



DEMOCRATIC POLICING

# Exchange

## Researchers Gather in New Delhi to Chart a Future Course for Research on Community Policing *Jennifer Trone*

The first modern experiments in community policing began nearly a quarter of a century ago in Europe and North America, and in parts of East Asia. Since then, law enforcement agencies around the world have launched a wide variety of programs in the name of community policing, and there are few places left where police don't feel at least some pressure to work more closely with the communities they serve. Yet the past 25 years of experimentation has produced comparatively less scientific evidence about what community policing in its many forms actually achieves.

The need for additional empirical evidence led a small group of researchers to gather for two days at the Institute of Social Sciences in New Delhi, India, this past November. The meeting, which attracted participants from Brazil, Chile, several states in India, Nigeria,

South Africa, Russia, and the United States, is part of a series of meetings organized by the Vera Institute of Justice and the Ford Foundation to inspire a new generation of research on policing.

Rigorous research on community policing and other aspects of law enforcement is necessary not only to learn what works but also to sustain beneficial programs. Policymakers and the public are increasingly likely to demand hard evidence about a program's impact before offering political, financial, or moral support.

Kicking off the discussion in New Delhi, Vera director Christopher Stone reviewed two large, well-known studies of community policing in the United States—evaluations of programs in Chicago and New York City. (The latter study was conducted by researchers at Vera and published by Sage in 1993 as *Community Policing: The CPOP in New York*.) Both studies made significant contributions to the field, but according to Stone only the Chicago study avoided what he sees as a common shortcoming in research on community policing: focusing exclusively on the officers and citizens directly involved in the programs rather than also looking at the effects on the larger community.

Stone's distinction sparked discussion about the need to study whether programs change people's feelings of security and influence their attitudes about police and their willingness to report crimes. It also

provoked a cautionary comment from Innocent Chukwuma, who has been exploring the role of informal policing in Nigeria as executive director of the Lagos-based Centre for Law Enforcement Education. His research suggests that a significant proportion of the public—and, in some states, the vast majority—are unlikely to seek help from the police even if officers demonstrate that they can give the public what they want.

On a brighter note, Julita Lemgruber, a researcher with the

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Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania da Universidade Candido Mendes (Center for Studies of Public Security and Citizenship at University Candido Mendes), pointed to a study of community policing in São Paulo by a fellow-Brazilian sociologist, Tulio Kahn, that reflects an advance in research methodology and indicates the potential benefits of community policing for citizens. Kahn found that people in neighborhoods with community policing felt somewhat

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## Rio Hosts Global Meeting on Women and Policing *Francis James*

The ranks of uniformed police have been closed to women throughout much of the world, and law enforcement has too often overlooked the needs of female victims of crime. These conditions are gradually changing, however. Today women are a small but growing minority within many police forces and there is an increasing sensitivity toward the unique law-enforcement needs of the female public. Still, there is a long way to go.

In September 2003, Vera and the Rio de Janeiro-based Center for Studies of Public Security and Citizenship at University Candido Mendes invited an international group of policewomen, nongovernmental activists, and policing scholars to Brazil to discuss the variety of issues that pertain to the intersection of women and policing. Approximately 35 participants from eight countries—Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, Russia, and the United States—participated in the event, which was part of a series of international meetings on democratic policing supported by the Ford Foundation.

The discussion yielded a rich exchange of ideas and experiences. The issues covered included the challenges women face working within a male-dominated police culture and the broader, more diverse society; the practical challenges female officers face working alongside men or in gender segregated units; the need to respond to violence against women and the special needs of female victims of crime; and concerns regarding the use of force as opposed to preventive strategies. The group explored the dynamics of change, which led to the beginnings of a plan to advance the work of women in the police.

Much of the discussion was underscored by the awareness that women are vulnerable to different crimes from those experienced by men; sexual assault, rape, and domestic violence are suffered

disproportionately by women and girls. Over the past several decades, the combination of increasing accountability of police organizations and the movement for women's rights has pushed police both to include women in their ranks and to be more responsive to women who need their services. Brazil, for example, has created specialized police stations staffed primarily by women to serve female victims exclusively. The meeting participants were able to visit and interact with the staff of one such specialized station in Rio. The Brazilian policewomen spoke about their role as agents of change, not merely as individuals but also as models for other policewomen.

