



SOCIAL COHESION AND SDG16+

in Central America and
the Dominican Republic

Measurement foundations



United Nations Development Programme

As the United Nations lead agency on international development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) works to eradicate poverty, inequality and climate change. We work with our extensive network of experts and partners in 170 countries to help nations build integrated, lasting solutions for people and the planet.

For more information, please visit www.undp.org or follow us @UNDP

© 2022 UNDP and USAID. All rights reserved
United Nations Development Programme
UNDP's Bureau for Latin America, Edificio 220, Ciudad del Saber.
Panama city, Panama.

Recommended citation: UNDP (2022). *Social cohesion and SDG16+ in Central America and the Dominican Republic. Measurement foundations.*

UNDP's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC)

José Cruz - Osorio

Manager of the Regional Hub

Jairo Acuña - Alfaro

Governance and Peace Team Leader

Rita Sciarra

Inclusive Growth and SDG Integration Team Leader

Gloria Manzotti

Access to Justice, Security and Human Rights Specialist

SOCIAL COHESION AND SDG16+

in Central America and
the Dominican Republic

Measurement foundations



UNDP Regional Project Infosegura

Marcela Smutt

Project Regional Coordinator

Juan Pablo Gordillo

Deputy Project Coordinator

Elvia Tapia

Knowledge Management and Research Specialist

Supervision

Renata Pardo

Coordination

Chiara Brunetti

Authors

Carolina Ávalos Burgos and María Montoya Aguirre

Editorial review

Laura Cárdenas

Visual design and layout

Ximena Chaperó

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the work and review of the teams of our UNDP offices in the countries where the Regional InfoSegura Project operates: Laura Rivera, Rafael Pleitez, Daniel Carsana and Víctor Tablas in El Salvador; Claudia Saravia, Ana Gabriela de León, Iñaki de Francisco, Giovanni García, Eduardo Díaz and Silvia Mendoza in Guatemala; Tania Martínez, Sergio Membreño, Cristina Sevillano, Osvaldo Lapuente and Carmela Lanza in Honduras; Randall Brenes and Karol Sánchez in Costa Rica; Marilyn Lee in Belize; Pura Hernández and María del Mar Pérez in the Dominican Republic. Thanks are also due to the Peer Reviewers for their valuable contributions: Eduardo Ortiz-Juárez, Sara Noguera, Olga Lucía Acosta, Iván González de Alba.

infoSEGURA



This document has been elaborated thanks to the support of the United States Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the technical assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The opinions and views presented in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions and views of the agencies and organizations that supported the preparation of this publication, nor those of the member countries of the United Nations.

Content

Foreword	7
Introduction	8
Background	11
Executive Summary	15

CHAPTER 1

REFERENCE FRAMEWORK	34
1.1 Theoretical and measuring framework for social cohesion in Latin America	34
1.2 Social cohesion and its link to citizen security and ODS 16+	37

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT OF SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY WITH A FOCUS ON SDG 16+ IN THE SUBREGION OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	42
2.1 Context of social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion	42
<i>Socioeconomic context and COVID-19 situation in the subregion</i>	42
<i>The state of social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion</i>	46
2.2 Institutional framework of social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion	54
<i>Country-level institutional framework in the subregion</i>	59

CHAPTER 3

INTEGRATED POLICIES ON SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY	74
3.1 Mapping the SDGs	74
3.2 Integrated policy proposal	77

CHAPTER 4

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING THE SOCIAL COHESION INDEX AT THE SUBREGIONAL LEVEL 86

4.1	General description	86
4.2	Data	87
4.3	Methodology	90
4.3.1	Conceptual approaches and estimation model	90
4.3.2	Collection and systematization of the indicators	93
4.3.3	Selection of relevant indicators	94

FINAL REMARKS

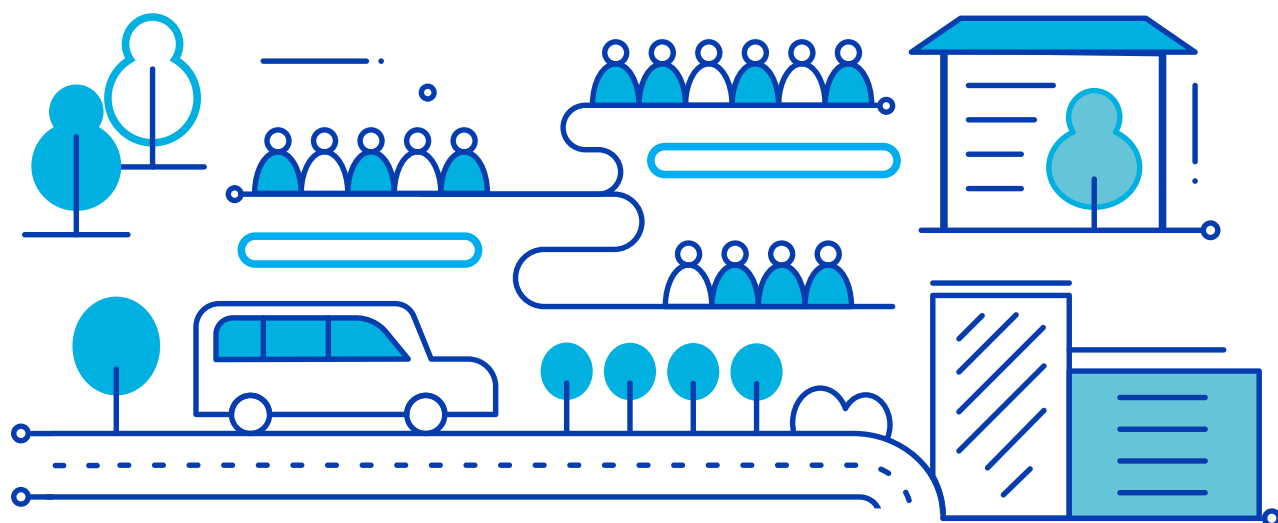
96

ANNEXES

Annex 1		
	SDGs relevant to social cohesion, citizen security and SDG 16+	100
Annex 2		
	Indices and indicators selected by country	103
Annex 3		
	Average SDG Performance and Social Cohesion Index	104
Annex 4		
	Social cohesion, human development, democracy and violence (correlation charts)	111
Annex 5		
	Subregional (and regional) level strategic partners with an influence on the social cohesion and citizen security agenda	112
Annex 6		
	Summary table of the institutional framework by country	114
Annex 7		
	Proposed theory of change for social cohesion and citizen security	115
Annex 8		
	Proposal for Integrated Policies for social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+, for the subregion of Central America and the Dominican Republic	117
Annex 9		
	Methodology for measuring social cohesion	125

References	127
-------------------	------------

List of acronyms	129
-------------------------	------------





FOREWORD

The social fabric in societies of Latin America and the Caribbean has deteriorated in the last decade, placing social cohesion at the center of the public policy debate. Setting agreements between political, social, and economic actors to prepare and implement response plans and inclusive strategies is essential to go further the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened social inequalities in the region. Although the virus affects everyone equally, its economic and social consequences are not equal, they are more severe for the most vulnerable. This represents a challenge for States, having to rebuild social and economic structures in an equitable and efficient courts of action to map the path towards recovery.

This work is part of a compendium of three reports on social cohesion which explore the concept in depth from different and complementary perspectives in the subregion of Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama) and in the Dominican Republic. The series analyses social cohesion in relation to some of the most relevant issues identified to deserve promotion in the current context: (i) economic inclusion, (ii) socio-environmental conflict and (iii) the SDG 16+ approach on peace, justice, and strong institutions.

The diagnosis which links the social cohesion and citizen security focuses on the Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG16+) specifically on the countries of the northern region of Central America. This diagnosis put forward a set of integral measures and comprehensive policy to creates cohesive, inclusive, peaceful, and fair societies, framing the path for a sustainable development in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

A methodological proposal is outlined to approximate a measure of the degree of social cohesion that is appropriate to the subregional context. Some alternatives are presented to establish the relationships between citizen security and the SDG16+ with social cohesion, as well as a set of indicators relevant to the context. This methodology is a contribution to previous made efforts to measure social cohesion, thus it is not intended to be a definitive tool for social cohesion, but rather a guide or reference to address this issue.

We hope this compendium will be useful to consider the dynamics of social cohesion in the public agenda of Central America and the Dominican Republic as well as its interrelation with the economic, environmental and citizen security dimensions.



Jose Cruz-Osorio
Manager

UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean



INTRODUCTION

Infosegura is a specialized regional project for the management of evidence-based information to strengthen the formulation and monitoring of public policies on citizen security in Central America and Dominican Republic.

Infosegura is a specialized regional project for the management of evidence-based information to strengthen the formulation and monitoring of public policies on citizen security in Central America and Dominican Republic. It aims to improve the quality of information on citizen security in the region, to promote its analysis and use it as an input for public policy and to increase regional coordination and collaboration on State strategies for citizen security.

The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean and is financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The regional scope currently extends to seven countries: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Belize, Costa Rica, Panama and Dominican Republic.

In its theory of change, Infosegura sets out an ultimate impact of reducing violence and improving citizen security and coexistence in Central America. A multidimensional analysis indicates a multiplicity of factors that aggravate, reproduce and deepen the problems in the region.

Under the Infosegura Project and with the goal of continuing to advance its work towards the consolidation of social cohesion as an indispensable factor for achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean proposes the development of a series of reports on social cohesion with a focus on SDG 16+ and social cohesion, economic inclusion and socio-environmental cohesion.



This document, the first in the series of reports, applies the Integrated Policy Methodology¹ developed by UNDP (under the 2030 Agenda) and used for the development of the theoretical cluster of targets for social cohesion in Latin America² that forms the framework for this work. The report seeks to analyze the link between social cohesion and citizen security, with a focus on SDG 16+, from two perspectives, one subregional (Central America and Dominican Republic, member countries of SICA) and the other in the countries of the northern part of Central America (also known as the Northern Triangle countries). This differentiation is essential, because the countries of northern Central America face specific shared challenges related to, among others, drug-trafficking- and gang-related violence, irregular migration and forced displacement, in addition to those related to gender inequality, democratic governance and the expansion and effects of COVID-19.

The methodology used for the preparation of this report has included a literature review and analysis of documents produced by UNDP and other international and research organizations related to social cohesion and its measurement in Latin America, citizen security, the impacts of coronavirus, and other official documents of the countries covered by this analysis. In addition, exchanges and collaboration took place between the various UNDP country offices, and interviews were conducted with the Infosegura project team, in order to complete relevant information. We worked in coordination with the UNDP Regional Hub team in Panama. Lastly, a peer review process was conducted. As a result, the report was evaluated and enriched by the comments of a group of experts in social cohesion, its measurement, citizen security and the development and implementation of policies in the subregion.

i The Integrated Policies Methodology is a tool developed by UNDP to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda SDGs, through responses based on multidimensional policies. It incorporates: i) a holistic approach that identifies synergies between the SDGs to provide inclusive, participative and sustainable responses; ii) the identification of policy intervention areas (“accelerators”) that trigger multiplier effects between economic, social and environmental dimensions; iii) the definition of evidence-based interventions, the principle of “leave no one behind”, and on monitoring and evaluation; and iv) the fostering of partnerships between multiple stakeholders and sectors and of an active and inclusive citizenship to achieve significant impacts on sustainable development.



© PNUD Guatemala / Fernanda Zelada Rosal

BACKGROUND

In recent decades, Central America has been the stage for a complex interweaving of processes and events marked by violence, insecurity and breaches of Human Rights. Armed conflicts, peace processes and the return to democracy in the 1980s involved a challenge to the region that was not only political and institutional but also in terms of security. This context gave rise to the peace process in Central Americaⁱⁱ and the reactivation of Central American integration.

In the 1990s, the concept of citizen security gathered force in Latin America, broadening the spectrum of actors, dimensions and components and leaving behind traditional ideas and those of the militarization of security, while the countries of Central America advanced in processes of consolidation towards democracy, integration and peace. The new century revealed the expansion of global and national threats and the influence of these made itself felt in the subregion in all its dimensions. Organized crime, drug trafficking, violence, and corruption, among other factors, have left their marks in every aspect of human development, including the political, institutional and community. In this way it has become one of the most violent regions in the world, marked moreover by a profound humanitarian crisis and complex irregular migration processes.

To this highly-complex situation are added structural problems (poverty, inequality, low economic growth, reduced productivity and environmental vulnerability)³ that have been exacerbated by the coronavirus crisis and have transcended to a crisis of governance. Taking this context for the Central America and the Dominican Republic subregion as its starting point, this report seeks to provide comprehensive answers for achieving peace, security, justice and robust regional institutions (SDG 16+) from a framework of social cohesion and the 2030 Agenda.

The report is divided into four chapters. *Chapter One* sets out the frame of reference taken from the document “*Estrategia de políticas integrales para la cohesión social en América Latina y el Caribe. Documento base*”,⁴ with a subregional overview of social cohesion linked to citizen security and the SDGs. *Chapter Two* addresses the context of social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion, with a focus on SDG 16+. To do this, it carries out an institutional and quantitative analysis based on the findings of the Social Cohesion Index (SCI) for Latin America set out in the document “*Cohesión social en América Latina: una propuesta de medición y sus resultados*”⁵ and other complementary indicators, as well as the impact of COVID-19.

Chapter Three focuses on the issue of social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion. The SDGs are mapped from a standpoint of the integrated policy methodology and a multidimensional approach, and an integrated policy proposal (or roadmap) is developed. *Chapter Four* presents a proposed methodology for measuring social cohesion in the subregion.

Lastly, the final chapter presents a series of *conclusions* in respect of the main challenges of social cohesion and citizen security – with a focus on SDG 16+ – in the subregion, and on how to go about measuring it in a way that is appropriate to its context.

ii The Central American Peace Agreements, Esquipulas I (1986) and II (1987), inspired by the efforts of the Contadora Group led by Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama to put an end to the conflicts in the region, were historic milestones that gave impetus to the reactivation of Central American integration.

BOX 1

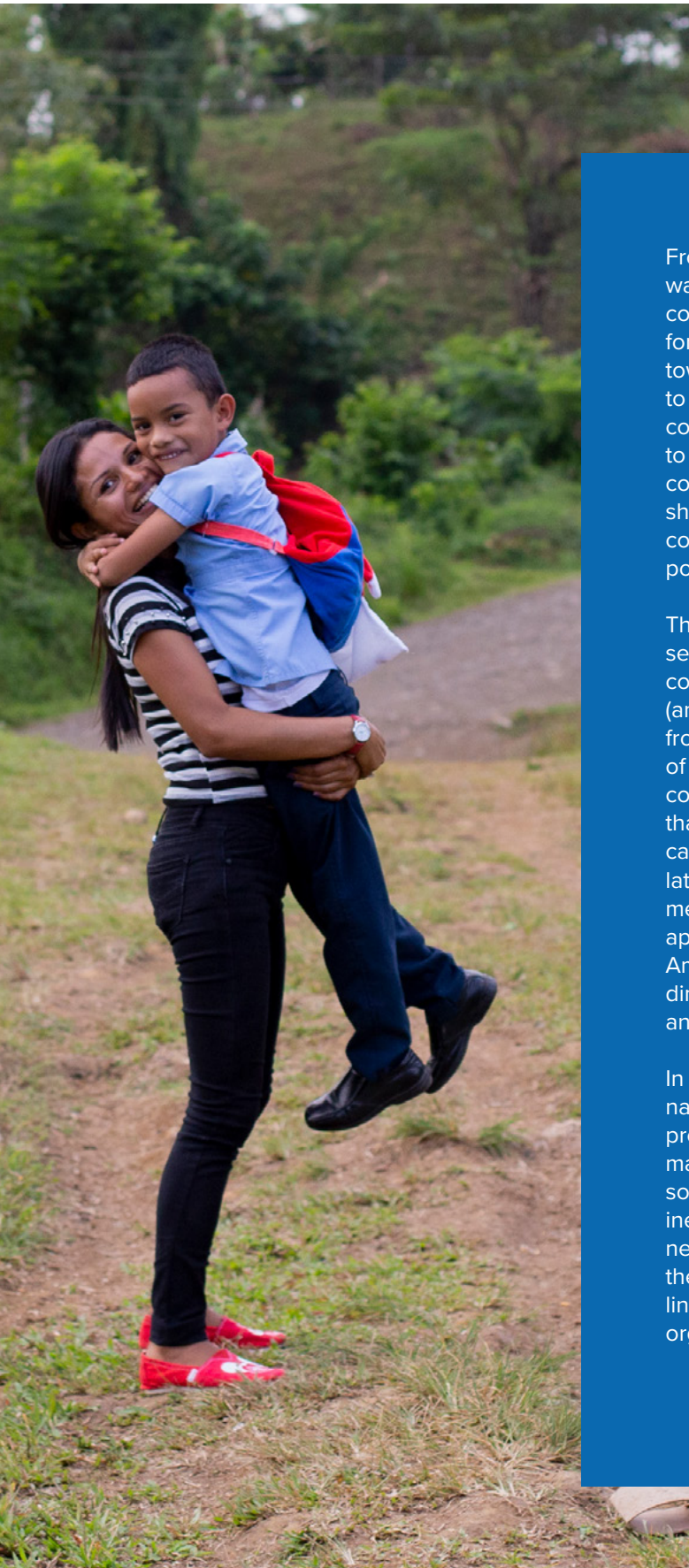
Background, conceptualization and measurement of social cohesion in Latin America

Social cohesion is considered an essential element for the sustainable development of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Even more so in a context of a global, multidimensional crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic that has led to an unprecedented humanitarian, economic and social crisis which deepens the pre-existing inequalities in the region, harms social cohesion and jeopardizes fulfilment of the Agenda.

There has been extensive discussion around the conceptualization of social cohesion in the region over the last two decades. More recently, this discussion, which remains open and takes as its starting point the fact that the concept of social cohesion is not settled, has been introduced in the public policy field as an essential element to advance towards democratic governance, social inclusion and gender equality. A conceptual approach is defined in Sojo (2017), which was taken as a reference for the base document (UNDP and AECID, 2021a) used for this analysis. This concept, in addition to including the fields of politics and policies as a "microsocial" space in which social cohesion is built, also considers the "social bond" that arises in a given society or community.

This framework identifies three dimensions of social cohesion considered in the comprehensive policy strategy, based on the literature on social cohesion:

- **Social inclusion:** This suggests social elements that attest to the absolute achievements of society, focusing on such aspects as poverty, social gaps, mortality, education, health and employment.
- **Governance:** This considers the mechanisms established around the social contract, the process of the formulation and application of public policies and laws, together with elements related to democracy, politics, corruption, government and institutions.
- **Sense of belonging:** This covers aspects related to the response and perception of the public to the mechanisms and rules established, and also to shared values, participation, trust and freedom of association, which in turn implies taking into consideration elements such as trust, values and perception in this dimension.

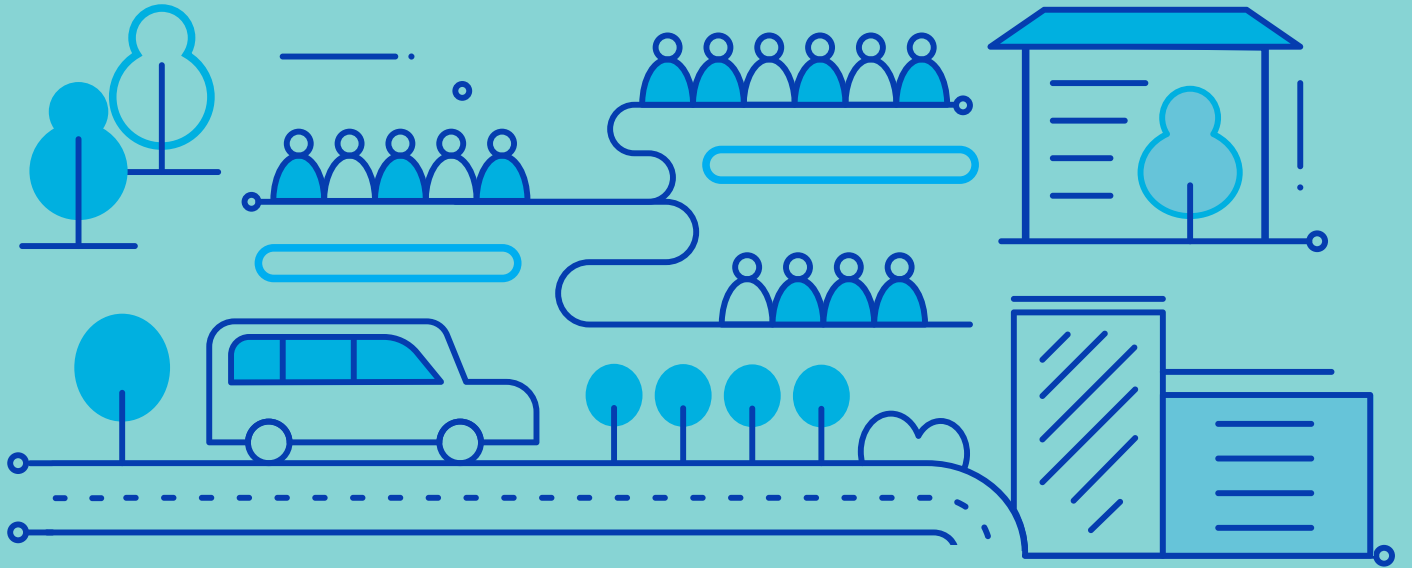


From this conceptualization, a methodological proposal was developed to synthesize important aspects of social cohesion in an aggregate index for Latin America. The formulation of this index constitutes work to move out towards operationalization and moving beyond an intent to be a definitive or even comprehensive measure of the complex, dynamic concept of social cohesion, it seeks to offer an empirical starting point to allow inter-country comparison. In addition, the index makes it possible to show the relative contributions of each of the dimensions considered, thus becoming a tool with considerable potential for use in public-policy design.

The Social Cohesion Index for Latin America is based on secondary data (available, high-quality and regional in coverage) establishing a demanding standard of comparison (and replicability) by adding 21 selected European countries from the OECD. The index is estimated using the technique of structural equation modelling (SEM), particularly confirmatory factor analysis (at two levels) due to the fact that social cohesion and its dimensions are concepts that cannot be directly observed or measured (that is, they are latent variables in a statistical model). Thus, the proposed methodology manages to provide a first multidimensional approximation of the degree of social cohesion in Latin America (17 countries) through an index composed of three dimensions (and 13 indicators): social inclusion, belonging and governance.

In sum, the appropriateness of this index to subregional/national contexts, as is sought in this analysis with the proposals presented as a starting point for its discussion, may be marked as one of the challenges for the impact of social cohesion on public policies. In the context of the deep inequalities that persist in Latin America, there is an evident need to create a certain social and political consensus on the importance of social cohesion based on broad dialogue linked and related to the political agenda of the region and organized civil society.

Source: UNDP and AECID. (2021a). Estrategia de políticas integrales para la cohesión social en América Latina y el Caribe. Documento base; UNDP and AECID. (2021b). Cohesión social en América Latina. Una propuesta de medición y sus resultados; and, UNDP and AECID. (2021c) Reflexiones sobre cohesión social. Lo que hemos aprendido.



Executive Summary

SOCIAL COHESION AND SDG16+

in Central America and the Dominican Republic

Measurement foundations

Over the last decade, social cohesion has taken centre stage in debate as a crucial building block to advance towards a more-comprehensive and inclusive form of development that “leaves no one behind” and to achieve the 2030 Agenda’s Sustainable Development Goals. This has gained even more relevance in the current context of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to a deepening of social inequalities and structural challenges in the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

Thus, social cohesion presents as a fundamental challenge for the countries of the subregion of Central America and the Dominican Republic, particularly because they face a difficult context that combines a series of threats linked to organized crime and structural violence, such as drug trafficking, mara and gang operations, including violence against women and other groups, the effects of extreme weather events, the humanitarian crisis resulting from forced displacement and irregular migration, the lack of State responses and the social conflict derived from these situations.

Achieving an impact on the reduction of violence and the improvement of citizen security and coexistence must start from a multidimensional analysis that indicates the existence of the multiple factors that aggravate, reproduce and deepen this problem in the subregion. This work requires a multidimensional approach incorporating the comprehensive public policies needed to advance towards societies that are more cohesive, inclusive, peaceful and just, thus opening the way to sustainable development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

This is the executive summary of the document *Social cohesion and SDG 16+ in Central America and the Dominican Republic. Measurement foundation* (UNDP, 2021), which forms the first of the series of reports on social cohesion with an approach based on SDG 16+ – social cohesion, economic inclusion and socio-environmental conflicts – that analyses social cohesion and citizen security in the countries of the subregion: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and the Dominican Republic. This work is carried out in the framework of the Infosegura regional project and the UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean, with the goal of continuing to advance its work towards the consolidation of social cohesion as an essential element for fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda in the region.



REFERENCE FRAMEWORK: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In recent times, discussion around the conceptualization of social cohesion in the region has been introduced in the public policy field as an essential element to advance towards democratic governance, social inclusion and gender equality. A conceptual approach is defined in Sojo (2017),ⁱⁱⁱ which was taken as a reference for the UNDP and AECID base document (2021a)^{iv} used for this analysis. This concept, in addition to including the fields of politics and policies as a “microsocial” space in which social cohesion is built, also considers the “social bond” that arises in a given society or community.

In this framework, and based on the literature on social cohesion, three dimensions of social cohesion considered in the comprehensive policy strategy are identified: social inclusion, governance and sense of belonging. From this conceptualization, a methodological proposal was developed to synthesize important aspects of social cohesion in an aggregate index for Latin America: the *Social Cohesion Index for Latin America (Índice de Cohesión Social para América Latina)*.^v Formulating this index constitutes work to move out towards operability and going beyond an intent to be a definitive or even comprehensive measure of the complex, dynamic concept of social cohesion, it seeks to offer an empirical starting point to allow inter-country comparison (17 countries of Latin America). In addition, the index

iii Sojo (2017) La cohesión social democrática, brújula indispensable en una época de desconcierto. Colección Documentos Interconecta N°1

iv UNDP and AECID. (2021a). Estrategia de políticas integrales, para la cohesión social en América Latina y el Caribe. Documento base. (Chapter 1)

v UNDP and AECID. (2021b). Cohesión social en América Latina. Una propuesta de medición y sus resultados



© PNUD Colombia

It is important to highlight the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic has moved beyond being a health crisis to a crisis of governance, exacerbating the already difficult economic, social and political context in Latin America. This scenario becomes further complicated in the subregion on account of violence and citizen insecurity.

makes it possible to show the relative contributions of each of the dimensions considered (and their 13 indicators) – social inclusion, governance and belonging – thus becoming a tool with considerable potential for use in public-policy design.

Even so, it is important to highlight the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic has moved beyond being a health crisis to a crisis of governance, exacerbating the already difficult economic, social and political context in Latin America.^{vi} This scenario becomes further complicated in the subregion on account of violence and citizen insecurity. This is why it is essential to address social cohesion from its link with citizen security and SDG 16+.

This link between social cohesion and security, developed by Dammert (2021),^{vii} raises social cohesion as a broader and hierarchically superior concept to security, whereby a society that has achieved cohesion facilitates the achievement of higher levels of security and where, furthermore, citizen security is established as a key component. Thus, relationships are established between the dimensions of social cohesion and security.^{viii}

vi Argument made by López-Calva and UNDP. (2021). América Latina y el Caribe: Gobernanza Efectiva, más allá de la recuperación. PNUD-RBLAC. January 2021.

vii Dammert, Lucía (2012) Seguridad ciudadana y cohesión social en América Latina. Programa Urb-al III (pp.43-55)

viii Ibid (pp.43-44)

CONTEXT OF SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY

In the last two decades, the general human-development balance sheet in the subregion has been encouraging, but its results have been heterogeneous both between and within countries. Human development gains observed (of basic capacities) have not translated as well-being on an equal basis; in 2019, significant Human Development Index gaps prevailed between men and women in most of the countries of the subregion.^{ix}

This crisis situation has had an impact on, or even badly shaken institutions in many countries, in this way contributing to the erosion of fragile democracies.

Reality shows that this progress is not sustainable and can be reversed in extreme situations, such as that caused by the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, whose impacts on deepening inequality and negative effects on every dimension of human development are devastating for most of the countries of Latin America and the subregion.^x These impacts have not only denuded fragile public health systems, but also jeopardized an entire global society, a situation that may increase the social polarization existing in many of these countries^{xi} and generate a spiral of conflict and social disillusionment due to the lack of or type of responses provided by the State. This crisis situation has had an impact on, or even badly shaken institutions in many countries, in this way contributing to the erosion of fragile democracies.

BOX 1

Differential impact of coronavirus^{xii}

Coronavirus has had a differential impact in the region on different population groups, deepening intersectional inequality (in respect of gender, social class, life stage, ethnoracial status, and migration status, among others).

Women are in a particularly vulnerable situation, in precarious employment and lacking protection: many of them (one in two) work in the informal sector, in paid domestic work (11.4%), mostly with no social security; the burden of unpaid domestic work is borne by women, teenagers and girls; and the increase in cases of violence against this group.

Thus, for example human development reverses are expected that may mean the loss of decades of progress on the women's participation rate in the labour force and in other areas such as education and the deepening of other gaps, such as digital.^{xiii}

ix UNDP. (2020a). Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2020. La próxima frontera: El desarrollo humano y el Antropoceno. New York; and UNDP. (2020). Human Development Perspectives Covid-19 and Human Development: Assessing the Crisis, Envisioning the Recovery. New York

x Ibid.

xi IDB (2020). Desigualdad y descontento social: cómo abordarlos desde la política pública: informe económico sobre Centroamérica, Haití, México, Panamá y República Dominicana / coordinadores, Arnoldo López, Marta Ruiz-Arranz. (Chapters 3 and 4).

xii ECLAC. (2020). Informe Especial COVID-19 (No. 3)

xiii UNDP. (2020a). Op. Cit.



© PNUD Brasil / Paula Mariane

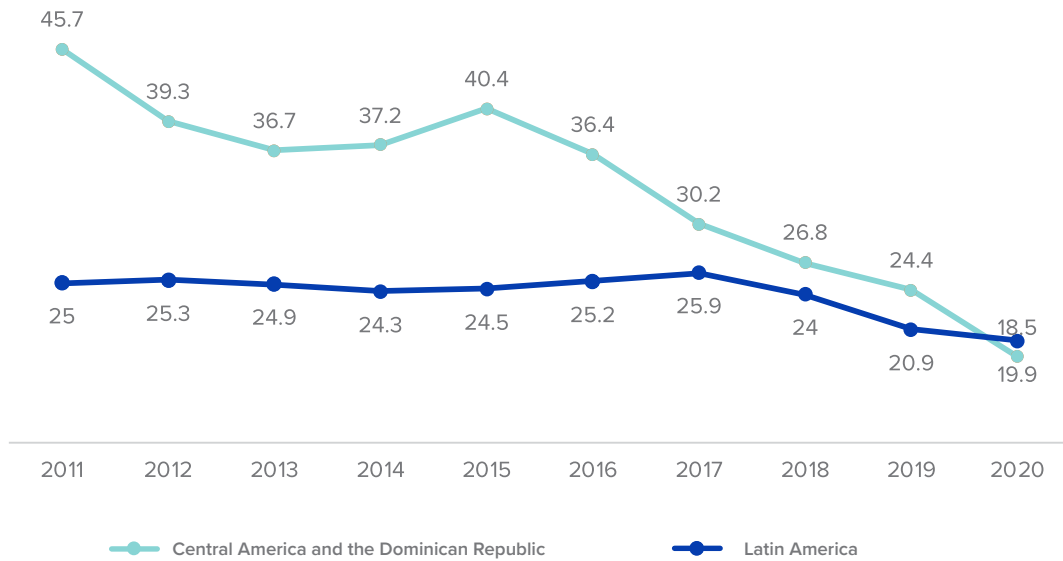
The position in respect of social cohesion and citizen security

Based on the measurements in the Social Cohesion Index for Latin America (SCI-LA), Costa Rica and Panama stand out among the countries of the region for better performance in progress on social cohesion. In the Covid-19 pandemic situation, however, this scenario becomes more complex in the subregion due to the prevalence of violence and citizen insecurity. The latter, which has come to disrupt every aspect of citizens' lives and the very fabric of society, damages social cohesion and limits opportunities to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs – SDGs 16 and 5 – and, therefore, sustainable development.^{xiv}

Violence remains a serious problem for the Central America subregion. Although there are differences between countries and the realities are not homogeneous, some common elements are worthy of mention. Firstly, the greater vulnerability of specific groups, such as young people, women, girls, children and adolescents, people with disabilities, ethnic communities, members of the LGBTIQ+ community and people in situations of irregular migration and forced displacement. Secondly, the territorialization of violence in both urban and rural areas and in both public and private spaces. And lastly, the modalities and manifestations that demonstrate the magnitude of the problem, not only as a matter of citizen security, but also of public health and coexistence. Homicide becomes the maximal expression of violence and its measurement and analysis the technical and political possibility of dimensioning the situation. (See charts below)

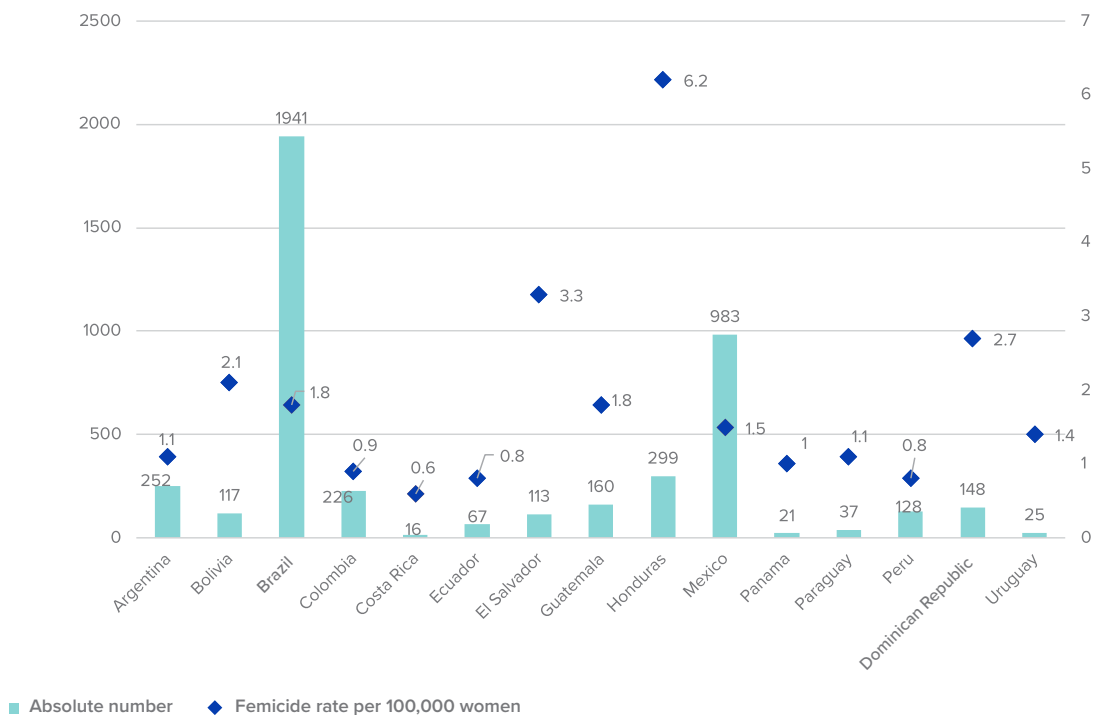
xiv UNDP and AECID. (2021a) Op. cit.; and, UNDP and AECID. (2021b). Op. cit.

Chart 1 | Homicide rates in Central America and the Dominican Republic compared with Latin America from 2010 to 2020, per 100,000 inhabitants



Source: Infosegura (2021). Análisis Multidimensional de la Seguridad Ciudadana durante 2020 en CA y RD. With official data from each country.

Chart 2 | Femicides or femicides in selected countries of Central America, the Dominican Republic and the rest of Latin America, 2019 (in absolute numbers and per 100,000 women)



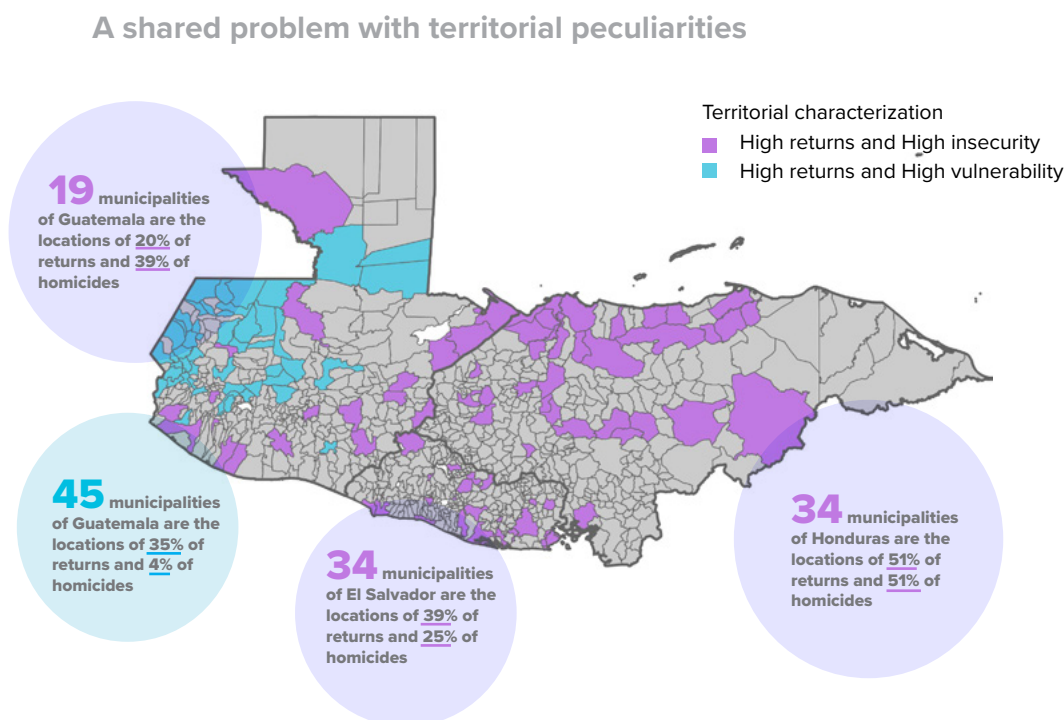
Source: ECLAC-GEO Gender Equality Observatory. Data retrieved on 30 September 2021: <https://oig.cepal.org/es/indicadores/femicidio>

Violence against women, girls and teenagers is a global and structural phenomenon that affects the region without distinction. It is the result of historically deeply-rooted patriarchal and violent sociocultural patterns of gender relationships based on men’s control and dominance of women. In the subregion, conditions of vulnerability, lack of empowerment, impunity and the set of risks to which women and girls are exposed throughout their lives, added to the contexts of insecurity and organized crime make it difficult to overcome this canker, evidencing the close relationship between criminal and gender-based violence.

