CHRONIC AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONFLICT

IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:

AN ANALYSIS FROM A PEACE AND SOCIAL COHESION PERSPECTIVE

CHRONIC AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONFLICT

IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:

AN ANALYSIS FROM A PEACE AND SOCIAL COHESION PERSPECTIVE

Summary

Conflict is an inherent factor of development, and the Latin American and Caribbean region, which has experienced chronic and multidimensional conflict for decades, is no exception. This analysis, carried out during the last quarter of 2020, is based on a systemic and articulated approach through interconnected multidimensional axes. To be able to reflect upon the different realities of the region, it was divided into four subregions: Southern Cone, Andean subregion, Central America and the Caribbean. The factors analysed in the region are dynamic and can change over time, giving rise to new findings.

The purpose of this systemic and multidimensional conflict analysis is to make visible the common factors of conflict and their articulation around axes. The identification of those factors that can contribute to the construction and consolidation of peace in the region will make it possible to strengthen social cohesion.

The analysis begins with an examination of the regional context and the methodological framework that supports it. Second, the axes of the conflict systems are identified to show the contradictions and similarities between the countries of the four subregions, as well as the interrelation or loops between the axes of the conflict system.

Third, the findings allow us to understand the main conjunctural factors revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean. Once the factors that impact and generate discontent have been identified at the country, subregional and regional levels, the analysis stresses the importance of identifying the factors or promoters of peace. It concludes with a description of the innovations leading to the strengthening of social cohesion within the framework of the recovery from the governance crisis generated by the socioeconomic consequences of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Acknowledgements

This document was prepared by the Governance and Peacebuilding team of the Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean with the support of the conflict prevention, peacebuilding and responsible institutions areas of the United Nations Programme for the Development (UNDP) Crisis Bureau. Mirna Cuentas, specialist in conflict prevention and dialogue, was responsible for the writing of the report under the direction of Jairo Acuña-Alfaro, leader of the Governance Team.

The document had as inputs four conflict analyses prepared for the Latin American and Caribbean subregions: Southern Cone (Pablo Lumerman), Andean subregion (Cecilia Milesi), Central America (Guillermo Villalobos) and the Caribbean (Dylan Kerrigan). The support of the UNDP governance focal points in the 22 countries of the region, who provided valuable input through the interviews, is appreciated.

We would also like to express our thanks for the contributions of Luqman Patel, specialist in regional programmes of the joint UNDP-DPPA programme and the Peace and Development Advisors (Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Venezuela, Ecuador). We are also grateful to Rita Sciarra, leader of the Inclusive Growth and Poverty Reduction team of the UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the members of the Governance Team of the Regional Hub for their observations on the document and their contributions with methodological toolboxes. The peer review was conducted by Asa Walton, Gloria Manzotti, and Emanuele Sapienza.

Index

Executive Summary 5

Chapter 1: Background and objectives 11

Chapter 2: Methodological aspects 13

Chapter 3: From latent inequalities to visible discontent 16

Chapter 4: Axes of the conflict systems in Latin America and the Caribbean 20

- **4.1** Democratic transition, political management and deinstitutionalization – Political conflict 22
- **4.2** Distribution and persisting inequalities – Economic conflict 29
- **4.3** Fracturing and reconfiguration of the social fabric – Social conflict 32
- **4.4** Ecosystem collapse – Socioenvironmental conflict 36
- **4.5** Land, territory, and territoriality – Territorial conflict 40
- **4.6** Dismantling of the established order – Conflict resulting from transnational organized crime 41
- **4.7** Social representations at the border – Crossborder conflict 42
- **4.8** Beyond the borders – Migration conflict 43

Chapter 5: Conjectural factors (COVID-19) that contribute to conflict 45

- **5.1** Impacts of the pandemic on pre-existing conflict 46

Chapter 6: Towards peacebuilding Factors/promoters of peace 50

- **6.1** Factors of peace for the governance crisis and the increase in human rights violations caused by state and non-state actors 51
- **6.2** Factors of peace to overcome the crisis associated with the recession of the global economy 53
- **6.3** Factors of peace to overcome the crisis associated with the environmental, climate and biodiversity emergency 53
- **6.4** Factors of peace to overcome the crisis associated with the deepening of inequality and social segregation 54

Chapter 7: Innovations for social cohesion 56

- **Bibliography** 62

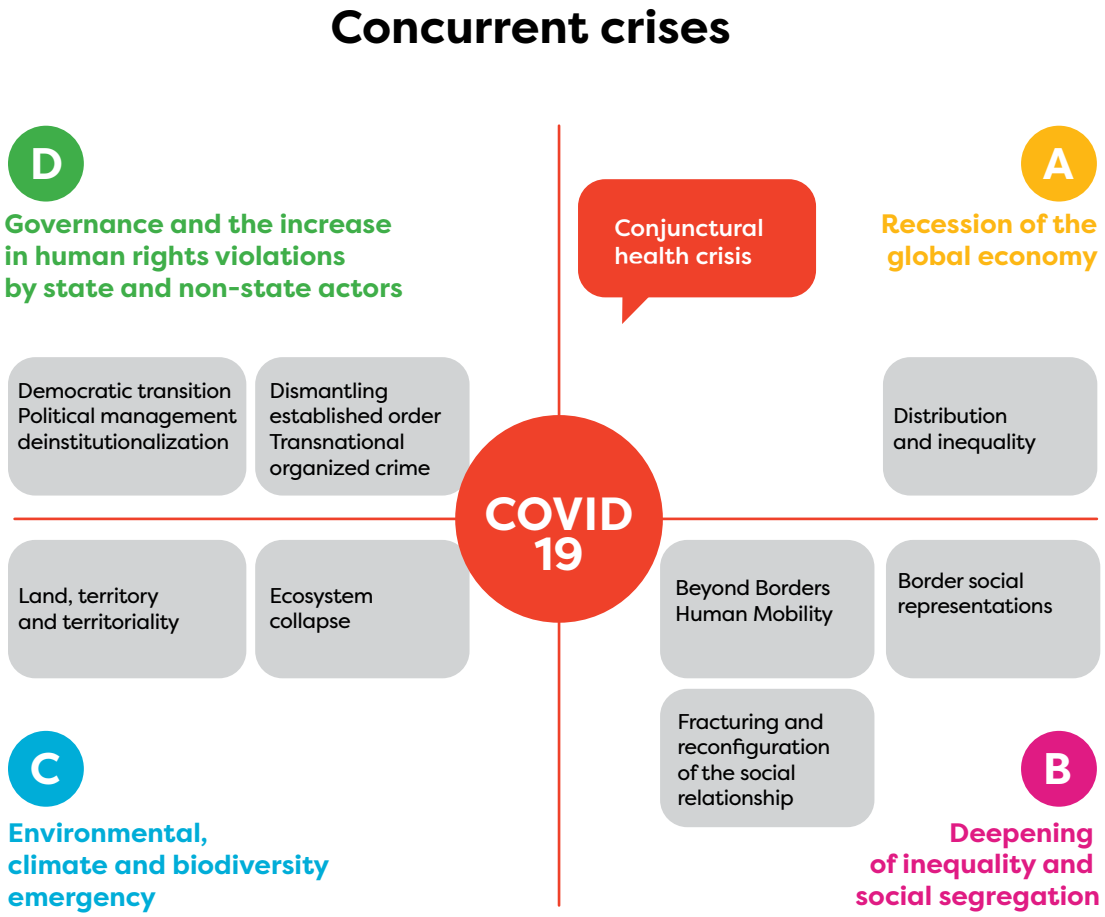
Executive Summary

The analysis of conflict systems, opportunities for peace and social cohesion from a regional perspective has three starting points. It begins with the analysis of the conceptual framework, followed by the identification of the axes of the conflict systems and the factors of peace. Finally, the innovative elements for social cohesion are identified.

The first section describes the methodology used, considering the following categories of analysis: social cohesion, conflict systems, factors of peace, factors of conflict and systemic analysis. The analysis is subregionalized in four geographic areas: Southern Cone, Andean subregion, Central America and the Caribbean.

Conflict translates into four concurrent crises: (A) the crisis associated with the recession of the global economy, (B) the deepening of inequality and social segregation, (C) the environmental, climate and biodiversity emergency and (D) the governance crisis and the increase in human rights violations caused by state and non-state actors.

Graph I : Four concurrent crises

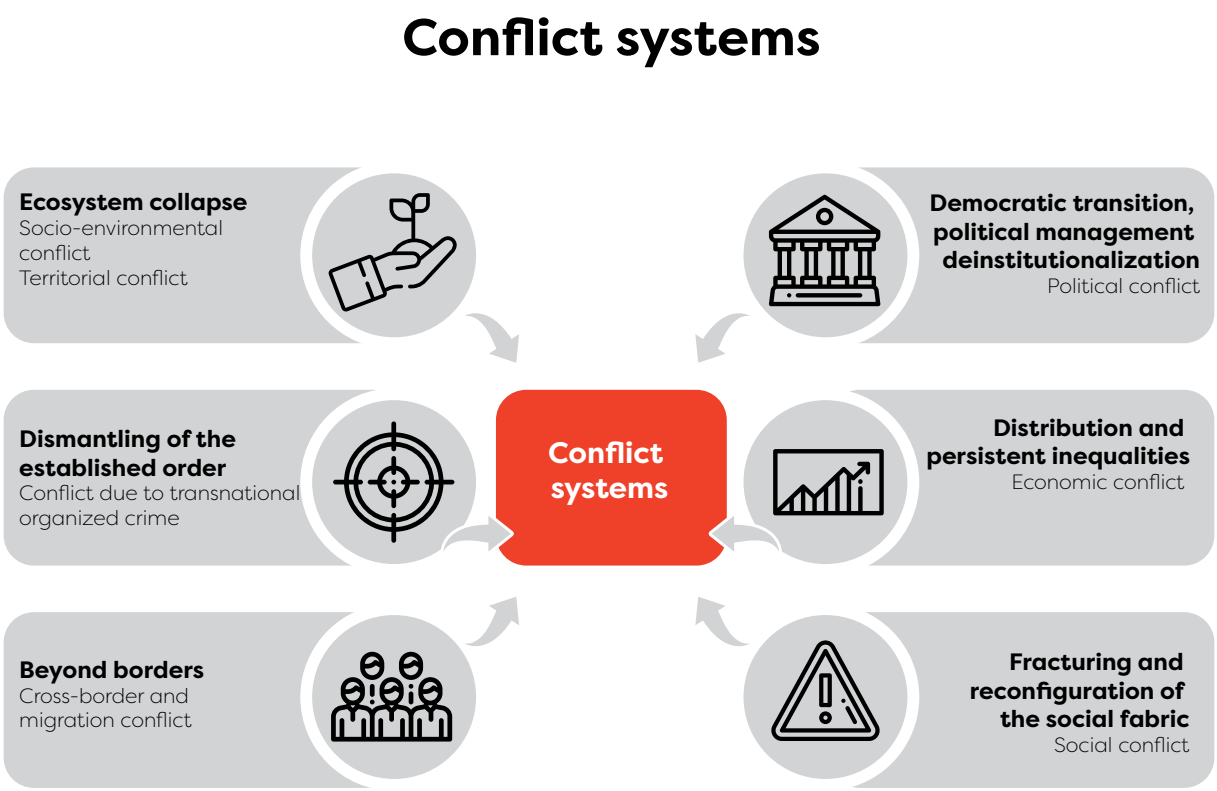


Source: own elaboration.

The methodology uses primary information, obtained through focus groups and semi-structured interviews, and secondary information. The study conducted 126 interviews in 22 countries.

The second section identifies the axes of the conflict systems in relation to the crises. For each axis, a central idea is taken as a starting point that is argued through a specific narrative. In addition, the conjunctural factors underlying the conflict (e.g., COVID-19) are highlighted:

Graph II: Conflict systems



Source: own elaboration

In perspective, conflict systems deepen mistrust, reveal inequalities, generate fissures in the social fabric and influence social networks.

Table I: Axes of conflict systems and main findings

AXES	CENTRAL IDEA	MAIN FINDING
Democratic transition, political management and deinstitutionalization	The violent events of the last three years have led to a visible questioning of the current political systems and order, as well as their legitimacy. They have reflected a weakening of the institutional framework, a result of the shortcomings in the response to the demands arising from structural inequalities.	Crisis of expectations about the capacity of representative democracies to solve social problems Media coopted by political and economic power as a tool of political conflict Crisis of representation and fragile democratic institutions New divisions linked to gender, diversity, ethnicity and religious beliefs Geopolitical polarization
Distribution and persistent inequalities - Economic conflict	Various development models have generated fractures in society and have deepened economic inequalities and inequities, impacting the democratic systems of Latin America and the Caribbean.	Increase in the informal economy and inequality Redistributive mechanism
Fracturing and reconfiguration of the social fabric - Social conflict	The rupture of the social fabric generates violence, loss of confidence and a breakdown of solidarity, giving way to individual and collective interactions that weaken social cohesion. This becomes a threat and unconfigures social and institutional ties, which generates conflict at all three levels: community, institutional and structural.	Early warning crime system
Ecosystem collapse – Socioenvironmental conflict	The environmental situation in Latin America and the Caribbean is complex and is characterized by the loss of native forest cover, the decrease in biomass and the contamination of fresh waters. The international demand for *raw materials* has a strong impact on the territories due to the overexploitation of generally non-renewable natural resources and the expansion of agricultural frontiers. Natural resources are part of a global supply chain and are subject to fluctuations in international prices. Socioenvironmental conflict develops in a context of imbalanced or asymmetrical power between actors.	Economies focused on raw material production Excessive use of agrochemicals that affect the health of the residents Mega forest fires and climate vulnerability Extractive projects and land use change Contributions of the transformation of socioenvironmental conflicts to the ecological transformation
Land, territory and territoriality – Territorial conflict	The exploitation of natural resources, the development of extractive megaprojects, the interests of irregular groups (organized crime) and the absence and inefficiency of state agencies in Latin American countries have created a complicated scenario for indigenous, farmer and Afrodescendent leaders and communities in the defence against the incursion of agribusiness, highways, oil exploitation, hydroelectric plants or illegal trade in timber resources and wildlife.	• Conflicts over land and territory regarding extractive investments and human rights • Conflicts over land occupation • Conflict over urban lands

AXES	CENTRAL IDEA	MAIN FINDING
Dismantling of the established order – Conflict resulting from transnational organized crime	Social cohesion is affected by the presence of organized power structures dedicated to illegal activities, with a temporary or permanent presence, articulated in vertical systems that operate in certain territorial spaces with international ties in many cases. This generates violence and affects economic activities, impacting citizen security and the population's ways of life.	Honduras is experiencing a lethal combination of physical, legal, economic and labour insecurity The Northern Triangle maintains a context of organized crime, drug trafficking and territorial control by gangs in several countries Territorial control by factual powers associated with the penetration of organized crime in different spheres of public life Territorial governance in the absence of the state in the south of the region, there is a low intensity war where relatively autonomous small armies control territories or areas Increase in paramilitary organizations, called militias, which are organized as self-defenders groups
Social representations at the border - Cross-border conflict	Border territories are spaces where local populations and social representations interact, configuring cross-border activities that may be legal or illegal depending on the location. This makes it possible to understand social action and the perception of the population. It is important to consider the pre-existing historical conflict, a focused and isolated conflict, but one with the potential for geopolitical repercussions. The social sciences refer to the system of values, beliefs and practices that are embedded in everyday life. They are economic, social and historical conditions that characterize a society, according to Sergei Moscovici's theory of social representations.	Conflicts in Cuenca del Plata (Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay) Conflicts in the Lithium Triangle (Argentina, Bolivia and Chile) Conflicts in the Southwestern Atlantic Conflicts in the Northern Patagonia (Chile and Argentina) Conflicts in Gran Chaco Americano (Paraguay, Argentina and to a lesser extent Brazil) Conflicts in Omoa Bay and the coastline (Honduras and Guatemala) Conflicts over freshwater (Chile and Bolivia)
Beyond borders – Migration conflict	Migration in Latin America is not a new phenomenon and in recent years has become one of the primary factors in most conflict. The so-called "sudden migration" triggered by crisis situations in various countries of the region, instability, economic crisis and insecurity are some of the factors that have also driven the mass exodus of Venezuelans. For example, on a single day in July 2018, around 50,000 Venezuelans crossed the border into Colombia. This has become a constant in different countries of the region.	Migrant and refugee population crisis Trinidad and Tobago: between Venezuelan migrants and the local population

Source: Own elaboration

Structural problems and their impact on the conjunctural issues were emphasized, the consequence of which can be summarized in the increase in unemployment, informality and insecurity, among others, which threaten to increase the levels of poverty and inequality. Other effects, in addition to the impacts of the pandemic on the pre-existing conflict, include the decline in gross domestic product, digitalization and asymmetries in access to internet services, the budgetary adjustment due to low tax collection, the gap between winners and losers, the worsening of the social and economic crisis, the denial of care policies and the increase in cases of violence against women, among others.

