



## DEMOCRATIC POLICING

# Exchange

## Common Ground and Crosscutting Themes on Funding Public Security Initiatives in Latin America *Todd Fogelsong and Emma Phillips*

A growing number of multi-lateral 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, the Ford Foundation's offices in Santiago and Rio de Janeiro jointly sponsored a discussion of this trend

among donor organizations that support public security and police reform in Latin America. The meeting, which took place in Buenos Aires, was facilitated by the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales/CELS (Center for Legal and Social Studies) in Buenos Aires and the Vera Institute of Justice in New York and drew participants from organizations of varying size, mandate, and regional focus: the International Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Foundation, the World Bank, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the British Embassy in Buenos Aires, the John Merck Fund, the Tinker Foundation, the Open Society Institute, and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. As the participants described the range of program areas they support and the devices they use to improve the likelihood that their support will be effective, they repeatedly returned to the following questions:

- How has democratization and the new concern for public security in Latin America affected the conceptualization of human rights?
- How have these two developments affected donor strategies?
- And what opportunity is there for closer cooperation among donors with shared concerns?

This article summarizes the conversation that took place around these

three questions. The full report on the discussion, *Common Ground and Crosscutting Themes on Funding Public Security Initiatives in Latin America*, is available on Vera's web site, [www.vera.org](http://www.vera.org).

### Public Security and Human Rights

The democratization of most Latin American countries during the 1990s helped to both expand the scope of public security reform and shift international attention to consolidating these democratic advances. Donors who had avoided 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. They also became interested in new strategies for strengthening these democratic transitions. Rather than fund civil society organizations to monitor and criticize the state for violations and abuses, they began seeking ways to fortify the state's own ability to protect rights and provide remedies.

This transition sparked new ideas about the role and nature of human rights advocacy. Today, human rights work increasingly involves strengthening the state's ability to protect citizens, because the failure of the state to ensure public safety can jeopardize democratic governance. Some donors now view public security as one of the most fundamental human rights, noting in particular that public insecurity is an enormous obstacle to basic human rights for

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## Funding Public Security Initiatives in Latin America *continued*

the poor. Yet not everyone within the donor community is comfortable with this shift. While some perceive the growing willingness to partner with the state as a positive reflection of a new and broader conception of democracy, others consider such engagement a “retreat” from earlier, more robust commitments to human rights.

### Different Strategies to Improve Public Security

As the field of public security reform has expanded, so have the ways donors pursue their goals. A variety of initiatives try, for instance, to reduce the opportunities for offending by focusing on the act and setting of crime itself. Examples of such initiatives include efforts to improve street lighting, create neighborhood watch groups, or discourage the purchase of stolen goods. Another type of program focuses on reducing criminal activity by law enforcement agents themselves, often by targeting the connections between police and organized crime, gangs, and drug traffickers. Some donors support police oversight projects that can improve the public’s perception of the police, resulting in better relations and cooperation. Still others provide support to nongovernmental organizations in the field, arguing that policy cannot be effectively designed or implemented without the active participation of civil society—by producing basic research, fostering public debate, or engaging in reform implementation. All of these approaches reflect different theories about what works in public security improvement.

### Ensuring Results

Because no approach can guarantee success, donors employ a variety of strategies to improve the likelihood that their policy will produce the desired effect. One such strategy emphasizes conscious and transparent measurement of program impact.

This can be challenging, as public officials, nongovernmental organizations, and donors often seek different reform outcomes. For example, international organizations may 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.

A second strategy that donors employ to increase the impact of their support is to promote good relationships and possible synergies among grant recipients. However, this is not always a simple matter either. Consider the Ford office in

Brazil’s work to enhance research capacity within universities on the subject of public security, creating a resource both for researchers and for the police. In order for the police to access and profit from the resulting information or technology, both they and the academic community must overcome a history of mutual suspicion.

