

Mano Dura: the costs and benefits of repressive criminal justice for young people in Latin America

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“Tough on crime” approaches to public security have widespread popular appeal. Because they sound action-oriented and morally just, authoritarian and populist leaders routinely resort to such tactics. Referred to as “mano dura” (iron fist) in Latin America, presidents, governors and mayors across the left and right are often prepared to suspend the rights and freedoms of their citizens in the name of “public order”. Indeed, citizens frequently welcome heavy-handed policing, tough sentencing and mass incarceration so long as it is intended to stem the region’s above-average crime rates. Latin Americans have good reason to be uneasy: the region registers the world’s highest murder and victimization rates.

A principle focus of mano dura approaches is on penalizing young males. Specifically, young adolescents and youth are often constructed as the primary perpetrators of criminal violence across Latin America, regardless of whether the statistics bare this out. While young males are often disproportionately represented as perpetrators, they are also overwhelming among the main victims of crime and victimization. Between 2003-2014 in Latin America, an astonishing 90 percent of all documented homicides consisted of young males aged 15-29. Yet instead of being treated as victims, much less possible agents in preventing and reducing violence and constructing more peaceful societies, young men are instead constructed as a “threat” to be contained and detained.

Notwithstanding their immense popularity, mano dura interventions are rarely, if ever, effective. Even by their own measures of success, mano dura measures – including the expansion of police powers to arrest people for minor offences, reduction in procedural rights for suspects, and deployment of soldiers and paramilitaries to restore domestic security – often fail to reduce violent crime rates, lower impunity, deter future crime, or prevent re-offending. While they provide evidence of decisive action by politicians and police chiefs, they are also economically inefficient. They also have unintended consequences, including the stigmatization and rights violations of young people – especially poorer black and minority males.

An oft-overlooked question for proponents of mano dura-style approaches, indeed for all public security measures, relates to their intended outcomes. What are the desired metrics of success of a given strategy to prevent and reduce crime? In theory, the answer should be straightforward: reduce violent and non-violent crime and restore the public perception of safety and security. In practice, the answer may have less to do with the guarantee of public wellbeing and more to do with

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reducing threats to a given regime and ensuring the semblance of public order to maintain regime legitimacy. These distinctions in expected outcomes dramatically impact how one evaluates the success or failure of *mano dura* more generally.

This preliminary assessment reviews the characteristics of *mano dura* style measures in a selection of North and Latin American cases. *Mano dura* encompasses a host of legal and extra-legal measures focused on repressing, punishing and deterring crime. Where possible, the study assesses the costs and benefits associated with punitive measures, including in relation to human and material factors. In this study a broad range of dependent variables are considered – including changes in homicide and victimization on the one side and dollars spent and saved on the other. The assessment consists of a review of the literature rather than the administration of new cost benefit analysis *per se*.

The focus of this report is on the intended and unintended consequences of *mano dura* in Latin America. There is an emphasis on the consequences for young people, including both adolescents and youth (aged 15-29). The assessment draws on available evidence that, albeit patchy, offers a state of the art overview of the real costs and benefits of repressive approaches to public security and criminal justice provision. A parallel goal of the report is to also highlight the positive contribution of young people to promoting safety and security in their neighborhoods, communities, cities and countries. In this way, the report feeds into the preparation of a report on Youth, Peace and Security to be completed in 2018. The first section considers the definition of *mano dura*. Section two then examines discrete categories of *mano dura* intervention. Section three examines the costs and benefits of prevention, underlining the cost and benefits for every dollar invested. The conclusion highlights a number of key findings and insights.

Definitions

Many countries across Latin America emerged from decades of civil war and authoritarian rule between the 1960s-1980s with their military and paramilitary institutions left intact. During these wars and dictatorships, state institutions relied on their armed forces to undertake discretionary arrests, overrule procedural rights and patrol streets to maintain law and order.² Legislative changes were introduced to allow the criminalization of misdemeanors and courts routinely accepted extrajudicial confessions, the detention of suspects without charges, and indiscretions during periods of “emergencies”. Inmates frequently languished for years without access to special counsel. The over-riding objective was defense of the regime and state institutions over the protection of people and their civil rights.

The emergence and consolidation of *mano dura* style policies and practices since the 1980s and 1990s can be traced to a number of factors. The first is that historically high crime rates have ensured that “law and order” responses remain high on the political agenda. Hard-line and ideologically conservative politicians, backed by media, religious and industry representatives, are adamant to ensure the issue stays there. There are legitimate concerns with violence in Latin America – not least the persistent homicide rates across the region. In some cases, the fear of crime is commensurate with its objective prevalence. In others, hysteria has taken hold, often with backing from the conservative establishment of churches, business and civil society more generally.³

Not surprisingly, elected officials routinely increase incarcerations in response to citizen fears of crime (regardless of crime trends). Recent surveys show that public

² See Holland (2009).

³ See Garland (2008).

preoccupation with rising crime and victimization are associated with increasing support for authoritarian government⁴, due process restrictions, expanded police discretion and vigilante justice.⁵ Another impetus for *mano dura* is the persistent appeal of criminological and sociological theories that justify its imposition. For example, “zero tolerance” policies applying the so-called “broken windows” approach⁶ to crime prevention in North America are especially seductive, including in Latin America. Political leaders and police authorities routinely cite such approaches – and particularly the New York experience of the 1990s – as a justification for ratcheting up certain *mano dura* measures. Yet unlike the experience of North America, Latin American efforts to introduce zero tolerance lacked few formal checks and balances. What is more, zero tolerance was applied in situations where criminal justice institutions were weak and by poorly trained police and ineffective judicial and penal systems.⁷

Owing to the way it is applied in very different settings across Latin America, *mano dura* is easier to describe than to define. *Mano dura* policies and practices refer colloquially to the application of repression to address public order concerns.⁸ It is typically shorthand for hardline authoritarian and populist approaches to law and order and the excessive use of military and police force to address common crime. Examples of *mano dura* policies are widespread, particularly in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, but also in large parts of Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela. Practically speaking, *mano dura* policies can be distilled to three sets of measures. It is their combination, and not necessarily just one on its own, that demarcates *mano dura* from strict zero tolerance style approaches to criminal justice.

Figure x. The core characteristics of *mano dura* approaches

	Law enforcement	Courts	Penal
Cracking down on low level offenders and offences	Aggressive operations Arrests for minor offences Continual harassment	Changing laws to criminalize minor offences and some behaviors Mandatory sentencing laws	Preventive detention Imprisonment of any suspicious-looking youngster
Reduction and suspension of procedural rights	Unauthorized searches Forced confessions Increase of discretionary faculties	Extra-judicial confessions Pre-trial detention Lowered evidentiary standards	Reducing criminal age of responsibility Segregating gang leaders Torture

⁴ See LAPOP (2017) and Muggah and Winter (2017).

⁵ See Muggah and Winter (2017).

⁶ According to “broken windows” theory, petty crimes, intimidation, and physical deterioration are the principle causes of crime because they scare off law-abiding citizens and allow delinquency to take root in a given area. “Broken windows” suggest police can make areas safer by cracking down on minor “quality-of-life” offenses, like vandalism or panhandling, on the assumption that strict enforcement of the law against petty crime will prevent more serious crime from taking root. See Kelling and Wilson (1982) and Ungar (2008).

⁷ See Ungar (2008).

⁸ Informal police brutality (Pereira and Ungar 2006; Brinks 2003), politicians with authoritarian tendencies (Chevigny 2003), illiberal or nondemocratic political preferences (Pérez 2003; Seligson 2003; Malone 2010), and extrajudicial retribution committed by citizens (Godoy 2006; Goldstein et al. 2007).

Deployment of military and forceful policing	Deployment of military Use of paramilitary Massive police crackdowns Tolerance of vigilantism	Emergency laws suspending civil liberties and expanding military and police powers	Use of military prisons Use of severe punishments
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First, there is the amplification of police discretion to arrest suspects on subjective evidence and to impose criminal sentences for minor offences. As a result, police are granted license to sweep poor and marginal neighborhoods. They can search, seize and arrest people for civil misdemeanors including loitering, public nuisance, vagrancy or, more ambiguously, “no licit purposes” or “lacking an identity document”. Since the object of many mano dura approaches are “gangs” – from sophisticated maras to street-corner cliques – the result is typically rapid and targeted incarceration of young people.

Second, there is a reduction in the procedural rights that are guaranteed to suspects, including minors. They may include a combination of pre-trial detention, extrajudicial confessions, the rolling back of protections for young people (under 18), increased prevalence of unauthorized searches, and lowered evidentiary standards. They move beyond so-called “zero tolerance” strategies that target low-level crimes, since there are few safeguards for limiting police abuse and procedural guarantees for detainees.

In Brazil, for example, approximately 22,000 young people were housed in juvenile detention centers for minor infractions in 2014. Yet these facilities were designed to hold just 18,000 individuals and many are unable to provide adequate protection, rehabilitation or education for inmates.⁹ Meanwhile, in Colombia the police apprehended on average 53 minors (15-17) every day in 2016, many of them for petty theft and drug-related misdemeanors. And in Mexico, a total of 16,885 adolescents were imprisoned in 2014: some 4,558 (27 per cent of the total) were deprived of their liberty due to serious crimes.¹⁰

Third, there is a wide application of militarized police and the armed forces to guarantee internal security. The involvement of soldiers in domestic security reverses decades of efforts to ensure civilian oversight and investment in civic police forces. Most constitutions allow the deployment of military during “national crises” as a temporary measure for exceptional circumstances. Mano dura interventions mobilize a more permanent use of military assets to control organized crime, and predominantly gangs under the rubric of “peace” and “order”. In many countries, institutional reforms have not contributed to meaningful institutional change: police corporations are frequently skeptical and resist change.¹¹ As a result, regressive organizational cultures persist, many of them committed to heavy-handed repressive approaches to policing.