The phenomenon of migration is nothing new in the subregion, yet the situation of violence and insecurity, especially in the countries of northern Central America, has marked a new phase characterized by migration crises. A context in which particularly vulnerable groups are identified as being at greater risk of suffering different forms of discrimination due to a lack of access to basic rights – health, education and basic services – and different forms of violence, such as people-trafficking, sexual exploitation and systematic violations of their fundamental human rights, including that to their very physical safety. Conditions of security and insecurity are additional to the gamut of causes that affect forced displacement and irregular migration in the subregion. The following map shows the municipalities to which people return (from which people previously left) and high levels of concentration of vulnerabilities and insecurity.

Conditions of security and insecurity are additional to the gamut of causes that affect forced displacement and irregular migration in the subregion.

Figure 1 | Citizen security, human mobility and development in the countries of northern Central America



Note: Territories were classified on the basis of human mobility, citizen security and development indicators, comprising the identification of municipalities with the greatest number of involuntary returnees; municipalities with the foregoing condition plus a greater number of threats and risks to citizen security as measured by the territorial prioritization index; and municipalities with both the foregoing conditions with the addition of a high rate of involuntary returnees.

Source: Infosegura (2020) Seguridad Ciudadana, Movilidad Humana y Desarrollo en los países del Norte de Centroamérica, September 2020.

Institutional framework

Belize

- National Security and Defence Strategy
- 3-year Strategic Action Plan (2020 – 2023) for the Belize Crime Observatory.^{1/}

National policy and strategy for the generation of evidence, integration of citizen security agencies and targeted actions

Costa Rica

- National Agenda for the Prevention of Violence and Promotion of Social Peace 2019-2022 ^{2/}

Comprehensive agenda linked to crime, and and social prevention

El Salvador

- Territorial Control Plan (2019) ^{3/}

Crime control policy, emphasis on some prioritized territories

Guatemala

- National Policy for the Prevention of Violence and Crime, Citizen Security and Peaceful Coexistence 2014-2034 (2014) ^{4/}
- K'atun Nuestra Guatemala National Development Plan 2032 ^{5/}
- General Government Policy (PGG) 2020-2024 ^{6/}

Complementary policies that coordinate control, prevention and targeting in primary attention areas

Honduras

- Comprehensive Policy for Coexistence and Citizen Security for Honduras 2011-2022 ^{7/}
- Strategic Government Plan (PED) 2018-2022 ^{8/}

Territorial plan based on 30 observatories, crime prevention and control plans

Panama

- National Citizen Security Strategy (ENSC) 2017-2030 ^{9/}
- Comprehensive Public Safety Policy ^{9/}
- Strategic Plan 2019-2024 ^{10/}

Complementary policies and strategies that coordinate control, prevention and re-socialization and prioritization of high-complexity neighbourhoods

Dominican Republic

- “My Safe Country” National Citizen Security Plan (2021) ^{11/}

National action plan that emphasizes territorial action on gender and citizen security, crime control and priority attention to territories

Notes: 1/ See document on Belize Crime Observatory (BCO) website: https://bco.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/download-manager-files/nationalsecurityanddefencestrategy2018_2021.pdf 2/ Document available at Costa Rica MIDEPLAN: <https://repositorio-snp.mideplan.go.cr/bitstream/handle/123456789/62/PP.005-AG.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y> 3/ See website of Salvadoran Ministry of Justice and Public Security: <https://www.seguridad.gob.sv/presidente-nayib-bukele-anuncia-iv-fase-del-plan-control-territorial-incursion/> 4/See document on website of Community Prevention of Violence Unit (UPCV) <https://upcv.gob.gt/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Politica-Nacional-1.pdf> 5/ECLAC - Regional Observatory of Planning for Development - K'atun National Development Plan, at: <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/es/planes/plan-nacional-de-desarrollo-katun-nuestra-guatemala-20322/> 6/ Document available at website of Vice-Presidency of Guatemala: https://www.hn.undp.org/content/honduras/es/home/library/democratic_governance/politica_convivencia.html 7/Document available at website of UNDP Honduras: https://www.hn.undp.org/content/honduras/es/home/library/democratic_governance/politica_convivencia.html 8/See website of General Government Coordination Secretariat (SCGG): <https://www.scgg.gob.hn/es/node/108> 9/See website of Ministry of Public Security of Panama: <https://www.seguridadciudadana.gob.pa/estrategia-nacional-seguridad-ciudadana/> 10/ ECLAC – Regional Observatory of Planning for Development Strategic Plan 2019-2024 of Panama: <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/sites/default/files/plan/files/PEG%202020-2024%20Panamá.pdf> 11/For further detail, see website of President of the Republic of Dominican Republic: <https://presidencia.gob.do/noticias/presidente-abinader-inicia-proyecto-piloto-mi-pais-seguro-la-estrategia-de-seguridad-mas>

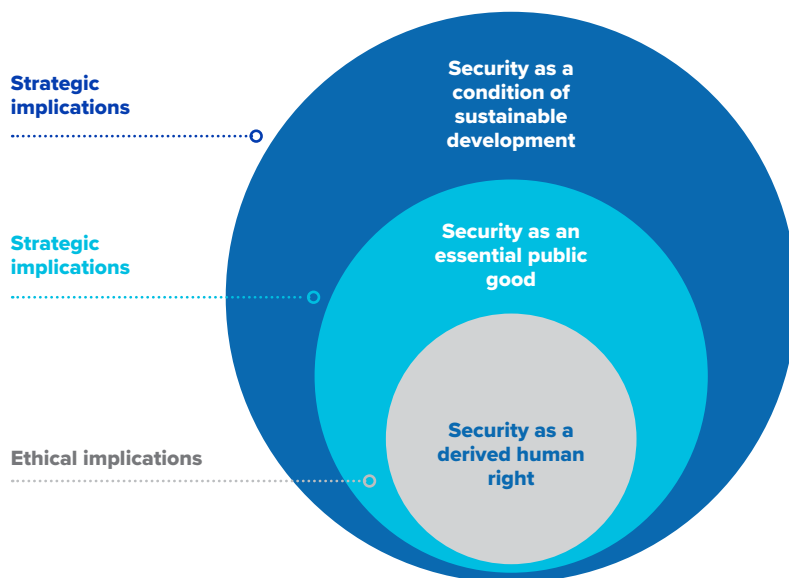
Source: Prepared using information from the different countries.



© Luis Gonçalves Martins

Having a comprehensive and gender-sensitive approach in public policies and their evidence-based formulation is critical for accelerating achievement of the SDGs in the subregion. Countries have responded to problems related to citizen insecurity, violence and social conflict by strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks and implementing policy measures to address the different aspects of the problem (at national or local levels). Progress has been made on the promotion of evidence-based public policies, including on prevention and evidence generation. Of these, the following are particularly noteworthy:

Figure 2 | The three dimensions of citizen security



Source: PNUD, 2020. Análisis sobre innovación en seguridad ciudadana y Derechos Humanos en América Latina y el Caribe (pág. 17)

Citizen Security remains the umbrella concept guiding the many trials and interventions that have been implemented in the region and subregion over three decades. There is a general consensus around taking the term to mean the possibility of protecting individuals' physical and mental well-being, individual and collective fulfilment, the full exercise of rights and duties and the enjoyment of individual freedoms in a context of harmonious development with respect for the norms in place. Citizen security is thus assumed from multiple dimensions that explain and define it as a public good, such as a Human Right, a condition for development and a dimension of the concept of Human Security.



INTEGRATED POLICIES ON SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY

Application of the integrated policy methodology recognizes the synergies and interconnections between the SDGs and their targets and identifies the policy interventions (or accelerators) that can lead to multiplier effects across the dimensions of development (economic, social and environmental). This approach makes it possible to construct effective integrated policy interventions to improve levels of safety, coexistence and social cohesion that contribute to the fulfilment of the SDGs, focused on SDG 16+, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In this regard, and based on the intensification of the problems of violence, citizen insecurity and social conflict facing (in varying degrees) the countries of the region, the theory of change is set out as the desired change whereby all, including women, children, young people and other groups at increased vulnerability to violence (in all its forms) are able to exercise their rights, on an equal footing, in an environment that is safe, free from violence and is characterized by effective management of social conflict. This change is brought about through achieving greater levels of citizen security, social cohesion and gender equality – SDG 16+, SDG 10 and SDG 5, within a framework of rights and effective justice, contributing in this way to the sustainable development of countries of the subregion.

Based on the SDG mapping^{xv} resulting from the subregion's context in terms of social cohesion and citizen security, a proposal is made for integrated policies.

xv Figure 3 presents an indicative mapping of the SDGs, identifying the main accelerators or policy interventions common to all the countries of the subregion of Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Figure 3 | Mapping of the SDGs: Social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+

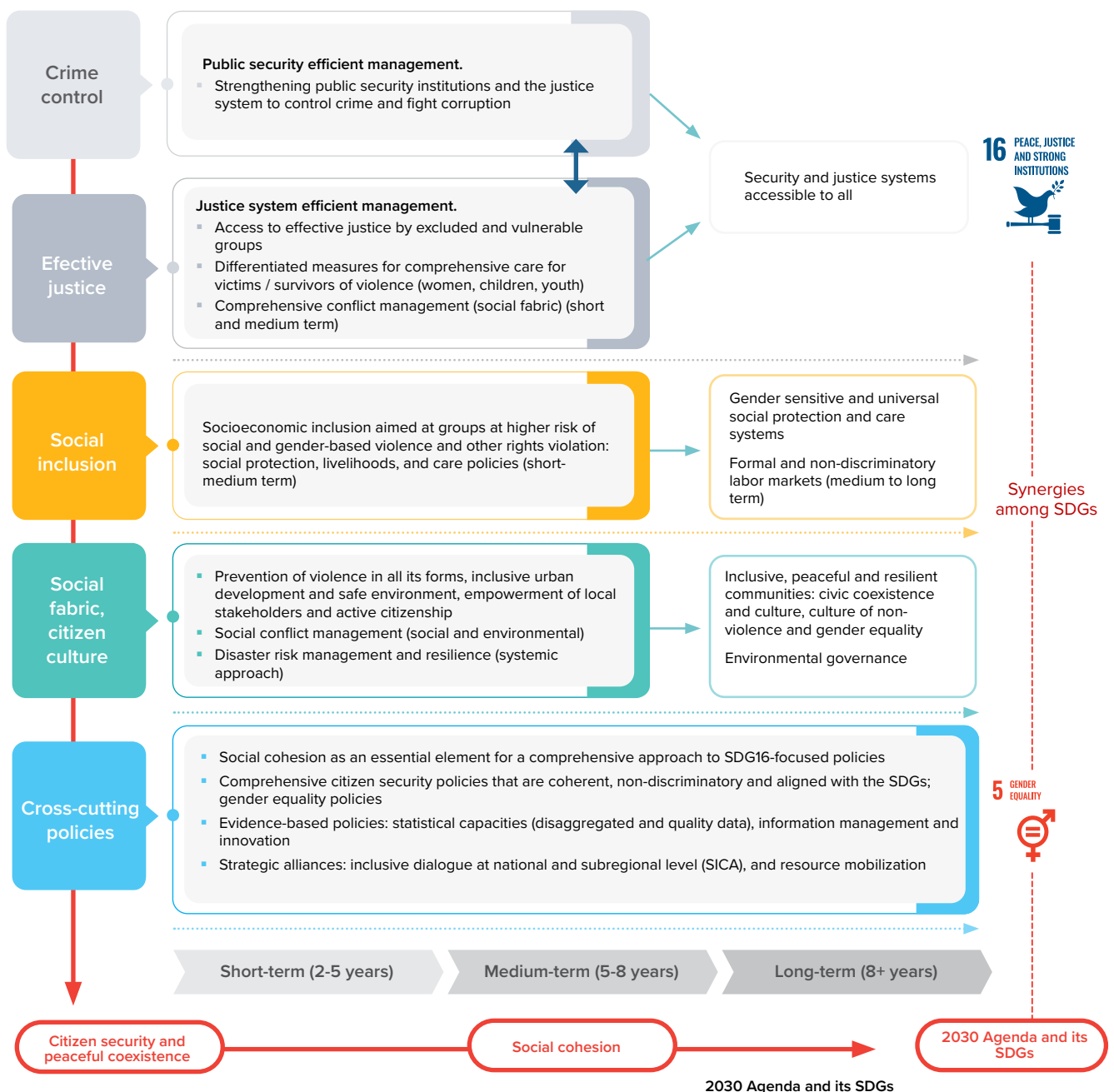


Source: Own elaboration based on Box 1 and Figure 6

The integrated policy proposal raises a number of considerations for the definition of a subregional roadmap:

- ✓ The importance of differentiated policies that incorporate short and longer-term measures for: i) escaping situations rights vulnerability, such as comprehensive care for the victims and survivors (and families) of situations of violence and for people in forced displacement; ii) building resilience and preventing violence; and iii) sustainability aimed at improving citizen security and promoting social cohesion as the bases upon which to build peaceful, inclusive and resilient cities within a framework of effective governance.
- ✓ Cross-cutting measures to strengthen national capacities for greater public-policy coherence and effectiveness.

Figure 4 | Integrated policies for social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+: areas and main accelerators



Source: Own elaboration based on figures 1 and 5, and box 1.



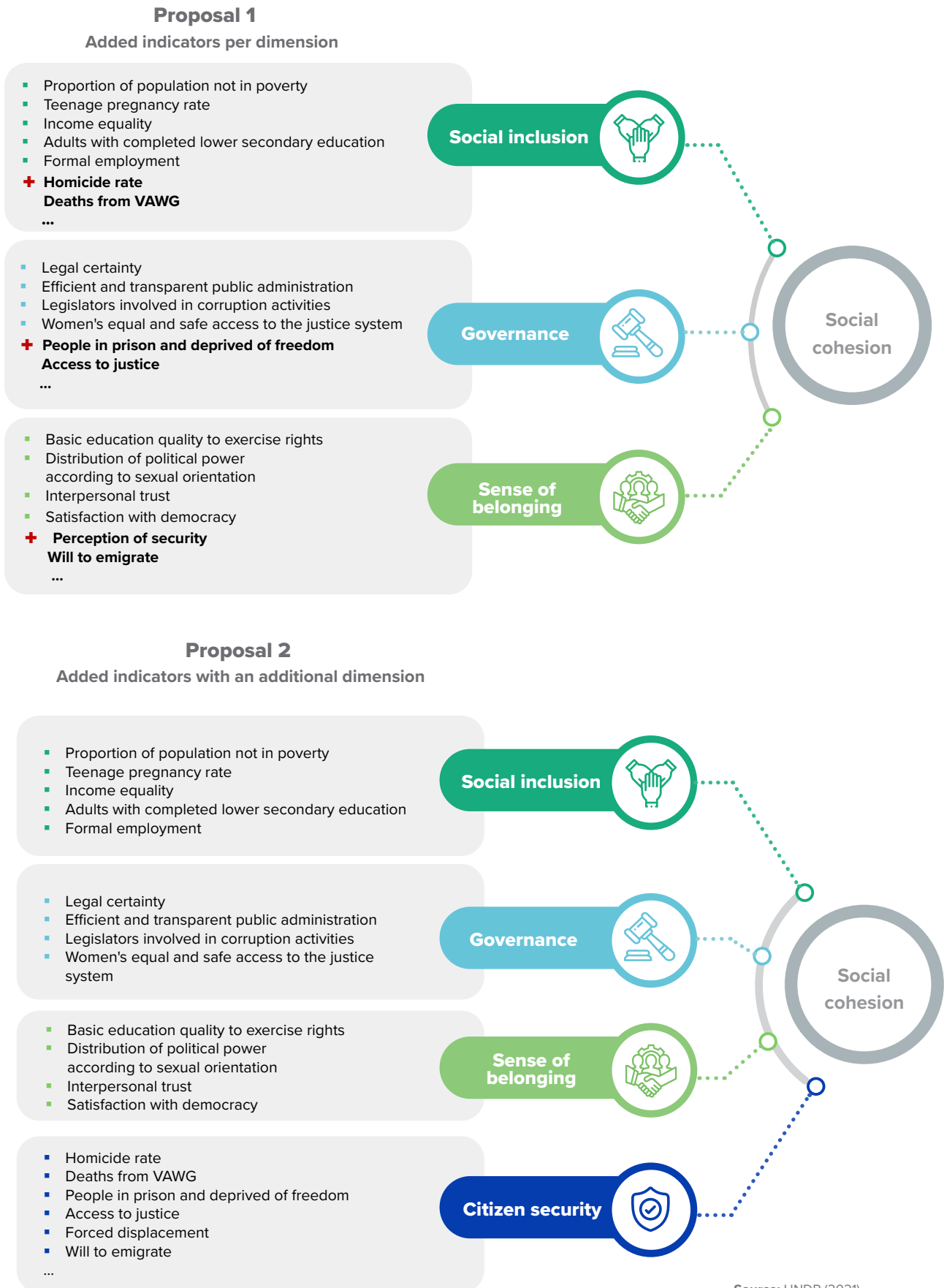
PROPOSED METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING THE SOCIAL COHESION INDEX WITH A SUBREGIONAL FOCUS

Construction of the index expanded by citizen security and SDG 16+ for the subregion consists of starting from a set of indicators that are normatively relevant for social cohesion in the subregion, to which are added the 13 indicators included in the Social Cohesion Index for Latin America (SCI-LA). Then, a subset is defined based on statistical criteria that are solely based on index performance by the countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic. The methodology for estimating the index will be through a structural equation model.^{xvi}

The first stage requires the definition of a structure for the expression of social cohesion prevailing in the countries of the subregion. The clear starting point, on account of its robustness, is the structure of the SCI-LA, since it already identifies the relevant indicators for three dimensions given in the literature, of social inclusion, governance and belonging. Even so, it is not obvious which dimension the ad hoc indicators related to citizen security and SDG 16+ belong to. They could be added to each of these dimensions according to the conceptual definition of each, or they could be included as an additional dimension of citizen security. The following figure shows both alternatives.

^{xvi} With this technique, it is possible to estimate, using a variance and covariance analysis, the relationship between unobservable constructs (latent variables) such as social cohesion and its dimensions, and observable indicators. This set of statistical techniques is similar to that used in the SCI-LA. The main differences between the proposed methodology and that used are: 1) the set of indicators used; 2) the dimensions of social cohesion covered in the model, since it is possible to modify any of the three dimensions identified or add an additional dimension; 3) the scale of the indicators, which for the subregion will represent the relative achievement of each indicator compared to the subregion itself; and 4) the statistical criteria for selecting the definitive indicators for inclusion in the index.

Figure 5 | Alternatives for the subregionally-focused model for estimation of the relative degree of social cohesion



Source: UNDP (2021).

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions of this analysis and the main challenges and scope of the proposal for measuring the social cohesion of the subregion with an emphasis on ODS 16+ include the following:

In respect of the institutional public-policy framework, the following is noteworthy:

- ✓ There has been significant progress in citizen security and its positioning on subregional and national agendas has contributed to promoting key initiatives and projects, especially in northern Central America.
- ✓ The countries of the subregion have responded to problems related to citizen insecurity, violence and social conflict by strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks and implementing policy measures to address different aspects of the problem (at national or local levels).
- ✓ The importance is emphasized of a comprehensive and gender-sensitive approach in public policies and their evidence-based formulation for accelerating achievement of the SDGs in the subregion.
- ✓ Special note should be taken of the importance of systematizing and capitalizing on all the knowledge acquired so far in the region on the comprehensive and gender-sensitive approach of public policies and their evidence-based formulation as critical inputs to the formulation of appropriate, comprehensive policies for acceleration of SDG 16+ and the achievement of greater social cohesion and citizen security. Notable work has been done on the generation of knowledge and statistical capacity in the fields of citizen security and violence prevention at both country and subregional levels, with the support of initiatives such as Infosegura (USAID/UNDP).
- ✓ The need to continue to support the strengthening of institutions responsible for security and justice for an effective response to violence and criminality, and the improvement of governments' capacities for the planning and implementation of coherent, non-discriminatory policies aligned with the SDGs.
- ✓ Further to countries' responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, prominence should be given to the need to strengthen the design of gender-sensitive and intersectional policies to provide more-effective answers in the field of VAWG and to make up the gaps seen in the jobs market and care-giving, helping to accelerate achievements in SDGs 5 and 16+.
- ✓ Inequality remains one of the main structural challenges in the subregion and that is why channelling national efforts towards person-centred sustainable development – in line with the principle of “leave no one behind” – becomes an imperative for progressing the 2030 Agenda.



Measurement proposal. Ensuring that the Social Cohesion Index for Latin America is appropriate to the subregional context, taking account of the link between social cohesion and citizen security, would involve a significant methodological challenge (due to the multidimensional, abstract and dynamic nature of the concept) in respect of having the tools to influence comprehensive public policies and their contribution to achieving social cohesion with an emphasis on SDG 16+.^{xvii}

Subregional agenda. The summits and different forums for political dialogue and consensus in the region are effective frameworks for promoting and influencing the social cohesion and citizen security agenda. In the current context of Covid-19, countries have reaffirmed their commitment to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, its effective implementation, “leaving no-one behind” and person-focused, recognizing inequalities and their increase as a predominant trait in the region.^{xviii} Foremost among the main challenges in promoting this Agenda are the need for a vision aligned with the SDGs and the strengthening of effective participatory and inclusive coordination mechanisms to prevent the overlapping of agreements between these, the various instruments and the spaces for dialogue.

Final conclusion. Covid-19 has shone a light on a crisis of governance in the subregion and created an opportunity to strengthen the role of the State (regaining its legitimacy and transparency and the trust of the public) and its capacity to lead development centred on the 2030 Agenda. In this context, social cohesion with an emphasis on SDG 16+ becomes central for configuring a new social contract in the subregion in a framework of effective governance that enables, through consensus, an inclusive and sustainable economic recovery, the consolidation of social protection and health systems and of labour markets, and the establishment of a justice system with effective access.

xvii UNDP and AECID. (2021c) Reflexiones sobre cohesión social. Lo que hemos aprendido

xviii See Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development 2021 (Fourth Meeting of the Virtual Forum-Meeting, 15 to 18 March), ECLAC.







REFERENCE FRAMEWORK





1. REFERENCE FRAMEWORK

1.1 THEORETICAL AND MEASURING FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL COHESION IN LATIN AMERICA

Importantly, the COVID-19 pandemic goes beyond a health crisis and extends to a crisis of governance – on account of its systemic nature – that is exacerbating the region’s already-challenging economic, social and political context.

The discussion about social cohesion in Latin America has taken particular relevance in light of the need to respond to the major challenges facing the region. On the one hand, there are those related to such structural (and persistent) problems as inequality, social exclusion, low economic growth and low productivity. And on the other hand, there are those that arise from new global and national dynamics such as social violence and insecurity, transnational organized crime, irregular migration, forced displacement, the corruption and weakening of democratic institutions, high vulnerability to disasters, and other extreme events such as the coronavirus.^{xix} In addition to the above, recent incidents of social unrest in several countries of Latin America, with particular characteristics in its form of expression – the leading role of young people and the use of mass communications media – underline the need to place social cohesion on the regional agenda more firmly than ever.

Importantly, the COVID-19 pandemic goes beyond a health crisis and extends to a crisis of governance – on account of its systemic nature – that is exacerbating the region’s already-challenging economic, social and political context.^{xx} In this regard, governance becomes a central issue in the subregion. The public require effective responses to their social demands, and all the more so in the current situation where job losses have affected large segments of the most-vulnerable population groups, in turn generating greater social unrest.

This crisis of governance, unprecedented in its scale, demands innovative solutions based on a “...redefinition of the social contract, understood as the search for new political and social accords able to guarantee economic prosperity, peace and social cohesion”.⁶ To do this, it becomes essential to establish strategic, inclusive alliances that will contribute to the construction of an active citizenship and will help to drive forward a new social contract in the region and in the subregion of Central America and the Dominican Republic. In this context, we return to the UNDP argument, which emphasizes that development for Latin America is a three-lane highway – productivity, inclusion and resilience – with effective governance as its necessary roadbed.^{xxi}

^{xix} As of February 2021, the total confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the subregion accounted for 6% of the total cases in Latin America (and 4% of all deaths), according to figures from Johns Hopkins University. Also, according to Bloomberg (Covid-19 vaccine tracker, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/covid-vaccine-tracker-global-distribution/>) on the vaccination rate (average vaccinations per day), it is estimated that it would take 10 months to cover 75% of the population in Dominican Republic, 21 months in Belize, and the other countries fall within this range, except Honduras, for which we do not have all the information.

^{xx} Proposed by López-Calva and UNDP-RBLAC (UNDP, 2021).

^{xxi} In this new scenario of effective governance, and to achieve a sustainable recovery, eight guiding principles are laid down to promote discussion aligned with national realities. These principles comprise: fiscal policies that allow sustainable spending; the capacity of States for innovation, transparency and accountability in their public affairs; trust in and legitimacy of political, economic and social actors; active citizenship; a negotiation mechanism between social and political actors without resort to violence; rule of law and equal access to justice; intergenerational equity; and environmental sustainability (UNDP, 2021).



© PNUD Guatemala / Luis Sánchez

Given this complex backdrop to the region, social cohesion emerges, in the public-policy sphere, as an essential element for progress towards the consolidation of democracy and peace, social inclusion, gender equality and achieving the SDGs and challenges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The starting point is an (approximate) notion of social cohesion resulting from discussions about its conceptualization and measurement, driven mainly by ECLAC and the European Union^{xxii} and which covers policies, public policy, and also the micro social space in which it is built, in addition to a subjective dimension related to social ties and a sense of belonging.^{xxiii} In this framework, the notion of democratic social cohesion is used, taken to mean “...the conflicting and contentious dialectic between the established social inclusion/exclusion mechanisms and the responses, perceptions and attitudes of the public to their definition and the way in which they work...”⁷

This definition, complemented by the notion of Grynszpan and López-Calva⁸ in which social cohesion, on account of being social, “involves individuals, potentially members of a politically-constituted community, requiring forces of attraction around a common goal”,^{xxiv} underlines the importance of achieving social inclusion incorporating equality and respect for diversity together with a minimum level of social well-being for every citizen, with the construction of social ties based on trust

and reciprocity and on the existence of common standards and values.⁹ There is a link between the concepts of social cohesion and security, developed by Dammert¹⁰, the former being broader and hierarchically superior to security, where a cohesive society facilitates the achievement of higher levels of security, and on the other hand, citizen security is established as a key component of social cohesion. In this sense, relationships are established between the spheres of social cohesion -equal opportunities, political trust, sense of community and belonging, and respect for diversity - and security. Thus, for example, the the existence of a link between trust and crime levels, which has been analyzed and which generally -equality of opportunities, political trust sense of community and belonging, and respect for diversity - and security. Thus, for example, the the existence of a link between trust and crime levels, which has been levels of crime, which has been analyzed and which generally points to a correlation between higher levels of trust and lower crime incidence.¹¹

In this regard, strengthening social cohesion contributes to accelerating the SDGs and fulfilling the 2030 Agenda, which sets minimum standards for social progress in the various dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). Additionally, it is crucial to enhance social cohesion to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations call to action on Human Rights.^{xxv}

xxii See more detail on the conceptualization of social cohesion and its different approaches in UNDP and AECID (2021) Op. cit. Ch. I p. 14) and its relationship with violence and security in Dammert Lucía (2012) Inseguridad, crimen y cohesión social en América Latina: ¿Es posible pasar del discurso a la evidencia? In *Violencia y cohesión social en América Latina* by Francisco J. Díaz e Patricio (eds.) Santiago de Chile: CIEPLAN, 2012. (pp.13-14)

xxiii For a more detailed discussion of the conceptual reference framework used for this report in relation to the notion of social cohesion within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, see the base reference document (UNDP and AECID, 2021a).

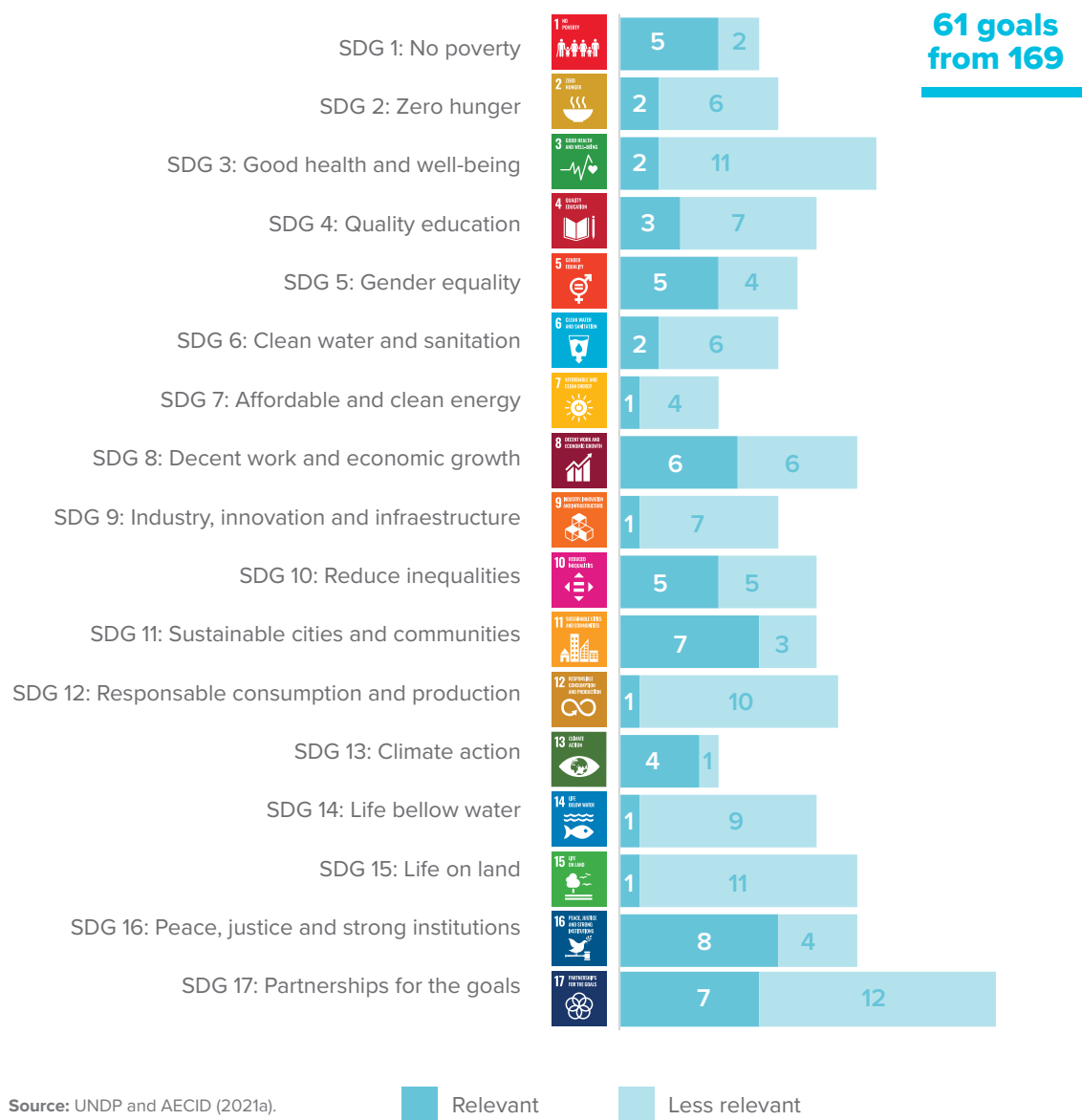
xxiv The authors note that both the institutional contexts and the historical, political and socioeconomic processes proper to each nation are “forces of attraction” or “of distraction” in respect of the shared goals (absolute achievements) of society.

xxv The United Nations call to action on Human Rights (as one of its actions to mark its 75th anniversary) comprises seven areas of action. See United Nations (2020) *The Highest Aspiration. Call to action for Human Rights*. See detail in: https://www.un.org/en/content/action-for-human-rights/assets/pdf/The_Highest_Aspiration_A_Call_To_Action_For_Human_Right_SPA.pdf

Increased States' should have increased capacity to promote non-discriminatory public policies and equal rights, with effective citizen participation^{xxvi}, not only helps to improve confidence in the governance institutions and the rule of law, but also to secure greater and better social cohesion in order to achieve the development goals more effectively.

This framework and the definition of the three dimensions of social cohesion set out in UNDP and AECID (2021b): (i) social inclusion; (ii) governance; and (iii) belonging) are used to identify the main SDGs linked to social cohesion (theoretical linkage) and their pertinence or relevance in the Latin American context. This linkage, which is presented in the next section, is focused on citizen security and SDG 16+. Figure 1 shows that in the region, the 17 SDGs are linked to social cohesion, SDG 16+ being the goal that encompasses the largest number of targets relevant to social cohesion, followed by goals 17, 11, 10, 8, 5 and 1.

Figure 1 | Number of SDG targets relevant to social cohesion.



xxvi A citizenship that participates (is active) in inclusive development processes (with spaces at both the local and the national levels) has an impact on the sense of belonging and is an essential element for the effectiveness of inclusive policies and institutions and for social cohesion, as addressed in Zamora, I. et al (2015). La cohesión social en América Latina. Estudio no. 9, Serie: Análisis Área: Transversal. EUROSOCIAL/FIAPP, July 2015.

1.2 SOCIAL COHESION AND ITS LINK TO CITIZEN SECURITY AND ODS 16+

Based on the conceptual framework of social cohesion and use of the three dimensions for its measurement, a Social Cohesion Index for Latin America¹² was constructed, which incorporates a battery of indicators that have been validated (according to their availability, quality and robustness) to measure the dimensions of governance, social inclusion and belonging. It does not include specific indicators related to citizen security and SDG 16+ (mainly for lack of information). These are two areas of very great interest for the subregion of Central America and Dominican Republic, which faces major challenges in respect of the increase in and intensification of public insecurity, violence, environmental conflict and other phenomena such as social unrest, irregular migration and forced displacement, common to the region. This is why Chapter IV of this report presents a proposal to adapt this measurement to the specific expressions of social cohesion in the subregion.

For this, it is essential to link the dimensions and indicators that respond to the current challenges to social cohesion in the region, with the concept of citizen security oriented towards SDG 16, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda. From the human-development perspective, citizen security is the personal, objective and subjective condition of being free from violence or the threat of violence or intentional dispossession on the part of others, focused on the well-being of persons. It is related to the physical and mental well-being of persons, individual and collective fulfilment, the full exercise of rights and duties and the enjoyment of individual freedoms in a harmonious context with respect for norms in place, also recognizing the destructive and intergenerational consequences of violence and crime on the development and economic growth of countries.^{13,14}

The broader conception of citizen security allows it to be adopted and understood as a public problem, as a public good, as a Human Right and as a condition for Development.¹⁵ Being considered a public good implies the effective safeguarding of rights, of the existence of strong institutions and of forms of democratic coexistence that allow the effective protection of these rights. It also implies the possibility of its being accessed from society as a whole, with no exceptions, recognizing conflicts and more-vulnerable groups: displaced people, street dwellers, migrants, minorities of all kinds, peasants, women and young people. It also means moving on from the traditional and limited view of security as a unidirectional service of the State towards citizens, towards incorporating actions of shared responsibilities.

This human-rights and human-development-based approach to citizen security forms the framework for the design of comprehensive strategies with the goals of well-being, an effective justice system, effective participation and community action for the prevention of crime and violence, with inclusive education and respect for the values of peaceful coexistence, the law and tolerance. Citizen security is closely linked to SDG 16+, which stresses the need for peaceful, just and inclusive societies for achievement of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

To bring about a sustained improvement to citizen security and lay the foundations for progress towards greater levels of social cohesion and sustainable development, we must foster achievement of SDG 16+ and its synergies among the SDGs. Here, the relationship established and reinforced between SDG 16+, citizen security and social cohesion can help to generate a virtuous circle (Figure 2).^{16,17,18}

Figure 2 | Social cohesion, citizen security and SDG 16+ within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.



Note: 1/ For example, young people's capacity development, and actions that promote factors that protect them from insecurity in the framework of resilient contexts. See UNDP-Infosegura Project (2020) (p14)

Source: Elaborated based on PNUD y AECID (2021a) and PNUD (2013).



Social cohesion, as mentioned above, encompasses multiple dimensions – social inclusion, governance and belonging – which is why it is essential to establish the complex and bidirectional links required to achieve synergies between citizen security and SDG 16+, taking account of the different areas of human development (economic, social and environmental). Thus, based on the theoretical exercise performed in the reference document^{xxvii} in Annex 1, an appreciation is made of the relevance or pertinence of social cohesion to citizen security and SDG 16+. This theoretical exercise will be used as the framework for analyzing the context of social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+ in the next chapter, and for proposing integrated policies for intervention in the subregion.

xxvii See UNDP and AECID (2021a) for more detail on social cohesion and the 2030 Agenda: the links, dimensions and issues of development (Figure 4, page 25). These are reflected in the various SDGs, such as rule of law, effective policies, inclusive cities, reducing inequalities, social mobility, and others.