A third strategy seeks to strike a balance between directive programming—guiding recipients toward projects that pursue the donor’s goals—and responsive support—helping recipients pursue projects and goals of their own. How donors find this balance depends on their

## Stepping Backstage: Martín Abregú and George Vickers Talk About Going from Grantee to Donor

**W**hen foundation grantees become program officers, their views on both roles can change. Until 2000, Martín Abregú, rights and citizenship program officer for the Ford Foundation’s Southern Cone office, was director of the *Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales/CELS* (Center for Legal and Social Studies), a nongovernmental organization in Argentina that seeks to foster and protect human rights, the democratic system, and the state of law. George Vickers is now regional director of Latin American programs for the Open Society Institute. From 1993 to 2001 he served as executive director of the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), a center for policy analysis and advocacy that works to secure human rights and promote democracy in the Americas. We spoke with George and Martín about their transition from grantee to donor and how it affected their understanding of the field of human rights. Our conversation took place in Buenos Aires during the Ford-sponsored meeting

for donor organizations working on public security (see page 1).

**Q: What have you learned about your former organization as a result of becoming a program officer?**

**Martín:** Two things. One, as a grantee we weren’t taking advantage of opportunities to build strategic alliances. We were so involved with ourselves, with the everyday business of running an organization, that we missed the strategic horizons. Now that I am looking at those horizons, I think, Why weren’t we working in these other areas?

The second thing is that I’ve learned to appreciate how difficult it is to think strategically. As I said, it’s tough for organizations that are preoccupied with their daily business. As donors, we have a role to play in helping these organizations think strategically—because I’m not sure that grantees can really do that on their own. I now see that my Ford program officer was always helping me to think strategically and I didn’t even realize it.

relative commitment to particular grantees, the geographic interests of the donor and the grantee, and the donor's specific theories of change.

## Conclusion

As they carry out their work, donors in the field of public security face a common challenge: how do they support public safety initiatives that simultaneously strengthen democracy *and* reduce crime? For some, the challenge centers around uncertainty about whether the two tasks are compatible. Is there a trade-off between public security and sustainable democracy? Or do improve-

ments in one trigger and promote improvements in the other?

One perspective advocates understanding this uncertainty as a tension between the short and long term in security sector reform: many interventions aimed at improving the police as a democratic institution also risk increasing crime rates in the short term, which could undermine public support, police morale, and, most dangerously, the will to reform. However, donors may not have to achieve both objectives at the level of individual projects or grantees. Some may reconcile the apparent tension between these goals within a larger program, or

they may locate their activities within the field of public security improvements as a whole. To do this, however, requires a greater commitment to communication among donors working in the field. 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 the consolidation of democracy and improvements in public security are advanced with equal commitment and success.

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**George:** That's right. A change has taken place affecting the NGO world: the "logic of capital" has invaded and competition for resources has become much more pressing. Now, standing outside of WOLA, I can see how we were competing with other organizations for funds; we avoided strategic alliances so as not to blur the distinction between our organization and others. As a donor I try not to put my grantees in that position so that they can collaborate and form alliances without worrying about jeopardizing their funds.

Also, it hadn't really occurred to me when I was in the NGO world that donors have strategies. I thought of them as having priorities. But I thought that they were sitting around and waiting for proposals.

**Q: So, in your new positions you're trying to operate more as organizers?**

**Martín:** I like the way a Ford colleague described this transition. When she was being interviewed for her current position as human rights program officer for the Brazil office she was asked how she felt about being "on the other side." She asked, What do you mean, "the

other side?" Don't you mean "backstage?" I like this analogy. I'm more of a producer now. I'm not on the other side.

**George:** It's more indirect. You work toward the same goals, but through other people.

**Martín:** Right. You're not on stage, but if the show fails, you fail too.

**Q: Working with your analogy, do most grantees think that they are performers and that the donors are the audience?**

**Martín:** Absolutely. This is something I have to explain to both donors and grantees: We're not the audience; we're part of the production.