Cracking down on low level offenders and offences

Mano dura measures can manifest in that the ways that law enforcement and criminal justice policies, agencies and personnel address low-level crime. In extreme cases, emergency laws may be introduced to increase the discretionary

⁹ See Griffin (2017).

¹⁰ See Azaola (2015).

¹¹ See Frühling (2003).

authority of law enforcers and other security auxiliaries. Large-scale operations may be conducted by police that apply excessive force for minor offences and crack down on civil liberties. More commonly, law makers may introduce tougher sentencing laws to facilitate the criminalization of specific crimes and offender groups, most often youth.

Emergency legislation

Mano dura legislation typically focuses on toughening criminal codes, lengthening prison terms and encouraging judges to apply maximum penalties. A classic example of this comes from the anti-mara law enacted in El Salvador in July 2003. This act, known as the *Ley Anti-Maras* facilitates the detention and prosecution of suspected gang members based on the newly classified felony of “illicit association”, or gang membership. Under this law, suspects were identified based on flimsy evidence such as tattoos.¹² Between July 2003 and August 2004, roughly 20,000 *mareros* were arrested, many of them teenagers and young men. Approximately 95 percent of them were eventually released without charge after the Mano Dura Law was declared unconstitutional by the Salvadoran Supreme Court for violating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹³ During that period, the country's homicide rate rose from six to seven murders per day.¹⁴

Similar emergency legislation was passed in Honduras in 2003. Specifically, the Honduran parliament revised article 332 of the penal code, and established the first “anti-gang law” in all Central America. The law ensured that young people could be charged with “illicit association” simply due to their physical appearance. The law catalyzed massive round-ups and vastly expanded the prison population. It presaged the growing militarization of the security system as a whole, with the application of curfews, crackdowns on non-violent offenders, and widespread imprisonment of minors.¹⁵ Between 2003 and 2006, at least 6,711 gang members were arrested for illicit association, 66 percent of whom were eventually released.¹⁶

Across Central America, mano dura style legislation continues to be popular. In some cases, it is connected to the wider “counter-terrorism” and “war on terror” discourse made popular since 9/11. In October 2016, for example, El Salvador initiated the Special Law Against Acts of Terrorism and ten years later, after abandoning a truce with gangs, public authorities passed new anti-gang measures that classified gangs as “terrorist” organizations. Meanwhile, in 2015, Honduras strengthened its legislation to combat gang activity by enacting stricter prison sentencing guidelines and new legislative tools for prosecuting gang members, increasing prison terms for recruits for up to 30 years. What is more, in May 2017, Guatemalan legislators have proposed a new bill with similar features to El Salvador and Honduras. It is aimed at criminalizing the country's gangs by increasing fines and prison sentences for suspected members.¹⁷

A central problem is the continued representation of young people as a “threat” in the Northern Triangle. Many young people – including large numbers of poor, under-educated and un- or underemployed male youth – are connected in the popular media and public discourse to gangs. At the same time gangs are themselves associated with the most violent forms of organized crime and subjected to a high degree of repression, while the underlying factors incentivizing

¹² See International Crisis Group (2017).

¹³ See Hume (2007).

¹⁴ See García (2015).

¹⁵ See International Crisis Group (2017).

¹⁶ See García (2015).

¹⁷ See Insight Crime (2017).

gang membership – failure of social and economic integration, broken families and weak social welfare systems, and persistent cultures celebrating machismo – are glossed over. Most of the wider public inevitably shares this bias, contributing to grater stigmatization, and further limiting possibilities for gang exist.¹⁸

Aggressive police and military operations

Aggressive police operations designed to stamp out low level offences are a common feature of *mano dura* from Brazil and Colombia to Central America, Mexico and the US. Typically such approaches are described as “zero tolerance”. While focused on curbing supposed criminal behaviors in designated hot spots, they typically ignore the underlying social and economic factors shaping crime in targeted areas.¹⁹ The metrics of success emphasize stops, searches, arrests, drug and arms seizures. Owing to their discriminatory and forceful nature – focused as they are on poorer black or minority male youth, they often come under heavy criticism from the human rights community. They can also undermine the trust and confidence in public institutions necessary to more effective community-based policing.

Across the northern triangle youth violence is strongly associated with drug trafficking and organized crime, which represents the primary threat to national security. It is thus elevated to the highest priority in discussions of public security. Meanwhile, *mano dura* approaches have contributed to systemic violations of the human rights of children, adolescents and youth, including torture, rape, and extrajudicial executions by agents of state security forces and related groups.²⁰ In Honduras, according to the information from the Public Prosecutor’s Office, most of the complaints reported to the District Attorney’s Office and human rights bodies are directed against police, with incidents such as unlawful entry and search, abuse of authority, and false imprisonment.²¹ In its 2014 World Report, Human Rights Watch also documented extrajudicial killings and disappearances carried out by the police.²²

Similar types of practices are common across South America. In Brazil, public authorities have a long tradition of applying *mano dura* style measures to quell crime and disorder. State governors routinely request support from the armed forces to reinforce urban operations. State military and civil police are often aligned with militia and extra-judicial actors. And official state policies frequently reinforce repressive policing. Take the case of the *Gratificação por Pecúnia* that provided financial rewards to police demonstrating “toughness” on the beat – promoting repressive policing instead of trust building with communities. The strategy spurred on both police violence and violent crime in Rio de Janeiro:²³ Amnesty International estimated that around 8,500 residents were killed due to police interventions between 2005 and 2014²⁴.

Meanwhile, in Colombia, a 2006 Presidential Decree issued Bonuses for Operations of National Importance (BOINA). BOINA contributed to the so-called “false positive case”²⁵ – wherein the armed forces falsely described slain civilians as guerilla combatants. The decree rewarded army members with up to 12 times their monthly

¹⁸ See Aguilar and Rossini (2012).

¹⁹ See Klisberg (2008).

²⁰ See Interpeace (2009).

²¹ See La Tribuna (2015).

²² Human Rights Watch (2014).

²³ See Djalma and Machado (2012) and Hinton (2006).

²⁴ See Igarapé Institute (2016).

²⁵ See United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2013).

salary for participating in successful operations of “national importance” against the insurgency.²⁶ According to data from the Colombian National Center for Historical Memory, in 2015 there were 5,700 complaints and 3,430 investigations by the National Attorney Office regarding false positives.²⁷ According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, that same year as many as 5,000 civilians may have been executed, most of them young males.²⁸

In Mexico, Felipe Calderon’s administration (2006-2012) introduced a National Security Policy that put the Federal Armed Forces (FAF) in charge of managing a wide range of national public security matters. The policy was implemented in response to spiraling violence in the country (9.7 homicides per 100.000 inhabitants in 2007 as compared to 17.9 murders per 100,000 in 2010), much of it drug-related. According to data from the Mexican Ministry of Defense (SEDENA), operations against drug trafficking increased exponentially from 1 in 2002 to 86 by 2010. Meanwhile, complaints filed against SEDENA to the National Commission of Human Rights (CNDH) also rose dramatically from 182 in 2006 to 1.415 in 2010. Mid-way through the Peña Nieto’s administration²⁹ the federal police were killing 4.8 civilians for every civilian injured, while the military’s ratio reached 7.9.³⁰

The excessive use of force by police is systemic and corrosive. According to the Americas Barometer, a victimization survey, there is considerable variation in reported police abuse: Argentina, El Salvador, Bolivia, and Colombia report the highest levels of police abuse.³¹ A review of the data also suggests that respondents who are more civically and politically active were more likely to report police abuse. Likewise, young people under 25 and male were dramatically more inclined to report police abuse than females.³² This may be because they are also disproportionately represented as victims: people under 25 years of age tend to be victimized by the police nearly four times more than people older than 66 years.³³ One of the main reason for this is that most of the crime fighting effort is directed against what is usually considered the typical delinquent profile: young, low-income men who gather in groups in public spaces; and second, people living on the street.³⁴

Recent evidence shows that there is a positive relationship between a country’s murder rate and the overall share of killings committed by the police. In El Salvador for example, one of the countries with the higher murder rates in the world, 17 per cent of the fatal shootings in 2015 were committed by the police. Although the proponents of mano dura policing argue that these high ratios might be the result of Latin American police officers facing frequent dangerous encounters, recent data has contradicted this thesis by showing that the ratio of people killed by police to

²⁶ See Acemoglu, et al (2017).

²⁷ See Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2015).

²⁸ The disappearance of 19 young people in Soacha - in southwest Bogotá, alerted the authorities to this phenomenon. These youths were deceived with false promises of work then assassinated by members of the Colombian Army, who presented them like members of the guerrillas killed in combat. Most of the victims of “false positive” cases were young men. Ibid.

²⁹ See Silva, et al (2012).

³⁰ See Silva et al (2015).

³¹ See Cruz (2009).

³² Some 7.2% of males reported being victims of police misconduct, whereas only 2.9% of females declared they were victims.

³³ See Cruz (2009).

