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International Practices in Intervention in the Culture of Drugs and Violence

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Table of Contents

Contents

Cape Town Report – Drugs and Violence in Cape Town, South Africa

Executive Summary

South Africa has made great strides in building a more equitable and democratic country in the post-apartheid era. There is still a long way to go. Some social problems, such as violence, crime and drugs, have not diminished in the post-apartheid. But partnerships among local government, the business community, academia and organized civil society have helped stimulate a broad, creative response to these challenges.

Criminal activity related to drug use and gang activity is considered by some to be a core obstacle to economic and social development in the new South Africa. Cape Town and its metropolitan area have been particularly affected by problems of drug use, gang activity and high levels of crime. Some of this has been exacerbated by conditions that predate the ongoing political transformation in South Africa; including gender violence and lack of empowerment for women, ethnic and sectarian tensions, as well as poverty and extreme disparities in the distribution of wealth. Some factors are more recent, including the influx of new migrants to Cape Town, the widespread availability of drugs and new clients for the sex trade.

Practitioners of prevention activities in Cape Town are keenly aware of the numerous challenges they face to their ongoing work. Nevertheless, they have found several effective strategies that recommend themselves to others doing prevention work on other national contexts, including building cross-sectoral partnerships, holistic approaches to youth intervention work, and non-territorial approaches to prevention.

Partnering across sectors holds the potential to leverage different sectoral capabilities and involve different sectors of civil society and government more deeply in a shared social problem. A holistic approach to prevention, encompassing families, cultural attitudes, self-esteem and skill-building appears to be helpful in the Cape Town context and can be replicated elsewhere. Cape Town's government and NGO community recognize that gangs simply migrate to other areas when they are confronted by law enforcement in their original area of operation. By employing a variety of non-territorial approaches, they are able to better serve their client population, rather than waiting for people to walk in.

This report details the unique contextual challenges that South Africa and Cape Town face, the dynamics of the gang and drug problems, and looks closely at

the various organizations engaged in drug and violence prevention. These are all analyzed for lessons learned from the Cape Town context. The strategies foreshadowed here are explored in greater detail in the concluding section.

Introduction

South Africa lies at the extreme southern tip of the African continent (see figure 1), and is a country of approximately 43 million people, of which it is believed that more than 5.3 million are infected with HIV/AIDS,[1] whether from intravenous drug use, unprotected sexual contact, or having been infected at birth. Cape Town lies on the south west coast of South Africa and is South Africa's legislative capital, as well as the provincial capital. It is one of South Africa's most populated cities, and had grown for decades with fiercely repressed squatter towns during the apartheid era, which came to an end in 1994 with the return of majority rule. Nelson Mandela's longtime jail of Robben Island is off the coast of Cape Town, and his first speech upon his release from prison was at the Cape Town City Hall.

Figure 1: Map of South Africa

Source: CIA World Fact book

The entire peninsula where Cape Town is located is really a collection of six towns including Cape Town proper, and is known collectively as the Cape Town Metropolitan Area or CMA. Approximately 3 million people live in the CMA. It is governed collaboratively between the Cape Metropolitan Council covering the CMA and six Metropolitan Local Councils corresponding to each town.

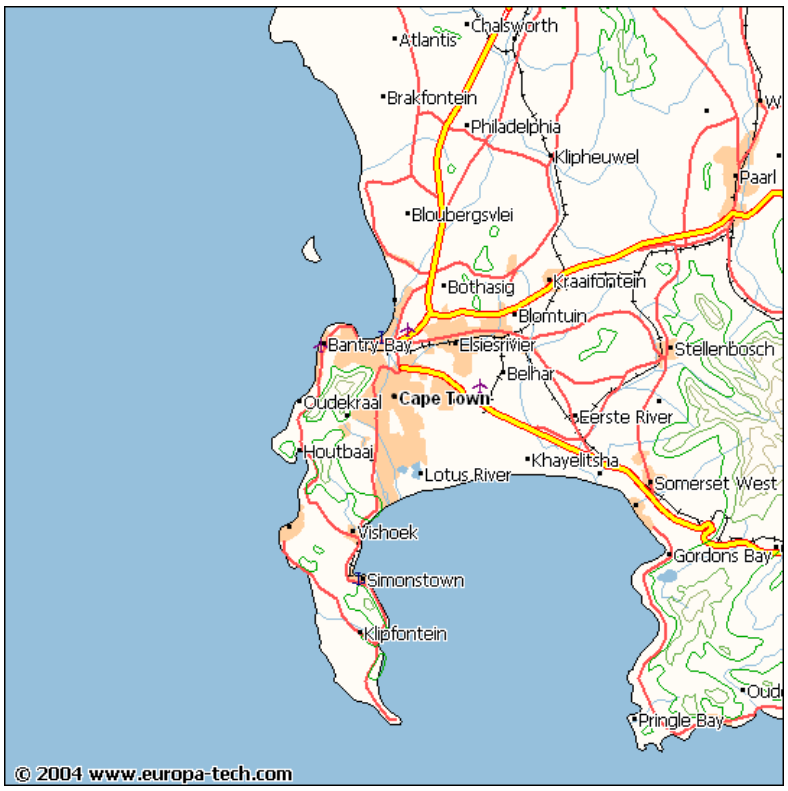
1 Census and HIV/AIDS data from CIA, The World Factbook, entry on South Africa, February 10, 2005. The CIA's AIDS figures date to 2003.

The commencement of apartheid and its systematic elimination of the political rights of black Africans and mixed ethnicity colored groups resulted in the wholesale eviction of many communities to the Cape Town Flats area, which is where much of Cape Town's problems of extreme poverty, gang violence and drug use originate. This area is isolated by the Table Mountain that runs along the spine of the peninsula. Service delivery and access to the center are thus politically and geographically problematic.

Cape Town, like many other cities in South Africa, is beset by social problems stemming from drug use and violence. This report offers a synthesis of the research and analysis conducted on Cape Town, South Africa from 2001-2004 regarding activities that resulted in a reduction of demand for illicit drugs in Cape Town, as well as complementary work in reducing social violence. Site visits to Cape Town were conducted to interview civil society leaders, and in June 2002 a showcase was sponsored by the US State Department, bringing together representatives from 26 organizations in Cape Town, across all sectors.

In the post-apartheid era, South Africa's many obstacles to economic and political development did not disappear. Some in fact have become exacerbated even as the country strives to overcome poverty, discrimination and deep social inequity and gender violence. In the absence of satisfactory government action on many of these problems, South Africans come together in civil society groups in order to address these issues, and sometimes seek partnerships across the globe to assist them.

Figure 2: Map of Cape Town



After providing an overview of South Africa's historical context the report profiles successful civil society programs and activities in order to bring together general lessons learned from their experience, and to offer insights to organizations and populations confronting similar challenges. LCG, Inc. worked with the US Department of State to identify and study drug demand reduction and violence prevention efforts in Cape Town South Africa. In addition to site visits and documentary research, the State Department sponsored four 'showcases' in June 2002. Each of the showcases brought together a different sector of those involved in this effort so that they could share experiences, ideas, challenges, promising practices and build networks for coordination and joint work. There were showcases for governmental agencies, including the police, for the NGO community engaged in prevention work, for the business sector alliances that focus on crime and gangs, and for the academic and research institutions that contribute to the expertise, evaluation and learning of the other sectors.

> "After the democratic elections in 1994 crime became the single most damaging factor in economic reconstruction and urban development. And at the heart of this problem were gangs, syndicates, drugs and violence."
> - Don Pinnock, *Gangs, Rituals & Rites of Passage* (1997)

Historical Context for the South Africa Anti-Drug and Anti-Violence Experience

South Africa's post-apartheid crisis: crime, violence and drugs

South Africa's historic transition away from its racist apartheid regime and toward democratic, majority rule culminated in the 1994 elections that brought Nelson Mandela to power as the country's first majority-elected president. However, political violence running up to and after the election marred the transition to the post-apartheid era, and were a portent of the landscape of criminality and delinquency that have characterized so much of South Africa's urban life in the past decade.

The transition to popular democracy and the radical restructuring of the political landscape in South Africa coincided with the emergence of new social problems for South Africa, as well as belated recognition of existing ones. Civil society organizations during the apartheid era were united in their struggle for political empowerment. Those that continued to have a social mission in the post-apartheid era took on the acute social problems facing the country.

Political and intercommunal violence rested on mobilization and militarization. With a transition away from political struggle came new opportunities for illegitimate criminal activities that make use of militancy's tools and circumstances: weapons, mobilization in absence of a cause and unemployment.

Young people less than 26 years of age in the Cape Town area account for more than one third of the population. A high percentage of young males experience poverty, an insufficiently positive social environment, inadequate educational and economic opportunities. They are ready fodder for the increasingly violent criminal infrastructure in Cape Town and the surrounding townships. They are available, inexpensive to hire and expendable, and thus live under great risk. They also produce great harm to each other, and to women through abuse and the sex trade. Recidivism in South Africa, by some estimates, is as high as 92% within the first five years after initial release from prison.

The gang panorama in Cape Town is well understood by the people who are trying to change it and address its consequences: Gangs in colored areas initiate new male members by having them demonstrate willingness to commit a crime, such

as raping a girl. Prison does not reduce gang identity, rather gang identities are reinforced in prison. As might be expected, gangs in Cape Town flats control the drug trade.

Black gangs are relatively new, compared with the long tradition of colored gangs. The black township gangs function as kind of surrogate government, running taxi services, prostitution, drug trade, and even control public services such as public housing. With the killings of numerous gang leaders in inter-gang warfare in recent years, the structure of gangs became less hierarchical, more dispersed and as a consequence, led to more inter gang rivalry. Immigrants from Nigeria and Russia also bring organized crime problems into Cape Town, while tourists visiting the wine producing country expose the local population to more frequent drug use. Crime has become a significant national problem that compounds intercommunal tensions between black and colored communities and between white Afrikaans-speakers and white English speakers.

HIV/AIDS and sexual violence are part of the panorama of social decay and violence. According to some, Cape Town was until recently known as "Rape City". Convictions of rapists have been shamefully low, by some accounts, as low as 1%. A permissive attitude toward violence against women is partly to blame for this state of affairs. There is official recognition of the inadequacy of law enforcement in South Africa: municipal police in Cape Town have been woefully understaffed and underfunded, while important matters had to be left to the national South Africa Police (SAP). The two police bodies traditionally did not cooperate but have begun to do so. Some practitioners of prevention note that all these social problems are complicated by a lack of acknowledgment: there is a degree of denial of the gravity of social problems at the individual, social and governmental levels. Parents have become de-sensitized to gang violence, alcoholism is tolerated too easily and domestic violence and rape are rampant. Prevention practitioners take note of this by focusing less on structural change and more on behavioral change.

Neglect of colored populations such as Cape Town

People who identify as 'colored' in South Africa make up 5% of the national population but are a majority in Cape Town. The 'colored' population includes people from Asia, including India as well as a large Asian Muslim component. With funding going into empowerment of the black population, the colored community feels isolated and neglected in terms of resources.

Intercommunal tensions play a role in lack of cooperation among organizations that work to address drug abuse and violence prevention. To the extent that prevention organizations miss out on cooperative opportunities and synergies because they too reflect communal and ethnic tensions, then this underlying problem needs to be addressed by the funding community, NGO leaders and by those who provide technical assistance. Efforts to overcome this barrier to prevention work need to be made more explicit.

The education system in Cape Town reflects the problem of ethnic exclusion and suffers from its own intrinsic problems, according to those running the prevention programs reviewed here. Classes are only taught in Afrikaans, which is not universally spoken by Khosa children. Learning disabled children receive little or no help. Corporal punishment and teacher-student violence alternates with teacher indifference. Teachers themselves are unsupported.

Government and civil society cooperation, pre and post apartheid eras

Funding of NGOs faltered after the 1994 elections and transition to the post-apartheid era. The struggle against apartheid also united disparate groups and gave a unified sense of purpose that often helps transcend local identities and differences. The pre-1994 common goal is now missing and prevention organizations feel its absence. It shows in the relative lack of cross-sectoral projects and activities in Cape Town and South Africa generally. Some successful examples of cross-sectoral cooperation, such as the **Cape Town Flats Urban Renewal Strategy** are mentioned below.

Cape Town's Civil Society Responses to South Africa's Social Problems Regarding Drugs and Violence

1. State agencies addressing drug use and violence

Provincial Ministry for Health and Safety of Cape Town has been implementing a 100% increase in budget allocations for law enforcement and will increase the number of police by 50%. Recognizing that there are problems in relying solely on law enforcement, the Ministry now focuses on urban renewal and economic development, as well as social renewal (morals, values). The Ministry created the **Cape Flats Urban Renewal Strategy** and enters into service agreements with NGOs (such as Project Chrysalis, see below) who get youth and other community members engaged in clean up and restoration projects, community-police relations, park and road upgrading and maintenance, graffiti removal, among others.

2. Civil society organizations (CSO) in the anti-drug movement, their strategies and actions

While numerous groups and organizations were contacted, attended the showcases and provided research data for this report, we highlight here organizations (and one individual) who are demonstrating success or innovation in their approach to intervention:

Cape Town Drug Counseling Center works with schools to provide them with the expertise to begin adopting and enforcing their own anti-drug and alcohol policies and to run high quality prevention programs. At the time they were contacted by LCG, they had activities in 170 schools, and of these, 90 implemented their full program. They conduct intensive training for teachers and school administrators to educate them about prevention work and teach them how to facilitate their own workshops in the schools. Beyond this prevention work, CTDCC also provides life-skills training and treatment programs for those already addicted to drugs. On the treatment side, CTDCC conducts empirical studies of its work and finds 55% to be drug-free within 6 months after leaving the program and 98% to be crime-free.

Joe Marx, Tribal Chief. Joe Marx was an ANC activist working with their military wing four decades ago and for the past several decades has been a kind of one-man gang intervention operation. In the 1980s his political activities began taking a more community-organization direction, and he began forming women's organizations

in Cape Town. As large gangs began forming in the 1980s, Marx began street work with gangs that arose within his own political faction inside of the United Democratic Front (UDF, an umbrella organization which replaced the outlawed African National Congress during Apartheid years). He observed that gangs fed off of an alienation and despair: 'there is no present, no future, why should we be good citizens?' Marx' approach was to avoid preaching: "You don't get to them by talking about peace. First, speak to them in their own language, be 'one of the guys'." When infighting within the political factions turned deadly on a large scale in the late 1980s, Marx was already in the leadership of the UDF, and made a point of inviting the competing political organizations to the funerals of those killed. "I am against ALL killing. They are not "the enemy"; they are people you don't know very well. I'd go to their funeral." By the 1990s he left party politics disenchanted with the UDF killing of Inkatha members. "My friends are my friends, party doesn't matter. I won't leave my friends for political reasons…My message to the gangs, "We are fighting so hard just to survive. You are from here. You are not from Mars. Don't fight each other!"

In the post-apartheid period, Marx continues to work with the most dangerous gangs involved in organized crime and killing, including the Americans gang. He organized community-police forums to help police liaise with community. His message to the police was, "Go to the gangs. Get to know them. They are your children. Go in search of your people. Love them. Learn from them. Teach them. Begin with what they know." He felt that community policing and effective gang intervention by the police required a real connection to the community, and that it was a mistake to bring police from other areas. "Working with gangs, you must live around them. *Then, there is no us-and-them. Just 'us'."*

Project Chrysalis. This program deals with young men who have some education, no convictions and no drug use. It is designed to build up their life skills, identity and self-esteem to enable them to resist gang culture, criminal activity and drug use by finding productive pathways to the future. The program runs in 12 week cycles of practical vocational training for boys age 16 to 22. Some funding comes from the Department of Community Safety. Chrysalis has had success in placing boys in employment. Other provinces in South Africa would like to replicate Chrysalis. Staff stays in touch with boys upon graduation and contacts them once a month for 6 months and then once a quarter.

Community Psychological Empowerment Services (COPES) implements its prevention activities in primary schools and provides training in violence

prevention. Its innovation is that it focuses on small children rather than youth. Its strength is in providing social skills training to teachers and children. They also consider parents to be an important factor to address in terms of mitigating domestic violence, because they grew up in political violence, and now tend not to distinguish between their own aggression and normal anger.

U Managing Conflicts (UMAC) conducts mediation among gangs, between gangs and police and does gang intervention. It also provides conflict resolution training to the community. Part of its mission has been to get engaged in police reform and thereby transform policing from the instrument of political repression that it symbolized during apartheid to an organizational mission of protecting public safety. UMAC sets up Community Safety Forums (CSFs) where police and community members can come together to jointly discuss their needs and concerns about each other and the problems they face. UMAC has also reduced violence by working with demobilized soldiers who had formed paramilitary 'self-defense units'. While they still exist throughout the country, UMAC's work has resulted in their disappearance from Western Cape Province.

Ilitha Labantu means 'sunbeam nation' and is a organization that operates ten centers in various townships all dedicated to addressing and preventing violence against women, including rape. It also addresses violence among men. It provides HIV/AIDS counseling and related community services. One of its services is called the Healing and Development Program, and is used to prepare women for court hearings regarding rape or domestic violence. In addition Ilitha Labantu provides literacy training, computer skills and life skills with the purpose of creating self-sufficiency and removing the need for the women to return to their abuser if he was the income earner. Ilitha Labantu is also working to create a "Network on Violence Against Women" within communities, churches and government agencies.

National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO). NICRO is an umbrella organization that funds other programs that deal with crime prevention and violence against women. Most of the youth served by NICRO programs have already had their first contact with the criminal justice system. Some will be referred to NICRO for an alternative to sentencing or probation. In one program, 86% did not re-offend in the two year period following their participation in the NICRO program, which serves as an alternative to gang involvement. The 14% recidivism group is identified early and special attention is paid to them.

Practical life skills are provided, and some are trained in food service professions, such as chefs, assistant chefs and catering. The population of 12,500 youths served by NICRO is between 14 and 19 years of age. There are 50 paid staff and 50 volunteers. Government subsidies and grants from the Dutch government help fund this work. NICRO also develops cooperative arrangements with organizations that conduct adventure-training programs for particularly high-risk youth. Recognizing that many offenders come from situations of domestic violence and sexual abuse, NICRO explicitly addresses these problems in its interventions with youth.

Ons Plek is a residential program for battered young women ages 14 to 18. The residence is a home for up to 20 girls at a time, and has another 16 beds outside of the residence that are available. Some girls are runaways, and come in off the streets as victims of gang violence, rape and prostitution. Their families are most often suffering from alcoholism, as are many of the girls. The ten person staff develops strong, warm relationships with the girls and helps them divorce themselves psychologically from their 'street' identities and to build a new identity. The client population attends school outside of the home and receives vocational training, with the goal being to reintegrate them into their families as soon as possible. Ninety five percent of the girls return home eventually, and 50% do so within a year of coming to Ons Plek.

3. The Business Community and Prevention

The private sector in Cape Town has also been active in the struggle against drug use and crime. In 1995, Nelson Mandela challenged the business community in Cape Town to 'put its money where its mouth is' and get involved in changing the social realities of South Africa. Two examples of business coalitions follow here:

National Business Initiative (NBI) is a coalition of businesses that was established in 1995. Initiatives run across the socio-economic spectrum. Among the various activities it supports are: education initiatives, local economic development, and capacity building.