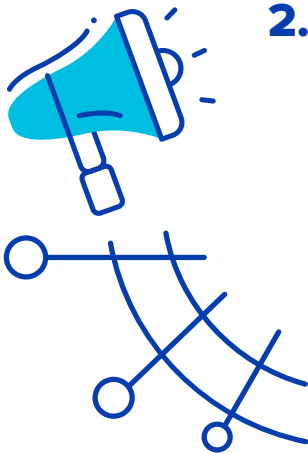


2

CONTEXT OF SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY WITH A FOCUS ON SDG 16+

IN THE SUBREGION OF
CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC





2. CONTEXT OF SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY WITH A FOCUS ON SDG 16+ IN THE SUBREGION OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

This chapter includes a first section containing a general overview of the socioeconomic context of the subregion, including consideration of the impact of COVID-19, and an analysis more focused on the state of social cohesion and citizen security in the countries of the subregion. A second section analyses the institutional and public policy framework for social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion, along with the institutional challenges for meeting SDG 16+. The analysis covers six Central American countries: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and the Dominican Republic, subject to the availability of information on each. Thus, for example, Belize is not included in the measurement of the Social Cohesion Index in Latin America as we do not have the information needed to do so.^{xxviii}

2.1 CONTEXT OF SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY IN THE SUBREGION

Socioeconomic context and COVID-19 situation in the subregion

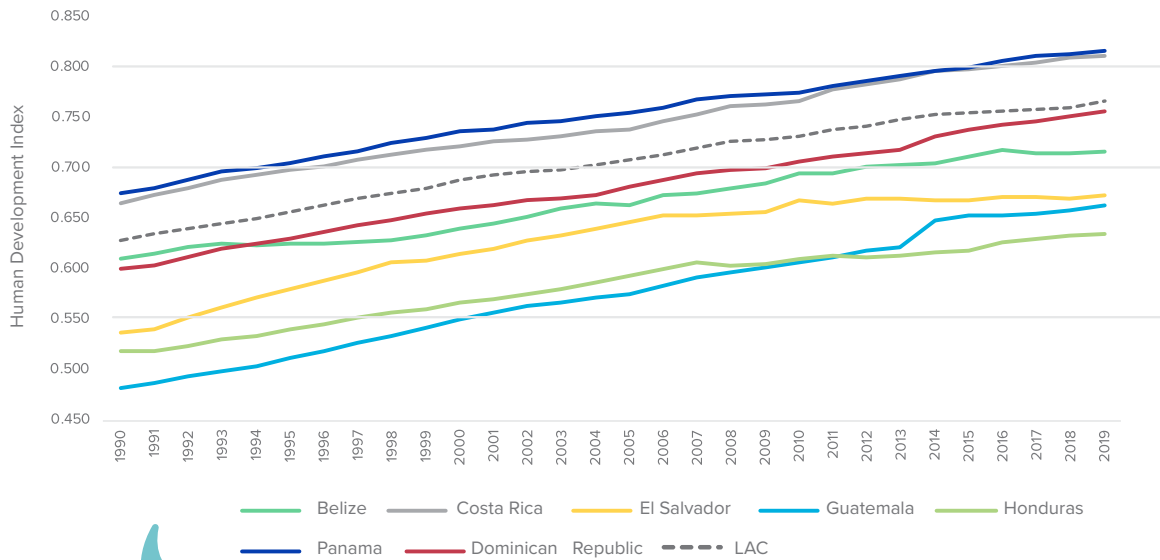
This crisis situation has had an impact on, or even badly shaken institutions in many countries, in this way contributing to the erosion of fragile democracies.

In the last two decades, the human-development balance sheet in the subregion has been encouraging, specifically with regard to a sustained reduction in poverty and improved social indicators in relation to education and health. This is also the case for efforts made towards the consolidation of more-comprehensive social protection systems. Nonetheless, these results have been mixed between and within the countries of the subregion. As the following chart shows, these positive human-development outcomes have not translated into well-being in an equal way with, in 2019, significant gaps in the Human Development Index between men and women in most countries of the subregion, except for Panama and Dominican Republic (See Annex 2 for country-by-country indicators).

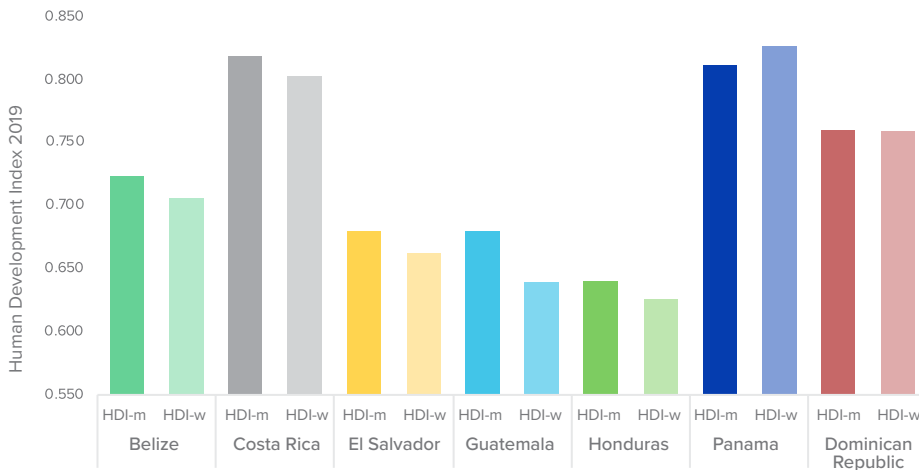
Reality shows that this progress is not sustainable and can be reversed in extreme situations, such as that caused by the pandemic crisis, whose impacts on deepening inequality and negative effects on every dimension of human development are devastating for most of the countries of the subregion. The impact of Covid-19 in the subregion has not only denuded fragile public health systems, but also jeopardized an entire global society, a situation that may increase the social polarization existing in many of these countries,¹⁹ worsen social unrest and generate a new range of social conflict and disillusionment due to the lack of or type of responses provided by the State. This crisis situation has had an impact on, or even badly shaken institutions in many countries, in this way contributing to the erosion of fragile democracies.

^{xxviii} Complementary statistics were used for the analysis of that country.

Chart 1 | Human development, trends and gender gaps.



HDI in men and women, 2019



The human development progress of the last two decades has not translated into welfare for all, without "leaving no-one behind".

Note: HDI measurement for men (HDI-m) and for women (HDI-w). Human development levels are very high (0.800 and over), high (0.700-0.799), medium (0.550-0.699), and low (less than 0.550).

Source: HDI 2019, from the Human Development Report 2020: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>



The latest HDI Report (2020) expects that the impact of coronavirus will contribute to a significant setback in human development, deeply affecting all the dimensions (and capacities) included in the Index.

The latest HDI Report (2020)²⁰ expects that the impact of coronavirus will contribute to a significant setback in human development, deeply affecting all the dimensions (and capacities) included in the Index. This decline is expected to be greater in those countries that already faced structural development challenges, which also do not have the means to deal with the social and economic effects of the pandemic. Thus, for example, it highlights the loss of decades of progress in the participation rate of women and girls in employment and other areas, such as education. In education, indeed, the already-existing profound gaps in digital access that have limited access to online learning have been made plain to see (see Box 1).²¹

BOX 1

Differential impact of coronavirus²²

Coronavirus has had a differential impact in the region on different population groups, that has deepened intersectional inequality (in respect of gender, social class, life stage, ethnoracial status, migration status, and other factors).

Women are in a particularly vulnerable situation, in precarious employment and lacking protection: many of them (one in two) work in the informal sector, in paid domestic work (11.4%), mostly with no social security; the burden of unpaid domestic work is borne by women, teenagers and girls; and the increase in cases of violence against this group.

It is estimated that in 2020 between **3.5 a 3.7** million more people will fall into extreme poverty.

In the Latin America region alone, it is estimated that in 2020 between 3.5 and 3.7 million more people will fall into extreme poverty and a further 3.3 to 4.3 million will do so in 2021 (with pre-pandemic predictions of persons living in extreme poverty of 23.9 million in 2020 and 23.3 million in 2021), according to the most-recent projections (January 2021) in the Global Economic Prospects (GEP) report.^{23xxix} The GEP report forecasts that Latin America and the Caribbean will be the region of the world to face the steepest fall in GDP and the deepest recession of the past sixty years.^{xxx}

Nevertheless, even before the spread of coronavirus, the subregion was facing not only economic challenges (low growth and productivity), but social and environmental ones too, foremost of which are those related to an increase in social violence –linked to gangs, drug trafficking and also to problems generated by social coexistence and the use of violence to resolve conflicts–, gender-based violence, disasters due to vulnerability to climate change –Hurricanes Eta and Iota in November 2020– and political crises that have

xxix According to the most-recent projections by the World Bank (2020) and Lakner et al (2020) (updated), PovcalNet, Global Economic Prospects. And according to the PovcalNet definition of the classification of regions and the measurement of extreme poverty, the number of persons living on less than \$1.90 a day, 2017 is the last year for which official estimates of global poverty are available.

xxx According to the World Bank (2020) the classification of six regions: East Asia and Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America & the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

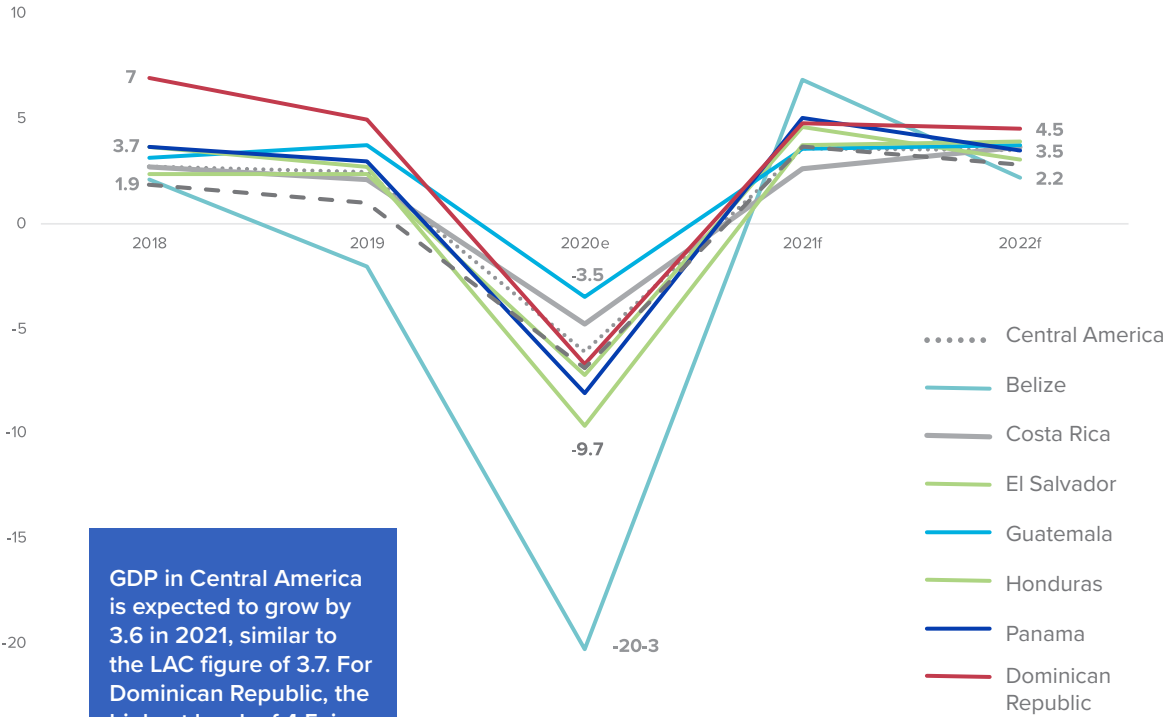
led to an atmosphere of distrust, disengagement and frustration in its societies. These situations, faced by most of the countries of the subregion (the violence is more pronounced in the countries of northern Central America), have led to people seeking new opportunities beyond their frontiers, taking risks and doing so against a background of extreme situations and breaches of their fundamental rights. Many of them are in irregular situations (risking their own and their children’s lives) and living in forced displacement (on account of the violence).

This situation poses the subregion new scenarios of deepening poverty along with inequality, citizen insecurity and the weakening of democratic governance and the rule of law, and these may in turn limit the relative achievement of social cohesion and the gains of sustainable development. Despite the devastating effects of the pandemic on health and the economies of the countries of the subregion, GDP is expected to grow by 3.6 in Central America in 2021, (compared with an average negative growth of 7.5 in 2020) based on projections that take account of the impact of measures to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, the launch of COVID-19 vaccines and post-hurricane reconstruction (Chart 2). To this we must add other economic factors and improvements in external conditions (remittances are expected to increase and export demand is predicted to become firmer).²⁴



Despite the devastating effects of the pandemic on health and the economies of the countries of the subregion, GDP is expected to grow by **3.6** in Central America in 2021.

Chart 2 | GDP growth forecasts for the subregion. 2018-2021.



GDP in Central America is expected to grow by 3.6 in 2021, similar to the LAC figure of 3.7. For Dominican Republic, the highest level, of 4.5, is forecast.

Source: World Bank (2021)

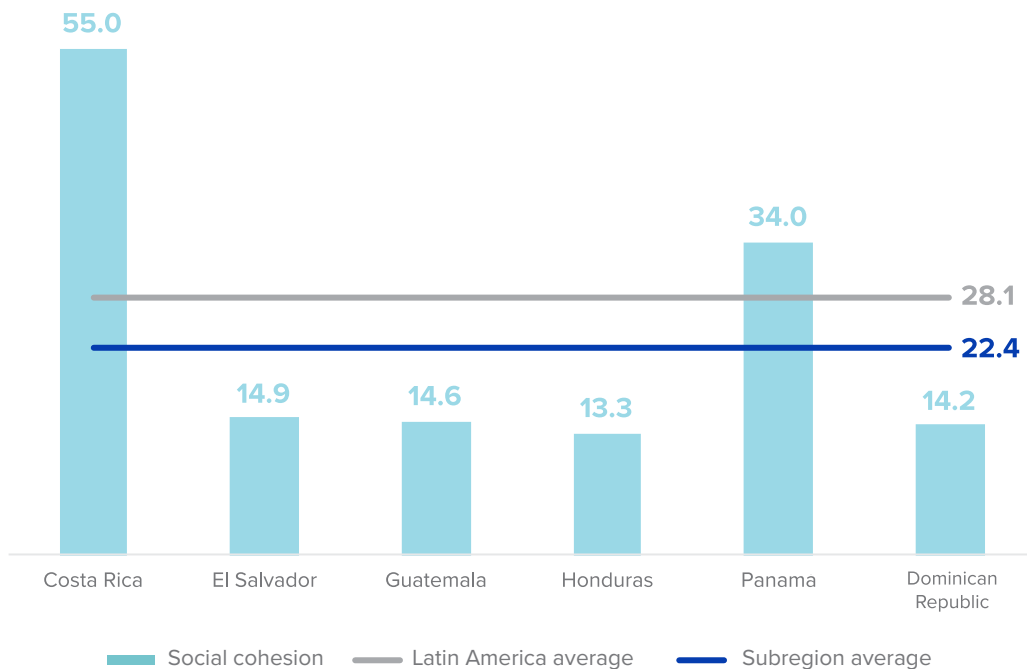
The state of social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion

The measurements in the Social Cohesion Index can be used to observe the performance of the countries of the subregion. The values in the Index show, in the following chart, that Costa Rica and Panama have performed better in the region in the relative achievement of social cohesion, with averages above that of Latin America, albeit still well below the average of the most-developed countries of the OECD (with a value of 78.6),²⁵ (see Annex 3).

This complex COVID-19 scenario in the subregion is magnified by the violence and citizen insecurity that has come to disrupt every aspect of the subregion’s citizens and the very social fabric, damaging social cohesion and limiting the possibilities of accelerating gains under SDG 16 and, therefore, sustainable development. There is, in fact, a positive correlation between the Social Cohesion Index and the Human Development Index (a measure of the robustness of this aggregated social cohesion measurement²⁶), indicating its contribution to human development, just as with the Global Democracy Index (2020). In contrast, there is a negative relationship between social cohesion and manifestations of violence; femicide, for example, erodes social cohesion (see Annex 4).

The measurements in the Social Cohesion Index can be used to observe the performance of the countries of the subregion.

Chart 3 | Degree of social cohesion in the subregion of Central America and Dominican Republic and the average for Latin America. Circa 2015.



Note: The simple average for Latin America and the subregion; the latter figure, which includes the countries of Central America – Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama – and Dominican Republic, is based on the results of the sample used for measurement of the SCI-LA.

Source: Based on results of UNDP and AECID (2021b).

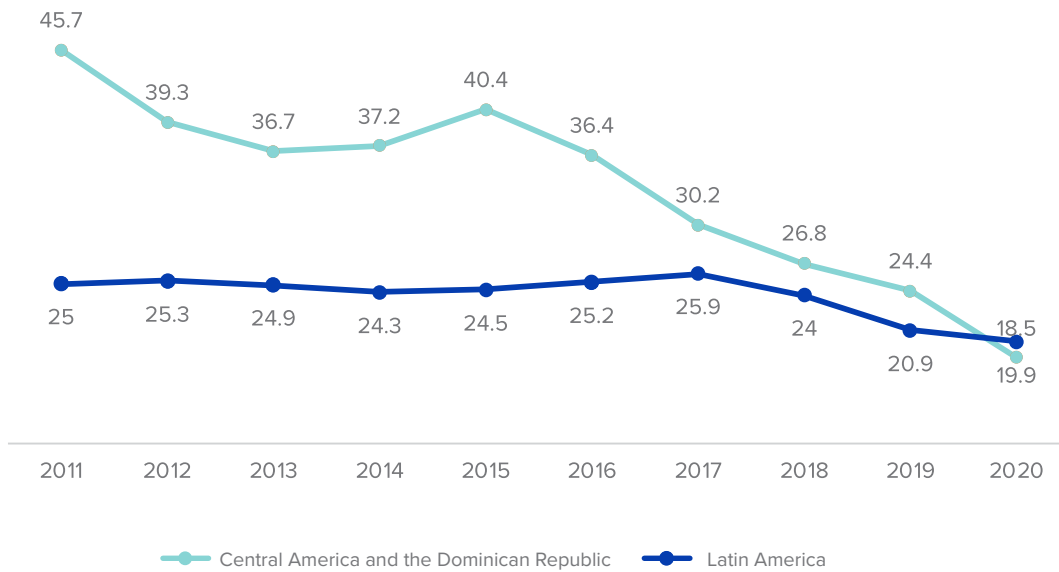
Violence continues to be a serious problem for the Central America subregion. Although there are differences between countries and the realities are not homogeneous, some common elements may be mentioned. Firstly, the greater vulnerability of specific groups, such as young people, women, girls, boys and adolescents, people with disabilities, ethnic communities, members of the LGBTIQ community and people in situations of irregular migration and forced displacement. Secondly, the territorialization of violence in both urban and rural areas and in both public and private spaces. And lastly, the modalities and manifestations that demonstrate the magnitude of the problem, not only as a matter of citizen security, but also of public health and coexistence. Homicides, massacres, violence against women and girls²⁷, political violence, social violence, the actions of criminal organizations; these are just some of the expressions of violence as a way of life and violence as a problem-solving mechanism. In all this, homicide becomes the maximal expression of violence and its measurement and analysis the technical and political possibility of dimensioning the situation. The following page presents some of the most relevant indicators for understanding the phenomenon: The region's homicide rate, homicides of women and the femicide/femicide rate.

The homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants is an important indicator to understand the many types of violence that affect the region and subregion. The use of a territorially-focused indicator and disaggregated information on victims, perpetrators and events, makes it possible not only to identify patterns and trends, but also to give decision makers an opportunity to undertake preventative actions at different levels, hence the relevance. Repeatedly, a significant number of cities of Central America and the Caribbean have been identified as the most violent in terms of homicides, generally associated with serious problems of insecurity, organized crime, inequality, the weakness of justice systems, drug trafficking and the presence of maras and gangs. In other words, homicide as a result of other violent behaviours (settling accounts, fights, assaults, etc.) or determined by other criminal events (robberies or kidnappings, for example) or even as a consequence of a continuous and structural phenomenon of violence. As the following graphic shows, homicide rates have been falling over the past decade to the extent that in 2020 (an atypical year for statistical comparisons on violence and crime, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and mandatory lockdown) those for Latin America converged with those for Central America and the Dominican Republic.



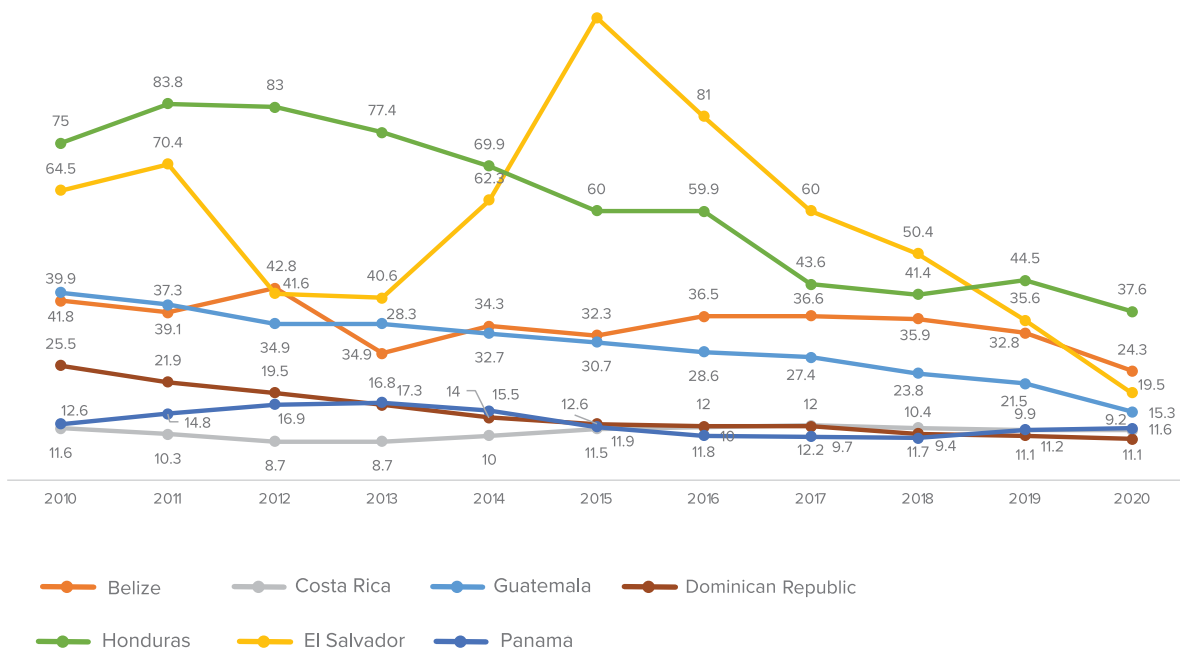
Violence continues to be a serious problem for the Central America subregion.

Chart 4 | Homicide rates in Central America and the Dominican Republic compared with Latin America from 2011 to 2020, per 100,000 inhabitants



Source: Infosegura (2021). Análisis Multidimensional de la Seguridad Ciudadana durante 2020 en CA y RD. With official data from each country.

Chart 5 | Homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants, by country



Source: Infosegura (2021). Análisis Multidimensional de la Seguridad Ciudadana durante 2020 en CA y RD. With data from Belize, BDP (2010-2020); Costa Rica, OIJ (2010-2020); El Salvador, PNC (2010-2013) and DIA-MJSP (2014-2020); Guatemala, INE with PNC data (2019-2020) and PNC in the process of validation by INE (2020); Honduras, IUDPAS (2010-2012), Technical Workgroup on Violent Deaths (2013-2019) and provisional data from Technical Workgroup on Violent Deaths (2020); Dominican Republic, OSC-RD (2011-2020).

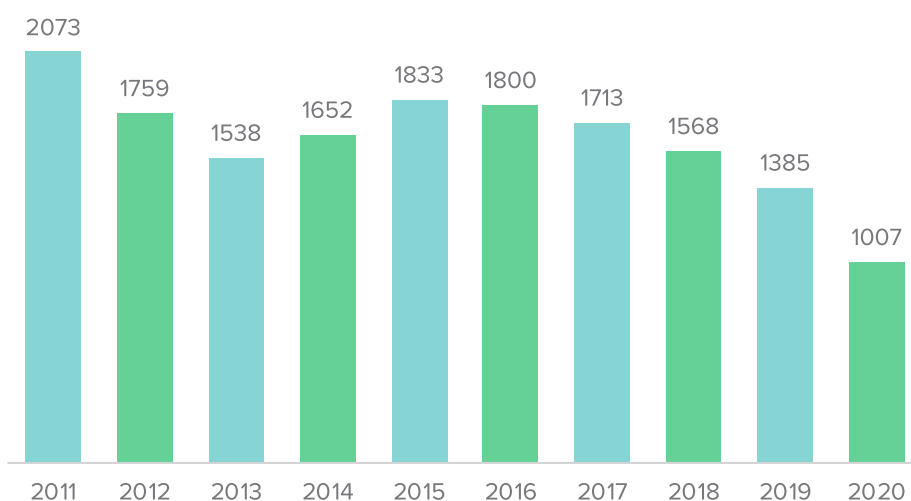


© PNUD Guatemala / Caroline Trutmann

Violence against women, girls and teenagers is a global and structural phenomenon that affects the region without distinction. It is the result of historically deeply-rooted patriarchal and violent sociocultural patterns of gender relationships based on men's control and dominance of women. In the subregion of Central America, conditions of vulnerability, exclusion, scant opportunities for empowerment, the impunity that characterizes crimes of this nature and the set of risks to which women and girls are exposed throughout their lives, added to the contexts of insecurity and organized crime make it difficult to overcome this canker, evidencing the close relationship between criminal and gender-based violence.

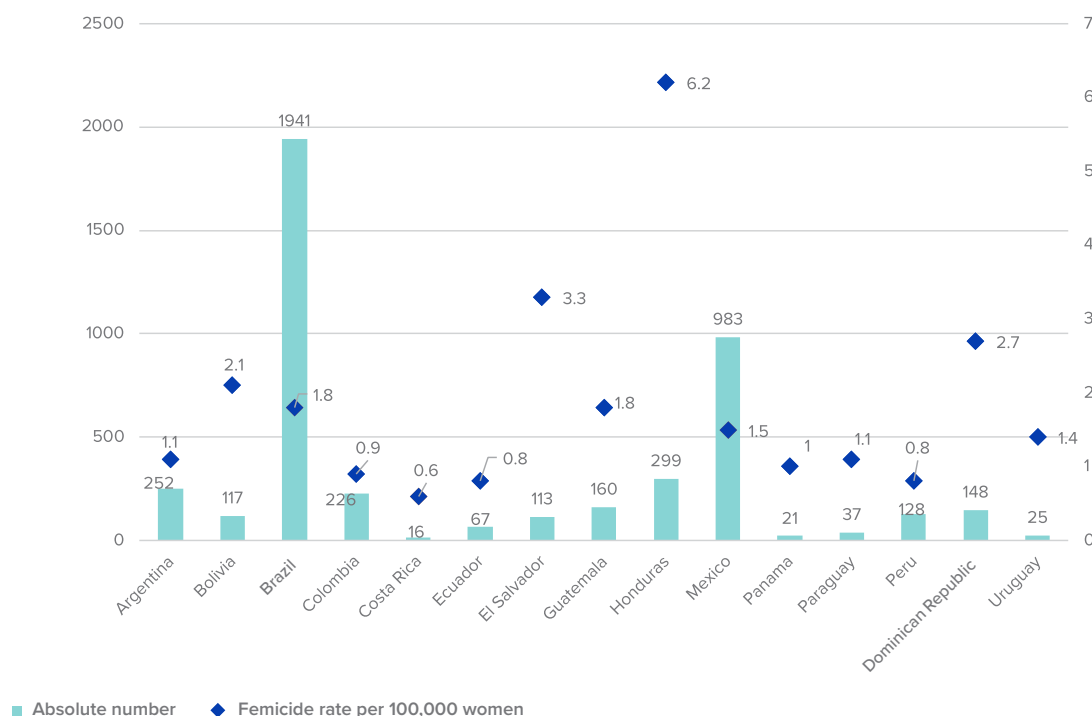
Violence against women, girls and teenagers is a global and structural phenomenon that affects the region without distinction.

Chart 6 | Number of homicides of women in Central America and the Dominican Republic



Source: Infosegura (2021). Análisis Multidimensional de la Seguridad Ciudadana durante 2020 en CA y RD. With data from Belize, BDP (2010-2020); Costa Rica, OIJ (2010-2020); El Salvador, PNC (2010-2013) and DIA-MJSP (2014-2020); Guatemala, INE with PNC data (2019-2020) and PNC in the process of validation by INE (2020); Honduras, IUDPAS (2010-2012), Technical Workgroup on Violent Deaths (2013-2019) and provisional data from Technical Workgroup on Violent Deaths (2020); Dominican Republic, OSC-RD (2011-2020).

Chart 7 | Femicides or femicides in selected countries of Central America, Dominican Republic and the rest of Latin America, 2019 (in absolute numbers and per 100,000 women)



Source: ECLAC-GEO Gender Equality Observatory. Data retrieved on 30 September 2021: <https://oig.cepal.org/es/indicadores/femicidio>



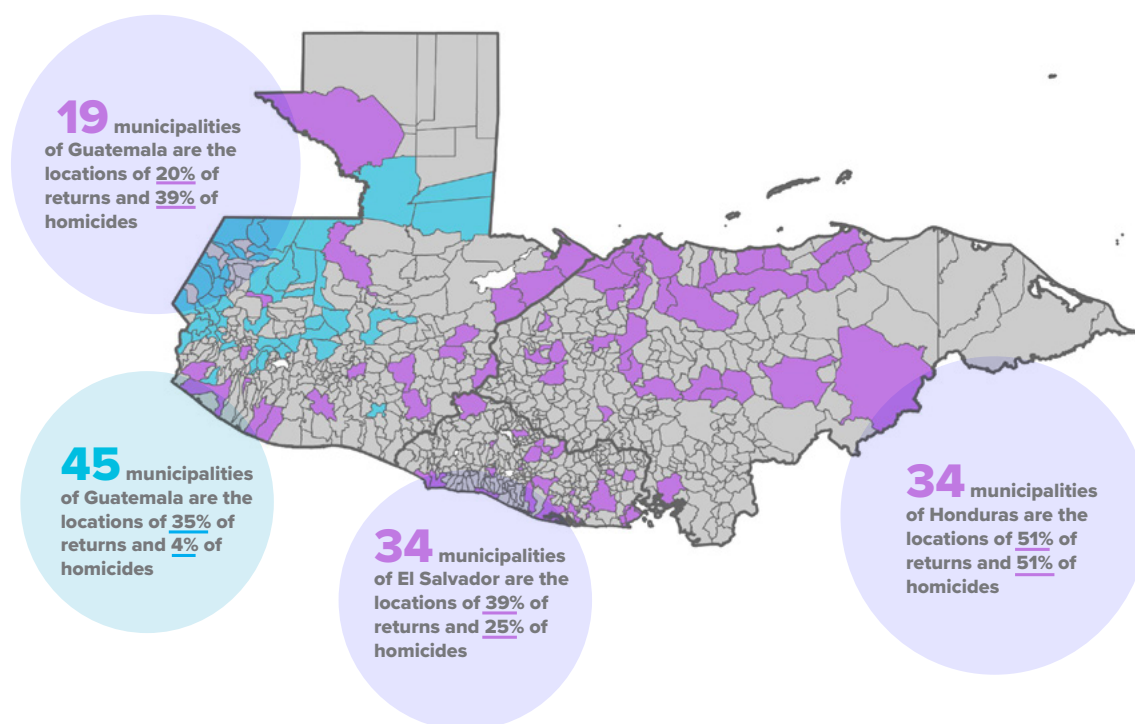
Violence and insecurity, especially in the countries of northern Central America, has entered a new phase characterized by migration crises.

Migration is not a new phenomenon in the subregion. It increased in the 1990s and late 2000s, further to the devastating impact of Hurricane Mitch (1998) and the global financial crisis. However, violence and insecurity, especially in the countries of northern Central America, has entered a new phase characterized by migration crises, such as the mass migration of unaccompanied children and adolescents in 2014 (see Figure 3 for the number of children and adolescents detained on the south-western US border). Also, migrant caravans (the first in October 2018, from Honduras), with increases in the numbers of both irregular migrants and persons with refugee status. There are also particularly vulnerable groups at a greater risk of different forms of discrimination due to a lack of access to rights (health, education, basic services) and the violence perpetrated all along the migration route (in countries of transit and destination),^{xxxi 28} such as people trafficking, sexual exploitation and systematic violations of fundamental human rights, including the right to personal physical safety. Conditions of security and insecurity are also additional to the gamut of causes that affect forced displacement and irregular migration in the subregion. The following map shows the municipalities to which people return (from which people previously left) and high levels of concentration of vulnerabilities and insecurity.

xxxi Migration crises require responses from both transit and destination countries. Transit countries, such as Guatemala and Mexico in the case of mass migrations from countries of the north of Central America, and destination countries such as Costa Rica and Dominican Republic for migrants from Cuba and Haiti, in the case of political situations and natural disasters, further to the Haiti earthquake of 2010 (SICA-IOM-UNHCR, 2019).

Figure 3 | Citizen security, human mobility and development in the countries of northern Central America

A shared problem with territorial peculiarities



Territorial characterization

- High returns and High insecurity
- High returns and High vulnerability

Note: Territories were classified on the basis of human mobility, citizen security and development indicators, comprising the identification of municipalities with the greatest number of involuntary returnees; municipalities with the foregoing condition plus a greater number of threats and risks to citizen security as measured by the territorial prioritization index; and municipalities with both the foregoing conditions with the addition of a high rate of involuntary returnees.

Source: Infosegura (2020) Seguridad Ciudadana, Movilidad Humana y Desarrollo en los países del Norte de Centroamérica, September 2020.

The migration situation is complex and, in addition to being subject to a range of internal factors related to structural problems that limit opportunities for full personal development for all and natural hazards from climate change, it is affected by the form that migration policies take (e.g., the hardening of US immigration policies and the safe third country agreements signed in 2019 with the countries of northern Central America and suspended in early 2021)^{xxxii} or the absence of migration policies that could ensure orderly migration that contributed to the full development of the people and countries of the subregion (SDG 10.7, migration policies).

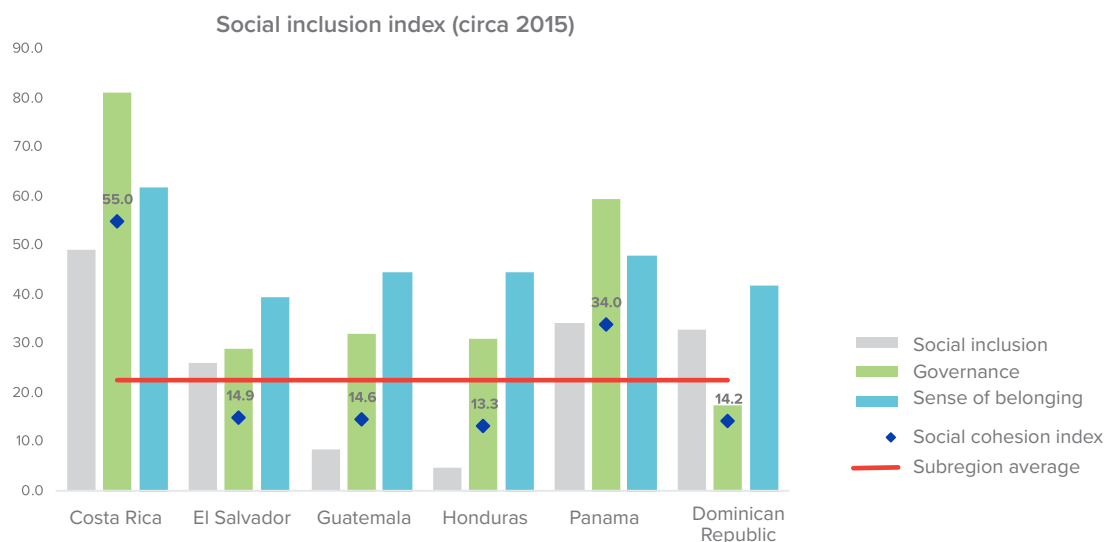
Further erosion of social cohesion will hinder opportunities for advancing sustainable development in the subregion. The impact of COVID-19, which has sharpened inequality and poverty, directly affects the dimensions not only of social inclusion, but also of governance (e.g., the weakening of democratic institutions and access to effective justice for all women) and belonging (e.g., educational equality and interpersonal trust).

The following chart shows the state of social cohesion in the subregion, based on the measurement of the Social Cohesion Index for Latin America,²⁹ in which

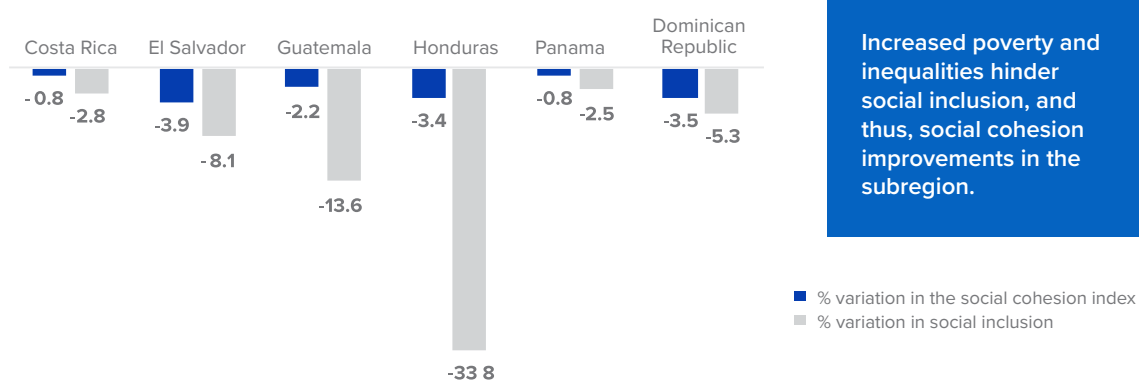
xxxii This refers to the Asylum Cooperative Agreements (ACAs), also referred to as “safe third country” agreements, made in 2019 with the governments of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador for the transfer of asylum seekers. Retrieved 27 February 2021: https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/19_1007_fact-sheet-spanish-agreements-w-northern-region-central-am-countries.pdf

Costa Rica and Panama perform better in the relative achievement of social cohesion, (in all its dimensions and better performance in some indicators in particular; see Annex 3) above the average for the subregion (22.4). On the other hand, the three countries of northern Central America are characterized by lower performance in the dimension of social inclusion and Dominican Republic for the dimension of governance.

Chart 8 | Effect of COVID-19 on the dimension of social inclusion and the degree of social cohesion.



COVID-19 Scenario: Increased poverty and income inequality



Note: For the simulation (simplified exercise) of the effect of coronavirus on the social-inclusion dimension of SCI-LA, we used the World Bank Gini Coefficient and poverty projections. For this the simple average of the countries of the subregion is calculated and the change in 2020 compared to 2019, with values of 27.4 and 30.3 respectively. The simple average for the subregion includes the countries of Central America – Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama – and Dominican Republic, from the sample used for measuring the SCI-LA.

