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Citizen security and community participation in Latin America

Seguridad ciudadana y participación de las comunidades en América Latina

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ABSTRACT. In recent years, Latin American governments have been committed to formulating and implementing new forms of police management. They have applied the notions of citizen security and community participation to involve populations in plans, programs, and projects aimed at guaranteeing the security of territories, from a perspective focused on prevention rather than repression. The new models of community policing implemented in different countries of the region share certain principles. Their implementation also shares challenges and obstacles, especially concerning the active participation of the inhabitants of the territories and their response to the proposed changes.

KEYWORDS: citizen security; Latin America; police; security policies

RESUMEN. En los últimos años, los gobiernos de América Latina le han apostado a formular y ejecutar nuevas formas de gestión policial, aplicando las nociones de seguridad ciudadana y participación de las comunidades, con el fin de involucrar las poblaciones en los planes, programas y proyectos dirigidos a garantizar la seguridad de los territorios, desde una perspectiva enfocada en la prevención más que en la represión. Los nuevos modelos de policía comunitaria que se han puesto en práctica en diferentes países de la región comparten unos principios, así como comparten retos y desafíos para su ejecución, en especial, en lo que se refiere a la participación efectiva de los habitantes de los territorios y su respuesta frente a los cambios propuestos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: América Latina; policía; políticas de seguridad; seguridad ciudadana

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The characteristic of chaos is its capacity for change and adaptability to change, sensitivity, creativity, freedom in action, novelty. In this way, disorder, in its ultimate degree, does not annihilate order, but rather chaos in its dynamics.

SILVIA ZIMMERMAN DEL CASTILLO

Introduction

The way in which Latin American countries have faced the phenomenon of crime and crime in cities in the last ten years is far from the perspective of the police model described by Dammert and Arias (2007) in which the control and command of violent actions are under the exclusive power of State institutions:

Insecurity in large cities has a multi-causal origin, in which not only social inequality is a major factor but also urban growth and deterioration, which, when combined with the weakening of the State, contributes to an increase in crime. (Moreno, 2012, p. 147)

This, of course, denotes not only a change of perspective in criminal policies in Latin America but also a more profound shift by states regarding their model of government and the relationships that they and their institutions weave with the citizens. In fact, “the concept of security, from a traditional perspective, assumed that as long as the State was free of threats, citizens would be too” (Buzan, 2016). Models such as those developed in Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Chile reaffirm the new role that community participation plays in crime prevention and strengthening confidence in police institutions and military forces.

In all of them, the following conception remains: the military and police forces must be based on a democratic model that guarantees public safety, restrains criminality from crime prevention and not from prosecution of criminals, and builds citizen trust towards the police and military institution. It is also vital to stimulate the mechanisms of public outreach and attention in conjunction with the police’s understanding of regional and local problems.

Aspects such as the recovery of public spaces, urban design for social integration, and the promotion of recreational activities, among others, have meant that a fundamental part of the policies for the prevention and control of violence and crime has been transferred to the sub-national level. However, the emphasis on the local also poses significant challenges in the design of mechanisms for complementation and coordination between national, state, and municipal authorities, which transcend time despite the changes in government. (Wilson Center, 2015)

Conceptually, the change is apparent. It has been a shift from a notion of citizen security “based on national security” (Ramos, 2005) to one that emphasizes the security of each individual. In other words, there has been a shift from restrictive citizen security centered on power and domination to one that is more respectful of life and attentive to the citizens. Previously “it was thought that in order to guarantee national security, it was essential to avoid any attack on the stability of the political system” (Jaramillo, 2015). Therefore, it became necessary to rethink “the traditional concept of national security with new notions, in order to generate a more comprehensive picture that responds to the challenges of the cities in which most criminal phenomena are concentrated” (Reyes, 2015). Indeed, “the concept has become fashionable in America, and most countries demand national and subnational policies on citizen security, and practically all international donors have aligned their investments in the same direction.” (Muggah & de Carvalho, 2014)

Therefore, it is worth asking whether, so far, the results achieved in practice by these police security models and the conditions from which they have been formulated have actually modified (at least to some extent) the asymmetric and traditional relationship between citizens and the police institution. A review of the approaches, principles, and forms of management that underpin the change in security models in Latin America makes it possible to establish whether the relationship of citizens and the police institution is real or it remains in the discourses and ideals that exist as the basis for *community policing* proposals.