NBI builds bridges between businesses and local schools to strengthen the skill level of students, thus making them more employable in the job market. Local economic development is supported by NBI building public-private partnerships that affect job creation, attract new businesses to the area, and support the tourism industry. NBI develops partnerships with the US Treasury Department, USAID, University of Stellenbosch, Deloitte & Touche and others to obtain funding and skills. Project Enterprise is an NBI initiative that helps young entrepreneurs create

innovative business plans that support economic development. Project Enterprise runs a competition and selected young entrepreneurs receive mentoring and coaching by NBI executives over an 8 month period. PricewaterhouseCoopers runs the selection process and the funding comes from a local telecommunication company. NBI also manages a tourism promotion project supported by a trust fund. The UK, US and German tourist markets are targeted and this is coupled with training for small and medium enterprises in tourism. As part of coalition-building activities, NBI coordinates a 'big business working group' that meets with government officials twice a year to discuss how businesses can more effectively contribute to social change.

Business Against Crime (BAC) is a smaller, business coalition, focused more directly on crime prevention. Among their initiatives are the "Adopt-a-police-station" project in which companies help their local police by sitting on management committees, and both mentoring and consulting with police. This exposure helps them identify capacity-building needs within the police force. BAC also runs the Business-Parliament Trust which takes key parliamentarians into the corporate sector at management level, in order to give government officials a better understanding of the challenges, opportunities and capacities of the private sector. The "Crime is not cool" publication series by BAC is printed in a local Afrikaans daily news-paper, and is sponsored jointly with the provincial government and Vodafone, a telecommunications firm. Each issue contains positive news regarding crime prevention, and profiles a local individual who has made a difference in fighting crime.

4. Research institutes and academia

Cape Town's research community actively provides guidance and content to the practitioner community regarding violence, crime and drug prevention. Brief examples of their work follow:

Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) at the University of Cape Town does gang mediation in communities. They work with community police forums and train police in conflict resolution. They give a course on gangs for detectives. Other research they do focuses on the links between crime and migration in Cape Town. CCR has conducted a longitudinal study of youth involved in gangs in order to better be able to track career criminals and understand patterns of behavior over time. CCR created the Child Justice Forum – a first in South Africa – to serve as a one-stop child justice system, including a community law center, education, justice – police and courts. CCR planned to expand to build one in each province.

Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town studies domestic violence, with an eye to legal reform as a mechanism to intervention. The Institute works with probation officers and psychologists to deal more effectively with young sex offenders. It has partnered with other NGOs such as UMAC (mentioned above) since the institute created the Community Safety Forums that UMAC conducts. The Institute has also been instrumental in creating national level policy on crime prevention.

Institute for Security Studies focuses on crime and violence prevention strategy and is a small Pretoria-based think tank with a focus on UN international peacekeeping issues. But ISS has a South Africa focus through its Crime and Justice Program. Among ISS's prevention activities are awareness-building activities such as People Opposed to Women's Abuse and Gun-Free South Africa. ISS has also helped build up the business community's investment in crime prevention through its Corporate Social Investment project, and in this regard helped start NBI and BAC (mentioned above). ISS works directly with government by providing crime data analyses, evaluations of programs and strategies.

The Children's Rights Project at University of Cape Town diverts youth from the criminal justice system and therefore tries to affect the lowest-level categories of crimes – e.g., no gang rapists). Diversion refers to keeping children and youth out of the criminal justice system due to its inherent problems with recidivism and out of concerns for child safety in the criminal system. In practice diversion is accomplished by partnering with organizations such as NICRO (mentioned above) that provide residential alternatives to pre-trial incarceration. Twenty thousand youth were diverted in 2000; and the project believed it could reach 50,000 youth quickly. They also train probation and police officers so they can undertake their own diversion programs.

Project ACCORD (African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes) located at the University of the Western Cape, gets conflict resolution content into the public school curricula. It works with peace education studies throughout southern Africa, as well as the UN University for Peace, now in Japan and Costa Rica. It provides training for students and teachers in mediation and resolution of interpersonal conflicts in the schools.

Cape Town-Specific Lessons Learned

Insights about the challenges and successes of prevention work in Cape Town were derived from the LCG site visits and interviews, as well as the showcases that brought together a diverse set of organizations for knowledge-sharing on their work.

The lessons concern the underlying challenges to prevention work, as identified by the South African participants in this study are:

- **Ethnic tension.** The criminality, gangsterism and drug problems in Cape Town have emerged against a back drop of historic disenfranchisement, and ongoing discrimination and ethnic tension. Tension exists between blacks and whites, between Afrikaans and English-speaking white, between colored and black, between black and immigrants from other parts of Africa. Ethnic tensions that underlie some of the social problems in Cape Town may need to be incorporated into programming that addresses the drug and violence problems

- **Poverty.** The dire economic circumstances of Cape Town's poorest populations greatly exacerbate the problems of drugs and violence. While this is not to say that affluent populations do not experience drug and violence problems, it is clear that the lack of economic opportunities causes a hopelessness that facilitates youth vulnerability to criminal activity.

- **HIV/AIDS** is reaching catastrophic proportions in South Africa generally and in Cape Town specifically. Clearly, this will create consequences that complicate the drug and violence prevention strategies, such as AIDS orphans, impoverishment, and unemployability.

- **Gang Culture.** The pervasiveness of a 'gang culture' in Cape Town is a serious challenge to prevention work. It needs to be replaced with other identities and modes of belonging that are healthier for youth and can help them avoid deriving a sense of belonging from gangs.

- **Men's attitudes toward women.** Problematic family dynamics, especially fathers' denial of noninvolvement with their children's drug problems is something that few practitioners take on in their work, but that many identify as a significant barrier to better prevention. It gives rise to the ongoing need for empowerment of women as individuals and as heads of

families and households, while highlighting the sexual and physical vulnerability of girls and young women in South Africa. The treatment of women is still highly problematic in Cape Town, and is the subject of much denial. Despite an Executive Mayoralty for the CMA headed by a black woman, violence against women and sexual violence are still far too common. Some in Cape Town believed that some cultural and tribal traditions and have fed into this problematic treatment of women as 'property'.

- **Credentials, skills and capacity.** There is still inadequate training and credentialing of drug counselors and prevention workers throughout the practitioner community. Several organizations expressed the view that conducting needs assessment of client populations and having referral networks are both needed in Cape Town. Clearly these are part of both professionalization of human services (conducting needs assessments) and better coordination (referral networks). The NGO community as a whole still lacks the capacity and skills for building sustainable relationships with funders.

- **Measuring success.** There is currently little monitoring and evaluation of program activities in South African context. Programs are conducted, but the results and outcomes are not being systematically collected and analyzed. Successful programs in Cape Town tend to deal with the person holistically—as a member of a family or community—rather than as an individual in isolation. This means that the context from which the individual emerges is critical to understanding and helping, but it also means that where possible, those contextual problems are also addressed while helping the individual; families, siblings, employment, literacy, skills acquisition, etc.

- **Knowledge sharing, specialization and coordination.** Cape Town's civil society community benefited from the Department of State's showcase meetings. Some expressed a desire to continue them and build on the momentum. There is a perceived need for better alliance building, coordination and specialization. Specialization among organizations is still needed, and requires organizations to identify what they do best and stay with it. Specialization in core competencies would facilitate better interaction among organizations.

- **Strategic partnering** among non profits, businesses, research organizations and government agencies has yielded promising results and should be replicated. There is still much to be gained from collaboration.

Prevention Strategies That Might Be Applied Elsewhere

There is still much to be learned and accomplished in Cape Town, and caution is needed in deriving replicable strategies that can be applied in other countries and social contexts that are engaging in or planning for prevention work. Still, these recommendations can be offered:

- Partnering across sectors.
- Approaching prevention holistically; include families and schools in the preventive strategy.
- Approach gang violence in a non-territorial way; don't rely exclusively on law enforcement. Conflict resolution and community police forums can play a role.
- Instill self-esteem, and practical skills while separating youth from an identification with the 'street' culture.

Partnering across sectors has not yet reached its full potential in Cape Town, but holds positive potential to leverage different sectoral capabilities and involve civil society and government more deeply in a shared social problem. Cape Town's experience with public-NGO partnerships, such as the Cape Town Flats Renewal Strategy seem to start with eliciting needs from the community itself, and then finding members of the community to help satisfy those needs; whether they are for building better relations between the community and the police or for sweeping streets.

A holistic approach to prevention; one that treats a person as part of a family and community context (taking that context into consideration diagnostically and when formulating treatment and intervention plans) appears to be helpful in the Cape Town context and can be replicated, especially in cultures where the collective and group identities are predominant over individual identity.

Cape Town prevention practitioners have embraced both families and the educational systems as areas they must target if prevention is to be successful in the long term. Numerous dysfunctionalities such as the absence of positive role models and fathers' denial of substance abuse in the family contribute to the tendency for youth to engage in gang and street life and drug use. Some therapeutic approaches

explicitly address this by working with other members of the family. Schools are increasingly recognizing their role in the social problems confronting Cape Town. Several interesting things are happening in the schools, including support and training for teachers and the integration of prevention-oriented curricula. Life skills, HIV/AIDs and sex education and healthy lifestyles are only just beginning to make their way into the school curricula mainstream.

Gangs are highly mobile and can take their business almost anywhere, anytime, provided a permissive enough environment. Law enforcement tends to be organized and implemented on territorial bases. If police reduce gang activity in one area, they see it rise in other areas. A strict reliance on law enforcement therefore cannot be successful in eliminating gang violence and related criminal activity. Both Cape Town's government and NGO community recognize that gangs simply migrate to other areas when they are confronted by law enforcement in their original area of operation. By opening satellite offices throughout the CMA and its surrounding townships, groups like Ilitha Labantu go out and meet the needs of those they serve wherever they arise, rather than waiting for people to walk in. UMAC, which is one of the groups that creates community police forums, helps to create more awareness among police of what is happening in a town, and provides an avenue for discussion and dialogue when there are tensions between police and community.

This is not to say that law enforcement can be neglected. In fact, Cape Town has needed to move toward community and local policing while addressing police corruption, and inadequacy. Cape Town has also invested in building better police-community relations. The judicial and law enforcement system, whatever its faults, cannot be neglected.

Organizations such as Ons Plek and Project Chrysalis work hard to separate youth from their identification with the street and give them practical skills and confidence to participate in healthier life choices and legitimate employment. This approach is not designed to delve deeply into all the psychological challenges confronting the client population, but is likely instrumental in addressing key issues of the need for belonging and damaged sense of self-worth that would contribute to participation in gangs, prostitution, and drug use.

Cape Town and its surrounding Metropolitan Area confront widespread and complex social problems, some of which had their origins in the political and social realities before the transition to democratic rule in South Africa. The growth and marginalization of the poorer townships and communities that are

part of Cape Town complicate the task of reducing violence and drug use. The municipal and national governments have not responded to these challenges as efficiently and effectively as they might have, but are beginning to catch up with increased capacity, better governance and cross sectoral approaches to drugs and violence. Civil society organizations have been leading the way, without a great deal of political support or resources. While the prevention community in Cape Town seems to have at least moderate success in fundraising, this has seemed opportunistic and unsustained. Civil society has made progress in identifying the profiles of gangs and drugs users, their social context and circumstances, the family dysfunctions and cultural facilitators that contribute to their problems and skill deficits that limit them. These organizations will only benefit from further specialization, networking and referral networks. Collective action will strengthen the civil society prevention work in Cape Town. Of particular interest will be further cooperative projects that bring together public and private resources, civil society vision and dedication and community needs.

ROCA Report – Solid Foundations for Violence and Drug Prevention

Executive Summary

Gang violence and drug use are global problems. In numerous cities throughout the United States, they are particularly acute. Treatment programs for drug use are ubiquitous, but innovative prevention programs that address both problems and their context are less easily found. Nearby Boston is a city with vibrant economic activity, higher educational opportunities and a thriving donor community. The economically challenged cities in which ROCA operates play host to new and old immigrant populations from war-torn countries that have settled there. The local education and government systems of some of these areas have been subject of federal investigations, state-takeovers and efforts to reduce corruption.

ROCA Vision
Young people and families thrive and lead change

ROCA Mission
To promote justice by creating opportunities with young people and families to lead happy and healthy lives

ROCA Values
Belonging and Generosity

ROCA's mission, work methods and growth plans offer practitioners of drug and violence prevention a number of lessons and strategies that can be applied in other less developed contexts, including the following, which are more fully explored in Section VI below.

ROCA programming is tightly aligned with a full understanding of client population and their social context. The organization addresses fundamental needs and life skills of its client population even while empowering the communities the client population comes from and promoting change in the justice system. Programmatically, ROCA puts its programs through a number of different types of evaluations in order to measure results and make adjustments. The organization claims—and seems to—practice what it preaches by espousing consonance between its actions and message.

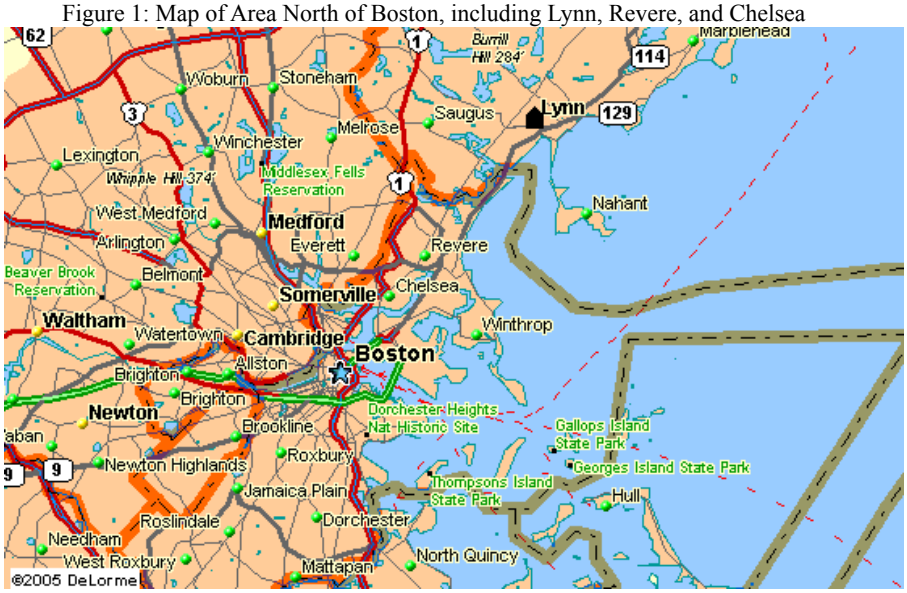
This report explores in detail the social backdrop of ROCA's work. It also goes into some depth regarding ROCA's programs and methods. Finally, ROCA's unique approaches and strategies are explored in depth with an eye toward their application in other contexts.

Introduction

ROCA is a community-based organization deeply embedded in the cities of Chelsea and Revere (See Map, Figure 1, below). It also serves populations in neighboring towns and areas (Lynn, East Boston and to a lesser extent, Lowell) whose social problems—including gangs and drug-related crime and addiction—cross over back and forth across towns and neighborhoods. This report offers a synthesis of the research into the work that ROCA carries out with youth from high-risk populations.

ROCA's innovative approach to intervention and partnering holds important lessons for strategies of drug demand reduction and mitigation of social violence elsewhere in the country and indeed throughout the world.

Figure 1: Map of Area North of Boston, including Lynn, Revere, and Chelsea



Chelsea, Revere, Lynn and East Boston are all economically and socially distressed areas of Massachusetts whose youth populations tend to be more prone to drug abuse, gang involvement, early sexual activity and unwanted pregnancy. The demographics of these areas are in flux, with important inflows of economically marginalized immigrants and refugees from war torn countries such as Cambodia. Children in this context are in danger of growing into their teenage years and experiencing gang violence, drug addiction, imprisonment, HIV/AIDS and other risks. Partly as a result of these negative factors in their childhood and teenage years, they tend not to finish school, may remain illiterate, and do not develop the life skills necessary for successful integration into the workplace.

Among ROCA's innovations in its approach to these problems is a grass-roots approach to engaging youth by going out to the street and inviting them into ROCA in order to supply a sense of social belonging in contrast to their isolation and exclusion. ROCA then works on infusing a sense of contribution and usefulness in the youth they work with (ROCA's term for this is *generosity*). ROCA accomplishes this by providing avenues for service and community work to this population. Coupled with this proactive approach to going to the street to engage youth, ROCA brings youth together to address their conflicts, psychological needs and communication deficits. This integral link—between what is happening on the street and what is happening within ROCA—is one of the cornerstones of ROCA's model.

ROCA attempts to transform the criminal justice landscape that characterizes so much of these young people's interaction with the institutions of the state. ROCA, in the course of all of this work, introduces to its clients and to the criminal justice institutions the concept of *v*, or the peaceful amelioration of crime and wrongdoing. In this sense, ROCA provides its clients with tools of non-violent change and problem-solving, even as they attempt to create a positive impact on the way in which the criminal justice system interacts with the young people they serve. This ambitious organizational goal attempts to address the social problems from two angles; by serving the affected population and by seeking to transform the context in which they live. Client interactions, interventions and improvements are easier to observe and measure than the more ambitious transformative goals of ROCA

This approach is interesting at several levels: it is embedded in the community it services, it is founded on a core methodology and skill set that it both uses and teaches to its clients. Finally, it attempts to 'vertically integrate' the criminal justice and social service sector by setting a table at which these agencies participate and are challenged to modify their own work and attitudes towards the population being served.

The Context For ROCA's Work in the Boston Area

Chelsea, Revere, Lynn and East Boston

The social challenges facing underprivileged and underserved youth span the greater Boston area. Chelsea, Revere, Lynn and East Boston are found just east and north of Boston proper and are distressed parts of the greater Boston area.[2] ROCA works primarily in Chelsea and Revere and has its principal sites in those two towns, but the challenges that ROCA's client population faces are not bound by municipal borders, and so the neighboring city of Lynn and a portion of Boston (East Boston) are also served by ROCA programs. This section briefly discusses general demographic characteristics of these areas served by ROCA, while the following subsections examine specific social problems relevant to the programming of ROCA. These provide a snapshot of the challenging conditions addressed by ROCA.

Chelsea is a city with a population that exceeds its 35,000 census-documented residents, and is the Massachusetts municipality with the largest population growth in the past fifteen years. Nearly half of the city's population is now Latino, up from only 14% in 1980. Revere's city government and the public schools were for several years under the management of a state-appointed receivership due to mismanagement and corruption, until the institution of a new City Charter that created a new city government structure in the mid-1990s.

The major concerns are similar in both cities: high HIV/AIDS infection rates and intravenous drug use, large numbers of gangs, low levels of educational achievement and literacy, teen pregnancy and entrenched poverty.

Lynn borders Revere and hosts a population of 80,000. Lynn shares a Cambodian refugee population with Revere and Chelsea, as well as the problems and challenges facing that population.

2 For more detailed program information see documents such as ROCA's VIA Project documents; the ROCA, Inc., Five Year Strategic Business Plan, March 2001; 2000 Census Data for various towns in Massachusetts; official websites for Chelsea and Revere city governments (www.chelsea.org and www.revere.org). Other key documents include ROCA's diverse reports submitted to funders, which summarize strategies, deployment of resources, methodologies and outcomes.

East Boston, a marginalized and geographically isolated neighborhood of Boston shares a border with Chelsea. It has also experienced the same demographic shifts faced by its neighboring towns, and was already a struggling part of the Boston municipality prior to the arrival of new exiles, refugees and other immigrant populations.

ROCA sees the youth population of these four areas as highly mobile and likely to move back and forth between the four areas. The criminal activities of the gangs that operate in the area are known to move easily from one neighborhood to the other. The demographic, social and municipal conditions shared by these neighborhoods, as well as their relative isolation from social services and other resources available in Boston and more affluent cities make them a natural geographical base for ROCA. Following is a look at the specific challenges facing youth in these areas.