³⁴ See Lemaitre and Albarracín (2012).

police officers killed by suspects in such places is higher than 10:1, implying the serious misuse of force.³⁵

Mandatory sentencing laws

Common strategies employed by supporters of *mano dura* and zero tolerance to crack down on certain offenders are strict mandatory sentencing laws. Despite their popularity, there is comparatively limited evidence of their effectiveness, including in relation to youth crime. To the contrary, there is significant criminological evidence that the lack of effective deterrence arising from these measures can actually increase incidences of recidivism. The central argument for mandatory sentencing is that enhanced punishments and sanctions can deter future criminals from committing future crime and reduce recidivism. This theory of change does not always hold in practice. Regardless, the nature, scope and approach of habitual offender statutes vary around the world. They typically involve mandatory sentences and involve imposing longer prison sentences on offenders.

The fact that young inmates frequently re-offend on departure suggests that youth detention is an inefficient approach to steering delinquents away from crime, much less rehabilitation. There is ample evidence of this from the US. In Florida, some 70 to 80 percent of incarcerated youth are rearrested within three years after leaving jail often committing even worse crimes.³⁶ Incarceration is no more effective than alternative sanctions in reducing youth criminality. A 2009 study of more than 1,300 juvenile offenders compared youth sentenced to juvenile corrections facilities versus similar youth who remained in their community under probation supervision. It concluded that there was no marginal gain in placing youth in a correctional institution compared to alternative sanctions.³⁷ Indeed, another study administered in Virginia concluded that low-risk youth released from correctional facilities had substantially higher rearrests rates than similar youth placed on probation³⁸.

There are at least three types of mandatory sentences. First, there are mandatory sentences that allow no discretion above a specific sentence (typically murder). Second, there are minimum sentences of imprisonment that require a sentence of a given set of years. Third, there are mandatory sentences that allow the court to impose lesser, or even non-custodial sentences. In Brazil, for example, it is recommended that stiffer penalties are applied to a smaller number of criminals responsible for violent crimes rather than punishing large numbers of low-level and not-yet adjudicated individuals.

While there is support for habitual offending legislation in some parts of the world, it is declining in many western countries.³⁹ Indeed, most legal scholars recommend a degree of proportionality in sentencing. The principle of letting the punishment fit the crime is a mainstay of most criminal justice systems. Individuals should not be jailed for life for minor offences, even if they are repeat offenders. Nor should people with addiction problems be criminalized – harm reduction strategies are vastly more effective and appropriate. According to some criminologists, the swiftness and certainty of punishment matters more than severity when it comes to

³⁵ See Osse and Cano(2017)

³⁶ **See Dadi (2017).**

³⁷ The Annie E. Case Foundation (2011).

³⁸ Ibid, page 12.

³⁹ The practice of mandatory and habitual offender laws is heavily criticized. A combination of advocacy groups, political parties, academics, criminal justice professionals and judges are at the forefront. It is important to stress that there are still comparatively few studies evaluating impacts on prison populations or crime rates. Those that have been conducted show comparatively limited results.

deterring crime. This in practice implies that impunity reduction together with policing and courts is more important than sentence length.

To be sure, punitive drug law enforcement has failed to protect young people from the negative consequences resulting from the consumption of illicit drugs.⁴⁰ To the contrary. Harsh penalties have rendered drug use far more risky and has generated stigma and discrimination among young drug users even when they are not problematic consumers. Moreover, such laws have pushed drug use into unsafe and unsanitary environments, further jeopardizing the health of young people who use them. They have also deterred young individuals from seeking treatment owing to a fear of judgment or arrest.⁴¹ Punitive drug laws have also adversely affected drug education since young people are mistrustful of government policies. As a result, young and adults most in need of assistance are least likely to access programs that seek to help them to overcome their addiction.⁴²

The criticisms of mandatory sentencing are various.⁴³ First, since the laws cannot define every conceivable circumstance of similar offenses, they eliminate critical judicial discretion. In this way, they shift it to police and prosecutors. Second, the increase in penalties for offenses does not necessarily deter potential offenders from committing said offense (since it is the speed and certainty of punishment rather than its severity that seems to matter). Third, mandatory laws can impose increased costs on the criminal justice system by reducing plea bargains and increasing trial costs and pre-trial detention. Finally, there are less severe and costly sentencing alternatives that can reduce specific crimes at lower cost.

Reduction in procedural rights for offenders

Mano dura approaches frequently over-ride the basic rights of offender groups, especially young people. Aggressive policing is common, including stop and searches, as are forceful targeted interventions focusing on "at-risk" youth. There are often controversial efforts undertaken to adapt criminal and penal codes to reduce the age of criminal responsibility. Similarly, new laws may be introduced to ensure more severe sentencing for adults and juveniles alike. There are also frequently efforts to segregate and contain prisoners once they are in jails, often with highly unsatisfactory results.

Although there is limited research about the relationship between police and young people, most studies indicate that adversarial contact between police and young men is of common-place.⁴⁴ Studies conducted in the UK exposed reveal that between a third and one half of all young people aged 11 to 15 have had experience of adversarial contact with the police⁴⁵. As might be expected, such contact is especially prevalent among children who are serious and persistent offenders. Additional factors that place children at risk of adversarial police contact include gender (being male) and coming a less affluent background.⁴⁶

A research conducted in New York between 2012 and 2013 determined that stop and frisk, a tactic used by police involving temporarily detaining and searching

⁴⁰ See EMCDDA (2011), Degenhardt et al (2008), The Organization of American States (2014), Rhodes (2002).

⁴¹ See Rhodes (2002).

⁴² See Count the Costs of the War on Drugs (2015).

⁴³ See Roberts et al (2005).

⁴⁴ See McAra and McVie (2005).

⁴⁵ See Anderson, et.al (1994), Jamieson, et al (1999).

⁴⁶ See McAra and McVie (2005).

suspects engaged in criminal activity, increased violent encounters with the law.⁴⁷ Young people in particular experience intimidation, verbal abuse and physical violence in their interactions with police. For example, another study conducted in Australia found out that 50 per cent of the 383 young participants that were taken to a police station said they were yelled or sworn at (70 per cent), pushed around (55 per cent) or physically beaten (40% percent).⁴⁸

A common feature of *mano dura* is the lengthening of prison sentences for inmates for both violent and non-violent offences, especially drug-related charges. The logic is that stiff sentencing and robust detention will deter future perpetration of crime. There is, however, comparatively limited evidence that such measures are effective as a deterrent. Moreover, there is comparatively limited research demonstrating that longer and more severe prison terms contribute to reducing recidivism and re-offending. To the contrary, there is growing evidence suggesting that stronger penalties may reverse, and even strengthen the power of organized crime, including prison gangs with youth membership.

Prisons have provided ideal locations for young gang members to become more cohesive from Colombia, Brazil and Mexico to Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. When confronted with repression and zero tolerance, youth gangs have adapted by developing higher levels of organization and forming underground networks that are more difficult to identify and confront. Hardline policing strategies designed to break up and defeat youth "street corner" gangs have led some of them to more closely resemble organized criminal groups.⁴⁹ One of the main factors increasing delinquent behavior is affiliation with other juveniles with criminal records.⁵⁰

Lowering the age of criminal responsibility

Another common tactic associated with *mano dura* is lowering the criminal age of responsibility. There is no globally agreed standard for setting the age of criminal responsibility. The UN has defined children as under the age of 18, but this has not necessarily translated into legal commitments from states or changes in criminal justice systems. While many states abide by UN standards for the proper administration of justice for juveniles⁵¹, there are also instances of states lowering the minimum age of criminal responsibility. It is not recommended to lower the age of criminal responsibility, though it is reasonable to explore opportunities to tighten sentencing procedures for exceptionally violent juvenile offenders.⁵²

⁴⁷ See Geller et.al (2014).

⁴⁸ See Crime and Misconduct Commission of Queensland (2009).

⁴⁹ See WOLA (2006).

⁵⁰ See World Bank (2011).

⁵¹ See Rules of Beijing (Res. 40/43. Ass. Gen. U.N. 1985), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Ass. Gen. U.N., 1989), the UN VI Congress (Havana, 1990), particularly Resolution II concerning the protection of minors deprived of liberty. Brazil is a signatory to the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (ratified in Brazil in 1948) and the Pact of San José, Costa Rica (ratified in Brazil in 1992), the Rules of the United Nations for the Protection of Young People Deprived of Freedom; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Brazil ratified the text in 1990).

⁵² As one criminal justice specialist noted, "90% of all kids will age out of crime naturally and benefit from limiting their contact with authorities, while 10% are career violent offenders just getting started. Both need to be addressed, providing pathways out of the system for most, while holding on to the riskiest ones to protect society." Interview with Thomas Abt, 1 October 2017.

Around the world, states adopt different approaches to setting the adult and juvenile ages of criminal responsibility. The US sets the age of criminal responsibility at both the federal and the state level. At the state level, 33 states have set no minimum age of criminal responsibility that theoretically allows children of all ages to be sentenced, albeit in juvenile justice systems. In all states, however, a capacity related test is applied. Meanwhile in those states that do set an age of criminal responsibility, North Carolina and Wisconsin set the lowest bar at seven and 13 respectively, again, in the context of juvenile justice systems.⁵³

Meanwhile, in Latin America, a number of states have also taken moves to lower the criminal age of responsibility. Argentina proposed a reduction from 16 to 14 in 2011, but this never passed. Bolivia passed a similar lowering of age from 16 to 14 in 2014. In Brazil, lawmakers are seeking to pass a legislative amendment to the Constitution to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 18 to 16.⁵⁴ Uruguay expected to host a referendum on whether to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 18 to 16, but the proposal was rejected in 2014 due to a lack of votes. In Mexico the juvenile system applies to children and adolescents aged 12-18, though the precise application varies from state to state. Finally, in 2012 Peruvian legislators presented a bill to lower the criminal age of responsibility from 18 to 16 for "serious crimes" (e.g. homicide, kidnapping rape), but this has not passed.