Source: Based on results of UNDP and AECID (2021b) and World Bank (2021).



© PNUD Costa Rica

Taking these results of the Social Cohesion Index³⁰ as a baseline and performing a simulation of the impact of COVID-19 on the dimension of social inclusion (on account of increased poverty and income inequality, according to the World Bank projections), it can be seen that the relative average achievement of social cohesion for the subregion falls from 22.4 to 22.0 (2.8%), due to the effect of the 5.9% decrease in the relative social-inclusion value.^{xxxiii} These averages are exceeded by the countries of northern Central America, with falls of greater than 2% (between 2.2% and 3.9%) in the relative value of achievement of social cohesion and of more than 8% (between 8.1% and 33.8%) in social inclusion.

In short, one can say that the subregion is faced with a complex situation in which COVID-19 has not only revealed major structural problems, but has also worsened problems of governance, in a context of countries many of which have fragile democracies. This requires a comprehensive, multidimensional response for substantive progress towards societies that are more cohesive, inclusive, peaceful and just, thus paving the way for sustainable development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

The relative average achievement of social cohesion for the subregion falls from

22.4



**to 22.0
(2.8%)**

xxxiii While the results of this exercise are useful for illustrating the possible impact of Covid-19 on social cohesion, it is worth noting that this represents a simplified exercise. In practice, changes to an indicator not only directly impact the Social Cohesion Index; but their total effect also depends on the other elements of the Index and on unobserved elements that cannot be included in an exercise with data aggregated at the country level. A simulation able to provide a more complete picture would require an estimate at the individual level with microdata, in order to be able to identify heterogeneous effects inside the country.

2.2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY IN THE SUBREGION

At the regional level, it is possible to identify a number of important forums for the highest-level dialogue (and political agreements) and the bodies and institutions that promote these and contribute to setting the agenda.



At the regional level, it is possible to identify a number of important forums for the highest-level dialogue (and political agreements) and the bodies and institutions that promote these and contribute to setting the agenda, including the Summit of the Americas (OAS), the Ibero-American Summit (SEGIB), the European Union-Latin America Summit, The CELAC Summit, the Meeting of Presidents of SICA, among other spaces and networks such as those promoted by ECLAC and civil-society networks, among others (see Annex 5). In Central America, the 1987 Esquipulas II Agreements and then the creation of the Central American Integration System (SICA) in 1991^{xxxiv}, were very important for finding a way out of internal conflicts, peace processes and restoring the democratic path in the subregion. From this supranational institutional framework, the concept of security has been linked -to a large extent- to the issues of justice, migration, drug trafficking, corruption, extradition policies and armaments.

The Central American Integration System (SICA), made up of the states of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic, adopted in 1995 a Framework Treaty on Democratic Security for Central America in the form of legal instruments for the implementation of regional policies. Ten years later, initiatives were promoted that led to the design of the Central American Security Strategy (ESCA)^{xxxv} by the Heads of States and Governments of SICA, which has included conferences and alliances such as the International Security Conference in Support of the Central American Security Strategy in Guatemala in 2011^{xxxvi} or the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle³¹. It is important to emphasize that, in addition to strategic alliances at the regional-subregional level, international cooperation and other instances, these processes require the leading role of organized civil society, as well as the private sector, and it is necessary to make effective the spaces for debate created for this purpose.^{xxxvii}

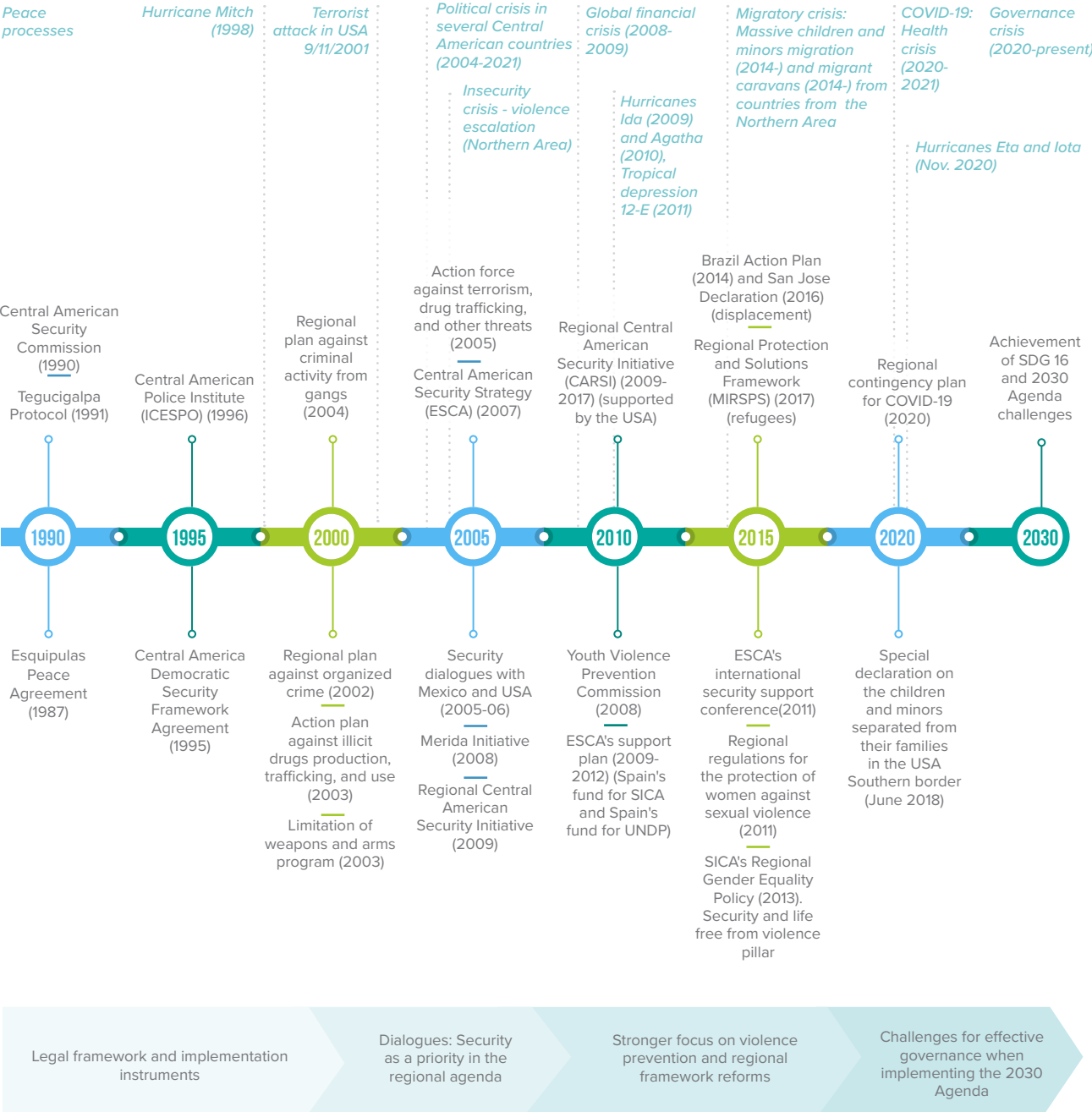
xxxiv The integration process was resumed with the signing of the Tegucigalpa Protocol on December 13, 1991, within the framework of the XI Meeting of Central American Presidents, which gave rise to the Central American Integration System (SICA) as a new legal-political framework, the Charter of the Organization of Central American States (ODECA), promoted by the pacification process in Central America (Esquipulas II). See more details at <https://www.sica.int>

xxxv See the ESCA in SICA: https://www.sica.int/documentos/estrategia-de-seguridad-de-centroamerica_1_60860.html

xxxvi This high-level international conference was attended by the Heads of State of the SICA countries, Mexico, Colombia, U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and representatives of the international community, which sought consensus on the capabilities and financial resources needed to implement the regional security strategy.

xxxvii In this case, the SICA Consultative Committee (CC-SICA) is the representative body -for participation and consultation- of civil society within the Central American Integration System, created by the Tegucigalpa Protocol in 1991.

Figure 4 | The subregion's security agenda, for SICA.



Source: Based on Caldentey (2011, 2017) and [SICA's website](#)

Similarly, there is strong support from the United Nations System for regional and national coordination on prevention, citizen security and gender. This support is provided in a comprehensive manner to countries through technical capacity building and evidence management to accelerate processes related to Sustainable Development Goal 16+. The following are foremost among these initiatives:

InfoSegura Project (UNDP-USAID)

This promotes work throughout the entire information management chain (production, multidimensional analysis, and use in public policy and dissemination). Likewise, it coordinates with security and justice institutions, statistical and women's institutions, cabinets dealing with social issues and presidential offices responsible for coordinating and implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda, universities and think tanks for the analysis and design of multidimensional proposals.

Spotlight Initiative (United Nations-EU)

This is intended to mobilize the commitment of political leaders and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, more specifically, SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies. For this, new multilateral collaborations are created. It aims to put an end to all types of violence against women and girls and it is especially targeted at those types that are most prevalent and contribute to gender inequality around the world.

The PBF Trinational Migration Project

This seeks to strengthen the governmental response to the context of unconventional violence in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. The project will include actions to promote and strengthen coordination platforms and dialogue and consensus-building processes around more-comprehensive policies on human mobility, citizen security and sustainable development.

There are other strategic partners too, such as multilateral and international cooperation agencies – World Bank, IDB, and United Nations agencies, among others – and the bilateral cooperation with the United States and other countries of the European Union that have helped to promote issues related to social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion (see Annex 5).

The reality of Latin America in the 1990s set the context for the rethinking of the traditional idea of militarization of security, rooted fundamentally in national defense, giving way to new approaches that broadened the concept towards citizen security, mainly promoted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The overcoming of the concept of state security and public order as a superior value, the reordering of the State's strategic, analytical and operational capabilities, and the focus on people's wellbeing, thus made it possible to position the idea of security linked to citizenship as the main objective of protection.



So far, Citizen Security continues to be the umbrella concept guiding the multiple experiences and interventions that have been implemented in the region and subregion for three decades. The general consensus is to assume it as the possibility of protecting people's physical and moral integrity, individual and collective fulfillment, the full exercise of rights and duties and the enjoyment of individual freedoms in a context of harmonious development with respect for established norms. From this approach, citizen security is thus assumed from multiple dimensions, which explain and define it: as a public good, as a Human Right, a condition of Development and a dimension of the concept of Human Security.^{xxxviii}

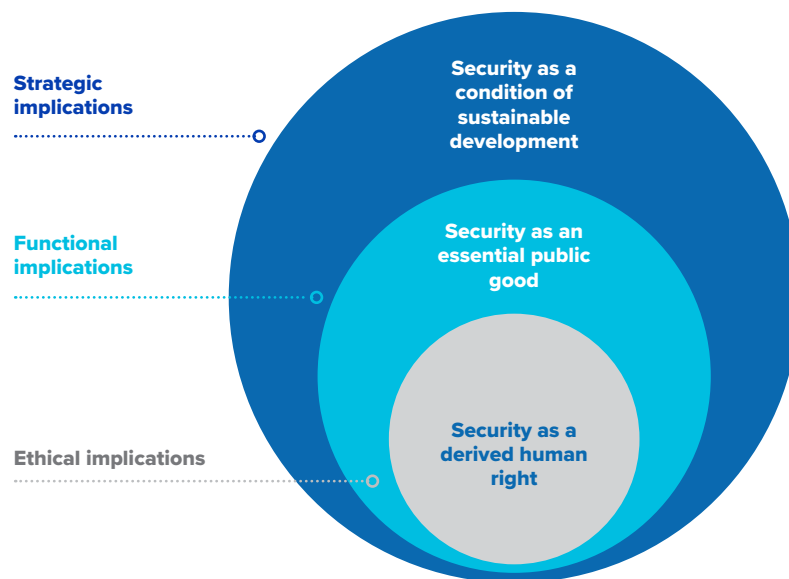
Citizen Security as a Public Good implies the access without exclusion with the competence of the State in the legitimate use of force to guarantee the rights of citizens. It implies overcoming the traditional and limited view of security as a unidirectional service from the State to the citizenry and incorporating actions of shared responsibilities. This is not an easy task given the exponential increase in security demands and, in turn, the limited or reduced capacities of the States, a situation that has generated both legal alternatives (private security companies) and illegal ones (specific armed groups that provide protection or security), accentuating exclusion or even increasing the levels of violence. The concept of Human Security refers to the pursuit of security based on the strengthening of democratic institutions and the rule of law, providing the individual with adequate conditions for his personal, familial and social development. It seeks to protection of people against threats, both chronic and sudden, such as hunger, disease, environmental degradation, drug production and trafficking, human trafficking, ethnic disputes, gender-based violence, social and criminal violence, and terrorism, among others.

Citizen security is thus assumed from multiple dimensions, which explain and define it: as a public good, as a Human Right, a condition of Development and a dimension of the concept of Human Security

^{xxxviii} The concept of Human Security refers to the pursuit of security based on the strengthening of democratic institutions and the rule of law, providing the individual with adequate conditions for his personal, familial and social development. It seeks to protection of people against threats, both chronic and sudden, such as hunger, disease, environmental degradation, drug production and trafficking, human trafficking, ethnic disputes, gender-based violence, social and criminal violence, and terrorism, among others.

Although citizen security is not enshrined as a human right in itself, to the extent that States are the guarantors of people's security, it is assumed that citizen security policies are ultimately aimed at protecting the lives of all people from violent or criminal acts that threaten their security and physical integrity, freedom, the right to the use of property, among others. This implies that the rights of the citizenry as a whole count, i.e., of those who have suffered such events - the victims - and those who have perpetrated them - the perpetrators and persons deprived of liberty-, and therefore, it should have an impact in terms of protection in the scope of the measures, legal and regulatory frameworks. The following figure illustrates the dimensions of citizen security, the relationship between them and the implications of each one of them.

Figure 5 | The three dimensions of citizen security



Source: PNUD, 2020. Análisis sobre innovación en seguridad ciudadana y Derechos Humanos en América Latina y el Caribe (pág. 17)



Understanding this framework results in the approach that seeks to guide the design, implementation and evaluation of citizen security policies in the subregion, incorporating participation, a territorial approach, a gender approach, inclusion, health, decent work, freedom of expression, among others, as well as intersectionality, interculturality and the ecological approach to violence. Such policies are the set of public interventions to address and resolve the risks and threats, concrete or foreseeable, of a violent and/or criminal nature that harm the rights and freedoms of people in a given place. They are instruments through which different actors agree on the vision of citizen (in)security and the lack of peaceful coexistence and, with the participation of all of them, agree on answers or solutions that and, with the participation of all, agree on answers or solutions that should go beyond political or governmental time horizons.

The entire process of designing and implementing citizen security policies from this perspective requires rigor, comprehensiveness, multisectoriality, sustainability, scalability and innovation. Hence the importance of linking citizen security with social cohesion, since the latter is ultimately an attribute or characteristic of cohesive societies. Social cohesion thus expresses the quality of citizen coexistence, which is an essential condition for citizen security. The analysis of social cohesion and its components has an impact on security by identifying levels or degrees of well-being (Inclusion), levels or degrees of satisfaction with the quality of state responses (Governance) and levels or degrees of identity, trust and cooperation (Belonging). In sum, this approach to citizen security reinforces the relationship between social cohesion and citizen security (Chapter 1, Figure 2), with a view to achieving higher levels of social cohesion and fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development in the countries of the subregion.



The entire process of designing and implementing citizen security policies from this perspective requires rigor, comprehensiveness, multisectoriality, sustainability, scalability and innovation.

Country-level institutional framework in the subregion

At the country level, the main policy measures are analyzed and the sectors (actors) and strategic institutions identified that have influence and importance in the cycle of public policies related to social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+. For this, the argument developed in the first chapter (summarized in Figure 2) is taken as the reference framework. This section provides a summary of this analysis (see country information for greater detail).

Continuous efforts can be observed at country level within the subregion to respond to structural development problems – socioeconomic, environmental and gender inequality; low productivity and growth; and low quality of employment, among others – and, more recently, increased citizen insecurity and violence coupled with growing social unrest and political crises spread over most of the subregion. The countries have promoted a series of medium- and long-term policy instruments that are mutually complementary and capable of being further strengthened to generate synergies between the different areas of development and identify potential multipliers for greater progress on social cohesion and citizen security (SDG 16) under the 2030 Agenda (see Annex 6). In particular, in the way in which citizen insecurity and crime are addressed, one can witness a shift towards policies that are more integrated and focused on the prevention of violence, in contrast to the more repressive approach adopted in the early 2000s (especially in northern-area countries). The strong and sustained support of strategic partners – international bodies and international cooperation – together with the commitment of States to security issues, has helped to position this issue on the regional and national agendas.



In light of these major challenges facing the countries of the subregion and within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, countries have turned their efforts towards strengthening their institutional frameworks, mainly by aligning their main strategic planning tools with the SDGs. Governance of the SDGs has national councils at the highest level, with coordination and participation mechanisms at every level of government and including the different sectors of society. Likewise, platforms or information systems have been created for monitoring the SDGs, all this in fulfilment of the principles set out in the 2030 Agenda: comprehensive and multidimensional (economic, social and environmental), universal (“leave no one behind”) with gender equality and alliances for development based on inclusive (multilevel and multi-actor) dialogue.

However, even greater efforts are required to provide political and effective public-policy responses that will contribute to the challenges of sustainable development and those posed by COVID-19 (see Box 3). The comprehensive and universal, person-focused character of the 2030 Agenda needs to permeate into every aspect of public administration and the way in which public policies are conceived throughout their cycle. This is not only to ensure a comprehensive approach to social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+, but also to provide appropriate responses to dynamically changing contexts related to climate change, thus putting countries onto a pathway of sustainable development.

BOX 3

COVID-19: Gender-sensitive policy responses³²

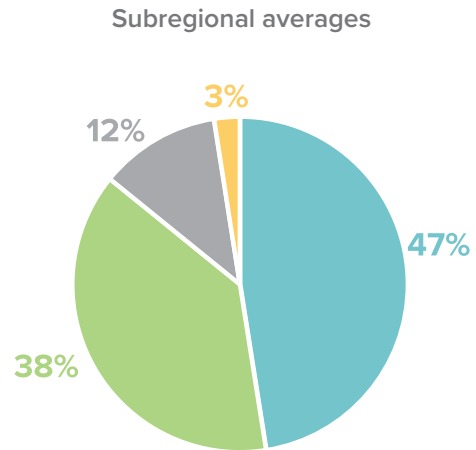
Coronavirus has brought an abrupt halt to the “normal” operation of governments and has forced them into an extended emergency situation that has highlighted institutional weaknesses (in terms of service provision, fiscal constraints, lack of preparedness for extreme events) and exposure to a deterioration of governance. Nonetheless, this is revealed to a greater or lesser extent depending on the capacities of countries’ institutions prior to the pandemic. In this regard, many of the subregion’s countries, Costa Rica for example, which had more-integrated social protection systems, have been able to provide a timelier response targeted at the households and individuals that are most affected.

Importantly, these responses have been crucial for mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 on the families most affected. Even so, a study that analyzed the types of programs identified that only half of these responses were gender-sensitive. Chart 5 shows the measures implemented, concentrating on social protection. In respect of gender-sensitive measures, these are concentrated in the fields of gender-based violence, reflecting fewer measures for women’s economic security and a lack of measures directed to the sphere of unpaid domestic and caregiving work, which was addressed by Costa Rica.³³

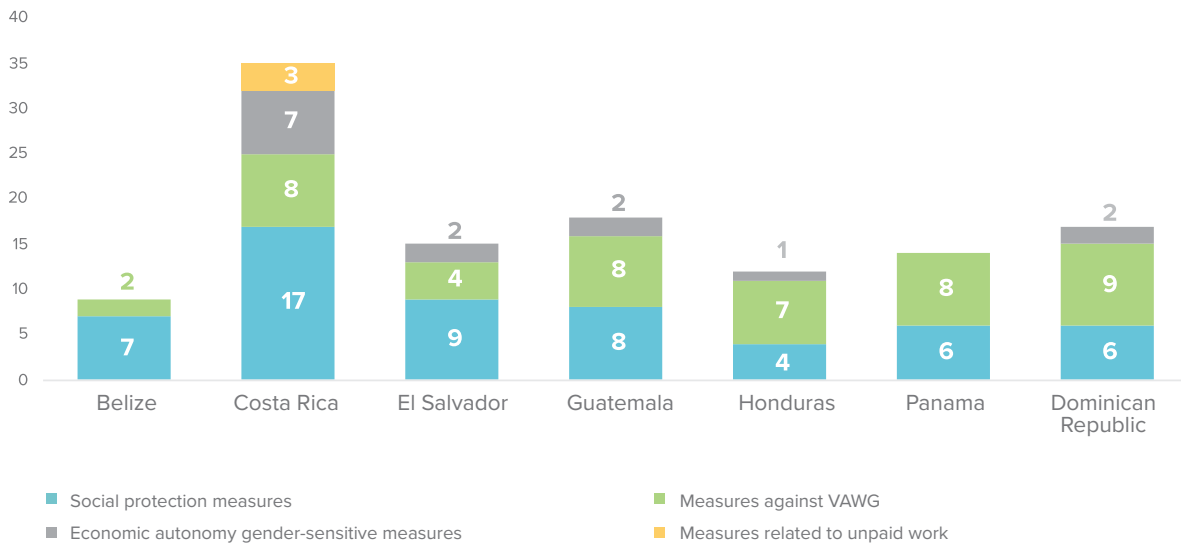
This reflects to some extent a major challenge facing countries in respect of their policy formulation, one that is critical for accelerating fulfilment of the SDGs. This area, therefore, can be identified as one that is necessary for strengthening national capacities throughout the whole policy cycle and the generation of statistics and information on gender and rights.

Chart 9 | COVID-19 response in the Central America and the Dominican Republic subregion.

- The impact of COVID-19 has not been gender neutral
- The subregion has given a response focused on social protection
- 1 in 2 responses have been gender-sensitive measures on average in the subregion, related to: Violence against women and girls (VAWG), women's economic security and unpaid work
- There are countries that are below this average



Social protection and gender-sensitive measures



Source: PNUD y ONU Mujeres (2020). COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker. Factsheet: Latin America and the Caribbean <https://data.undp.org/gendertracker/>

In respect of national policies, it is important to note that the countries have made progress on the promotion of evidence-based public policies, including on prevention and the generation of evidence. Some of the most noteworthy current national policy initiatives include the following:

<p>Belize</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Security and Defence Strategy • 3-year Strategic Action Plan (2020 – 2023) for the Belize Crime Observatory.^{1/} 	<p>National policy and strategy for the generation of evidence, integration of citizen security agencies and targeted actions</p>
<p>Costa Rica</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Agenda for the Prevention of Violence and Promotion of Social Peace 2019-2022 ^{2/} 	<p>Comprehensive agenda linked to crime, and and social prevention</p>
<p>El Salvador</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial Control Plan (2019) ^{3/} 	<p>Crime control policy, emphasis on some prioritized territories</p>
<p>Guatemala</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Policy for the Prevention of Violence and Crime, Citizen Security and Peaceful Coexistence 2014-2034 (2014) ^{4/} • K'atun Nuestra Guatemala National Development Plan 2032 ^{5/} • General Government Policy (PGG) 2020-2024 ^{6/} 	<p>Complementary policies that coordinate control, prevention and targeting in primary attention areas</p>
<p>Honduras</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Policy for Coexistence and Citizen Security for Honduras 2011-2022 ^{7/} • Strategic Government Plan (PED) 2018-2022 ^{8/} 	<p>Territorial plan based on 30 observatories, crime prevention and control plans</p>
<p>Panama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Citizen Security Strategy (ENSC) 2017-2030 ^{9/} • Comprehensive Public Safety Policy ^{9/} • Strategic Plan 2019-2024 ^{10/} 	<p>Complementary policies and strategies that coordinate control, prevention and re-socialization and prioritization of high-complexity neighbourhoods</p>
<p>Dominican Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “My Safe Country” National Citizen Security Plan (2021) ^{11/} 	<p>National action plan that emphasizes territorial action on gender and citizen security, crime control and priority attention to territories</p>

Notes: **1/** See document on Belize Crime Observatory (BCO) website: https://bco.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/download-manager-files/nationalsecurityanddefencestrategy2018_2021.pdf **2/** Document available at Costa Rica MIDEPLAN: <https://repositorio-snp.mideplan.go.cr/bitstream/handle/123456789/62/PP.005-AG.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y> **3/** See website of Salvadoran Ministry of Justice and Public Security: <https://www.seguridad.gob.sv/presidente-nayib-bukele-anuncia-iv-fase-del-plan-control-territorial-incursion/> **4/** See document on website of Community Prevention of Violence Unit (UPCV) <https://upcv.gob.gt/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Politica-Nacional-1.pdf> **5/** ECLAC - Regional Observatory of Planning for Development - K'atun National Development Plan, at: <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/es/planes/plan-nacional-de-desarrollo-katun-nuestra-guatemala-2032/> **6/** Document available at website of Vice-Presidency of Guatemala: https://www.hn.undp.org/content/honduras/es/home/library/democratic_governance/politica_convivencia.html **7/** Document available at website of UNDP Honduras: https://www.hn.undp.org/content/honduras/es/home/library/democratic_governance/politica_convivencia.html **8/** See website of General Government Coordination Secretariat (SCGG): <https://www.scgg.gob.hn/es/node/108> **9/** See website of Ministry of Public Security of Panama: <https://www.seguridadciudadana.gob.pa/estrategia-nacional-seguridad-ciudadana/> **10/** ECLAC – Regional Observatory of Planning for Development Strategic Plan 2019-2024 of Panama: <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/sites/default/files/plan/files/PEG%202020-2024%20Panamá.pdf> **11/** For further detail, see website of President of the Republic of Dominican Republic: <https://presidencia.gob.do/noticias/presidente-abinader-inicia-proyecto-piloto-mi-pais-seguro-la-estrategia-de-seguridad-mas>

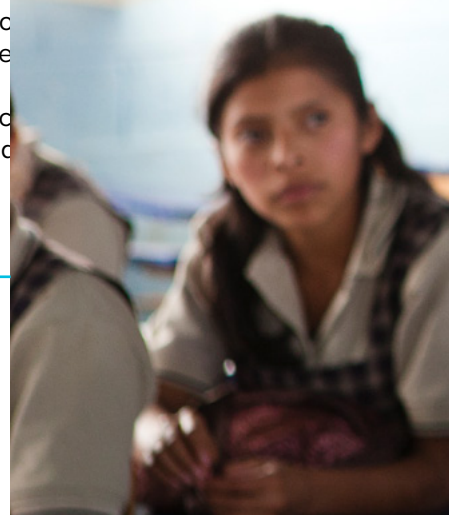
Source: Prepared using information from the different countries.

While institutional environments do exist, created and strengthened around citizen security in all the countries, significant challenges remain in respect of designing and integrating strategies, policies (including gender-sensitive budgeting) and impactful programs able to identify the synergies between the SDGs, so that these interventions become accelerators and drivers for fulfilment of SDG 16+ and contribute to greater social cohesion. While these challenges differ from country to country, it is still possible to highlight some common threads:

- ✓ Countries' main planning tools are aligned with the SDGs; a governance framework has been created around them, including high-level councils and committees for consultations with the various stakeholders, among others. Nevertheless, further efforts are needed towards a multidimensional approach to the main problems of development, particularly in respect of citizen security, with integrated and effective policies.
- ✓ All the countries have comprehensive institutional and governance frameworks for citizen security that include national security strategies and coordination mechanisms at all levels of government (intra- and inter-sectoral), including local governments as strategic agents of implementation of the various measures, along with civil society organizations. Strategies are comprehensive in the sense that they span the different dimensions of public safety and access to justice, that is, the control and prevention of crime, the improvement of environments, and the strengthening of the institutions of public safety and of the justice system.
- ✓ An institutional and regulatory advance exists in all the countries around an integrated approach to VAWG initiatives. This includes a first group of laws (from the late 1990s and early 2000s) against domestic violence, intrafamilial violence and child abuse in all the countries, and a second group of specific laws (concentrated in the 2010s) against people trafficking (in all the countries except Belize), violence against women (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama). Penal codes have been reformed in respect of sexual assault, the creation of the offence of femicide (in the case of Honduras and Panama) and the

establishment of programs for the comprehensive care and protection of women victims of violence and for women's refuges and shelters (Dominican Republic has a specific law on refuges).

- ✓ Based on countries' responses to COVID-19, it is possible to highlight the need to strengthen the design of gender-sensitive policies in the field of VAWG and to address the gaps in the field of labor market and caregiving. Going beyond gender-neutral policies can prevent regressions in the current coronavirus crisis to the progress made in gender equality and accelerate SDGs 5 and 16+.
- ✓ In this regard, the design and implementation of evidence-based, gender-sensitive public policies, with a rights-based and intersectional approach, remains one of the challenges to the capacities of all the countries for the generation of knowledge and high-quality statistics. Here, it is important to strengthen such management tools as registers of participants, targeting mechanisms, and integrated information systems to enable better coordination of programs for social and economic inclusion, and the prevention of violence.
- ✓ Many countries have these tools for greater coordination. Honduras has the National Centre for Social Sector (CENISS, *Centro de Información del Sector Social*), which has information platforms such as the Register of Participants (RLP, *Registro de Participantes*), Register of Involvement (ROI, *Registro de la Oferta*), and the Geo-referenced System of Statistics of Honduras (*Georreferenciado de Estadística Honduras*). It also has the National Observatory of Migration (under the Undersecretary of Migration Affairs) that provides data and monitoring information in the labor and migration field. The National Violence Observatory (under the National University of Honduras) and There is also SEPOL, a police force and a computerized system for the identification and monitoring of cases and the creation of observatories of coexistence in 60 municipalities of Honduras.



- ✓ The Infosegura Project is becoming a “before and after” for the countries of the subregion in respect of its impact on the generation of evidence-based information and statistics on citizen security. However, continuity is needed in this direction for this vision to be consolidated and adopted as part of the process of modernizing the public administration of the various countries, which will contribute to the formulation of policies and high-impact programs on priority areas for sustainable development and will accelerate fulfilment of the SDGs (see Box 4).
- ✓ Policy interventions exist that have been implemented in the various countries and that, from a holistic view of citizen security and social cohesion, can provide key elements for the design of impactful interventions (programs). Therefore, systematizing and capitalizing on all this experience may help identify the main limitations of these programs – in their design and implementation, coordination and linkages – and outline responses in terms of well-focused and integrated policies for accelerating the SDGs (See Table 1 and Box 4).
- ✓ The sustainability of interventions remains a major challenge for there to be impact. It is, therefore, important when designing policies and throughout their life cycles, to build in the inclusive and active participation of the public and other social and local actors, and the mobilization of resources, particularly in respect of the development of innovative instruments for financing development.
- ✓ There are still many centralized programs. In respect of these, the active and inclusive participation of the public and other local actors must be based on a bottom-up approach to ensure that the design of these programs responds effectively to local problems and needs and to those of specific population groups. This approach contributes to the empowerment of citizens, as well as to accountability, monitoring and adapting interventions to suit local situations, in order to ensure their effectiveness and equality of outcomes.
- ✓ With regard to social and economic inclusion, most of the countries have regulatory frameworks for social protection; even so, there are challenges to be faced in this area. This is all the more so in the current context in which coronavirus has made visible a structural problem and a social-protection deficit, which requires these efforts to be resumed and directed towards the construction of integrated social-protection systems or regimes. This construction should take account of the contributory and non-contributory, and of caregiving, and it needs to be consistent with the concept of human development and the principles of the 2030 Agenda.





The INFOSEGURA project has contributed significantly to the generation of evidence-based information and statistics on citizen security in the subregion. With this innovative vision in 2014, UNDP began the implementation of the project, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This regional initiative seeks to strengthen institutional capacities for the management of information on citizen security and promote comprehensive citizen security policies with a gender approach in Central America and the Dominican Republic. Among the main action areas of the INFOSEGURA project are the following:

- A change in the vision of information management, focusing on the development of tools and production of knowledge as inputs for public policies on prevention and violence working together with national institutions.
- A qualitative leap with greater levels of disaggregation, territorialization or georeferencing by supporting initiatives that contribute to understanding the phenomenon in all its breadth in order to focus interventions so that no one is left behind.
- Focusing on transparency through a policy of open data on citizen security in institutions.
- Preventing violence before it occurs with the implementation of early warning tools with the conviction that anticipating is essential to prevent criminal acts from occurring.
- Incorporating the gender perspective and the human rights approach in citizen security policies through numerous initiatives at the subregional and national levels.

- Supporting national processes for the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda by generating information and piloting global indicators for SDG 16 and SDG 5.
- Generating greater synergy and articulation between institutions by promoting the construction of partnerships for the exchange of information from this multidimensional perspective.
- Promoting the use of information in public policies, generating evidence for the design, implementation and monitoring of citizen security policies.
- Analyzing at the local level the manifestations of violence and insecurity that impact mainly on communities, which is why it is essential to know and understand what is happening to citizens through prioritization and targeting tools.
- Generating, building and promoting a regional knowledge community with the creation of national and regional knowledge networks and, on the other hand, through dissemination actions such as the DATAACCION virtual seminars with wide participation and call for participants throughout the region.

Continuity in this direction is required for this vision to be consolidated and adopted as part of the modernization processes of public management in the different countries, contributing to the formulation of policies and programs with an impact on priority issues for sustainable development and accelerating compliance with the SDGs (see Box 4).

BOX 4

Programs with an impact on violence prevention and the social inclusion of young people.

There are interventions in the subregion related to different areas of citizen security and social and economic inclusion that contribute, as shown by impact assessments, to the prevention of violence. These experiences highlight the importance of programs that are gender sensitive and empowering to women, young people and communities in respect of preventing violence and changing cultural norms. The following examples of impactful interventions (based on rigorous evaluations of an experimental and non-experimental nature) may be identified:

El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama.^{1/} An impact assessment of the community-based crime-prevention program (under CARSI) shows that, on average, several aspects of the program have been successful. It can, thus, be stated that the program produces the following impacts compared with what would have been expected without this intervention: i) it produced a significant reduction in expected levels of incidents of offending and violence; ii) there was a significant increase in expected levels of a feeling of safety on the part of the public; iii) it was responsible for a significant decrease in expected levels of social disorder in the neighborhood, such as young people roaming around or the presence of gangs; iv) satisfaction with the performance of the police has significantly improved; v) programs' indirect effects include the strengthening of values, which have significantly improved compared to levels expected without the program. Other qualitative outcomes relate to the roles of schools and families, the community and the church, and people leaving gangs, among others.³⁴

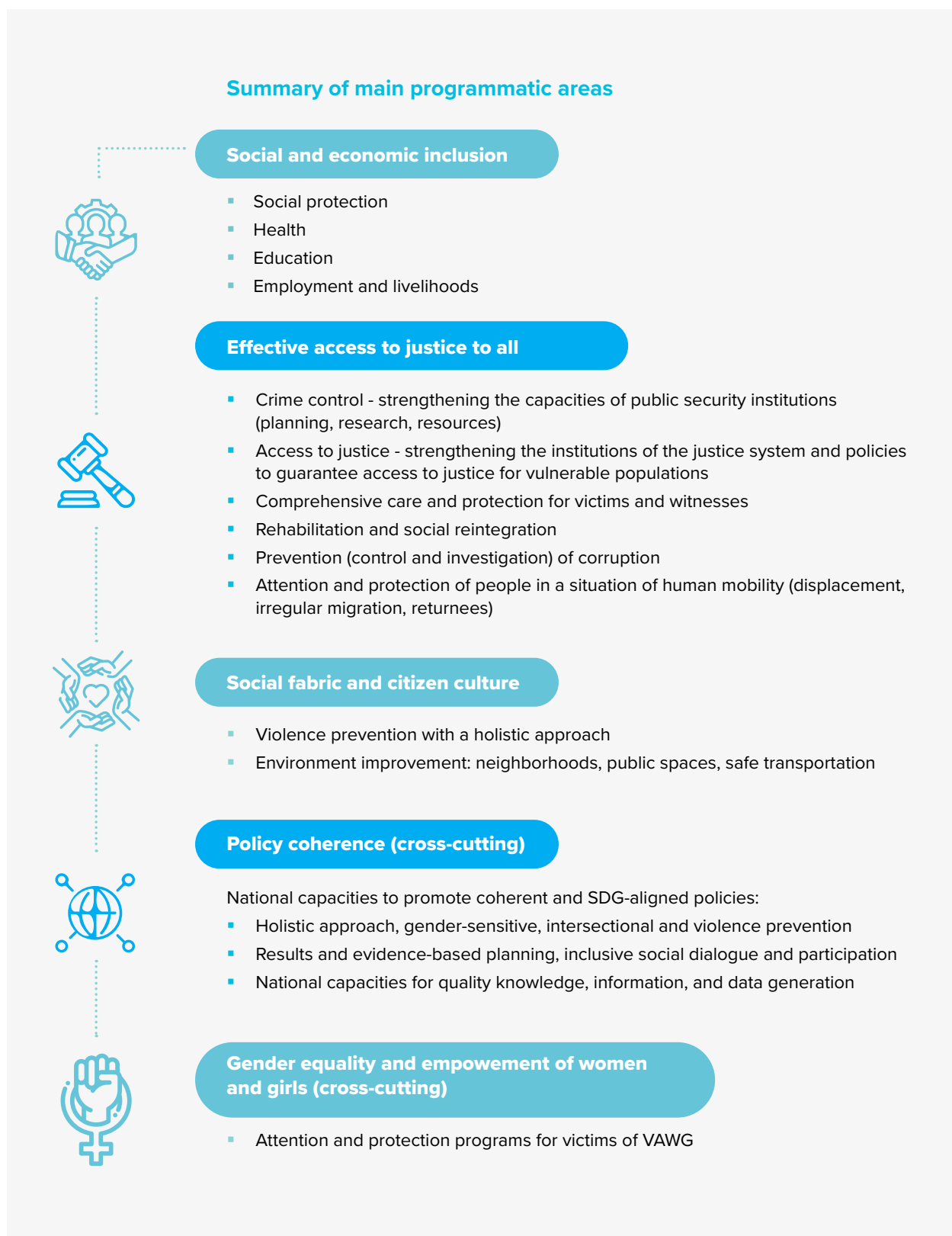
Costa Rica.^{2/} An impact assessment (based on the matching methodology or propensity score-matching (PSM)) of the *Avancemos* Program conducted in the early years of its implementation (2006/2007) showed a positive impact to prevent school dropout and achieve reintegration. Thus, the assessment suggests that between 10% and 16% of the students who did not drop out of the educational system did so as a direct result of the program. This conditional cash transfer program for school attendance was aimed at poor families; it was a monthly benefit that was phased in accordance with the year group of the young person. In addition, this transfer was complemented by other components, such as the incentive to encourage saving and support for education and training provision.³⁵

El Salvador. The results of an analysis (based on panel data) of the Temporary Income Support Program (2009-2014) – which ran in municipalities with high levels of violence and insecurity, temporarily guaranteeing for six months a minimum level of income for women and young people in families in extreme poverty and offering participants experiences in local social and productive activities – show that the program reduced crime rates in the target municipalities. These results are consistent with the findings of previous impact assessments of the program. The greatest part of this reduction can be explained by the effect on incomes, since the program provided participants with cash benefits which replaced the lack of income and, potentially, the need to carry out illegal activities (such as theft and extortion). It is also suggested that the decline in the number of non-economically-motivated offences is mainly due to factors related to social capital due to community participation and that people were required to work, which allowed less time for committing crime. Furthermore, the effect in terms of crime reduction may be the result of the fact that most of the beneficiaries were young people – an age group at high risk of participating in anti-social and offending behavior.³⁶



© PNUD Panamá

Table 1 | Social cohesion and citizen security: main intervention areas.