Challenges facing the client population served by ROCA

In its sixteen years of youth intervention work ROCA has gained a highly precise profile of the clients it serves in the communities where it implements its programs.[3]

1. Crime, gangs, drugs and recidivism

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that in a city such as Chelsea, 40% of people fewer than 27 years of age have been arrested. Chelsea has one of the top crime rates in Massachusetts. The social problems facing the Latino population of East Boston are compounded by their constant exposure to the criminal justice system. The many undocumented Latino residents face the risk of deportation and family separation even when accused of relatively minor traffic infractions or other lesser violations of the law.

For Revere and Chelsea, the most serious social problem related to crime has been the increasing incidence of organized street gangs, including several which are well-known and have members in other parts of the country: Crips, Latin Kings, La Familia, Neta, Bloods, MS-13, Asian Bloods, Asian Crips and Red Dragons. Their criminal activities range from drug dealing to violent assaults, theft and turf battles. Gang recruitment and criminal activities span these two towns and spill over into Lynn and East Boston. Although subject to much variation, ROCA has a fair sense of how many youth are actively engaged in gang activities in each community,

3 ROCA, VIA Project Description Needs Statement. No date.

and the given numbers extend into the hundreds. A higher number of the youth population served facing similar risks are not formal gang members, but are 'on the street'.

A high proportion of youth are involved in the distribution or consumption of illicit drugs and/or alcohol abuse. For example in one cohort of fifty ROCA youth being evaluated for improvement in behavior, approximately 32% had engaged in binge drinking during the initial quarter of the year being reviewed, 73% were using marijuana. In that group of 50 participants, one was a heroin user, 15 were taking pills of some kind, and 3 were crack cocaine users.[4]

Forty percent of the cohort mentioned above was on probation in the same time period. When these youth are involved in criminal activities and processed through the criminal justice system, they do not experience a one-time encounter. Youth involved in criminal activities related to gangs and drugs evidence a high rate of recidivism. ROCA believes this demonstrates two problems: first are the criminal justice system's inherent weaknesses, and second, the poor conditions youth face on reentry into these communities. Both problems contribute to a return to the habits and criminal activities that got them into trouble originally.

2. The problems of war, exile, immigration and integration

A significant portion of the youth population served by ROCA has experienced directly or through their parents and grandparents the traumas that result from war and exile. Many continue to feel the effects of post-traumatic stress disorders that are the consequence of such experiences. More often than not, the syndrome and its manifestations go untreated. The lack of treatment and attention faced by survivors of such experiences leads directly to problems of social integration and adaptation to the new society.

There has been rapid population growth in several of the areas served by ROCA. While some growth is due to deliberate policy decisions to resettle refugees in what were previously under-populated towns, some of the growth is also due to the influx of undocumented people. Chelsea's population growth is partly due to the influx of refugees from Somalia, Bosnia and Cambodia and other war-torn countries. There are more than 7,000 Cambodians living in Lynn, thousands of them undocumented, though some estimates put this population between 10,000 and 20,000. Approximately 3,000 of Revere's residents arrived there after fleeing

4 "ROCA Outcomes Project for FY 2002" n.d.

Cambodia's genocide under the Khmer Rouge regime. They have been joined by new arrivals from Bosnia, Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria.

The Cambodian population in particular and war refugees in general often have a well-founded and deep-seated mistrust of government based on their experience of repression by the authorities in their own countries. This distrust has resulted in a lack of interest in engaging in civic activity. This community lacks political and community representation, leadership and empowerment. Their experience of racism has only deepened their isolation and consequently, many from the original refugee wave have not healed from their war experiences and post-traumatic stress syndrome. Their children suffer inordinately from social marginalization and exclusion as they too seek a path toward healthy adult lives.

East Boston also has been host to thousands of relatively recent arrivals from Central America, fleeing the wars, revolutions and poverty of their homelands. Like Chelsea, nearly half the residents of East Boston are Latino, and this represents a dramatic demographic shift from East Boston's previous history as a white working class neighborhood, with all the attendant problems of integration, education, literacy and employment that accompany such transitions.

3. Economic conditions, educational attainments, poverty and inability to obtain and maintain employment

The client population being served by ROCA in these four towns and neighborhoods demonstrate a persistent and aggravated level of poverty. While part of this is attributable to past decline caused by loss of traditional employment sources in Massachusetts and the general impoverishment of both white and black working class residents, much is also due to the conditions facing the newer arrivals. Poverty is twice the state average in Revere and Lynn, and four times the state average in Chelsea. Chelsea in particular has the lowest per capita income in the state. Revere is slightly better off, but not by much. Yet nearby Boston has the third highest cost of living in the entire United States.

With poverty often come inferior educational opportunities and poor performing public schools, which would otherwise benefit from the tax base of more affluent communities. Youth in particular have suffered from the generally poor level of public education obtainable in these areas. Chelsea's schools were in such poor condition that the local school authorities were bypassed in 1989 and the school system was put under the direct control of the state.

The high level of ethnic diversity and the numerous countries of origin of the immigrant and refugee populations in this area are a challenge for the already below-par schools. More than twenty languages are spoken in this area, complicating the task of building English literacy as a life-skill needed for employment and social participation. Compounding the problem of illiteracy in English is the fact that some among ROCA's client population are illiterate in their native language as well, and thus require instruction and literacy in their native language first, as a prerequisite for learning English as a second language.

The condition of the public schools and the other circumstances of the youth population both impact this population's ability to complete school. Nearly 27% of Lynn's population does not have a high school degree. In the recent past, East Boston experienced a 7.3% drop out rate. Dropout rates there and throughout the ROCA area reach as high as four times the state average (for the Cambodian community in Revere, for example). Without sufficient educational levels and skills, the youth population enters the workforce with a competitive disadvantage. Even when people are able to obtain jobs, they are not likely to be paying a living wage. Under the circumstances of inferior employment and inadequate life skills, people are unlikely to hold onto such jobs very long even when they get them. The cycle of poverty continues and deepens.

4. Teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and drug use

ROCA notes a clear tendency among the population it serves to engage in early sexual involvement and this is correlated to gang involvement, being 'on the street' and dropping out of school. They are therefore at greater risk of teen pregnancy and taking on the responsibilities of child-care and running a household before they are ready to do so. They also run the risk of becoming infected with HIV/AIDS.

The pattern in Revere and Chelsea is revealing: the AIDS infection rates in both are in the top 10% in Massachusetts. Most new HIV infections directly affect intravenous drug users (IVDUs) or are due to sexual contact with IVDUs. In this pattern, we can observe that drug abuse, premature sexuality and HIV/AIDS problems appear to directly exacerbate each other. Diagnoses of sexually transmitted diseases other than HIV/AIDS are also on the rise. Teen pregnancies and births are much higher among the ROCA population than in Massachusetts generally and many do not receive prenatal care. As many as half of the teens who become mothers in Chelsea never complete high school.

There is a potent combination of challenging factors facing the population served by ROCA: direct dislocation due to immigration or first generation status; insufficient education and basic skills, underemployment and unemployment; criminality, drug use and violent gang activities; teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. State and city governments are hard pressed to address such problems. Looking back at the ten years since the city emerged from receivership, Jay Ash, the Chelsea City Manager, noted ROCA five times throughout his 2005 State of the City report, and noted that ROCA's executive director was recognized as the "Community Organization Person of the Year" in 2004.[5]

5 Jay Ash, Chelsea City Manager, Annual State of the City Report to the City Council, *A Rejuvenating Community*, February 1, 2005.

"Young people participating in the Revere Leadership Program are getting arrested less often and are in frequent contact with a caring adult who is helping them express their fears, envision a future, and plan the steps to get them there."[6]

ROCA's 'Pillars'

How does ROCA respond to such overwhelming challenges as those facing the individuals and communities discussed here? With foundational work in the refugee community of Cambodians who emigrated to the United States after the Khmer Rouge genocide in the 1970s, ROCA has developed a multifaceted approach to its work that revolve around four 'pillars' and is guided by a Vision, Mission and Values statement.[7]

The first pillar is **street work**: an intense commitment to meeting the people they serve wherever they are, especially 'on the street'. This means both the physical location of the streets of these cities, and a hands-on involvement in their educational, probationary and criminal cases and situations.

A second pillar comprising the core methodology of ROCA is called "**peacemaking circles**." ROCA's peacemaking circles are actually a method of participative decision making and conflict resolution that ROCA teaches to its client population. Just as importantly, it is used for managing the organization itself and running its projects. Partners, community members and outside agencies are also invited to sessions in which this methodology is used.

The third pillar encompasses all of the **programmatic activities** run by ROCA alone or in collaboration with its numerous partners (and described below).

The fourth pillar is precisely the partnering that ROCA does with the diverse social service agencies involved in the lives of their clients, as well as with critical providers of concepts, training and other services that contribute directly to the ROCA work and mission. This work seems to set ROCA apart from other social service endeavors insofar as it is really an effort to **transform the context** in which its client population lives; changing the rules of the game for them and ultimately attempting to humanize the institutions of the state that are sometimes part of the problem rather than part of the solution for these youth.

6 "ROCA Outcomes Project for FY 2002"
7 ROCA report to Surdna Foundation on Outcomes, FY 2002.

While a fuller examination of ROCA's relationship with funders is beyond the scope of this report, ROCA's success in this regard has contributed to their sustained engagement in the community. Their success in obtaining full or partial state funding for some of their programming is testament to the constructive relationships ROCA has built with the institutions and social agencies of the state. ROCA has also experienced great success in obtaining funding from private donors and foundations. Managing the expectations that flow from funding relationships so that the activities of an organization like ROCA are sustainable is certainly an achievement in and of itself.

The pillars described above and other components of the ROCA approach are examined in the discussions below. ROCA has a 'theory of change' that drives both planning and implementation of its programmatic activities: "When individuals and communities feel and demonstrate belonging and generosity, they are able to thrive and lead change."[8] In this regard, ROCA promotes the discovery and creation of meaning in the lives of the youth it serves.

ROCA builds much of its work on a model called the ROCA circle of development, encompassing four dimensions or qualities critical to the work they do: Generosity, Belonging, Independence and Competence. This developmental model is based on the Medicine Wheel that appears in Native American cultures. (See Figures 2 and 3, ROCA Circle of Development and Native American Medicine Wheel, respectively.)[9]

Figure 2: ROCA Circle of Development

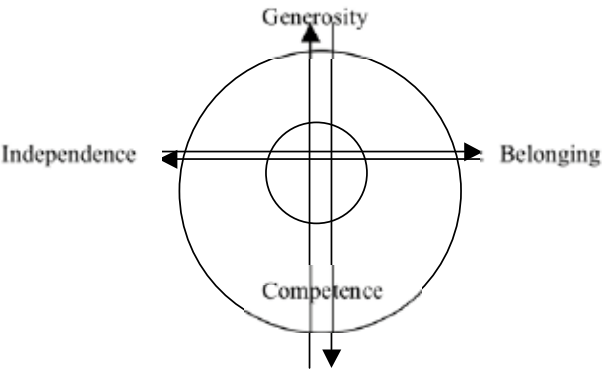
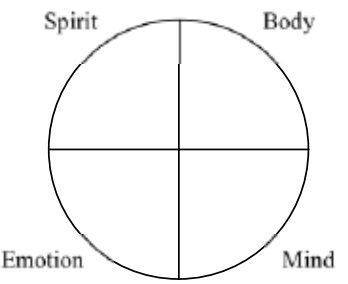


Figure 3: Native American Medicine Wheel



8 ROCA, VIA Project document, no date.
9 ROCA's internal documents show these two figures (which have been reproduced here), and occasionally show a third figure; the ROCA development circle with the Medicine Wheel labels superimposed on it.

In ROCA's own words, "Belonging" refers to a "physical function that is about the experience of people in relationship to each other and to community. Generosity is a spiritual function that is about the experience of sharing of the self with others, with community and the world. Competence is a function of the development of the mind and Independence is a function of the development of emotion. Competence and Independence are related to building the skills and capability for self-determination."[10] This translates into programmatic activities that foster an ability to be in meaningful social, personal and professional relationships (competence). This comes about by rediscovering a sense of membership in community (belonging) that they can contribute meaningfully to (generosity). Social responsibility, personal accountability and emotional growth contribute to independence.

A full description of each of the four pillars, including details on each ROCA program is attached to this document as Annex One.

10 Various ROCA internal documents.

"We strongly believe that ROCA's model can contribute to the development of appropriate violence prevention methods in rapidly changing communities that have seen a dramatic increase in gang violence, prostitution, drug use and drug distribution, child labor, domestic violence and abuse, rape, the dispersion of the traditional family and extended family networks, hunger, unemployment and crime in varying Third World settings."[11]

Prevention Strategies That Might Be Applied Elsewhere

ROCA's prevention strategies are multi-faceted and present several interesting possibilities for strategies that can be tried by others involved in drug use prevention work in other contexts. In applying their strategies anywhere else, it must be recalled that other social and national contexts may have considerably more difficult challenges in both their programmatic work and the social context in which they work.

ROCA operates in economically and socially distressed areas of Massachusetts and part of its client population has experienced war, displacement, large scale upheaval and post-traumatic stress. Nevertheless, the overall context in Massachusetts is one of functioning government services, the absence of immediate armed conflict such as war, revolution, daily terrorism, the presence of a mature and well-developed donor community, the presence of vibrant economic activity nearby and numerous other facilitating factors.

Even where positive conditions do not hold, prevention activities may benefit from the strengths of ROCA's approach, which include:

- Address fundamental needs of its client population
- Measure outcomes honestly
- Consonance between ROCA's actions and its message
- Emphasis on practical life skills

11 ROCA proposal: "Young Adults Developing in Community—A New ROCA Initiative", no date.

- Base programming on a full understanding of client population and their social context

- Promote change in the justice system and social service agencies

Each of these is considered more fully below.

Address fundamental needs.

As a human services organization, ROCA is refreshingly holistic in approach; seeking to create programming, core concepts, and outputs that take into consideration the whole person, the social context, past experiences, present needs and future possibilities for the youth it works with. There is a notable commitment to addressing fundamental social-psychological needs of youth. ROCA explicitly fosters a sense of belonging in each person coming off the street, and as part of this, strengthens the ability of its youth to contribute positively to their communities through personal improvement and community service. In some cases, the young people ROCA serves become leaders within ROCA and within their communities, running programs and serving as powerful role models for other youth.

Measure outcomes honestly

ROCA is not shy about measuring the outcomes of its work. It has undertaken extensive evaluation and monitoring of its work performance by contracting with academic centers and individuals qualified to assess social services. This type of qualitative review permits ROCA to stay honest with itself about the alignment of its mission, capacity and people, and social context. In its reporting to funders, ROCA does not hesitate to mention evaluation methods and results.

Using a server and computer system in conjunction with the extensive documentation and logging of interactions with the youth it serves, ROCA is able to generate reports for analysis and impact-assessment. ROCA is able to measure the kinds and frequency of contacts with staff, the patterns of drug use reported by youth working with ROCA, and even the 'sense of belonging' a young person feels (or doesn't feel, as the case may be) through his or her engagement with ROCA activities. School participation, ROCA participation, grades, arrests and probationary status and basic demographics are also among the available data. Due to extensive interviewing and diagnostic reporting, staff are able to get a sense of how their population is doing in a holistic way and even to take a pulse of the

overall psychological health of the group being served, which is something that individual feedback cannot provide.

The data collection and monitoring permits ROCA to benchmark its performance by seeing the progress of its population regarding drug use and gang involvement over time and compared to non-ROCA populations. Indicators such as drug use, penal record, school attendance and grades, among other indicators permit such comparisons. Obviously having such benchmarks available can permit an organization such as ROCA to make credible claims about the impact of its work reducing drug use and gang involvement.

Consonance.

There is a consistency and alignment of mission, methodology, and work norms. ROCA works to inculcate in young people the ability to be autonomous, expressive, and service-oriented even when these same youth are prone to unhealthy dependencies, are not skilled in expressing themselves constructively, and face society's indifference to their plight every day. It is in this regard that ROCA's emphasis on teaching and modeling democratic, participative decision making is so innovative as it communicates to youth that they are important, that their voices will be heard and that they can, ultimately, make a difference for themselves and for those around them.

The emphasis on participative decision making and expression through peacemaking circles stems from the concepts at the core of the organization and drive its services. Perhaps just as important for credibility and effectiveness, these same concepts appear to influence the management and administration of the organization. The organization thus claims to model what it expects of those it serves.

Emphasis on personal growth and skills acquisition in order to succeed in alternative lifestyles.

In order for youth to have a chance to avoid or turn away from gang life, drug use and violent lifestyles, they need to have the minimum tools to succeed at what ROCA terms 'an alternative lifestyle'. The programmatic work of ROCA seeks to maximize young people's chances to succeed by helping them grow in terms of a wide range of practical and life-skills. Having identified knowledge gaps and needs, ROCA progressively moved to create learning opportunities that strengthen literacy

in both native languages and English, and provide a path toward improved school performance and ultimately, completion of at least high school.

Perform work on the basis of a solid understanding of the populations being served.

Through its intensive relationship building and data-gathering ROCA seems to be able to perform its work on the basis of a dynamic, fluid but accurate understanding of the people it is serving. Wherever they are, ROCA goes.[12]

ROCA is able to describe the specific profiles of the at-risk population that it serves. It understands their social, psychological, educational and political context. By assessing the changing circumstances of the youth they work with, and the changing nature of their needs, ROCA makes small and large-scale adjustments. Coupled with an emphasis on participatory decision making by those it serves (through the peacemaking circles, for example) ROCA is better suited to make adjustments to its programming in order to better meet the changing needs.

Promotion of change among the social service agencies that impact their clients.

In some ways the most far-reaching of strategies and activities employed by ROCA, this goes beyond simply forming 'strategic partnerships' that build synergies on the different capacities of civil society and government agencies. ROCA seeks something more ambitious; they seem to want to change aspects of the way the 'system' (education, courts, police, and youth services) deals with youth. They do this by sitting down with these agencies and getting them to participate in ROCA activities using restorative justice principles and practices in their interactions with the youth they serve together.

12 An example of this is the migration of the Cambodian community out from Revere, and ROCA's consequent relocation of a core program to the new home of the community, the town of Lynn.

Annex One: ROCA's Four Pillars in Detail

All of ROCA's programming serves to help youth develop and be in what ROCA terms "Transformational Relationships" that teach them that "all people are valuable, all people matter, and that all people have something to offer the world." ROCA does not 'do' transformational relationship building, it helps its youth develop them and thus to eventually make the successful transition away from ROCA and back out into the world with a far different set of assumptions about themselves and relationship skills than the ones with which they arrived at ROCA in the first place. This annex expands upon the material presented in Section V above.

Pillar One: Street work and relationship building

Through program activities such as Lynn Cambodia Project and the Street Outreach Team, ROCA goes out to youth "wherever they are" who are at risk of joining gangs or are already in them. Street outreach workers get to know the needs, dreams, frustrations and fears of these young people, and invite them into ROCA's physical space and programs. Outreach workers focus on building trusting relationships with these youth, which takes a great deal of time and patience and one-on-one engagement. ROCA documents and tracks each street interaction so that the organization gains a comprehensive understanding of the conditions and needs of the people it serves. Typically a ROCA street outreach worker is working with thirty young people at a time. Several former members of Cambodian gangs in Lynn have come to work on this project, and one now leads it.

Pillar Two: Peacemaking circles

Peacemaking circles are a critical component in the ROCA mission. They are a conceptual tool used in work with youth, community members and officials. They also serve as a functional component of the way ROCA manages itself. Based on the participative decision making practices of indigenous people throughout the world the peacemaking circle as a method of relationship development, community building and restorative justice. They are, in essence, an alternative process of communication. Unlike many organizations that preach a constructive method of communication, ROCA seems to take its own advice and uses the peacemaking circle to run its own affairs.

