—the project provides an opportunity to demilitarize police education while encouraging contact between officers and their fellow students and teachers. This approach also works to establish a foundation for stronger institutional relationships by helping the police understand the value of social science research to their policing and reform efforts. Elizabeth Leeds, Ford program officer in Rio de Janeiro, believes that this program, and others like it, can establish universities as a permanent resource for the police, yielding a more stable base for long-term reform efforts even as politicians and governments change.

A closely related strategy is to invest in technological innovations within university institutes that work collaboratively with the police. This approach allows donors to ensure that police access to new technology is accompanied by complementary changes in attitude and institutional relations. By decreasing the likelihood that new technologies are simply absorbed into old practices without the benefit of new ideas, it increases the potential for improving police effectiveness and service to communities. With support from Ford and the Hewlett Foundation, this approach has been adopted by CRISP (Centro de Estudos de Criminalidade e Seguranca Publica) and the police in Minas Gerais in their collaboration on crime mapping and community policing.

A substantially different funding approach to the problem of poor public confidence in the police seeks to lower the profile of the police in reform initiatives. This tack was

adopted by the Canadian International Development Agency in its Just and Safe Communities (Comunidades Justas y Seguras) project in Rosario, Argentina. While the police play a key role in this project, other actors are equally prominent, including religious and community-based organizations. Its goal, moreover, is to cultivate conflict resolution and self-managed public security techniques within the community so that interactions with police are less common.

While the donor community is increasingly committed to funding police reform activities, Steven Hendrix, coordinator for rule of law and legal reform at USAID, notes that their activities center almost exclusively around the "soft" side of policing and is limited to issues such as budget, ethics, community policing, and police training. Very few donors are willing to engage in "hard" policing problems like narcotics and homicide. Are donors content, he asks, to leave the most difficult policing activities to agencies with less public-minded interests?

3. Reforming the criminal justice sector

While police play a crucial role at the front end of the criminal justice system, other factors such as pretrial detention and the efficiency of courts also have a significant impact on public security. Donors, particularly large national and multilateral aide organizations, direct the majority of their support for justice sector reform to government institutions that administer justice. This support may take any number of forms: training officials, creating new agencies, drafting new laws, encouraging interagency efforts to deal with specific crimes or groups of offenders, etc. Most of these initiatives appear to be based upon three hypotheses about why reforming the justice sector advances public security:

- An effective justice system can deter crime by guaranteeing consequences for illegal acts. In other words, potential offenders are less likely to offend when they believe they will be caught and punished.
- An effective justice system gives police confidence in the state's ability to handle crime and dissuades them from taking the law into their own hands or committing crimes themselves.
- The proper administration of justice generates legitimacy for the government in the eyes of the public, creating a climate of order and respect for the law.

While these hypotheses are intuitively appealing, they enjoy ambiguous empirical support. There is little evidence that offenders adjust their behavior on the basis of legal sanctions, for example, particularly where the chances of detection are relatively small. Only the best administered rehabilitative sentences appear to reduce criminal behavior, and there is little correlation between the length of most sentences and the likelihood of re-offending. There is also scant evidence that police trust even the most sophisticated

criminal justice systems to deal effectively with crime through the courts. Finally, while the public may feel better protected by a justice system that is able to convict and sentence offenders, it is unclear where this sense of security originates and whether it is augmented by real reductions in crime rates.

4. Engaging civil society

A fourth way in which donor organizations promote improvements in public security is by providing support to nongovernmental organizations in the field. This is particularly true of private philanthropic organizations, which generally have smaller grant-making portfolios or may be hesitant to fund police or other security agencies.

Many donors view the participation of civil society as fundamental for controlling and promoting change, and for developing innovative techniques and strategies that can be replicated either in the public sphere or in the larger society. Nancy Truitt, senior advisor at the Tinker Foundation, argues that policy cannot be effectively designed or implemented without the active participation of civil society, either by producing basic research, fostering public debate, or engaging in reform implementation. The Ford Foundation's initiative to create police-university relationships in Brazil also seeks to foster civil society participation in the reform process.

The form of donors' support for civil society initiatives can vary greatly. Some donors, such as Tinker and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, support basic research on the nature of public security in Latin America. Others may specifically engage nongovernmental organizations to help strengthen civil society as a whole. The Open Society Institute, for example, supports the Washington Office on Latin America to increase the visibility and credibility of civil society groups as actors in process of police reform.