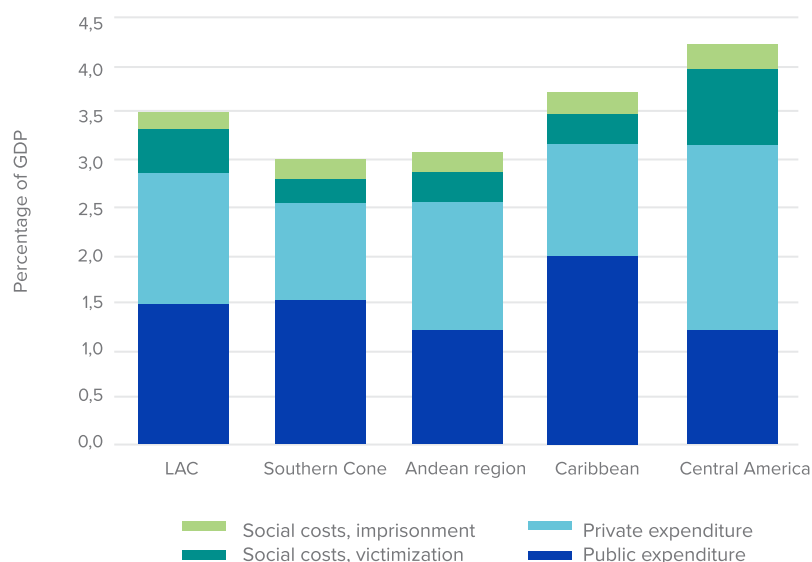
Source: Own elaboration based on the region's main policy interventions.

Exploring in greater depth the reasons for the prevalence of high levels of violence in the subregion is essential for the better targeting of public spending from an integrated-policy approach to citizen security. In the LAC economies, average overall crime-related costs reached 3.55% of GDP in 2014.³⁷ This figure is much higher in the subregion of Central America, reaching 4.3% of GDP for the same year. The countries with the highest costs as a percentage of GDP include Honduras (6.5%) and El Salvador (6.1%). Other countries, such as Guatemala and Costa Rica are between 3 to 3.5% of GDP. This means that for those four countries, total estimated costs (or losses) due to crime are estimated at 11.799 billion international dollars (in nominal terms for 2014).^{xxxix}

Chart 6 shows the costs of crime in LAC, indicating that Central America is above the regional average. High spending on private security is noteworthy in the subregion. As percentages of GDP, Honduras (3%) and El Salvador (2.7%) have the highest spending, higher even than estimated public spending, which reaches 1.31% and 1.95% respectively.³⁸

According to ECLAC data, public social spending in the LAC region grew by 2.8 percentage points over the last two decades, to reach 11.3% of GDP in 2018. The average increase in the subregion was 1.3 percentage points (excluding Belize and Nicaragua) for the period 2000 to 2018. Costa Rica (increase of 3.1 pp) and Dominican Republic (increase of 2.2 pp) are noteworthy, in comparison with the other countries, where the average increase was 1 percentage point or less. Chart 7 shows the levels of central government spending in the countries of the subregion, reflecting an even-greater challenge in regard to the importance of maintaining and increasing social and social-protection spending in order to avoid further regressions in the social progress so far achieved.

Chart 6 | Costs of crime in LAC by subregion, 2014.

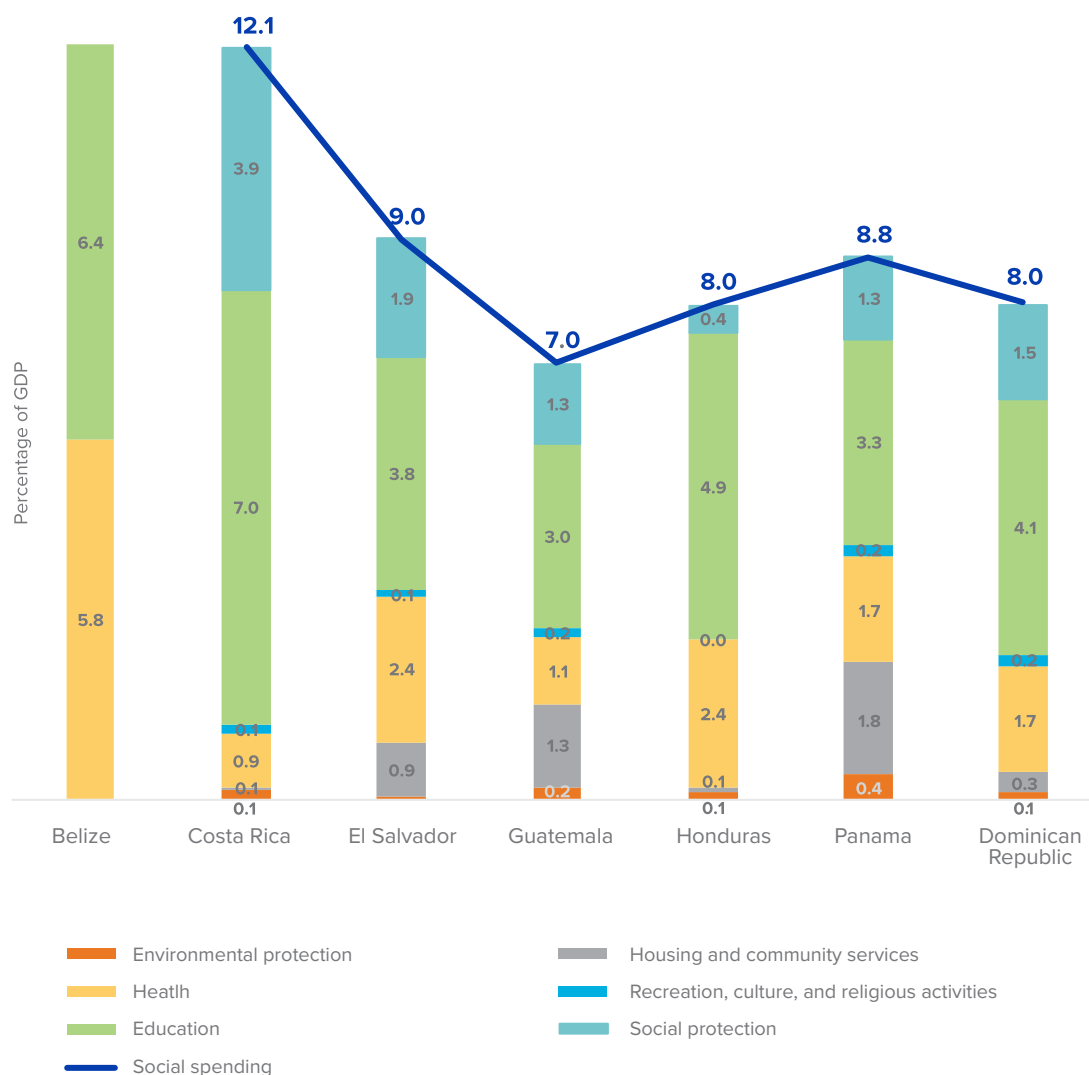



Crime-related costs in Central America amount to around 4.3% of GDP.

Source: Jaitman, 2017.

xxxix For El Salvador, costs (in international dollars) are estimated at 3.134 billion, or 600.74 per capita; for Honduras, 2.551 billion or 302.49 per capita; for Guatemala, 3.628 billion, or 229.52 per capita; and Costa Rica, 2.486 billion, or 520.89 per capita. For detailed methodology, see Jaitman (2017).

Chart 7 | Public social spending in the countries of the subregion, prior to the pandemic (2018).



Source: Public Expenditure Database, ECLAC-ECLACSTAT.

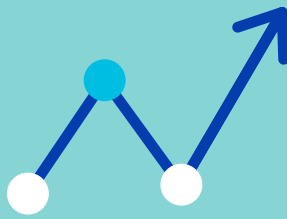
According to the latest ICEFI analysis of the fiscal context in Central America (2021), an increase in public participation was observed in the subregion, a countercyclical effort mainly directed to offsetting the impact of the pandemic. However, in a context (and expectations) of low growth, this could generate a complex macroeconomic and fiscal picture. In this respect, fiscal restructuring is crucially important for greater effectiveness and efficiency of public spending, taking into account the challenges of informal labor, fiscal weakness and low tax-collection capacity, as well as the issues of decentralization, accountability and combating corruption.

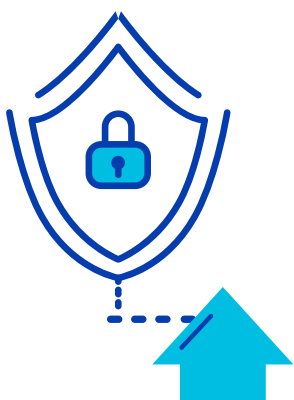
To conclude this chapter, the security challenges are great, at both the national and subregion levels, and even more so against the backdrop of the COVID-19 crisis, which has shown the importance of strengthening public administration to provide a comprehensive response to priority development issues and, most of all, to the deterioration of public safety and social cohesion that the countries of the subregion face. Thus, it should be emphasized that to achieve peaceful, cohesive and sustainable societies, the structural problems of inequality, poverty, gender and intersectional inequality must be overcome.



3

INTEGRATED POLICIES ON SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY





3. INTEGRATED POLICIES ON SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZEN SECURITY

This chapter discusses the issues analyzed in the previous paragraphs on social cohesion and citizen security in the subregion, using a multidimensional approach and applying the integrated policy methodology that is used to map the SDGs and an indicative proposal for integrated policies (a proposed roadmap).

3.1 MAPPING THE SDGS

The aim of the integrated policy methodology is to address, in a holistic manner and using a systemic approach, the underlying causes and risk factors for citizen insecurity, social conflict and violence in all its forms.

The aim of the integrated policy methodology^{xi} is to address, in a holistic manner and using a systemic approach, the underlying causes and risk factors for citizen insecurity, social conflict and violence in all its forms, especially those forms that are prevalent in some countries of the subregion, such as violence linked to organized crime, maras and gangs, and gender-based violence. To do this, this approach recognizes the synergies and interconnections between the SDGs and their targets, and identifies the policy interventions (or accelerators) that can lead to multiplier effects across the dimensions of development (economic, social and environmental). This approach makes it possible to construct effective integrated policy interventions to improve levels of safety, coexistence and social cohesion that contribute to fulfilment of the SDGs, focused on SDG 16+, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.^{xii} It is also important to highlight the importance of having an institutional and policy framework able to anticipate, address and adapt to the different kinds of changes (shocks and extreme events) that are becoming ever-more frequent (systemic approach to risk management).

In this regard, and based on the intensification of the problems of violence, citizen insecurity and social conflict facing the countries of the region (in varying degrees), the theory of change is set out as the desired change whereby everyone, including women, children, young people and other groups at increased vulnerability to violence (in all its forms), is able to exercise their rights, on an equal footing, in an environment that is safe, free from violence and

^{xi} The Integrated Policy Methodology is based on an inclusive dialogue process comprising the following steps: (1) Adoption of the integrated policy approach. (2) Definition of the specific problem. (3) Construction of the Theory of Change. (4) Development of a Roadmap. (5) Joint implementation with stakeholders. (6) Monitoring and evaluation. Methodology based on the principles and approaches underlying the 2030 Agenda – leave no one behind; gender equality and empowerment of women; human-rights based approach – and approaches related to equality and non-discrimination, inclusive, active participation (from all sectors of society and citizenry), and the comprehensiveness and indivisibility of the SDGs, among others.

^{xii} It is important to note that a substantial element for application of the Integrated Policy Methodology is the identification of the specific problem in a country or locality/community, based on rigorous analysis and involving the participation of different actors from society for building the theory of change and integrated solutions, through a process of inclusive dialogue. Therefore, what is presented in this section is the result of a documentary analysis and is indicative in nature.



is characterized by effective management of social conflict. This change is brought about through achieving greater levels of citizen security, social cohesion and gender equality – SDG 16+, SDG 10 and SDG 5, within a framework of rights and effective justice, contributing in this way to the sustainable development of countries of the subregion (see Annex 5 for proposed general theory of change).

Based on the reference framework and analysis of the context of the countries in the subregion, and on the proposed theory of change, an indicative mapping of the SDGs has been undertaken, identifying the main accelerators or policy interventions common to all the countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic. The following figure shows these identified accelerators for improving social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+.

In this respect, a mapping exercise that responds to countries' particular and local contexts requires collective construction of the theory of change, involving citizens and other strategic actors. For example, in the northern area, social and criminal violence linked to organized crime, maras and gangs (extortion, forced recruitment, etc.) has been raised as one of the most complex development problems that these countries face, together with the deterioration of democratic governance and vulnerability to extreme events. Figures indicate that gender-based violence is widespread in most countries of the subregion and that it is exacerbated by new dynamics of violence in northern Central America (including trafficking and exploitation of women and girls), as well as problems of coexistence or interpersonal relationships. At the same time, this situation has been exacerbated by the current COVID-19 situation, which has had a particular impact on women, hence the need for differentiated policy responses.

Figure 5 | SDG mapping: Social cohesion and citizen security, focused on SDG 16+.

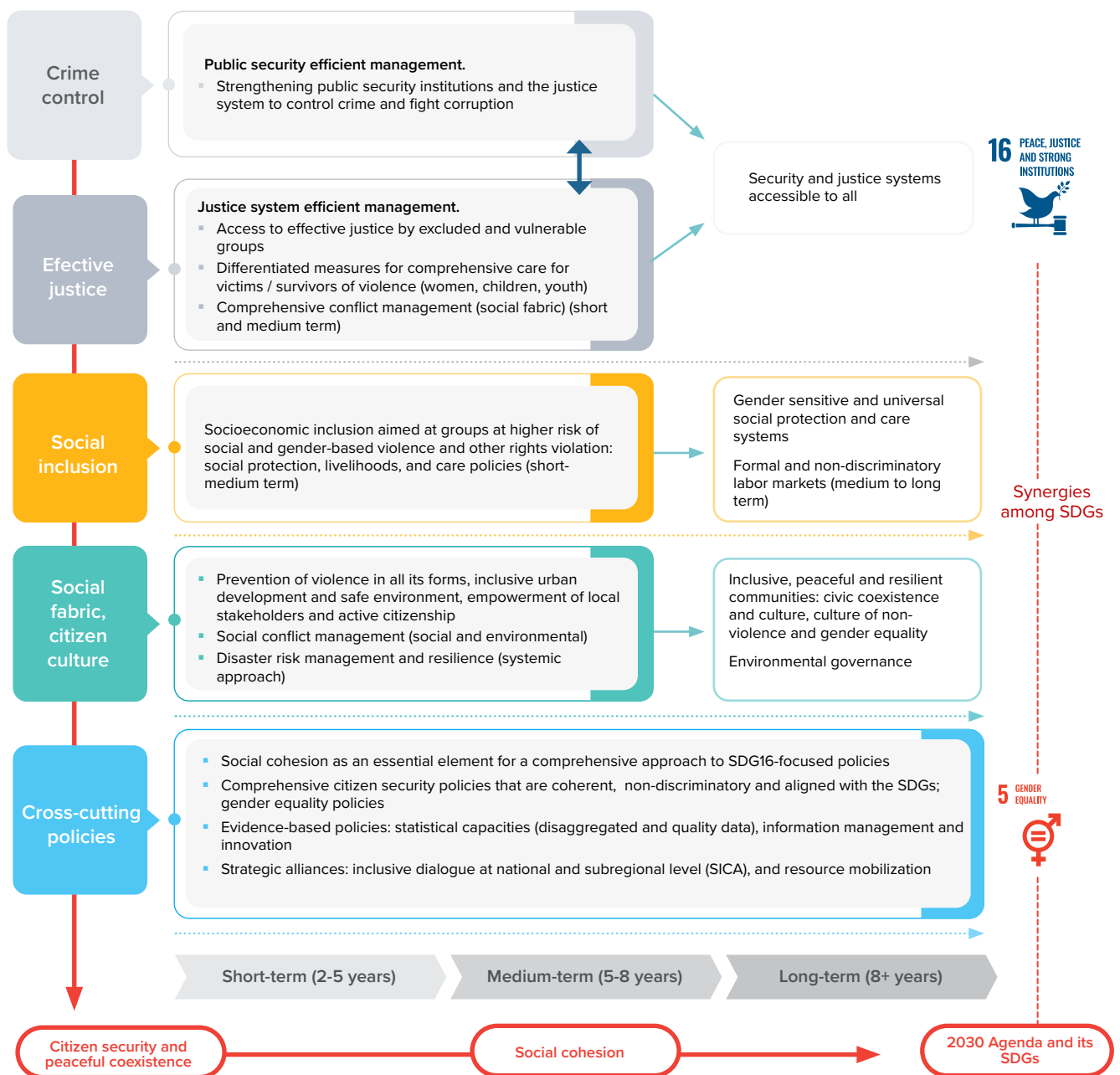


Source: Own elaboration based on Box 1 and Figure 6

3.2 INTEGRATED POLICY PROPOSAL

Based on the SDG mapping and the result of the subregion's context in terms of social cohesion and citizen security, a proposal is made for integrated policies. This proposal is indicative and is not intended to be exhaustive. It concentrates on the policy areas that are essential for an integrated approach to the challenges of citizen insecurity and violence, and on the management of social conflicts in the countries of the subregion and offers some lines for the development of future initiatives and projects (see Figure 6 and Annex 6).

Figure 6 | Policies for social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+:
Main accelerators.



Source: Own elaboration based on figures 1 and 5, and box 1.



The integrated approach to policy interventions is critical to achieving the SDGs. Thus, for example, violence against women and girls requires both a rights-based, a life stage and intersectional approach. The risks that women and girls face of suffering different forms of violence (physical, sexual and psychological abuse) occur at every life stage. However, each stage (childhood, youth, adulthood, old age) is exposed to specific forms of violence according to the changing relationships and different areas (public or private). The intersectional approach^{xlii} refers to the multiple discriminations that women face. As well as enduring discrimination on account of being women, they can be subject to many forms of discrimination on other grounds, such as age, sexual orientation and gender identity, race or ethnicity, or being a displaced person or returnee migrant, among others. This integrated approach should also include the ecological model put forward by WHO, which takes account of individual, relational, social, cultural and environmental factors.^{xliii} The Spotlight Initiative is a region-wide effort to offer comprehensive answers to the various forms of violence against women and girls (see Box 5).

BOX 5

Spotlight initiative³⁹

The Spotlight Initiative (2017) is a global initiative launched by the EU and the UN for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, and particularly those that are most prevalent and contribute to gender inequality. In Latin America, in the face of the epidemic of femicide (the region accounts for 14 of the 25 countries worldwide with the highest femicide rates), the Initiative (with €50 million in funding) has prioritized Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico and focuses on ending femicide by means of specific interventions to address it in a holistic manner that includes training regional networks.

xlii Term coined by Crenshaw, K. (1989) *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*. University of Chicago Legal Forum, 14 upon introducing it to explain the exclusion of African-American women in feminist and anti-racist policies, since these took no account of the intersection of race and gender.

xliii This model explores the relationship between individual and contextual factors and considers violence as the product of multiple levels of influence on behaviour. For more detail, see Krug E G et al., eds. (2002). *World report on violence and health*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2002.

While policy responses must be differentiated to contexts and local dynamics specific to each country, it is important to highlight the following policy considerations in each domain:



Effective justice: Strengthening the institutional framework for public safety and justice for controlling crime and criminality.



Social and economic inclusion: Non-contributory social protection programs have helped to provide more-immediate answers to specific situations and extreme events,⁴⁰ such as coronavirus. However, these social welfare programs do not suffice for moving forwards on the reduction of structural inequalities. In respect of these, the main challenges arise of having universal and integrated social protection systems, formal and inclusive labor markets and gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory policies.



Social fabric: Management of social conflicts. Differentiated measures to improve the processes of prevention, management and resolution of social conflicts in the various areas of development, such as conflicts over the use of natural resources. Looking in the longer term to contribute to democratic governance and inclusive, sustainable economic growth. Measures to promote the empowerment of civil society and within the framework of inclusive dialogue on an equal basis and that takes account of different cultural expressions.



Gender-sensitive (cross-cutting) policies: Gender inequalities prevail as a common denominator in the subregion. These inequalities, that have their expression in violence (in its various forms) and a lack of economic, social and political opportunity, deepen when they interact with the multiple forms of discrimination (the intersectionality approach) faced by many women and other highly-vulnerable groups, as with life stages and the person-related domains (the ecological model). This applies all the more in the context of COVID-19, whose impacts have not been gender neutral. It is, therefore, essential that public policies are not only gender-sensitive, but that they also embody the concepts of rights, intersectionality, life stage and the ecological model.



© PNUD Guatemala



Coherence (cross-cutting) of public policies: Policy coherence is essential for a comprehensive approach to citizen security and for accelerating implementation of SDG 16+, by taking account of the synergies and inter-relationships between the different SDGs. Here, it is essential to promote and adopt gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory policies aimed at progressively achieving greater equality in public-policy areas, including in fiscal policies (aligned to the SDGs). Above all, social cohesion, in all its multiple dimensions – social and economic inclusion, governance and belonging – must be considered an essential element to trigger a multiplier effect on achieving SDG 16+ and synergies with other SDGs.



Statistical capacity: The importance of maintaining efforts targeted and supported by Infosegura at the capacities of countries to generate information on citizen security. This is a subregion-level example that countries would need to resume for the various areas identified for an integrated approach in this regard. Also, consider the new metrics, some of which cover subjective well-being, that could help to provide better measurement of areas such as social capital, for example.⁴¹

Other cross-cutting themes: Involuntary human mobility. While the lack of opportunities for economic and social development extends throughout the subregion, it is compounded in the northern area on account of the new dynamics of violence linked to organized crime, maras and gangs, becoming the main (or most impactful) factor contributing to involuntary human mobility (displacement, migration and return). However, this situation affects both departure and destination countries (and transit countries). This is why a subregional vision for the migration issue is required. In addition, involuntary human mobility must be addressed using a holistic approach, since it is multi-causal in its character, heterogeneous in respect of territories and determined (both for departure and return) by a confluence of vulnerabilities and threats, among other factors.⁴²

Likewise, we note progress in the countries to accelerate the production of information, generation of actions and promotion of policies aligned with SDG 16+. Among these, the following acceleration initiatives are particularly noteworthy:

Honduras

- **Evidence for the 2030 agenda and SDG 16+: Inclusive and Peaceful Societies in Honduras**

The General Government Coordination Secretariat (SCGG), as focal point of the SDGs in Honduras, has worked to collect institutional information and baseline data for the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, in September 2019, UNDP with the support of the regional Infosegura Project and the Trinational Project for Resilience and Social Cohesion in Northern Central America, at the request of the Government of Honduras, began a process of collecting information from the various sources of information, to ascertain progress on SDG 16+. This was reflected in the report *Informe: Evidencias para la agenda 2030 y el ODS 16+: Sociedades Inclusivas y Pacíficas en Honduras*. (<https://www.hn.undp.org/content/honduras/es/home/presscenter/articles/informe--evidencias-para-la-agenda-2030-y-el-ods-16---sociedades.html>)

Costa Rica

- **Conceptualization and challenges to building just, peaceful and inclusive societies**

Workshop 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals organized by the Inter-institutional Technical Commission for Statistics on Coexistence and Citizen Security (COMESCO). It forms part of a regional South-South cooperation strategy that seeks knowledge transfer between the countries and institutions of the region for the transfer of best practices and the sustainability of initiatives.

Belize

- **Regional capacity-building in measuring SDG 16 in Latin America**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) organized a series of webinars focused on measuring the progress of SDG 16 indicators in Latin America. These were aimed at strengthening the technical capacities of the authorities and capacities for coordination between the producers and users of data, for generating, analysing and disseminating the indicators for SDG 16. They were also intended to strengthen the organizational framework and promote a "data community" between data producers and users, for the exchange of experiences and challenges.

Regional

- **Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy for Belize 2016-2019**

Includes elements of governance and citizen security, sustainability, social cohesion and resilience. Provides for integration of different agencies around policy processes and acceleration of development actions.

In this regard and from an analysis of the policy frameworks of the countries of the subregion, the integrated policy proposal is presented below as a set of comprehensive policies and their main measures, depending on the domain of intervention (based on Figure 6). This is an indicative proposal for the subregion; particular emphases are proposed for each country analysis, detailed in the country details developed from this analysis. Thus, for example, the countries of the northern area have an emphasis on addressing drug-trafficking, mara and gang-related violence and involuntary human mobility caused by violence, as departure countries. In Costa Rica and Dominican Republic, the emphasis in terms of this last issue of involuntary human mobility, would have to be in terms of their being destination countries.

The integrated policy proposal (subregional roadmap) comprises three differentiated sets of policies:

1

Measures for escaping situations of breaches of rights (short- and medium-term): This includes policy measures and interventions aimed at providing comprehensive support for persons (and families) that are victims and survivors of all kinds of violence, including gender-based violence and femicide. These measures would be focused on the victims/survivors of violence (in all its forms) and on those living with breaches of their rights, such as people in situations of involuntary human mobility and the population groups most affected by the crisis arising from coronavirus.

2

Measures for resilience to and the prevention of violence (more medium-term): This includes violence-prevention policy measures and interventions aimed at expanding economic and social opportunities and the resilience of the population groups most at risk of being the victims or perpetrators of violence (in all its forms) and at risk of breaches of their rights. It also takes account of those communities that are living with the greatest citizen insecurity and vulnerability to extreme events, with measures to improve their environment and resilience.

3

Sustainability measures (longer-term): These include longer-term policy measures and interventions aimed at improving public safety and promoting social cohesion as the basis for the construction of cities that are peaceful, inclusive and resilient, operating within a framework of effective governance. Among them are measures for social inclusion and equality of outcomes, aimed at strengthening social-protection or labor-market systems or regimes. Other measures are targeted at strengthening the security and justice system, to ensure access to effective justice for all, to improve and restore confidence in public institutions, and to combat corruption (eradicate impunity) at all levels of the State. There are also other measures to promote inclusive and active public participation (including the representation of the most vulnerable) and to establish appropriate mechanisms for the public's effective participation throughout the public-policy management cycle, including accountability.

4

Cross-cutting measures: These comprise policy measures and interventions aimed at strengthening national capacities for greater coherence and effectiveness of public policies – gender-sensitive, non-discriminatory and evidence-based – and an integrated approach to public safety that contributes to democratic governance and social cohesion. It is, therefore, essential to build in strategic and multisectoral alliances that will contribute to greater efficiency and transparency in the whole public-policy cycle and to the mobilization of resources for development.

Figure 7 | Set of comprehensive policy measures for social cohesion and citizen security focused on SDG 16+.



Source: Own elaboration based on figures 5 and 6, and annex 7.E.



4

**PROPOSED
METHODOLOGY FOR
MEASURING THE
SOCIAL COHESION
INDEX AT THE
SUBREGIONAL LEVEL**





4. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING THE SOCIAL COHESION INDEX AT THE SUBREGIONAL LEVEL

4.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

In this regard, social cohesion is not only the end of certain public policies, but also the means of achieving other, equally important, objectives.

Social cohesion is a fundamental building block to advance towards sustainable and inclusive development, from the sphere of policy, public policies and the local space in which it is built and from its dimensions of social inclusion, governance and belonging (see reference framework in Chapter 1). Also, as has been identified in Chapter 2 of this document, the components of social cohesion are closely linked to most of the SDGs and many of their targets. In this regard, social cohesion is not only the end of certain public policies, but also the means of achieving other, equally important, objectives.

The need for tools to identify and analyze the factors that contribute to promoting peaceful, inclusive societies, leads one to consider the relevance of including social cohesion indicators in debates around the objectives and implementation of public policies in the subregion of Central America and the Dominican Republic. Understanding the components that define, and the ability to measure, social cohesion is of full interest to those responsible for developing and monitoring policies, and to authorities, academics and donors, particularly to identify interventions and policies likely to be more efficient at promoting positive outcomes.

Defining a tool for the measurement of social cohesion is a methodological challenge, given the multidimensional and abstract nature of the concept. There is, moreover, no single unequivocal definition of the concept of social cohesion and its expressions differs depending on the historical, political, cultural and social context. Thus, a measure used to articulate solutions capable of addressing the issue of social cohesion must resolve two major challenges. Firstly, delimiting the elements that define, or at least approximate to, social cohesion in a given context; and secondly, using observable elements to capture these in an aggregated manner that reflects this abstract, or not directly-observable concept.

The Social Cohesion Index for Latin America (SCI-LA), whose results were presented in Chapter 2 of this document, is an empirical exercise built using a statistically-robust methodology that helps progress to be made on this challenge.⁴³ The methodology of the SCI-LA is particularly useful for estimating the relationship between unobservable constructs – such as the dimensions of social cohesion and the aggregate of social cohesion itself – from a set of directly-observable variable, that is, the indicators for each dimension. However, given that the definition of the index was mainly due to statistical criteria, this may leave out aspects that are particularly relevant in some countries, even if they are less relevant in most. For Central America and Dominican Republic, for example, the importance has been identified of including indicators that relate to citizen security and SDG 16+ to comprehensively analyze the position in respect of social cohesion.



A proposed methodology is outlined below to arrive at an approximate estimate of the degree of social cohesion including Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Belize, Costa Rica, Panama, and Dominican Republic. The main objective is to address the methodological challenge of the measurement adequately reflecting the conditions that are particular to the subregion and of including the common challenges related to insecurity, violence and other phenomena such as irregular migration and forced displacement. To achieve this, the proposed methodology combines normative and statistical criteria to establish a definition of an index expanded by a focus on citizen security and SDG 16+.

In particular, the proposal outlines some alternatives for establishing the relationships between citizen security & SDG 16+ and social cohesion, and a series of ad hoc indicators that are pertinent to the context; it does this so that these can be used as a starting point for a participatory discussion process to help define the normative criteria delineating the index.

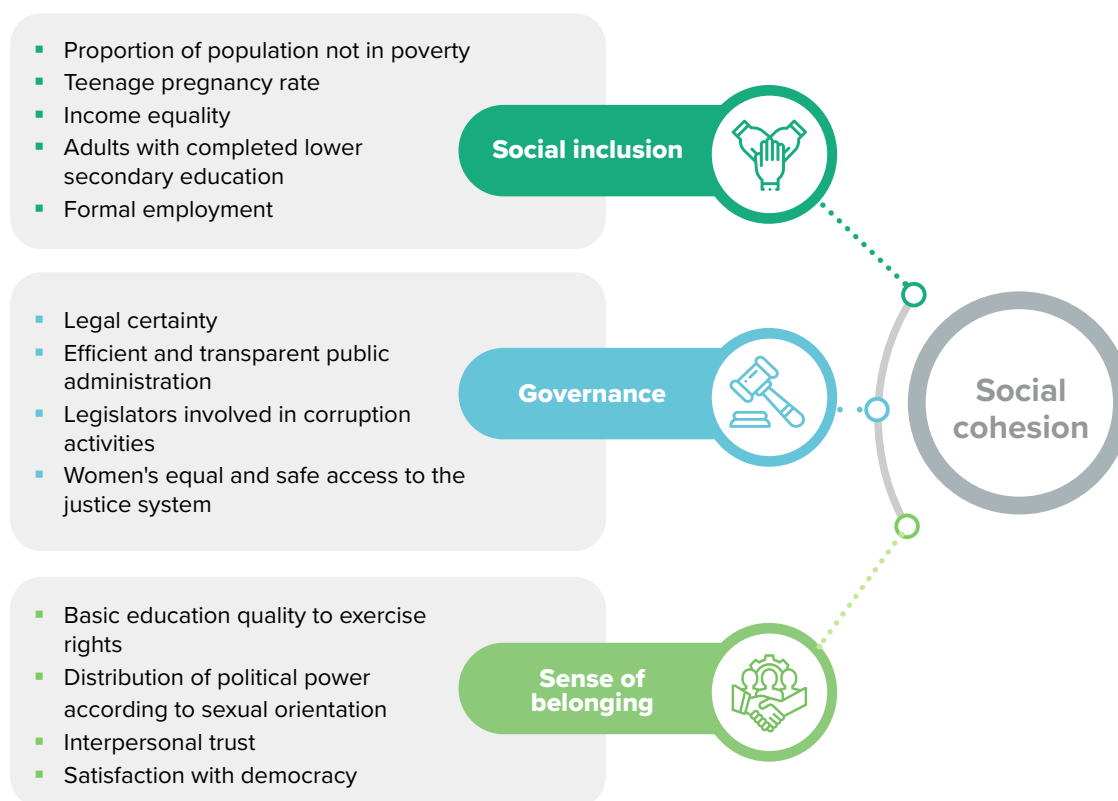
4.2 DATA

Construction of the index will be based on a set of observable indicators from secondary data sources. This approach, like that of the SCI-LA, seeks to ensure that the data are transparent, publicly available and allow the replicability of the index. It also seeks to ensure that the data are of high quality, that they are comparable across countries and that their availability allows broad coverage of countries in order that the index is robustly estimated. Specifically, data aggregated at the country level will be used, such as from government records and those compiled by the UNDP Infosegura Project, local UNDP offices, national statistical offices or international bodies such as the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The results of public opinion polls, such as the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) and Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM), will also be used.

The first group of potential indicators to be included in the estimate of the index is composed of the 13 indicators used in SCI-LA (Figure 8), since these have already been identified as useful for explaining the variance in the three dimensions of social cohesion – social inclusion, governance and belonging – according to a series of conceptual and statistical criteria.^{xliv}

^{xliv} For a deeper treatment of the relevance of these indicators for measuring expressions of social cohesion, see UNDP and AECID (2021a), UNDP and AECID (2021b) and UNDP and AECID (2021c).

Figure 8 | Components of the social cohesion index in Latin America.



Source: UNDP and AECID (2021c)

One difficulty is that the SCI-LA was not estimated for Belize. However, a detailed review of the information available for Belize shows that, in general, most of the SCI-LA indicators are available, except two, whose source in the SCI-LA is the Latinobarómetro public opinion survey. It is possible to replace these two indicators by a very close approximation using the results of the LAPOP survey, which does include data for Belize. The definition of these indicators and their sources can be found in Annex 8.

Taking this first group of potential indicators as a starting point, a second set of indicators is added, from an ad hoc selection intended to include aspects pertinent to social cohesion, given the context of the subregion. Chapter 2 of this document presents the outlook facing these countries, characterized by economic challenges related to low-to-moderate growth, high prevalence of poverty and marked inequality, and social challenges such as those around a high incidence of violence linked to organized crime, gender-based violence and political crises that have created an atmosphere of distrust, disengagement and frustration in their populations.

Since the first group of potential indicators already takes account of those related to the economic challenges mentioned above and some social challenges relating to democratic governance, it remains to include those that can offer information about the positions in respect of citizen security, access to justice and migration. The indicators relating to the targets of SDG 16+ are a clear starting point for the inclusion of these topics. The link between citizen security, SDG 16+ and social cohesion is developed in section 1.2 of this document.

In line with the diagnosis of the region, there follows below a preliminary set of available indicators that can be used for covering the elements that are particularly relevant to the context of the subregion. The selection proposed here sought to include indicators related

to the targets of SDG 16+ that had not been included in the first group of indicators, in addition to inclusion of migration indicators, including forced migration (according to the categories established by UNHCR and available in the Migration Data Portal). It is important to note, however, that this set is relatively limited by the availability of data in some countries of the subregion, due to the management of information on citizen security being more heterogeneous and there being more lag in the systematization and publication of indicators compared to the rest of the countries in question. This is particularly the case in Belize, Dominican Republic and Panama. The list of indicators shown is not definitive and its final definition would benefit from participatory discussion with stakeholders.

Notably, the estimate of the expanded index aims to compensate for a relative weakness of the SCI-LA,

by comprehensively covering issues relevant to the subregion. In particular, the omission of the aspects listed in Table 2 by the SCI-LA was due to, firstly, that its construction is based on the results of an econometric model and on the choice of statistical criteria for selecting indicators that explain most of the variation in each dimension of social cohesion from a set of 240 indicators. The availability of data on citizen security is limited, and for that reason the indicators used to estimate the original model are limited. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, given that the statistical model selects relevant variables, and that information was included for 2015 in 17 countries of Latin America and 21 European members of OECD, it is possible that the model may not have considered those data the most important, due to their not being so important for the sample as a whole, even though they are for a particular subregion such as Central America.

Table 2 | Ad hoc indicators for measuring social cohesion with a subregional focus.

