



CIPREVICA

Centro de Investigación para la Prevención
de la Violencia en Centroamérica

INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

The Research Center for the Prevention of Violence in Central America (CIPREVICA) is a Non-profit association established in Guatemala City, which began operations in January 2011.

MISSION

To be a non-governmental organization that, based on scientific research, seeks to promote a comprehensive and inter-sectorial approach to violence from the prevention perspective, through training and technical assistance to civil society and State entities, as well as enabling its articulation in Central America.

VISION

We are a sound community of knowledge and practice that, based on its own model for prevention of violence, contributes to building a dignified and violence-free Central America.

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REGIONAL CONTEXT AND ISSUES

The Central American region – and especially the countries comprised in the so-called Northern Triangle – continues to be one of the most violent regions of the world, despite efforts conducted by several civil society organizations and insufficient government actions aimed at reducing violence rates in this territory. Insight Crime’s report on homicides in 2014 states that, during that year, Guatemala registered a rate of 31 per every 100,000 inhabitants; in El Salvador, the rate was 68.6 per every 100,000 inhabitants; and in Honduras, the rate was 66 per every 100,000 inhabitants. It should be highlighted that most of these homicides entailed the use of fire arms.

On the other hand, surveys on victimization and perception of violence show that inter-personal violence is the main dimension of violence. In addition, it affects all social strata in the Northern Triangle. This type of violence is linked and takes place in the framework of other serious social problems that affect these countries, as a result of inequity and exclusion, such as racism, land conflicts, environmental conflicts, migration due to economic reasons, violence against women¹, violence against children and adolescents, political violence, electoral violence, occupation of land by organized crime and drug traffickers, forced disappearances, proliferation of networks of human trafficking (women and children) for labour and/or sexual exploitation, trafficking of weapons, organ trafficking, freight traffic, social cleansing, homophobia, trans-phobia, and, overall, all crimes against life and patrimony. Extortions are a phenomenon that is affecting people every day, regardless of their social stratum, and which is taking many lives in the region.

Evidence collected in the past three years of working in the region have led us to think that governments, altogether, do not seem to be willing to acknowledge the historical and structural nature of violence and its close relation to socio-economic inequalities and marginalization of most of the population. Consequently, they experience serious difficulties to lead definition and implementation of comprehensive and sustainable policies to face the issue. Scarce advances are as unstable as power structures and political variations, and have not become stakes in the medium and long-term that could go beyond the imposition of the “Tough Hand” (model that has proven to be inefficient). In this context, it is clear that the civil society must assume and is assuming a significant role in the social transformation of the reality of violence, mainly based on the implementation of initiatives to prevent violence, which articulate the efforts of the holders of rights and duty bearers linked to addressing the issue in municipal arenas.

¹Its magnitude is hard to measure due to the lack of reliable data that show the specificity of the problem, even though available figures on femicide or violent deaths of women are high enough to warn us about it. In the case of Guatemala, in 2014, the National Forensic Sciences Institute (INACIF – for its name in Spanish) reported 744 cases of violent deaths of women. In addition, 1,234 reports on femicide were filed and 281 due to other forms of violence against women (Report of the United Nations’ High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Activities of its Office in Guatemala, 2014:13).



STRATEGIC LINES

Based on its nature and experience, CIPREVICA will work on the following strategic lines:

1. Building evidence
2. Capacity building by sectors
3. Technical assistance to initiatives by sectors
4. Facilitation for inter-sectorial articulation
5. Inter-sectorial strategic support