How do Peacemaking circles work? The method is refreshingly straightforward. With a group of people seated or arranged in a circle, the circle 'keeper' establishes the values, ground rules or guidelines of a dialogue that is about to take place. The facilitator proposes a topic, decision or subject that needs to be discussed in a

participatory fashion, and for which there is need to build consensus, accountability or awareness. A 'talking-piece' is circulated and only the holder of the piece can speak, assuring that he or she will be heard without interruption.

Emotions that have rarely been explored constructively or perhaps even expressed positively can be dealt with in the peacemaking circle, and so there is a therapeutic value to its use that is tightly linked to the Belonging and Independence axis of the ROCA circle of development. In dialogues and conversations where ROCA wants to invite its participants to a higher level of leadership, responsibility and accountability, the peacemaking circle is the place where the sense of powerlessness, disengagement and isolation is dealt with and confronted. For populations facing social isolation and political disenfranchisement, this can potentially be an important part of their growth and healing.

In a ROCA's report to one of its funders, the writer noted that "ROCA has begun using the peacemaking circles as a key method within the organization to understand and practice living the vision, mission, and values of the organization."[13] In this regard, ROCA makes sure all of its staff and management are trained at least to participate in (and in some cases to 'keep' or lead) circles. But beyond having staff be familiar with a core part of an organization's methodology, ROCA uses this tool for its own staff work.

One of the most interesting uses of the peacemaking circle is ROCA's application of the method to situations in which people who are present have caused some type of harm to others. In contrast to systems of administration of justice based on a set of laws that are enforced by fear of or application of punishment, restorative concepts of justice see a potential for salvaging the social relationship from which both victim and offender emerge.

Consistent with the aboriginal use of this method, ROCA fosters a sense of accountability in the person who has caused the harm (as well as in those who have contributed to it in some way, perhaps by affiliation with him or her), a sense of appropriate redress in the victim of the harm, and a sense of justice and reconciliation in the group as a whole. This is, in essence, what ROCA strives for in its application of this tool to achieve what it calls "restorative justice." Principles and concepts that underlie this application of the tool can be found even in modern day non-punitive forums in which 'truth and reconciliation' are the goal, rather than fact-finding and punishment.

13 ROCA report to the Clark Foundation, August 9, 2002.

The social demographics, family and economic circumstances of these young people are not likely to contribute to their ability to feel heard, appreciated and held accountable, or to develop the ability to communicate constructively. This method or 'pillar' of the peacemaking circle, which permeates so much of ROCA's work, both internally for the management of the organization and externally with those it serves is a democratic, participative and direct way to make group decisions, create awareness and healing. It is a real-life laboratory for young people to learn how to listen and how to express themselves.

The use of peacemaking circles is such an integral part of ROCA's work that it is used in every single programmatic activity conducted by the organization. In fact, ROCA has been successful in getting sentencing judges and other corrections officials interested in the peacemaking circle as an alternative way of interacting with youth in criminal justice contexts. This will be discussed further below in the subsection on strategic partnerships.

Pillar Three: Programmatic work

The programs run by ROCA are typically multidimensional—that is they involve several component activities and projects, and engage various aspects of ROCA's holistic approach to building up the total individual and the community. There are several core ROCA programs each of which may be comprised of several projects and activities[14].

The two founding programs are:

Chelsea Leadership Program is the founding program and based in a youth center equipped with a gymnasium, dance studio, art studio, meeting rooms and a music room. Youth brought in through ROCA's proactive street outreach in Chelsea use these facilities weekday afternoons and evenings. Through this outreach, trusting relationships are built up and form the basis of leadership development. Some youth who come in from the street become program leaders themselves in this way. This program "intensively engaged" 150 youth in ROCA's FY '02 programming year, while extending support services to an additional 2000 youth. This foundation program transitioned into a "large Project Victory" (see below) in order to focus more on 12-15 year olds at risk of street involvement, drugs and crime.

14 The program descriptions come from the ROCA, Inc. organizational description, available for download from ROCA's website http://www.rocainc.org/about.htm and various descriptive documents.

Lynn Cambodian Project supports street and gang involved young people and supports community building within the Cambodian community. It was originally the Revere Leadership Program. Due to the substantial migration of the Cambodian community out of Revere, ROCA made a strategic decision to relocate and grow the program in order to have broader and sustained impact. The program was based in a small community center in Revere where relationships with street and gang-involved youth through street outreach were built. The program also operated a drop-in center and went out to the gang members and kids on the street. Through this program ROCA sought to cultivate leadership skills in former gang members so that they can organize and run projects and community work. The Lynn 'version' of this program was also being planned in terms of continued street work, leadership development and restorative justice through use of peacemaking circles. The project organizes the Cambodian community around issues of civic participation, voter registration, school involvement and economic development. ROCA uses its peacemaking circles in meetings with community members and civic leaders. Just before its transition to the Lynn Cambodian Project, this program served 90 youth "intensively", with general community outreach impacting 2000 people. The program made use of youth volunteers and successfully brought in participants who were members and leaders of different gangs.

Additional ongoing programs include:

Project Victory is an intensive after school program for youth ages 12-15 which includes educational support, leadership development and community service. The young teens served by this program are the focus of efforts and activities designed to keep them in school and help them succeed there, while also performing voluntary service to the community.

VIA Project is an educational program that supports the communities' most disenfranchised young adults through ESL, pre-GED, GED and job preparation.

Youth STAR is an AmeriCorps program in which 30 youth and young adults provide community health and HIV/AIDS prevention education, organize and lead conservation work. Youth STAR members develop leadership skills and attain educational goals through GED and College Prep classes. The AmeriCorps members served food to hundreds of families through a food pantry on a regular basis, and conducted HIV awareness and condom distribution through outreach activities that reached 16, 390 people in one year alone. The program also partners with a health clinic run at Massachusetts General Hospital in order to get youth

health care attention.

Healthy Families provides intensive home visiting and outreach to more than 125 young mothers and their babies. One on one home visits are enhanced by community events and a weekly drop in night for young parents to come together. A Friday night drop-in center for young mothers ran successfully, while providing support and parenting skills. Through a partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital this program also made use of a health clinic to provide diagnostics, preventive care and treatment.

Street Outreach Team outreaches to multicultural street and gang-involved youth and young adults, and supports their growth and development through intensive relationships, peacemaking circles and leadership development.

Community Building Team outreaches and develops relationships with multicultural newcomer families, provides educational opportunities for parents and community adults through GED Spanish and numerous volunteer taught classes in parenting, and supports community organizing and celebration of diverse cultures through events and programming. This program "intensively served" 300 adults, 50 young adults and 70 children, with general outreach to 5000 people.

Pillar Four: Strategic partnerships

There are at least two kinds of strategic partnerships that ROCA is engaged in. The first set is comprised of academic and research institutes that contribute technical assistance, evaluation services and conceptual inputs to ROCA's work. Some of them are contracted by ROCA to perform services on behalf of the organization. The examination of every such partnership is neither feasible nor critical to the findings of this report. The second set is the "engaged institutions" in ROCA's terminology. These are the social service agencies (including to some extent, the education system) and criminal justice institutions. ROCA interacts with them because the youth it works with must also interact with them. But ROCA pushes beyond simply interfacing with them on behalf of its client population. ROCA attempts to gain 'buy-in' from these institutions on the concepts of restorative justice, peacemaking and reconciliation.

Academia and research institutes

Strategic partnerships with academics and research institutes have been highly

useful to ROCA for several purposes, among them the development of core methods and concepts, the implementation of programming, and the evaluation of outcomes of ROCA's work.

Dr. Carolyn Boyes-Watson of the Center for Restorative Justice, Suffolk University, is one of Massachusetts's foremost proponents of the concept of restorative justice. The center provides ROCA with technical assistance on the implementation of its alternative approach to justice in situations where harm has been done. The center focuses on victim-offender mediation, re-entry into society after incarceration and other restorative justice practices. This Center also evaluates ROCA's work with "engaged institutions;" the agencies and institutions of the municipal and state governments.

The Center for Youth and Communities, at Brandeis University, has been helpful to ROCA particularly in terms of assessing the impact of its use of peacemaking circles, and the center is closely affiliated with one of ROCA's funders, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Center has years of experience with ROCA both in terms of advice on youth development and program evaluation. This Center is only one of several other university and private partners that ROCA has engaged in order to evaluate its work.

Yukon and Minnesota Peacemaking Circles Teams. ROCA partners with practitioners of peacemaking circles in other contexts, namely, the aboriginal Canadian context and Minnesota's Restorative Justice work within its Department of Corrections. Judge Barry Stuart and Mark Wedge from Canada's Yukon Territory provide training to ROCA's staff and others regarding the use of peacemaking circles and other aspects of restorative justice and organizational development. Kay Pranis of the Minnesota Department of Corrections helps ROCA use the peacemaking circles to address harms done by an individual to another individual or the community. Using Pranis expertise in this way helps ROCA empower gang members to address grievances against each other in a non-violent way, and to break the cycle of violent retribution that gangs are often locked into. In comparison, a judicial approach to the problem of gang violence is that each gang's separate members are processed and punished for their separate actions. There may be no interruption to the cycle of violence, and certainly no opportunity for accountability and non-punitive reparation among the gangs.

Social service agencies and law enforcement

ROCA's terminology for the social service agencies, school system and criminal

justice system that impact the youth ROCA serves is "engaged institutions" precisely because ROCA has a serious commitment to working with them as part of its overall strategy of facilitating change in the individual and in the society at large. Certainly, this engagement gets ROCA information and resources to better serve its client population. But more importantly, ROCA's work with the engaged institutions is meant to transform these very institutions and thus change society's official response to the problems of drug use, gang involvement and crime. Some ROCA projects have advisory boards, and these are in part composed of individuals from the social service agencies and schools, as well as the NGO community. The court system and police provide ROCA with referrals as well.

Two Massachusetts agencies, Department of Youth Services (DYS) and Department of Social Services (DSS) have various degrees of involvement with ROCA. DYS, as the state's juvenile justice agency, has a mission to protect the public interest by preventing crime and intervening in the lives of at-risk youth. DYS is the operator of institutional remedies ranging from secure group homes to foster placement. It has been seeking to create what it terms 'systemic change' and in this regard has partnered with ROCA to use the peacemaking circle in ROCA-DYS strategic planning for the creation of improved educational programming for youth in the state. DSS also interacts directly with ROCA programs and activities. Both DYS and DSS have successfully experimented with using peacemaking circles in their interventions with youth and families.

"When young people come out of prison, what often awaits them is often the abyss of the very world they left." ROCA therefore builds relationships with the Massachusetts Department of Corrections so that a person leaving prison can be integrated into a circle process and thus experience a meaningful, purposeful re-entry into the community and be less likely to return to criminal activity. ROCA notes several instances of judges adopting the peacemaking circle as a substitute for traditional sentencing hearings, although data on results such as any recidivism were not collected in such cases.

Palermo Report – Drugs and Violence in Palermo, Italy: Civil Society Transforming The Culture

Executive Summary

Sicily is notorious for its struggle with the Mafia and organized crime, and with the Mafia's entry into drug trafficking, Sicily began to experience extremes of violence and drug use. It is far less well-known for the courageous and sometimes heroic role of individuals and groups from civil society that spearheaded the struggle against the Mafia.

The sheer power and pervasiveness of the Mafia has made their struggle all the more difficult and all the more valuable at the same time. The people and organizations that work for prevention come from all social classes in highly stratified Sicily, and come from the Catholic Church, the human services community, the business community, academia, and others. They have built broad coalitions amongst themselves and on occasion, allied themselves with public, governmental institutions when this was appropriate. Above all, they have attempted to modify a culture of lawlessness that undermines Sicily's growth and development.

The Mafia's overreach in attempt to substitute and later bypass the state, and its unbridled excesses of violence changed the minds of many Sicilians who had previously tolerated and accepted it as part of their social reality. Italy's focus in the struggle against illicit drug use has been on treatment, but the practice of prevention has grown. There is still more to be done, and more resources to be leveraged in Sicily and through the international community, including the institutions and funding of the European Union. Tackling economic underdevelopment in Sicily will also help create viable alternatives for youth at risk of gang involvement, criminal lifestyles and drug use.

Sicily has learned from its experience and adapted its strategies appropriately. Practitioners elsewhere working against similar challenges in other contexts can benefit from them. Some of these include emphasizing the empowerment of women, linking anti Mafia and anti drug strategies together at the level of national policymaking and local implementation, focusing on creating opportunities for economic development that deprive the Mafia and gangs of recruits, sharing knowledge internationally, and working with schools and youth groups to inculcate a new value of lawfulness to counter the old norm of distrust in the state, resulting in lawlessness.

This report provides critical background on Sicily, in particular Palermo and the area surrounding it, as well as the context of the Mafia's involvement in the drug trade and the consequences this had for Sicily. The responses of the state, the reaction of the Mafia, and the popular revulsion of civil society all helped to boost a nascent popular movement against the Mafia, and re-focus efforts on prevention. The report surveys some of the principal individuals and organizations that have led prevention efforts and finally, looks at the lessons offered by the Sicilian experience and the successful strategies that might be applied in other countries.

The Mafia can only be defeated if the process of [its] suppression continues and improves and at the same time, civil society continues its process of cultural change.
-Mayor of Corleone, Pippo Cipriani

Introduction

This report offers a synthesis of the research conducted in Sicily, Italy from 2001-2004 regarding activities that resulted in a reduction of demand for illicit drugs throughout the island, as well as complementary work in reducing social violence. Sicily, legendary birthplace of the Mafia, is also the center of an ongoing anti-Mafia movement, which encompasses a struggle against drug trafficking, addiction, and the myriad social problems that arise as a consequence.

In the context of highly centralized government and consequent neglect of rural areas and outlying municipalities, the Mafia filled the vacuum of state power throughout Sicily. Likewise, in the struggle against the Mafia, the power of the state has been insufficient to tackle the breadth and depth of the drug and violence problems engendered by organized crime. Thus, in formulating responses to these social problems, non-governmental actors play critical roles.

Figure 1, Map of Italy

Source: CIA World Fact Book, February 10, 2005

Figure 2: Map of Palermo and surrounding area

Source: http://ragusaonline.com/mappe/palermo.htm

Palermo has long been considered the epicenter of Mafia activity in Italy, and in some sense has been a world capital of organized crime. Major Mafia triumphs and defeats have taken place in Palermo, and the Mafia's most recent kingpin, Toto Riina, spent decades there without taking too much trouble to conceal himself, thanks to the Mafia's corrupting influence on law enforcement agencies.

In Palermo, Sicily, (See Figures 1 & 2) civil society has worked hard, both on its own and in collaboration with the public sector, to combat the societal influence of the Mafia, to create awareness about the consequences of the drug trade and drug abuse, and to prevent youth from engaging in violence.

After providing an overview of Sicily's historical context, the report profiles successful civil society programs and activities in order to bring together general lessons learned from their experience, and to offer insights to organizations and populations confronting similar challenges.

[Italy is an]…important gateway for and consumer of Latin American cocaine and Southwest Asian heroin entering the European market; money laundering by organized crime and from smuggling…
-CIA Fact Book, 2005, entry for Italy under "illicit drugs"

Social Context For the Sicilian Anti-Drug and Anti-Violence Experience

Italy is a founding member of NATO and the European Union and its predecessor organizations. Since the end of World War II it has enjoyed parliamentary democracy and peaceful transitions of power among its diverse political parties. It is a prosperous country overall, and yet its southern region, Sicily, is beset by poverty, underemployment and the penetration of organized criminal organizations in public and private spheres of life. Palermo, Sicily is situated on the northern side of Sicily, and is closer to Tunis then to Rome, at least as the bird flies. Italy, even today, is heavily affected by Mafia penetration of government and private sector activity. In 2002 it was estimated that up to 20% of the country's businesses were Mafia-controlled and had combined earnings of about $133 billion.

\Sicilian history is not simply a chronicle of the Mafia and its killings, extortion, and 'codes of conduct', although this ruthless and deeply embedded organized crime network has in fact played a critical role in the challenges facing Sicily. The history of Sicily is also a chronicle of resistance and defiance of ordinary people against the overwhelming power of the Mafia. It is the story of valiant people who rise up against lawlessness and violence, and risk their lives to bring peace to their communities.

The Mafia, Italian Government and a Culture of Lawlessness

Prior to the unification of Italy, the Mafia existed as either a defense league for peasants against feudalism, or as an instrument of oppression by feudal lords against the peasants, depending on which version you believe. The Italian state was unified relatively late (1848) and has always struggled for legitimacy and trust in eyes of some of its population. Local differences in language, customs and history are pronounced, particularly contrasting Sicily with the rest of Italy. For a once-powerful region which perceived itself as left behind in newly unified nation, the

Mafia had a powerful hold – dispensing patronage such as jobs and social services; performing functions the State should have but failed to perform. Thus, with unification came consolidation and growth for the Cosa Nostra, its organization around families and predominantly criminal purposes. Initiates were all drawn from Sicily's male population and were sworn to secrecy by the code of *omerta* (loyalty or death).

In the 1920s and 1930s the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini attempted to break the Mafia, but the Mafia gained an important advantage in siding with the Allied Powers during World War II. When the Allies were in Sicily, important Mafiosi were released from prison ostensibly to fight the fascists. This would come to have repercussions for the United States as Italian emigration, and Sicilian emigration in particular, brought Mafiosi to the US among the law-abiding majority.

As Sicily gained regional autonomy in the post-war reconstruction, the Mafia adapted and grew, taking advantage of the large influxes of new capital. Clientelism—the plunder of the state's resources by means of political patronage, and simultaneous use of the state's powers to plunder the private sector— was rampant. Local government in Sicily was simply inadequate to put in place controls, procedures and norms for the distribution of resources, capital and jobs that accompanied the reconstruction. Not surprisingly, abuses resulted from this situation.

Mafia infiltration of the government and thus control over government contracting brought lucrative opportunities to the Mafia. The state was barely functional after World War II, and was unable to fulfill many social commitments and responsibilities. The Mafia, in contrast, gained a hold on people's hearts and minds through their pocketbooks by building a kind of substitute social contract for the one the state should have been upholding. By the mid-1950s, a new possibility presented itself for Mafia enrichment: leading crime families from the US and Sicily met in 1957 at Palermo's Hotel des Palmes to consider the drug trade and its business possibilities. With the decline of the French Connection in 1970s, which had controlled the shipments of Asian heroine through Marseilles, the Sicilian Mafia moved into the lucrative market.

The drug trade greatly increased profit margins for the Mafia, but also required new capital, new risks, and new coordination. International drug trafficking is different than local extortion and illicit contracting. Mafia families joined forces to pool resources and share risk in their excursion into drug trafficking. The risks

associated with the new phase of criminal activity were far greater: more scrutiny from international law enforcement and powerful rivals and enemies. Trust became even more essential to the Mafia's internal dealings, and thus opportunities to betray trust were more frequent and more lucrative. A more ruthless Mafia emerged from the drug-running experience, and was far more likely to violate its former unwritten rules of behavior, such as not killing wives and children in their internecine conflicts, not killing policemen or priests.

Eventually, this newer, more ruthless Mafia turned on itself and several of its top leaders felt betrayed by their old organization, and decided to cooperate with prosecutors attempting to bring the Mafia to justice. They became known as the *pentiti,* or penitent ones. In return for protection, immunity and other incentives, the *pentiti* provided the details of the operations, the connections, the names, and the plans to prosecutors.