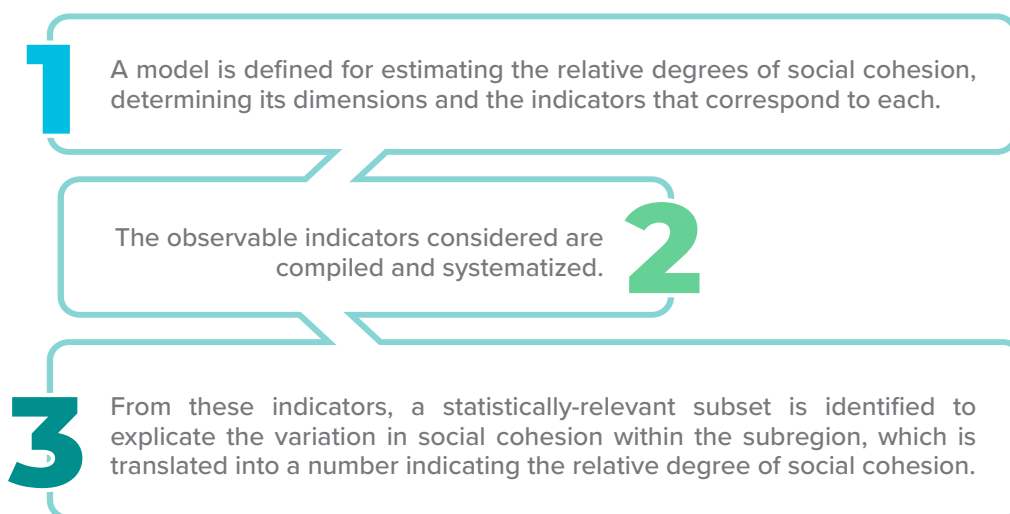
Indicator	Description	Sources
Homicides	Homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants	World Bank
Deaths from gender-based violence	Femicide rate per 100,000 women	Consultation in each country / EUROSTAT
Sexual violence	Rate of sexual offences per 100,000 inhabitants	Consultation in each country / EUROSTAT
Suicides	Suicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants	Consultation in each country / EUROSTAT
Domestic violence	Domestic violence complaints (in the case of Guatemala, intrafamilial violence is recorded, similar to this indicator)	Consultation in each country / EUROSTAT
Persons deprived of liberty	Incarceration rate per 100,000 inhabitants	Consultation in each country / World Prison Brief / EUROSTAT
Due process	Percentage of persons imprisoned without trial	Consultation in each country / World Prison Brief / EUROSTAT
Perception of security	Responses to the question: Speaking of the place or neighborhood where you live and thinking about the possibility of being the victim of an assault or robbery, do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe or very unsafe?	LAPOP / European Social Survey (NSD)
Being a victim of crime	Responses to the question: Have you been the victim of any type of crime in the last 12 months?	LAPOP / European Social Survey (NSD)
Confidence in the police	Responses to the question: To what extent do you trust the police?	LAPOP / European Social Survey (NSD)
Forced displacement^{1/}	Number of asylum seekers from the country	UNHCR, available at the Migration Data Portal (IOM)
Forced displacement^{1/}	Number of refugees by country of origin	UNHCR, available at the Migration Data Portal (IOM)
Migration	Net migration	UNHCR, available at the Migration Data Portal (IOM)
Intention to migrate	Responses to the question: Are you planning to go and live and work in another country in the next three years?	LAPOP / European Social Survey (NSD)

Note: 1/Forced migration includes several categories that will be reviewed, including: asylum seekers from the country, refugees by country or region of origin, total or annual internal displacement (due to conflict) and total or annual displacement (due to disasters), among others.

4.3 METHODOLOGY

Construction of the index expanded by citizen security and SDG 16+ for the subregion consists of starting from a set of indicators that are normatively relevant for social cohesion in the subregion, to which are added the 13 indicators included in the SCI-LA. Then, a subset is defined based on statistical criteria that are *solely* based on the performance of the index for the countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic.

The empirical exercise consists of three general stages:

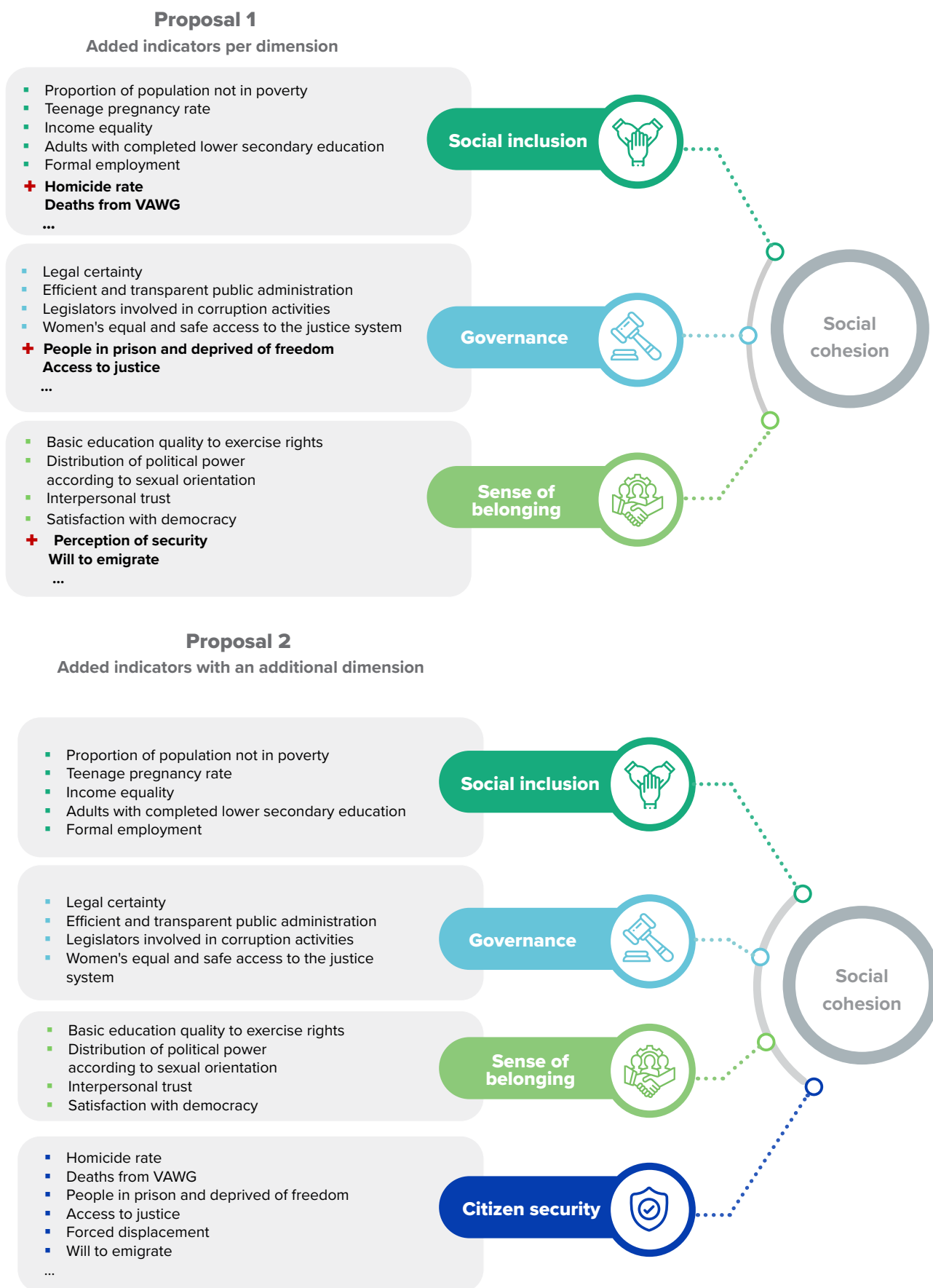


The methodology for estimating the index will be through a structural equation model. With this technique, it is possible to estimate, using a variance and covariance analysis, the relationship between unobservable constructs – also called latent variables, which include social cohesion and its dimensions – and observable indicators. This set of statistical techniques is similar to that used in the SCI-LA⁴⁴ – and is also similar to the methodology used in other social cohesion indices such as the UNDP SCORE Index for the countries of Cyprus, Bosnia and Nepal, and is consistent with similar techniques for determining, for example, the selection of beneficiaries of social programs or priority areas based on multiple observable indicators (see Annex 8 for specific examples). The main differences between the proposed methodology and that used in SCI-LA are: 1) the set of indicators used; 2) the dimensions of social cohesion covered in the model, since it is possible to modify any of the three dimensions identified or add an additional dimension; 3) the scale of the indicators, which for the subregion will represent the relative achievement of each indicator compared to the subregion itself; and 4) the statistical criteria for selecting the definitive indicators for inclusion in the index.

4.3.1 Conceptual approaches and estimation model

The first stage requires the definition of a structure for the expression of social cohesion prevailing in the countries of the subregion. The clear starting point, on account of its robustness, is the structure of the SCI-LA, since it already identifies the relevant indicators for three dimensions given in the literature, of social inclusion, governance and belonging. Even so, it is not obvious to which dimension the ad hoc indicators related to citizen security and SDG 16+ belong. They could be added to each of these dimensions according to the conceptual definition of each, or they could be included as an additional dimension of citizen security. The following figure shows both alternatives.

Figure 9 | Alternative models for measuring social cohesion at the subregional level.



○ The first alternative is consistent with a narrative in which aspects related to violence are closely tied to social exclusion, manifested in a lack of economic opportunities, inequality and a lack of social mobility. In their stead, organized crime represents an opportunity for insertion for those who are excluded from the legal economic system. This context of insecurity results in a deterioration in interpersonal relationships and mistrust between members of the same community; an erosion of the sense of belonging that, in recent circumstances, can lead people to leave their communities and migrate. The weakening of social capital results in greater support for repressive measures and severe punishments for insecurity problems that, coupled with failures already existing in democratic governance, may result in a one-dimensional government response of more prisons and less access to justice.⁴⁵

The second alternative responds to the fact that the narrative is complicated, and the relationships with each dimension blur when one considers that citizen insecurity can be a cause and consequence of the erosion of each of the dimensions and, therefore, can be used as an overall indicator of the state of social cohesion. Violence is linked not only to a socioeconomic background, but also to certain individual characteristics such as ethnicity and gender and, consequently, to complex, structural social exclusion mechanisms. Gangs and organized crime serve not only as social mobility, but as spaces in which to acquire social identity, and this is why violence can also be considered a manifestation of a deterioration of the sense of belonging.⁴⁶ Similarly, while indicators for access to justice reflect the mechanisms and rules of the State – related to governance – they also become mechanisms of social inclusion or exclusion that can perpetuate inequality – related to



social inclusion. Furthermore, by their nature, indicators of the reporting of violence reflect citizens' perceptions of the usefulness of the justice system and victims' levels of agency, as well as a measure of violence. For example, the decision whether to report incidents of domestic violence depends on victims' economic security to support themselves without their aggressors – related to social inclusion – and also on how effective they believe their reports will be – related to governance – given that if there is no effective response, victims may suffer severe reprisals.⁴⁷

There are advantages and disadvantages to both alternatives, and this is why choosing one should be the result of a participatory process with stakeholders. The **first proposal** builds on the same conceptual framework of social cohesion proposed in this document and on the original methodology of the SCI-LA, which responds to the prevailing literature on social cohesion in the region.⁴⁸ Even so, it has the disadvantage that the allocation of indicators to each dimension is not obvious. One resource that could inform this exercise is to assess the correlations between the indicators and variables defined in the SCI-LA for the dimension in question, since these have already been identified as a measure for each dimension. The **second alternative** recognizes the relationship of the ad hoc indicators with all the dimensions and social cohesion in general, which creates a new dimension and avoids the problem of classifying the indicators. However, this new dimension has not been given formal consideration in the literature on the concept of social cohesion, raising a need to explore a conceptual development capable of supporting it as a dimension.



4.3.2 Collection and systematization of the indicators

Collecting information will be a major task, given that in all the countries, at least 14 indicators need to be obtained from different sources in addition to the 13 used to estimate the SCI-LA. This can be done, however, because it has been confirmed that the information is compiled by the countries in the sample or can be obtained from other sources.

After collecting and systematizing the information for the set of ad hoc indicators, the scales of the indicators will be transformed so that they can be expressed as relative achievements, preferably on a scale of 0 to 100. This is also known as unity-based normalization. This involves performing normalization based on the minimum and maximum values for each indicator in the sample. In this case, unlike the original SCI-LA, normalization will be carried out using the minimum and maximum values for the subregion, in order to have achievement thresholds appropriate to the context. The orders of those indicators that originally denote some kind of downward movement to reflect progress, such as crime indicators, needs to be reversed.



4.3.3. Selection of relevant indicators

The third stage consists of estimating a structural equation model to analyze the structure of the data gathered and eventually determine the relative degree of social cohesion. This methodology is a multivariate statistical technique that combines multiple regressions with factor analysis and is explained in further detail in Annex 7. The first step is to carry out an **exploratory factor analysis** to reduce the number of indicators to be analyzed using two criteria from the results of the model. First, it will consider including those indicators that explain most variation in each of the dimensions for the entire sample. Second, different specifications for the model will be estimated, varying the inclusion of indicators apart from the first criterion and an evaluation will be made of the goodness of fit of the model in the Central America and the Dominican Republic sample in order to determine the list of indicators used in the index.

Lastly, based on the reduced list of indicators, a **confirmatory factor analysis** is carried out to assess the performance of the model, estimate the relative degree of social cohesion and determine each dimension's contribution to said degree. Ideally, the performance of this expanded index, in terms of goodness of fit, should be better for the Central America and the Dominican Republic sample than for the original index.

This expanded index would make it possible to determine each indicator's and each dimension's contribution to the abstract concept of social cohesion defined for the subregion. Thus, it would be possible to construct a summary narrative on social cohesion from improving a specific indicator in the subregional aggregate or from general improvements in citizen security. A detailed explanation of how to estimate each indicator's contribution using the results of the model and a set of simplified cases to illustrate the effect of improved indicators on the degree of social

cohesion can be found in the document describing the methodology used for the SCI-LA.⁴⁹

The benefit of this methodology to an expanded index is that it makes it possible to add important aspects for the subregion under normative criteria in a way that is consistent with the descriptive findings of this document and the conceptual framework, without it being completely arbitrary. Ultimately, the relationship between the ad hoc indicators (the definitive list of which requires consultation and discussion between stakeholders), and social cohesion will be determined by the structure of the data and will be what informs the selection of indicators in the index. To sum up, the index adopts the statistical techniques used in the SCI-LA, since these overcome the first methodological challenge of estimating the unobservable dimensions of social cohesion by use of observable indicators, while at the same time compensating for the weaknesses of the SCI-LA by addressing the second challenge of identifying and reflecting aspects relevant to the expression of social cohesion in a specific context.

The usefulness of the expanded index to the public-policy framework lies, firstly, in that it makes it possible to identify relevant elements related to the expression of social cohesion to guide the formulation of multisectoral policies to address complex problems. In other words, policy interventions should be aimed at addressing every element of social cohesion – inclusion, governance, belonging and, potentially, citizen security – to generate synergies and reinforce progress between indicators. Secondly, the index can be used to monitor the evolution of the expression of social cohesion through indicators that are directly affected by implementation of different public policies, in such a way that it can be used as a tool to evaluate these in terms of their contribution to the strengthening of social cohesion.

FINAL REMARKS



FINAL REMARKS

This chapter sets out the principal conclusions of this analysis and the main challenges and scope of the proposal for measuring the social cohesion of the subregion with an emphasis on ODS 16+.

Subregional agenda (SICA): The summits and different forums for political dialogue (and consensus) in the region are effective frameworks for promoting and influencing the social cohesion and citizen security agenda. Moreover, in the current COVID-19 situation, in which the countries of the region have reaffirmed their commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its effective, person-centered implementation “leaving no one behind” that recognizes inequality and its increase as a predominant feature of the region (Fourth Meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development). The main challenges associated with taking this agenda forward include the need for an aligned vision of the SDGs and for strengthening effective mechanisms for participatory and inclusive coordination (with all strategic partners) in order to avoid overlapping agreements in the different spaces for dialogue. In particular, giving greater relevance to and strengthening the role of SICA as a more direct space to influence the subregional agenda.

A range of efforts have been made at the subregional level to open spaces for dialogue around the issue of citizen security. It is, however, necessary to focus these efforts within the SICA framework of Central American integration, through strengthening ESCA and existing spaces for dialogue as the main instruments for consolidating all these efforts and to achieve alignment with the SDGs and the subregion’s specific development challenges.

In this vein, consideration could be given to the creation of a more dynamic and innovative platform that used a holistic view of social cohesion and citizen security to establish the interrelationships between the different dimensions of the issue in the subregion (along with exchanges of experiences, information and lessons learned, consolidating the work done by the Infosegura Project on the management of information to inform evidence based public-policy formulation), thus contributing to efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.



In respect of the institutional public-policy framework, the following is noteworthy:

- ✓ There has been important progress on citizen security in the subregion and its positioning on the SICA agenda has helped to give impetus to key country-level initiatives and projects, especially in northern Central America.
- ✓ The countries of the subregion have responded to problems related to citizen insecurity, violence and social conflict by strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks and implementing policy measures to address different aspects of the problem (at their national or local levels). Having a comprehensive and gender-sensitive approach in public policies and their evidence-based formulation is critical for accelerating achievement of the SDGs in the subregion.
- ✓ The importance should be emphasized of systematizing and capitalizing on all the knowledge gained so far in respect of public policies related to the various areas of social cohesion and citizen security; this could provide the inputs for the formulation of sound, comprehensive policies for the acceleration of SDG 16+, among others.
- ✓ Notable work has been done on the generation of knowledge and statistical capacity, at both the subregional and country levels, with the support of initiatives such as Infosegura (USAID/UNDP). It is important to capitalize on the experiences of country-level programs that have had impact, in order to transfer knowledge and experience between the countries of the subregion. To do this, consideration could be given to formalizing a learning community for an integrated approach to citizen security based on work done up to now mainly by Infosegura, to include the participation of strategic partners from government (national and local), civil society and regional bodies (SICA, OAS, IDB), among others.
- ✓ Support needs to be continued to strengthen the institutions responsible for security and justice for an effective response to violence, crime and access to justice, and the role of governments in the planning and implementation of coherent, non-discriminatory policies aligned with the SDGs. This requires effective and efficient management of public spending for an integrated approach in this area, especially in less-stable and fiscally-weak macroeconomic contexts, such as in the current case.
- ✓ Inequality remains one of the main structural challenges in the subregion and that is why channeling national efforts towards person-centered sustainable development – in line with the principle of “leave no one behind” – becomes an imperative for progressing the 2030 Agenda.
- ✓ Further to countries’ responses to COVID-19, prominence should be given to the need to strengthen the design of gender-sensitive and intersectional policies to offer more-effective answers in the field of VAWG and to make up the gaps observed in the fields of caregiving and paid work, preventing the COVID-19 crisis from causing these to regress from the progress made on gender equality, and accelerating SDGs 5 and 16+.

Measurement proposal: Defining a measurement that captures the different expressions of social cohesion responds to the need for tools to identify and analyze the objectives and implementation of public policies to bring about peaceful and inclusive societies. It is, however, a major methodological challenge to measure social cohesion, due to the multidimensional, abstract and dynamic character of the concept. The expanded index proposed herein responds to the need to enrich the Social Cohesion Index with normative criteria that adequately reflect the context, while also using the statistical tools developed and maintaining part of the data-based approach proposed in SCI-LA. The methodology proposed also adapts the achievement thresholds, so that the index can be interpreted as a relative achievement in respect of the subregion, rather than against the achievements of the European countries.

While a set of ad hoc indicators have been proposed here to enrich the index on the basis of the availability of information and analysis of the situation in the subregion, as well as two alternatives for establishing their relationship with social cohesion, like any initial proposal, this will need further, more detailed, work. Conceptually, this can certainly benefit from discussion involving all stakeholders and from collaboration with the institutions responsible for the construction of information on these issues in the countries involved, in order to decide on which indicators should be included, the possibility that they might be redundant and what their place is in respect to the other dimensions of social cohesion.

As a final conclusion, it should be emphasized that efforts towards greater coherence of citizen-security policies and approaching them in an integrated manner (from the perspectives of social and economic inclusion and governance) that contributes to peaceful, inclusive, resilient and more-cohesive societies providing a basis for sustainable development requires a radical shift in the way in which we conceive public policies. For this, dialogue must be resumed to drive a new generation of institutional reforms for the “modernization” of public affairs, that responds to the challenges and demands of the public in a context of globalization and new social and environmental dynamics, and within the framework of the challenges of the 2030 Agenda.

COVID-19 has shone a light on a crisis of governance in the subregion and created an opportunity to strengthen the role of the State (regaining its legitimacy and transparency and the trust of the public) and its capacity to lead development centered on the 2030 Agenda. In this context, social cohesion with an emphasis on SDG 16+ becomes central for configuring a new social contract in the subregion in a framework of effective governance that enables, through consensus, an inclusive and sustainable economic recovery, the consolidation of social protection and health systems and of labor markets, and the establishment of a justice system with effective access for all, generating opportunities for peaceful coexistence and the resolution of social conflicts. In this regard, it should be stressed how the multidimensionality of social cohesion, in line with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, can generate a virtuous circle through multiplier effects and synergies between SDGs, which may help to shorten the way to overcoming the main problems facing the countries of the subregion, while laying the foundations for sustainable development. In order to move in this direction, it will be essential to develop and deepen a consensus around it, a matter that directly falls to the political agenda of the subregion and requires the inclusive participation of every sector of society and citizenship.⁵⁰

Thus, it remains as a final recommendation to consider the social-cohesion agenda as an essential component of the subregion’s public policies.

ANNEXES



Table A1.1 | SDGs relevant to social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+.

Relevance to social cohesion (dimension of social cohesion and sustainable development framework) ^{1/}	Relevance to citizen security and social cohesion ^{2/}	SDG 16+ targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
<p>SOCIAL INCLUSION</p> <p><i>Reducing inequalities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing inequality, and social inclusion – “leave no one behind” – link directly to the areas of reducing gaps and increasing a sense of belonging. (SDG 10) <p><i>Social mobility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations of social mobility and access to resources and consumption generate systemic trust and legitimacy of democracy and, therefore, link directly to various areas of social cohesion. (They may generate an expectations gap and social unrest). Inclusive, high-quality education. (SDGs 8 and 4) <p><i>Social protection (resilience)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic social security guarantees (a basic social floor) relating to the protection of rights and non-discrimination. Foster the resilience of populations (and persons) in situations of poverty and high vulnerability and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to extreme events. Resilience (SDGs 1 and 10) 	<p>CAPACITIES AND FREEDOMS</p> <p><i>Rights and guarantees</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Countries with the greatest inequality of opportunities (social and cultural, economic, political) are more likely to have higher levels of violence and social conflict. Affecting to a greater measure groups in situations of higher vulnerability and social risk. (SDG 10) Poverty is a risk factor associated with violent crimes and being a victim, both individually and nationally. (SDG 1) High levels of violence and insecurity exert pressure on State health (and mental health) services (SDG 3) and create direct and indirect costs to the economy and society as a whole. (SDG 8) Violence and insecurity have a negative impact on schooling and educational outcomes (differentially in girls and boys). (SDG 4)^{3/} A lack of high-quality education contributes to school drop-out and increases the risks of illegal activities and gang membership. (SDG 4)^{3/} 	<p>SDG 16+ 16+.b. Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies (cross-cutting). SDGs 1, 3 and 4. SDG 5 SDG 10 (10.3, 10.4)</p>

Relevance to social cohesion (dimension of social cohesion and sustainable development framework) ¹⁷	Relevance to citizen security and social cohesion ²¹	SDG 16+ targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p><i>Rule of law</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the effectiveness of human-security policies increases, so too is generated greater fairness in the administration of justice, while levels of corruption fall and trust in institutions and the legitimacy of the political system grows, improving democratic governance and strengthening social cohesion. <p><i>Inclusive, peaceful cities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is in cities and communities that inequality is exacerbated, generating other dynamics (socioeconomic, cultural, political, etc.) and interactions (institutions, market and family). Here too is where public policy can make an impact, reducing inequality and increasing social capital, thus strengthening social cohesion. (SDGs 11 and 16+) <p><i>Effective public policies</i></p> <p><i>The coherence of public policies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public policy (including statistical capacities) that respond to the various expressions of social cohesion and help to accelerate progress of the SDGs by exploiting synergies between them. (SDG 17) <p><i>Environmental governance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality environmental governance and its application using an integrated approach will contribute to democratic governance and social cohesion. (SDG 13) 	<p>DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE</p> <p><i>Rule of law, citizenship and support for democracy, access to justice for all citizens, and robust institutions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a link between the prevalence of the rule of law and levels of violence and insecurity. A fair and effective justice system can prevent violence (and its recurrence) and generate greater trust in public institutions and greater social cohesion. (SDG 16+) While migration can contribute to the economic development of a country, when migration is irregular it can contribute to increased levels of violence and organized crime (such as people trafficking, sexual exploitation and VAWG), with a greater effect on women and pregnant women, children, LGBTI people, and people with disabilities, among other groups. (SDG 10.7) Cities can generate conditions conducive to reducing violence, but they can also contribute to its increase. Many countries of the subregion are characterized by unequal, segmented urban spread with very precarious urban settlements that have led to increased crime, violence and insecurity (in communities and schools), extortion, drug trafficking and the expansion of gangs and organized crime groups so much as to control these settlements. (SDG 11) Most of the precarious settlements are highly vulnerable to and at risk of natural disasters and the effects of climate change. The lack of high-quality environmental governance contributes to environmental conflicts. (SDG 13) 	<p>SDG 16+</p> <p>16+.3. Promote the rule of law and access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.4. Combat organized crime.</p> <p>16.5. Reduce corruption.</p> <p>16.6. Effective and transparent institutions.</p> <p>16.7. Responsive, inclusive and participatory decision making.</p> <p>16.9. Legal identity for all.</p> <p>16.10. Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms.</p> <p>16.a. Strengthen national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.</p> <p>SDGs 11, 13 and 17</p>

Relevance to social cohesion (dimension of social cohesion and sustainable development framework) ^{1/}	Relevance to citizen security and social cohesion ^{2/}	SDG 16+ targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
<p>BELONGING</p> <p><i>Social capital</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social capital (confidence in institutions, social networks, social norms) and its link with the sense of belonging, indispensable as an articulator of sustainable development and greater levels of social cohesion. (SDG 16+) 	<p>SOCIAL FABRIC AND CIVIC CULTURE <i>(belonging and opportunities for cooperation)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence and insecurity erode the social fabric of communities and societies as a whole. • Rapid, poorly-managed urbanization, high levels of inequality and lack of access to basic services; the presence of organized crime and gangs are factors that increase the risk of violence. Violence directly and disproportionately affects young people. • Macho norms and attitudes contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based violence,ⁱⁱ and these have been worsened by coronavirus and the violence linked to organized crime, maras and gangs. In addition, the precarious nature of neighborhoods and environments, and the lack of safe public spaces in communities contribute to citizen insecurity. (SDG 11) • The promotion of resilient environments. Thus, for example, in the creation of spaces for the participation of the educational community in which intergenerational dialogue takes place is key to promoting the creation of resilient contexts that support young people.^{2/} 	<p>SDG 16+. 16.1. Reduce all forms of violence. SDG 11 SDG 13</p>
<p>GENDER EQUALITY (CROSS-CUTTING)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (close gender gaps) helps to create the foundations for achieving greater social equity and contributes to social cohesion: policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women; the full participation of women; the elimination of all forms of VAWG in the public and private spheres; addressing the gender-related vulnerabilities of specific groups of women: indigenous, Afro descendant, LGBTI, women in forced displacement, and people with disabilities. 	<p><i>Gender equality (cross-cutting)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAWG and femicide are the main barriers to achieving gender equality, the main accelerator of the 2030 Agenda.^{3/} • Equal opportunities and women's empowerment contributes to reducing violence (e.g., domestic violence) and, therefore, to achieving SDG 5. 	<p>SDG 16+ 16.1. Reduce all forms of violence. 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. SDG 5</p>

Notes: 1/ Young people without access to high-quality education have reduced economic opportunities and are, therefore, more likely to engage in offending and violent behaviors, including being attracted to structures of organized crime and gangs.⁵¹ 2/ See in UNDP-Infosegura Project (2020), Diagram 1 (p. 122) of the promotion of resilient environments: protection and risk factors according to setting – individuals, family, school and community. 3/Krug EG et al. (2002).

Source: Based on: 1/ UNDP and AECID (2021a) and 2/ UNODC (2019). This latter paper analyses the relationship between homicide and various fields of development, from the perspective of the SDGs, and explores how violence (homicide rates) affects levels of development and vice versa.

Table A2.1 | Selected country indices and indicators: HDI, SCI-LA, indicators of economic growth, homicides and physical empowerment of women.

	Human Development Index ^{1/}			Real growth at market prices ^{2/}		Social Cohesion Index for Latin America SCI-LA ^{3/} : Overall and by dimension				Homicide rate (per 100,000 inhabitants) ^{4/}	Gender equality: Physical empowerment of women and girls ^{5/}	
	Overall HDI	HDI men	HDI women	2020 e	2021p	SCI-LA	Social inclusion	Governance	Belonging		Femicide rate (per 100,000 inhabitants) (2019) ^{6/}	Teenage pregnancy ^{7/}
Belize	0,716	0,723	0,706	-14,1	1,9	--	--	--	--	24,3	-- ^{8/}	11,7 (2010)
Costa Rica	0,810	0,818	0,802	-4,1	2,7	55,0	49,1	81,3	61,8	11,2	0,6	11,1 (2011)
El Salvador	0,673	0,679	0,662	-7,9	4,1	14,9	26,2	29,0	39,4	19,5	3,3	15,4 (2007)
Guatemala	0,663	0,679	0,639	-1,5	3,6	14,6	8,3	32,1	44,5	15,3	1,8	13,1 (2018)
Honduras	0,634	0,639	0,625	-9,0	4,5	13,3	4,9	31,1	44,5	37,6	6,2	17,2 (2013)
Panama	0,815	0,811	0,826	-17,9	9,9	34,0	34,4	59,6	48,0	11,6	1,0	15,4 (2010)
Dominican Republic	0,756	0,760	0,759	-6,7	5,5	14,2	33,0	17,3	42,0	9,2	2,7	20,5 (2013)
LAC (average)	0,766	0,772	0,755	-6,5	5,2	28,1	32,5	45,6	47,6	19,9	--	--

Source: 1/ Human Development Report 2020 (HDI 2019), retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>; 2/ World Bank (2021); 3/ UNDP and AECID (2021b); 4/ Infosegura, based on information from primary sources in each country, see: <https://infosegura.org>; 5/ Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, physical empowerment is expressed in two dimensions: respect for women's reproductive rights and gender-based violence; see: <https://oig.cepal.org/es/autonomias/autonomia-fisica>; 6/ Femicide rate, data taken: Guatemala: Judicial Agency (Organismo Judicial) and Public Prosecutions Office (Ministerio Público); Panama: Public Prosecutions Office (Ministerio Público) and Procurator-General of the Nation (Procuraduría General de la Nación); Costa Rica: Judicial Authority (Poder Judicial), Observatory of Gender-based Violence against Women and Access to Justice (Observatorio de Violencia de Género contra las Mujeres y Acceso a la Justicia); Honduras: University Institute of Democracy, Peace and Security (IUDPAS, Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad), Autonomous National University of Honduras (UNAH, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras). Observatory of Violent Deaths of Women and Femicide (Observatorio de Muertes Violentas de Mujeres y Femicidios); El Salvador: General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic (Fiscalía General de la República); 7/ Teenage pregnancy: i) For El Salvador, see recent study of teenage pregnancy for the period 2015-2017, which emphasizes the reducing number of pregnancies in girls and adolescents, but that the ratio of pregnancies in this specific age group of 10 to 19 years remains at 1 for every 3 pregnancies for all age groups. https://elsalvador.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Mapa%20EmbarazosSV_%202017.pdf ii) Dominican Republic: teenage pregnancy data from Endesa 2013; 8/Belize: according to Belize Crime Observatory, in 2019, women accounted for 13% of all homicides (17 women), <https://bco.gov.bz>

Annex 3 Average SDG Performance and Social Cohesion Index

This annex presents, for each country, the overall SDG performance and average SDG performance, and the Social Cohesion Index for Latin America and average performance by indicator.

Belize

SDG and social cohesion

OVERALL PERFORMANCE^{1/}

Belize Index score:

64.4

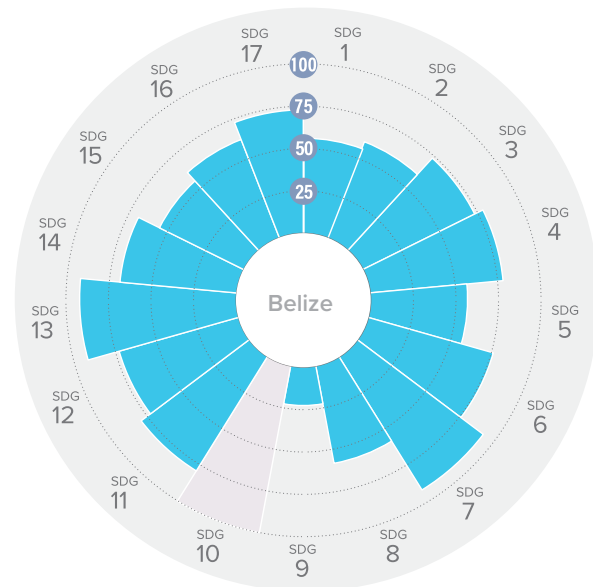
Regional average score:

68.6

SDG global rank:

104 (of 166)

Average performance by SDG

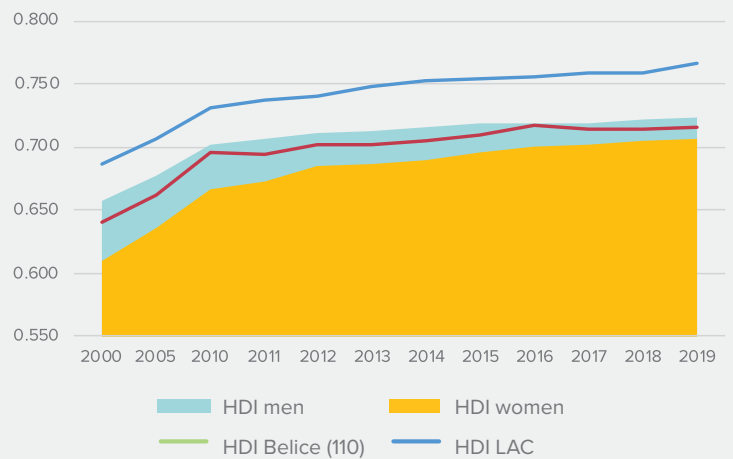


SDG 16+: Performance by indicator

Homicides (per 100,000 population)	37.8	2017	● ↓
Unsented detainees (% of prison population)	56.9	2018	● ↓
Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	50	2014	● ●
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	NA	NA	● ●
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	95.7	2019	● ●
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	NA	NA	● ●
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	2.2	2013	● ●
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0	2019	● ●
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	275	2020	● ↑

↓ Decreasing
 ↗ Moderately improving
 ● Information unavailable
→ Stagnating
 ↑ On track or maintaining SDG achievement

Global Human Development Index evolution, women and men^{3/}



Source: 1/ Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade for Action for Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See: <https://dashboards.sdindex.org>, 2/ Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2020, Informes de Desarrollo Humano, Centro de Datos. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

Costa Rica

SDG and social cohesion

OVERALL PERFORMANCE^{1/}

Regional average score: **68.6**

Costa Rica index score:

73.6

SDG global rank:

50 (de 166)

SOCIAL COHESION INDEX VALUE

Average social cohesion index in LAC: **28.1**

Social cohesion index in Costa Rica:

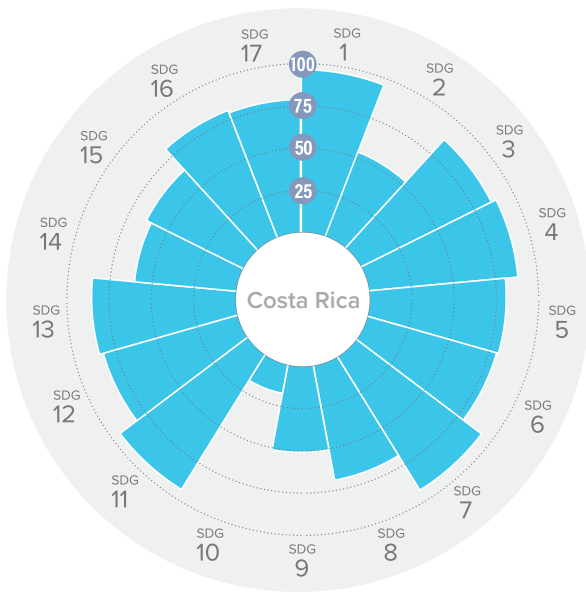
55.0

Social inclusion **49.1**

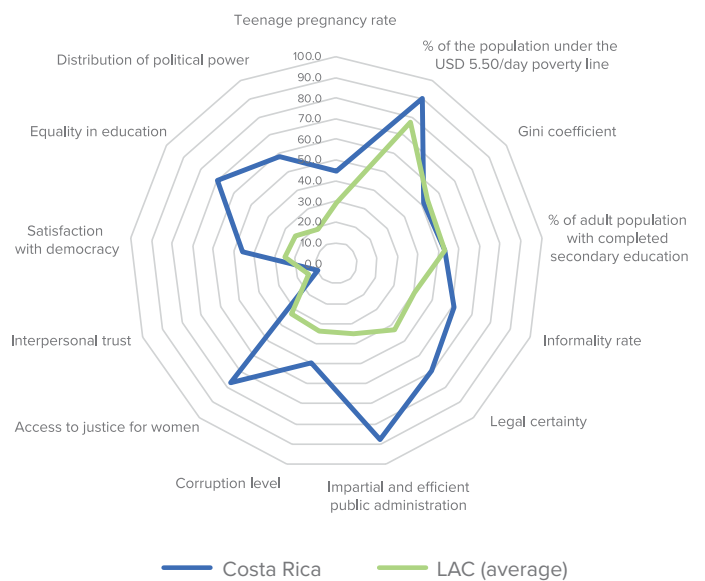
Governance **81.3**

Sense of belonging **61.8**

Average performance by SDG^{1/}



Social cohesion index: Average performance by indicator and compared to the subregion^{2/}

