

IMPROVING CRIME PREVENTION POLICIES IN LATIN AMERICA

In the Latin American context during the nineties, initiatives were developed and linked to community crime prevention based on U.S. and European experiences. Although some initiatives lost efficiency because they were implemented without clarity of indicators and quantification of their impact. Also these initiatives had short durations and in some cases the disappearing of political scene stopped the implementation process [1. p. 25]. Similarly National Plans' operations were rather political and possessed electoral purposes [2. p. 34]. Overall the evaluation of actors and institutions influenced the immediacy in the decision-making, articulation and lack of vision for implementing policies affected its development.

However, there have been successful initiatives in taking crime prevention as a necessary measure. In Colombia, the success obtained in Bogota 1994-2002 in the homicide rate and traffic accident death reduction was associated with government intervention that emphasized prevention as an education mechanism, methodology and management. This Bogota Coexistence Program included strategies like the Local Security Fronts, which focused on neighbor's fear versus apathy, indifference and solidarity. However, it was noted the personnel and institutional leadership were based on a strong Mayor who directed interventions and policy design, achieving a speech that emphasized the need to address violence and crime from a different perspective [1. p. 27]. At the same time, it was important the use of social accountability mechanisms.

Viva Rio, a nongovernmental organization created in Brazil during a violence crisis in Rio de Janeiro, focused on conflict resolution, the importance of citizenship, non-violence, and weapons removal/collection among youth in more than 350 slums [1. p. 27]. This initiative showed how interventions should be focused and that civil society participation can be done even in a violent context. It also considered that the youth are the most vulnerable and susceptible group to violence and risk factors. The Municipality of Quito, FLACSO-Ecuador and Pan-American Organization of Health created the Metropolitan Observatory of Quito to collect, analyze exchange and disseminate systematic and updated information about the different forms of violent death and crime, domestic violence [1. p. 29]. Although public policies have directed efforts to focus on these problems, a dilemma persists about how civil society participation should be approach

Crime in Latin America has grown; it has diversified and changed, to the extent that it has become one of the main issues debated in the academic and public policy agendas. There are more challenges than assertive approaches. The situation is obvious at the point that the society is able to perceive the problems and demands solutions [3. p. 12]. The challenges include finding financing associations, political sustainability, police reforms and judicial integration and institutional coordination, expanding the role of citizen such as the use public spaces, networks, project management and public policies. However, initiatives need to work on the minimizing of citizen authoritarian discourse, due to the increase of violence such as the lynching, which occurred in Peru, Mexico, Bolivia and others.

There must be crime prevention recognition as an effective mechanism to reduce violence and crime, but the corresponding evaluation and monitoring should also be valued and implemented, along with a significant increase in the exchange experiences with other countries.

Список використаних джерел

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