Similar stories of progress emerged from other countries. An Indonesian policewoman described how a nongovernmental organization staffed by retired policewomen suggested, and are now evaluating, new practices in the Indonesian police. In Kenya and India, there are desks within police stations that specifically handle crimes against women. In the United States, women's groups have lobbied for domestic violence to be recognized

as a criminal offense and have since partnered with the police to provide more appropriate service to female victims.

As in previous international gatherings on policing, progress is demonstrated by lessons learned, contacts and relationships established, and movement toward advances in practice. This meeting focused on four themes: improving system-wide training and supervision regarding working with women; examining the utility of police stations specifically for women, or "gender desks" within stations; connecting and engaging with nongovernmental organizations and letting them serve as a bridge from policy to practice; and encouraging relevant research for women and police organizations. The meeting ended on an optimistic note. As one participant noted, "women police may be small in stature and in numbers...but their future in the police services around the world is vitally important and guaranteed."

*Francis James is the former director of international programs at the Vera Institute of Justice.*

### Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

#### **Seventh Annual International Crime Mapping Research Conference—Crime Mapping and Public Safety**

March 31 - April 3, 2004

Sponsor: National Institute of Justice Mapping and Analysis for Public Safety Program

Location: Boston, Massachusetts, USA

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/maps/conferences.html#7>

#### **The First International Conference on Asian Organized Crime and Terrorism**

April 11 - April 16, 2004

Sponsor: International Organization of Asian Crime Investigators and Specialists

Location: Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

<http://www.icaoct.com/>

#### **International Society for Third-Sector Research 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference – Contesting Citizenship and Civil Society in a Divided World**

July 11 - July 14, 2004

Sponsor: International Society for Third-Sector Research

Location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

<http://www.istr.org/conferences/toronto/>

## Recent Publications

Alpert, Geoffrey P. and Roger G. Dunham, *Understanding Police Use of Force: Officers, Suspects, and Reciprocity*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004

Alvazzi del Frate, Anna, Joachim Bule, John van Kesteren, and Angela Patrignani, *Strategic Plan of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique*, Rome: United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, 2003

Brodeur, Jean-Paul, *Les Visages de la Police (The Faces of the Police Force)*, Montreal: Presses de l'Université de Montreal, 2003

Chalk, Peter and William Rosenau, *Confronting "the Enemy Within": Security Intelligence, the Police, and Counterterrorism in Four Democracies*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004

Chukwuma, Innocent and Etannibi E.O. Alemiak, *Guidelines for the Conduct of Police Officers*, Abuja: Police Service Commission, 2003

Faulkner, David, "Taking Citizenship Seriously: Social Capital and Criminal Justice in a Changing World," *Criminal Justice* 3, no. 3 (2003): 287-315

Frühling, Hugo, *Policía Comunitaria y Reforma Policial en América Latina. ¿Cuál es el impacto? (Community Policy and Police Reform in Latin America: What is the Impact?)*, Santiago: Centro de Estudios en Seguridad Ciudadana, 2003

International Council on Human Rights, *Crime, Public Order, and Human Rights*, Geneva: International Council on Human Rights, 2003

Kalyani, Radha, *Police, Crime, and Human Rights*, New Delhi: Manohar, 2003

Klockars, Carl B., Ivkoviæ Kutnjak, and M.R. Haberfeld, *The Contours of Police Integrity*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003

Kumar, Pramod, *Institutionalising Community Police Resource Centres: An experiment in Community Policing: Punjab*, Chandigarh: Institute for Development and Communication, 2003

Moore, Mark Harrison and Anthony A. Braga, "Measuring and Improving Police Performance: The Lessons of Compstat and its Progeny," *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 26, no. 3 (2003): 439-453

Stromsem, Janice M. and Joseph Trincellito, *Building the Haitian National Police: A Retrospective and Prospective View*, Washington: Programs in International Affairs at Trinity College, 2003  
<http://www.trinitydc.edu/academics/depts/Interdisc/International/PDF%20files/HNP.final.pdf>

Vera Institute of Justice, *Measuring Progress Toward Safety and Justice: A Global Guide to the Design of Performance Indicators Across the Justice Sector*, New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2003