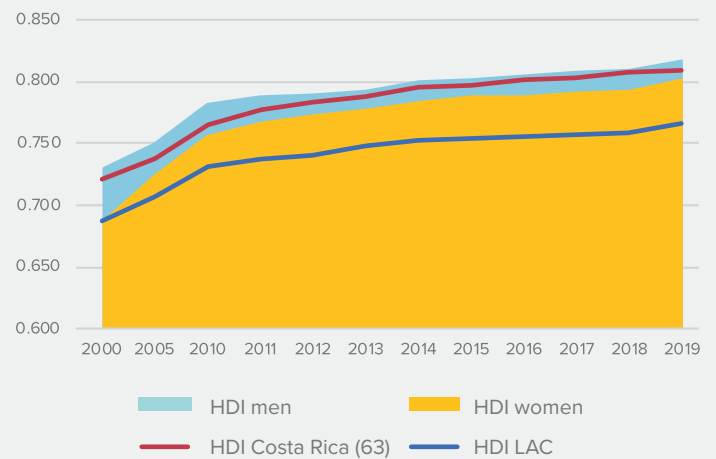


SDG 16+: Performance by indicator

Homicides (per 100,000 population)	11.3 2018	● →
Unsented detainees (% of prison population)	20.6 2018	● ↑
Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	48 2019	● →
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	5.1 2020	● ↑
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	99.6 2019	● ●
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	57 2020	● ↑
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	3.4 2018	● ●
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0 2019	● ●
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	10.5 2020	● ↑

↓ Decreasing ↗ Moderately improving ● Information unavailable
→ Stagnating ↑ On track or maintaining SDG achievement

Global Human Development Index evolution, women and men^{3/}



Source: 1/ Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade for Action for Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org>, 2/ Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2020, Informes de Desarrollo Humano, Centro de Datos. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

Guatemala

SDG and social cohesion

OVERALL PERFORMANCE^{1/}

Regional average score: **68.6**

Guatemala index score: **59.9**

SDG global rank: **121** (de 166)

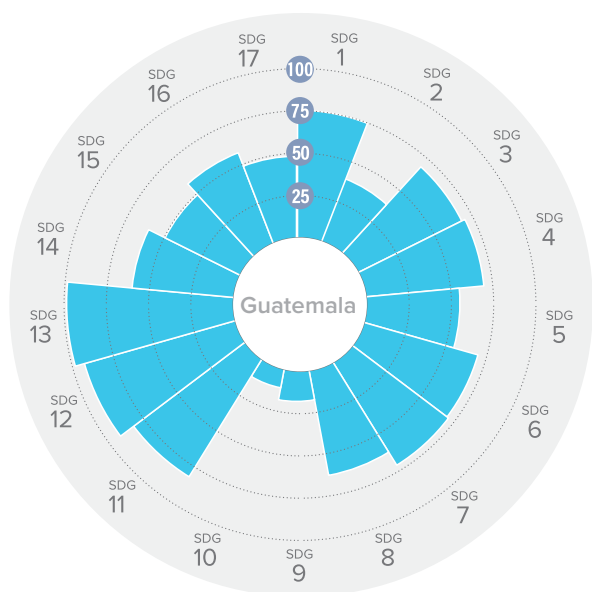
SOCIAL COHESION INDEX VALUE

Average social cohesion index in LAC: **28.1**

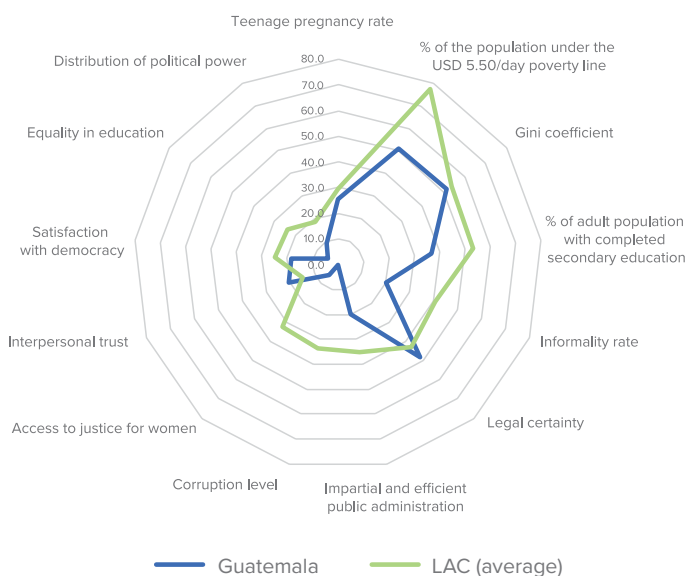
Social cohesion index in Guatemala:

14.6
Social inclusion **8.3**
Governance **32.1**
Sense of belonging **44.5**

Average performance by SDG^{1/}



Social cohesion index: Average performance by indicator and compared to the subregion^{2/}

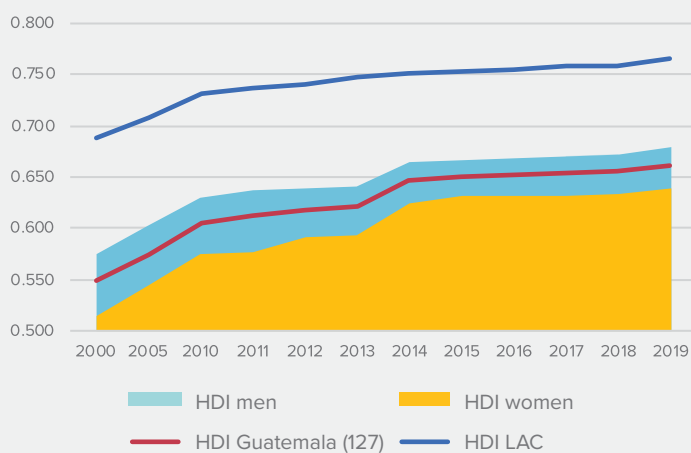


SDG 16+: Performance by indicator

Homicides (per 100,000 population)	22.5 2018	● ↑
Unsentenced detainees (% of prison population)	51.8 2018	● ↓
Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	56 2019	● ↗
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	4.2 2020	● ↑
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	96.4 2019	● ●
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	25 2020	● ↓
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	8.1 2013	● ●
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0 2019	● ●
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	35.7 2020	● ↗

↓ Decreasing
 ↗ Moderately improving
 ● Information unavailable
→ Stagnating
 ↑ On track or maintaining SDG achievement

Global Human Development Index evolution, women and men^{3/}



Source: 1/ Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade for Action for Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org>, 2/ Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2020, Informes de Desarrollo Humano, Centro de Datos. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

El Salvador

SDG and social cohesion

OVERALL PERFORMANCE^{1/}

Regional average score:
68.6

El Salvador index score:

67.9

SDG global rank:
89 (de 166)

SOCIAL COHESION INDEX VALUE

Average social cohesion index in LAC:
28.1

Social cohesion index in El Salvador:

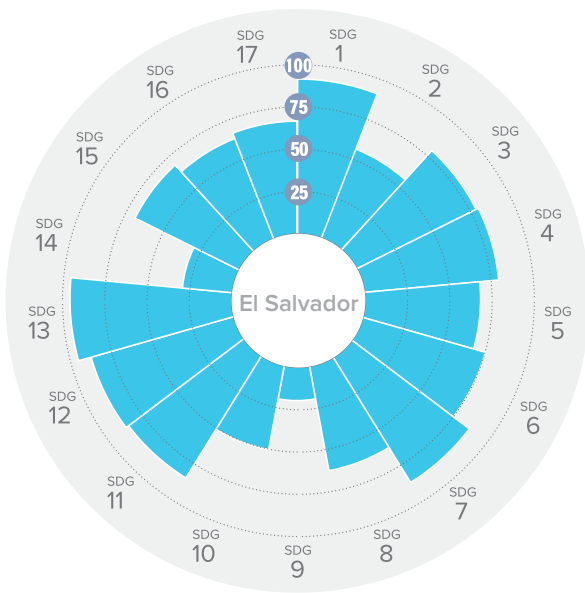
14.9

Social inclusion **26.2**

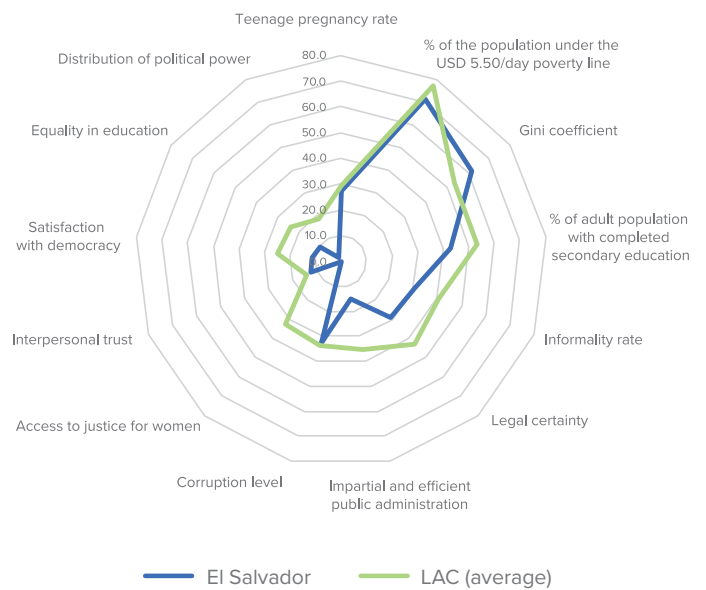
Governance **29.0**

Sense of belonging **39.4**

Average performance by SDG^{1/}



Social cohesion index: Average performance by indicator and compared to the subregion^{2/}

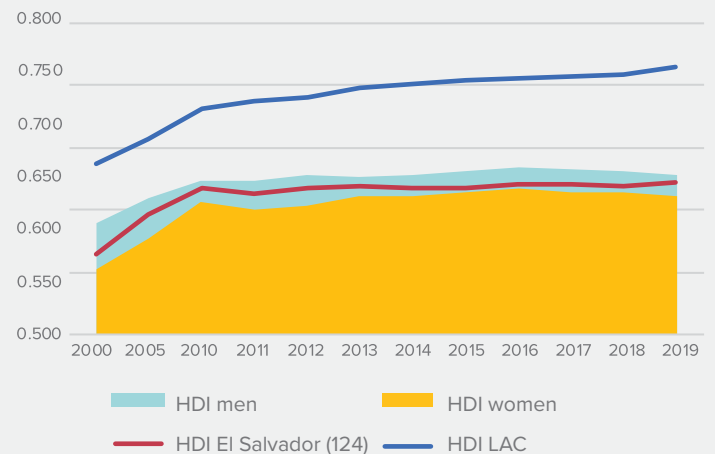


SDG 16+: Performance by indicator

Homicides (per 100,000 population)	52.0 2018	● ↑
Unsented detainees (% of prison population)	30.4 2018	● ↓
Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	62 2019	● ↑
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	3.7 2020	● ↗
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	98.5 2019	● ●
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	36 2020	● ↓
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	3.5 2019	● ●
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0 2019	● ●
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	29.7 2020	● ↑

↓ Decreasing
 ↗ Moderately improving
 ● Information unavailable
→ Stagnating
 ↑ On track or maintaining SDG achievement

Global Human Development Index evolution, women and men^{3/}



Source: 1/ Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade for Action for Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org>, 2/ Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2020, Informes de Desarrollo Humano, Centro de Datos. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

Honduras

SDG and social cohesion

OVERALL PERFORMANCE^{1/}

Regional average score: **68.6**

Honduras index score: **62.8**

SDG global rank: **112** (de 166)

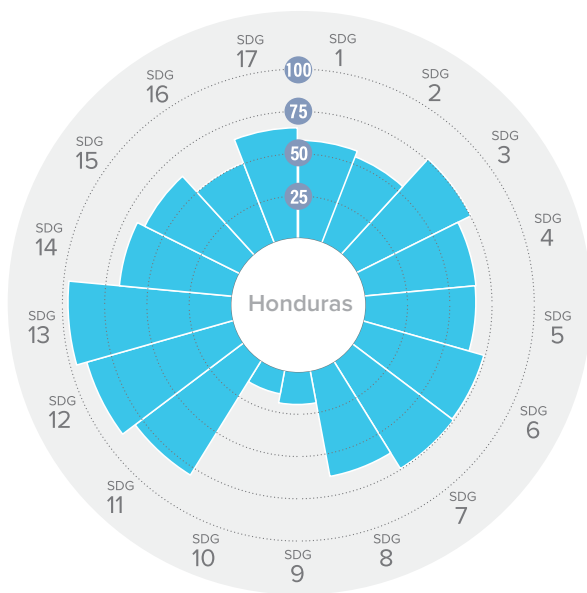
SOCIAL COHESION INDEX VALUE

Average social cohesion index in LAC: **28.1**

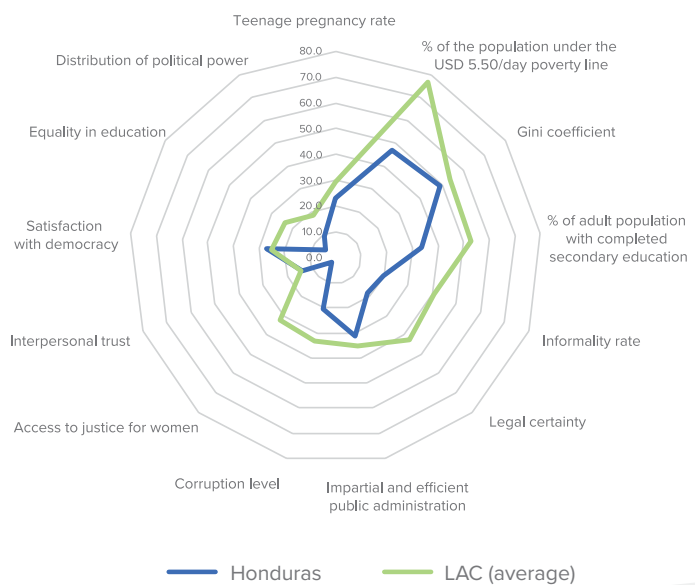
Social cohesion index in Honduras:

14.6
Social inclusion **8.3**
Governance **32.1**
Sense of belonging **44.5**

Average performance by SDG^{1/}



Social cohesion index: Average performance by indicator and compared to the subregion^{2/}

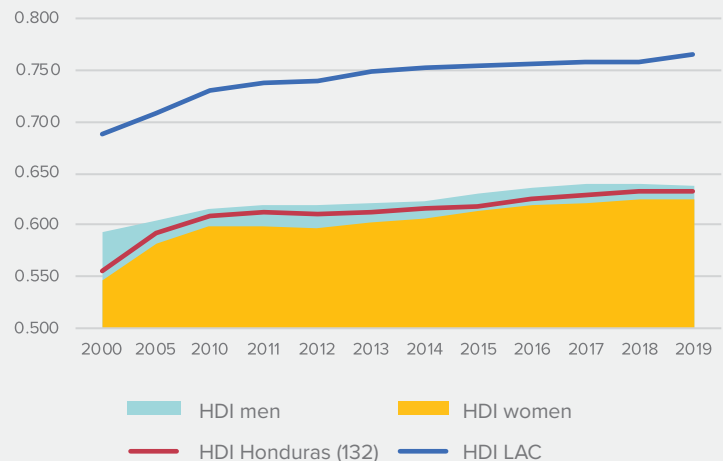


SDG 16+: Performance by indicator

Homicides (per 100,000 population)	38.9	2018	● ↑
Unsented detainees (% of prison population)	55.4	2018	● ↓
Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	59	2019	● ↑
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	3.3	2020	● ↓
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	93.6	2019	● ●
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	24	2020	● ↓
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	8.0	2014	● ●
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0	2019	● ●
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	48.5	2020	● ↓

↓ Decreasing ↗ Moderately improving ● Information unavailable
→ Stagnating ↑ On track or maintaining SDG achievement

Global Human Development Index evolution, women and men^{3/}



Source: 1/ Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade for Action for Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org>, 2/ Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2020, Informes de Desarrollo Humano, Centro de Datos. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

Panama

SDG and social cohesion

OVERALL PERFORMANCE^{1/}

Regional average score: **68.6**

Panama index score:

68.0

SDG global rank:

88 (de 166)

SOCIAL COHESION INDEX VALUE

Average social cohesion index in LAC: **28.1**

Social cohesion index in Panama:

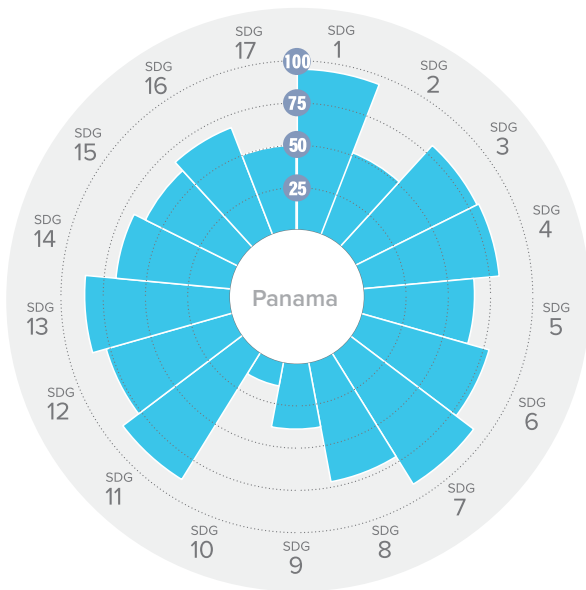
30.4

Social inclusion **34.4**

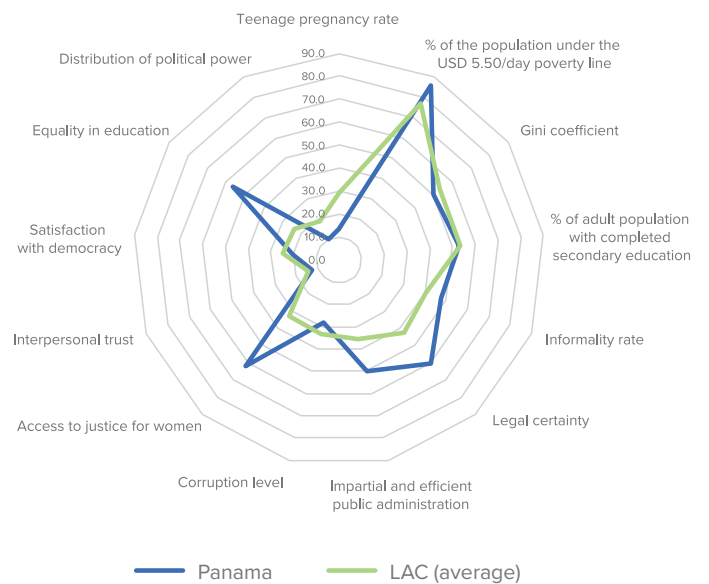
Governance **59.6**

Sense of belonging **48.0**

Average performance by SDG^{1/}



Social cohesion index: Average performance by indicator and compared to the subregion^{2/}

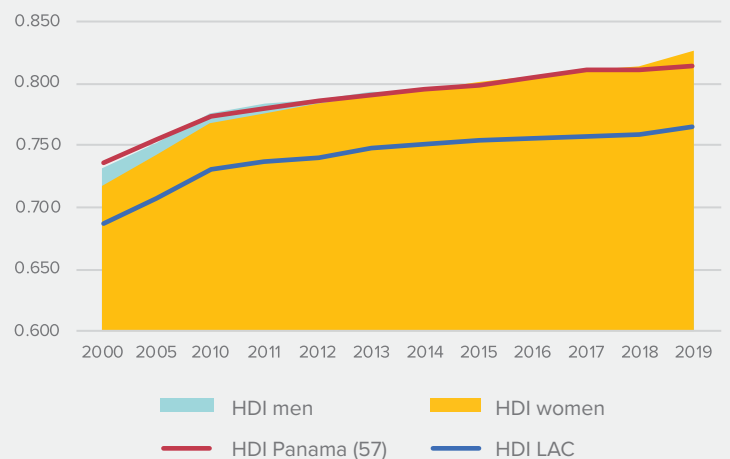


SDG 16+: Performance by indicator

Homicides (per 100,000 population)	9.4	2018	● ↑
Unsentenced detainees (% of prison population)	52.8	2018	● ↑
Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	50	2020	● →
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	4.7	2020	● ↑
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	95.6	2019	● ●
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	35	2020	● ↓
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	2.2	2016	● ●
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0	2019	● ●
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	29.8	2020	● ↑

↓ Decreasing
 ↗ Moderately improving
 ● Information unavailable
→ Stagnating
 ↑ On track or maintaining SDG achievement

Global Human Development Index evolution, women and men^{3/}



■ HDI men
 ■ HDI women
— HDI Panama (57)
 — HDI LAC

Source: 1/ Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade for Action for Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See: <https://dashboards.sdindex.org>, 2/ Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2020, Informes de Desarrollo Humano, Centro de Datos. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

Dominican Republic

SDG and social cohesion

OVERALL PERFORMANCE^{1/}

Regional average score: **68.6**

Dominican Republic index score:

70.8

SDG global rank:

67 (de 166)

SOCIAL COHESION INDEX VALUE

Average social cohesion index in LAC:

28.1

Social cohesion index in Dominican Republic:

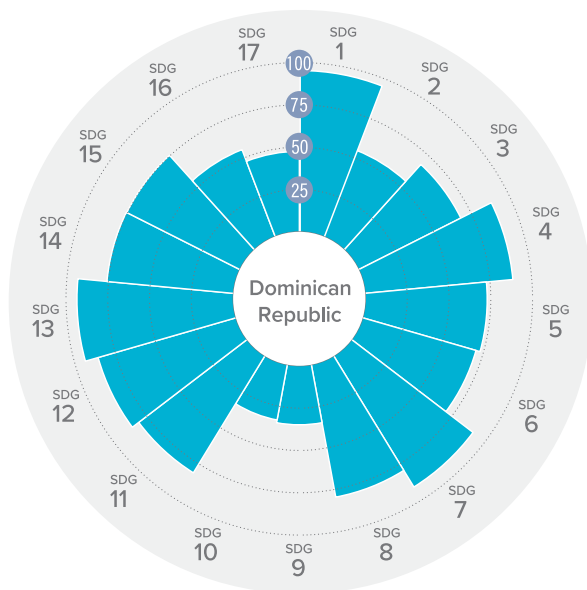
14.2

Social inclusion **33.0**

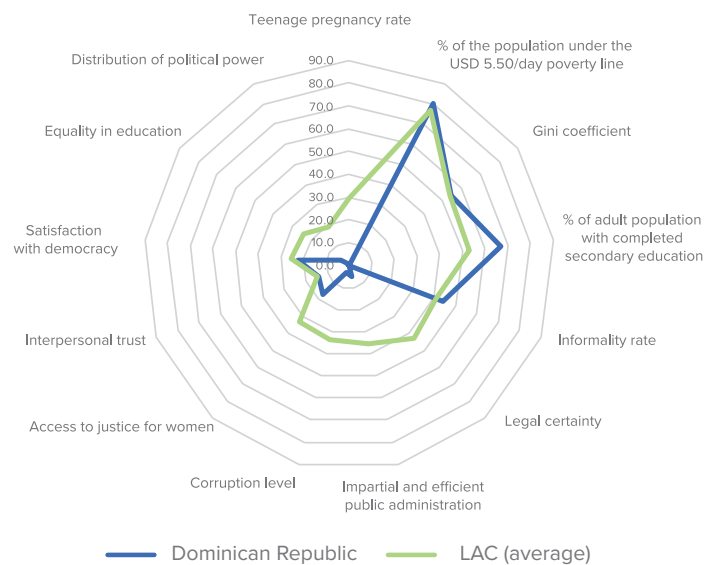
Governance **17.3**

Sense of belonging **42.0**

Average performance by SDG^{1/}



Social cohesion index: Average performance by indicator and compared to the subregion^{2/}

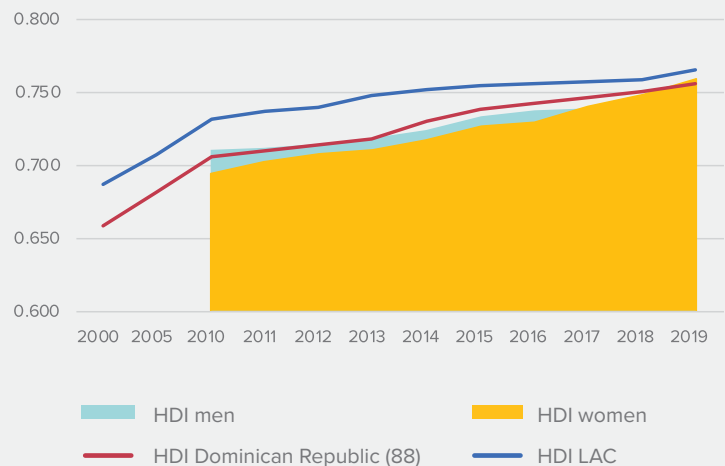


SDG 16+ Performance by indicator

Homicides (per 100,000 population)	10.1 2018	● ↑
Unsented detainees (% of prison population)	60.3 2018	● ↓
Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	45 2020	● ↗
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	4.2 2020	● ↑
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	88.0 2019	● ●
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	28 2020	● ↓
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	5.6 2014	● ●
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0 2019	● ●
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	27.9 2020	● ↑

↓ Decreasing
 ↗ Moderately improving
 ● Information unavailable
→ Stagnating
 ↑ On track or maintaining SDG achievement

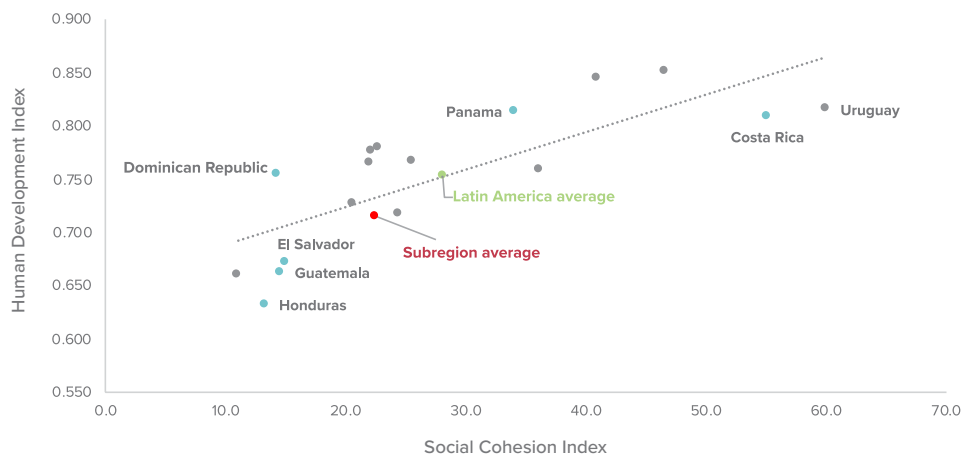
Global Human Development Index evolution, women and men^{3/}



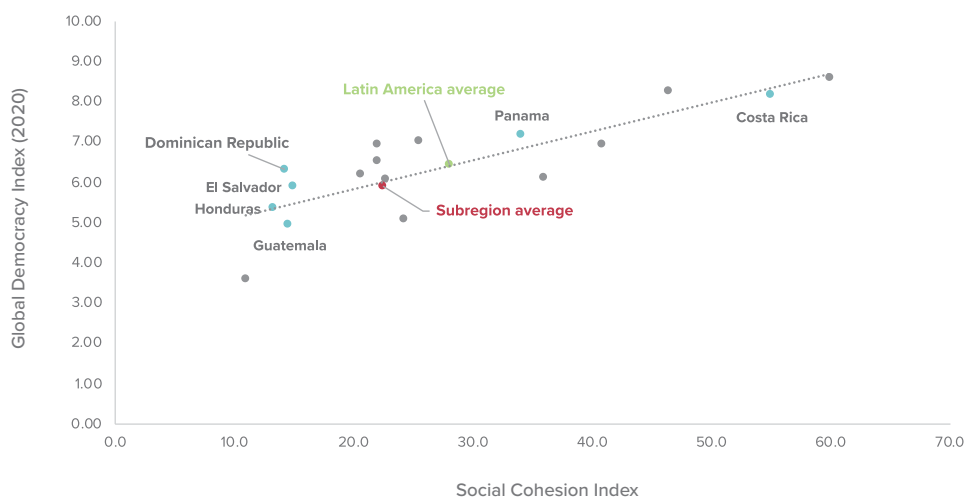
Source: 1/ Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade for Action for Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org>, 2/ Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2020, Informes de Desarrollo Humano, Centro de Datos. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

Social cohesion, human development, democracy and violence (correlation charts)

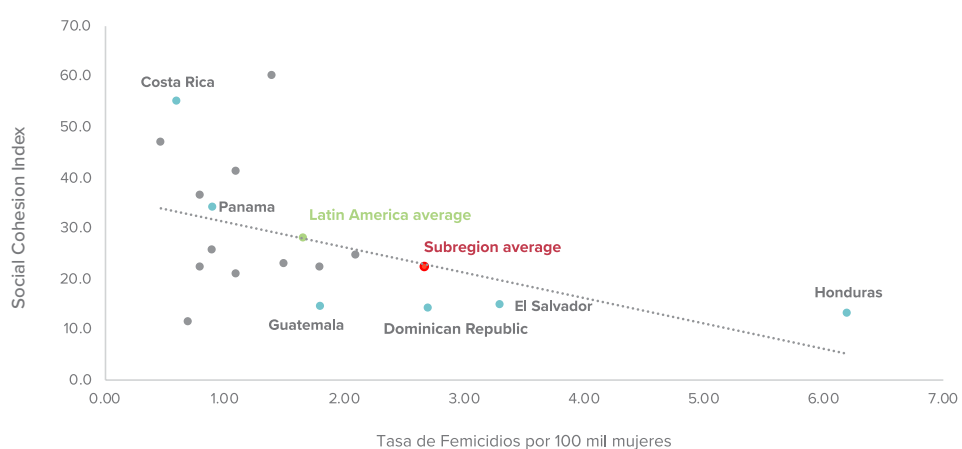
Correlation between the Social Cohesion Index (factorial) and the Human Development Index.



Correlation between the Social Cohesion Index (factorial) and the Global Democracy Index (2020).



Correlation between the femicide rate (per 100,000 women) and the Social Cohesion Index (factorial).



Note: The correlation includes the countries of the sample for Latin America used in the aggregate measurement of social cohesion, except Belize, which is not included, due to information not being available.

Sources: Sources: Global Democracy Index 2020 (The Economist Intelligence Unit): <https://www.eiu.com>; HDI 2019 taken from the Human Development Report 2020: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>; ICS-AL circa 2015 taken from UNDP and AECID (2021b) and Femicide rate (per 100 women) last year available taken from Gender Equality Observatory ECLAC-GEO: <https://oig.cepal.org/es/indicadores/feminicidio>

At the regional (trans-regional and subregional) level, the following spaces for political dialogue and consensus building at the highest level (Heads of State or Government) have been identified:

- ✓ **The Summit of the Americas (1994) with 32 States from the LAC Region and the United States and Canada, and the OAS (General Secretariat) as the main political forum:**^{1/xlv} democracy, human rights, security and development, political dialogue, inclusion and cooperation. For security issues, the OAS has the Committee on Hemispheric Security.^{2/xlvi}
- ✓ **The Ibero-American Summit (1991), with 19 States from the LAC region and 3 from Europe (Spain, Portugal and Andorra), SEGIB:** education, social cohesion and culture, and cooperation.
- ✓ **European Union-Latin America Summits (1999) with 33 LAC Member States and Member States of the EU, and the EU itself:** regional integration, inclusion – education and employment – and social cohesion, migration, sustainable development and cooperation.
- ✓ **Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), with 33 LAC Member States:** food security, education, culture, youth, gender equality, urban development, citizen security, fight against corruption, promotion of ICT, climate change, risk management, and cooperation.
- ✓ **Meeting of Presidents, as the supreme organ of SICA, with 8 countries including those of Central America and Dominican Republic, and the General Secretariat of SICA,** with 10 secretariats covering: social and economic integration, education, health, gender equality, environment and development, among others; also has specialized institutions such as the Central American Security Commission, migration authorities, among others.
- ✓ Other strategic areas mainly driven by ECLAC, such as the Forum of the LAC Countries on Sustainable Development (within the framework of the 2030 Agenda) and the regional conferences on specific development issues (e.g., population and development, social development, social protection, gender issues, and development planning, among others).
- ✓ Among the regional networks that facilitate dialogue on policies related to social cohesion and citizen security, mention must be made of the following: on justice, the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Ibero-American Countries (COMJIB); on regional development, the Latin America and the Caribbean Territorial Development Network; and other civil-society networks on ombudsmen, transparency and access to information, and tax authorities, etc.

xlv In principle, political agreements and commitments arising from the Summits of the Americas (which may take legally-binding forms) guide the work of international organizations of the OAS and of other associated institutions, such as IICA, PAHO, IDB, ECLAC and the World Bank.

xlvi The Committee on Hemispheric Security is primarily responsible for formulating and implementing the strategies and policies of the OAS relating to the security of the region. Through its Secretariat for Multidimensional Security, the OAS has made progress on strengthening cooperation on various security fronts and on developing regional policies and strategies to address a range of threats. See: <https://www.oas.org/es/council/csh/>

Other strategic partners such as multilateral bodies have played a key role in promoting policies related to social and economic inclusion (social protection, labor market, etc.) and citizen security (neighborhood and public infrastructure improvements, violence-prevention projects, etc.) and strengthening national capacities for planning and project management. These agencies have also been the drivers for other spaces for dialogue to promote the effectiveness of public policies on citizen security, such as the Citizen Security Network (2010) promoted by the IDB,^{xlvii} among others.

The United Nations System is another of the strategic partners for the region. Through the expertise of each agency, it contributes to the cooperation framework for the development and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. UNDP in the region focuses on the areas of inclusion, the acceleration of structural transformation and the building resilience to crises and conflicts.^{xlviii} In particular, it supports initiatives such as Infosegura, aimed at improving the quality of information on citizen security (joint UNDP and USAID initiative); the Spotlight Initiative, aimed at eliminating femicide in the region (joint European Union and United Nations program with UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA), among other initiatives related to citizen security aimed at modernizing justice sectors and strengthening legal frameworks for the prevention, management and resolution of social conflicts.

Finally, the bilateral cooperation of the United States and the countries of the European Union, among others, should be noted. This is particularly targeted at supporting initiatives in SICA and the northern area, such as the “Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle”^{xlix} promoted by the USA and aimed at El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

xlvii The IDB’s Citizen Security Network seeks to promote dialogue among key policymakers from the different governments of Latin America and the Caribbean, with the goal of finding common answers to the challenge of preventing violence and promoting peaceful coexistence in the Region. See: <https://www.iadb.org/es/investigacion-y-datos/dialogo-regional-de-politica/seguridad-ciudadana>

xlviii UNDP provides support in the following specific areas: poverty, governance, resilience, environment, energy, gender equality and women’s empowerment. See UNDP frameworks for work in the countries of the region at: <https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/about-us/country-programmes.html>

xlix For more detail on the IDB website about the Alliance for Prosperity initiative, see: <https://www.iadb.org/es/alianza-para-la-prosperidad/ejes-estrategicos-y-lineas-de-accion>

Belize	Costa Rica	El Salvador	Guatemala
<p>1.The Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) 2016-2019 builds on previous documents including especially Horizon 2030: National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030.</p> <p>2.National Security and Defence Strategy 2017-2020</p> <p>3.Belize Crime Observatory (BCO) -3-year Strategic Action Plan (2020 – 2023)</p>	<p>1. National Public Investment Plan (PNDIP) 2019-2022</p> <p>2. National Pact for the Advancement of the SDGs within the framework of the 2030 Agenda</p> <p>3. Partnerships for Peace National Agenda for the Prevention of Violence and Promotion of Social Peace 2019-2022</p> <p>4. National Policy for the Care of and Prevention of Violence against Women of all Ages (PLANNOVI) 2017-2031</p>	<p>1. Government Plan 2019-2024/ (Cuscatlán Plan)</p> <p>2. Territorial Control Plan (2019)</p> <p>3. National Policy for the Access of Women to a Life Free of Violence 2011 (PNVLV) and its Action Plan 2016-2021.</p>	<p>1. National Development Plan: K'atun Nuestra Guatemala 2032, which has synergies with the 2030 Agenda</p> <p>2. General Government Policy 2020-2024, based on the National Innovation and Development Plan (PLANID) and with an axis of Governance and Security in Development: it seeks to improve the governance of the country for peaceful and harmonious coexistence that allows for appropriate conditions for investment</p> <p>3. National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence and Crime (2017-2027) and the Logical Model for the Prevention of Violence</p> <p>4. National Policy for the Prevention of Violence and Crime, Citizen Security and Peaceful Coexistence 2014-2034.</p> <p>5. National Security Policy 2017</p> <p>6. Gender Equality Policy and Comprehensive Attention Model for Women Victims of Violence l'x Kem (MAIMI) (Public Prosecutions Office)</p>
Honduras	Panama	Dominican Republic	
<p>1. Country Vision and National Plan (long term) has an axis of development in democracy with security and without violence</p> <p>2. Strategic Government Plan (PEG) 2018-2022 has a strategic objective of a more peaceful and inclusive society</p> <p>3. National Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (AN-ODS) (2019) aligned with Country Vision and PEG 2018-2022; addresses SDG 16</p> <p>4. Comprehensive Policy for Coexistence and Citizen Security for Honduras 2011-2022</p> <p>5. National Policy for the Prevention of Violence and Children and Young People, 2012, has other inter-institutional efforts to address other types of violence, including the Inter-Institutional Commission Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking (CICESCT)</p> <p>6. National Plan to counter Violence Against Women 2014-2022</p>	<p>1. National Strategic Plan with Vision of the State, "Panama 2030" (PEN) for achievement of the SDGs and Long-Term Vision 20/50</p> <p>2. Strategic Government Plan 2019-2024 of Panama, which has a pillar of the Rule of Law, of Law and Order</p> <p>3. National Citizen Security Strategy (ENSC) 2017-2030</p> <p>4. Comprehensive Public Policy "Security for All": prevention (community, police), repression and re-socialization</p> <p>5. Policy on gender equality, women's empowerment and prevention of gender-based violence</p>	<p>1. National Development Strategy (END) 2010-2030, which has an axis of the Social and Democratic State of Law. An axis that includes efficient and transparent public administration, rule of law and citizen security, participatory democracy, national security and peaceful coexistence</p> <p>2. Government Plan 2020-2024, which includes a citizen security component</p> <p>3. SDG Commission of the Dominican Republic (2016), which has an SDG platform and promotes the rooting of the SDGs at national and subnational level Citizen Security Plan (2021)</p> <p>4. Citizen Security Plan (2021)</p> <p>5. Policy on gender equality, women's empowerment and prevention of gender-based violence</p>	

Source: Prepared using information from each country.

Table A6.1 | Proposed theory of change (ToC) for the subregion.