Subsequently, those factors that contribute to the promotion of peace were identified. Of note are the creation of a regional information programme on migratory flows and the promotion of development visions from territorial and local spaces. Other initiatives include the promotion of public-private partnerships; justice system reform; the strengthening of electoral bodies; a culture of peace through the formal educational system, as well as spaces for political and social agreement, with an emphasis on the socioenvironmental; the construction of social solidarity; and support for the creation of transparency and accountability observatories.

Table II: Factors of peace

FACTORS/PROMOTERS OF PEACE			
Factors of peace related to the governance crisis and the increase in human rights violations caused by state and non-state actors	Factors of peace related to the crisis associated with the recession of the global economy	Factors of peace related to the crisis associated with the environmental, climate and biodiversity emergency	Factors of peace related to the crisis associated with the deepening of inequality and social segregation

Source: Own development

The last section describes innovations that promote social cohesion. It establishes the need for a review of the monitoring and compliance mechanisms for national agreements, as well as the promotion of a development model conceived from local, territorial and sectoral realities; the reduction of educational, digital and gender gaps; the incorporation of indigenous peoples; respect for human rights; and equality and equity for marginalized and discriminated sectors. The section highlights the importance of accounting for asymmetries between actors in project formulation to enable the development of a healthy and sustainable economy, the promotion of citizen education, community meetings and the formalization of a rule of law that is sustained in the sociocultural worldview of diversity.

Background and objectives

The 2030 Agenda establishes and strengthens UNDP lines of work on sustainable development, peace and governance. It integrates and reinforces the links between its five critical dimensions: people, prosperity, planet, partnership and peace. In addition, it addresses the root causes of conflict based on development achievements and includes a set of 17 goals aimed at promoting peaceful and inclusive societies through the strengthening of institutions.

Goal 16 recognizes that to reduce violence and prevent future crises, it is necessary to focus on (re) building the institutions, structures, processes and attitudes necessary to create and maintain viable peace in society. Social cohesion is a necessary condition to keep society united for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
In this context, Latin America and the Caribbean is a heterogeneous region with multiple chronic and multidimensional conflicts. These are characterized by inequality, the concentration of wealth in a few hands and a deep political polarization, which has generated a wave of violent social protests arising from citizen discontent. There are various causes of the conflict including distrust in electoral processes, economic adjustment measures, lack of credibility of political institutions and structural inequalities tied to gender and human rights, which compound pre-existing factors such as chronic violence, insecurity, poverty or climate problems. All the above have permanent consequences such as the massive migration flows observed in the region.

In 2020, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the conflicts inherent in this complex situation and abruptly exposed development deficits and deep political divisions. With the arrival of the health crisis in the region and the exponential increase in the number of infections, countries were forced to impose containment measures such as quarantine, isolation and social distancing, which tested the resolution and response capacity of both national and local government institutions. Although several of the governments took immediate action, an even greater economic impact is expected. The current situation is compounded by external factors including the decrease in commercial activity with countries such as China, the disruption of global and regional value chains, and the decline in the tourism sector, among others.

In the face of these challenges, UNDP is presented with the opportunity to cushion the impact of the governance crisis (multisectoral), which could lead to permanent conflict (latent past and current conflicts). The challenges, injustices and inequalities must be addressed before they translate into discord and violence, particularly in areas aggravated by the pandemic and its consequences in the countries of the region.

One of the great challenges we face lies in identifying and understanding the dynamics of conflicts as a product of historical accumulation, the impact of COVID-19 and, mainly, the factors of peace. In this context, it is imperative to update methodologies and tools in line with the new reality and in parallel to the formulation of a regional strategy for consolidating peace and strengthening social cohesion.

Methodological aspects

02

This analysis will make it possible to consider the significant factors that contribute to conflict, as well as the underlying assumptions related to the accumulated conflict and resulting from the pandemic. In this regard, the analysis was structured around the following categories: social cohesion, conflict systems, factors of peace, factors of conflict and systemic analysis.

The study adopted a systemic perspective and was supported by four documents prepared by subregion (Southern Cone, Andean subregion, Central America and the Caribbean) with primary and secondary information collected by four consultants between September and December 2020. Scientific research models were combined with peer reflections using three techniques: interviews (snowball sampling), focus groups, and in-depth semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. "Standardized formats" were applied for the interviews using selection criteria to identify key actors (government, civil society, church, academia, indigenous peoples, among others). Twenty-two country offices participated with 107 individual interviews and 19 participants in four focus groups.

The analytical body of the reports was consolidated from an analysis articulated at the country, subregional and regional levels.

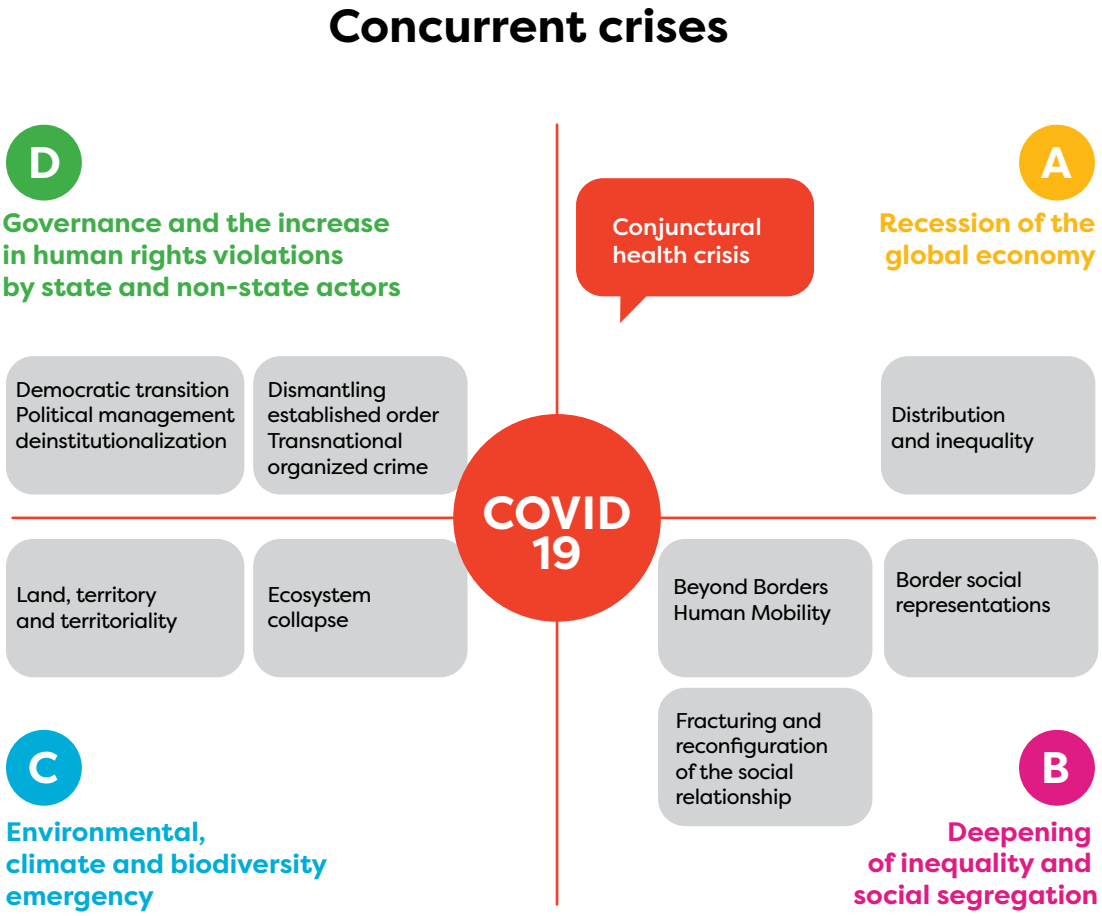
Conflict is perceived as multi-causal and is rooted in historical, structural and conjunctural issues that reinforce each other at different times, as well as in the growing impotence of the state in addressing them. These processes contribute to the degradation of social cohesion, damaging the fabric of relationships of belonging, collaboration and common identity, which in turn is intensified by factors stemming from the pandemic and that is reflected in four types of concurrent crises:

A. **Crisis associated with the recession of the global economy**
B. **Crisis associated with the deepening of inequality and social segregation**
C. **Crisis associated with the ronmental, climate and biodiversity emergency**
D. **Governance crisis and increase in human rights violations by state and non-state actors**

The colored text boxes that appear throughout the document offer methodological resources for strengthening governance and social cohesion.

The following graph links each type of crisis with the axes identified in the conflict systems that will be described in the analysis.

Graph I: Four concurrent crises



Source: Own elaboration

The analysis also highlights the persistence of two factors that impact cohesion and peace: politics and polarization between sectors of national societies, which today are confronted with varying worldviews and the destruction of the state's capacity to sustain social and environmental safety nets.

However, beyond the frustration and the discontent, there is also a proliferation of factors, initiatives, actors, and spaces for peace and social cohesion that provide a path towards the consolidation of channels of dialogue and social harmony. The analysis seeks to understand these dynamics that appear to offer an auspicious outlook for the strengthening of social cohesion in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

From latent inequalities to visible discontent

The conflict identified in Latin America and the Caribbean requires a systemic approach. Although the underlying factors are common, cross-cutting and interconnected, their intensity differs from one country to another. These are often conflicts accumulated throughout history with unresolved causes that have become more marked in times of pandemic. The UNDP Human Development Report[2] incorporates two elements (carbon dioxide emissions and the material footprint) to generate a new index that measures the influence of human progress on the well-being and integrity of the planet. The annual publications of the State of the Nation/Region Report, as well as the studies of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank and other United Nations organizations, provide an account of the indicators that depict the reality of existing inequalities in the countries of the region.

"Conflict sensitivity" stems from the recognition that humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities cannot be separated from the context of peace and conflict in which they are implemented. *Guidance Note on Conflict Sensitivity, Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace. United Nations Group for Sustainable Development.*

For the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2019 has remained the "indicator year" for conflict. Many experienced a multiplicity of demonstrations, protests and even strikes and road closures with varying degrees of violence and repression. These conflicts, in several cases, stem from political crisis. In El Salvador, for example, massive demonstrations, repression, death and displacement resulted from the actions undertaken by the executive branch with the support of the military and the police against the National Assembly. In Nicaragua, the social security reform proposal generated a crisis in April 2018, a situation that remained latent until the beginning of the pandemic.

In the economic sphere, some of the proposed reforms became social and political "triggers of conflicts".[3] These include the subway fare hikes in Chile and the targeting of hydrocarbon subsidies in Ecuador in October 2019, as well as the day of protests called by workers' unions, university students and civil society in Colombia in November 2019. Young people and women have been protagonist of this turbulent conflict in most cases.

In contrast, 2020 has been a year marked by the effects of COVID-19. The confinement and biosecurity measures applied by governments functioned at first as a "containment ring" but could be incubating an even greater social reaction than previously experienced. The worsening of unemployment, the drastic fall in government income, the external debt acquired to meet the ordinary and extraordinary needs of citizens, the rise of informality, the increase in

2. UNDP (2020). *Human Development Report. The next frontier. Human development and the Anthropocene.*
3. The "trigger" is an element of the conflict structure that is the initial cause of the conflict, See Ayala Peñaranda, G. E. (2003). "Análisis del conflicto la mediación comométodo de resolución: Redorta y Moore". *Revista Académica & Derecho* 4 (7) (79-106), July-December 2013.

poverty, the impact on public education and the limitations on access to basic services in general could contribute to a pressure cooker situation that, with the return of the new normality, could generate violent demonstrations after a period of contained conflict.

In the face of this situation, several countries implemented actions with little transparency that impacted contention measures and undermined the confidence of the population. These actions increased uncertainty, required rapid acquisition of goods and services, and pushed governments to abuse of public power.

Added to this less than optimistic scenario are the effects of the health crisis and the latest slew of natural hazards including hurricanes Eta and Iota (2020) that impacted a large part of Central America, particularly Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras, leaving a trail of destruction that undermines a hopeful outlook for the near future.

These recent phenomena, including the COVID-19 pandemic, reveal important flaws in a highly unequal development model and deep sectoral and territorial asymmetries that threaten the globalization paradigm, given its inability to effectively address serious structural problems that have given rise to conflict in the countries of the region.

This reality threatens a crisis of democratic governance that requires prompt identification of new instruments to promote a development model that views sustainable recovery (in the medium and long term) as "effective governance".**4** One of the principles of "effective governance" postulates "the elimination of the use of violence as negotiation mechanism between social and political actors" (principle 6) without neglecting the global challenges arising from the negative impact of climate change, the massive destruction of biodiversity and the accompanying socioeconomic repercussions.

At this juncture, COVID-19 has impacted all countries in sectors such as labour, with the increase of unemployment accompanied by a worsening of insecurity, poverty, gang activity, lack of access to justice, impunity and organized crime, which controls important territories and continues to penetrate institutions.

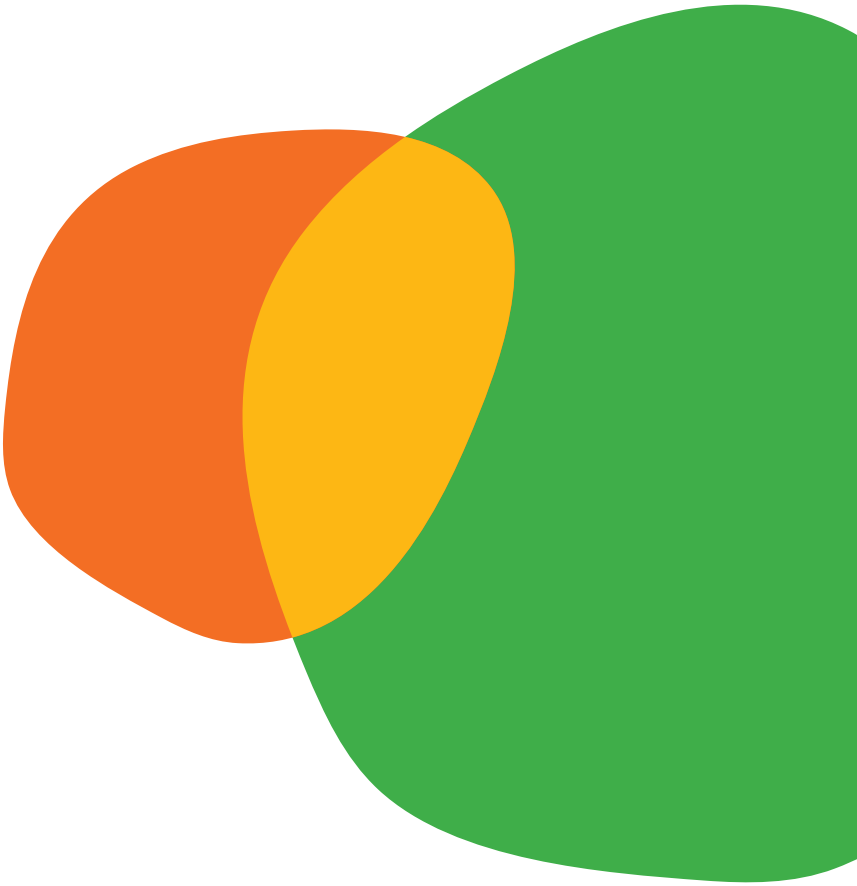
Another impact of the pandemic is the generation of new social gaps by the so-called "fourth industrial revolution" or "digital era", accelerated by the current trend towards digital transformation or virtualization, which contrasts with the limited access to information and communication technologies (ICTs)**5** of a large segment of the population in Latin America and the Caribbean. The lack of access to technology generates the so-called digital divide.