In this document, we will see how the new community policing models, put into practice in some countries of the region, share certain principles that produce challenges and issues that also affect their implementation, especially regarding the active participation of the population and its response to the proposed changes.

From national security to public safety

Understanding the evolution of security agendas in Latin America in recent years is a reasonably complex exercise, as it is necessary to consider the regional, geopolitical, economic, and social diversity of the region. However, some dynamics can indicate trends and presumptions upon which proposals are designed, and projects are carried out to reduce crimes and contraventions that afflict the populations. In Latin America and the Caribbean, there is a growing recognition of the limitations of criminal justice approaches to crime prevention (Muggah, 2016; CAF-Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina, 2014).

After the end of the period known as the Cold War (which generated political instability in different regions of the world, resulting from the nearly half a century

conflict between the dominant countries of the capitalist and communist systems), the ways of guaranteeing the security of the territories at the national level changed perspective. In Latin America, social and political transformations gave way to the possibility of undertaking new proposals to renew the internal security system (Rojas, 2000). The need was evident to generate processes to create support and cooperation networks, mainly between countries belonging to the same region or geographical block. "Taking this opportunity means that the countries of Latin America, in particular, the South American countries, leave a conceptual framework of a self-referential geopolitical character" (Rojas, 2000). Therefore, in Latin America,

Public safety policies also cover a series of activities that seek to improve general security, prevent violence, and reduce crimes. These include the redesign, renovation, and repowering of urban spaces; the creation of specific jobs; the existence of training and employment generation programs; educational and school interventions for young people at risk; early childhood and parent support activities; as well as formal and informal mediation to reduce intragroup tensions in highly volatile situations, among others. (Muggah, 2017)

This change is reinforced by the dynamics of globalization and the massification of new information technologies (ICT), which have made it possible to formulate mechanisms and design proposals that diversify political agendas and include new security perspectives.

Interventions that have been implemented quickly, modeled on programs in North America and Western Europe, are unlikely to be successful; this is because the current dynamics of the region are connected to deep-rooted historical, political, economic, and socio-cultural factors, including inequality, impunity, weak institutionalization of state entities, as well as the normalization of violence. (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo [PNUD], 2017)

Thus, it was conceivable to move from the concept of "national security," based on the protection of the territories by state forces, to "citizen security," which proposes safeguarding of and by the individual focusing on their needs and wellbeing.

Since the middle of the 20th century, Latin America was framed by precepts of political, economic, and social instability, mainly because of the characteristics of the governments, which were stipulated under authoritarian, elitist, or populist measures. In this context, dictatorships and social revolutions were continuously established in different countries of the region. It was not until the end of the 1980s that a process of new democratization began, joined by different actions that promoted peace processes in the territories. Both aspects generated new dynamics in the governments and the proposed policies (Kurtenbach, 2001).

In recent years, the idea of consolidating a block that situates the region within the global context as a conglomerate of nations with a competitive capacity has been promoted. Although this perspective is mainly in the economic sector, actions and programs cut across the different dynamics established in the countries of the region, which is evident in the transformations of the change in the security perspective. Indeed,

Latin American countries have experienced crimes of a transnational nature, such as trafficking in persons, arms, illicit drugs, and terrorism, which are beyond their capacity and contribute to the confusion between the functions of the civilian and military agencies responsible for providing security. (Amaya, 2015)

Consequently, “imparting justice and maintaining public order are two activities of great impact on the perception of security and the achievement of peace-keeping.” (Ramos, 2015)

The actions made in favor of reducing the risks, violent acts, crimes and contraventions in the territories involve proposals that are aimed at effectively reducing these situations while proposing to undertake actions that produce positive impacts on credibility, legitimacy, and trust in the institutions that are responsible for ensuring national security. “The evolution of the concept of security, as well as its interpretations, foster new and best practices, with a complex focus that allows considering the potential of human dimensions” (Palacios & Sierra, 2014). In this sense, citizen security is understood as