Zaverucha, Jorge, *Polícia Civil de Pernambuco: O Desafio da Reforma (The Civil Police in Pernambuco: The Challenge of Reform)*, Recife: Editora Universitária da UFPE, 2003

## For the Police, a Good First Impression Could be Crucial *Jennifer Trone*

The morning hours are the busiest. Put together the individuals who come to report crimes committed the night before with those who have waited until daybreak to seek help for some other problem and you have a steady flow of people walking through the door of the Citizen Assistance Center. This bright but small office is where they arrive after deciding to go to the police and entering Sovietskaya Station in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia—first passing photos of “wanted” criminals and posters illustrating how to operate automatic firearms. Newcomers follow signs directing members of the public to the Citizen Assistance Center. Repeat visitors know which corridors to take and call the staff by name.

The center is an experiment, testing whether it’s possible to build public confidence in law enforcement by improving the very first contact between police and a crime victim or citizen seeking help. The ambition—and, to some extent, the strategy—is becoming common around the world, from Rio’s *favelas* to remote areas of the Punjab to this relatively prosperous city about 600 kilometers northeast of Moscow on the banks of the Volga River.

In Russia, public attitudes about the police reached an all-time low in 2002, mainly because officers were known to be rude and unhelpful, especially to victims of crime. At that time, a person mugged on one of the sleepy side streets in Nizhny who decided to report the crime was in for a frustrating, insulting experience. The police officer on duty would undoubtedly ask the victim to write and rewrite the account of what happened, rejecting each version for having too much, too little, or the wrong kind of detail. Many victims gave up and went home.

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# Active Policing-Related Ford Grants

## Brazil

### **Afro-Reggae Cultural Group**

*Jose Pereira de Oliveira Junior*

For a pilot project to create a new model of police-community relations.

### **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.

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

*Barbara Soares*

Study of the impact of the growing presence of women in Brazil's military police.

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

*Silvia Ramos*

Study of racial profiling among military police of Rio de Janeiro.

### **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.

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

*Claudio Beato and Renato Assuncao*

Core support for the Center for Criminology and Public Security.

### **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.

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

*Rosa Marga Rothe*

To study police misconduct in the state of Pará.

## University of São Paulo

*Sergio Adorno and Nancy Cardia*

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

## 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.

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

*Wu Handong*

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

## India

### **Business Initiative for Professional Policing (BIPP)**

*Vaijayanti Pandit*

To draw members of the business community into taking an active role in improving the professionalism of the police by providing management training, customer service training, assistance with communication technology, and other practical help.

### **Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative**

*Maja Daruwala*

Support for law enforcement reform and prison reform in India.

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

*Pramod Kumar*

Support for community policing projects and awareness-raising activities aimed at improving law enforcement in Punjab.

### **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.

### **Samarthan**

*Vivek Pandit*

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

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

*Anjali Dave*

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

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

*D. Banerjee*

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.

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

*Anjali Dave*

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

## Indonesia

### **Rifka Annisa Crises Center**

Support for the establishment of a Special Unit for Women Victims of Violence within the Yogyakarta police force organizational structure and training workshops for legal sector personnel.

### **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.

### **Yayasan Indonesian Police Watch**

*Adnan Pandupraja*

Support for police oversight, dialogues on democratic policing, and the creation of municipal-level community police forums.

### Nigeria

#### Centre for Law Enforcement Education

*Innocent Chukwuma*

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

#### Civil Liberties Organization

*Aye Obe*

For media outreach on police reforms and capacity strengthening.

#### Lagos State Ministry of Justice

For strengthening mediation services and public defender offices, and holding of workshops and training of magistrates and police officials in Lagos.

### Regional

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

*Hugo Frühling*

To establish an international commission on police reform for the Andean region and Southern Cone.

#### 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.

### United States

#### Vera Institute of Justice

*Christopher Stone*

Support for research, strategic planning, and consultation on issues of police accountability and police effectiveness internationally.

#### Vera Institute of Justice

*Merrick Bobb and Christopher Stone*

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

A study released in 2002 showed that police in Russia failed to register more than seven out of every 10 crimes that people tried to report. They weren't being malicious, just naively self-interested. Typically, police officers are judged by their ability to clear cases, so they have a logical but perverse incentive to under-record crime. Fewer crimes recorded mean fewer cases to investigate and solve.