---

4. UNDP (2021). Latin America and the Caribbean: Effective Governance, beyond Recovery. Available at: **www.latinamerica.undp.org.**

5. These are resources and technologies that use binary code to represent and work with information in digital form through technological elements (computers, telephones, televisions, among others.)

In addition, the educational lag during the pandemic has been significant in all countries with a notable increase in school dropouts. Women have also been greatly impacted by the weakening of protection and care systems and of their economic autonomy. The "new normal" brought with it an increase in gender violence and violence against children. This pronounced regional and global challenge threatens to intensify after the pandemic is over. For this reason, ensuring education and access to the vaccine for the entire population are now key priorities.



Axes of the conflict systems in Latin America and the Caribbean

04

For the purposes of this study, conflict systems have been articulated around a series of axes. In perspective, these are factors that deepen mistrust, reveal inequalities, weaken the social fabric and influence social networks.

Graph II: Conflict systems

Source: Own elaboration

4.1 Democratic transition, political management and deinstitutionalization - Political conflict

Central idea

The violent events of the last three years have led to a visible questioning of the current political systems and order, as well as their legitimacy. They have reflected a weakening of the institutional framework, a result of the shortcomings in the response to the demands arising from structural inequalities.

Main findings

A set of factors is set forth that make up the axis of political transition as part of the conflict systems in Latin America and the Caribbean.

A. Crisis of expectations about the capacity of representative democracies to solve social problems

The accumulated deficiencies are related to the shortcomings of "representative democracies" in the response to social demands, which translates into a "crisis of expectations" or, in other words, institutional models that are not very permeable to citizen demand. The capacity to protest, veto and mobilize citizens underlines the urgency of renewing democratic institutions in Latin America.

The crisis sparked in Chile over a government metro fare hike in 2019 is an example of a perverse accumulation of unresolved demands. It unleashed a string of protests including "mass evasions" in the subway (entering the platforms without paying). Tensions increased, escalating to violence in the streets of Santiago and the destruction of property, both public (burning of subway stations and buses) and private (looting of supermarkets and shops). Clearly, the trigger for the event was the fare increase but not its cause. Ecuador experienced similar protests and destruction of public goods in reaction to the measures issued to target subsidies on fossil resources.

In reaction to these events, organizations such as Human Right Watch (HRW) spoke out on the excess use of public force in a state governed by the rule of law. States have the obligation to provide security to their citizens in line with international norms that establish limits on the use of force to control public demonstrations. The situation polarizes public opinion, which deepens the crisis regarding the expectations of citizens of role of the State and the respect for human rights.

Democratic transitions have led to episodes of extreme violence, a symptom of the discontent of the population that challenges the State (Honduras 2017 and Bolivia 2019). The triggers have been related to the legitimacy and legality of the processes. In this regard, the effectiveness of the political party system as an instrument of representation and mediation between the State and civil society has been called into question due to its limited capacity to channel, structure, mediate and resolve social, political and economic conflicts of the national society.

BRIDGE METHODOLOGY.

RIDGE stands for: "Building resources in democracy, governance and elections." It is a training tool for the management of inclusive and participatory electoral processes. BRIDGE is a modular professional development programme with a particular focus on electoral processes.

https://www.bridge-project.org/methodolgy/

Another factor is related to the emergence of new leaders, both "outsiders" and "insiders"[6], who complicate and polarize the political system by exercising strategies of accumulation of power based on the moralization of political discussion[7]. These leaders emerge as an alternative to weakness of political parties and the lack of results produced by government efforts.

Finally, the space for political interaction is being co-opted by the appearance of "collective religious leaderships". These actors empower their members but do not allow for dissent from fundamentalist beliefs or the capacity to influence over the group. This political trend has gained strength in the region, for example in Brazil where the evangelical sectors are one President Jair Bolsonaro's key support bases. In Costa Rica, the presidential candidate of the National Restoration Party, the preacher Fabricio Alvarado, reached the second round in the 2018 elections.

B. Media coopted by political and economic power as a tool of political conflict

Another factor in conflict systems is the media, which can exacerbate or minimize conflict, depending on the position it takes. Reporting from a specific perspective contributes in many cases to the existing conflict.

Media ownership is concentrated in the hands of economic and political powers and can be used to exacerbate or minimize conflict, which impacts social stability. The last decade has witnessed the increasing financial dependence of the media, not only due to the acquisition of its assets by multinational companies but also to the dependence on advertising, regulatory frameworks, etc. This backdrop provides a partial explanation for the transformation of the media in the countries of the region, which has even included cases censorship in private national and international channels (for example, in Argentina, Ecuador, Bolivia, Panama).

6. Leaderships that initiate within political parties but that take another direction.

7. For example, this happened in the failed elections of 2019 in Bolivia with the appearance of the leadership of Luis Fernando Camacho (later candidate for governor of Santa Cruz), in Ecuador (2017) with the disaffiliation of President Moreno from the Alianza País Movement, in El Salvador with President Bukele, who assumed the presidency breaking with almost 30 years of two-party dominance, Yaku Perez in Ecuador and the leadership of Eva Copa in Bolivia, among others.

ACTOR AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES MONITORING SYSTEM (SIMAT)

System for the monitoring of traditional and non-traditional public media within citizen culture. It informs on the perceptions of social groups or key actors in society to prevent escalation to demands and conflict.

https://www.sigob.org/faq/

The institutions have not had the capacity to provide an early and timely response to the complexity of social conflicts and the role of social networks. Through the dissemination of misinformation, social networks can generate conflict through the messages they transmit. Thus, the challenge in the countries of the region is to build adequate forms of articulation between the State and civil society.

Social networks are a vehicle for transmitting "information devoid of truth", which benefits some, harms others and hinders critical thought. The lack of social resilience in the face of information contamination, resulting from low "media literacy" and the weakness of fact-checking systems, has meant that populations tend to rely more on information from local networks (e.g., through WhatsApp) than official sources.[8] Information contamination is present at both the governmental and non-governmental levels.

C. Crisis of representation and fragile democratic institutions

Another factor that activates the conflict system is the crisis of representation and the fragility of democratic institutions. An additional indicator is political violence against women as a negotiation mechanism between political actors, which violates the democratic institutional framework.

In the countries of Central America, with the exception of Costa Rica, there is a crisis of representation with respect to the political system (political parties and their leaderships) and the traditional social leaders, expressed in the loss of legitimacy and public confidence, the disconnection between the ruling elites and the citizens, and the weakening of the mechanisms for the inclusion and response to the interests and needs of important social sectors. Added to this is the weakness of democratic institutions, which could affect the perception of democracy as a political system capable of responding to structural challenges.

According to the 2018 Latinobarómetro report, only two countries in the region (63 percent in Costa Rica and 51 percent in Nicaragua) registered over 50 percent of opinions in support of democracy. The rest of the countries – Guatemala (28 percent), El Salvador (28 percent), Honduras (34 percent) and Panama (42 percent) – fell below 50 percent in support for the democratic political system. The perception of

8. Kerrigan, D. (2018). "Preventing Violent Extremism through Strategic Communications" Project. Scoping report for UNCT.

the role of the State, regional challenges, economic inequality and citizen security differs between men and women and between age groups.

Latinobarómetro is a public opinion data analysis tool that allows us to understand the evolution in space and time of multiple axes of conflict and of the different subjective factors that affect the various population subgroups.
https://www1.undp.org/content/undp/es/home/blog/2020/taking-the-pulse-of-the-covid-19-response-in-latin-america-and-t.html

It is worth noting that the level of support for democracy in Latin America had been high prior to falling below 50 percent between 2010 and 2018. This drop reveals a high level of indifference as between democratic or undemocratic political systems and should call attention to the potential for conflict resulting from discontent.[9]

Added to this context is the generalized perception of growing corruption in parts of the public and private spheres, accompanied by the impunity of elected authorities and officials of different ranks. These factors call into question the justice systems of most of the countries in the Latin American context with the exception of Costa Rica[10], which still enjoys a minimum of confidence in its judicial institutions.

In this regard, Venezuela ranks among the last ten countries in the world (176 out of 180) on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, while other countries in the Andean subregion obtain relatively poor results. For example, Peru has experienced a successive chain of corruption scandals, which has increased the level of conflict and culminated in the removal of the last president (Martin Vizcarra), the suicide of a former president (Alan García) and the prosecution of several former presidents (Alberto Fujimori, Alejandro Toledo, Ollanta Humala).[11] Note that political leaders and supporters at the highest levels are directly or indirectly under investigation or have been convicted of corruption. Private companies have also been implicated in cases of corruption (from premiums or bribery, as in the Odebrecht case, to tax evasion).

The negative impact of these events weakens confidence in the institutions and has ramification across the region, for example,

9. Sapienza, E. (2020). Attitudes towards politics in Latin America A review of regional perception data. UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean.
10. In the same 2018 study, only Costa Rica registered close to 50 percent in favor of the judiciary, and Honduras registered only 25 percent.
11. See cases of corruption opened against former presidents of Peru in the following article "Seis presidentes del Perú salpicados por escándalos de corrupción". Available at: **https://www.niusdiario.es/internacional/latinoamerica/seis-presidentes-peru-salpicados-escandalos-corrupcion_18_3042120083.html**

in Panama, Colombia[12], Ecuador, Argentina and Brazil, among others.[13]

In the countries of the Caribbean, corruption has been described as a national security problem. In Jamaica, for example, the public function is used for private benefit, impacting the rule of law and the capacity of the State to enforce anti-corruption laws. Added to this is Jamaica's strategic location as a Caribbean island state with access to the United States by sea and by air. This advantage is used by persons involved in illicit activities such as drug smuggling between the two countries, which feeds local and regional illegal markets.

Moreover, extortion has a radial effect on corruption. Increasing reports of extortion coincide with the perception of insecurity (Guatemala)[14], and despite the downward trend in the homicide rate over the last decade, the perception of insecurity in 2019 is 16 points higher than in 2010 (LAPOP, n.d. in INFOSEGURA).

A fragile institutional framework can enable discretion, corruption and a culture of illegality as exemplified in the Latin American expression: "For my friends everything; for my enemies the law."

Institutional frameworks in Latin America, despite the division of powers (legislative, executive and judicial), are characterized by a *judicialization* of politics, understood as the influence of political power in judicial decisions instrumentalized against situational opposition.

At different times, countries such as Argentina, Ecuador, Honduras and Bolivia have experienced spiraling processes that combine corruption, advocacy and direct benefits in a deep context of polarization and the establishment of antagonistic models. Thus, those who disagree with the ideology of the ruling party may be subject to persecution. For example, a United Nations Human Rights Commission report[15] identifies cases abuse and harassment of various actors – including extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions and torture – by high-level state authorities (with power and oversight of the security forces and intelligence agencies). Beyond these challenges, several reports highlight the level of self-advocating and militant organization of Venezuelan civil society organizations.

In the Bolivian case, there are two opposing narratives. According to one version of events, the 2019 elections were subject to "electoral fraud" (Organization of American States report), which resulted in the departure and resignation of former President Evo Morales and generated a "constitutional succession" and power vacuum due to successive resignations (vice president, president of the Senate, president of the Chamber of Deputies).

---

12. Former President Uribe was sentenced to house arrest on charges of procedural fraud in a case with direct implications for the Colombian peace process. Similarly, former President Santos and his party were accused of receiving financing from the engineering and contracting company Odebrecht during the 2010 and 2014 presidential campaigns.
13. A simple synthesis of the Odebrecht case can be found on Wikipedia: **https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caso_Odebrecht**
14. INFOSEGURA. "La cara escondida de la inseguridad. Violencia contra las mujeres en Centro América y República Dominicana" Report. Available at: **https://infosegura.org/2020/08/28/informe-la-cara-escondida-de-la-inseguridad-violencia-contra-las-mujeres-en-centroamerica-y-republica-dominicana/**.
15. The full report of the Commission may be accessed at the following link: **https://www.ohchr.org/SP/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=26247&LangID=S**

Finally, in order of precedence, the appointment fell to an opposition senator, who took over as transitional president. According to another version, power was assumed in a "coup" and not through succession following the 2019 elections.

Consequently, accusations arose from both sides. Opposition to the Movement for Socialism (MAS) pointed to "political persecution and imprisonment of opposition leaders during the administration of former President Morales". In contrast, accusations of political persecution against MAS leaders following the 2019 elections arose in relation to electoral fraud – the reason for which former President Morales and many of his ministers requested political asylum in Mexico.[16] This type of phenomenon is what has been called "judicialization of politics".[17]

Another factor that appears to have further weakened the institutional framework is the questioning of electoral institutions and the ensuing street protests. In Honduras, discontent with the electoral system during the 2017 elections and the prospects for 2021 election put the electoral process into question. The interpellation was similar in Nicaragua. In Guatemala, the dissolution of key institutions such as the Secretariat of Agrarian Affairs and the International Commission against Impunity (CICIG)[18] in September 2019 stands out. In Bolivia, the 2019 election results polarized the country, and in El Salvador, the discreditation of parliamentarians affected confidence in the role of the legislative power and of the president. According to information from the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador (BCR),[19] during the third quarter of 2019, confidence in the economic sector grew 2.7 percent more than during the previous two quarters. However, these figures reflect more of a personalized and to a certain extent polarizing trust than trust in the institutional framework.

According to the Latinobarómetro, only 10 percent of Salvadorans expressed a favourable opinion of parliament. This figure registered 15 percent in Nicaragua, 17 percent in Guatemala, 21 percent in Honduras, 26 percent in Panama and 27 percent in Costa Rica.

D. New divisions linked to gender, diversity, ethnicity and religious beliefs

Given the tensions among the agendas of different groups, there continues to be a lack of consensus on how policies for the protection of human rights should be implemented, based on the fundamental assumption of universality and that there are rights inherent to the dignity of the human person. The fact is that inequalities linked to gender, ethnic origin (indigenous peoples and/or people of African descent) and religious belief systems persist.

There are differences in the processes of identity construction. For example, the women's movement in Argentina, a group of diverse and heterogeneous identities with different

16. He first went to Mexico and later requested asylum in Argentina.

17. See the Human Rights Watch investigation "Justice as a weapon". Available at: **https://www.hrw.org/es/report/2020/09/11/la-justicia-como-arma/persecucion-politica-en-bolivia**

18. In Guatemala.

19. Diario La Huella (23 December 2019). "La confianza en el gobierno del Presidente Bukele disparó el crecimiento de la economía al 2.7%". Available at: **https://diariolahuella.com/la-confianza-en-el-gobierno-del-presidente-bukele-disparo-el-crecimiento-de-la-economia-al-2-7/**

levels of political positioning coexist, including radical feminisms, Catholics for the Right to Decide, academics and parliamentarians from different factions, among others. The division and polarization manifested themselves in reaction to the trending "anti-abortion" actions in the political space and the expressions of different collective actions in the public space. The discourse of the self-styled "pro-life" groups continued to oppose the abortion-rights group. Polarization deepened, tempers flared, and hate speech and intolerance multiplied.