The concern for the quality of life and human dignity in terms of freedom, market access, and social opportunities [...]. [Likewise] not fearing violent aggression, knowing that physical integrity is respected and, above all, being able to enjoy the privacy of home without fear of being assaulted, and being able to move calmly on the streets without fearing a robbery or aggression. (Arriagada, 2002)

In other words, this form of security is a social construction understood as a cultural practice, as it implies implementing egalitarian forms in the structure and social relations in which spaces are understood as a common good of all citizens. It is from this perspective that the different social problems and conflicts can be understood; unemployment, hunger, poverty, environmental deterioration, political repression, lack of opportunities, criminality, drug addiction, and violence can be perceived as threats to public safety. According to 448 opinion leaders and journalists from fourteen countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, corruption, and insecurity are among the main problems that plagued the region in 2018, given the potential increase in criminal violence in these countries, as shown in Figure 1.

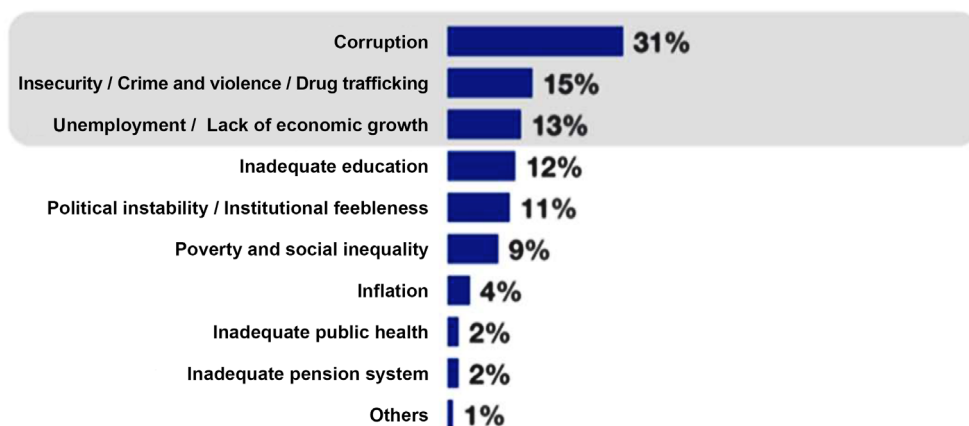


Figure 1. Problems in Latin America in 2018.
Source: Ipsos (2018).

Currently, the security issue is inserted in the agendas of the governments of the region as a priority; the policies established by several of the governments of the region include security plans that are effective in the short term and sustainable over time (Rolland, 2008). The different challenges endured by the region, together with the new threats caused by internal and globalization processes, create the need to promote and develop various forms of thinking and institutional proposals to guarantee security in the territories at local and national levels. In this sense, the new proposals undertaken include

The basic dimensions of security regarding the use of force, as well as new aspects derived from global interconnection, where the consequences of the economic phenomena of globalization affect the lives of millions of human beings. All this is prompting us to change approaches and interpretative maps of international and security relations. (Rojas, 2003)

The new perspectives seek to generate higher degrees of trust in the entities responsible for safeguarding and protecting citizens, namely, the police force, whose main objective is ensuring the safety and well-being of the communities. In this sense, it is a transformation that encompasses different dimensions. Thus, new mechanisms are stipulated in the forms of protection and security mechanisms. From these approaches, new security models based on the principles of community policing were implemented in different countries, seeking to involve communities in processes that guarantee well-being in the territories, in line with the presumptions and objectives of citizen security.

Security policies and application of the community policing model in Latin America

Citizen security is understood as a strategy undertaken by the governments of the Latin American region to strengthen the State and the actions of governments and institutions responsible for community security. Therefore, different actions are undertaken aimed at the prevention of violence and crimes with greater participation of civil society in these plans and projects. In this sense, security and defense policies are established in a scene of transformations through political and institutional wagers related to a restructuring of the states' forms of government and the main objectives of their management. However, in Latin America, citizens' trust in security policies is low, as shown in the study by the Barometer of the Americas (Figure 2).