The Mafia's response was to unleash campaigns of killing and extreme violence. The targets were highly visible, important men. They assassinated scores of policemen, judges, prosecutors, who came to be known as the 'excellent cadavers'. They included *carabinieri* investigating money laundering, judges sitting on the anti mafia commission, priests, journalists. In 1977, the rise in the level of violence again grew, along with the importance of the victims.

Extreme violence: a turning point in tolerance of the Mafia

As long as there has been a Mafia, there has been an anti-Mafia, whose story is much less well-known. The anti-Mafia struggle cuts across all sectors of Sicily's highly stratified society. 1979 marked the beginning of a turning point for Italian society's tolerance for the Mafia: Judge Cesare Terranova, who had led investigations against the Mafia in the 1960s, and later sat on the Anti-Mafia Commission, was assassinated. In 1982, the head of Anti-Mafia Task Force, General Alberto Dalla Chiesa, was also assassinated. The situation became critical when the Mafia assassinated two prosecutors: Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino in 1992. Their deaths consolidated a wave of revulsion with the Mafia and fueled a dormant grassroots anti-Mafia movement.

The principal victims and their bodyguards quickly were seen as martyrs. Anti-Mafia demonstrations began and a political party, La Rete (the network) was formed to fight crime and corruption. Hundreds of NGOs were registered as anti-Mafia organizations. The Mafia, previously glamorized in Mario Puzo's novel *The Godfather,* could no

longer uphold its antiquated image as a supposedly "honorable" part of Sicilian society. At its head was a man from Corleone, Salvatore "Toto" Riina, who wholeheartedly endorsed the drug trafficking and ordered the murders of Falcone and Borsellino. Illiterate and of humble origins, Riina presented a stark contrast to the old-fashioned (and somewhat more principled) Mafiosi criminals of the past.

In 1986 Italy held its first mass prosecutions of accused Mafiosi. The so-called 'maxi-trials' ended in 1987 with numerous convictions and long sentences. In 1993 Italy passed the La Torre legislation, the Italian counterpart of the US federal law known as the 'RICO' Act (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) that has been used so successfully to prosecute US mafia organizations. The Mayor of Palermo at the time, Leoluca Orlando, began a vigorous program involving school children in the renovation of the city and its historical sites and monuments. This new burst of civic pride accompanied by urban renewal culminated in the restoration of Palermo's Opera House, which had fallen into decay since 1970.

Civil society responses to the Mafia

Civil society efforts in Sicily are largely self-financed, operating on very low budgets, often with some in-kind support from local governments. Without financial support or physical protection, individuals engaged in this work demonstrate great courage in their struggle to free their community from the grip of the Mafia. Many involved in this work have paid with their lives.

1. Link between anti-drug strategies and anti-Mafia work

There is a critical link between those doing anti-Mafia advocacy and people involved in anti-drug work. Their struggles are organically linked because the Mafia (like its Colombian counterparts, the narcotraffickers) controls the flow of drugs, and introduces a violent, criminal dimension into the entire set of activities surrounding their acquisition, shipment, distribution and sale. The struggle against the Mafia in this regard has a positive impact on the drug demand and related problems. The struggle against drug use and trafficking necessarily runs up against the Mafia.

2. Key civil society organizations (CSO) in the anti-Mafia movement, their strategies and results

Individuals have played a critical role motivating civil society to action against

the mafia and for drug treatment and prevention. Women, businesspersons, and Catholic priests have been catalysts in this and have spearheaded efforts that were energized when the mafia committed high level killings that provoked national and international outrage, such as the assassination of prosecutor Paolo Borsellino. Some visionary individuals acted out the courage of their convictions. Others have embedded their efforts in a successful organization or institution. In this section, we look at the efforts made by the Catholic Church, groups led by women, business groups, research centers, dedicated treatment and prevention agencies, as well as some government-led efforts.

a) Role of the Catholic Church in the anti-violence movement

The Catholic Church has a long record of grassroots activism on behalf of people most in need. Its priest and lay activists are sometimes supported, sometimes merely condoned, sometimes barely tolerated, and sometimes openly condemned by the Church's hierarchy. It is nevertheless true for Sicily that the Catholic Church exercises considerable influence on the rest of society, including the political, economic and family spheres. And even when the hierarchy has been silent (or even accused of complicity) in Mafia influence, priests and others on the front line of the Church's interaction with society have taken courageous steps both to challenge the influence of the Mafia and to work diligently to serve those who are its most vulnerable victims: children and youth. The Church has also joined with the national government in calling for anti-Mafia, pro-lawfulness content in school curricula: the Ecclesiastic Commission on Lawfulness in 1991 issued a policy document mandating this, entitled "Education for Legality."

Father Giuseppe Puglisi. Fr. Puglisi created outreach centers to get at-risk youth away from the reach of the Mafia and thus keep them from being recruited into the Mafia. He ran a variety of cultural, social, recreational and sports activities for youth from the "Our Father" community center, next to the Church of San Gaetano in Palermo. He encouraged children to stay in school when tempted to drop out, and discouraged them from getting involved in drug dealing, robbery and selling of contraband cigarettes. The Mafia issued a series of warnings to him, to dissuade him from his efforts to deprive the Mafia of a recruitment base. He paid no attention to the warnings. In September 1993 he was shot at point-blank range and killed as he left his home. Priests doing similar work were assigned bodyguards after his death and Pope John Paul II, in his 1994 visit to Sicily, praised Fr. Puglisi as a "courageous exponent of the Gospel," and urged Sicilians not to allow his death to have been in vain. The Pope warned that silence and passivity in the face of Mafia

crimes was tantamount to complicity.

Associazione Casa Famiglia Rosetta and Father Vicenzo Sorce. Father Sorce carried on some of the work with addicts that had been initiated by Father Giuseppe Puglisi. His Casa Famiglia Rosetta has grown to have 40 centers throughout Sicily. His client population of his centers includes homeless children, the elderly, and the severely retarded. Despite the ambitious reach of his work, he found dealing with drugs to be the most challenging aspect of his mission. "We had 600 drug addicts, and 50% were HIV positive….I had to accompany those kids to their death." He was haunted by one of his patients, a 'baby-killer'—one of the children used by the Mafia to commit murder. "This person who had the eyes of a child and the hands of a vulture had already killed twice."

Fr. Sorce's initial foray into drug treatment led him to prevention work and the creation of holistic approaches to youth development. He studied best practices elsewhere in the world and adapted them to the Sicilian context. In moving from treatment to prevention, his Casa Famiglia Rosetta has shared experiences through an office in Brazil, an exchange program in Colombia and was conducting training programs in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Casa Rosetta also hosts interns from countries still developing this type of response.

Father Cosimo Scordato and San Severio Community Center. Priests in Sicily working in poor communities with high unemployment face the challenge of youth being recruited into crime organizations, as has been noted in other countries and contexts. Such priests found that their work in strengthening the cohesiveness of the community brought them into direct confrontation with the Mafia. The San Severio Community Center was founded in 1985 in one of Palermo's poorest neighborhoods with unemployment reaching 70%. Fr. Scordato and his community use the Church and the Center as their base to implement anti-Mafia initiatives such as convincing a local trattoria to stop selling stolen goods, installing streetlights to illuminate a high crime area, and re-opening an open-air food market. He has developed initiatives that bring together the community and professionals such as economists and architects to renovate the local housing stock and thereby contribute to stabilizing the neighborhood. The San Severio Community Center works to take back the moral space that has been co-opted by the Mafia.

b) Women and their civil society leadership role

The role of women in a male-dominated society such as Sicily's has been

problematic; encouraging passivity and complicity while demanding loyalty and silence. But women in Sicily have played an important role in the anti-Mafia movement. Because of their lack of overt power in the accepted hierarchy of this conservative society, their influence tends to be overlooked, which they can at times turn to their advantage. By not being taken seriously by the power structure that encompasses the Mafia, women are able to 'operate under the radar' and cross social barriers such as class and family lines. They have been extraordinarily effective at mobilizing and raising the consciousness of individuals and the communities they live in. Their key role is changing the mentality within the family, especially with children and youth, who are the groups most vulnerable to Mafia recruitment. Three of the individual women and the principal groups they founded are described here:

Giovanna Terranova, director of Libera, founder of Sicilian Women Against the Mafia. Giovanna Terranova, a Baroness, is the wife of assassinated Judge Cesare Terranova. She came to the realization that the only way for her to survive and overcome her loss was to carry on her husband's work against the Mafia. She single-handedly started a social movement in 1981 called *Comitato delle donne Siciliano contra la Mafia* "Sicilian Women Against the Mafia," which was the first registered, anti-Mafia NGO in Sicily. It assists 'Mafia wives'-- women whose Mafiosi husbands have been killed by the Mafia -- to appear in court and demand justice. It presents an interesting panorama of feminine solidarity: women who were married to high-level judges and women who were married to petty Mafiosi reaching across the divide to assist each other. They conducted outreach events nationally and internationally before becoming inactive. Mrs. Terranova now directs Libera (described below), which was formed by Rita Borsellino, sister of the assassinated prosecutor Paolo Borsellino. Her social rank as a baroness is in contrast to the status of wives of low-level Mafia operatives. While this indicates the breadth of the disparity of social status in Sicily, it also indicates that cooperation against the Mafia has truly been across social classes. For women of these two classes to create common cause is remarkable in Sicily.

Rita Borsellino, sister of assassinated prosecutor Paolo Borsellino. Rita Borsellino was a pharmacist who quit her profession after the assassination of her brother and dedicated herself full time to fighting the Mafia. With the huge increase in anti-Mafia NGOs in the 1990s, she felt that there was a danger of losing direction through a lack of coordination among the diverse organizations. Libera was their solution to this problem, and now is the umbrella organization for some 800 NGOs, coordinating work among church, government and civil society. It is

the pre-eminent anti-Mafia network. One of Libera's major accomplishments was in raising public awareness of Mafia criminality and gaining vast public support for the passage of a 1996 law that enables the Italian government to use seized Mafia assets to support economic and social development. In the first four years since the law's enactment, 865 pieces of real and other property were seized, worth some 120 million euros. The symbolic value is just as important as the economic value of these assets.

Marta Cimino and the Women of the White Sheets. Marta Cimino's 12 year old daughter returned from the funeral of prosecutor Giovanni Falcone inconsolable and in response her mother promised to make Palermo a safer town in her daughter's lifetime. Cimino and other women courageously began hanging white sheets with anti-Mafia slogans from their balconies. It was a way for everyone to express their outrage and defiance and required almost no resources. Her example and campaign were a living demonstration of individual and collective responsibility at work, and they took advantage of the public interest in the White Sheets campaign to emphasize other individual behavior changes that were within everyone's grasp, such as refusing to participate in tax evasion or refusing to exchange votes for politicians in return for favors.

c) Treatment and intervention centers

Following is a sampling of drug and violence prevention centers in Sicily: the Sortino Drug Addiction Prevention Center, Ragusa House and the Gela Drug Addiction Prevention Center.

Sortino Drug Addiction Prevention Center. This center opened in February 2001, and at the time research was conducted, had only one paid staff member, a monk named Fra Giuseppe who founded the Center. The center relies on a network of local people familiar with the community's needs and challenges, their cultural inhibitions and social sense of shame. They attempt to change people's minds about practices traditionally tolerated, such as youth drinking. Relying on a proactive outreach approach, the Center volunteers go out to youth wherever they are; in bars, video arcades, public squares, and also work with their families to address concerns such as AIDS, drug use and alcohol.

Ragusa House for the Underage. This relatively new program works with youth and children from ages 5 to 18. Some have been removed from their families by court order or social service agencies; others have been abandoned to the streets or

are escaping family violence. They live at the House while working or attending school in the community. Siblings are kept together wherever possible. Nine children are served at the House at any one time, and are given responsibilities and chores, as well as opportunities to discuss their problems and challenges in group settings. Individual counseling is also provided. Youth are gradually reunited and reintegrated into their families, beginning with weekend visits. The House is a net that catches youth who might otherwise be on the streets and totally vulnerable to violence, drugs and Mafia recruitment.

Gela Drug Addiction Prevention Center. This Center started out as a day center for primary intervention, and works primarily with children aged 9 to 15 who are mostly in school but may be involved in Mafia killings and drug use. Some are referred from the state-supported *Servizio Tossicodependiente* centers (fifty two drug addiction treatment centers located throughout Sicily). The Center staff sees drug abuse strongly related to crime and lack of positive alternatives in an area bounded by Gela, Palermo and Ragusa. Drug prevention activities include photography and music instruction. To discourage violence, the Center promotes sports and other recreational activities. The staff includes a psychologist, social worker and teacher. The center encourages youth to speak out about their experiences. One child's father had been in jail his whole life; his brother had been killed by the Mafia. Another 10 year old talked about people who sell weapons and it became clear that he was discussing his own family.

d) Business community

The struggle against the Mafia is not limited to the human services and advocacy communities. Businesses, which are often overlooked as a part of classical civil society, can also mobilize themselves against the monopolization of power wherever it occurs; whether it is the state or underground criminal organizations. In the late 1980s and 1990s, the practice of extortion intensified and widened throughout Italy. Business owners pay a bribe, known as *pizzo*, which is forced upon them as 'protection money'. While many businesses simply pay up and look away, a few have made an impact in fighting the Mafia. Some have paid with their lives. Others realized that if they all stood together they could beat crime. As the Falcone and Borsellino deaths had spurred ordinary citizens to act, the death of a businessman inspired the business community to unite against the Mafia.

Libero Grassi, a Sicilian businessman, did the unthinkable on January 10, 1991. He announced he had received a demand for pizzo, and had refused to pay. Italian

media paid little attention but his action attracted the attention of international media and resulted in a *Washington Post* story with the headline "Sicilian Businessman Does the Unthinkable: He Says No to the Mafia". The Mayor, police officials, unions and others all declared their solidarity with Grassi for his defiance and courage, but in reality he was isolated. The police did not prosecute extortion even when they had evidence of it. The justice system was helpless against it. Judges considered it a kind of insurance contract, thus legitimizing extortion. Grassi urged others to follow his example, but on August 29 was assassinated in front of his home. Outrage (and perhaps shame) over his death was channeled productively into new antiracketeering laws and the mobilization of Cofindustria, an anti-Mafia business alliance. Business associations in other parts of Sicily emerged to facilitate collective defiance of the Mafia and also to create the conditions for successful prosecution of Mafia figures.

e) Academia and research institutes

There is a real lack of Sicily-based research on the Mafia and the anti-Mafia movement. Most of this type of research is conducted outside of Sicily with the exception of the Impastato Center, which is major contact point for scholars, and a resource for educational outreach for the rest of the community. There is an urgent need for analysis as the basis for action, and this Center provides it.

Centro Siciliano di Documentazione Giuseppe Impastato (Director Umberto Santino and wife Ana Puglisi) was founded in 1977 and later named after a militant anti-Mafia fighter Giuseppe Impastato, who was assassinated by the Mafia in 1978. Its goal is to develop awareness of the Mafia and similar organized criminal phenomena, nationally and internationally. The Center also seeks to promote initiatives to combat organized crime and to elaborate and spread a culture of legality, development and democratic participation. The Center's outreach is extensive, attracting international scholars to its library and providing programs and lectures in schools, universities and civic groups in Italy and worldwide. Part of its outreach to schools is focused on drug use prevention, and in that regard, in 1990 the Impastato Center developed a curriculum on prevention and demand reduction with European Union grants. In conjunction with government and church mandates to introduce such topics into the schools, the Centro has been a pioneer in exposing young people and students to the concept of lawfulness.

f) Municipal and government efforts

The public sector in Sicily and in Italy generally has long been affected by the Mafia through infiltration, corruption and outright complicity. Exercising influencing over government purchasing and other contracting have been lucrative activities for the Mafia. Public sector officials are sometimes complicit with the Mafia in such infiltration.

Yet local government has not been absent in the struggle against the Mafia, drugs, delinquency and violence. Sicilian political leaders may have unrealized potential in the struggle against the Mafia, as they are readily identifiable by the rest of society and can help set norms and expectations: of what should be and what should not be tolerated. Certainly when public officials betray the public trust and enjoy impunity, it sends the wrong signal to the rest of society. When they cultivate public trust and hold themselves to the same or higher standards expected of everyone else, it sends a subtle and powerful message to the rest of society.

The public sector has many roles to play that support, complement and guide the efforts of civil society. For example, it has been noted by activists and civic leaders in Sicily that there is a general disregard for norms of legality throughout the population, not just among the Mafiosi. This, it is believed, provides part of the culturally permissive backdrop for the drug trade and Mafia violence. The public sector can support civil society as they work together to create a new culture of lawfulness.

In 1980, the Sicilian Regional government passed Law Number 51 that included provisions for Sicilian schools to contribute to the development of a civic conscience against Mafioso criminality. Later, in 1993, the Italian Ministry of Public Education promulgated Circular Number 302, which mandated "education on legality." Palermo and other Sicilian municipalities have been active in the anti-Mafia, anti-drug and anti-violence work that their civil society counterparts have undertaken. While mostly harmonious, in at least one example, it seemed to some observers and participants that the political figure (Mayor Orlando and SRI discussed next) was more interested in co-opting the triumphs of civil society groups in order to consolidate political power.

Perhaps the most highly touted example of Sicilian public sector efforts against the Mafia was the creation of the **Sicilian Renaissance Institute**, with its emphasis on taking back history and space, and creating a culture of lawfulness. It was created in 1999 by Italian and US community leaders and educators under the leadership of the Mayor of Palermo at the time, Leoluca Orlando, who ran on an anti-Mafia platform with the *La Rete* party.

SRI's mission was to document the Sicilian anti-Mafia experience and provide information on how communities could work jointly to prevent crime and corruption while enhancing the quality of life for their citizens. SRI acted as a kind of 'show-case' of the region's numerous gains against the Mafia in partnership with the Church and civil society. Under Mayor Orlando's leadership, SRI accomplished much in terms of physical reconstruction of Palermo, thus making it a more attractive place to live, visit and work. Citizens felt that they had a stake in Palermo's renewal.

The chief administrator of SRI, **Enzo Lo Dato**, has separated from SRI and continues to be involved in this work in association with the subsequent **Mayor Cammarata** as his advisor in the Office of Legality. Cammarata is from the center-right party of Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi, *Forza Italia*. Mayor Cammarata quickly set up new mayoral Department for Lawfulness and Transparency, and showed his commitment to its independence by asking a prominent member and activist from the rival Italian Communist Party, **Michele Costa**, to head it. The mandate of this new department is mainly to oversee municipal contracts and assure that they are awarded fairly and without Mafia coercion. Costa has great public credibility in the anti-Mafia movement since his father was a prosecutor killed by the Mafia in the 1980s. Mayor Cammarata also committed to working with Transparency International to have the city of Palermo adopt Transparency International's Integrity Pact, a process begun under former Mayor Orlando.[15]

Another way that municipal, regional and national governments can support civil society initiatives against drugs and violence is in the seizure of Mafia assets and their hand-over to civil society groups to use in their programs. This practice has worked at various levels in Italy, and in particular in Sicily, with various of the anti-Mafia/anti-drug players benefiting from the use of seized Mafia assets, including the former properties of one of the most recent Mafia leaders. As discussed above, one of Libera's legislative campaigns won passage of a 1996 national law permitting the use of organized crime's seized assets for economic and social development.