FORUM: Citizen Institution Forum System, enables interaction with population groups to gather information about their needs and build responsible commitments, and include dialogue in a management and working system at three points in time: before, during and after each forum event between institutions and citizens. Aimed at the senior management of the institutions to facilitate a new means of interaction with citizens.
https://www.sigob.org/faq/

Along the same lines, the importance of recognizing tensions that emerge from the intersect of religious and political systems was identified in the countries of the Caribbean.[20] Many of these are conservative in nature and reinforce sexism, limiting the capacity to address gender relations and LGBTQI rights due to the power that some church pressure groups exert on the government approach to these issues. The church, through its belief systems, has a certain influence over the voting population. This issue generates contrapositions between disparate points of view, some more conservative and others that see a regression of social inclusion. This affects social cohesion.

E. Geopolitical polarization

The integration mechanisms propose different strategic guidelines and have responded to projects such as CELAC,[21] UNASUR[22], ALBA-TCP[23], MERCOSUR[24] or the Pacific Alliance.[25] Latin American politics follow different guidelines, which has generated situations of friction such as antagonistic models of integration in the region (for example, ALBA versus the Pacific Alliance) with repercussions on the political systems of different countries. Polarization is a factor of conflict at the macro (regional) and micro (national) level.

20. Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Bahamas and Barbados.
21. Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.
22. Union of South American Nations, created in 2008.
23. The Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Peoples' Trade Treaty or ALBA-TCP is an international regional organization, founded in 2004 by Cuba and Venezuela.
24. Southern Common Market.
25. Regional integration initiative made up of four member countries: Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, four countries in the process of incorporation, four associated countries.

It is important to look at the regional cooperation axes or trade blocs that could outline new agendas on commercial exchanges. Latin America is a food producer, Brazil is the leading soybean producer and the countries of the Southern Cone have large agricultural (corn, wheat, soybeans) and cattle industries, among others. Of note are blocks such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and commercial exchanges with an eye on Latin America and the Caribbean.

4.2 Distribution and persisting inequalities - Economic conflict

Central idea

Various development models have generated fractures in society and have deepened economic inequalities and inequities, impacting the democratic systems of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The structural problems of the region's economy are observed from four spheres with their own but interrelated dynamics: 1) the governance crisis, 2) the slow and more unstable growth of gross domestic product and world trade, 3) the rapid increase of inequality in the main economies of the world, and 4) the destruction of the environment and climate change (ECLAC, 2020).[26]

Main findings

The factors related to the axis of inequalities are a constitutive part of conflict systems. They are linked to the development models of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and to the redistribution of resources based on an underground economy not subject to fiscal and labour legislation, which allows for the survival of certain sectors of the population.

A. Increase in the informal economy and inequality

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), some 158 million people or more than 53 percent of the employed population in the region (293 million) currently work in informal conditions. Rates are close to 80 percent in several lower-middle-income countries such as Bolivia, Guatemala, and Nicaragua but are also high in upper-middle-income countries such as Argentina (47.2 percent), Brazil (46 percent) and Chile (40.5 percent).

La informalidad reduce la capacidad de la seguridad social y de las instituciones laborales para proteger el empleo en situaciones de crisis y desastres. Los trabajadores informales solo tienen acceso a la protección social no contributiva, por ejemplo, subsidios o transferencias monetarias, que en general son de baja cuantía y por períodos limitados. En un contexto de confinamiento y suspensión de algunas actividades económicas a causa de la pandemia, las actividades más afectadas son las informales, con el consiguiente riesgo potencial de violencia y conflictividad.

26. ECLAC (2020). Building a new future: Transformative recovery with equality and sustainability. Thirty-eighth session of ECLAC. 16 to 28 October.

Informality reduces the capacity of social security and labour institutions to protect employment in crisis and disaster situations. Informal workers only have access to non-contributory social protection, for example, subsidies or cash transfers that are generally small and for limited periods. In a context of confinement and suspension of some economic activities because of the pandemic, the most affected activities are informal in nature, with the consequent potential risk of violence and conflict.

In the case of the countries of the Southern Cone, development has been hampered by historically volatile economic growth and various institutional obstacles (with less emphasis on Chile and Uruguay). Despite factors such as urban poverty, characterized by a marked contraction of formal economies, uncontrolled growth of the informal economy and a complex fiscal situation, the implementation of adjustments and reforms promoted the improvement of fiscal balances and projected a stabilization of debt in the medium term. The appearance of the pandemic has slowed and reversed the processes of fiscal consolidation in this subregion (Arreaza, 2020).[27]

The factors described are related to uneven territorial development, externalized by the asymmetry between the large capitals and the small cities. In the capital cities, this has led to the formation of suburban settlements of people living in precarious conditions of overcrowding, poverty and social exclusion. In the region, 23 of every 100 inhabitants[28] live in shanty towns, favelas, barracks, camps, forgotten cities, barrios, etc., according to the different denominations of each country. The living conditions of these settlements, characterized by violence, lack of basic services, stigmatization and invisibility make them petri dishes for potential conflict and are part of the historical accumulation of inequalities in territorial and sectoral development.

The effects of the pandemic on the world economy and the confinement and quarantine measures implemented by the governments have significantly increased the risks of conflict due to the worsening of the socioeconomic conditions of thousands of families in the different subregions of Latin America and the Caribbean. World Bank estimates indicate that GDP in Latin America fell by around 7.2 percent in 2020 and will cause unemployment to rise to 11.5 percent, that is, 37.7 million people out of work. In the case of Central America, with the exception of Nicaragua, it is estimated that 6.5 million workers are at risk of reduced wages or income loss. This means that around 40 percent of all jobs are at risk, a particularly serious situation for women due to their increased vulnerability.

Specific data confirms trends of increasing unemployment and informality, in addition to job insecurity. In Panama, for example, the unemployment rate is expected to increase from 7 percent in 2019 to 25 percent by the end of

27. Arreaza, A. (13 July 2020) "La disyuntiva fiscal en América Latina. Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina". CAF-El País de Uruguay. Available at: **https://www.caf.com/es/conocimiento/visiones/2020/07/la-disyuntiva-fiscal-en-america-latina/**

28. Romero, T. (29 September 2019). "Favelas y cinturones miseria en América Latina". El Orden Mundial. Available at: **https://elordenmundial.com/favelas-cinturones-miseria-america-latina/**

2020, which would imply 385,000 new unemployed, aggravated by an increase in informality from 40 percent to 55 percent in the same period. In Costa Rica, unemployment would increase from 11.8 percent pre-pandemic to 23 percent by end 2020, which would represent 264,000 new unemployed. Finally, in Honduras, it is estimated that an additional 140,000 workers would be unemployed by end 2020.

B. Redistributive mechanism

The redistribution mechanism makes it possible to distribute resources at the territorial and sectoral level among the population. The consequences of a poor resource distribution, unequal development and limited access to basic services for important segments of the population in times of pandemic threaten to increase poverty in multidimensional terms. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 39 million people (7.5 percent of the population) live in households in acute multidimensional poverty,[29] that is, they suffer deprivation across the 10 indicators measured, constituting a potential trigger for conflict in the region.

For instance, in countries such as Panama and Costa Rica, the drop in revenue in the pension and retirement system is endangering the sustainability of these regimes, which in themselves, already showed serious financial difficulties prior to the pandemic. In countries like El Salvador, a drop of 9.4 percent is projected.[30]

In Costa Rica, the government entered talks with the International Monetary Fund to address the fiscal crisis in the country. The resulting proposals for new taxes incited various social sectors, leading to street closures, demonstrations, acts of violence, destruction of assets and the paralysis of a large part of the country.

In Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua, additional factors include migration, remittances and the return of citizens as a result of U.S. government policies. In the Honduran case, remittances represent 27 percent of GDP and 30 percent of family income. According to estimates, remittances decreased by more than 7 percent during the first months of the pandemic compared to the same period in 2019. The decrease in remittances is close to 10 percent in El Salvador and 3 percent in Guatemala, a significant indicator that reflects the high unemployment rates faced by young people in the Caribbean and Central America.

As for the Caribbean, Jamaica is an example of a country with a high youth unemployment rate, which exceeds 30 percent and contributes to the high levels of juvenile delinquency. It is estimated that the cost of crime is as much as 7.5 percent of the country's GDP.[31] In Latin America and the Caribbean, opposing development models persist that define

---

29. Santos, M. E. (2019). Multidimensional poverty in times of COVID-19. UNDP. Available at: **https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/blog/2020/pobreza-multidimensional-en-tiempos-del-covid-19.html**.

30. In El Salvador, despite the fact that the Central Reserve Bank has not yet published official data, the former president of that institution and president of the Foundation for the Development of Central America (FUDECEN), Oscar Cabrera, estimates that between April and May, economic production fell 13.7 percent and projected a third quarter decline of 9.4% from July to September." (El Salvador.com publication "Economía salvadoreña acumula seis meses de caída continua y entra en recesión" 28 September 2020).

31. Robinson, S. A. (2018). Adapting to climate change at the national level in Caribbean small island developing state. *Island Studies Journal* 13(1):79-100.

social policy – redistribution versus competitiveness –, which generate friction between multilateral organizations in terms of geopolitical and regional integration.

4.3 Fracturing and reconfiguration of the social fabric - Social conflict

Main findings

The rupture of the social fabric generates violence, loss of confidence and a breakdown of solidarity, giving way to individual and collective interactions that weaken social cohesion. This becomes a threat and unconfigures social and institutional ties, which generates conflict at all three levels: community, institutional and structural.

The countries of Central America are taken as a starting point because they are the most unequal on the continent[32] and show the deepest poverty and development asymmetries according to the indicators set forth by international organizations.

Main findings

A 2014 report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean[33] warned that over 14 percent of the population of Central America suffered from malnutrition, exceeding the average for the continent by six percentage points. In other words, more than 6 million inhabitants suffer from this characteristic scourge of poverty, exclusion and neglect by public institutions.

Around half of the population of this subregion lives in poverty and almost 27 percent in extreme poverty, a figure that is twofold that of Latin America. Six Central American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala are among the 40 most unequal nations in the world in terms of income distribution.[34] Forbes magazine[35] highlights that 4 of the 10 worst ranking countries on the Gini inequality index published by the World Bank are Central American.

To better understand the structural factors of poverty and inequality in Central America, it is important to note the position of the countries on the 2018 Human Development Index, led by Panama in 67th place and followed by Costa Rica (68), El Salvador (124) Guatemala and Nicaragua (126) and Honduras (132) in a ranking of a total of 195 countries.

---

32. Regular publications such as the reports of the State of the Region and the State of the Nation support quantitatively and qualitatively the characterization of this subregion as one of the most unequal in the continent.
33. FAO (2014). Centroamérica en cifras. Available at: **http://www.fao.org/3/a-at771s.pdf**.
34. Ibid.
35. Coll Morales, Francisco (10 September 2019). "Desigualdad sacude duramente a Centroamérica". Forbes Centroamérica. Availalbe at: **https://forbescentroamerica.com/2019/09/10/desigualdad-sacude-duramente-a-centroamerica/**

As a derivative of the notion of "human development,"[36] the concept of "citizen security" was born, understood as a public good that must be accessible to all members of a society, without exclusion, and its administration the responsibility of the public authority. Citizen security is characterized by multi-causality, territoriality and intersectoralism, and is configured as a dimension of the concept of "human security", specifically referring to the risks and threats derived from physical violence and crime.

A study by the Universidad Luterana Salvadoreña (2016) attributes the effects of violence in El Salvador to an engrained structural problem linked to the social organization, power relations and the consolidation of power through limitations on human rights. For its part, gender violence is considered "normal", a nearly daily occurrence in territories with high levels of organized crime, while organized crime is considered an evil and is condemned.[37]

This type of violence is accompanied by an increase in organized crime, drug trafficking and the territorial control exercised by gangs in several of the countries. The so-called Northern Triangle of Central America – made up of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador – has registered some of the highest homicide rates for several years (with a slight decrease in Honduras and El Salvador in 2019) and is considered one of the most dangerous regions in the world. A study carried out in 2018[38] on violence in the Northern Triangle clearly stated that "the violent climate constitutes a social phenomenon that is produced and reproduced through social practices and focuses on violence associated with gangs, both in their role of perpetrators as well as victims, in a context in which the State is also a source of criminal violence".

Parallels may be found between the danger represented by the growth of this scourge and the weak response capacity of the states. The increase of homicides in the region evidences the fracture of the social fabric.

A comparative analysis makes it possible to visualize the homicide rate in Latin American countries (2019).[39]

Early warning crime system - El Salvador.
Digital, georeferenced and automated tool that uses internal data and priority variables to make operational decisions in real time.
https://infosegura.org/

36. Paradigm developed by Amartya Sen at UNDP (2020). Analysis on innovation in citizen security and human rights in Latin America and the Caribbean.
37. INFOSEGURA. "La cara escondida de la inseguridad. Violencia contra las mujeres en Centro América y RD" Report. Available at: **https://infosegura.org/2020/08/28/informe-la-cara-escondida-de-la-inseguridad-violencia-contra-las-mujeres-en-centroamerica-y-republica-dominicana/**
38. Prado, R. E. (2018). El entramado de violencias en el Triángulo Norte Centroamericano y las Maras. *Sociológica*, year 33, number 93, January-April, pp. 213-246.
39. Homicide rate calculated by InSight Crime based on available official homicide data and the most recent population estimates for each country.

COUNTRY	HOMICIDE RATE – 2019	CAUSES
Venezuela	76 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants	Common and organized crime, extrajudicial executions
Guatemala	42.5 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (2018)	Extortion, the MS13 and Barrio 18 gangs are the main source of violence in the capital.
Honduras	41 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (from 542 violent deaths in 2018 to 516 in 2019)	Implementation of policies to reduce violence
El Salvador	35.3 violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants	Extortion, maras control the streets through informal checkpoints.
The Caribbean – Port of Spain and Trinidad and Tobago	24.5 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in 2019, one of the most violent years for Port of Spain.	Organized crime (drug trafficking through the Caribbean), aggravated by the situation in Venezuela
Panama – Panama City	18.5 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (24 percent increase compared to 2018)	There are about 160 gangs operating in the country (about 60 in the metropolitan area of Panama City)
Uruguay – Montevideo	14.7 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (decreased compared to 2018)	Use of the country as a transshipment and transit point for drugs
Colombia	14.3 per 100,000 inhabitants	The car bombing attack of 2019 evidenced the presence of urban cells of the ELN
Brazil – Brasilia	13.7 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (in Brasilia)	Homicide rates are highest in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo
Costa Rica	12.9 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants	Settling of scores, fights and firearms assaults
Peru - Lima	8 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants	Highest increase in Callao (drug trafficking, extortion, etc.)
Nicaragua - Managua	6.6 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants	Government and paramilitary abuse are concentrated in Managua
Paraguay – Asunción	Low homicide rate in Asunción compared to departments bordering Brazil, whose rates amount to more than 70 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants	In Asunción, homicides are attributed to "common violence" in border areas and disputes over control of the border
Chile - Santiago	4.9 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants	Increase of 17 percent compared to 2018 (violent protests in October)
Argentina – Buenos Aires	4.6 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (2018)	Decrease in the homicide rate
Ecuador - Quito	6.7 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants	
Bolivia – La Paz	Without official data on homicides in 2019	The violence would have increased with the protests caused by the controversial departure from power of President Evo Morales

Source: Prepared from information on the homicide rates in Latin American capitals.[40]

40. **https://es.insightcrime.org/noticias/analisis/balance-homicidios-capitales-2019/**

Along these lines, the proliferation of firearms – a product of the armed processes that occurred in many Latin American countries in the 20th century – plays a preponderant role in the wave of violence and conflict. The efforts of Latin American states to control the acquisition and use of firearms have been timid and have not achieved the expected effects.