**George:** I completely agree. I still feel that I'm trying to accomplish certain things, in terms of political impact and policy. But now I'm working through other people to accomplish them. I'm giving grants to organizations that share my vision—even though, in fact, their ideas might be substantially different.

**Martín:** It's an interesting joint venture.

**George:** What we do is exactly what producers do: we bring together people who have different ideas but a similar vision.

**Q: As a donor, how much of an advantage do you think it is to have come from the position of being the receiver?**

**Martín:** I don't think coming from the grantee world is such an advantage—it's great, but it's not necessary. What's more important is how you see your role as a donor. Many of my colleagues who have not been grantees share the same approach I have.

**Q. As a grantee you weren't aware that donors have strategies. How does the fact that that you are now a donor with experience trying to build relationships among grantees affect the way you interact with your colleagues from other donor organizations?**

**George:** Foundations are not immune to a similar pressure, which is to establish a distinct profile vis-à-vis others by deliberately funding different actors—this may be more visible with bilateral organizations. I'm trying to play it differently. I want to talk to other donors about how we can work together.

## Set Up to Serve?: An International Group of Researchers Tests a Police Station Walkthrough and Visitor's Report *Jennifer Trone*

**A**cross the United States, elementary school teachers are being trained to visit other classrooms and assess learning environments by observing their physical conditions. Similarly, engineers and executives in charge of manufacturing plants routinely tour each other's factories to rate their organization and efficiency. If the same approach suits both learning and manufacturing, shouldn't it also work in settings where justice is administered?

To test this hunch, staff at the Vera Institute of Justice developed simple guidelines for visiting police stations, a short list of "yes" or "no" questions about station conditions, and a score card for rating stations in a few key categories. The questions range from whether the location and signage make a station easy to find to whether officers on duty understand how their work fits into the broader criminal justice process. This information—ideally collected by a team of two or three people—is then sifted into general categories that define whether a station is set up to provide good public service.

Vera asked professional researchers and others working in Argentina, Brazil, India, Nigeria, Russia, and South Africa to test the guidelines in at least one local police station in their home country. At the same time, Vera staff visited a station in New York City. The investigators gathered in Santiago, Chile, in November 2002 to share their findings and discuss the walkthrough strategy's merits. The meeting, part of a series of global workshops intended to advance democratic policing, was hosted by the Santiago-based Centro de Estudios en Seguridad Ciudadana/CESC (Center for Studies on Public

Safety), Vera, and the Ford Foundation.

The discussion opened with several researchers expressing concern about what the assessment might conceal or misrepresent. Ted Legget, a researcher working in South Africa, described his visit to a station in a wealthy area of Pretoria,

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*On a police station walkthrough, "you don't even have to ask [the officers] to find out what they think. You can see it on their faces," says CLEEN director Innocent Chukwuma.*

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saying, "I saw friendly faces and an organized environment, but I know that station does not have the person-power to provide good service." What about a station that ranks high on measures of ergonomics, a researcher working in Chile asked, but where the officers are making unnecessary arrests? Such concerns about the possibility that appearances could mislead citizens are particularly likely in countries where citizens have for a long time mistrusted the police. Yet Vera's Todd Foglesong pointed out that the walkthrough and visitor's report are intended to paint only part of the picture. They become powerful and useful, he said, as a complement to satisfaction surveys and other studies.

The potential benefits of the walkthrough registered strongly with Innocent Chukwuma, director of the Center for Law Enforcement Education (CLEEN) in Lagos, Nigeria, who visited six police stations in preparation for the meeting. "You don't even have to ask [the officers] to find out what they think. You can see it on their faces," he explained. Hugo Fruhling, director of CESC, was similarly persuaded. "It would have been difficult to learn what we learned in other ways," he said.