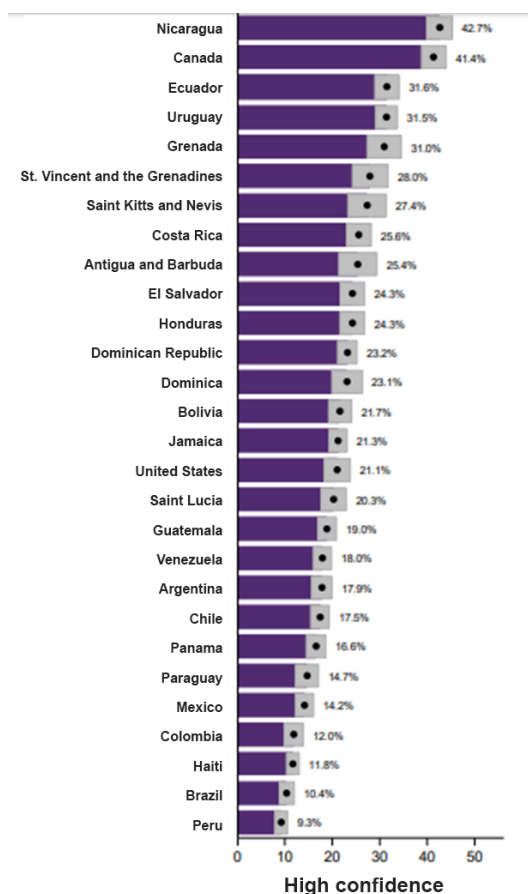


Figure 2. Level of confidence in the security policies of each country.
Source: Cepal (2018).

As the figures show, the articulation of each country's security and defense policies with the different proposals established in Latin America generates a multilateral security system in which finding a common security agenda is feasible, so long as the political wagers of institutional incidence insist on generating a joint and articulated effort with the citizens.

The region is faced, then, with one of the most significant security policy challenges, expanding the possibilities of population participation. The previous is evidenced in the concern for integral human development in which communities can generate and influence social processes that benefit the forms of management proposed by the institutions (Kurtenbach, 2001). The above take into account the statistics on the perception of insecurity in the local environment and the cost of crime in the economy by sub-regions, based on the 2014 GDP at the Latin American level.

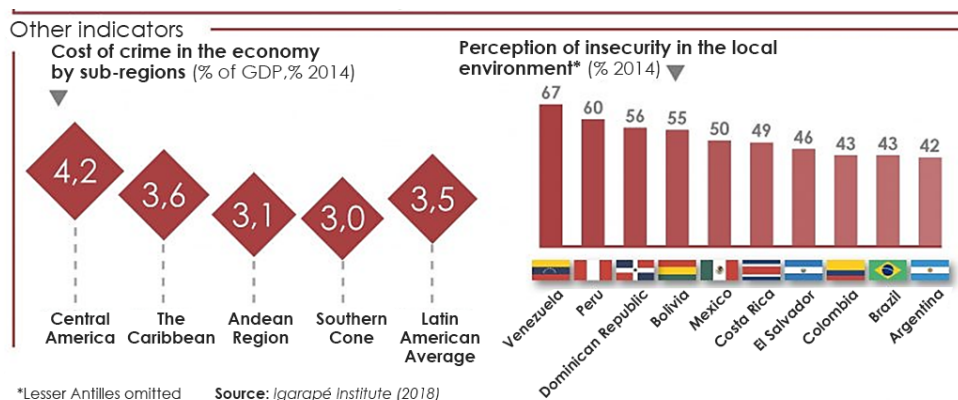


Figure 3. Perception of insecurity in the local environment and cost of crime in the economy by sub-regions.

Source: Hernández (2019).

Some of the most prominent security proposals in the region are based on the logic of promoting new mechanisms in the forms of policing management. Different approaches have been established that involve a new way of understanding and promoting security in cities. In this sense, the proposals include the articulated work between the institution and the population to meet the objectives of improving security conditions, achieving higher levels of citizen coexistence, generating processes with short and long-term results, and improving the confidence of the population in the police and other institutions responsible for ensuring the reduction of crimes and violent acts to improve security perceptions. "The absence of effective institutional

controls encourages the enactment of violent acts. The ineffectiveness of the judicial systems increases the lack of credibility of the population in the current institutional framework, including the police.” (Reyna & Toche, 2017)

One of the most representative examples of the application of the concept of citizen security in Latin America is the model of quadrant community policing surveillance in Colombia and the reform in the management of their functions. Through this model, mechanisms to promote population participation and higher levels of trust between civil society and the institution are established. The trust, in this case, is of a practical nature; it is built and remains in force while the interaction and exchange are maintained. Thus, the relationship between citizen participation and legitimacy is neither automatic or unidirectional (Moreno, 2015).