Another factor that contributes to the weakening of the social fabric is the increase of incarceration. Of note is the case of Brazil with the third highest number of people deprived of liberty in the world (behind China and the United States). In the Southern Cone countries, Brazil also leads in homicide and armed population rates, and political and social violence appear as increasingly legitimate tools to address conflict in the country. There is evidence of top-down legitimization of the use of violence for self-defense. The government supports the rearmament of civil society and promotes legislative reform that authorizes the population's use of firearms.

In the countries of the Southern Cone and Central America, there is growing concern about the increase in the killing of or attacks against human rights defenders and community organization representatives in conflict with the State, companies and criminal organizations. This topic will be further explored in the socioenvironmental axis.

An additional issue that weakens social cohesion is the increase in hate speech and legitimization of institutional and social violence in public space. The use of narratives of social and political hatred generates polarization in countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua (Central America); Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru (Andean); and Argentina and Brazil (Southern Cone).

In addition, factors such as racism continue to manifest themselves in xenophobia, discrimination, intolerance, prejudice and exclusion with a strong presence in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Many of these countries share a common colonial history, some "shared historical roots" that generate long-term exclusion and discrimination. At present, the "failing to acknowledge otherness" is one of the main sources of conflict. This dynamic is present in countries with indigenous peoples and populations of African descent, despite the celebration of the International Decade People of African Descent,[41] namely: Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Brazil (Andean subregion and Southern Cone), Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua (Central America and the Caribbean).

41. The International Decade for People of African Descent is in force (2015-2024) and seeks to "promote a greater knowledge and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies."

4.4 Ecosystem collapse - Socioenvironmental conflict

Central idea

Socioenvironmental conflicts are related to extractive activities (fossil resources, mining, timber resources, expansion of the agricultural frontier, land tenure, and water, forest, soil and air use) and the defence of natural resources, the environment and land/territory by indigenous communities and farmers.

The environmental situation in Latin America and the Caribbean is complex and is characterized by the loss of native forest cover, the decrease in biomass and the contamination of fresh waters. The international demand for *raw materials* has a strong impact on the territories due to the overexploitation of generally non-renewable natural resources and the expansion of agricultural frontiers. Natural resources are part of a global supply chain and are subject to fluctuations in international prices. Socioenvironmental conflict develops in a context of imbalanced or asymmetrical power between actors.

Main findings

A. Economies focused on raw material production

Since the early 2000s, Latin America has experienced an export boom in the primary sectors of the economy (hydrocarbons, minerals, soybeans, etc.) to meet the demand from countries such as China and India, in particular. The countries of the Southern Cone became suppliers of soybeans – used for food, fodder and fuel – and later expanded to other triple-use products. Countries like Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay produce more than half of the soy available globally. Mining activity has been profitable since colonial times despite ups and downs caused by price fluctuations in the market. The intensive exploitation of natural resources damages ecosystems, increases environmental pollution and creates "sacrifice zones".[42] These activities impact local populations and are part of conflict systems.

B. Excessive use of agrochemicals that affect the health of the residents

In addition to the intensive land and water use, the move to an intensive agro-industrial model multiplied pesticide use to improve production and increased the degradation and pollution of ecosystems, with repercussions on socioenvironmental health and, therefore, on the health of residents of the area.

C. Mega forest fires and climate vulnerability

Data on the uncontrollable fires that have burned through the Amazon region since 2019 is alarming. Between January and September 2020, Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE) detected 140,000 fires via satellite. Of these, almost 102,000 fires occurred in the Legal Amazon, a region comprising nine states in northwestern Brazil.

42. Those places where numerous polluting companies are concentrated that harm the life of the communities and pollute the territories.

Of the countries of the Southern Cone, Argentina has experienced the greatest increase in fires year-on-year. In 2020, it has registered over 51,000 fires to date, almost three times the close to 19,000 fires detected in the same period the previous year.[43]

Among the causes of the fires are global warming and burning for agricultural production and real estate speculation. Some of the consequences are the acceleration of climate change, the loss of biodiversity, air pollution and reduced freshwater availability in several affected populations.

As for the Caribbean countries, one of the great challenges lies in "climate vulnerability". For example, Jamaica – with more than 60 percent its population located in the coastal zone and an economy reliant on coastal resources[44] – is the 17th most tourism-dependent country in the world. In this context, there is a potential conflict system caused by socioenvironmental issues with climate change and other environmental phenomena impacting income generation in the country.

Among the notable consequences of global warming – the causes of which have been addressed above – is the impact of recent hurricanes Eta and Iota on several Central American countries (such as Honduras and Nicaragua) and the Caribbean. The serious adverse effects of these natural hazards may be attributed to the location of homes in high-risk areas, the negative impact of climate change and socioeconomic conditions.

D. Extractive projects and land use change

Agrifood production and extractive industries generate economic income and mobilize private investment and development with job creation. At the same time, they produce negative socioenvironmental and economic impacts linked to the development model. In response to crises and economic slowdowns, the model seeks to attract investment in the extraction and primary processing of natural resources.

These projects tend to modify land use, violate the rights of the population living in the area and contribute to the emergence of conflicts. As a consequence, they generate local resistance and an escalation of conflict with confrontations, persecution of leaders and reprisals against human and environmental rights defenders to protect the interests of the projects in question.

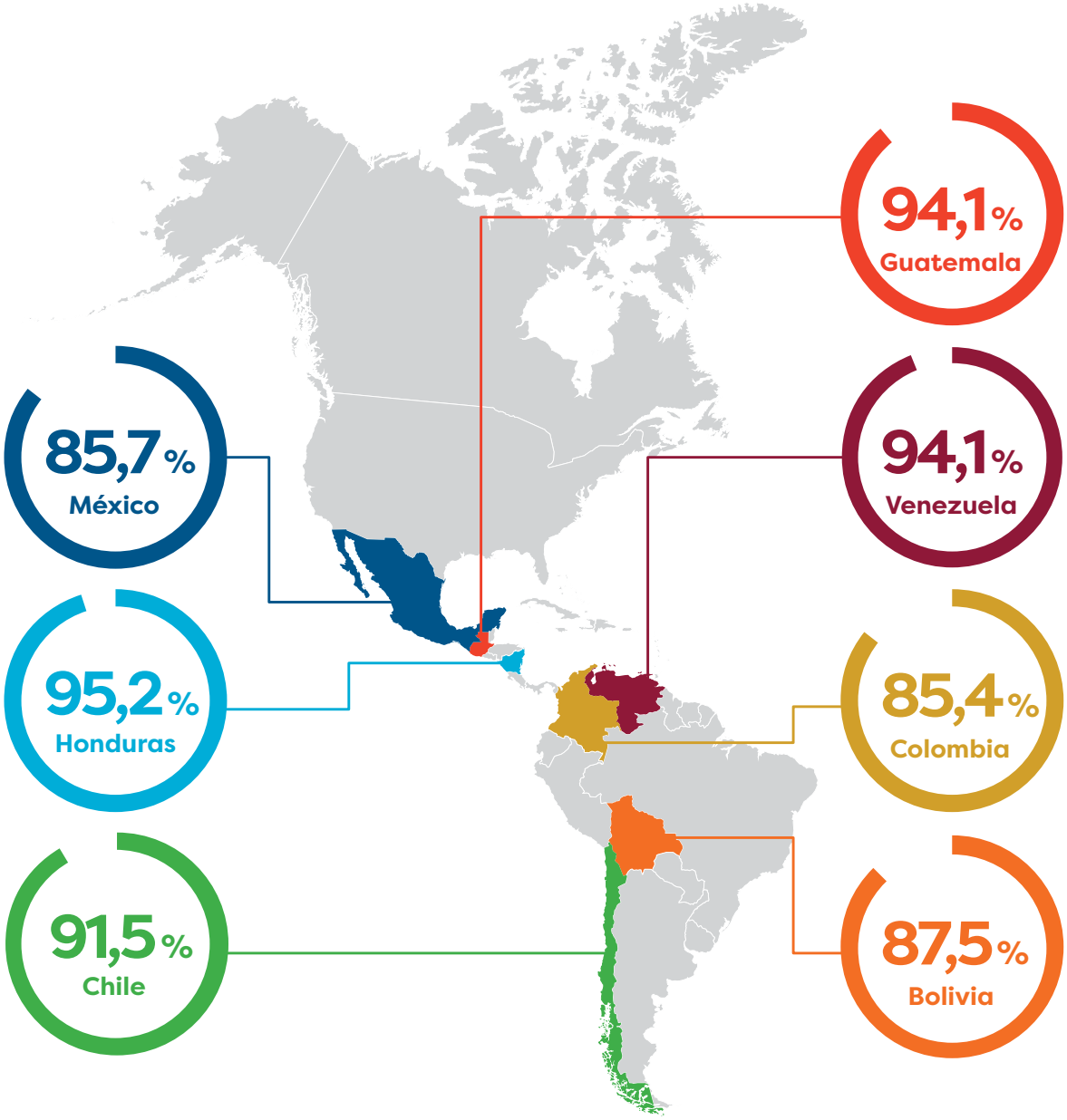
Conflicts stemming from land disputes have persisted since ancient times. These territorial spaces, historically occupied by indigenous peoples with their own ways of life, collapse with the arrival of new sources of income in the territory. The concentration of large tracts of land in the hands of landowners and the limited land tenure of certain social sectors (indigenous peoples, farmers and populations of African descent) are common phenomena in several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Central America is not on the fringes of this problem. There, disputes have revolved around factors related to the destruction of forests (illegal logging), the serious environmental consequences of mining activities or

43. Source: National Institute for Space Research (INPE), from 1 January to 16 September 2020.
44. Ibid.

the development of mega projects such as hydroelectric plants, which displace communities and affect rivers as main sources of water for human consumption and agricultural production. More recently, this situation has been compounded by the occupation and use of territories for illicit actions such as drug trafficking.

Graph III: Countries with the greatest increase in socioenvironmental conflict [45]



Source: Iokiñe Rodríguez Fernández et al. (2019).

45. Rodríguez, I. (2019). Conflictividad socioambiental en Latinoamérica. Aportes de la transformación de conflictos socioambientales a la transformación socio-ecológica. Cuadernos de H Ideas 3(2019):1. Available at: **https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337224712_Conflictividad_socioambiental_en_Latinoamerica_Aportes_de_la_transformacion_de_conflictos_socioambientales_a_la_transformacion_socio-ecologica**.

E. Contributions of the transformation of socioenvironmental conflicts to the ecological transformation

Growing disputes between governments, civil society and the market over some of these activities are common variables across the region. In the case of Guatemala, the Latin American Observatory of Environmental Conflicts (OLCA) has identified a long list of conflicts, violent events and even assassinations of leaders in the context of mining disputes. In El Salvador, the environmental organization CESTA denounced the environmental and social dangers of the construction of the El Chaparral hydroelectric dam, and the Salvadoran Ecological Unit (UNES), in alliance with the Association for Social Economic Development Santa Marta (ADES), denounced illegal logging activities and the impact on drinking water sources.

Included in the long list of violent actions arising from socioenvironmental conflicts over access to land and natural resources is the 2019 murder in Costa Rica of the Bribri leader Sergio Rojas, who defended the rights of indigenous peoples against the illegal occupation of their territories, and the murder of environmental activist Bertha Cáceres in Honduras, which dates to 2016.

The "Defend Tomorrow" report by Global Witness presents alarming figures on the murders of environmental activists. More than half of the 212 murders occurred in Colombia and the Philippines. In 2019, 64 activists were murdered in Colombia, the highest number ever recorded by Global Witness. Several reports show a drastic increase in murders of community and social leaders in recent years.[46]

Continuous complaints have been filed in response to the lack of prior, free and informed consultation[47] with representatives of indigenous, native and Afrodescendent peoples on mining, hydroelectric plants and illegal logging. The case of Barro Blanco in Panama and the Canadian Marlin Mine in Guatemala are two notable examples. Another variable is related to non-compliance with agreements and commitments, one of the most emblematic cases being that of Guatemala and the non-compliance with the peace accords.

This is a recurrent theme. Despite the ratification of ILO Convention No.169 by 22 countries including 15 from Latin America and the Caribbean, the application of free, prior and informed consultation is not implemented in all countries. Only a few have laws that regulate prior consultation, including Peru, Colombia and Panama. A 2014 ECLAC report[48] identified 826 indigenous peoples in the region (305 in Brazil), which occupy territories from Patagonia to the North of Mexico, stretching across different geographical areas such as the Amazon, the Andes, the Continental Caribbean, Lower Central America and Mesoamerica.

---

46. Global Witness (2020). Defending Tomorrow. The climate crisis and threats against land and environmental defenders. Available at: **https://www.globalwitness.org/es/defending-tomorrow-es/**

47. Prior, free and informed consultation, within the framework of Convention No.169 ratified by the ILO.

48. ECLAC (2014). "Indigenous Peoples in Latin America. Progress in the Last Decade and Pending Challenges for Guaranteeing their Rights."

4.5 Land, territory and territoriality - Territorial conflict

Central idea

Land access and distribution has historically been one of the central issues in Latin America and the Caribbean and has been a source of conflict in both past and present conflict systems. The concept of territory and the indigenous peoples that inhabit the land have been recognized and incorporated through the ratification of several international conventions (ILO conventions No. 107 and No. 169).

The exploitation of natural resources, the development of extractive megaprojects, the interests of irregular groups (organized crime) and the absence and inefficiency of state agencies in Latin American countries have created a complicated scenario for indigenous, farmer and Afrodescendent leaders and communities in the defence against the incursion of agribusiness, highways, oil exploitation, hydroelectric plants or illegal trade in timber resources and wildlife.

Main findings

A. Conflicts over land and territory regarding extractive investments and human rights

The conflict surrounding food production investment projects, intensified by the relaxation of regulations and a discourse in support of international investments and critical of human rights protection measures, has led to an intensification of conflicts over the land and territory. Conflicts are escalating into direct violence in the form of attacks, reprisals and killings.

During these episodes, public forces as well as rural militias organized by landowners intervene to evict communities.

B. Conflicts over land occupation

Conflicts over land occupation caused by the overlapping of and irregularities in the allocation of tenure rights are a recurring and long-standing theme in the region and are reflected in the inequality between landowners and farming, indigenous and Afrodescendent communities.

In Central America, territorial and sociocultural inequalities are manifest. Territories occupied by indigenous or native peoples in Guatemala and Panama evidence higher levels of poverty, inequality and lack of access to basic services. In Colombia, where the conflict has led to population displacement and irregular settlement, tenure, land use and rural development are central to the peace process. This pressure on land and territories enhances the dynamics of conflicts.

Finally, during times of pandemic, the high dependence of economies on the U.S. market has led to a significant contraction that is exacerbated by the trade war unleashed between the U.S. and China, both strategic economic partners of all countries. There is a strong demand for primary resources from the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Conflict over urban lands

Urban land conflicts are related to the occupation of public lands and the creation of settlements on the peripheries of cities. The new neighbourhoods lack basic public services and are governed by a hegemony of networks of criminal organizations, drug traffickers or urban militias in complex conflict relationships, often in collaboration or collusion with the political system.

4.6 Dismantling of the established order - Conflict resulting from transnational organized crime

Central idea

Social cohesion is affected by the presence of organized power structures dedicated to illegal activities, with a temporary or permanent presence, articulated in vertical systems that operate in certain territorial spaces with international ties in many cases. This generates violence and affects economic activities, impacting citizen security and the population's ways of life.

Main findings

A conflict associated with parastatal violence of irregular armed groups can be observed in Central and South American countries.