The **municipality of Corleone**, for example, made use of one of imprisoned Mafia boss Toto Riina's seized country estates by turning it over to a Libera member organization. They in turn have harvested wheat on the estate and began marketing pasta products made from the wheat grown by the cooperative there under the Libera brand. Father Sorce, discussed above at the beginning of this section, has been working with Butera another neighboring municipality to turn Mafia

15 See Transparency International's Italy project report, *TI Integrity Pacts: A Status Report of the Applications in Italy (*as of September 5th 2000), accessed April 9, 2005 at www.transparencyinternational.org.

property into a treatment center for drug addicts. The capital has definite value to underfunded social agencies, and has enormous demonstrative value for the rest of civil society as they observe the decay of the once-omnipotent Mafia.

Sicily-Specific Lessons Learned

Despite the many inroads against the Mafia made by government, civil society and church, the Mafia's corrosive effects on society are still felt throughout Sicily. Sicily is not free of the Mafia yet. This work is incomplete.

Drug demand, drug use, and drug related violence are problems that are entwined with the Mafia's pervasive presence in Sicily. Once the Mafia acquired the drug trade, it underwent changes, became more violent, less centrally-controlled and disciplined and more prone to use child-killers, conduct extortion, kidnapping. Drug production and drug use, and consequently drug-related violence, are relatively new problems in Sicily, even though Mafia violence wracked Sicily long before the introduction of the drug trade.

There are important lessons to be learned from the over-reaching of the Mafia as the drug trade inflamed the greed, ambition and ruthlessness of its leaders and operatives. The Mafia had co-existed with the state and civil society for decades without any serious threat to its survival. The drug trade seems to have incited the Mafia to commit two errors: first, permit intra-Mafia fighting to rise to excessive levels and spill over to innocent victims, and second, when the state responded vigorously to defend the public interest and prosecute Mafia violence, the Mafia challenged the supremacy of the state and began high profile assassinations of prosecutors, judges and anti-Mafia officials. This over-reach resulted in both public revulsion with the Mafia and redoubled government efforts to crack down on them.

The Sicilian economic challenges, particularly unemployment, directly affect drug addiction in Sicily and the vulnerability of young people to Mafia recruitment. The best hope for employment among young Sicilians is often migration abroad. Those who leave Sicily for work (for example to Germany) sometimes return to Sicily with addictions they acquired abroad, complicating an already complex drug use panorama. Efforts to address the economic plight of Sicilians would tend to reduce incentives for youth involvement in the criminality spawned by the Mafia's presence, and reduce the chances of economic migrations and its potentially negative consequences such as becoming addicted to drugs while abroad.

Treatment programs reviewed here in this study all seem to suffer from grossly inadequate resources. Some do not wish to be associated with government funding for fear of being indebted to government influence. Continuity of service offerings is problematic as a result and some programs and agencies have been known to

close periodically due to funding shortfalls. There is potential for European Union funding but this does not seem to have been realized.

Perhaps due to the initial inadequacy of both government and private efforts to address Mafia-influenced drug use and violence, Sicilian programs that deal with drug abuse have focused overwhelmingly on treatment to the near-exclusion of prevention. The prevention focus seems inadequately addressed even by dedicated agencies who understand the problems they are confronting.

Prevention Strategies That Might Be Applied Elsewhere

Although each sector of Sicilian society is taking on different priorities and addressing different needs, some general lessons can be derived from their collective efforts. These could be useful to others attempting to confront similar challenges in different contexts.

Anti-Mafia approach must be multi-faceted

There are at least three facets of action that must be taken to erode the hold of an organized criminal movement on a given society.

1. Criminal-political nexus

In this regard, political leaders and public officials who are not tied to organized crime need to be elected and appointed to public office. The voting citizenship needs to be sensitized to the need to support candidates for office that are either not supported by organized crime or are openly opposed to its influence. The creation of public institutions and leadership who are not beholden to organized crime facilitates prosecution, asset seizure and the implementation of all other mandates related to organized criminal activity.

2. Economic-political nexus

Two things may be said here. First of all, the members of the business community who are facing extortion and manipulation from organized crime elements need empowerment and support so that they can set a successful example of defiance. This is partly to break down their own indifference and complicity. On the competitiveness side, economic development needs to be encouraged and supported so that it is itself transparent and free of criminal influence, and just as importantly, so that it contributes to the creation of jobs that erode the recruitment and delinquency base among the unemployed.

3. Images of the mafia and the possibility of a better future

The antiquated image of the Mafiosi as honorable, admirable, strong and in any case invincible needs to be constantly challenged. Criminal organizations emerge from a culture of permissiveness that perpetuates positive images of them, or at least casts the negative images of them in an undeservedly positive light. The image may

gradually be replaced through sustained engagement in educational curriculum that portrays the real cost to society of its Mafia past.

In many places in the world, Sicily included, organized crime has presented itself as a kind of Robin Hood challenging the monopoly on power of an uncaring government. It is essential to replace the moral, geographic, and economic vacuum left by the Mafia and highlight the courage and sacrifice of the mothers, priests, businessmen, judges and prosecutors who stood up to the Mafia. Some lost everything, including their lives, to do so. A successful strategy must demonstrate to its citizens that there are and will be tangible benefits from the struggle against organized crime and the activities that it generates.

Improvements in economic prosperity, political accountability, cultural revival, employment, tourism, better international reputation and foreign investment could all be signals of a better future resulting from a sustained struggle against the Mafia.

Youth education and mobilization deprive mafia of recruitment base and prevent drug exposure

Some of the agencies reviewed here have as an explicit purpose to deprive the Mafia of its recruitment base. When these organizations treat drug addicts or take in street children at risk of being used as child killers, they proactively deprive the Mafia of recruits and victims.

Education with a transformative purpose is an essential step in recreating the history, present and future of places such as Sicily. Children need to learn to think and reason in order to gain skills need for employment but also to be able to understand their choices and responsibilities in life. They must learn to be proactive, rather than be passive observers of what happens in the society around them. To end complicity youth must learn lessons of courage, the importance of lawfulness, respect for themselves, their society and the state. They need to learn about healthy alternatives to the destructive lifestyle choices of violence and drugs that may become attractive to them as an outlet or escape from their other realities. Some of this certainly must be channeled through the schools and universities but it must also be initiated by other institutions of society, notably church and family. Due to their age, today's youth in Sicily will not recall the outrageous assassinations of the 80s and 90s that mobilized society. Practical, intellectual reasons are needed for them to resist the ideas, temptations and images associated with organized crime.

Empower women

Women are leading figures in the anti-Mafia movement, despite the male-dominant social context in which they exist. Women have been particularly effective bridge-builders in the anti-Mafia efforts they undertook: women who lost law enforcement husbands to Mafia killings making common cause with women whose husbands were part of the Mafia and lost their lives in its internecine conflicts. Women have led the movements even when they did not directly experience a loss due to Mafia violence. In other words, their commitment to this work is deeper than simple personal motivation. They have also crossed the rigid class lines of Sicilian society to build alliances and raise consciousness. Support for educational and prevention efforts has come from networks of women around the world, and not simply from Sicily.

Link the anti-mafia fight to overall development strategy

Sicily is a part of Italy that comparatively less developed in economic and social terms. Linking asset seizures to Sicily's economic and social needs is a powerful way to bridge the anti-violence and anti-drug efforts to the economic development of the region. During the research period for this report, Italy, alone among European Union countries was using seized assets from criminal groups to support development, thanks to the efforts of the women-led Libera network and its ability to garner massive popular support for 1996 legislation on seized assets.

Inculcate respect for legality and lawfulness

The Women of the White Sheets Campaign led by Marta Cimino (discussed above) believe in taking small steps in efforts to change people's attitudes and behaviors. Several initiatives mandating that children be taught respect for legality through the schools, have been instrumental in creating these small attitudinal changes; national, regional governments as well as the Church have been proactive in this regard. By targeting young people they have identified the best way to affect the future. Today's law-respecting children become tomorrow's law-abiding citizens.

Small, individual actions multiplied throughout society amount to large scale changes over time: Getting people to stop evading taxes, refusing to buy stolen goods, and otherwise modeling a culture of legality are just some examples of how this was promoted in the Sicilian context.

Share knowledge internationally

Numerous examples of knowledge sharing are evident in the work the Sicilian organization do; by comparing challenges and best practices across the world, these organizations not only find moral and logistical support for each other, they proactively learn about how they approach a problem more effectively.

- Third Global Conference on Drug Abuse Prevention (2000) was organized by Associazione Casa Famiglia Rosetta, with sponsorship from the US Department of State (INL) and numerous governmental agencies. The conference brought together 550 delegates from 74 countries.

- Delegates from Gela, Sicily and Medellin, Colombia came together at this conference and discovered that they had similar challenges to implementing prevention work, and helped each other to break down those barriers to providing prevention services, including the initiation of an accelerated training program for prevention workers.

- With support from both the Italian and US governments, Casa Famiglia Rosetta has shared its experiences and competencies with numerous countries and organizations with both long-standing and emerging drug prevention needs; Hungary, Slovenia, Poland, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Russia, Moldova, Belarus. Training programs were provided through UN auspices with university accreditation derived from the University of California at San Diego.

- The UN Convention Against Transnational Crime was opened for signature at a gathering in Palermo in 2000, highlighting that city's physical renovation and reconstruction and cultural revival for visiting dignitaries and world leaders who came to sign the Convention on behalf of their countries.

- Engagement with groups like Transparency International helps cities in Sicily to understand the mechanisms for reducing the opportunities for corruption, particularly in government purchasing and contracting of services.

Make anti drug strategy part of overall anti-mafia strategy

A comprehensive approach to prevention can be seen as a component of an overall anti-organized crime strategy, and includes

- Depriving organized crime of legitimacy by changing society's attitude toward illegality, especially by introducing pro-legality concepts through the schools and other channels that reach youth

- Denying organized crime easy recruitment opportunities by strengthening employment and economic development

- Leverage seized assets for both their symbolic value and for the absolute gain derived by the groups taking advantage of the seized assets to run their programs

- Identify and develop international resources and technical assistance; knowledge, money, and best practices.

The anti-Mafia struggle cannot be won in a day. By engaging in the drug trade, the Mafia facilitated the entry of drugs and violence to the rest of society and had a highly corrosive effect on society, government and business, not to mention youth and children.

This is a profound challenge and will require profound social changes that have already begun in Italy. Confronting the culture of illegality and replacing it with a culture of lawfulness is one key component of this gradual transformation. A functioning social contract between government and people is needed to consolidate this change. Of course, as part of this, governments—especially local governments—must demonstrate that they are responsive to the needs and challenges of those they represent. Developing the legislative and prosecutorial tools needed to punish and deter crimes, as well as to deprive organized crime of its assets is another component. Empowering civil society to focus on prevention and learn about how it is done successfully elsewhere will also contribute to Sicily's capacity to resist and transform itself.

Medellin Report – Civil Society's Role in Drug and Violence Prevention

Executive Summary

Drug use, drug trafficking and the organized crime machinery that surround the production, sale, distribution and use of drugs in Colombia have helped spawn enormous problems of violence on a national and local scale in Colombia. This report looks specifically at the problem in Medellin, Colombia, which was where much of the drug trade and violence started.

Under other circumstances, Colombia may have been able to cope better with the causes and consequences of violence and drug use, but the government has been beset by serious threats, including various guerilla insurgencies, right wing paramilitaries, well-armed and financed drug traffickers. All of them compete with each other and the state for prevalence. The state itself has been weakened by the influence of the drug trade due to the political, social and economic influence the drug cartels exerted on the state at different points in Colombia's history. As a consequence of these multiple and complex challenges, Colombia is one of the most violence-prone countries in the hemisphere.

Despite all the challenges facing Colombia in the past decades, civil society has made gains in the prevention and treatment of drug use and violence problems of Colombian society. That is not to say that the various levels of government in Colombia have not addressed the cartels and other gang activities, but that the deterrent law and order approach that emphasizes prosecution has been the state's focus. The institutions of the state have also had to confront their own inadequacies, corruption, institutional and legislative weaknesses. The combined efforts of both the state and civil society are needed in order to complement each others' capacities in the quest for a peaceful and prosperous society.

Despite the challenging panorama, Colombian civil society has risen above the numerous obstacles, demonstrating successful strategies for prevention while offering lessons to others who need to implement programs in other national contexts. In particular, the Colombian civil society leaders and groups provide important lessons on the importance of coordination and collaboration among prevention practitioners, the development of social safety mechanisms typically provided by the state, leveraging the use of volunteers, the development of positive pathways for youth development and the building of broad grassroots coalitions composed of numerous civil society organizations working toward complementary goals.

This report looks in detail at the complex social and political panorama that challenges Colombia's political and economic development and provides the backdrop for the prevention activities researched here further in the report. Building on the work and findings of practitioners, the report offers lessons learned that are specific to the Medellin context, and expands upon the strategies for civil society action.

Introduction

Colombia, bordered by Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Panama, as well as both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans (see Map 1), has a functioning democracy, and yet fulfills some basic criteria of 'failing states'—countries where the government still exists, but simply cannot provide the minimum conditions of human security in its various dimensions in some or all of the territory under its jurisdiction. Colombia is not yet a failed state, and is even showing signs of recovering from the multiple challenges to stability, survival and development. But in the past several years, the government has not been able to assert its authority over large parts of the national territory. Insecurity, violent crime, economic uncertainty, extreme poverty and the harsh realities of internal displacement and war are a part of 'normal' life for too many Colombians in both rural and urban centers. At the core of the many problems facing Colombia is corrosive effect of drug production, drug use and drug trafficking. As a source of illicit but vast wealth, the drug trade is fought over by traditional narcotrafficking gangs and consortia, anti-government insurgents, and right-wing paramilitary groups.

Map 1.: Colombia and its neighboring countries

Source: United States Library of Congress

Caught in the midst of this is the population of Colombia. Medellin, at the geographic center of Colombia, (see Map 2) has also been at the center of the storm of civil and political disorder. It went from being a conservative, Catholic, family-based urban area to a militarized, traumatized society driven by drug use, child killers, street warfare. The economic context has not been favorable. Traditionally rooted in textile design and export, the Medellin economy has suffered from stiff competition from cheaper producers in Asia and elsewhere. As is in other major cities in Latin America, Medellin has experienced a vast influx of the rural poor who seek an escape from poverty and the relentless four-way warfare among the traffickers, insurgents, paramilitaries and the government. Medellin has been at the forefront of Colombia's struggle against drug trafficking and the myriad social problems that come with it.

This report looks at the ways in which Medellin civil society has stepped in where the state has failed to provide alternative pathways for the youth who are vulnerable to all the consequences of drug trafficking. In this report, we will gain some insight into the challenges and successes of the civil society efforts to reduce violence and drug use, and seek lessons that are applicable to other global contexts. The report provides a synthesis of the field research and analyses conducted on Medellin, Colombia from 2001-2004 regarding activities whose strategic purpose was a reduction of demand for illicit drugs in Medellin, as well as complementary work in reducing social violence.

Map 2.: Colombia and major cities

Source: US Central Intelligence Agency

The overall panorama of civil war, insurgency and drug trafficking, as well as official corruption and repression make for a bleak backdrop in Colombia's bid to emerge from underdevelopment, poverty and deep social inequity. The infamous Medellin cartel that consolidated narcotrafficking and became a global player in the supply chain of illicit drugs no longer exists. In its place, a more fragmented, diversified and agile drug trafficking industry has taken the cartel's place in Medellin. Complicating the scenario is the fact that both right-wing paramilitary groups and left-wing guerillas compete for control over drug production and erode the power of the state to provide the conditions for economic and social development.

Given such formidable challenges and the state's inability to resolve them, it should not be surprising that civil society steps in to address its own needs. Colombia's civil society groups and individual leaders have stepped in to take care of pressing social needs related to violence and drug use. Some of civil society's responses and activities hold lessons for policymakers and service providers confronting analogous problems in their own countries.

After providing an overview of Colombia's historical context the report profiles successful civil society programs and activities in order to bring together general lessons learned from their experience, and to offer insights to organizations and populations confronting similar challenges.

Historical Context for the Medellin Anti-Drug and Anti-Violence Experience

Colombia is a republic of 44.4 million people, of whom 76% are urban dwellers, a figure that has risen from only 60% in 1975. The country has enjoyed a moderate rise over time in its Human Development indicators (HDI), but is just slightly under the regional Latin America/Caribbean average HDI for 2004 and has declined in the past two years. The poorest 20% of the population enjoy only a 2.7% share of the national income and consumption. Colombia is thus a country with a deeply entrenched inequality of family income.[16] Life expectancy, infant mortality and child malnutrition have also worsened in the past several years and the economic performance of the country has suffered due its reliance on coffee exports, which represent 25% of the export economy.[17] Price reductions in world prices for coffee adversely affect the economy of Colombia.

Medellin is the capital of the department (or state) of Antioquia, and has approximately 1.8 million inhabitants. The infamous Medellin cartel that drove so much of the drug trafficking of Colombia has been destroyed. In its place a more fragmented drug industry has arisen, foregoing the massive consolidation accomplished by the older cartel structure. One group smuggles the narcotics from Colombia to Mexico, another group controls the jungle labs, while yet another may handle transportation of coca base from the fields to the labs. There may be more than 300 organizations involved in the smuggling of illicit drugs in Colombia today after the fall of the Medellin cartel. Drug trafficking suffered an important defeat with the disappearance of the big cartels, but it did not disappear.

Colombia's long struggle with civil war, insurgency and drug trafficking

By some estimates, the overlapping internal conflicts in Colombia have taken as many as 35,000 lives in the past three and a half decades. That statistic alone is cause for concern, but the direct cost in lives of the armed conflicts and drug trade is not the only human cost inflicted on Colombia. Over 1.2 million people are considered Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) having been dislodged from their lands, homes and communities within Colombia due to the violence of armed

16 The gap between the rich and poor is measured by an index known as the 'Gini coefficient', on which Colombia scores a relatively poor 57.6. United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2004*, Colombia-specific database, accessed April 4, 2005, http://hdr.undp.org/statistics.

17 World Bank, Colombia at-a-glance, September 16, 2004, accessed at http://www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata on April 4, 2005.

conflict. Their problems and challenges are similar to those facing displaced people who cross international borders and are thus entitled to refugee status under international law. IDPs have fewer protections in international law and are the responsibility of the country in which they find themselves. Colombia's displaced are vulnerable to further ravages of violence as they often move to larger cities such as Medellin where they live precarious lives and are inordinately exposed to the extremes of violence that the drug trade has engendered.

1. Civil war, insurgency and counterinsurgency

After several exceedingly bloody episodes of civil war from the 1900s to the late 1950s Colombia began consolidating a pluralist democratic system in which the two major parties alternated in their rule of the government while providing some governmental representation to the losing party.

While this ended the blood-letting between the major parties, eight armed insurgent groups of diverse left-wing tendencies emerged with the intent of overthrowing the government. The struggle between the armed forces and the guerillas took on grotesque proportions as elsewhere in Latin America, with thousands of victims of torture, forced disappearance, assassination and massacres. The lawlessness of the guerillas was matched by the impunity of the armed forces.

Most of the insurgent groups faded away after failing in their military strategies, or in the attempt to convert themselves into political parties.[18] Candidates for office as well as rank and file members of the former insurgents' political parties became new victims of assassination, disappearances and massacres. The most powerful of the two surviving insurgencies, *Las Fuerzas Armadas de la Revolucion Colombiana* (FARC) continues today stronger than ever, sustained by profits from kidnapping, drug cultivation, and narcotrafficking.

FARC gained territory, wealth and arms as it transformed over time from a grass-roots insurgency into one more component of the drug trafficking network threatening the stability of the country. In 1998, the President of Colombia offered to cede a major portion of Colombian territory to FARC control as a confidence-building measure while peace talks were underway. The talks failed and both FARC and the government returned to military confrontation.