Community participation in the new policing management models

The new perspectives include mechanisms that promote the articulated work of the police and the population; it is about generating mechanisms that arouse and guarantee citizen participation in favor of crime reduction and risk prevention. Community participation in public management implies a process of social public policy construction. It is a right, responsibility, and a complement to the traditional mechanisms of political representation (Carta Iberoamericana de Participación Ciudadana en la Gestión Pública, 2009).

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the participation of communities in the prevention of crimes and contraventions has had a leading role in the public policies of various Latin American countries. This involvement has been mainly driven by the lack of credibility in the effective actions of the institutions responsible for ensuring the safety of citizens (Dammert, 2003), as well as the high rate of criminal indices and the population’s growing fear about the risks to which they are exposed.

The policies concerning these issues are aimed at reducing crimes and contraventions that endanger people’s safety; this is done through the potentializing and articulating of the relationship between the police and the community. The inhabitants of the territories acquire a fundamental role in the policies designed for that purpose, causing a paradigm shift, in which there is no *public security* but *democratic security* or *citizen security*. Thus,

Citizen participation in public policy has survived failed attempts and continues to be prescribed, encouraged, and strengthened because, in democracy, governments should not act unilaterally and in isolation. They are compelled to be held accountable and to allow, except in extraordinary situations of national security

or natural disasters, citizens (either individually or in an organized manner) to participate in the formulation, development, and scrutiny of policies. (Arellano & Blanco, 2013)

In practice, this has different implications. Processes must be generated in which citizen participation is encouraged to design and formulate policies and improve relations and degrees of trust with the police. However, this is not equally evident in all countries. In some, this remains at the discursive and ideological level, while in others, plans and actions that seek to achieve these objectives have been implemented.

Trust in government and its institutions is necessary to get citizens to cooperate with them, articulate their demands, and adhere to the law. However, the phenomenon of legitimacy is a genuine black box that is difficult to unravel. On the one hand, trust is necessary and depends on citizens considering that the government takes into account their interests. (Fung, 2016)

Considering the previous approaches, it can be concluded that citizen participation has three main objectives. The first is to improve and strengthen the relationship of the police with the inhabitants so that trust is restored, allowing joint work and actions to reduce crime and improve the wellbeing of the communities. The latter should support the police's actions while supporting the projects undertaken by the populations to improve the conditions in the territories.

The second objective involves the strengthening of the existing social networks so that they become human capital that favors security and the reduction of crimes and contraventions in the territories. This means that it is not only an articulation of the communities with the work of the police, but that the mechanisms must work in both ways. The police must also be able to insert itself in the actions developed and executed by the communities positively. Thus, social capital becomes the main strategy to prevent violence and reduce security risks that threaten populations.

The third objective is related to the populations' autonomy and resolve to have processes of their own that respond to their needs and requirements in terms of safety and well-being. In other words, decentralized participation exercises have been proposed that offer the inhabitants of the territory the ability to play an active role in the planning, formulation, and implementation of strategies that promote security and help reduce crime.

Bodies like the National Police of Colombia and the Federal Police of Mexico have strived to reach these objectives beyond the discourse, not only to achieve them but also reduce the citizens' distrust in the institution. In this regard, the Safe and

Peaceful Communities program was created in Colombia. This program focuses on prevention concerning coexistence and security to strengthen human capital to prevent crimes, contraventions, and safeguard the territory through a personal commitment. Similarly, the Federal Police of Mexico articulates the participation of the community through the *Centro de Atención Ciudadana* (Center for Citizen Attention) to strengthen, through different programs, the connection of society and the dignification of the police.