Mass incarceration

Most countries across the Americas suffer from mass incarceration policies and prison overcrowding. Take the case of Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and the US, where prisons are far above their carrying capacity. The rapid increase of inmates is due to stricter penalties and longer sentences rather than increased apprehensions. Punitive strategies overwhelmingly affect the poor and most inmates are charged with minor offences.⁵⁵ The costs of building prisons and incarcerating inmates run in the hundreds of millions and are vastly disproportionate to non-custodial options.

Prisons have a mixed record in ensuring any meaningful rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates into society.⁵⁶ Indeed, even when more humane and harm reduction approaches are pursued, the results are highly uneven. Instead, there is an abundant literature on the ways in which the penal system can reinforce patterns of criminal behavior. Where prisons are overcrowded and suffer from poor

⁵³ See Cipriani (2009).

⁵⁴ The proposed legislation requires approval and may, even if approved, be unconstitutional. The call for lowering the criminal age of responsibility in Brazil is driven by popular concerns with crime in cities. There are two basic arguments justifying the reform. The first is that adults use adolescents as a "longa manus" for criminal acts and that special treatment of minors limits crime prevention efforts. The second is the current laws are outdated, and that adolescents have the capacity to understand their acts. At 16, Brazilians are entitled to vote and increasing access to education and information accelerates their awareness.

⁵⁵ A study by Bergman et al (2014) found that more than half of all inmates reported in selected Mexican prisons were in on minor offences (theft of \$280 or less).

⁵⁶ There is an ongoing debate about the rehabilitative potential of prisons and the effects of post-prison support in the Americas. There is some evidence indicating that the provision of services to the families of recently released prisoners can generate positive outcomes for former inmates, including lower rates of physical, mental, and emotional duress, reduced problematic drug use, and declines in recidivism.

conditions, there are also impacts on inmate emotional and psychological wellbeing. Such environments can induce hostile and aggressive behavior, which increases the probability of recidivism.⁵⁷ Even when prisoners are released, the stigma of a criminal record reduces their chances of being hired.⁵⁸

Severe containment-based approaches to controlling and managing prisoners likely reinforce delinquent behavior. There is increasing reliance on sophisticated and expensive security hardware and surveillance technology: metal detectors, x-ray machines, leg irons, waist chains, handcuffs, holding cages, "violent prisoner restraint chairs," psychiatric screens, chain-link fences, concertina wire, tasers, stun guns, pepper spray, tear gas canisters, gas grenades, and, in some jurisdictions, a wide array of civilian and military firepower.⁵⁹ All of these measures are inconsistent with harm reduction and more humane standards to prisoner care.

Mass incarceration has a range of negative repercussions on families, including children and youth. Studies from the US show that parental separation can generate profound impacts on the emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing of young people under 18.⁶⁰ The immediate effects include feelings of shame, social stigma, loss of financial support, weakened ties to the parent, poor school performance, increased delinquency, and increased risk of abuse or neglect. The longer-term impacts as they become young adults can range from the questioning parental authority, negative perceptions of police and the legal system, and increased dependency or maturational regression to impaired ability to cope with future stress or trauma, disruption of development, and intergenerational patterns of criminal behavior.⁶¹

Excessive incarceration of young people also has deleterious knock-on social and economic effects outside the prison gates. In the US, for example, the official poverty rate would have fallen between 1980 – 2004 had it not been for mass incarceration which undermines productivity.⁶² Statistically speaking, the net impacts of incarceration on poverty are substantial.⁶³ Mass incarceration also disrupts a neighborhood's informal mechanisms of social control and social support by, for instance, breaking-up families, reducing the purchasing power of neighborhoods, increasing reliance on government support programs, and heightening barriers to legitimate labor opportunities, development and financial well-being that might otherwise have been the case.⁶⁴

Excessive detention due to drug offences has also deprived many children and young people of parental supervision. In the US for example, 55 per cent of the women and 69 per cent of the men held in federal prisons for drug offences had children. The impacts on future generations can be traumatic. Indeed, child-parent separation can give rise to a host of emotional, psychological and social problems

⁵⁷ See Haney (2006).

⁵⁸ See Gottschalk (2011).

⁵⁹ See Haney (2006)

⁶⁰ Prisoners' children are more likely to be mentally ill with depression, anxiety, and aggressive behaviors- to be worsening on black children. See Gottschalk (2011). This research drew from 6,000 children, adolescents, and young adults in Chicago over three waves of data collection from 1994 to 2002. The FFCW followed roughly 5,000 children born between 1998 and 2000 in 20 large cities.

⁶¹ See Travis, Cincotta and Solomon (2005).

⁶² There is a two-way causality between poverty and incarceration rates implies a type of positive feedback loop, where rising incarceration rates create conditions that beget even higher rates of imprisonment (Haney, 2006).

⁶³ See DeFina and Hannon (2013).

⁶⁴ See DeFina and Hannon (2013).

for the child, many of whom are already raised in households struggling with poverty, debt, discrimination and limited educational and employment opportunities. Children of incarcerated parents are at greater risk of suffering from depression and becoming aggressive and register substantially worse social and other non-cognitive skills at school entry.⁶⁵

Tightening penalties on gang leaders

A particular focus of *mano dura* strategies is containing and controlling high-level leaders of drug trafficking and organized factions. Overt and covert strategies of control have limited, and often unintended, consequences on deterring future crimes, on limiting in-prison violence, on reducing recidivism and even on the organization of criminal economies. The most common measure – the segregation or transfer of gang leaders to different prison units – reveals marginal to no effect on in-prison inmate or staff safety.⁶⁶ What is more, mass segregation is widely considered a failure.

Meanwhile, there is anecdotal evidence from the U.S. that segregating a very small number of violent inmate leaders can yield some positive effects.⁶⁷ The application of segregation for gang leaders is widespread, but highly criticized and declining.⁶⁸ In the US, unlimited isolation of imprisoned gang leaders is less common in the wake of a series of class action suits.⁶⁹ In most US states, for example, segregation is permitted only for inmates who commit new crimes behind bars. Inmates can no longer be locked in soundproof, windowless cells. Former US President Obama and US Supreme Court Justice Judge Kennedy strongly condemned year-long segregation. Today there is disagreement on whether and when it is appropriate, whether it is effective and what kinds of viable alternatives exist.

Prisons have introduced overt and covert strategies to control leaders. The most obvious example of an overt measure are super max prisons themselves that are designed to segregate. Maximum security institution efforts to harden environments has had mixed effects. Efforts to block social bonding through extreme segregation, for example, can have the reverse effect. In institutions where prison management controls are weak and where officials violate inmate rights, this can reinforce gang formation.⁷⁰ Others include the use of segregation units for selected prison gang members⁷¹, the isolation of prison gang leaders, the lockdown of entire institutions, the more aggressive prosecution of criminal acts committed by prison members, the interruption of prison gang members' internal and external communications, and case-by-case examination of gang offenses.

⁶⁵ See Glaze and Maruschak (2010) and Human Rights Watch (2002).

⁶⁶ See de Souza Briggs et al (2003), Sundt et al (2008), and Wooldredge and Steiner (2015).

⁶⁷ Interview with Thomas Abt, October 2017.

⁶⁸ The Association of State Correctional Administrators (2015) estimates that there were between 80,000-100,000 inmates in restricted housing in 2014. Most experts agree it is overused.

⁶⁹ The Center for Constitutional Rights has filed class-action federal lawsuits on behalf of inmates that are held in segregation in California. The suits focus on the cruel and unusual punishment of isolating prisoners in small cells with limited external contact. See *Ashker v. Governor of California* (2012).

⁷⁰ See Fong et al (1992); Diulio (1987); Ralph and Marquart (1999).

⁷¹ Administrative segregation is designed to incapacitate inmates by removing them from the general prison population, deter inmates from misconduct, and normalize facilities. See Sundt (2016).

Latin American penal authorities have also pursued strict approaches to controlling leaders of organized crime groups applying many of the same approaches as those tested in the US. But owing to major institutional failings, the outcomes are highly uneven. From Mexico and Central America to Colombia and Venezuela, for example, new maximum security facilities have become notorious for human rights abuses and appalling conditions resulting in their closure. El Salvador has imposed strict security features and regimes to break the control of criminal organizations. It is worth noting that in 2015, El Salvador also reversed its policy of segregating prisoners according to gang affiliation. Instead, authorities now separate inmates based on their relative “threat” or “risk” to society rather than gang affiliation (whether MS13 or Barrio 18). Gang leaders are also imprisoned in a separate maximum security prison. This change marks a major departure from accepted practice over the past 10 years.