Working with civil society has its own set of challenges and questions. For example, when should donors augment the capacity of existing organizations and when should they try to create new capacity, either by encouraging other organizations to enter the field or by establishing new entities? What balance between autonomy and cooperation allows civil society organizations to work effectively with the state? What constraints do donor interventions face in communities where other socioeconomic obstacles exist? Faced with such questions, Max Everest-Phillips, governance advisor at DFID, recommends fellow donors resist viewing civil society as a substitute for governmental structures. Instead, he argues, civil society should be supported as an auxiliary actor in justice and a barometer of a democratic society.

PART II. The structure of strategic funding

Although each of the four major approaches to improving public safety—reducing crime, reforming police, reforming the criminal justice sector, and engaging civil society—has the potential to succeed, none are infallible or guaranteed to produce success. Moreover, efforts to strengthen police agencies and improve the capacity of courts and penal agencies run the risk of enabling these institutions to repress rather than protect the public. With these caveats in mind, donors use a variety of techniques to improve the chances that their programs are genuinely advancing safety and public confidence in the administration of justice. These techniques typically fall into three categories:

1. Establishing measurable outcomes,
2. Selecting appropriate recipients, and
3. Balancing directive and responsive programming.

1. Establishing measurable outcomes

Many donors are increasingly determined to measure the impact of the projects they support. USAID programs require clear "mission performance plans" before projects can be undertaken, for example. DFID, too, now makes the process of "appraising" projects an integral part of planning. By making donors and grantees accountable to each other, this "measurement movement" in international justice assistance promises to provide clarity about goals and measures and increase program efficacy. But selecting appropriate indicators of success or conclusively measuring impact is not easy. Nor is the purpose of measurement always clear. Some donors also worry that projects can become measurement-driven or that measurements will be imposed after the fact in order to provide "results." Donors consequently face a host of measurement challenges and choices.

Measurement Challenges and Choices. Some of the greatest challenges in devising effective measurement programs are strategic. To begin with, public officials, nongovernmental organizations, and donors often seek different reform outcomes. As Eric Scheye, security sector reform advisor at the UNDP, points out, international organizations may, for example, be more interested in improving the accountability of public institutions than in increasing their effectiveness or law and order—two results that local entities and citizens might prioritize. Moreover, different interest groups are likely to seek different types of data from a single project. Governments, for example, may want to determine what behavior or quality of service they should hold their public institutions accountable for; citizens may want to measure crime and violence; private sector interests may have an eye toward the investment climate; and donors may want to

assess the effectiveness of their interventions. As few measures will satisfy all audiences, any decisions about measurements must be based on a clear articulation not just of the goals and anticipated results of a project, but also of the interests and needs of the recipients of the information.

The long timeline of many public security initiatives presents donors with another challenge regarding measurement and data. Because indicators of a program's success are often slow to materialize, donors must understand what kinds of results are realistic to expect from the types of support they are providing. They must consider whether the timeframe for their expectations is realistic given the political environment in the recipient country and the organizational pressures within the program itself.

Selecting an appropriate methodology for measurement is also a challenge. Donors naturally wish to attribute improvements in justice to specific programs. But is this plausible? The question goes beyond the difficulty of adhering to rigorous, scientific measurement. Some project results are inherently difficult to measure—efforts designed to improve institutions, advance interagency cooperation, or build organizational capacity are but three examples. And how can donors sort out the effectiveness of an institution from the environment in which it operates? This is particularly relevant in efforts to replicate innovations from another country or region with dissimilar demographic or political characteristics.

Unforeseen side-effects of donor interventions can complicate measurement decisions. A study of the number of deaths as a result of police action in São Paulo, for example, risked stimulating the police to stop recording deaths or use non-police-issue guns. Ultimately, the donors at the meeting in Buenos Aires agree that such dangers should not stand in the way of effective measurements. Moreover, argues Steve Hendrix of USAID, donors should model the behavior they want others to emulate. If the goal is to improve police transparency, he said, it is important that "donors are also up-front about the work they are carrying out and its ultimate impact on public safety."

Linn Hammergren, public sector management specialist at the World Bank, notes that every measurement strategy is a work in progress. This is because any methodology for measurement is, in effect, testing two things at the same time: the project, and the strategy for evaluating it.

Measurement Strategies. In response to these challenges, donors have developed several measurement strategies. Some programs attempt to gauge the impact of crime reduction initiatives by monitoring the indirect causes and risk factors associated with high rates of offending. For example, some interventions can have marked impacts on patterns of alcohol consumption and substance abuse—behaviors strongly linked to delinquency. Others programs may document reductions in factors closely correlated with crime, such as aggression within families and school truancy. Tracking indirect factors is often easier than documenting direct effect on crime. It is also politically appealing: Because such

changes are valued independently from the reform effort, claims about their worth and relationship to crime are less likely to be disputed.