Such testimonials suggest that the walkthrough and visitor's report could help make police work transparent to the public. "It's important to develop common tools that advance the public perspective on policing," noted Vera director Chris Stone. Julita Lemgruber, head of Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania (Center for Studies on Public Security and Citizenship), a nongovernmental organization in Rio de Janeiro that studies the police, believes that the walkthrough and visitor's report fill this need by documenting the extent to which a police station is set up to serve the public. Moreover, Lemgruber suspects that in contrast to emotional pleas for change, this measured, or "cool," type of observation is likely to enjoy greater sway with policy makers.

While a common tool makes cross-cultural comparisons and even international standards possible, some participants expressed reservations about comparing stations in rich and poor areas of the same city let alone those in different countries. For instance, in Russia police never document and display crime statistics or deployment decisions—two indicators of a well-run station according to the

## Recent Publications

Vera tool. Does this mean that standards in Russia should change or that the walkthrough and visitor's report are less accurate and useful there? Or is there a way to conduct assessments so that police get credit for making good use of available resources and are not penalized for falling short of standards elsewhere?

Informed by these and other concerns, Foglesong is now heading up a revision of the walkthrough and visitor's report. At the same time, the group is also considering an important concern raised by Chukwuma: "What will the police get out of this?" Chukwuma suggested that adding questions about equipment and tools at the station and the training and preparation officers receive would allow police to use the assessment results to advocate for more resources and would help to unite police and civilians in the common project of improving police stations.

Whether the democracies they work in are new or mature, those who study policing face the same challenge: how to conduct research that actually changes behavior? The police station walkthrough and visitor's report promise to help meet this challenge, provided researchers are willing to collaborate with their subjects. To do this, however, they must pay attention to what police want to know and respect the concerns of law enforcement leaders. It also means sharing results as studies progress and delivering findings in a form that is useful to police. The most fundamental shift of all: instead of relying on their autonomy as a guarantee of objectivity, researchers have to develop methods like the walkthrough and visitor's report that achieve the same ends.

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# Active Policing-Related Ford Grants

## Brazil

### **Brazilian Association for Post-Graduate Study in Collective Health**

Cecilia de Souza Minayo

For a study on the causes of work- and health-related problems seen to influence police violence in Rio de Janeiro. *E. Leeds*

### **Brazilian Society for Instruction, Candido Mendes University**

Julita Lemgruber

Support for a study of civilian oversight mechanisms of the police in five Brazilian states. The study will propose recommendations for improvements in oversight mechanisms. *E. Leeds*

### **Center for Training in Human Resource Development of the State of Amapá**

Support for the Third National Forum for Education in Public Safety to examine police training in University and NGO settings. *E. Leeds*

### **Federal Fluminense University**

Roberto Kant de Lima

Support for a year-long graduate-level course in social science and public policy for police and criminal justice personnel. *E. Leeds*

### **Federal University of Ceara**

Cesar Barreira

Support for a study to evaluate changes in public security policy in the northeastern state of Ceara, Brazil. *E. Leeds*

### **Federal University of Minas Gerais**

Claudio Beato and Renato Assuncao

Core support for the Center for Criminology and Public Security. *E. Leeds*

### **Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul**

Jose Vicente Tavares dos Santos

For an evaluative study on recently implanted innovative police policies in the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul in partnership with the police of that state. *E. Leeds*

### **Foundation for the Support of Development of the Federal University of Pernambuco**

Ana Tereza Lemos-Nelson

For research on the role of the public prosecutor's office in the oversight of police activities. *E. Leeds*

### **Institute of Economic, Social and Political Studies**

Maria Tereza Sadek

Support for research on the civil police in seven states in Brazil. *E. Leeds*

### **Legal Assistance Office for Popular Organizations**

Research, documentation on, and human rights training of police in northeast Brazil. *E. Leeds*

### **Pará Society for the Defense of Human Rights**

Rosa Marga Rothe

To study police misconduct in the state of Pará. *E. Leeds*

### **United Nations Latin-American Institute-Brazil**

Tulio Kahn

For evaluative research on community policing in the municipality of Sao Paulo. *E. Leeds*