Deployment of military and paramilitary

Military and paramilitary responses to domestic crime challenges can undermine democratic legitimacy and basic norms of human rights and procedural justice. Their use virtually always results in the excessive use of force since militaries are organized according to vertical and inflexible command structures and strategies designed to eliminate the enemy. By contrast, law enforcement agencies are expected to minimize the use of violent force and establish a tighter relationship with communities.⁷²

There are many examples of the use of military and paramilitary assets to address regional and domestic crime challenges. Their impacts on stabilizing crime-affected areas and deterring specific perpetrators of crime are mixed. On the one hand, there are occasions where the use of soldiers to “pacify”, “occupy”, and “contain” can have a calming effect, albeit time-bound. On the other, there is considerable evidence that such strategies – alongside “counter-narcotics” and “counter-insurgency” measures – also result in widespread and routine violations of human rights, including lethal violence, disappearances, torture and more.

The deployment of military and paramilitary assets for domestic law and order virtually always increases overall violent mortality. In Mexico, military interventions since 2006 resulted in year-on-year increases in the average homicide rate in selected municipalities. While the overall long-term tendency was increasing homicides, the estimated effects of the deployment of armed forces varied considerably across the 18 treated areas.⁷³ Meanwhile, in Brazil, there is evidence that military measures and the deployment of military police and soldiers can also contribute to disproportionate violence against citizens.⁷⁴ These effects are more pronounced in states led by right-leaning officials.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, the use of soldiers and paramilitaries to fight drugs production, trafficking and consumption has also generated major unintended consequences. With widespread public support⁷⁶, military expenditures on counter-narcotics have

⁷² See Dammert and Bailey (2007).

⁷³ See Espinosa and Rubin (2015).

⁷⁴ See Ahnen (2007).

⁷⁵ In Brazil (1994-2001), governors on the right end of the spectrum are associated with significantly greater rates of killing by the military and civil police forces. Partisanship was shown to be a robust explanatory variable in predicting rates of police violence using both raw data and superior estimates, though not the only or even the most important determinant (Ahnen, 2007).

⁷⁶ Not surprisingly, there is considerable public support for tough on drugs approaches across the Americas. A 2010 survey in Mexico revealed that 57% of the

ballooned over the past few decades. Between 2009 and 2013, for example, the United States spent approximately \$12.5 billion in drug control measures in Latin America. Since 2008, while aid to Central America was on the rise - especially due to the implementation of the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), the military and police assistance to the rest of the region was declining (in 2013 the support to Colombia was at its lowest point \$279 million).⁷⁷

Likewise, from 1999 to 2009, US military forces trained more than 141,000 Latin American military personnel, though the costs of these programs are exceedingly difficult to measure. In El Salvador, 8,000 troops are involved in internal security efforts, while in Guatemala, fewer than ten per cent of the country's 9,000 soldiers perform traditional military functions.⁷⁸ More ominously, many of these soldiers go on to desert and join organized crime groups⁷⁹.

The militarization of drug law enforcement is unlikely to reduce drug-market related violence. Instead, the existing evidence suggests that gun violence and high homicide rates may be an inevitable consequence of drug prohibition and that disrupting drug markets can paradoxically increase violence. For example, in over 90% of empirical research assessed by researchers there was a significant association detected between drug law enforcement and increases in violence, especially among young people.⁸⁰

The costs of waging a war on drugs are not just ineffective, they have also been grossly inefficient and damaging. The Colombian government has devoted more than \$1.2 billion a year but there is little evidence that drug production (and consumption) has reduced.⁸¹ Instead, the continued reliance on repressive and prohibitionist approaches has strengthened the criminal market, expanded violations of human rights, increased the prison population, displaced drug production and transit to new areas, diverted resources from the health and education sectors to the security sector, devastated areas involved in production, and stigmatized users.⁸² These effects are disproportionately felt directly and indirectly by adolescent and youth.

There are multiple spillover effects associated with militarizing public security. For example, there is evidence that the transfer and use of military assets - including weaponry and vehicles - significantly increases the number of civilian fatalities in a wide range of settings. In the US, for example, a statistical study examined some 1,033 transfers of military equipment to local law enforcement agencies. A spike in police violence, evidenced by the rise of the number of observed annual police killings and the increasing use of military-style tactics to solve domestic crime problems was detected in an statistical analysis based on data from four states (i.e. Connecticut, Maine, Nevada and New Hampshire) between 2006 to 2014.⁸³

Assessing the costs and benefits of prevention

citizens believed the military should oversee all activities related to countering drug trafficking.

⁷⁷ See Isacson and Kinoshian (2013).

⁷⁸ See Meyer and Seelke (2015).

⁷⁹ Between 2000 and 2006 there were 123,218 military desertions in Mexico. The Zetas in Mexico are made up primarily of deserters of special and elite forces, trained in anti-drug and anti-terrorist operations. See Moloeznik and Suárez de Garay (2012).

⁸⁰ See Werb et al (2011).

⁸¹ See Mejía and Csete (2016).

⁸² See Global Commission on Drug Policy (2014, 2011).

⁸³ See Delehanty, Mewhirter, Welch and Wilks (2017).

There is a considerable literature on examining the costs and benefits of prevention programs to reduce violence, incarceration and improve inmate rehabilitation. Costs and benefits of early childhood, improve family integration, support at-risk youth, and reduce recidivism are relatively common. The availability of such studies in the prevention field are in contrast to the relative dearth of cost and benefit analysis to measure the effects of *mano dura*-style interventions. The public health and criminology sectors place a premium on data-driven and evidence-based strategies and are constantly measuring value for money. There are fewer relative concerns among proponents of *mano dura*.

The challenges of measuring the cost-benefits of mano dura

Determining the costs and benefits of *mano dura* requires determining the expected outcomes and impacts. The reality is that the overall aims of *mano dura* are not always clearly stated beyond vague slogans such “waging a war on organized crime”. To put in the dry technical language of public policy, there is no clearly established theory of change. As a result, its impacts frequently require being imputed. It can be assumed, then, that one goal of *mano dura* is to deter crime – which can be measured as objective and subjective levels of public safety. Another objective of *mano dura* is to dismantle organized crime, including the groups that sustain it. The discrete benchmarks of success set by supporters of *mano dura* are more often associated with process metrics – arrests, interdictions, gun and drug busts, and gang-members incarcerated.

Without clearly stated goals, outputs, outcomes and impact measures, it is difficult to determine a precise cost-benefit of *mano dura* in general. That said, it is conceivable that cost-benefit analysis could be undertaken of discrete facets of repressive approaches – including in relation to incarceration and military deployment. There are of course risks associated with cost-benefit assessments. Indeed, one must be careful not to assume that small scale measures can be easily scaled, there are risks of what researchers call “scale degradation”. Likewise, one must be wary of not simplifying findings and rendering conclusions that are widely generalizable.⁸⁴ There are also limitations when it comes to measuring intangible costs including pain and suffering.⁸⁵

There are comparatively few systematic assessments of *mano dura* style measures. Most cost-benefit analyses of law and order efforts are focused on US and European prisons.⁸⁶ Studies typically find that the cost of building and maintaining prisons vastly exceeds their benefits to prisoners and society as a whole. Prison expenditures are frequently accounted in terms of the direct costs – to house and feed a prisoner – as well as some indirect costs – lost productivity. Yet the indirect costs can be far reaching including rehabilitative and social services; child welfare and educational support; and associated pain and suffering to families and communities. It is often difficult for cost-benefit analysis to account for intangible costs such as the impacts of incarceration on parental bonds, self-esteem and long-term reintegration.

A 2011 assessment examined the total costs taxpayers incurred for prisons in 40 US states. It examined direct expenditures of correction departments as well as prisons costs paid by other agencies, such as employee benefits and taxes (\$613 million), states’ contribution to pensions on behalf of the corrections department (\$598 million), health and hospital care for inmate population (\$335 million), officer

⁸⁴ See Zedlewski (2009).

⁸⁵ See Dossetor (2011).

⁸⁶ See Muggah (2017b).

health insurance (\$613 million), training programs, retiree health benefits and social security.⁸⁷ The assessment estimated that the total price-tag for taxpayers related only to prison’s expenditures was \$38.8 billion, \$5.4 billion more than the \$33.4 billion reflected in correctional budgets.

There are also some superficial analyses of the hidden costs of military-style interventions to address organized crime. For example, the Brazilian government has routinely deployed military forces to “pacify” crime-affected areas of the country. In Rio de Janeiro, for example, the military was deployed no fewer than 12 times since the early 1990s. The costs of these investments are high. For example, a single deployment for four months in 2014 to “contain” a favela (Maré) was priced at roughly BRL \$400 million (roughly \$180m at the time). The overall outcomes of the intervention are difficult to assess, though it is widely accepted that overall violent crime rates actually increased in and around areas of intervention immediately following the military departure.

Figure x. Prevention strategies to prevent crime

Prevention strategies	Intervention	Examples
Early childhood and family based measures	Nurse-family partnerships, functional family therapy	Elmira program (US) Perry Preschool Program (US) Chicago Child-Parent Center (US)
Youth-based interventions	Cognitive behavioral therapy, classroom-based management practices, after-school and structured leisure time activities.	LA’s BEST program (USA) The Abrindo Espaços (Open Schools) Program (Brazil) Aulas en Paz program (Colombia) Becoming a Man (US)
Community-based interventions	Focused deterrence (with law enforcement), community mediation	Cure Violence (US, Central America) Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) (US). Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) (US) Peace Management Initiative (Jamaica) Fica Vivo (Brazil)
Recidivism reduction	Mentoring and entrepreneurship programs, harm reduction/drug rehab related programs	Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center (USA) Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison (USA) Juvenile Breaking the Cycle (USA) Protection and Assistance of the Condemned (APACs) (Brazil).