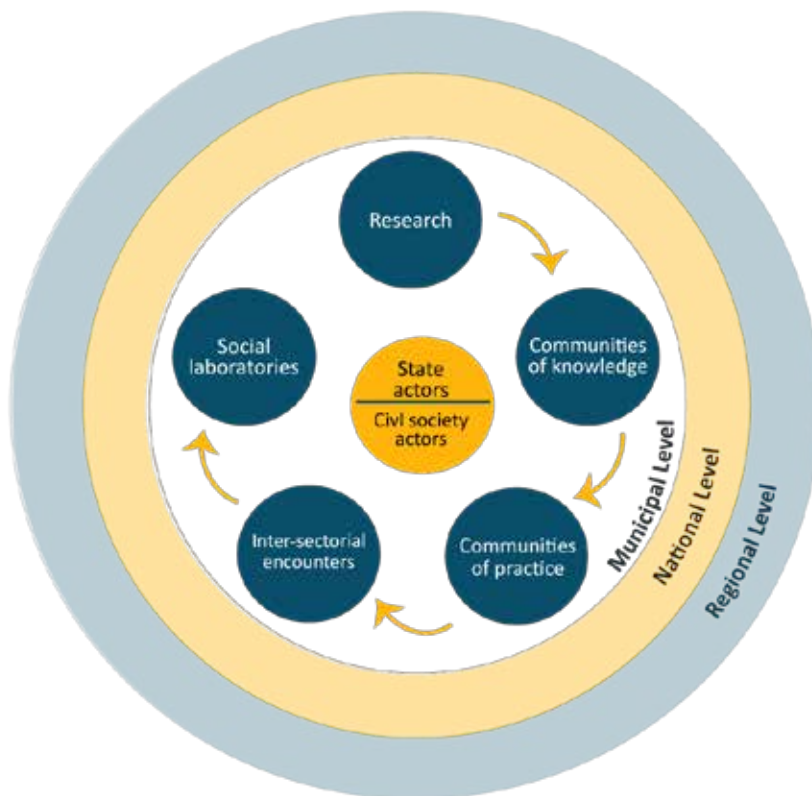


INSTITUTIONAL INTERVENTION MODEL

CIPREVICA aims at direct intervention at municipal level in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, to prevent violence from a rights-based approach. Thus, it is interested in working simultaneously with holders of rights and duty bearers, building the capacities of the first to demand the fulfilment of their rights and building capacities among the latter, so they are more efficient in complying with their duties.

Intervention entails scientific-social research processes that are aimed at constructing evidence that enable deeper knowledge of the different dimensions, trends and dynamics of violence in target municipalities. Training processes implemented by CIPREVICA seek to foster and/or build knowledge, capacities and skills to prevent violence, among key stakeholders of the civil society and the State,

fostering the emergence of local research proposals, training and formulation of public policies, programmes, projects and/or actions to prevent violence. These proposals emerge from the experience of communities of practice, which have been generated as a result of training processes implemented at municipal level, with CIPREVICA's technical assistance. Afterwards, the process focuses on inter-sectorial articulation, starting by enabling spaces for key stakeholders of the State and the civil society to come together and for dialogue which translate into the creation of social laboratories where multiple actors benefit from CIPREVICA's intervention, and design joint initiatives for the prevention of violence at local level, with the organization's strategic accompaniment.



REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

CIPREVICA implements two programmes to address the issue of violence:

Programme for the Prevention of Urban Violence

The main objective of the Programme for the Prevention of Urban Violence is to Foster capacities for collective resilience to address the issue of violence in urban territories, with an aim to increase active, purposeful and articulated citizenship of holders of rights and duty bearers, to address the issue of violence with a rights-based approach. It is also aimed to build urban municipal spaces with improved conditions to ensure a dignified life, lower violence rates, and sustainable development in the countries of the so-called Northern Triangle of Central America.

Programme for the Prevention of Violence against Women

The main objective of the Programme for the Prevention of Violence Against Women is to make visible violence against women as a social issue that prevails in all stratum of society, and to promote active and purposeful participation of holders of rights and duty bearers to promote gender equity at local level, based on building knowledge and capacities, fostering dialogue and inter-sectorial articulation, to enable the creation of conditions to address the issue of violence against women, from a multi-dimension and evidence-based perspective; which makes women's access to a dignified and violence-free life viable, as well as the advance of society towards sustainable development.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS UP TO DATE

01

In the 2011-2016 period, the Centre has generated social-scientific knowledge on diverse aspects of the issues of violence in Central American societies, with emphasis on the so-called Northern Triangle, by conducting several quantitative and qualitative investigations, aimed at building empirical evidence and theoretical reflection on the characteristics and behaviour of violence in the region.

02

Between 2013 and 2015, the Centre managed to create and/or build capacities for the prevention of violence among multiple actors of the civil society and the State in Central America, through the implementation of seven virtual technical courses at regional level, through educational platforms. Some of these courses entailed academic certificates from the National University of Honduras (UNAH – for its name in Spanish) and the University Institute for Women of the San Carlos de Guatemala University (IUMUSAC – for its name in Spanish).

03

The Centre has promoted exchange of knowledge and experiences for the prevention of violence, among diverse key stakeholders of the civil society and the State, by holding four international seminars (Honduras – 2011; El Salvador – 2011; Nicaragua – 2012 and Costa Rica -2013) and two regional encounters (Honduras – 2014 and El Salvador – 2015)

04

Since 2013, the Centre is a regional member (America) of the World Alliance for the Prevention of Violence (VPA) of the World Health Organization (WHO).

05

In Guatemala, the Centre has been a member of the Table for Specialized Analysis (MAE – for its name in Spanish) of the United Nations' Development Programme (UNDP), since it was set up in 2014.