Donors who base their support for institutional reform on the premise that structural modifications can change behavior often monitor changes in specific outcome indicators, such as average times to disposition in court proceedings, duration of detention in jail, the rate of successful prosecution, number of stalled cases, or incidence of death or injuries as a result of police action. However, even these results can be difficult to measure, because the information may be unreliable or government may be sensitive to its release.

Programs may also evaluate impact by examining secondary activities designed to encourage a desired behavior. Some examples include the writing and dissemination of new manuals and brochures and the convening of conferences and discussions. Another tack is to examine the impact of systemic innovations by examining client views and experiences, such as waiting times and perceptions of effectiveness. Other donors insist upon achievable results in lieu of results that, while more closely representative of the program's goals, are impractical for any number of reasons. Often, these are incremental improvements in performance that governments and officials will want to achieve themselves, and for which they will be more likely to support rigorous quantitative assessments.

Some donors deal with the problem of measurement by creating projects whose mandate is to assess and diagnose public security. The Open Society Institute chose this approach in supporting nongovernmental organizations to evaluate best practices of public security reform efforts, including OSI's own activities. George Vickers argues that this strategy provides OSI with a more genuinely independent review of all of its projects because it places them within the context of other public security initiatives. Other donors have made baseline evaluations of the character and quality of justice either the subject of separate grants or components of larger grants. A potential difficulty with this approach, however, is that these evaluations are almost always negative and precipitate criticism for government performance that may alienate potential domestic partners.

2. Selecting appropriate recipients

In building successful public security initiatives, donors must be able to evaluate the suitability of potential aid recipients. Specifically, they must ask two key questions:

- Are government actors sufficiently committed to the project? and,
- What synergy and/or possible tensions may arise among actors, both governmental and nongovernmental, involved in the project?

In answering these questions, donors consider many subsidiary issues. Is the initiative targeted at the right level of government to optimize its impact and effectiveness? Does the civil society organization have adequate capacity to implement the program? These

considerations also inform the tension between responsive and directive funding, which will be discussed in a later section.

Developing Institutional or Governmental Commitment. Donors and grantees alike know that initiatives that depend on government action require institutional commitment in order to succeed and be sustained. Martin Abregú, of the Ford Foundation, argues that donors can contribute to the creation of political will, particularly by cultivating participation among nongovernmental organizations and universities. However, while strong civil society involvement can lay the groundwork for reform initiatives, it cannot solve the problem of political fickleness or instability, which can too-easily upset reform programs. The need for institutional commitment therefore raises another set of questions: Should donors seek a commitment to fundamental rights before partnering with police or other state institutions? If so, ought this commitment to, for instance, respect human rights, reduce institutional violence, and end corruption be explicit and formal?

Some donors seek to cultivate institutional commitment to change by identifying and nurturing individual officials who express commitment to reform. They hope to foster communities of reform-minded officials by sponsoring conferences, training programs, and partnerships with civil society. Targeting these efforts at middle-management officials is believed to be particularly effective, since it is from this rank that the next generation of leaders is drawn. A disadvantage of this approach, however, is that the reform-minded individuals they identify may come to be seen by their peers as friends of the United States or beholden to other foreign interests. Among police officials, this reputation might result in debilitating isolation within the force.

Because an expression of political will from a few key individuals is no substitute for a commitment to change among the leadership of a government agency, many donors seek to craft projects that exploit particular moments of government openness to change. This approach not only better ensures that the project receives the necessary institutional support, but it can also add momentum to periods of democratization and government action. Such reform "windows" are as likely to occur at the municipal or state level, as in the national government. Indeed, some projects might be better targeted at local governments, which can more effectively coordinate local agencies and services, as illustrated by DESEPAZ in Cali, Colombia.

Another strategy for fostering political will is to fund initiatives around crime-reporting and media interests. The Open Society Institute, together with Transparency International and the Institute for Press and Society, awards an annual prize for the best news article that exposes government corruption. Similarly, the John Merck Fund helps young crime reporters in Latin America to participate in short "externships" on the crime desks of newspapers in North America. Donors may also fund workshops on statistics, crime-mapping, victims' needs, and other key issues in crime reporting. By these means,

donors seek to invigorate local media coverage and encourage journalists to expose undesirable practices among security forces and create pressure for them to punish and prevent it.