Early childhood and family based measures

⁸⁷ See Vera (2011).

There is a broad literature on the costs and benefits of early childhood intervention in preventing violence. It is important to stress that the gains may not be immediately visible. For example, prenatal and early infancy measures are widely associated with strong reductions in violence in the long-term, often over the course of 10-20 years. Evaluations of multi-component early childhood interventions show reductions of on average 13% in subsequent youth violence and arrests for violent crimes.⁸⁸ The associated cost-benefit ratios depend on the length of follow-up, and range from \$6 returned for every \$1 dollar invested (6:1) to 12:1.⁸⁹

Other common early childhood strategies include nurse family partnerships (NFP).⁹⁰ Such programs are intended to provide direct support from the public health sector to at-risk families. Considering less tangible savings (such as potential gains in work, wages and quality of life) along with resource cost savings (out-of-pocket payments including savings on medical care, child welfare, special education, and criminal justice) NFP's total benefits to society equal \$60,428 per family served. This yields a 6.4 benefit to cost ratio for every dollar invested in NFP.⁹¹

NFPs focus on a group of prenatal and infancy-related risks that increase the possibility of a person to adopt antisocial behavior, depression and substance use⁹². Where NFP's mitigate risks such as infant maltreatment, negligence and poor parenting and strengthening protective factor⁹³ and deliberately improve home environments that result in more conducive conditions to the children's emotional and cognitive development⁹⁴ there are clear declines in violent behavior later in life. NFP can reduce child abuse and neglect compared to mothers and children under the same cultural, social and economic conditions that are not part of such interventions.⁹⁵

A positive example is the Elmira program, a prenatal/early infancy project that was launched in the early 1970s in Elmira, New York. It is credited with dramatic reductions in risks of future child delinquency, substance abuse as well as child abuse, neglect and dependence on public assistance.⁹⁶ The intervention involves pre- and post-natal nurse visits to economically disadvantaged first-time mothers. The total cost savings reached \$2.88 for every \$1 dollar spent on public assistance related outcomes.

Another strong intervention is functional family therapy (FTT) strategies. Such interventions typically involve a trained therapist working directly with juveniles in the justice system and their families over a designated period of time. Studies suggest that recidivism rates can drop by more than 18% across a 13-year cycle. The costs of the program are on average \$2,380 per intervention resulting in savings as much as \$52,156 of life-cycle benefits.⁹⁷ A similar program is called Family Integrated Transitions tested in Washington state, which projected a cost-benefit of \$3.15 per \$1 dollar invested in avoided criminal justice and indirect

⁸⁸ See Farrington and Welsh (2003).

⁸⁹ See Barnett and Masse (2007) and Nores et al (2005).

⁹⁰ See Drake et al (2009).

⁹¹ See Miller (2015).

⁹² See Clark and Cornelius (2004) and Olds (2002).

⁹³ **See Hill et al (2007).**

⁹⁴ See Olds et al (1994).

⁹⁵ See Olds (2007).

⁹⁶ See Dossetor (2011).

⁹⁷ See Drake et al (2009).

victim costs.⁹⁸ Yet another example is the Perry Preschool Program (1962-1967) which is credited with having a cost-benefit ratio of \$7.16 to \$1.⁹⁹

Another excellent example is the federally funded Chicago Child-Parent Center (CPC) program. The CPC has operated since 1967 in the poorest neighborhoods of Chicago and provides educational and family support to low-income children aged three to nine. The program is associated with improved school achievement, greater rates of high school completion and with lower rates of remedial education services, juvenile delinquency and child maltreatment.¹⁰⁰ This initiative produced a desirable cost-benefit ratio of \$7.14, \$1.66 and \$6.11 for preschool program, school-age program and extended program respectively. For each \$1 that was invested in this program, taxpayer received \$7.14, \$1.66 and \$6.11 in saving after 15 years.

Youth based interventions

There are ample examples of evidence-based programs that are intended to support at-risk youth before, during and after they enter the criminal justice system. A short list includes multi-systemic therapy substance abuse measures, family-centered prevention intervention, aggression replacement training, juvenile life skills training programs, big brother and sisters mentoring programs, interventions targeting street-connected youth, behavioral couple therapy for substance abuse, cognitive behavioral therapy for adolescents, adolescent community reinforcement approaches, universal classroom management practices, and targeted truancy interventions.

There is considerable research assessing the positive outcomes of youth-based interventions in reducing violence. For example, a meta-review summarizing the findings of 361 scientific studies examining young people aged 12 to 21 who received a specific intervention designed to reduce re-offending. The review found that the most effective types of programs were cognitive behavioral therapy measures (yielding on average a 26% decrease in reoffending) and behavioral programs such as behavior management, contingency contracting, and token economies (generating on average a 22% decrease in reoffending). The cost-benefit ratio of cognitive behavioral therapy for juveniles in the US is 1.96: 1.¹⁰¹

A particularly successful youth-based intervention is Becoming A Man (BAM), a 16-year-old group therapy and mentoring program operating in dozens of Chicago area schools. It aims to help young men learn impulse control together with skills and values that will guide them to productive lives after they graduate. In 2017, BAM aims to serve an estimated 6,000 boys, up from 4,100 in 2016. Research conducted by the University of Chicago's Crime Lab in 2010 found that boys participating in BAM were arrested for violent crimes 45% less often than classmates did not participate in the program. Moreover, arrests on all charges were 28% lower for participating youth. The effect on arrest rates didn't persist after the boys left BAM, but another effect did: the boys were 19% more likely to graduate from high school. A second randomized study by Crime Lab researchers

⁹⁸ See Aos (2004).

⁹⁹ The Perry Preschool Program - carried out from 1962 to 1967- provided high-quality preschool education to children aged 3-4 living in poverty, brought average benefits of more than \$105,000 (in 2001 dollars) per participant in terms of estimated economic benefits for both taxpayers and potential crime victims. Since the average cost of the program was \$14,716 per participant, the estimated cost-benefit ratio was \$7.16 to \$1. See Osher (2003).

¹⁰⁰ See Dossetor (2011).

¹⁰¹ See Robertson et al (2001).

and the National Bureau of Economic Research finished in 2015 confirmed the earlier results, finding that BAM reduced violent crime arrests by 50% and overall arrests by 35%.¹⁰²

After-school and other structured leisure-time activities are implemented in a group setting or as one-to-one tutoring – the latter with a focus on academic skills development. The aim of these programs is to reduce risk factors for youth violence, providing children with supervision during critical times of the day, increasing attachment to school and providing skills needed to avoid violent behaviors.¹⁰³ A good example is the BEST program in Los Angeles that reveals how students who participated in the program are 30% less likely to commit juvenile crime. The estimated cost- benefit ratio of the intervention is 2.50:1.¹⁰⁴

Meanwhile, in Brazil, the Ministry of Education and UNESCO launched the *Abrindo Espaços* (Open Schools) Program in 2004. The average monthly student cost was US\$ 12 to US\$ 24 per student per year. Evaluations revealed that levels of violence registered in schools and their surroundings were lower for schools taking part in the program than those that did not. In São Paulo, the Open Schools Program was implemented in 5,306 schools between 2003 and 2006 and criminal acts were reduced by 46%.¹⁰⁵ The program reveals positive achievements in terms of reducing violence in two states, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, including school fights, students' bad behavior, vandalism and personal humiliation.¹⁰⁶

In Colombia, *Aulas en Paz* (Classes for Peace) is a school-based program oriented towards the development of emotional, cognitive and communicational capabilities. The program mixes more traditional teaching methods with life-skills training to encourage children and youth to make a constructive contribution to their communities and society at large. These skills prepare students to confront challenging situations that are routinely experienced in daily life, including conflict and aggression.¹⁰⁷ Experimental research suggests the program works: participants exhibit less aggressive behaviors than the control groups, along with more pro-social behavior, as reported by both teachers and students.¹⁰⁸

Community based intervention

There are a wide range of interventions designed to reduce crime and violence through community- and neighborhood-based programming. These strategies seek to adopt comprehensive approaches tackling a range of risk factors while promoting protective factors. They also involve leaders with a degree of legitimacy, strategies to build cohesion and efficacy, and tactics to involve a wide range of stakeholders. In some cases, such measures may involve law enforcement, while in others they may not. There is also a growing evidence-base of what works, and what does not, when it comes to such measures.¹⁰⁹

Successful examples of community-based measures are common in the US. For example, *CureViolence* was launched in 2000 to reduce violence in metropolitan Chicago. It deploys specially trained mediators selected from heavily crime-affected communities to identify and prevent violent events (and violent behaviors) from

¹⁰² See Heller et al (2015).

¹⁰³ See World Health Organization (2015).

¹⁰⁴ See Goldschmidt et al (2007).

¹⁰⁵ See UNESCO (2008) and World Health Organization (2015).

¹⁰⁶ See Morales (2007).

¹⁰⁷ See Nieto et al (2007).

¹⁰⁸ See Chaux (2012).