### **University of São Paulo**

Sergio Adorno and Nancy Cardia

To support a translation series of international literature on policing in democratic societies. *E. Leeds*

### **University of São Paulo**

Sergio Adorno and Nancy Cardia

Action-research on conflict mediation and the local administration of justice in greater São Paulo. *E. Leeds*

## China

### **Peking University School of Law**

Chen Xingliang, Chen Ruihua, and Zhang Shaoyan

Support for research on reforming reeducation through labor and other forms of punishment of minor crimes. *T. Liu*

### **South Central University of Economics and Law**

Wu Handong

For a pilot program providing criminal procedure training for local police chiefs in Hubei province. *T. Liu*

## Egypt

### **United Nations Development Program**

Hamed Mobarek

For a human rights training program for the judiciary, police, and other public officials in Egypt. *F. Azzam*

## India

### **Institute for Development and Communication**

Pramod Kumar

Support for community policing projects and awareness-raising activities toward improved law enforcement in Punjab. *A. McCutcheon*

### **Institute of Social Sciences**

Sankar Sen

Support for a seminar series and research on topics of law enforcement reform in India involving the police, scholars, and civil society organizations. *A. McCutcheon*

### **Samarthan**

Vivek Pandit

Support for promoting advocacy skills and police reform within poor communities in the state of Maharashtra. *A. McCutcheon*

### **South Asia Research Society (SARS)**

Jayanta Kumar Ray and Arun Mukherjee

Support for law enforcement reform through research and a community-policing project in West Bengal. *A. McCutcheon*

### **United Nations Development Fund for Women**

Chandni Joshi

Support services at police stations in Mumbai for women survivors of violence. *A. McCutcheon*

### **Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative**

G.P. Joshi

Support for law enforcement reform and prison reform in India. *A. McCutcheon*

### **Penal Reform and Justice Association**

Rani Shankardass

Support for research and public education to protect the rights of women prisoners. *A. McCutcheon*

### **West Bengal University of Juridical Sciences**

Madhava Menon

Support to the School of Criminal Justice and Administration for teaching and research on criminal justice, the police, prisons, prosecutors, judges, and other actors in the criminal justice system. *A. McCutcheon*

### **Tata Institute of Social Sciences**

Anjali Dave

Support for research and dissemination related to law enforcement and violence against women. *A. McCutcheon*

## **Indonesia**

### **University of Gadjah Mada**

To organize an international meeting, and for action, research, and training to sensitize lawmakers and the police to women's reproductive rights.

*M. Budiharsana*

### **Yayasan Indonesian Police Watch**

Adnan Pandupraja

Support for police oversight, dialogues on democratic policing, and a study tour. *H. Antlov*

## **Kenya**

### **Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative**

Support for research on policing budgets and public safety in East Africa. *J. Gitari*

### **Kenya Human Rights Commission**

Support for a project on community policing, human rights monitoring, and advocacy in Kenya. *J. Gitari*

### **Nairobi Central Business District Association**

Philip Kisia

Support for a community policing program and related activities to improve public safety. *J. Gitari*

## **Nigeria**

### **Center for Law Enforcement Education**

Innocent Chukwuma

For advocacy and networking on behalf of community policing and police reform in Nigeria. *A. Odaga*

### **Civil Liberties Organization**

Aye Obe

For media outreach on police reforms and capacity strengthening. *A. Odaga*

## **Russia**

### **ANNA (Association No to Violence)**

Marina Pisklakova

Support for the establishment of a National Expert Working Group on domestic violence education strategies aimed at developing a model for cooperation between the government and NGO sector, and preparing educational materials for police officers and social workers. *S. Solnick*

### **Citizens' Watch**

Boris Pustintsev

Core support for a human rights NGO engaged in several police-related projects in St. Petersburg, including introduction of a human rights course and establishment of a human rights department in the national police academy and creation of an experimental juvenile probation service. *S. Solnick*