The prevalence of right-wing paramilitary groups with some ties to the official armed

18 A formal peace process succeeded in incorporating several insurgent groups into mainstream politics and a new constitution was promulgated in 1991.

forces has complicated the resolution of Colombia's struggle with violence and disorder. The current government has separate talks proceeding with both FARC and the paramilitaries, and has taken a hard line in an attempt to restore public security to the country and make it safe for its own citizens and foreign investors.

2. *Drug trafficking*

Colombia was not always an important player in the global supply of illicit drugs. Its original role was as a transshipment point in the drug trade. Bolivia and Peru, traditional coca growers since pre-Hispanic times, used to be the starting point of the modern cocaine supply chain. While demand and supply were both at low levels, Chile was the country where coca leaf would be converted into cocaine, and Colombia was simply the jumping off point for export to the United States. Colombia has both Atlantic and Pacific Ocean coasts, and is at the northern-most tip of the South American continent (See Maps 1 & 2). The transshipment industry was of a relatively small scale compared to what drug trafficking became in Colombia, and consequently had little effect on Colombia itself.

Colombia is now the global leader in supplying cocaine, producing at least 300 metric tons per year, as well as perhaps 6 tons of heroin annually. According to the US Drug Enforcement Agency and the Department of State, "80% of the worldwide powder cocaine supply and approximately 90% of the powder cocaine smuggled into the United States is produced in Colombia. It is also a significant source of over 70% of the heroin consumed east of the Mississippi."[19] The production network was once tightly controlled by 'cartels' or organized criminal networks with strong individual or family control, such as the Medellin Cartel, which was led by Pablo Escobar Gaviria until his shooting death in 1993 led to the cartel's demise and the rise of a more fragmented and nebulous drug trafficking panorama.

The combination of vast resources made available to the groups that control drug trafficking and these same groups' predilection for violence has given rise to the term 'narcoterrorism', which encompasses car bombings, kidnappings, extortion of the peasant population, assassination of government officials who refuse to cooperate with the demands of the drug traffickers, and violence against members of civil society who combat the causes and effects of narcotrafficking and impunity. Narcoterrorism is the legacy of decades of extreme political violence, inadequate and corrupt governance, submissive civil society and the opportunity for gains from the drug trade.

19 United States Department of State Country Background Note, Colombia, February 2005, at http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35754.htm

3. The relationship between drug use, social violence and crime in Colombia

The large number of victims of the political and social violence over the years has left an inordinate amount of impoverished young people without parents, family networks or care-givers, making them an easy recruitment base for organized crime networks. Young people serve as 'mules' transporting drug packets in their bodies in condoms or balloons that they swallow, or as assassins, couriers, spies and distributors of drugs. From this stark panorama of violence at the political level, a new level of social violence has emerged with its locus among the youth who have been victimized by Colombia's wars even as they become its child soldiers.

As the numbers of youth in this context increase, gangs of *sicarios* or assassins have emerged, further aggravating the social violence. The sicarios may number in the thousands in Medellin alone, and by one account between 5000 and 7000 young people in Medellin have committed murder for pay at least once. On the wealthier end of the economic spectrum, families with means suffer from kidnapping, extortion and carjacking. Colombia has one of the highest rates of kidnapping in the world.

Violence and drugs are elements of a way of life and a way of economic advancement for vulnerable sectors of the population.[20]

20 The current government of President Uribe, who is not tied to either of Colombia's predominant political parties, has made progress in restoring security and accountability to Colombia. "Between May 2002 and September 2004 Colombia saw a decrease in homicide by 17.6%, massacres by 55.4%, kidnappings by 35.1%, and acts of terrorism by 18.4%. The economy is projected to grow by over 4% in 2004, compared to 3% in 2003. Coca and poppy cultivation has decreased by 33% since 2001." United States Department of State Country Background Note, Colombia, February 2005, at http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35754.htm.

4. Children, drugs, armed conflict and violence in Colombia

Up to 30,000 children in Colombia simply live in the street and perhaps half a million children are not enrolled in school. Thousands of children are the victims of killings and few cases are ever prosecuted. Violence against the young is committed in an extremely permissive environment and perpetrators count on virtual impunity for their crimes.

Sexual violence too has been used in the armed conflict, and the incidence of rape is believed to be 2.5 per 1000 women. It is estimated that up to 35,000 children and youth have been forced into prostitution. According to UNICEF, girls suffer great vulnerability in armed conflict, suffering sexual violence from combatants, and even being abducted into the various factions of armed conflict in Colombia. But "abduction is not the only cause of girls' participation in armed conflict. Girls are sometimes given into armed service particularly to the guerilla groups by their parents as a form of 'tax payment'.[21]

Drug use also seriously affects Medellin's youth. Drugs have created new social strata, and have directly decayed the communities in which young people grow up. Twelve to 15 year olds are the greatest users of marijuana and *bazuco* (crack), and 12 to 19 year olds are the age group with the highest incidence of cocaine use in the population. In Medellin, out of every 100 youth who die violently, 34 used alcohol and 10 have used cocaine. In homicides involving youth, 47% of the suspects state that they had been under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs, vividly illustrating one of the links between drugs and violence. Fifty two percent of the victims of violent death were youth between sixteen and twenty years old.

Child soldiers forcibly recruited into combat in Colombia may be as high as 14,400.[22] Currently paramilitary and armed opposition groups forcibly recruit and abduct children into their ranks. The UN's Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict has successfully encouraged the demobilization of government troops who are underage. The practice is still widespread among FARC and the paramilitary group *Autodefensas Unidas Colombianas* (AUC).[23]

21 United Nations Children's Fund, *State of the World's Children*, 2005, accessed at http://unicef.org.
22 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Global Report 2005*, Colombia chapter, accessed at http://www.child-soldiers.org/regions/country.html?id=47.
23 United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, reports on 1999 and 2000 missions to Colombia, accessed at http://www.un.org/special-rep/children-armed-conflict/English/Colombia.html.

Civil Society Responses to Drug Abuse and Social Violence

Assassination of Rodrigo Lara Bonilla: a tipping point in the struggle against drug trafficking?

Rodrigo Lara Bonilla was an up-and-coming member of the Liberal Party in Colombia who became at age 37, the Colombian Minister of Justice under President Betancur in August 1983. Less than eight months later, he was murdered by two *sicarios* on motorcycles who shot him while his car was stopped in traffic. His selection as Minister was in part due to his reputation for honesty at a time when Colombia's institutions throughout society were riddled with the influence of drug trafficking. Pablo Escobar was at the time a member of the Colombian Parliament, actively seeking ways to destroy Lara's reputation and prosecutorial initiatives. It was the beginning of a serious contest between the state and the drug traffickers.

The assassination managed to turn national opinion in favor of harsher measures against the drug traffickers, who above all things feared extradition to the United States to face indictments there. At the funeral for Lara Bonilla, President Betancur pledged to begin extraditions.

The reaction of the drug traffickers was two-fold: to launch more armed attacks on the politicians, police and armed forces who were involved in the prosecution and interdiction of drug trafficking, and to launch attacks against the civilian population. The strategy of terror was meant to diminish popular and governmental support for extradition in particular and to continue the impunity generally enjoyed by the drug traffickers. The period from 1988 to 1993 saw the initiation of a campaign of bombing of malls, shopping centers, an AVIANCA airliner and even the headquarters of the Administrative Department of Security and hundreds of other venues throughout Colombia's five major cities. 'Narcoterrorism' gained currency as the term that best described the actions and their perpetrators.

Despite the high cost borne by civilians, the population remained supportive of the government, and helped to create an environment of intolerance for the excesses of the drug traffickers. This ultimately led to the demise of the Medellin and other cartels, the downfall of the major drug trafficking figures either through capture and prosecution, extradition or armed confrontation. Lara Bonilla's crusade against the drug traffickers and his death did not end Colombia's problems, but they did alter

the landscape of popular opinion, civil society and government policy in which drug trafficking operated. His death and the consequences that flowed from it marked an important turning point in Colombia's struggle to be rid of violence and drugs and in civil society's resolve to no longer tolerate the problems engendered by drug trafficking.

Individuals and civil society organizations (CSO) in Medellin

The government of Colombia and the state and municipal governments of Antioquia and Medellin, respectively, provide few services or resources to deal with the social problems of youth described above either in Medellin or elsewhere in Colombia. In the sustained absence of a coherent government response to such challenges, Colombia's communities themselves have risen to the challenge of preventing youth from getting involved in the drug trade, gangs, militias, and the violence and murder they engender. Over the course of the fieldwork and research conducted, LCG found that 292 prevention-oriented programs run by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operated in Medellin. Of these, 195 work in primary prevention, 82 in education, and 15 perform both primary prevention and education. Their work varies according to who their primary client population is (youth, families, and teachers) and by the age group of the clients, as well as basic differences in mission. Violence prevention programs generally include a component on human development, community ethics and values, and to a lesser extent, skills development. LCG identified 11 organizations and programs as particularly effective in their work. A description of each organization/program is provided here, and they are grouped according to their principal approach to prevention,[24] which include:

- Residential Prevention and Treatment Centers for Youth
- Grass Roots Community Organizations
- Educational Programs
- Social Safety Net Programs
- Prevention Through Health Education
- Community Service

24 Other groupings are possible, including population served, but these categories make sense for the purpose of gaining insight to the success and reliability of what each organization does.

- Multiple Prevention Activities
- Arts and Culture

1. Residential Prevention and Treatment Centers for Youth

There are numerous treatment and prevention programs in Medellin, and many have of these, as well as other prevention projects, have been spearheaded by exceptional individuals. The report looks briefly at the work of both the individuals and the institutions they created.

Father Fidel Marco Lopez' early pastoral career was focused on writing about and promoting child development. In the 1970s, he used his skills as a reporter and child advocate to fight against the growth of the Medellin Cartel. His numerous anti-drug and anti-Cartel articles and radio interviews threatened the Cartel's (and specifically Pablo Escobar's) attempts to create a veil of legitimacy over their criminal activities and to maintain the impunity that permitted them to thrive. Father Lopez uncovered the brutality of the Cartel and its destruction of Medellin's society. Escobar and his associates made threatening phone calls to Father Lopez and even sent him a printed invitation to his own wake, accompanied by a funeral wreath. Fortunately, this only heightened Father Lopez' zeal to fight the Cartel and establish prevention and treatment programs in Colombia. Asked if he felt threatened, Father Lopez responded that all Colombians feel threatened on a daily basis by the violent world in which they live of drugs, guerrillas and militias. "If they kill me, they kill one man, but not the idea for which I stand."

Fr. Lopez studied different treatment alternatives for drug treatment in Europe and learned about therapeutic communities, bringing his learning back to Colombia. In 1982, there were only 200 clinics throughout all of Colombia and none of them treated adolescents. Children and youth addicts from the wealthier classes were sent for treatment to New York or Miami addiction programs or to military schools.

In addition to his advocacy work against the cartels, he used his knowledge of therapeutic treatment for substance abuse to open the first therapeutic community centers in Medellin and Bogota in 1982 and 1983. In these first centers, he blended long-term community residential therapy with culturally appropriate techniques. He also established the first advanced degree curriculum for drug treatment at the Luis Amigo University in Medellin.

Father Gabriel Mejia operates the ***Fundacion Hogares Claret*** (Claret Homes Foundation). The foundation operates the only outreach program for street children as well as a residential drug program for children and youth who are victims of drugs and violence. Provision of basic needs to the street children, instead of having these needs distorted and exploited by gangs and pimps, is part of their approach. The Fundacion operates drop-in centers that are open all night, unlike many of their US counterparts. Youth can come in for a shower, meal and a place to sleep safely at night, as well as obtain counseling, at the time when they are most vulnerable to the dangers of street life. As youth demonstrate an increasing desire to change their lives, they can be placed on a waiting list to be admitted to one of the Foundation's Residential Centers. Fr. Mejia also takes pleasure in putting Pablo Escobar's former properties to better use as drop-in and residential centers for youth exposed to the culture of drugs and violence that Escobar and others helped create. Ironically, Escobar's main residence is now a drug abuse treatment training center.

Physically, he is a small man, but his deeds are larger than life. As he walks into the Street Outreach Center, he is deluged by young boys and girls, asking for his blessing, a pair of shoes, a slot in one of the residential homes, or help for one of their friends. He is a Pied Piper luring children off the streets into a safe environment. Asked his goals, he responds, "I want each child to be happy, to feel whole and have a sense of self-worth. A child who is happy does not need drugs. A child who is happy is not involved in violence." Violence also touches him personally, as he was the victim of a hijacking as he drove outside the city. Rather than being aggressive or angry with his teen abductor, he reached out with love and the few possessions he had. Hours later he was safely let go. The next day, the young man who accosted him showed up at the Foundation asking for help in kicking his drug addiction and changing his life.

At the residential centers, the provision of basic needs continues, but there is also access to education, job skills training, recreation and more intensive counseling. While the children play and live in a residential environment, they continue to attend public schools in the surrounding community because the Foundation believes it is important for the children and youth to continue to have contact with the world outside the residence, which will test their commitment to leading a drug-free and violence-free life. Expulsion from the residence or restriction to the residence grounds can be the punishment for violating the residence's rules.

Fundacion Hogares Claret serves as the administrative arm of the Latin American Federation of Therapeutic Communities but is also helps to connect them to

agencies and networks that are more focused on prevention. These relationships strengthen individual and group efforts to educate the public on drugs and violence, provide a continuum of services and increase the knowledge and skills of staff.

Fr. Mejia is a national and international leader in the prevention and treatment fields. He helped establish at least 50 therapeutic community treatment programs throughout Colombia. He also helped to establish the Colombian Federation of Therapeutic Communities and the Drug Prevention network of the Americas. As President of the Latin American Federation of Therapeutic Communities, he helped expand the network to include 3,000 drug demand reduction programs throughout the Caribbean, South and Central America.

2. Grass Roots Community Organizations

Juan Carlos Tabares is a talented and highly-educated man who could be pursuing a lucrative career in private industry. But his concern for young people and a small poor neighborhood on the outskirts of Medellin, known as El Picacho, have led him to create and operate a small non-profit agency called and ***Corporacion Picacho con Futuro*** (Picacho with a Future). Picacho con Futuro got its start as a youth drop-in center in 1987, and transformed itself into a collaborative of 10 neighborhood organizations looking to build on each others' strengths. They recognized that each organization alone could only address *Picacho's* needs in a limited fashion, and that there were many issues which crossed agency lines and many issues that were not addressed because they did not fall within any one agency's mission. Membership grew to 35 neighborhood organizations that have banded together in a grassroots coalition for fundraising, program development and coordination. The board of directors consists of representatives from each member organization.

Since its mission had become coordination rather than direct provision of services the *Corporacion* itself has only a small staff consisting of the Executive Director, a Technical and Administrative Assistant, secretary and five program volunteers. They share in the development of pilot programs and then coordinate their various prevention and intervention efforts. He proudly distributes copies of the strategic plan, excitedly talking about how the entire neighborhood wants its children to have a chance for a better life—a life with options—a life without drugs and violence.

The creation of the cross-organization strategic plan is just one example of the collaborative work *Corporacion Picacho* accomplishes: It began with a 1997

neighborhood survey carried out with the cooperation of municipal agencies. The survey identified several strengths in an otherwise challenging social landscape: the existence of a large number of organizations focusing on community improvement, many churches, recreational parks, community halls, day care and community centers, as well as an adequate transportation system. The major challenges identified included: lack of an integrated educational system available to all children, poor quality schools, inadequate environmental protection, poor housing stock, inadequate water and sewer systems, minimal job training, low income per household, domestic violence, lack of sufficient public health preventive and treatment services, and lack of citizen involvement in local matters. Based on the identified strengths and challenges, a strategic development plan for the year 2010 was formulated, building on the diverse capabilities of the member organizations.

3. Educational Programs

SURGIR (Spanish for the verb "to rise up") has developed a project in collaboration with the Medellin Mayor's Office, "**United for Our Children**" (a parent association of parents of children in private schools in Medellin), the Private Schools Association of Antioquia, and the National Conference of Catholic Centers of Education called **Substance Abuse Prevention Program for Young Students.** The project is a prevention effort that operates in 187 schools and educational centers, reaching 120,000 students, 2,000 parents and 5,000 teachers. In addition to teaching and promoting a life free of drugs and alcohol, the project has created a Strategic Alliance among public and private schools to promote a curriculum called **Living Healthy Lives and Preventing the Use of Drugs**. A fundamental part of the curriculum involves distributing "newspaper murals" to the schools. One side of the mural contains text on a topic dealing with substance abuse prevention. The facing side is blank and is for the students and teachers to fill with their comments, questions, observations and feelings on the topic. A teacher's guide accompanies the mural in order to facilitate its use as a tool of dialogue and learning on substance abuse prevention.

Liceo Santo Domingo Savio has formed alliances and collaborative partnerships with eighteen other organizations in the Santo Domingo neighborhood of Medellin. The partner organizations include NGOs working on education and youth services, as well as religious and community-based organizations. The collaborative focus of Liceo Santo Domingo Savio is to improve the educational resources for youth and provide them with an opportunity to get involved in positive activities such as health campaigns, recreational trips, and sports activities.

4. Social Safety Net Programs

In Medellin, **COMFAMA** is one of the principal providers of the social safety net that would normally be provided by government. It is a non-profit social agency established by a 1954 agreement between workers and business leaders. Three years later it was incorporated. Its resources come from a contribution equal to 4% of business payrolls. Additionally, each low salaried worker receives a monthly benefit allotment calculated on the number of dependent children in the worker's family. But the work of COMFAMA goes beyond the provision of economic benefits to the working class poor.

COMFAMA's services are aimed at the entire population beyond the workers on the payroll of contributing businesses, which positions COMFAMA to intervene in poor areas and populations at risk of violence and gang activity. Among the prevention activities carried out by COMFAMA are:

Violence Prevention work:

- COMFAMA promotes peaceful coexistence in neighborhoods experiencing high levels of violence.

- It provides conflict resolution training for communities and local agencies. The training includes strategies for improving interfamily and workplace relationships.

Service Centers:

- A system of decentralized service locations that provide families with recreational opportunities, including swimming, gymnasium, sports fields, game rooms, gardens and picnic facilities.

Health Care:

- COMFAMA addresses health needs including: provision of primary health care, maternal and pediatric care, and treatment whose high cost is otherwise prohibitive to members.

Education and Job Training:

- COMFAMA provides an alternative education system for preschool, basic primary ed and secondary ed for youth and adults who have been out of school for 2 to 3 years and who want to finish their secondary education.

- Courses that focus on strengthening the family through provision of parenting skills, crisis intervention for youth, and workshops on interfamily conflict.

- Basic life skills, culture and vocational training in areas including family nutrition, sewing, music, dance and photography.

- Training for individuals who want to start or improve their own small business through technical assistance, micro credit and management training.

- Job training for youth seeking their first job, career advancement within an existing job, retraining for career transitions.

COMFAMA also has specifically targeted preventive programs for alcohol and drugs, as well as a gang intervention program that addresses young people's need to belong and to be respected. They call their approach the 3-A Strategy: Acercamiento, Asesoramiento, y Acompanimiento (Getting Close, Providing Counseling, Being a Companion). Outreach workers go into a neighborhood to meet gang members on their own turf. It takes about 2 to 3 months of constantly visiting a neighborhood and engaging gang members in casual conversations before trust can be established and relationships begin to develop. At this point, outreach workers must be careful not to force change. Then, analysis of the gang's organization is needed. Workers must get to know gang members as individuals. The next step for the outreach worker is to ask gang members about their needs and to determine how to help them to improve their lives. One of the most frequent requests is for help in getting a job. Since most gang members have dropped out of school at a young age, or were otherwise prevented from finishing their basic educational requirements, the outreach worker helps link them to schools and training programs and workshops, some of which are also run by COMFAMA.