Although the concept and strategy of community policing for crime prevention and reduction have gained strength in Latin America only in the last few years, it is not a new phenomenon worldwide. It has been implemented in different parts of the world to generate positive response mechanisms to the problems caused by the abuse of power, lack of police effectiveness, and questions that revolve around their legitimacy. Thus, each country responds to its process by generating certain conditions that allow it to respond to the needs to implement the appropriate security mechanisms.

From the decade of 1980, a general debate began on the role of the police and the community in crime prevention. [...] The need for reform became more evident because of the evidence of corrupt and violent actions by members of the police institution, [...] which not only involved undue charges by police officers but also the commission of other crimes. (Dammert, 2003)

Although each country proposes a model for the implementation of security strategies concerning the community policing model, there are basic assumptions that are repeated in the different Latin American countries (Vanderschueren et al., 2004).

- Crime prevention and reduction strategies are proposed for small and specific geographical territories.
- Mechanisms are proposed to establish close and trusting relationships between the police and community to work jointly and permanently consult the inhabitants immersed in the dynamics and involved in the specificities of the territory. For this, it is essential to understand the perceptions of the communities encompassed in the plans and projects undertaken to improve security conditions and reduce crimes.
- The police must make different efforts and generate processes that allow them to mobilize the community in favor of preventive actions that give effective results in terms of the objectives set.
- Police management systems are designed to emphasize the efficient and effective resolution of problems, as well as prevention. That is, their personnel

should not be trained only to respond to calls from citizens but also to transcend that first instance.

- A new police priority scheme must be proposed so that the role of citizens is recognized in crime prevention, as well as in the deterring of conflicts and problems. The inhabitants' ability to generate solutions to problems and propose protection and prevention mechanisms are recognized.

Just as the management and implementation models of the community policing strategies vary from one country to another, the results are also diverse. However, it can be established that

In places where these programs are implemented, public confidence in the police is increased, and citizens express interest in a closer relationship. It is less clear that such plans imply a decrease in police abuse and that, in terms of results of decreased fear and victimization, they are conclusive (Vanderschueren et al., 2004)

Thus, while the efforts made by the police to generate an effective rapprochement with the community and the positive results seem obvious, it does not immediately translate into a trail of institutional changes or management on their part.

Community policing and proposals for effective outreach to the population

As we have seen so far, in the 20th century, traditional security models and police management methods existing in the vast majority of Latin American countries have proposed actions framed nationally and locally rather than on the welfare of the populations. However, since the beginning of the 21st century, the political security agendas have been positioned towards the implementation of new modalities that involve how the institutions responsible for citizen security provide their services. In this sense, it is essential to

understand community policing as a philosophy, a way of thinking, a way of feeling, and acting that police near the community should have, which is based on treating the public well, higher efficiency, and better police services. It is not a police force within a police force; it is the essence of the police effort. (Yépez, 2014)

However, the results obtained through the application of community policing models may differ considering the specifications, characteristics, dynamics, and priorities of each country where they are carried out, making it essential to develop an overview that accounts for the processes undertaken throughout the region. Throughout Latin America, there is a political projection regarding the functions of community

policing oriented towards the effective resolution of conflicts, restorative justice, and preventive actions against crimes and contraventions. In general, it can be stated that “in many countries of the world, through its implementation, significant reductions in crime rates have been achieved over the last decade, as well as an important collaboration relationship between the police and the community.” (Montbrun, 2002)

However, it is important to understand whether these new policing models, which are gaining increased strength in Latin America, can be understood as an effective way to build trust in citizenship towards the police apparatus in practice or if this effectiveness does not go beyond discourse. It must be noted that effective transformation encompasses different dimensions, such as articulation with communities, forms of conflict resolution, and internal organizational change, from which new mechanisms are stipulated in forms of protection and security mechanisms.

The progressive implementation of community policing programs is explained because it is a strategy whose principles coincide with those guiding the process of state reform in Latin America. In other words, economic and political motives lead to changes in the administration of the state that seeks to bring it closer to the citizen, to decentralize functions to local governments, and to make its operating principles more flexible. These changes, when they are transferred to the police organization, are adequately attuned to some concepts of community policing. (Frühling, 2009)

Different experiences wager on the implementation of plans and programs that promote the models of community processes.¹ However, there are weaknesses in the forms of evaluation and control to measure the effectiveness of the proposals and the new forms of police force management. A few years ago, the processes of measuring the impact of programs concerning the perceptions of security and the reduction of crime were not entirely reliable, as there was a need to promote methodologies and strategies that would enable accurate comparisons in the territories before and after the implementation of the new security proposals (Frühling, 2003).