Development impact	Decent levels of social well-being for all, “leaving no one behind”, within a framework of sustainable and inclusive development.	
Impact of theory of change	All persons, including women, children and young people and other groups at increased vulnerability to violence (in all its forms) exercise their rights on an equal footing, in a safe environment free from violence and with effective management of social conflict.	
Long-term outcomes/effects for impact in ToC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen security and coexistence prevail within a framework of democratic governance. (SDG 16) • Gender equality and empowerment of women prevail in all areas of development. (SDG 5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher levels of democratic social cohesion (equality of outcomes under SDG 10).
Results for impact in ToC	<p>Social inclusion: access to social protection and labor market on an equal basis.</p> <p>Safe, inclusive and sustainable cities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the environment and resilience through empowering local stakeholders and the public (improving neighborhoods and safe public spaces, social and basic services, safe transport). • Management of social conflict through dialogue and empowerment of civil society. • Culture of citizenship and coexistence: changes to social, cultural and institutional norms so that they do not tolerate violence and corruption. <p>Gender equality and women’s empowerment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social, economic and political inclusion. • Elimination of all forms of gender-based violence. 	<p><i>Access to effective justice for all:</i> Strengthening law enforcement agencies: effective, gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory response based on an integrated approach to violence (in all its forms): prevention, response, protection, access to justice and reparation and rehabilitation.</p> <p><i>Prevention of violence (in all forms):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated approach for the prevention of violence aimed at population groups at greater risk of social and gender-based violence. • Civic culture: changes to social, cultural and institutional norms that reproduce violence (and gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination).
Products with ToC effects (definition of specific products depending on regional, national or community context)	All citizens, especially groups with greater vulnerability to violence in all its forms, are fully aware of their fundamental human rights and right to a life free of violence, and have the mechanisms and resources needed to demand such rights and the knowledge and means extended in their communities.	

ToC product strategy

Contributes to change through interventions targeted at risk factors for violence (in all its forms and gender-based violence) depending on the prevalence of violence in all its forms at the regional/country/community levels, and of social conflicts, namely:

- Overcoming structural and gender inequalities in all areas of human development.
- An integrated approach to violence that ensures the exercising of the right to a life free of violence.
- Violence prevention focused on those interventions that affect changes to cultural norms that reproduce violence and promote civic culture.
- An integrated approach to the effective management of social conflict: prevention, management and resolution.
- Strengthening institutions for effective access to justice for all, focused on the institutions of the justice and security system.
- The empowerment of local actors and citizens, especially those groups facing social exclusion, and marginalization and multiple forms of discrimination (women, children, young people, LGBTIQ).
- The generation of knowledge, statistical capacity – disaggregated, high-quality data – and the use of innovation and development of tools to manage information related to citizen security and social cohesion.

All the above within a strengthened normative and institutional framework with the capacity to drive forward consistent, gender-sensitive, non-discriminatory and evidence-based policies aligned with the SDGs - SDGs 16, 5 and 10.

Proposal for Integrated Policies for social cohesion and citizen security with a focus on SDG 16+, for the subregion of Central America and the Dominican Republic

Table A7.1 | Areas of intervention, main accelerators and specific measures, challenges, SDGs and their targets.

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^{1/}	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
Social and economic inclusion	Reducing inequality in all areas of human development		SDG 10 (10.3, 10.4)
Access to basic healthcare, including SRHS and mental health	Inclusive and equitable access to health services – SRHS and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen health services (and SRHS and mental health) to ensure equitable, inclusive access to high-quality health care for all, especially the vulnerable (depending on life cycle and specific epidemiological profiles of communities). Progressively expand coverage in areas with limited coverage and greater vulnerability to social and gender-based violence and involuntary human mobility (e.g., extension of health services and mobile clinics, and for the detection and timely referral of cases of violence). Strengthen sexual and reproductive health services (public system and respective modules in women's health centers in the countries that have such services – El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Honduras and Guatemala) to ensure the right to reproductive health with a differentiated, inclusive and culturally-relevant focus. Strengthen comprehensive health care for victims of violence – protocols and reference and counter-reference systems (standardization and differentiated approach and cultural relevance). Strengthen and expand coverage of mental health services – including psychological and emotional care of victims/survivors of violence (as part of comprehensive health care). Strengthen services for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse. 	<p>SDG 3: 3.4 Mental health. 3.5 Prevention/treatment of substance abuse. 3.7 SRHS coverage and 3.8 health coverage.</p> <p>SDG 5: 5.6 SRHS/reproductive rights</p>
Access to high-quality and inclusive education	Access to high-quality and safe education for vulnerable sectors of the population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the different forms of discrimination (in the education system) that those in situations of exclusion and vulnerability (to violence) particularly face, to realize the right to education. Ensure timely progression and completion of primary and secondary education for those in situations of exclusion and vulnerability. Increase the number of young people and adults with the skills (technical and professional) needed to access employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. Improve the security environment of educational centers and the educational community as a whole, in areas with higher levels of violence and insecurity. Improve the quality of educational processes and learning environments, to close gaps in access to and appropriation of knowledge (including the digital divide), especially in schools in communities with greater poverty and citizen insecurity. Increase investment in education and make education spending more equitable, focusing on the quality of education and cultural relevance. 	<p>SDG 4: 4.3 Equal access to high-quality technical, vocational and higher education; 4.5 Remove gender disparities in education and ensure access to vocational education and training for vulnerable people. 4.4 Technical and vocational skills.</p> <p>SDG 9: 9c Access to information technology and universal and affordable internet access.</p>

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^{1/}	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
Access to social protection and resilience	Universal and integrated social protection systems that contribute to the principle of “leave no one behind”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures aimed at strengthening universal, integrated social protection systems Adapt institutional and public policy rules for the creation or strengthening of universal, integrated social protection systems. Create or strengthen tools for managing social and social protection policies from a perspective of gender, life stage and intersectionality, for the effective inclusion of vulnerable population groups. Promote a violence-prevention and civic-culture approach as a cross-cutting element (for the short and longer terms) in social-protection and resilience interventions. Improve the effectiveness of public spending on social protection, through better coordination and linkage of public provision (including local and private) and the introduction of innovative mechanisms for its financing. Consider a systemic approach to risk able to respond to the socioeconomic impacts of extreme events, exemplified by coronavirus. 	<p>SDG 1: 1.1 Eradicate extreme poverty; 1.2 Reduce poverty in all its dimensions; 1.3 Implement social protection measures and systems; 1.4 Access to basic services, ownership and control over land, among others, particularly by the poor and vulnerable.</p> <p>1.5 Build the resilience of the poor and vulnerable.</p> <p>SDG 5: 5.4 Unpaid care and social protection policies.</p> <p>SDG 16: 16.9 Legal identity for all.</p>
Labor/economic mobility	Formal and non-discriminatory competitive labor market Close gaps in the labor market and improve inclusion and decent employment (high-quality and productive, with rights and social protection)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the regulatory framework and measures for the formalization of the labor market (highly segmented and discriminatory markets) (create a bridge between social protection and labor market measures). Mechanisms for the protection of employment rights. Active employment and labor intermediation policies with an inclusive, non-discriminatory focus. Measures that integrate training and employment skills and their link to local employment demand (labor intermediation) – with an emphasis on the employment of young people and women (groups with higher levels of unemployment and underemployment). Address the feminization of employment and precarious employment (informal and unpaid). Address young people, particularly those who are excluded and vulnerable (and at greater risk of violence). Financial inclusion and access to credit. Greater access to financial inclusion programs (that promote financial education and access to affordable savings and credit services). Entrepreneurship programs and access to micro-credit to support the economic empowerment of excluded and vulnerable women and young people. Eradicate all forms of child and forced labor. Inclusive Market Systems (IMS) approach^{2/} in forced-displacement settings, with the aim of developing holistic, market-based livelihood strategies for migrants, refugees and host communities. 	<p>SDG 8: 8.3 Productive activities, decent jobs, micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises.</p> <p>8.5 Full employment, decent work for women and men and equal pay.</p> <p>8.6 Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.</p> <p>8.7 Eradicate child labor.</p> <p>8.8 Protect labor rights and safe working environments, including migrant workers (in particular women and those in precarious employment).</p> <p>8b Develop a youth employment strategy – Global Jobs Pact of the ILO.</p>

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^v	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
Access to effective justice for all	Citizen security and coexistence		SDG 16
Effective management of public security – strengthening the institutions of public security	Ensure effective public security that is close to the people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen national capacities of institutions of public security for an integrated approach to violence and citizen insecurity. • Promote the professionalization of the law enforcement agencies and (continuous) training processes in regulatory and legal procedures, human rights, gender, etc. • Ensure that there is a focus on violence-prevention in public-policy measures such as the longer-term strategy (link and coordinate with social, social-protection and income-generation programs). • Focus interventions according to the new dynamics of violence and specific local conditions; programs to prevent violence in priority groups such as young people, women and other at-risk groups. • Strengthen mechanisms for coordination and joint work between governments and local communities (throughout the policy cycle). • Invest in resilient infrastructure and environmental improvements – improving neighborhoods, public spaces, safe transportation, etc. • Strengthen mechanisms for reporting crimes and emergency systems. • Strengthen the appropriate bodies responsible for measures for preventing, investigating and combating the crime of drug trafficking (and micro-level drug sale) and other crimes involving murder and extortion, particularly in the most-troubled areas or communities. • Adopt a regional-level approach to combating organized crime (within the framework of work done under ESCA-SICA and its correspondence with work done at the national level). • Strengthen systems for managing information and generating statistics, and tools for the accountability of public security management. • Strengthen national capacities to generate knowledge, information and statistics for timely, evidence-based decision-making (e.g., mapping risks and occurrence of crime). • Strengthen internal and external monitoring of the performance of national police and other law-enforcement agencies (improve confidence in the institutions of public security). • Improve prison systems (management and infrastructure) and comprehensive rehabilitation and social reintegration programs. 	SDG 16: 16.1. Reduce all forms of violence. 16.4. Combat organized crime. 16.a. Strengthen national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^v	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
<p>Effective management of the justice system: Strengthen the institutions of the justice system</p>	<p>Ensure effective management of and access to justice for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework to guarantee human rights and access to justice to all, and ensure the protection of vulnerable and discriminated-against groups in the countries of the subregion. • Strengthen and promote an independent judiciary and effective management of the justice system. • (Continuous) training processes for greater specialization and building the capacities of judges and prosecutors (and other justice-system officials) on human rights, interculturality and gender, and specific issues related to gender-based violence. • Create/strengthen prosecution departments specializing in the investigation and prosecution of crimes of violence of all kinds – gender-based violence, people trafficking and sexual exploitation (most of the countries have specialist prosecutors for crimes of domestic violence against women, children and adolescents), including the investigation and prosecution of crimes against life, the violent deaths of women, and femicide. In Honduras, this has been strengthened by the creation of a Women’s Special Prosecution Department and a Femicide Prosecution Unit. • Strengthen prosecution departments specializing in organized and gang-related crime. • Strengthen comprehensive (and affordable) services providing judicial assistance to victims of violence. • Improve the effectiveness of judicial proceedings. • Strengthen partnerships and coordination mechanisms between the various bodies of the justice and security systems and local government, other local actors, and civil society. • Increase knowledge and awareness for the public to appropriately access services of the State in relation to judicial matters – an efficient justice system that is close to the community. 	<p>SDG 16: 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. 16.4. Combat organized crime. 16.5 Reduce corruption in all its forms. 16.a. Strengthen national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime. SDG 10: 10.10 Public access to information and protect fundamental liberties. SDG 17: 17.8 Enhance use of information and communication technologies (internet use). 17.9 Enhance international support (and North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation) to support national plans to implement the SDGs.</p>
<p>Essential services for the comprehensive support of victims and other groups whose rights have been breached</p>	<p>Have an institutional public-policy framework for the comprehensive care and protection of victims of violence and other forms of discrimination and vulnerabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the comprehensive care and protection of victims/survivors of (all forms of) violence and their families. VAWG and femicide, violence against children and adolescents, trafficking and sexual exploitation. • Improve mechanisms for the detection of different forms of violence. • Strengthen mechanisms for coordinating and linking institutions of the State and their different levels, and work with CSOs to ensure a comprehensive and effective approach on the part of services (based on permanent, participatory and inclusive dialogue). • Strengthen services for the comprehensive care and protection of groups whose rights have been breached, such as persons in involuntary human mobility, among others. 	<p>SDG 16: 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. SDG 10: Facilitate orderly, safe and legal migration.</p>

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^v	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
<p>Comprehensive legal framework for the protection of rights against violence (in all its forms), different forms of discrimination and combating corruption (and impunity)</p>	<p>Have a comprehensive legal framework for rights against violence (in all its forms) and different forms of discrimination</p> <p>Strengthen the rule of law</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures (e.g., reforms or new laws) to strengthen the existing legal framework in line with international legal standards (amendments or passing of new laws and regulatory frameworks) on rights against violence and the various forms of discrimination (For Honduras: signature and ratification of CEDAW Protocol). Ensure the inclusion of all forms of violence and, in the context of the new dynamics of violence linked to organized crime, gangs and maras in the subregion (particularly the countries of the northern area). Ensure a comprehensive framework to guarantee orderly, regulated and safe migration that is responsive to the phenomenon of involuntary human mobility in the subregion (as exit, transit or destination countries). Ensure adoption of the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee on comprehensive care for vulnerable groups (including human-rights ombudsmen). Reform or repeal of law and regulations, to ensure non-discrimination (16.3). Adopt measures aimed at greater transparency of public affairs and for preventing and combating corruption and impunity. Strengthen the institutional and public affairs framework: civil service, efficient use of public resources, transparency and ethics; and measures for the control and eradication of corruption. Adopt effective mechanisms for greater citizen participation in public affairs and social comptrollership. 	<p>SDG 5: 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against women and girls.</p> <p>SDG 10: 10.3 Ensuring equal opportunity in laws and policies.</p> <p>10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration.</p> <p>SDG 16: 16.3 Rule of law and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.5 Reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Effective, accountable and transparent institutions.</p> <p>16.10. Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms.</p>
<p>Promote safe, inclusive and sustainable cities: social fabric, civic culture</p>			<p>SDG 11</p> <p>SDG 16</p>
<p>Improving the environment and resilience through empowering citizens and local actors</p>	<p>Reduce levels of urban segregation and exclusion spaces</p> <p>Close the digital divide</p> <p>Reduce environmental vulnerability and increase resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote inclusive and sustainable territorial and urban development. Promote development and sustainable urban planning in accordance with demographic changes. Modernize (inclusive and high-quality) public transport and improve mobility in cities/communities to guarantee its access and safety. Expand access to decent and safe housing, especially for those living in precarious and vulnerable neighborhoods – comprehensive improvement of precarious neighborhoods and settlements with basic services and safe public spaces. Construction of safe public spaces: parks, cultural and community centers, etc. Improved infrastructure for access to and use of ICT (schools, public spaces). Strengthen local capacities for integrated risk management and increased resilience, especially in the most-vulnerable communities.^{3/} Strengthen disaster risk governance for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation. Greater investment to reduce disaster risk for resilience in all areas (individuals' economic, social, health and cultural), including strengthening land-use, planning and urban-development policies – e.g., improving the most precarious and vulnerable neighborhoods – incorporating technology and innovation – e.g., information-management tools – among other measures. 	<p>SDG 6: 6.1 Universal and equitable access to drinking water; 6.2 Access to equitable sanitation and hygiene services.</p> <p>SDG 7: 7.1 Universal access to energy services.</p> <p>SDG 9: 9c Increase universal and affordable access to information and communications technology (ICT).</p> <p>SDG 11: 11.1 Access to housing and adequate basic services; 11.2 Safe, affordable and accessible transport systems. 11.3 Enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization; 11.7 Safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces.</p> <p>SDG 13: 13.1 Resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.</p> <p>SDG 14: 14b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.</p> <p>SDG 17: 17.8 Improve capacity and use of ICT.</p>

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^v	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
<p>Improve capacities for the management of social conflict through dialogue and the empowerment of the public and civil society</p>	<p>Effective management of social conflicts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework for the effective management of social conflicts. • Measures (and tools) for the prevention and early detection, monitoring and evaluation of social conflicts. • Mechanisms and processes for the analysis and management of social conflict. • Strengthen the coordination and linkage of public policies with local governments and other territory or local actors for the prevention and management of social conflicts, especially around issues of environmental governance and equitable access to land (e.g., women members of indigenous peoples, etc.) among others. • Establish mechanisms for the community organization and citizen participation and representation of socially excluded and marginalized population groups to manage risks and build resilience, including capacity to manage social conflicts. 	<p>SDG 2: 2.3 Greater agricultural production and incomes and <i>equal access</i> to land – women and indigenous peoples.</p> <p>SDG 11: 11b Strategies to reduce risk of disasters in line with Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.</p> <p>SDG 13: 13.2 Climate change measures.</p> <p>13.3 Improve education and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p>SDG 15: 15.9 Value of ecosystem and biodiversity in planning.</p>
<p>Prevention of violence (in all forms) and promotion of civic culture and non-violence</p>	<p>Safe cities</p> <p>Prevalence of a culture of citizenship and non-violence, gender equality and non-discrimination (long-term change in attitudes and social norms that contribute to the perpetuation of violence and citizen insecurity and damage social cohesion)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote medium- and longer-term measures to prevent violence (and social reintegration) and control of crime in cities. • Development of municipal policies for violence prevention, coordinated with national security policies and responsive to local dynamics of violence (e.g., associated with drug trafficking and gangs, and gender-based violence). • Inclusion- and participation-focused interventions at the neighborhood/community level, with an emphasis on prevention programs aimed at young people at increased risk of violence. • Campaigns to prevent gender-based violence and discrimination against vulnerable groups (such as LGBTIQ). • Strengthen alert systems using timely information from national or local observatories of violence. • Strengthen systems for the public to report allegations and emergency systems to respond to violent acts and breaches of rights. • Strengthen social capital and trust in institutions. • Measures to strengthen and expand mechanisms for access to public information and accountability, and complaints and resolutions systems. • Develop and establish effective mechanisms for active and inclusive participation (citizens and local leaders) in various policy areas at national and local level and in social, political, economic and environmental matters, including issues around violence prevention and citizen security, and systemic risk management and resilience. • Education interventions for sustainable development, including the promotion of rights and gender equality, and the right to a life free of violence. • Promote a change in gendered roles and abilities – in employment, caregiving, chores within the home and in the community (recognize, redistribute and reduce). • Address harmful norms and behaviors that reproduce violence in all its forms (e.g., VAWG+F, early marriage). • Eradicate stigmatization in a context of involuntary human mobility (displacement and return) and of COVID-19. 	<p>SDG 16: 16.1. Reduce all forms of violence.</p> <p>16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p> <p>16.7. Ensure inclusive and participatory decision making that responds to needs.</p> <p>SDG 3: 3.5 Prevention/treatment of substance abuse.</p> <p>SDG 4: 4.7 Education for sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, a culture of peace and non-violence, etc.</p> <p>SDG 8: 8.6 Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.</p> <p>SDG 10: 10.2 Empower the social, economic and political inclusion of all.</p> <p>SDG 12: 12.8 Access to knowledge for sustainable development and life styles.</p> <p>SDG 17: 17.17 Effective public-private and civil society partnerships.</p>
<p>Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls</p>			<p>SDG 5</p>

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^v	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
Policies on gender and women's and girls' empowerment	<p>Achieve gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in all areas of development</p> <p>Eliminate all forms of VAWG+F</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream the gender (and intersectionality) perspective in public policies and national budgets. • Expand measures and programs to prevent and protect from gender-based violence, aimed at vulnerable groups. • Policies and measures to address gender-related vulnerabilities of vulnerable groups. 	<p>SDG 5: 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls; 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work; 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation; 5c Policies and legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.</p>
Elimination of all forms of gender-based violence	<p>Have an institutional and public policy framework for the comprehensive care of victims of gender-based violence and femicide and other forms of discrimination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and/or create a regulatory framework to comprehensively address violence against women and girls and other forms of discrimination (intersectional). • Measures that include a package of essential services (WHO) for the comprehensive care and protection of victims and their families. • Many of the countries have comprehensive services but require measures to strengthen the specific services included in this package: health services – SRHS and mental health – reference and counter-reference systems (standardized care protocols), judicial care, access to refuges or shelters, others. • Strengthen the women's and families' (children's) agencies (units) in local government, in respect of their capacity to respond to and refer cases of violence. 	<p>SDG 5: 5.2 Elimination of all forms of violence. 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage.</p> <p>SDG 16: 16.1. Reduce all forms of violence. 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p>
Consistent, comprehensive and evidence-based public policies			SDG 17
Consistent, comprehensive and evidence-based public policies for social cohesion and citizen security at the national and regional levels	<p>Public administration that responds to the new challenges of development and of the 2030 Agenda</p> <p>Establish social cohesion as an essential element of sustainable development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize and update regulatory and institutional frameworks (at central and local levels) to ensure equality and non-discrimination and alignment with the SDGs and challenges of the 2030 Agenda – to improve the coherence of public policies. • Expand institutional capacities (in central and local government) for the formulation of inclusive – gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory – public policies that are effective, sound and evidence-based. • Promote the mainstreaming of social cohesion with an emphasis on SDG 16+ as part of the essential elements for the formulation of public policies that respond to the local realities of the countries of the subregion. • Develop inclusive measures and mechanisms for citizen participation throughout the public policy cycle and for accountability, in a way that contributes to the construction of an active (and empowered) citizenship that participates in its development and creates bridges for coordinated and articulate work with different sectors of society. • Measures to improve tax collection capabilities. 	<p>SDG 16: 16.6 Effective, accountable and transparent institutions; 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making; 16.10 Public access to information; 16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies (cross-cutting)</p> <p>SDG 17: 17.1 Domestic capacity for tax collection; 17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.</p>
Gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory public policies, including budget	<p>Have a non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive institutional framework and public policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure equal opportunities in laws and policies. • Mainstream gender and rights in all policies and actions of the State. • Expand institutional capacities (in central and local government) for the formulation of inclusive, gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory public policies that are effective, sound and evidence-based. • Gender-sensitive budgets aligned with gender policies and the SDGs. 	<p>SDG 5: 5c Policies and law for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.</p> <p>SDG 10: 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity in laws and policies; 10.4 Policies (fiscal, wage and social protection) to achieve greater equality.</p>

Area of intervention / Main accelerators	Challenges (general)	Drivers or conductors (specific measures) ^v	SDG 16 targets and synergies with other SDGs and SDG targets
<p>National capacities for the generation of knowledge and statistical information (disaggregated, high-quality data)</p>	<p>National statistics systems strengthened and aligned with the SDGs</p> <p>Generation of information for an integrated approach to citizen security and social cohesion</p> <p>Expand access to the information generated, to decision makers and the general public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and measures to modernize and introduce innovation in national statistics systems (censuses, household surveys, geo-referenced information, big data, among others) and for their effective management. • Strengthen national capacities for the development and effective management of integrated information management and M&E systems related to social and social protection policies (generation of information and breakdown by vulnerable groups), gender-sensitive and focused on the prevention of violence and promotion of civic culture. • Strengthen capacities for the generation of information for developing measures and indicators of social cohesion. • Strengthen statistical capacities for the generation of information on citizen security – continue with the support of initiatives such as Infosegura. • Strengthen statistical capacities for the generation of information specifically related to the different forms of gender-based violence and other breaches of rights related to involuntary human mobility. • Develop institutional mechanisms and procedures for the management and sharing of information between those who produce, manage and use the information generated, such as academia and research institutes, and international organizations (knowledge and know-how management). • Strengthen the management and sharing of knowledge (studies and best practices) with the different strategic partners – policy makers and strategic sectors – and with citizens. 	<p>SDG 17: 17.18 Availability of high-quality, timely, reliable disaggregated data. 17.19 Statistical capacity to measure progress on sustainable development.</p>
<p>Alliances for development: for social cohesion and citizen security at the national and sub-regional levels (SICA)</p>	<p>Effective, inclusive alliances to respond to the challenges of social cohesion and achieving the SDGs</p> <p>Mobilization of resources to support comprehensive responses to the challenges of social cohesion and achieving the SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish spaces for dialogue and consultation involving citizens and strategic actors from the public, public-private, organized civil society on public policy cycle and accountability, knowledge and technology management, among others. • Strengthen networks for women and other vulnerable groups, and other CSOs linked to the promotion of human rights and non-violence at work (political and general advocacy skills). • Strengthen local/community-level leadership and capacity to form alliances with other sectors – private, culture, communications media, NGO, others – to prevent violence and promote civic culture. • Establish strategic alliances to influence and advance the social cohesion and citizen security agenda in the subregion and the mobilization of resources for development: multilateral and international cooperation agencies, public-private alliances, among others. 	<p>SDG 10: 10b Encourage official development assistance for least-developed countries. SDG 17: 17.3 Mobilize resources; 17.16 Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development. 17.17 Promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships.</p>

Table A8.1 | Description of indicators for the Social Cohesion Index (UNDP and AECID 2021b) and sources for their use in estimating the expanded index for Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Indicator	Description	Source
Social inclusion		
Teenage fertility rate	Births per 1000 women aged between 15 and 19 years.	World Bank
Proportion of population not in poverty	Percentage of population below the international poverty line of \$5.50 per person per day (adjusted for purchasing power parity at international prices for 2011).	World Bank
Income equality	Gini Index. Degree to which the distribution of income between individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution.	World Bank
Adults with complete lower secondary education	Percentage of population aged 25 and older that has completed lower secondary education.	World Bank
Formal employment	Proportion of informal employment to total employment.	International Labour Organization
Governance		
Transparent laws with foreseeable application	Responses to the question: Are the laws of the land clear, well-publicized, coherent, relatively stable year to year and enforced in a predictable manner?	V-Dem Project
Rigorous and impartial public administration	Responses to the question: Are public sector employees impartial in the performance of their duties?	V-Dem Project
Legislators involved in corrupt activities	Responses to the question: Do members of the legislature abuse their positions for financial gain? This includes any of the following: (a) accepting bribes; (b) helping companies that the legislator (or the legislator's family) owns to obtain government contracts; (c) granting favors to companies in exchange for job opportunities after leaving the legislature; (d) stealing money from the State or campaign contributions for personal use.	V-Dem Project
Women's equal, secure access to justice	Responses to the question: Do women enjoy equal, secure and effective access to justice?	V-Dem Project
Belonging		
Quality of basic education for exercising rights	Responses to the question: To what extent is high quality basic education guaranteed to all, sufficient to enable them to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens?	V-Dem Project
Power distributed by sexual orientation	Responses to the question: To what extent is political power distributed according to sexual orientation?	V-Dem Project
Interpersonal trust	For Latin America, responses to the question: Would you say that you can trust most people or that one can never be sufficiently careful when dealing with others? For Europe the proposition used is: Can you trust most people, or can you not be too careful?	Latinobarómetro / LAPOP (Latin America) and European Social Survey (Europe)
Satisfaction with democracy	For Latin America, responses to the question: Would you say that you were very satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (country)? For Europe: How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in the country?	Latinobarómetro / LAPOP (Latin America) and European Social Survey (Europe)

Source: UNDP and AECID (2021b).

Model for estimating the expanded index

The methodology for estimating the index is based on a structural equations model using a two-stage factor analysis. The use of similar techniques to generate empirical evidence and guide policy decisions has been gaining ground in recent years. Noteworthy examples include the use of principal component analysis to generate inputs able to target the use of public resources, such as the Mexican National Population Council's Marginalization Index or the use of factor analysis to select recipients of public transfers, using a set of indicators. This set of methods has also been used to generate an index to measure women's level of agency, from survey data, or to measure economic well-being and identify individuals who make up the middle class.⁵²

The usefulness of these tools is that they can describe a complex phenomenon in simpler terms. This modelling strategy can be used to analyze the relationships between multiple variables; it is widely used in psychometrics and behavioral sciences to measure concepts that cannot be directly observed.

In this context, the goal is to estimate each of the dimensions of social cohesion: social inclusion, governance and belonging, through the common variance of the indicators for each dimension. The assumption is that the indicators that determine a latent variable, that is, each dimension of social cohesion, must correlate with it and, therefore, with each other too. For example, to estimate the level of social inclusion, we start with indicators that are conceptually coherent with that dimension, such as the percentage of the adult population that has completed secondary education and income equality, and we take their common variance as a measure of social inclusion.

In the first step, that of the exploratory factor analysis, an estimate is made of the model to reduce the number of indicators to analyze. From the large set of indicators, those with the highest factor loadings are identified, that is, those that are most useful for explaining each dimension of social cohesion. Then, different specifications of the model are estimated by varying the inclusion of indicators apart from the first criterion and these are evaluated in terms of goodness of fit on the sample of countries of Central America and Dominican Republic. The statistical criteria used are SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) and the coefficients of determination (R^2). In the second step, the confirmatory factor analysis, the model is estimated on the basis of the indicators selected by both criteria as relevant for determining each dimension and the relative degree of social cohesion in the subregion.

The estimation of the Social Cohesion Index is carried out in the same manner as in UNDP and AECID (2021b) and is based on modelling the variance-covariance matrix Σ from the structure of observable data under the following structure:

Where Λ_x is the matrix of factor loadings of the observable indicators x ; Φ is the variance-covariance matrix of latent variables ξ ; and Θ_ε is the error matrix .

The estimate of each latent variable j , each dimension of social cohesion, from a number of indicators k is given by the system of equations:

$$\begin{aligned}x_1 &= \alpha_1 + \lambda_{1j}\xi_j + \varepsilon_1 \\x_2 &= \alpha_2 + \lambda_{2j}\xi_j + \varepsilon_2 \\&\dots \\x_k &= \alpha_k + \lambda_{kj}\xi_j + \varepsilon_k\end{aligned}$$

All the indicators x are expressed on a scale of 0-100. α is the constant, equal to the average of the corresponding indicator; ε is the error term and represents the factor loadings.

REFERENCES

- 1 PNUD. (2017a). Bienestar más allá del ingreso. Herramienta de Combos + evaluación rápida integrada (RIA). Unidad IV. Metodología de Combos como enfoque y herramienta: Paso 2. Curso Virtual del Campo Virtual PNUD para LAC. 2017.
- 2 PNUD & AECID. (2021a). Estrategia de políticas integrales, para la cohesión social en América Latina y el Caribe. Documento base.
- 3 UNDP. (2021b). Social cohesion and economic inclusion: situational assessment of Central America and the Dominican Republic.
- 4 *Ibíd.*
- 5 PNUD & AECID. (2021b). Cohesión social en América Latina. Una propuesta de medición y sus resultados.
- 6 PNUD. (2021). América Latina y el Caribe: Gobernanza Efectiva, más allá de la recuperación. PNUD-RBLAC. January 2021.
- 7 CEPAL. (2007). Cohesión social: inclusión y sentido de pertenencia en América Latina y el Caribe.
- 8 Grynspan, R., & López-Calva, L. F. (2007). Democracia y gobernabilidad en la región latinoamericana. *Pensamiento iberoamericano*, (1), 85-104.
- 9 PNUD & AECID. (2021a). *Op. cit.*
- 10 Dammert, Lucía (2012) Seguridad ciudadana y cohesión social en América Latina. Programa Urb-al III (pp.43-55)
- 11 *Ibid* (pp.43-44)
- 12 PNUD & AECID. (2021b). *Op. cit.*
- 13 See more detail in UNDP (2020c) Análisis sobre innovación en seguridad ciudadana y derechos humanos en América Latina y el Caribe. Una perspectiva desde las políticas públicas y la gestión institucional. (Ch. I, pp. 20-21) Available at: https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/library/democratic_governance/analisis-sobre-innovacion-en-seguridad-ciudadana-y-derechos-huma.html
- 14 PNUD. (2013). Informe Regional de Desarrollo Humano 2013-2014 Seguridad Ciudadana con Rostro Humano: diagnóstico y propuestas para América Latina. This concept is in line with the approach to the problem in different human development reports such as PNUD. (2010). Informe sobre desarrollo humano para América Central 2009-2010 Abrir espacios para la seguridad ciudadana y el desarrollo humano; and other previous reports that use the broader concept of human security as PNUD. (2005). Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano Costa Rica, Venciendo el temor: (In) seguridad Ciudadana y Desarrollo Humano en Costa Rica; y el anterior PNUD. (1994). *Op. Cit.*
- 15 *Ibíd.* (pp.20-21)
- 16 Centro para la Cooperación Internacional. (2019) Pioneros para sociedades pacíficas, justas e inclusivas. La Hoja de ruta para sociedades pacíficas, justas e inclusivas – Un llamado a la acción para cambiar nuestro mundo.
- 17 PNUD. (2020b). Evidencias para la agenda 2030 y el ODS 16+: Sociedades Inclusivas y Pacíficas en Honduras.
- 18 PNUD-Proyecto Infosegura (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo- Proyecto Infosegura) (2020). Una mirada a las juventudes expuestas a violencia en el norte de Centroamérica desde un enfoque de vulnerabilidad y resiliencia humana. Panamá: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) / United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
- 19 BID (2020). Desigualdad y descontento social: cómo abordarlos desde la política pública: informe económico sobre Centroamérica, Haití, México, Panamá y República Dominicana.
- 20 PNUD. (2020a). Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2020. La próxima frontera: El desarrollo humano y el Antropoceno.
- 21 PNUD. (2020a). *Op. cit.*
- 22 CEPAL. (2020). Informe Especial COVID-19 (No. 3).
- 23 World Bank. (2021). Global Economic Prospects, January 2021.
- 24 *Ibíd.*
- 25 PNUD & AECID. (2021a). *Op. cit.*
- 26 PNUD & AECID. (2021b). *Op. cit.*
- 27 See progress on the governments of the regions; commitments under the Regional Gender Agenda in ECLAC (2019).
- 28 SICA, OIM, ACNUR. (2019). Hallazgos del Estudio de Línea Base sobre Migración y Desplazamiento en la Región del SICA.
- 29 PNUD & AECID. (2021b). *Op. cit.*
- 30 *Ibíd.*
- 31 Alianza para la Prosperidad en: <https://www.iadb.org/es/alianza-para-la-prosperidad/ejes-estrategicos-y-lineas-de-accion>
- 32 PNUD LAC. (2021). PNUD LAC C19 PDS No. 25. Los impactos del COVID-19 en la autonomía económica de las mujeres en América Latina y el Caribe. PNUD & ONU Mujeres. (2020). COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker, Factsheet: Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 33 PNUD LAC. (2021). *Op. cit.*
- 34 LAPOP-USAID. (2014) Evaluación de impacto de la estrategia basada en la comunidad de USAID para la prevención de la delincuencia y la violencia en América Central: Informe regional para El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras y Panamá.
- 35 Mata, Catherine & Hernández, Karla. (2015). Evaluación de impacto de la implementación de transferencias monetarias condicionadas para educación secundaria en Costa Rica (Avancemos). *Revista de Ciencias Económicas*. 33. 9. 10.15517/rce.v33i1.19964
- 36 Acosta P., y Monsalve Montiel E. (2021). Public works programs and crime: Evidence for El Salvador. *Rev Dev Econ*. 2021;00:1–16.
- 37 Jaitman, L. et al. (2017). Los costos del crimen y de la violencia: nueva evidencia y hallazgos en América Latina y el Caribe.
- 38 *Ibíd.*

- 39 Spotlight Initiative (n.d.) - Iniciativa Spotlight: lo que hacemos.
- 40 Sánchez Chico, A., Macours, K., Maluccio, J. A., & Stampini, M. (2018). Six years of Comunidades Solidarias Rurales: Impacts on School Entry of an Ongoing Conditional Cash Transfer Program in El Salvador.
Coady, D., Olinto, P., & Caldés, N. (2004). Coping with the coffee crisis in Central America: The role of social safety nets in Honduras.
- 41 Sudarsky, J. (2007). La Evolución del capital social de Colombia.
- 42 Infosegura. (2020). Seguridad Ciudadana, Movilidad Humana y Desarrollo en los Países del Norte de Centroamérica.
- 43 PNUD & AECID. (2021b). Op. cit.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 T. Beirute. (2009). Cohesión social y seguridad ciudadana. *Cohesión social y políticas sociales en Iberoamérica*. 105-122.
- 46 Beirute, Tatiana. (2009). Op. cit.
Murcia, Walter (2015). Las pandillas en El Salvador: Propuestas y desafíos para la inclusión social juvenil en contextos de violencia urbana.
- 47 Felson, R. B., Messner, S. F., Hoskin, A. W., & Deane, G. (2002). Reasons for reporting and not reporting domestic violence to the police. *Criminology*, 40(3), 617-648.
- 48 CEPAL. (2007) Op. cit.
Grynspar, R., & López-Calva, L. F. (2007). Op. cit.
Hardy, C. (2014). Estratificación social en América Latina: retos de cohesión social.
Sojo, A. (2017). Op. cit.
- 49 PNUD & AECID (2021b). Op. cit.
- 50 PNUD & AECID (2021c). Reflexiones sobre Cohesión social. Lo que hemos aprendido.
- 51 UNODC. (2019). Global Study on Homicide 2019.
UNESCO/LLECE (2015). Informe de resultados TERCE.
CEPAL (2017). Las violencias en el espacio escolar.
- 52 Jayachandran, S., Biradavolu, M., & Cooper, J. (2021). Using machine learning and qualitative interviews to design a five-question women's agency index (No. w28626). National Bureau of Economic Research.
Torche, F., & Lopez-Calva, L. F. (2013). Stability and vulnerability of the Latin American middle class. *Oxford Development Studies*, 41(4), 409-435.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
CASS	Central American Security Strategy
CC-SICA	Comité Consultivo del Sistema de Integración Centroamericana, Consultative Committee of the Central American Integration System
CELAC	Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
COVID-19	The infectious disease caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 of 2019
CSC	Comisión de Seguridad de Centroamérica, Central American Security Commission
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EU	European Union
HDI	Human Development Index
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
Infosegura	Regional Infosegura Project
LA/LAC	Latin America / Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Intersexual, Queer
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAPTN	Plan de la Alianza para la Prosperidad del Triángulo Norte, Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle
PRIEG	Política Regional de Igualdad y Equidad de Género, Regional Gender Equality and Equity Policy
SCI-LA (SCI)	Social Cohesion Index for Latin America
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEGIB	Secretaría General Iberoamericana, Ibero-American General Secretariat
SICA	Secretaría General del Sistema de Integración Centroamericana, General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System
TMSD	Tratado Marco de Seguridad Democrática en Centroamérica, Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP-LAC	United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNO	United Nations Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WHO/PAHO	World Health Organization / Pan American Health Organization