The Moscow-based Center for Justice Assistance (CJA), a joint project of Vera and the Russian nonprofit INDEM, produced that research, and the results compelled the staff of CJA to find a way to make a person's first contact with the police a better experience.

Instead of trying to change the behavior of the "duty" officers, they worked with police researchers to create special centers within police stations to take complaints. Cadets from the local police academy and law school students in Nizhny Novgorod volunteer their time to listen patiently to each person's story, document it, and then submit the complaint to the duty officer. Today, recorded crime in the three police districts with Citizen Assistance Centers more closely matches reported crime—thanks also to the police department's decision to base performance on more than just clearance rates. A preliminary "exit" survey suggests that people who seek help from the police are more satisfied with the service they receive. And, equally important, the thoroughly documented complaints are helping police solve crimes.

While the law students and cadets focus on improving the first contact between citizens and police, they commonly are called upon to provide ongoing assistance and support—usually if the police process stalls or the victim questions a decision by the police department, but sometimes just to provide a sympathetic ear. One of the challenges of running the centers is helping the staff under-

stand and accept the limits of their role—hard to do when a case is compelling and the risk of injustice looms large.

Project Coordinator Valentina Kosyreva is rallying her staff at Sovietskaya Station to help a woman whom they believe was brutally beaten by a neighbor after she testified against him in court. The police have twice refused to open an investigation and a civil court judge is unwilling to hear her case, so the staff are trying to figure out what to do next.

Their tenacity is admirable but possible only in a few cases. And every day, residents present problems the police view as outside their scope of responsibility. An elderly woman who shares an apartment with her granddaughter and the young woman's husband is convinced that her relatives are trying to force her out and take over the lease. The woman's predicament is a common one in Russia today. During a recent visit to the center, she was crying as she reported that her granddaughter slapped her. But there were no visible marks of an assault and, therefore, no reason to believe the police would open a case.

If the centers survive beyond their pilot phase—which depends on the station commanders viewing the centers as integral to police operations—the cadets and law students will figure out how much advocacy they can afford to provide, and they will learn even more about the value of the respect and empathy they can offer. More interesting, what these young criminal justice professionals learn through their work could begin to shape police policy. Maybe next year the police will have a strategy for preventing elder abuse.

*Jennifer Trone is senior writer and editor in the communications department.*

## Researchers Gather in New Delhi (continued from p. 1)

safer and were more likely to express trust in the police, especially if they were aware of the community policing program. However, it was noted that Kahn's study illustrates a different weakness in much of the research to date. He cannot prove that the addition of community policing caused these positive changes. Only with baseline data gathered before a program launches can researchers hope to demonstrate causation.

Since one can never expect a majority of residents to know about any government program—even with funding for the most robust public education campaign—police need to find a way for citizens to feel the effects of community policing even if they are not aware of the program. Simply changing deployment patterns, for example, so that the same few officers patrol a neighborhood might make people feel safer and believe that police are more accessible.

The researchers gathered in Delhi agreed that they and their colleagues also need to help police develop discrete and realistic goals for community policing—not the laundry list of grand claims that public officials may need to make in order to launch a program—and they need to find ways to share progress toward those goals over time. This kind of work places researchers squarely in the position of collaborating with the officials who run the programs they are evaluating. Fortunately, social scientists have learned how to navigate the pressures inherent in such a role and can retain their credibility. The research on community policing may have several shortcomings, but this is not one of them.

Consider this problem: Community policing initiatives often aim to involve residents in the process of shaping local law enforcement priorities, but what amount of

involvement reflects successful engagement? Researchers can actually help set the standard by understanding the findings. Involving just three percent of a community of 5,000 residents looks like an achievement if you think of 150 attending periodic meetings with the police. Making that claim depends on being able to show that rates of engagement tend to be very low, however, and that depends on researchers sharing information with one another.

This meeting among researchers from seven countries was an important step toward encouraging those who create and operate community policing programs and those who study them to look to other cultures for insight and inspiration.

*Jennifer Trone is senior writer and editor in the communications department at the Vera Institute of Justice and observed the meeting in Delhi that she writes about.*

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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 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).