Thanks to ECLAC's evaluations of “criminal violence and citizen security,” new challenges and proposals have been defined and implemented more recently, with forms of evaluation that generate structural processes and structural changes within the police force and in the ways of establishing relationships with communities. In

1 In this regard, we can mention the Neighborhood Community Participation Boards of Argentina, the Peacemaker Police Units of Brazil, the National Civil Police Project of Guatemala, the Quadrant Plan for Preventive Security of Policeman of Chile, and the National Quadrant Community Policing Plan of Colombia, among others.

this regard, it can be stated that, based on the application and execution of community policing programs, there has been an adequate response by the institution to the growing demands and requirements of the population. Thus, the evaluations and analyses carried out remain within a positive range of effectiveness concerning their plans, actions, and projects. "The available information indicates that where these programs are executed, public confidence in the police is increased and citizens express interest in a closer relationship with them." (Frühling, 2003)

Despite the previous statement, it is not possible to maintain the same validity and effectiveness against the results obtained regarding the internal organization and the treatment of the communities by the police. For this to be possible, it is necessary to initiate an alternative process undertaken as a matter of priority that allows the expected goals and projections to be achieved. On the other hand, one of the main contributions obtained through the application of community policing models in Latin America has to do with the forms of management formulated through a new internal value system, which proposes a decrease between the grades and ranks of hierarchies.

Faced with these changes, the suggestion is a police officer that works under a perspective of community effort and public order, with personnel trained to design different strategic solutions and have the capacity to respond to violent, criminal, and delinquent acts that occur in the territories. However, the effectiveness of the plan requires not only a change in the forms of management by the police force but the establishment of new mechanisms, implying a significant investment of capital and human resources, that is, with conditions granted by of the state to make its applicability possible (Salamanca, 2004).

The proposed reforms also include sensitization processes with the communities to overcome cultural restrictions and barriers, where the inhabitants of the territory's mistrust towards the institutions in the resolution of conflicts and problems often prevails. Despite the positive outcome of experiences shown throughout the article, it is recognized that most of the proposals introduced in Latin America are pilot tests that remain in a constant state of formulation, evaluation, and reformulation based on assessments and initial results. Similarly, because they are in a state of implementation, the proposed models do not cover the entire police force nor are they established in the same way throughout the national territory; therefore, they tend to give priority to the communities with the highest crime and contraventions rates (Frühling, 2011).

Thus, it has been established that the mechanisms proposed to encourage and improve relations between the police and the community are usually conceived under episodic and sporadic principles. This lack of continuity in the processes hinders the development of the population's credibility and trust in the police force. Therefore, it

has been impossible to establish and articulate long-term processes to generate a positive impact on the reduction of fully identified offenses, crimes, and contraventions.

Furthermore, the various studies carried out on citizen security in the region are unable to establish effective indicators for cultural and management changes in the police. The only available measurements are during the periods that they are in the territories, which does not impact the internal structure and organization of the institution. It can also be concluded that citizens are interested in consolidating to improve the security of the territories. However, a further organization is needed in the target areas by creating and executing new proposals that improve security and increase trust in institutions.

Implementation of the model and challenges in Latin America

Based on the analysis of community policing models in Latin America, there is general evidence of governments' concern and efforts to implement mechanisms that increase security awareness and decrease the crime and violence that threatens the well-being of communities. The mechanisms are aimed at improving relations between the police force and communities so that actions, programs, and projects are generated jointly. The objective, therefore, is to ensure that the inhabitants take ownership of the actions undertaken to improve security conditions and reduce criminal acts in the territories.