¹⁰⁹ See crimesolutions.gov and Abt and Wisler (2016).

escalating. The CureViolence approach has spread to 50 communities in nine countries, and has been evaluated independently on multiple occasions. Each evaluation shows statistically significant reductions in armed violence. In Loíza (Puerto Rico), there was a 50% reduction in the murders associated with the first year of program implementation. In Ciudad Juarez (Mexico), after the program was implemented, the homicide rate fell 24.3% and in 2013 the program was initiated in parts of San Pedro Sula in Honduras. Considerable reductions in violence place in all areas of the program, with an average of reductions in shootings of 88% in 2014 and 94% in 2015.¹¹⁰

Other programs are similarly focused on “hot” places and at-risk young people. For example, between 1992-1999, the Boston TenPoint Coalition conducted outreach programs with youth and mediators to counsel at-risk young people, including gang leaders. A combination of counselling and economic alternatives were pursued and the program is credited with making dramatic reductions in homicide over a certain period.¹¹¹ A challenge with programs such as the TenPoint Coalition, as well as others like CureViolence, is scaling them up and ensuring long-term financing. These kinds of local initiatives are frequently prematurely terminated.

Another innovative case is the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV). CIRV adopted a focused deterrence approach that created (and communicated) meaningful consequences for gang violence. Focused deterrence involves interventions that are undertaken collectively by both community police and neighborhood associations. Law enforcement communicates and applies hard penalties on specific offences, especially violent ones. Communities reinforce these messages and work to mediate tensions in partnership with police. CIRV’s goals were clearly identified as the reduction of homicides and gun-related violence perpetrated by gangs. The average number of gang related homicides declined from 3.8 to 3 per month following the intervention – a 37.7% decline after 24 months.¹¹² Likewise, the total number of violent firearm incidents were reduced from 36.6 to 34.4 offences per month for up to a year.

In New Orleans, Louisiana, another focused deterrence strategy, the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS), also sought to reduce gang violence and related homicide. Following the implementation of the GVRS in New Orleans, homicide rates were 17.3 percent in the 14 comparison sites – a statistically significant difference. Multivariate analyses also revealed that the GVRS was associated with a significant decline in the mean number of monthly firearm-related homicides.¹¹³

Yet one more program, the Peace Management Initiative, was launched in Jamaica’s capital, Kingston, in 2005 and is credited with reducing homicide in selected areas by over 90%. The program involves “peace walks” with young people and their families, the formation of peace councils made up of community members, recreational events, income generating activities for at-risk youth and specific retreats. It also opens crime-affected neighborhoods to a wide range of public and private investment and social welfare services. A cost-benefit of the assessment determined that roughly \$12 dollars is saved for every \$1 dollar invested if measured by a combination of direct healthcare costs and indirect productivity losses.

¹¹⁰ One area of the city where the program was implemented reported 17 months without a single shooting. See Ransford et al (2017).

¹¹¹ See Irons (2013) and BTPC (2015).

¹¹² See Engel et al (2013).

¹¹³ Corsaro, Tillyer and Engel (2011).

What is more, in Brazil's Minas Gerais state, the Fica Vivo program combined both police enforcement and social preventive activities. Preventive activities focused on social support for at-risk families and young people together with specific education opportunities (designed to promote school retention and after-school support).¹¹⁴ Meanwhile, repressive actions involved more rapid police action and judicial engagement, increasing the probability of arrest and punishment of violent offenders. A cost-effectiveness ratio includes an estimate of the value of homicides prevented by the program. According to the model, the cost-effectiveness ratio regarding homicide avoided by Fica Vivo varies between approximately \$93,000 and \$112,000 dollars. The rate of return of the program is favorable across virtually all parameters, varying from a small tax return of 4% to a large tax return of 840%. These results suggest that the Fica Vivo present a favorable cost-benefit ratio.¹¹⁵

Prison based measures

When it comes to harm reduction, a key strategy is to avoid prisons altogether. Indeed, whether it is pre-trial detention or sentencing in open, semi-open or closed penal systems, the deprivation of liberty should always be a last resort. The diversion of children must be a priority, including through alternative procedures and programs, probation, mediation, counselling, community services or otherwise. Greater efforts must be devoted to divert non-violent offenders from the penal system, especially given their over-crowded and highly-violent character in countries such as Brazil, Mexico and the US.

Where incarceration is pursued, there are many strategies to reduce associated harms for detainees. A widely applied approach involves rehabilitation programs – including re-entry initiatives. The primary goal is to rehabilitate offenders so they can return to society as productive contributors. In-prison rehabilitation is a common approach adopted across North America and Western Europe with mixed results. A prominent model of rehabilitation is the maximum security prison in Halden Norway. Established in 2010 with a focus on rehabilitation of high-risk offenders, it is designed to simulate life outside the prison with activities, recreation and unarmed staff living in a “community” and is associated with statistically significant positive outcomes.¹¹⁶ Broadly similar rehabilitation models have been pursued in other parts of the world, including Canada¹¹⁷, Israel¹¹⁸, and The US.¹¹⁹

There is a wide variety of rehabilitative programs around the world, virtually all of them seeking to reduce recidivism. Many of these interventions have been pursued inside prisons, as well as outside by service providers. This study identified at least 80 examples of successful recidivism programs in the US¹²⁰, many of which focus on educational opportunities, cognitive development, behavior skills enhancement and mentorship both in and outside prisons. Prominent examples in the US include

¹¹⁴ See Muggah et al (2016).

¹¹⁵ See Peixoto et al (2007).

¹¹⁶ The physical design of the prison and the cells were all purposefully designed to simulate village life.

¹¹⁷ See <http://lincsociety.bc.ca/emmas-acres-reintegration-restoration-and-food-security>

¹¹⁸ See

http://www.galilcol.ac.il/Courses/4999/Innovations_in_Prisoner_Rehabilitation_%E2%80%93_The_Israeli_Experience.

¹¹⁹ See http://www.huffpostbrasil.com/entry/recidivism-programs-prison_n_6655392.

¹²⁰ Also consult <http://crimesolutions.gov/> for evidence-based strategies to reduce recidivism and limit victimization.

the Defy Ventures program that is active in 24 states and serves hundreds of entrepreneurs in training.¹²¹ Defy Ventures is an entrepreneurship, employment, and character development training program created in 2010 in New York city, that aims to harness the entrepreneurial talents of men, woman and youth inmates with criminal histories and redirect them toward the creation of legal businesses and careers. Defy provides entrepreneurship training inside prisons and robust post-release services including job placement, executive mentorship, startup incubation, among others.

Another is the Prison Entrepreneurship Program, which connects released offenders with executives and entrepreneurs.¹²² The program is credited with processing over 1,300 graduates with high-earning wages and retention for more than a year after release.¹²³ Likewise, the Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center (MJTC) in Wisconsin provides intensive treatment programs for serious and violence incarcerate delinquent boys. The benefits per MJTC-treated youth was made up of \$8,176 in avoided criminal justice processing costs plus \$42,214 in avoided prison costs. The total saved by the taxpayers on avoided criminal justice costs was estimated at \$50,390 per MJTC-treated youth over the 4-5 year follow-up period. Dividing total benefits by total costs produced a desirable cost-benefit ratio of 7.18:1.

The Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison in Maryland achieved significant results in reducing recidivism and drug use, increased the likelihood of finding employment, and saved money over the cost incarceration. The Maryland State Commission on Criminal Justice Sentencing claimed that the state of Maryland usage of alternative sanctions for drug offenders has reduced the annual cost to house an offender from \$20,000 to \$4,000. Treatment oriented intensive supervision programs yielded \$2.45 worth of benefit for every dollar spent in this state.¹²⁴ Likewise, the Juvenile Breaking the Cycle (JBTC) program that operates in Lane County in the state of Oregon identified, provided, and coordinated individualized services for high-risk, drug-involved, justice-involved juveniles. Youths who participated in this program were 2.36 times less likely to be re-arrested and 3.78 times more likely to be receiving substance abuse treatment.¹²⁵

There are also growing numbers of recidivism reduction efforts in Latin America.¹²⁶ In Brazil, for example, the Associations for the Protection and Assistance of the Condemned (APACs) has reduced re-offending from roughly 60% to 10% among its caseload.¹²⁷ The APACs are non-profit institutions financed through private donations and staffed by unpaid volunteers. There are roughly 41 APACS around the world with a capacity of 2,750 people. These programs emphasize rigid discipline but also trust: rehabilitees hold the keys to their own cells. The costs of APACS are one third of the cost for regular inmates.¹²⁸ Meanwhile, other countries such as Chile have experimented with social reintegration for convicts, with some pilot projects demonstrating a 32% drop in recidivism.¹²⁹

¹²¹ See <https://defyventures.org/what-we-do/our-impact/>.

¹²² For a complete review of effective recidivism initiatives in the US, consult <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/TopicDetails.aspx?ID=35>.

¹²³ See <http://www.pep.org/>.

¹²⁴ See McVay et al (2004).

¹²⁵ See Lattimore et.al (2004).

¹²⁶ See Epinoza (2015).

¹²⁷ See http://www.ambito-juridico.com.br/site/index.php?n_link=revista_artigos_leitura&artigo_id=9296.

¹²⁸ See https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/7857/A%20new%20chance%20for%20prisoners%20in%20Brazil.