D. In this regard, Mario R. Argueta[49] published a piece that stated that "Honduras is experiencing a lethal combination of physical, legal, economic and labour insecurity that creates a mental state of anguish, anxiety, terror, fatalism and powerlessness among young people and adults, and which also contributes to the daily exodus of compatriots in search of peace and refuge beyond our borders."

E. This type of violence is accompanied by an increase in organized crime, drug trafficking and territorial control exercised by gangs in several of the countries. The so-called Northern Triangle of Central America (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) has registered the highest homicide rates for several years and is considered one of the most dangerous regions on the planet. A work carried out in 2018[50] on violence in the Northern Triangle clearly stated that "the violent climate constitutes a social phenomenon that is produced and reproduced through social practices and centers on violence associated with gangs, both in their role of perpetrators as well as victims, in a context in which the State is also a source of criminal violence."

F. The increase in territorial control by these de facto powers associated with the penetration of organized crime in different spheres of public and private life in the countries becomes an extremely serious and conflictive factor in the current and future reality. Most of those interviewed agreed on the danger posed by the growth of this scourge and the weak response capacity of the states.

---

49. Argueta, M. R. (2020). "Violencia en Honduras: causas y tipos". El Heraldo de Honduras. Available at: **https://www.elheraldo.hn/opinion/columnas/1046647-469/violencia-en-honduras-causas-y-tipos**.

50. By Ruth Elizabeth Prado Pérez from the department of socio-political and legal studies of the Western Institute of Technology and Higher Education and the Jesuit University of Guadalajara, Mexico.

Territorial prioritization index for Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador. Quantitative tool that identifies priority municipalities for citizen security and coexistence policies. The index is made up of various indicators of citizen insecurity (homicides, assaults, violence against women, robberies, etc.) and associated risk factors related to social fabric and cohesion.
https://www.infosegura.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Indice-de-priorizacion-de-municipios-COMPLETO-Infosegura.pdf

G. In terms of territorial governance in the absence of a state presence in the south of the region, there is a low intensity war in which relatively autonomous small armies control territories or areas. In some countries (such as Brazil, which is setting the trend), there is evidence of a low-intensity warfare associated with the international and local war on drugs and drug trafficking. Faced with this scenario, criminal organizations are internationalizing at the regional level to guarantee the entire value chain.

There are armed groups, such as the Paraguayan People's Army guerrilla movement or the Comando Vermelho drug cartel. In addition, paramilitary organizations, commonly called militias, have multiplied – organized as financed self-defenders groups to manage land conflicts with farmers or citizens looking for protection from criminal gangs. Many times, these groups evolve towards criminality, coercively "selling" private security and resolving problems related to the access to public services for the population under their control. They can control segregated urban and rural territories in the absence of state security.

4.7 Social representations at the border - Cross-border conflict

Central idea

Border territories are spaces where local populations and social representations[51] interact, configuring cross-border activities that may be legal or illegal depending on the location. This makes it possible to understand social action and the perception of the population. It is important to consider the pre-existing historical conflict, a focused and isolated conflict, but one with the potential for geopolitical repercussions.

Main findings:

A. Cuenca del Plata (Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay)
Hydroelectric dam system Impact of climate change on conflicts related to fires,

51. The social sciences refer to the system of values, beliefs and practices that are embedded in everyday life. They are economic, social and historical conditions that characterize a society, according to Sergei Moscovici's theory of social representations.

droughts and migration Conflict over control and repression: drug trafficking route to the South

B. Lithium Triangle (Argentina, Bolivia and Chile)

Reduced competence of jurisdictions and lack of human rights protection policy Geopolitical dispute over control of the lithium distribution chain Desertification and water stress

C. Southwestern Atlantic

Geopolitics: access to Antarctica and Falkland Islands Climate change: ocean acidification and coastal erosion Conflicts in fisheries value chains

D. Northern Patagonia (Chile and Argentina)

Conflicts over urban and tourism developments: impact on the environment and communities Ethnopolitical conflict involving the States, the Mapuche people and local communities

E. Gran Chaco Americano (Paraguay, Argentina and to a lesser extent Brazil)

Land use change and deforestation for agro-industrial purposes Climate change impacts: fire risk

F. Omoa Bay and coastline (Honduras and Guatemala)

Pollution of Omoa Bay and the coastline, with direct effects on fishermen and the economies of both countries, has increased in parallel to the levels of pollution in the Motagua River.

G. Freshwater (Chile and Bolivia)

The use of freshwater from the Silala, an aquifer that joins the department of Potosí in Bolivia and the Antofagasta region in Chile, transcends water governance and is related to the handling of the historical tensions between Chile and Bolivia. The border between the two countries is an illegal trade (smuggling) and drug trafficking route.

4.8 Beyond the borders - Migration conflict

Human mobility - aspects related to migration

Central idea

Migration in Latin America is not a new phenomenon and in recent years has become one of the primary factors in most conflict. The so-called "sudden migration" triggered by crisis situations in various countries of the region, instability, economic crisis and insecurity are some of the factors that have also driven the mass exodus of Venezuelans. For example, on a single day in July 2018, around 50,000 Venezuelans crossed the border into Colombia. This has become a constant in different countries of the region. Although "exodus" is used to describe these massive migrations, the term "migrant caravans" has also arisen to specifically describe the numerous groups of people who cross international borders and multiple countries on foot. The caravans from the north of Central America have increased since 2018. The causes for this massive migration are rooted in factors such as violence, poverty in countries of origin and climate change, which has impacted agricultural activity, forestry, livestock and fishing, generating food and economic insecurity due to droughts and floods.

At its source, migration is not a cause but a consequence, but it becomes a factor of transnational conflict that strains relations between countries, as is the case with Nicaragua and Costa Rica or Panama and El Salvador. It also impacts external relations with the United States.

Main findings

As described above, the landscape in Latin America and the Caribbean has transformed over the last decade. The islands of the Caribbean have become a pole of attraction for a significant number of migrants and refugees, many of whom arrive through highly dangerous routes, both by land and sea. This dynamic tends to increase vulnerability, human trafficking and exploitation.

Prior to the waves of migrants of the last five years, migration was sustainable and even provided a source of labour in destination countries. However, the economic recession in the region and the "refugee crisis" have transformed this phenomenon into a potential trigger for conflicts. For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, turmoil and tension between Venezuelan migrants and the local population has increased due to the demand for employment, housing and asylum, accompanied by an increase in crime.[52]

Another factor of conflict is the human mobility of returnees – ex-ISIS fighters, children and women held ISIS refugee camps – who have been repatriated to Trinidad and Tobago and generate social and political tensions during the pandemic. Intervention on this issue is not focused on acceptance of this population but rather on their long-term reintegration.[53]

Similarly, the high number of deportees and urban marginalized men between 15 and 25 years of age impact the levels of crime and violence. The deportees arrive in very precarious situations without a safety net or cushion. In many cases, they have little to lose and are a potential trigger for social violence.

52. Kinosian, S., Ramírez, M. and Hutchinson-Jafar, L. (24 November 2020). "Dozens of Venezuelan migrants arrive in Trinidad after hours at sea". Reuters. Available at: **https://www.reuters.com/article/venezuela-jected-trinidadtobago-idUSKBN284346**

53. Loutoo, J. (9 December 2020). "82 women, children at ISIS refugee camps want travel documents to return home". Trinidad and Tobago Newsday. Available at: **https://newsday.co.tt/2020/12/09/82-women-children-at-isis-refugee-camps-want-travel-documents-to-return-home/**

Conjectural factors (COVID-19) that contribute to conflict

Central idea

COVID-19 has exposed structural and conjunctural problems that lead to an increase in unemployment, informality and insecurity, which threatens to increase levels of poverty and inequality.

Main findings

In the context described, the arrival of the pandemic highlights the dramatic realities of all countries, intensified by the mandatory confinement decreed by governments as part of the biosecurity measures implemented to prevent contagion and reduce the high number of COVID-19 deaths. This is added to the structural factors accumulated and aggravated by the economic contraction, the closure of companies and the increase in unemployment and informality.

The weakness of public health systems in most countries is an additional risk factor of conflict. Apart from Costa Rica, which seems to have a relatively robust system, the rest of the countries do not have sufficient hospital capacity, medical and technical staff, and resources to face the emergency caused by this pandemic.[54] Chile and Uruguay also showed better response capacities to the emergency, which along with Costa Rica, have the most efficient health spending in the region. In the rest of the countries, the weakness of the public health systems is accompanied by limited access to education, housing and drinking water services, a combination that represents a potential factor of conflict.

Another factor is the "confinement fatigue" caused by restrictive measures. A large portion of the population has begun to speak out against closures and control measures and increasingly challenge authority with street protests despite the risk of contagion.

5.1 Impacts of the pandemic on pre-existing conflict

Drop in Gross Domestic Product

All the countries of the Southern Cone have registered drops in GDP. In the second quarter of 2020, Argentina recorded a year-on-year decrease of 19.1 percent, and Chile reported its biggest economic decline since 1982 (14.1 percent) along with a 19.1 percent decline in domestic demand. Brazil and Uruguay registered smaller reductions, with 9.7 percent and 10.6 percent, respectively, but very different pandemic realities. Brazil registered some of the highest COVID-19 infection and fatality rates in the world with more than 4,500,000 contagions and 138,000 deaths. Paraguay is expected to be the least impacted in the region with an estimated 2.5 percent decline in GDP, pending the publication of official numbers.

Projection: After the crisis, the regional GDP will drop by around 9 percent. Poverty will

54. Gallo, C. (29 March 2021). "¿Qué ha mostrado la pandemia de los sistemas de salud en América Latina?". France24. Available at: **https://www.france24.com/es/am%C3%A9rica-latina/20210329-salud-america-latina-pandemia-crisis-coronavirus.**

increase between 7 and 10 percent and inequality between 1 and 8 percent, with the largest countries most severely affected (ECLAC, 2020).

Projection: After the crisis, the regional GDP will drop by around 9 percent. Poverty will increase between 7 and 10 percent and inequality between 1 and 8 percent, with the largest countries most severely affected (ECLAC, 2020).

Digitalization and asymmetries due to gaps in access to internet services

Digital networks constitute the basic communication, coordination and production infrastructure in today's society. The COVID-19 crisis has accelerated digitalization, evidencing the inequality between those who have the capacity to "digitalize" their lives and those who do not. The digital divide creates challenges for reactivation. Inequality in internet access intensifies the gap between those who are included and excluded in recovery policies and processes based on tele-education, telemedicine and telework. Ultimately, the digital divide tends to exacerbate inequities.[55]

Today, distance or online education generates asymmetries resulting from a deficit in coverage that prevents school-age children from accessing this digital tool.

Budgetary adjustment

The "Fiscal Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2020" report was presented amid the greatest health, human, economic and social crisis that the region has faced in the past century as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. ECLAC projects that it will produce an economic contraction of 5.3 percent in the region in 2020, the deepest recession since the 1930s, with severe repercussions for employment, poverty and inequality.

This is widely expressed in budget cuts, particularly in education and public health, and affects the most vulnerable populations.

Distance between winners and losers

The pandemic and confinement measures deepened gaps across the board. They affect and promote the reconfiguration of production, logistics, commercial, financial and technological systems, in which some win and others lose. This dynamic is also reflected in the different subregions as some may recover faster than others. There are sectors and regions with less capacity and resilience that will undoubtedly face severe adversities until they recover the path of development.[56] As more systems are added, the greater their weight in the economy (e-commerce and healthcare, for example), and the more systems are lost, the less weight they carry in the

55. Levy, G. (20 October 2020). "Brecha digital: el lastre en el crecimiento económico de América Latina". Andina Link. Available at: **https://andinalink.com/brecha-digital-lastre-economico/**.

56. See the articles available at: **https://blogs.iadb.org/integracion-comercio/es/coronavirus-comercio-integracion/; https://es.semrush.com/blog/impacto-economico-coronavirus/**; **https://www.ecoanalisis.org/eco-mercado/articulo/ideas-para-la-reactivacion-economica-despues-del-covid-19/**.

economy, as is the case with tourism and construction.

Impact on the employment status of women

The current COVID-19 crisis has generated the largest drop in employment in the region in recent history. This loss mainly affects women, although it presents variations among countries.

The crisis has three important features that particularly affect the female labour market. First, the suspension of face-to-face educational and care activities implied an increased workload at home, with most of the burden falling on women.

Second, the employment crisis is not homogeneous across the different sectors of the economy. Mobility restrictions and social distancing measures affected some sectors more than others. Gender gaps increased, and job losses were mainly concentrated in sectors such as commerce, construction, tourism and gastronomy, many common sectors for women's employment.[57]

Third, social distancing measures led many people and companies to choose to work remotely or telecommute. The opportunities for telework differ for men and women depending on two aspects: access and use of technology and the type of task performed at work. Before the pandemic, there were significant lags in the use and access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) for women, a relevant barrier to teleworking.

The pandemic has increased the vulnerability of women, young people and children.

Impact on labour conflict

The impact of the pandemic is mainly reflected in the growing demands of public sector workers who are exposed on the front lines: health staff, education workers and police officers. Likewise, social organizations in the informal economy are expressing increased demands for social protections. This trend in conflict is expected to increase over the next few years as a result of the acceleration of new technologies, the reconversion of productive sectors and the loss of purchasing power of wage earners, among other factors.

Worsening of the social and economic crisis

The recession, which had been announced prior to the pandemic, has manifested itself very clearly in times of COVID-19 with a significant decline in economic activity. It has expressed itself in the closure of companies, reduction of both public and private investment, suspension of employment contracts, a drop in government revenue and the application of subsidy measures that consume large amounts of resources and force countries to resort to borrowing in the financial market to meet the basic needs and new demands of citizens. Examples include the *Bono Solidario* in Panama, the *Bono Proteger* in Costa Rica, the *Bono Comercio Popular* in Guatemala

57. Azuara, O. et al. (12 October 2020). "COVID-19 incrementa las brechas de género en el mercado laboral". Factor Trabajo, IADB blog. Available at: **https://blogs.iadb.org/trabajo/es/covid-19-incrementa-las-brechas-de-genero-en-el-mercado-laboral/**

and the $300 government subsidy in El Salvador for families directly affected by COVID-19 in El Salvador.

Denial of care policies

The deepening of citizen distrust of state institutions, the demands for individual freedoms and the anti-science trend are widespread not only at the regional level but also at the global level. There have been demonstrations against the use of masks in different countries, which constitutes a conjunctural problem.

Increase in cases of violence against women, children and adolescents

Mobile application for women with protection measures.
An early warning mechanism for violence against women, the mobile app makes ir easy for women who have been violated to notify the police and their support network in cases of agression.
https://infosegura.org/. El Salvador

There has been a confirmed increase in social and domestic violence with serious consequences for women, which tends to be underreported. Although the region has made considerable progress in recent years, the situation has been complicated by the isolation measures promoted as health policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

An article published in the online newspaper El País (Costa Rica) in April 2020 reports that, in Guatemala, "insults, intimidation, classified as psychological violence, give way to physical and sexual assault, or both, nothing new in this country where not 10 minutes go by without the Public Ministry receiving a report of violence against women; however, the situation is now more complex with one enemy on the street and another at home". The countries of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) share a similar situation.

Towards peacebuilding • Factors/promoters of peace

6.1 Factors of peace for the governance crisis and the increase in human rights violations caused by state and non-state actors

Contemplating peace in a region marked by permanent conflict throughout its history is a great challenge. However, Latin America and the Caribbean is not being overrun by armed conflict and guerilla organizations, although irregular armed groups (dissidents of the peace accords) remain in countries like Colombia.

DEMOCRATIC DIALOGUE.
It is a tool for change and for building consensus that facilitates equitable participation for all actors; working together in a peaceful and legitimate manner to transform relationships and generate rationality; managing critical moments or crises; a generative and reflective space; and strategic discussions to promote shared visions.
https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/library/democratic_governance/guia-practica-de-dialogo-democratico.html

Most of those interviewed in the four subregions agreed that important changes are required to ensure peace and tranquility. Many countries seek to address the levels of tension and conflict associated with structural deficiencies and unacceptable social debt. Peace is seen as a building process based in differences. By no means, does this mean that democracy eliminates these differences, but it should establish mechanisms, spaces and conditions for the agreements and consensus required.