However, political will is not enough to generate positive results from the implementation of the new models. It is necessary to implement mechanisms that promote the execution of the models in the short and long-term, understanding that trust and institutional legitimacy are based on continuous actions that make communities feel supported and bolstered. In this sense, the changes undertaken encompass different dimensions of the social structure and organization. It is crucial and necessary to transform the actors involved in the process, namely, the government, the institutions, and the communities. Thus, participation mechanisms must be promoted to involve the populations in the processes and make them the ones who execute the evaluation exercises and the proposals to improve and overcome the drawbacks uncovered. Likewise, continuity is required from the governments so that the proposals can transcend the space and time of their execution.

The models have four basic characteristics that are flexible and adjust to the needs, requirements, and population dynamics of each country (Müller, 2012). The first one is community-based crime prevention in which the police institution makes an effective presence in the territories; that is, it is visible and accessible to the inhab-

itants of the territory to respond to their requirements and needs. In this scenario, the aim is for communities to see the police as a key player in preventing the crimes and conflicts that arise, which involves generating mechanisms that establish ties and bonds of trust between the inhabitants and the police to work in a coordinated manner.

The second characteristic is the redirection of patrolling to establish a deep connection with the community, thanks to the effective and immediate actions of the police. The third is based on increasing accountability to improve evaluation and control processes. The latter is the most important because it is a process that produces the decentralization of command, meaning that the police institution should have the capacity and autonomy to generate actions and mechanisms depending on the characteristics and specificities of the territory in which it is situated. Common results can be recognized from the execution of the models under these principles and assumptions, among which the following stand out (Frühling, 2004):

1. The implemented projects and forms of management have sustained positive results, which are recognized by the police institution and the communities.
2. Regarding the transformations in the police institutions, the changes have remained partial, without transcendent changes.
3. The proposals do not include the entire police force.
4. Although assertive community participation in the processes is evident, efforts need to be improved to ensure that the inhabitants of the territories become increasingly involved in the processes and articulate their initiatives. To do so, the confidence of the population in the institutions responsible for ensuring their safety must be improved; this is reinforced mainly in the most vulnerable areas and with higher rates of violence.

This model is projected as a proposal with favorable results. However, in order to obtain a practical application that transcends the discourses, it is necessary to promote mechanisms that include planning exercises, diagnoses, and continuous work with the communities. Therefore, the implementation time should not be constrained to the periods of the governments in office. The execution of a community policing model in each country responds to specific needs, and therefore not related to an exercise of formulation and application that is simple and immediate. Experiences and initiatives undertaken in other spaces with successful and effective results do not guarantee that the same results will be reached in different latitudes. Therefore, the adoption of new strategies and forms of management in the police force requires a prior assessment to make any necessary adjustments.

Conclusion

From the different experiences that have been carried out in Latin America, it can be seen how, from the initial approaches, similar objectives are proposed supported by strategies that make it possible to achieve goals and projections. In general, the proposals are aimed at providing welfare to communities by promoting a better quality of life. In this sense, the forms of management and actions assumed by police institutions are geared towards protecting the inhabitants of the territories against the crimes, offenses, and contraventions they face daily.

To effectively address the new security demands in each country, the entire police force must direct its efforts towards the achievement of these objectives. In other words, it is about managing institutional actions that guarantee the protection of the inhabitants of the territories. Meanwhile, through the application of the new models, promoting their participation in the reduction of crimes. Thus, one of the objectives of the different projects formulated for the implementation of the new forms of policing management is to promote actions, strategies, and mechanisms that allow guiding the forms of police management towards a community approach that achieves the resolution of conflicts and problems (Frühling, 2011).

A second objective is to improve the quality of the services provided by the institution by fulfilling its functions with greater efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness while respecting the citizens' rights and always ensuring their safety and welfare. To this end, specific actions are proposed to reduce crime, public disorder, and insecurity in general.

Finally, it is worth clarifying that the police management reforms and the new mechanisms through which the improvement of the security conditions of the territories are expected must be addressed gradually so that the transformations yield effective results in the short and long-term. Thus, making the actions of the police in Latin America efficient support to increase the communities' positive perceptions on security and guarantee the security of the territories thanks to the articulated effort.

As can be seen throughout this article, the models and management methods proposed in Latin America are important initiatives to involve communities in conflict resolution. However, the efforts made must transcend the capacity for immediate response and provide mechanisms that contribute to ensuring the participation of populations effectively over time.

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