### **INDEM Foundation**

Georgii A. Satarov

For the research activities of INDEM's new Center for Justice Assistance focused primarily on juvenile justice, and on other issues of penitentiary, law enforcement, and judicial reform in Russia. *S. Solnick*

## **South Africa**

### **Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation**

Graeme Simpson, Amanda Dissel

Support for the Centre's criminal justice policy unit for research and policy formulation on curbing human rights violations and abuses of power within the South African criminal justice system. *A. Brown*

### **University of Cape Town**

Wilfried Schaerf

Partial support to the University's Institute of Criminology for its policing, gender, and criminal justice information projects. *A. Brown*

## **United States**

### **Vera Institute of Justice, Inc.**

Christopher Stone

Support for research, strategic planning, and consultation on issues of police accountability and police effectiveness internationally. *N. Kanem, E. Leeds, and A. McCutcheon*

### **Vera Institute of Justice, Inc.**

Merrick Bobb and Christopher Stone

Start-up support to establish the Police Assessment Resource Center. *N. Kanem*

## **Regional**

### **Center for Socio-Economic Studies of Development**

Hugo Fruhling

To establish an international commission on police reform for the Andean region and Southern Cone. *M. Abregu and E. Leeds*

### **Claudio Fuentes**

To complete a thesis on citizens' rights, advocacy networks, and police violence in democratic Argentina and Chile for a Ph.D. program in political science at the University of North Carolina.

*M. Abregu*

# Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

## April

### **National Center for Women and Policing, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Leadership Conference**

22–26 April 2003

Sponsor: National Center for Women and Policing

Location: Los Angeles, California

[http://www.womenandpolicing.org/conference/conference\\_03.asp](http://www.womenandpolicing.org/conference/conference_03.asp)

## July

### **XI<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Victimology**

13–18 July 2003

Sponsor: World Society of Victimology

Location: Stellenbosch, South Africa

[www.victimology.co.za/](http://www.victimology.co.za/)

## August

### **XIII World Congress of Criminology—Reducing Crime and Promoting Justice: Challenges to Science, Policy, and Practice**

10–15 August 2003

Sponsor: International Society of Criminology

Location: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/societe.internationale.de.criminologie/>

### **Convergence of Criminal Justice Systems: Building Bridges—Bridging the Gaps**

24–28 August 2003

Sponsor: International Society for the Reform of Criminal Law

Location: The Hague, Netherlands

<http://www.isrcl.org/>

## September

### **The Third European Academy of Forensic Science Triennial Meeting—Partnership Against Crime**

22–27 September 2003

Sponsor: European Academy of Forensic Science

Location: Istanbul, Turkey

<http://www.eafs2003.org/>

## October

### **Conflict Studies Annual Conference—Terrorism and Crime: A Global Perspective**

3–4 October 2003

Sponsor: The Centre for Conflict Studies of the University of New Brunswick

Location: University of New Brunswick, Canada

<http://www.isanet.org/news/conflict.html>

## November

### **Policing and Mental Illness International Conference**

10–11 November 2003

Sponsors: Queensland Health, the Queensland Police Service, and the Queensland University of Technology

Location: Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

<http://www.aic.gov.au/conferences/otheraus/031110.html>

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**DEMOCRATIC POLICING EXCHANGE** is a semi-annual newsletter on public safety and police accountability. It is produced by the Vera Institute of Justice for the Ford Foundation in order to foster discussion about police reform issues among police officials and all those interested in policing in democratic societies.

The Vera Institute of Justice is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to making criminal justice fairer, more humane, and more efficient. Working in collaboration with public officials in New York and around the world, Vera designs, implements, and evaluates innovative programs that improve the administration of justice.

If you would like to submit articles, news, or conference or publication listings for inclusion in *Democratic Policing Exchange*, please send them to Chitra Bhanu, Vera Institute of Justice, 233 Broadway, 12th Floor, New York, New York, 10279. Email: [cbhanu@vera.org](mailto:cbhanu@vera.org).