Peace in the region faces enemies as dangerous as the historic armed conflict that has endured since the 20th century. It also finds itself threatened by corruption, impunity, new manifestations of violence and the resurgence of radicalism and dogmatisms, including religious ones, embodied in some cases by key actors in the construction of social cohesion, and that in others represent a threat to the human rights of citizens.

Individualism and the weakening of a collective vision lead our societies down paths of indifference and social disarticulation. The following were identified as factors of peace or connectors:

- **Peace mechanisms** (culture of peace and conflict prevention) that allow for the construction of more resilient and cohesive societies
- **Dialogue and consultation instruments** updated according to the context
- **Agreements between elites** renewed amid a crisis of representativeness and an explosion and fragmentation of civil society to reduce the loss of trust and credibility
- Citizens with **direct voice** through all alternative means of communication (social networks) and freedom of expression, but also of abuse. It is therefore imperative to use new **technological mechanisms for citizen participation**

that reposition dialogue, the construction of consensus and agreements in a broader and more transparent dimension. One example is the recent call by Panamanian President Laurentino Cortizo for the Bicentennial Pact "Closing Gaps", which launched the AGORA online platform to collect proposals from Panamanians and resident foreigners over the age of 15 years to resolve the marked development asymmetries in the country. This is an example of a different and creative initiative that is worth following closely.

- **Transparency and accountability observatories** that counteract the corruption and impunity that threaten to reach extremely dangerous dimensions of conflict. This is accompanied by an early warning system and the strengthening of citizen action because the observatories are sometimes viewed as elite, academic or technical bodies removed from the public. Another positive initiative is the creation of permanent institutional bodies for dialogue in government structures that help build capacities to adequately address the conflict.
- Recover an **agenda for the promotion and protection of human rights** that addresses basic needs (food, housing, employment, etc.). Although contemplated in the Constitutions, there is still a long way to go until all citizens have full enjoyment of these rights.
- **Reform of the justice systems**, emphasizing judicial independence
- **Strengthening of electoral bodies** and promotion of a culture of peace through the formal educational system
- Justice and citizen security are often presented as connectors in peacebuilding. However, this perspective does not recognize the alienation of justice, built on transhistorical structures of social injustice, as a discriminatory factor for all vulnerable groups. It is necessary to **promote scientific-social studies[58] on certain aspects of the administration of justice** in the Caribbean, such as the titling models or differential treatment in the administration of justice, which contributes to the alienation of the justice system.
- Court systems in the Caribbean are simply not built to include historically marginalized groups such as the poor, the disabled and those who lack life skills related to long-standing social problems, stemming from the underdevelopment of the local society for particular groups. In a context of widespread apathy among young people and lack of inclusion – and where prison and justice systems criminalize young people instead of providing justice, with the consequent social damage – UN efforts can contribute to **support minors and a justice reform that focuses on rehabilitation, the imposition of non-custodial sentences and the reintegration of young people upon completion of their sentences.**

58. Kerrigan, D., Jamadar, P., Elahie, E. and Sinanan, T. (2019) "Securing equality for all in the administration of justice: the evidence and recommendations". In Caribbean judicial dialogue: equality for all in the administration of justice. The Faculty of Law, The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.

PROSPECTIVE SCENARIOS.
The prospective understood as a reflection on the future based on an analysis of the decision-making processes and present actions.
https://www.facebook.com/pg/PAPEP.UNDP/posts/

- If corruption negatively impacts the quality of democracy, the pandemic creates conditions for the deepening of corruption as public decisions are co-opted and distorted by private interests. It is also true that some banking services in the Caribbean accept money from undisclosed origins. Anti-corruption initiatives, understood as new progressive development model, can generate greater social trust in state institutions. **Supporting the creation of transparency and accountability observatories** can help consolidate the dispersed civil society efforts.
- New political structures that contribute to social contracts, as is the case in Chile and its path to the Constituent Assembly (2021)

6.2 Factors of peace to overcome the crisis associated with the recession of the global economy

- **Creation of the Economic and Social Council** to provide political direction and facilitate agreements to help restore the confidence of citizens in their institutions as a sine qua non of peace and social cohesion.
- **Public-private partnerships** that allow governments to reduce the pressure of the financial burden and public debt while boosting economic activity, creating new jobs and addressing part of the accumulated mismanagement public works and services.

6.3 Factors of peace to overcome the crisis associated with the environmental, climate and biodiversity emergency

- **Creation of spaces for political and social agreement** with an emphasis on the socioenvironmental.
- Development of peace infrastructures for socioenvironmental issues such as **dialogue platforms on the sustainable management of common goods**. In the Southern Cone subregion, primary information identifies at least four natural resources with a high probability of becoming causes of conflict or war (water, lithium, forests and/or jungles, copper). It is necessary to prepare peace infrastructures to meet these challenges.

- Incorporation of the **Sustainable Development Goals** from a logic of prevention and early warning.
- Strengthening and modernization of the systems that support the access to justice, integrating judicial and non-judicial mechanisms and tools; dissemination and promotion of the **Escazú Agreement**[59] on the right to environmental justice.

6.4 Factors of peace to overcome the crisis associated with the deepening of inequality and social segregation

- Promotion of **dialogue among young people** (community, political, business and union), between women and young people, who are currently protagonists. Recover and strengthen dialogue experiences among the multiple existing actors (for example, dialogue experiences in Paraguay).
- **Creation of a regional information programme on migration that includes Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador** to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences, management of remittances and other related matters. This initiative should be accompanied by a strengthening of UNICEF's care programmes for vulnerable and at-risk communities.
- **Visions of development from territorial and local spaces** that reinforce democratic institutions, determine structural inequalities and incorporate citizens throughout the planning and implementation process.
- **New local leadership and definition of the roles of new actors:** Decentralization requires the organization and empowerment of local civil society as a key actor in its own development.
- Mechanisms of democratic participation with close accompaniment of key governance institutions.

The lack of national databases on social protection needs in the Caribbean makes it difficult to determine which sectors and proportion of the population are being ignored. Laws introduced in the framework of the pandemic, such as stay-at-home orders, lockdowns and Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs) introduced in Jamaica, have created a temporary barrier against rising crime and violence.

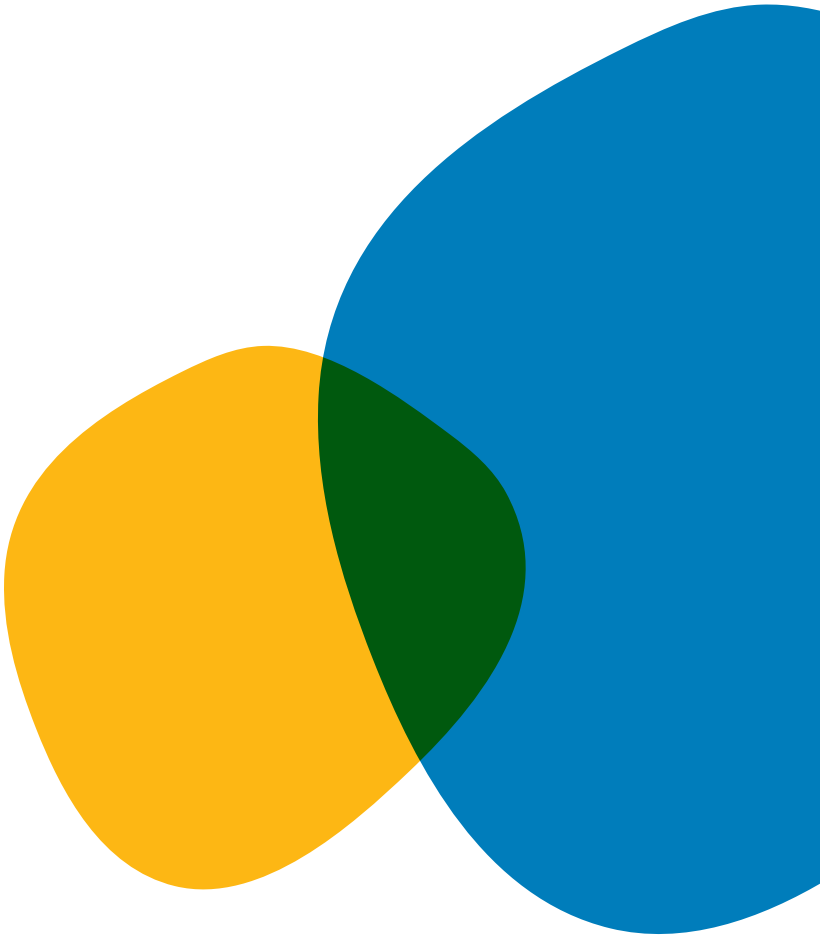
Levels of crime and violence, especially in terms of gang violence and homicides, have declined in most of the region during the pandemic. However, gangs have also reached truces to work together to target police, and the decrease in inter-gang violence does not signify that gangs have weakened. The new mobility measures are also not supported by all citizens, some of whom request further closures.

- Recreational and cultural activities such as sports, music, festivals, holidays and traditional celebrations are very popular in the region and can be understood as connectors for peace in the context of **creating**

59. The **Escazú Agreement** establishes minimum standards for the exercise of the rights of access to information, participation and environmental justice, as well as for the management of natural resources, all of which contribute to the exercise of fundamental human rights such as the right to life, integrity and health.

social solidarity. At the same time, in a context of social fissures, cultural connectors can develop as anti-state movements. In Trinidad, **the new "Trinibad" music** is popular among young people of all social classes, but its lyrics are often tinged with violent and anti-government messages.[60]

- Commissions in the region improve social cohesion. For example, the **Ethnic and Racial Commissions were established as mechanisms to address possible triggers and social conflicts. Programmes have also been developed to foster social cohesion and combat racism on social media and in the press**.
- To encourage social cohesion, it is necessary to engage in more conversations about social and cultural history and the legacies of nations and the region through the **promotion of public dialogues and historical commissions** that contribute to mutual forgiveness and historical memory, in addition to providing safety valves for historical social tensions.
- Alternative and proper management of "protest movements" based on the principles of dialogue and the full recognition of the rights to freedom of expression and assembly.



60. Seemungal, J. (7 July 2020). "Dancehall artistes in PoS peace talks". Trinidad & Tobago Guardian. Available at: **https://www.guardian.co.tt/news/dancehall-artistes-in-pos-peace-talks-6.2.1151560.9b75285be0**.

Innovations for social cohesion

07

The primary information and the documentary review have made it possible to identify a strong trend towards fragmentation, even in relatively more cohesive countries such as Costa Rica, where an individualistic vision of the model has been imposed that weakens the collective, especially in traditional structures such as political parties and unions. The situation is aggravated by institutional weakness and the absence of an inclusive and representative vision of national development of the sociocultural reality of each country. This is in part due to the growth of corruption, which threatens to become a pandemic phenomenon.

This may be explained by the weakening of trust in political actors and the crisis of representativeness, as well as spontaneous reactions by civil society that releases its feelings of anger and rejection, based on concrete facts, and expresses itself outside of the formal structure. Other factors include the increase in violence, particular violence against women, and the presence of drug trafficking and organized crime, which have penetrated territories, socioeconomic sectors and even strategic areas of state institutions.

Strengthening social cohesion, understood in terms of social integration, is relevant to overcoming the growing uncertainty in most countries. There are signs of fragmentation, polarization and weakening of consensus-building spaces and of the agreements reached through prior dialogue and negotiation processes. This highlights the importance of reviewing monitoring and compliance mechanisms for national agreements directly linked to the development of more just, equitable, inclusive, democratic, peaceful and sustainable societies.

Central America has yet to heal from the armed conflicts it experienced during the second half of the 20th century and is far from achieving the wishes embodied in the peace agreements, reached through blood and tears. It is essential to keep these experiences in mind for countries such as Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Other countries in the region such as Costa Rica, which has traditionally been more homogeneous and integrated in comparison, are now torn between polarized positions, demonstrated by the results of the dialogues and the rejection of the government's first convocation effort facilitated by The State of the Nation.

It appears that the development model imposed on all these countries, with a significant emphasis on the modernization of international trade, has left important sectors of the population behind, excluding them from this integration based on opportunities that favor a majority with the capacity for social mobility. The weakening of the middle class and the trend towards a new polarization tend to increase poverty and concentrate wealth. Panama, paradoxically, is one of the countries with the highest growth rates but one of the worst in terms of distribution. Costa Rica, considered a middle-income country, is currently experiencing a deterioration in its distributive capacity (see the Gini index).

In this regard and in view of the decline it has experienced in recent years, social cohesion must be strengthened through a sustained effort of public policies and socioeconomic investment in those territories and sectors that are excluded from just, inclusive and

sustainable human development. Invigorating and sustaining social cohesion requires that nations of the region promote a development model based on the local, territorial and sectoral reality as opposed to the centralized approach that has prevailed historically.

VIOLENCE IN EDUCATION ALERT SYSTEM (SALVE).
El Salvador enables the educational community to report cases of violence in educational centres, via mail and mobile phone app. (reports of homicides, suicides, harassment, rape, bullying or threats in or around schools.
https://infosegura.org/2019/09/03/el-salvador-sistema-educativo-cuenta-con-alerta-de-violencia-salve/

In an ever-changing world impacted by knowledge and technology, it is imperative to conceive of a nation state that is integrated economically and socially but also culturally and environmentally. These last two concepts require a unification of efforts to reduce educational, digital and gender gaps. Labour dynamics continue to change at an accelerated pace and threaten to displace those workers who do not have the training and tools required by the market. However, it is essential to incorporate a humanistic approach that prioritizes human beings over the materialism and consumerism that have characterized development models. Social cohesion should be based on an inclusive and alternative vision to the throw-away society that today threatens peace and peaceful coexistence.

This effort should include the participation of new political and social actors who feel underrepresented by the traditional social intermediation structures. It must include the worldview of indigenous peoples and respect the human rights, equality and equity of marginalized and discriminated sectors to formulate a national project that is based on the asymmetric realities of the population. This effort has the potential to revalue seriously threatened concepts such as solidarity, social justice, cultural identity and democracy that contribute directly to authentic social integration. It must push the envelope and move beyond subsidy policies, temporary assistance programmes and the political patronage that prevail in the current model.

The fight against violence and its different manifestations is another factor of social cohesion that must be clearly strengthened. The fear and insecurity caused by organized crime through territorial control by gangs and “maras”, kidnappings and criminality are factors that undermine investment, the generation of quality jobs and the development of a healthy and sustainable economy. The promotion of efforts in this area is vital to reduce migration and build trust among the deeply fragment actors in society.

Most of the countries have been weakened to the extreme of becoming insular, fragmented and disjointed spaces. It is urgent to recover efforts to **promote citizen education, community meetings and the formalization of a rule of law that is based on the sociocultural**

worldview of its ethnic diversity as key factors of social cohesion.

Rather than a sudden break between models, there should be a process of transition that recovers successful past experiences and adds the vision of a new citizenship, an authentic citizen reconciliation based on unification and articulation.

At the regional level, it is necessary to **promote a new governance model that enables the construction of a "new normal"** for territories, countries, subregions and the region. This "new normal" must be able to manage conflicts and lead societies towards a transformative way out of the crisis. The importance of equity is highlighted in the United Nations Framework for the Immediate Socio-economic Response to COVID-19, which establishes basic criteria.

Five priority steps are recommended to address the complexity of this crisis: strengthening protection systems and access to services; improve social protection; protect jobs, small and medium-sized enterprises and workers in the informal sector; formulate macroeconomic policies that benefit all; and promote peace, good governance and trust to strengthen social cohesion.