Synergy among recipients. Rather than allow the success of a project to rest solely on the commitment of a single government institution, many donors develop partnerships between government agencies and nongovernmental organizations. This kind of arrangement offers a variety of benefits. Civil society organizations may provide commitment and stability to a project should the government's commitment waver. They also can monitor public security institutions or act as mediators between the police and other civil society organizations with whom the police have more antagonistic relations. Civil society groups may also develop specific research expertise in areas better suited to nongovernmental organizations or universities, such as how to conduct victimization surveys, organize debates, or compare data analysis. Each of these contributions have been discussed in earlier sections of this report.

In reviewing the range of roles played by civil society groups, however, donors might also ask what is the most effective *kind* of participation that they could encourage in order to assure a level of trust that will allow the interaction to succeed? Given, for example, that a nongovernmental organization working with a government agency may need access to the agency's resources, must it already have sustained experience in the field or with particular government actors? A Ford Foundation program that effectively dealt with such issues sent a "visiting committee" of policing officials and reformers from different countries to spend a week with police departments interested in reform. Not only does this model combine the expertise of active officers with nongovernmental reformers, but it also provides the local force with an international menu of options drawn from the committee members' diverse range of experiences.

Donors may also ask how they can support nongovernmental organizations that are interested in public security but only beginning to develop expertise and relationships. The Open Society Institute's initiative to help increase the visibility and credibility of civil society groups as actors in the reform process is one example of an initiative designed explicitly to engage civil society. Similarly, the Ford Foundation has sponsored nongovernmental organizations to generate debate around public security issues, with the long-term goal of strengthening civil society capacity.

3. Guidance v. assistance: Directive and responsive support for reform

Whether donors are involved in a wide array of public security initiatives or focused on narrow reform agenda, they have to make strategic decisions about which programmatic and methodological approaches will work and which recipients will be best able to carry them out. In either case, the decision making process includes balancing directive support—guiding recipients toward projects that pursue the funder's goals, with responsive support—helping recipients pursue projects and goals of their own.

Several variables influence how a donor organization strikes a balance between directive and responsive funding. Two frequently competing factors, for example, are the donor's relative commitment to particular grantees on the one hand and, on the other, its commitment to its own specific theories of change. The geographic interest of the donor and the grantee are another such factor. A grantee that focuses on local issues may be concerned only about improving conditions in a particular city or state, while a regional or global donor may be concerned with whether or not the project it funds can be replicated elsewhere or will contribute to a broader field of research. In such circumstances, the donor might become more directive, specifying the kinds of local projects that will also serve its larger goals. In these situations, donors must figure out how to integrate, complement, and enrich both theories of change.

Conclusion

Donor initiatives in public security reform vary widely in their recipients, amount and duration of support, and specific activities. Yet the strategies they adopt have much in common. Most donors who seek to reduce crime and improve public security pursue initiatives aimed at preventing crime, reforming police, reforming the criminal justice sector, and engaging civil society in the reform process. Because the results of such efforts are uncertain, they use a variety of devices to increase their chances of success, particularly by insisting on measurement of results, strategically selecting particular recipients, and guiding the work of recipients in particular directions.

As they carry out their work, donors in the field of public security also face a common challenge: How do they support public safety initiatives that simultaneously strengthen democracy *and* reduce crime? For some, the challenge comes from uncertainty about whether the two tasks are compatible. Is there a trade-off between public security and sustainable democracy? Or do improvements in one trigger and promote improvements in the other?

Martin Abregú suggested that this uncertainty could be understood as a tension between the short and long term in security sector reform. Any intervention aimed at improving the police as a democratic institution by limiting their ability to resort to "hard-line" tactics for crime prevention also risks increasing crime rates in the short term and significantly undermining public support, police morale, and, most dangerously, the will to reform. But, he argued, this should not justify advancing public security at the expense of democratization.

A possible solution to this dilemma lies in expanding the diversity within programs, and better coordination and cooperation among donors. Donors may not have to achieve both objectives at the level of individual projects or grantees provided they reconcile the goals within a larger program or locate their activities within the field of public security improvements as a whole. To do this, however, requires making regular communication among donors working in the field an even more important enterprise. Regular exchange allows donors to share effective techniques and consider opportunities for collaboration. It can also serve to articulate a wider agenda for reform in which two important goals—consolidation of democracy and improvements in public security—are advanced with equal commitment and success.