¹²⁹The Chilean authorities reduced prison sentences and encouraged alternative sentencing for nonviolent crimes, including community service. They reduce the

Criminal justice systems in Europe are widely encouraged to adopt a comprehensive approach to drug policy in prisons. This includes needle and syringe exchange programs within the penal system.¹³⁰ An example of this is Spain, which launched a program in 2001. By March 2002, guidelines, policies, procedures and training and evaluation material were created. Each Spanish prison is responsible for setting up a commission, assessing the needs of prisoners and drug use, designing a protocol, and implementing strategies. There are dozens of prisons that now participate in the program.¹³¹ While still unpopular, opioid substitution is another key priority and can significantly reduce mortality rates from overdose while generating crime-reducing effects.¹³²

Conclusions

If *mano dura* style approaches are to be confronted and reversed, then there needs to be a careful reconsideration of the framing of young people across Latin America.¹³³ The stereotype of young, increasingly violent men in big cities advanced by media and politicians is hugely damaging. Indeed, the factors shaping the panorama of violence across Latin America are wide ranging. The World Bank, for example, attributes it to 'a complex set of factors, including rapid urbanization, persistent poverty and inequality, social exclusion, political violence, organized crime, post-conflict cultures, the emergence of illegal drug use and trafficking and authoritarian family structures'.

Although youth gangs in and out of prison are unquestionably a concern across Latin America, a closer inspection of sensationalist claims also reveals a more complex reality. Indeed, reliable information about the regions various gangs is scarce, and official record-keeping is problematic due to under-reporting, deficient data collection and political interference. Even the most basic consensus on the size and scale of gang membership is similarly lacking with estimates ranging from 70-200,000 or more. Instead, gangs – and youth more generally – are mobilized as a convenient scapegoat that conceal much deeper structural challenges.

The demographics of gang membership, however, are increasingly recognized. For one, they are a distinctly urban phenomenon. Up to 15% of youth within gang-affected communities can reportedly end up joining a gang – although most studies suggest that on average the figure is somewhere around 3 to 5%.¹³⁴ While it is the case that the vast majority of gang members are male, there is also evidence of female gang members and all-female gangs in some countries. The age range also

rate of overcrowding from 60 percent to 15 percent by 2014. While Chile has also privatized some of its prisons, they are nevertheless still heavily regulated by the government.

¹³⁰ A comprehensive review of 11 needle Exchange programs found that none of them was associated with increased drug use intake, attacks against staff or prisoners, or sharing of needles. See Meyenberg et al (1999) and Stover and Neeles (2003).

¹³¹ See Stover et al (2008).

¹³² See Lind (2005).

¹³³ See Jutersonke et al (2009).

¹³⁴ ERIC (Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación) et al. 2001. *Maras y pandillas en Centroamérica*, Vol. 1. Managua: UCA Publicaciones.

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varies, with a mean of 15 and an average age of 20.¹³⁵ The motivations for gang membership are also heterogeneous, including a search for belonging and status, peer influence, family problems and economic gain.¹³⁶

What also must be acknowledged are the fundamental limitations and negative outcomes of punitive *mano dura* strategies. While they can reduce certain forms of crime in the short term, they frequently generate massive harms in the long run. Often "success" is measured as a function of process indicators - arrests, greater seizures of drugs and firearms, and the increasing numbers of people incarcerated. While these metrics are commonly advanced by politicians and law enforcement as a sign of crime reduction, they are also potentially misrepresentative. More relevant indicators of successful crime reduction relate to levels of violent crime, the prevalence of victimization, the extent of impunity and perceptions of safety and security.

What is more, *mano dura* measures do not appear to be cost-effective. Contrary to what some of its supporters may claim, they are not associated with a deterrence of future crime among would be offenders or the prevention of inmate re-offending. Instead, *mano dura* style interventions routinely generate unintended consequences, including the use of excessive force, the stigmatization and rights violations of young people, the erosion of the procedural rights guaranteed to suspects, and the undermining of democratic legitimacy and basic norms of human rights and procedural justice.

Notwithstanding their popularity, there are no scientific assessments of *mano dura* measures in Latin America. Most cost-benefit analyses of "law and order" and "zero tolerance" efforts emerge from US and Western European settings. They typically emphasize metrics such as the "hit rates" of stops, searches, arrests, drug and arms seizures. There is limited evidence that such actions serve as a deterrent to would-be criminals. To the contrary, there is evidence suggesting that stronger penalties may have the reverse effect, and even strengthen the power of organized crime, including prison gangs. Paradoxically, after a prison sentence, inmates are more likely to commit a crime.

By contrast, the positive outcomes of specific prevention are well-documented. While not always immediately visible, there are empirically measured reductions in violence that correlate with prevention. The costs and benefits of preventive strategies - including early childhood and family based measures, youth-based and community-based interventions and recidivism reduction - are widely studied. Cost-benefit ratios depend on the types of interventions pursued and the length of

¹³⁵ The age range of gang members is variable. For example, a 2001 survey of 1,000 gang members administered by the Instituto Universitario de Opinión Pública (IUDOP) in El Salvador detected an average age of 20 and a mean entry age of 15. Nicaraguan gang members appear to fall between the ages of 7 and 23, while the age range of Guatemalan and Honduran gang members is between 12 and 30. Ibid.
¹³⁶ . In interrogating their motives for joining a gang, the IUDOP assessment found that 40% claimed to have done so in order to 'hang out', 21% because they had gang-member friends, and 21% in order to evade family problems. The study also detected a partial correlation between youth unemployment and gang membership: only 17% of gang members were employed, and 66% actively characterized themselves as 'unemployed' (Santacruz Giralt & Concha-Eastman, 2001). Reified 'determinants' and proximate factors such as family fragmentation, domestic abuse or a psychological constitution do not appear to be consistently significant. One factor that appears to systematically affect gang membership relates to religious affiliation, insofar as evangelical Protestant youths in Nicaragua tend not to join gangs. Ibid.

follow-up, and range from a return of \$3:1 to \$12:1. It is essential that the evidence of what works (and what does not) is better communicated to public policy makers, business leaders and civil society actors alike.

Annex. Cost-Benefit and outcomes of prevention strategies to prevent crime

Prevention Strategy	Intervention	Cost-Benefit (Dollar invested: Dollar returned)	Outcomes
Early childhood and family based measures	Nurse family partnerships (USA)	1:6.4	Depend on the specific intervention.
	Elmira (New York, USA)	1:2.88	Dramatic reductions in risks of future child delinquency, substance abuse as well as child abuse, neglect and dependence on public assistance.
	Functional family therapy (USA)	Costs of the program are on average \$2,380 per intervention resulting in savings as much as \$52,156 of life-cycle benefits.	Recidivism rates can drop by more than 18% across a 13-year cycle
	Family Integrated Transitions (Washington State, USA)	1:3.15	N/A
	Perry Preschool Program (USA)	1:7.16	N/A
	Chicago Child-Parent Center (Chicago, USA)	1:7.14 for preschool program 1:1.66 for school-age program 1:6.11 for extended program (after 15 years)	Associated with improved school achievement, greater rates of high school completion and with lower rates of remedial education services, juvenile delinquency and child maltreatment
Youth based interventions	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (USA)	1:1.96	Average of 26% decrease in reoffending
	Becoming A Man (Chicago, USA)	N/A	Boys participating in BAM were arrested for violent crimes 50% less often than classmates did not participate in the program. Arrests on all charges were 35% lower for participating youth. BAM boys were 19% more likely to graduate from high school.

	BEST Program (Los Angeles, USA)	1:2.50	Students who participated in the program are 30% less likely to commit juvenile crime.
	Abrindo Espaços (São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, Brazil)	N/A	In 5,306 schools where the program was implemented between 2003 and 2006 in São Paulo, criminal acts were reduced by 46%. In Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco there was a significant reduction in school violence, including school fights, students' bad behavior, vandalism and personal humiliation.
	Aulas de Paz (Colombia)	N/A	Participants exhibit less aggressive behaviors, along with more pro-social behavior.
Community based intervention	Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (Ohio, USA)	N/A	Average number of gang related homicides declined from 3.8 to 3 per month following the intervention – a 37.7% decline after 24 months. Total number of violent firearm incidents was reduced from 36.6 to 34.4 offences per month for up to a year.
	Group Violence Reduction Strategy (New Orleans, USA)	N/A	Following the implementation of the program, homicide rates were 17.3% in the 14 comparison sites.
	Peace Management Initiative (Kingston, Jamaica)	\$12 dollars are saved for every \$1 dollar invested if measured by a combination of direct healthcare costs and indirect productivity losses.	Program credited for reducing homicides in selected areas by over 90%. It also opened crime-affected neighborhoods to a wide range of public and private

			investment and social welfare services.
	Fica Vivo (Minas Gerais, Brazil)	Cost-effectiveness ratio regarding homicide avoided by Fica Vivo varies between approximately \$93,000 and \$112,000 dollars. The rate of tax return varies from 4% to 840%.	Homicide reduction.
Prison based measures	Prison Entrepreneurship Program (USA)	N/A	The program is credited with processing over 1,300 graduates with high-earning wages and retention for more than a year after release.
	Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center (Wisconsin, USA)	Benefits per treated youth were estimated at \$8,176 in avoided criminal justice processing costs plus \$42,214 in avoided prison costs. Total savings were \$50,390 per treated youth over a 4-5 year follow-up period. 1:7.18	N/A
Drug treatment alternative programs	Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison (Maryland, USA)	Annual cost to house an offender was reduced from \$20,000 to \$4,000 1:2.45	Significant reductions in recidivism and drug use, increased the likelihood of finding employment, and saved money over incarceration costs.
	Juvenile Breaking the Cycle (Oregon, USA)	N/A	Youth who participated in this program were 2.36 times less likely to be re-arrested and 3.78 times more likely to be receiving substance abuse treatment.
	Associations for the Protection and Assistance of the Condemned (Brazil)	Costs of APACS are one third of the cost for regular inmates.	Reduced re-offending from 60% to 10% among its caseload.

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