In order to establish the foundations of a new governance model capable of managing the challenges of this profound crisis, it is necessary to:

- **Promote an institutional framework that encourages political negotiation, intra- and inter-party electoral institutions, and the defence of human rights** (such as congresses and ombudsmen).
- Structure political and multisectoral dialogues at the national and territorial levels that are integrated and articulated around an **agenda of "minimums" required** by consensus for the reconstruction of state capacities.
- Promote **"citizen dialogue"** and a meeting culture for the social and political depolarization in favour of the pluralism and cohesion of national and regional societies as "unintentional" spaces focused on various issues.
- Promote **digital democracy** to reduce the digital divide and strengthen justice systems (civil, environmental, social and economic, labour, etc.), establishing the operational independence and transparency of actors.

School reform is necessary in contexts of unequal opportunities and quality. Public education is also necessary to promote collective values. Fun initiatives for peace should return to both school and public education programmes. The current educational models in the Caribbean reinforce the class system and educational inequality, generating social dislocation for a large part of the youth in terms of participation and school attendance. **Peacebuilding through educational initiatives such as "Music for Peace"** can nurture collective values, enhance solidarity, develop local capacities and empower young people.

In the vocational education space, the scope of skills programmes and mentoring databases should be expanded to include services (welding, plumbing, masonry, etc.) and agricultural training, as well as unconventional career paths. It is necessary to invest in positive deviance projects and **peer mentoring**

programmes and implement them in low-income communities.

Many social classes and identity groups in the Caribbean feel marginalized and excluded from national inclusion and development opportunities at the individual and community level, therefore **messages aimed at different population groups must be incorporated**, for example, the middle and working classes, urban and rural populations, young people and older adults.

In all the countries of the region analysed, young people constitute a vulnerable group, often more exposed to lack of employment and excluded from national development plans. It is necessary to **develop communication and messaging aimed at young people to support them and connect them with the fundamental values of the region**. What are your roles in the future? What does the government want from its young people? They should be made to feel included and provide with opportunities for growth and development.

Strategic communications are also needed throughout the region in situations where historical memory has been lost and must be rebuilt to improve ethnic-racial relations. The continued need for **regular community dialogue and extensions of dialogue such as historical commissions to rebuild trust in democratic institutions is identified in the context of the damage caused to social cohesion by patriarchy, problematic masculinities and gender-based violence in general.**

Strategic communication must continue to target problematic norms and values around gender roles and ideologies in the Caribbean and must be maximized, as the understanding of the notion of gender as identity is still limited. As such, gender violence is not understood as a structural axis. Experts agree that the economic and social costs of gender-based violence and child abuse affect the entire region and contribute to behavioural problems in adults; however, data is currently lacking to test these connections. It is **necessary to incorporate gender experts in the political space to promote government policies and shape communication**; guarantee substantive participation of mechanisms at the national level to strengthen and implement actions from a gender perspective; and incorporate security units at the national and local government levels.

In much of the Caribbean region, data collection for decision-making and policy development is insufficient. There are challenges that are linked to geographic realities such as archipelago configuration, therefore many interventions in the region are reactive rather than proactive. For example, in terms of gender policies, the quantitative information necessary to carry out interventions to prevent child abuse does not exist.

In the context of ethnic relations, it is necessary to **develop surveys on mutual grievances and attitudes regarding ethnicity and social class**. In terms of health systems, it is necessary to analyse the causes, given that Caribbean countries, with their limited health care capacities, appear to have achieved better results in treating COVID-19 than many nations in the Global North to date.

There is more quantitative information available about crime in the region. For example, in Jamaica, gang migration data has been used successfully to reduce gang activities. However, this information does not address the causes of social conflict and continues to drive militarized and unsustainable forms of policing, mainly in already impoverished areas. **More qualitative data on perceptions, attitudes and experiences is required**.

YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY PROGRAMMING HANDBOOK

It provides an understanding of the role of young people in violence prevention, conflict and peacebuilding. It incorporates conflict-sensitive analysis of the specific situation of youth, how age interlinks with conflict dynamics and opportunities for peace.

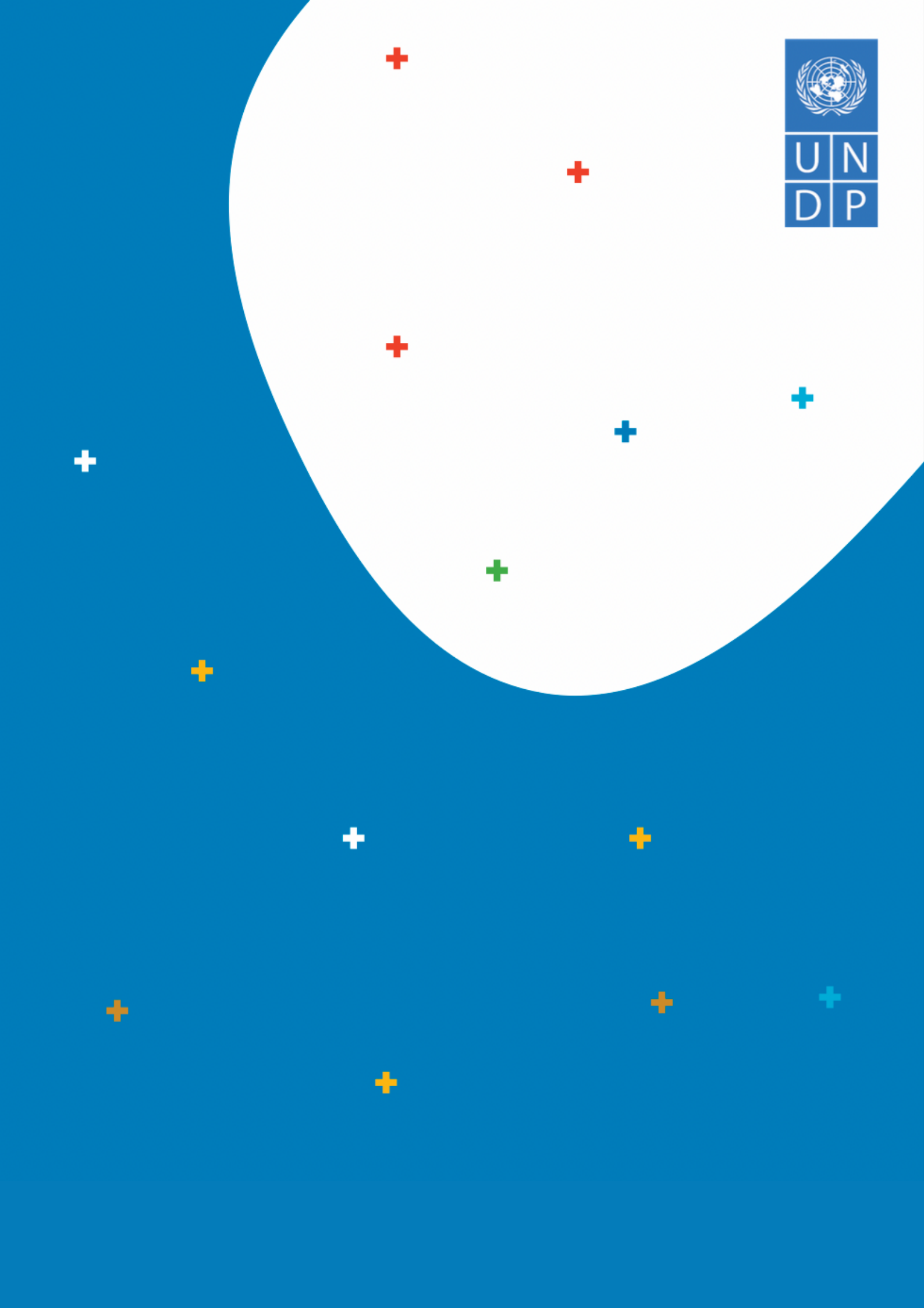
https://www.youth4peace.info/YPShandbook

To fill information gaps, **young people could be trained and involved in data collection** and local real-time data collection applications such as "Safetipin", which could be developed locally in and for the Caribbean. Cari-SECURE is an existing regional model that could be adapted to record other forms of information. Local skills and methodologies must be harnessed in conjunction with new technologies and food security programmes that employ vulnerable youth and the long-term unemployed. As people begin to see the state implement efforts to address persistent and historic poverty by employing and training those who need work, society begins to feel more secure.

Bibliography

- Anderson, M. B. (1999). Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – Or War. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Arreaza, A. (2020). "La disyuntiva fiscal en América Latina. Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina". CAF-El País de Uruguay. Available at: **https://www.caf.com/es/conocimiento/visiones/2020/07/la-disyuntiva-fiscal-en-america-latina/.**
- Asmann, P. y O'Reilly, E. (28 January 2020). 2019 Homicide Roundup. InSight Crime. Available at: **https://es.insightcrime.org/noticias/analisis/balance-homicidios-2019/.**
- Palomar, B. (15 November 2020). "Los seis últimos presidentes de Perú, salpicados por escándalos de corrupción". NIUS Diario. Available at: **https://www.niusdiario.es/internacional/latinoamerica/seis-presidentes-peru-salpicados-escandalos-corrupcion_18_3042120083.html**
- CELADE–ECLAC (2014). "Los Pueblos Indígenas en América Latina - avances en el último decenio y retos pendientes para la garantía de sus derechos". Available at: **https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/37050-pueblos-indigenas-america-latina-avances-ultimo-decenio-retos-pendientes-la.**
- ECLAC (2020). Building a new future: Transformative recovery with equality and sustainability. Thirty-eighth session of ECLAC. 16 to 28 October. Available at: **https://periododesesiones.cepal.org/38/es/documentos/construir-un-nuevo-futuro-recuperacion-transformadora-igualdad-sostenibilidad.**
- ECLAC-FILAC-FORD FOUNDATION (2020). Los pueblos indígenas de América Latina – Abya Yala y la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible: tensiones y desafíos desde una perspectiva territorial. Available at: **https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/45664-pueblos-indigenas-america-latina-abya-yala-la-agenda-2030-desarrollo-sostenible.**
- Coll Morales, Francisco (10 September 2019). "Desigualdad sacude duramente a Centroamérica". Forbes Centroamérica. Available at: **https://forbescentroamerica.com/2019/09/10/desigualdad-sacude-duramente-a-centroamerica/**
- Molina, K. and Reyes, M. (28 September 2020). "Economía salvadoreña acumula seis meses de caída continua y entra en recesión". El Salvador.com. Available at: **https://www.elsalvador.com/noticias/negocios/coronavirus-economia-salvadorena-recesion-en-octubre/758334/2020/**
- Santos, M. E. (2019). Multidimensional poverty in times of COVID-19. UNDP. Available at: **https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/blog/2020/pobreza-multidimensional-en-tiempos-del-covid-19.html.**
- FAO. **http://www.fao.org/americas/es/**
- Hood, R., Shute, S. and Seemungal, Fl. (2003). Ethnic Minorities in the Criminal Courts: Perception of Fairness and Equality. Executive Summary. Research Series DCA No 2/03.

- INFOSEGURA. “La cara escondida de la inseguridad. Violencia contra las mujeres en Centro América y República Dominicana” Report. Available at: **https://infosegura.org/2020/08/28/informe-la-cara-escondida-de-la-inseguridad-violencia-contra-las-mujeres-en-centroamerica-y-republica-dominicana/.**
- Human Rights Watch. (9 November 2020) Human Rights Watch investigation “Justice as a weapon”. Available at: **https://www.hrw.org/es/report/2020/09/11/la-justicia-como-arma/persecucion-politica-en-bolivia.**
- Rodríguez, I. (2019). Conflictividad socioambiental en Latinoamérica. Aportes de la transformación de conflictos socioambientales a la transformación socio-ecológica. Cuadernos de H Ideas 3(2019):1. Available at: **https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337224712_Conflictividad_socioambiental_en_Latinoamerica_Aportes_de_la_transformacion_de_conflictos_socioambientales_a_la_transformacion_socio-ecologica**
- Romero, T. (29 September 2019). “Favelas y cinturones miseria en América Latina”. El Orden Mundial. Available at: **https://elordenmundial.com/favelas-cinturones-miseria-america-latina/**
- Seemungal, J. (7 July 2020). “Dancehall artistes in PoS peace talks”. Trinidad and Tobago Guardian. Available at: **https://www.guardian.co.tt/news/dancehall-artistes-in-pos-peace-talks-6.2.1151560.9b75285be0.**
- International Labour Organization, (1989). Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 169). Geneva, ILO.
- Kerrigan, D. (2018). “Preventing Violent Extremism through Strategic Communications” project. Scoping report for UNCT.
- Kerrigan, D., Jamadar, P., Elahie, E. and Sinanan, T. (2019) ‘Securing equality for all in the administration of justice: the evidence and recommendations’. In Caribbean judicial dialogue: equality for all in the administration of justice. The Faculty of Law, The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.
-
- Ropers, N. (1999). Systemic Conflict Transformation: Reflections on the Conflict and Peace Process in Sri Lanka. Handbook Dialogue Series 6 – lead.
- Perry, Keston K. (2020). “The New ‘Bond-age’, Climate Crisis and the Case for Climate Reparations: Unpicking Old/New Colonialities of Finance for Development within the SDGs,” SocArXiv h9s2z Center for Open Science.
- UNDP (2021). Latin America and the Caribbean: Effective Governance, beyond Recovery. Available at: **https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/library/democratic_governance/america-latina-y-el-caribe--gobernanza-efectiva--mas-alla-de-la-.html.**
- UNDP (2020). Analysis on innovation in citizen security and human rights in Latin America and the Caribbean. A perspective from the public policies and institutional management. Available at: **https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/library/democratic_governance/analisis-sobre-innovacion-en-seguridad-ciudadana-y-derechos-huma.html.**
- Argueta, M. R. (2020). “Violencia en Honduras: causas y tipos”. El

Heraldo de Honduras. Available at: **https://www.elheraldo.hn/opinion/columnas/1046647-469/violencia-en-honduras-causas-y-tipos.**

- Prado, R. E. (2018). El entramado de violencias en el Triángulo Norte Centroamericano y las Maras. *Sociológica*, year 33, number 93, January-April, pp. 213-246.
- UNDP (2021). Human Development Report. The next frontier. Human development and the Anthropocene.
- Ayala Peñaranda, G. E. (2003). "Análisis del conflicto la mediación como método de resolución: Redorta y Moore". *Revista Académica & Derecho* 4 (7) (79-106), July-December 2013.
- Robinson, S. A. (2018). Adapting to climate change at the national level in Caribbean small island developing state. *Island Studies Journal* 13 (1):79-100.
- Rojas Ríos, C. (2017). "Multicrisis Global". Editorial SIGNO/ENSAYO.
- Sapienza, E. (2020). Attitudes towards politics in Latin America: A review of regional perception data. UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at: **https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/dam/rblac/docs/Research%20and%20Publications/Democratic%20Governance/UNDP-RBLAC-AttitudesTowardsPolitics.pdf**
- Sarti, C. (2007). Construcción de paz y resolución de conflictos. Construction de la paix et résolution de conflits. Irenes. Ciudad del Carmen, Campeche, México. Available at: **http://www. irenees. net/bdf_ficheanalyse-782_es. html.**
- Saunders, H. (1999). A Public Peace Process: Sustained dialogue to transform racial and ethnic conflicts, New York: Palgrave.
- UNDP (2020). Strengthening Social Cohesion: Conceptual framing and programming implications. Available at: **https://www.undp.org/publications/strengthening-social-cohesion-conceptual-framing-and-programming-implications.**
- Weekes, T., Ashley, D., Williams, R. and Robinson, N. (2020). "Communities, Crime Control and Policy Change for Safer Spaces in Jamaica". In *Vínculos: Espacios seguros para mujeres y jóvenes en América Latina y el Caribe*, p. 233.