In addition to provision of academic and technical skills outreach workers help youth redefine their personal values. Once each week, outreach workers lead discussion with small groups of youth on personal growth and family issues. This helps youth realize that economics and the lack of a job are not their only problems. Rather, they learn that they also need to work on developing better relationships. Finally, outreach workers encourage youth to design and undertake community projects. This gives them a sense of autonomy—accomplishing something positive on their own that benefits their community. It also helps them transform their self-identity and community impact from negative to positive. In one project, *Vuelo de Mariposas* (Flight of the Butterflies) gang members encourage young children to stay in school.

1. Prevention through Health

Dr. Francisco Lopez Bernal and **Hospital de San Cristobal**. Dr. Lopez Bernal is a physician and Director of the Hospital San Cristobal which is located in the countryside outside of Medellin. Access to families in the remote parts of the countryside served by this hospital is difficult: some areas lack roads and so transport is on foot or horseback in many cases. Along with his colleagues, he has developed a program of "Health Promoters" or home health visitors, which brings public health education and services to highly marginalized populations living in San Cristobal and the surrounding rural area. They have trained more than 480 volunteers in this public education/home visit project, and currently have 50 active volunteers. Dr. Lopez and his colleagues raise awareness among volunteers that health is a fundamental human right and a collective responsibility. At the same time, they learn a holistic approach to human health in which physical, mental and social well-being interact and go far beyond the mere absence of disease. Criteria to become a Health Promotor include credibility with the neighbors, ability to interact effectively, and knowledge of health issues.

The volunteers provide information on self-esteem, family relationships, community leadership, prenatal health, drug and alcohol dependence, breastfeeding, child and youth development, and healthy eating and nutrition and ways to improve the sanitary conditions of these families, among other topics. The volunteers compile a home health census of the families living in their areas, do cursory medical examinations, such as measuring children's growth indicators (height and weight) and provide immunizations. Dr. Lopez is proud of the positive outcomes the volunteers have achieved—outcomes that can be measured with an increase in health indicators and a decrease in community drug use and violence. Dr. Lopez is

concerned for the sustainability of the modest government support that the home health visitor program receives, as the government's struggle against the guerrillas and drug traffickers outweighs all other political priorities.

2. Community Service

Corporacion Region—Youth Factory is built on the principles of youth involvement, self-determination, inter-agency collaboration and community benefit. Neighborhood youth design projects that will help improve their community. Each project is led and depends on the active involvement of local youth who first develop a concept, identify its potential impact and benefits, and demonstrate their ability to implement it in a collaborative fashion. Each project must consist of persons between 15 and 25 years of age and have equal gender participation. Furthermore, each project must address a drug abuse, violence or discrimination prevention strategy. All the projects must adhere to three additional general criteria: integration with other community projects; interdisciplinary approaches to prevention; and working across different geographic and programmatic sectors.

Youth participate in weekly meetings where they receive training, mentoring, and general support to develop and implement their project. Drug abuse prevention strategies include: group and individual counseling, development of decision making, self-determination and self awareness. Violence prevention focuses on taking responsibility, solidarity, and respect. Self-esteem and confidence are considered to be the underpinnings of the anti-discrimination strategy.

3. Multiple Prevention Approaches

Asociacion Cristiana de Jovenes (Christian Youth Association) is a member agency of the Young Men's Christian Association, better known as the YMCA, and provides young people from a group of inner city neighborhoods with opportunities to increase their education, develop job skills, grow spiritually, psychologically and emotionally, as well as undertake community health education programs. The agency's service area includes the most violent neighborhoods in Medellin. By opening the doors to young people, the Asociacion Cristiana provides a safe space for young people to congregate, share support and design service projects. Without this 'safe space' and the support of adult leaders, youth in these neighborhoods would either be isolated in their homes or at risk on the streets.

4. Arts and Culture

Corporacion Ser Humano is a small NGO that actively engages youth in a variety of arts to promote health education and drug/violence prevention. The agency unites students and out-of-school youth from different neighborhoods, thereby reducing the psychological and social barriers created by neighborhood boundaries. It uses a variety of mechanisms to teach youth the importance of having a healthy body and avoiding unhealthy practices such as drug abuse and early sexual activity. Among these are theatre, dance, yoga and the visual arts. From 1998 to 2000, 60 youth from different parts of the city performed a play entitled "The Lives of Medellin Youth—Between Myth and Reality." Nearly 3000 people attended the various performances involving youth telling their own life stories and how drugs have affected them and their communities.

The innovation of Corporacion Ser Humano's approach was not limited to the artistic methodology of their engagement with their client population. Their value extends beyond the auditorium and individual performance. After hearing the youths' stories the audience participated in discussions with the actors. Special workshops were also held for teachers and students to enable further dialogue outside of the theatre and to enable youth to discuss these issues with their parents.

Corporacion Educativa, Recreativa, Ecologica y Cultural Barrio Comparsa (Educational, Recreational, Ecological and Cultural Masquerade Neighborhood Corporation) attracts young people to its program through neighborhood carnivals. During these events, young people are dressed in colorful costumes based on Colombian folklore and entertain neighborhoods with music and dance. The community gets involved in a safe, fun carnival celebration, something that happens rarely in Medellin. These events serve two purposes: they allow the entire community to come together so that neighbors can get to know each other, and they also serve as a recruitment mechanism for the agency. While the music is playing, program staff passes out information and encourage young people who are interested in the arts and folklore to visit the agency. Once there, they can learn to play musical instruments, sing and perform, write poetry and theatre pieces, and learn yoga and other healthy life activities.

Medellin-Specific Lessons Learned

In the midst of the four-decade-long war that has undermined Colombia's social and economic development, Colombia's beleaguered civil society has managed to make significant gains in the prevention and treatment of drug use and violence problems of Colombian society.

The problems engendered by the insurgencies and threats posed to government and civil society by the FARC, AUC, the narcotraffickers have been of such duration and magnitude that it is not surprising that the national government's focus has been on these national level threats, rather than the individual human security issues affecting society's weakest and most vulnerable people: poor children and youth.

Yet, as in other contexts, there are opportunities for government and civil society to collaborate and support each other's efforts. SURGIR was awarded a contract to conduct an evaluation of the numerous (292) agencies working on prevention issues in Medellin.[25] The contract came through a funding partnership of the national and departmental (Antioquia) governments. The provision of seized assets from the drug traffickers to substance abuse treatment and prevention agencies is another mode of public-private cooperation. It helps assure that those assets serve as a visible reminder of the futility of the drug trade. The use of Pablo Escobar's properties as treatment training centers and drop-in centers by Hogares Claret is an example of this. More fundamentally, local authorities and municipal governments in Medellin can increase their support for and cooperation with Medellin's prevention community by referring clients to them, encouraging cooperation between these agencies and police, and partnering on educational and awareness-raising projects.

The weakening of Medellin's middle class has been part of broader decay of Medellin society due to the influx of drug trafficking money and drugs, and all the consequences that flow from those two factors. Combined with Colombia's already high level of economic inequality, the middle class may be seen as particularly vulnerable of slipping downward in socio-economic status. With the large numbers of rural poor and those fleeing from the insurgency in the countryside inflating the population of Medellin and all of Colombia's major urban centers, the challenge of providing a social safety net becomes acute. Several of Medellin's civil society organizations surveyed here have been addressing this as part of their overall prevention strategies, and many provide skills-training, opportunities to raise educational levels and practical experience through voluntary community service.

25 LCG made use of the SURGIR evaluation in order to identify the eleven successful organizations discussed in the present report.

Keeping people meaningfully employed and increasing their employability have been recognized as a part of the overall strategy for keeping them away from illicit ways of making a living.

In the next section, the specific strategies that were successfully employed by the organizations described above are distilled and explained, with an eye toward their utility elsewhere.

Prevention Strategies Used in Medellin That May Be Replicated Elsewhere

In analyzing the successful strategies and activities of the best Medellin organizations working in drug and violence prevention, we can discern several general strategies in use. To the extent such strategies contribute to the successful demand reduction and violence prevention results of these organizations, these strategies may be applied and adapted to other national contexts confronting the same challenges.

- Coordination and Collaboration
- Development of social safety net
- Building on the strengths of volunteers
- Developing positive pathways for youth development into adulthood
- Building grassroots coalitions

Each of these is discussed below, along with illustrations from the organizations surveyed here.

Coordination and collaboration across organizational lines to offer a rational but holistic set of services

With social problems of such large magnitude and civil society organizations of comparatively small size with considerable specialization and distribution, there is a special need for coordination and collaboration across organizational lines (which are always needed regardless of the context). Scarcity of both private and public resources for prevention work in Colombia means that organizations that specialize in one approach are better off when they combine efforts with others to minimize unnecessary duplication, provide 'bundled' services and reduce wasteful competition for volunteers and funds.

Numerous prevention-oriented groups in Medellin work through coordination and collaboration, but one at least has taken on the role of actually being the coordinator for the others. Corporacion Picacho con Futuro demonstrates this competency as a

core part of its approach to social service. Although it started as a drop in center, it successfully transformed itself into a coordinating mechanism for numerous other neighborhood organizations that needed assistance to raise funds, minimize overlap of services. It is also run as a collaborative effort, with board members coming from the member organizations.

SURGIR has created an alliance that brings together the private and public schools in Medellin in order to jointly implement an anti drug curriculum among all schools in the community. SURGIR has, in this sense, built a bridge between two different parts of the educational system that most likely were not coordinating their efforts before. SURGIR also developed a Substance Abuse Prevention Program for Young Children by collaboratively working with the Medellin Mayor's Office, as well as the national network of Catholic schools and the Antioquia association of private schools. The accomplishment here is to create the opportunity for joint efforts where none was possible before.

Development of a social safety net to begin to meet social, health and other needs

With limited public services to keep people from falling out of the middle class during times of crisis, or to help the poor meet basic needs with dignity, civil society can step in to provide the very safety net that otherwise the state might provide with public resources. In Medellin, there are several examples of those most in need organizing themselves so that they can, together, meet collective basic needs of families and communities.

In the polarized economic environment in Colombia, with the extremes of wealth and poverty predominant, the lack of a social safety net has serious consequences and it is likely that those without means of survival, and without any state-provided social safety net, will be more likely to resort to violent crime and drug-related activities such as carjacking, kidnapping and homicide for pay. The sheer number of people in dire economic conditions has a direct link to the prevalence of these crimes in Colombia. COMFAMA's comprehensive safety net services are one of the few or only factors preventing more people from slipping into poverty. Clearly there is room for a more coherent social safety net in the Medellin context, and the effort should ideally bring together a balance of private and public sector resources as appropriate.

Involve communities by using volunteers to strengthen civil society organizations

In contexts where resources are already scarce and in the absence of a well-developed philanthropic practice and donor community, there will be scarcity of paid staff to carry out prevention work. The need for trained volunteers is important not just in terms of scarce resources, but also in terms of giving community members a stake in the communities they are transforming.

Volunteers are essential partners with government and non-government agencies in providing the vast array of prevention services today's communities need. They help provide policy guidance through Boards of Directors, help identify and raise funds, serve as consultants, and also directly provide services. Often, they bring an expertise that an agency could not otherwise afford. Volunteers who are from the community being served play a critical role in helping build grass roots support for the work of the agency providing the service.

All of the organizations identified in this research, and most likely all of the agencies working on prevention in Medellin rely to some degree on the efforts of volunteers. One of them has incorporated the volunteer strategy into its programmatic work: The Hospital de San Cristobal's program of Health Promoters relies on the work of volunteers to conduct its home visits and provide basic health information and services.

Development of positive youth development pathways and activities to safeguard the passage to adulthood

Keeping the passage from childhood to youth to adulthood free of serious risks to the health and survival of those children is important, but so is conceptualizing, providing and protecting positive development pathways so that they can form the values and identity that will make their adulthood meaningful and productive. Several of the 'pathways' identified in the work of the organizations reviewed here include

- youth empowerment
- involvement in arts and cultural activities
- self-esteem and accountability

Corporacion Region and its Youth Factory program focuses on empowering young people to come up with their own community service projects that fulfill critical cooperative criteria. Rather than waiting for someone to provide them with the solutions to their problems, youth working with this organization are part of the solution. COMFAMA's gang outreach street work also culminates in a transformative experience in which the gang member progresses all the way to designing and implementing a community service project. Given the self- and community-destructive activities of gangs, the integration of community service—designed by the youth themselves—seems particularly appropriate and creative.

Corporacion Ser Humano and Barrio Comparsa both focus heavily on youth involvement in the arts; theatre and carnival performances respectively. The use of arts, music, performance and dance in prevention work enables youth to develop self-confidence and practical life skills, and of course have an intrinsic esthetic and wholesome value. Ser Humano's approach is also innovative because the theatre piece performed can become a medium for communicating the plight of youth in the Medellin social context. Performers then facilitate a dialogue with the audience on the issues illustrated in the play, which goes beyond a simple, passive audience experience.

The work of the organizations mentioned in this subsection all build up the self-esteem of young people who are at risk of, or who are already involved in, drugs and violence. Fundacion Hogares Claret seeks to provide a complete continuum of service that starts out with meeting basic shelter and food needs, but culminates in the movement toward self-realization. Hogares Claret also instills a strong sense of accountability in the youth it serves by getting them to both attend school and interact with society outside of the residence, while adhering to the rules of the residence.

Build grassroots coalitions

Encouraging participation of the people on whose behalf public policies and services are provided enables them to articulate their needs, gives them experience in democratic decision making, and gives them a stake in the future of Medellin. Prevention programs and strategies, no matter how well designed, do not succeed without grassroots support from the community they are to serve. One of the major challenges confronting any agency, public or private that is engaged in prevention work is actively involving community residents in the work. At a minimum, the people to be affected by the prevention efforts must accept them. Optimally, they

should be active players involved in the design, implementation and assessment of prevention initiatives. Several of the organizations in Medellin strive to build up grassroots coalitions focused on preventing violence and drug abuse and promoting healthy and safe community environments.

Corporacion Picacho con Futuro, for example, held a series of meetings throughout the year with agencies and residents of the Picacho neighborhoods to identify community needs and strengths, as inputs for the strategic plan they created. Corporacion Region organizes public events to mobilize the citizens of Medellin and engage them in discussions on critical public issues such as public safety and youth development. Hospital San Cristobal's volunteer network is directly drawn from the community, and the volunteers serve as the community's voice in designing future prevention activities.

Colombia obviously faces some unique circumstances in its struggle against social violence, political fragmentation and drug trafficking. And yet these problems are global in reach. What is learned in one venue may be adaptable in another. Medellin, as a microcosm of all of Colombia, suffers from everything the entire country experiences, and has a vibrant civil society that is actively engaged in prevention activities. Their experience should be valuable for the rest of Colombia as it confronts the same challenges, and for other countries similarly situated.

Comparison Report – Drugs and Violence Prevention – 4 Case Studies

Introduction

The problems of illicit drug use and social violence seem to appear together throughout the world. The drug trade, like thousands of other industries both licit and illicit, is a global phenomenon. It has very distinct local manifestations although the impact on individuals and families shares much everywhere:

- destruction of families and communities
- loss of employment and employability
- domestic violence
- crime and social violence
- community decay
- ongoing economic deterioration
- death from a variety of causes linked to drug use and drug trade

The approaches taken to address these problems differ from place to place, context to context and country to country, according to prevailing norms, resources and knowledge available in each place.

This report therefore compares and contrasts the various approaches taken in four different countries where drug trade, drug use and violence are problematic and where important prevention activities are present. This report uses the research and site visits conducted from 2001 to 2004 in

- Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa
- Medellin, Antioquia, Colombia
- Revere, Chelsea, Lynn and Boston, Massachusetts, USA
- Palermo and throughout Sicily, Italy

The site visits, research and related activities were carried out by Laurel Consulting Group for the Demand Reduction project of the US Department of State International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau. A separate report has been completed for each of the country site visits. This report provides a generalized overview of their findings and their stories of prevention work. Key differences and similarities between these sites are considered here; including the different ways the drug trade and organized crime manifested itself in each, and the social impact of drug use and the extent and depth of violence related to drugs.

With the contextual differences and similarities as a critical backdrop, the approaches to prevention work are discussed with an eye toward finding common themes, general lessons and insight into promising practices and possible contributions to better design and implementation of prevention programs elsewhere in world.

The Social Contexts and Different Manifestations of Drug Trade, Drug Use and Social Violence

The four countries and sites each come from a very different part of the world, politically, economically and in terms of human development.

South Africa, although one of the more advanced societies in sub-Saharan Africa, has been undergoing a long-awaited but difficult transition from the exclusionist Apartheid regime that ended in 1994 with the institution of democratic, majority rule. The country is wracked by strong income inequalities, ongoing ethnic tensions, and a catastrophic rate of HIV/AIDS infections

Italy is part of one of the most successful experiments in economic and political integration: the European Union. Sicily, however, is one of the poorest regions of Italy despite the EU's status as one of the most developed and wealthiest regions of the world today.

Colombia has a national government that changes administrations through peaceful, democratic elections, but has long been challenged by a plethora of left-wing insurgencies and right wing paramilitaries. Further eroding the power of the Colombian state were the enormously powerful and wealthy drug cartels that fueled lawlessness, terrorism and wide-scale criminality. Drug traffickers (no longer the virtually omnipotent cartels), guerrillas and paramilitaries still compete for control of the drug trade.

Just north of Boston, several towns and communities confront the effects of war, poverty, oppression and marginalization their inhabitants left behind when they migrated from or fled their countries of origin in Asia, Central Europe, Latin America and Africa. The established and new immigrant communities in Revere, Chelsea, parts of Boston and Lynn are faced with intense economic and social marginalization that leave their youth at risk of drug addiction, gang involvement and all the consequences of those phenomena.

The focus of the Massachusetts research was an in-depth case study of a single prevention organization, ROCA. This agency was chosen as an example of an innovative, effective prevention and treatment program operating in a country that does not face the economic and political challenges of the other three sites. The other three country reports reviewed a broader range of prevention efforts and

organizations. The Colombia, South Africa and Italy reports thus paint a broader picture of the prevention efforts, without going into the same amount of detail on any one prevention organization.

(See individual country reports for detailed background on each site.)

Impact of the drug trade on the rest of society across the four sites

1. Comparing the 'epidemiology' of drug use and social violence in each country

Although we will find shared characteristics of cause and effect among the four sites, some insights can be gained by applying a more critical approach to the different ways that drugs and violence have manifested themselves. Of the four, there are two natural pairings, South Africa and the United States are clearly the regional economic powers in their respective regions of the world, while Colombia and Italy represent different spectra of development in their respective regions: Colombia possessing some of the better human development indicators in Latin America and Sicily demonstrating some of the lower indicators for the EU. And yet, these natural pairings do not tell us a great deal.

Upon closer analysis that takes us beyond economic and social indicators and directly to the way in which the drug trade manifested itself, Medellin and Palermo are most similar to each other, while Cape Town and the cities north of Boston, Massachusetts share more in common with each other than with the other two sites. We must bear in mind that these comparisons are only for analytical purposes. Other sites, had they been chosen in this study, might have more or less in common with each other. These are not absolute comparisons, but rather opportunities to gain insight.

2. Medellin and Palermo compared and contrasted

Medellin and Palermo are both places where the drug trade interacted with highly organized crime elements. In Colombia the drug trade generated the rise of the cartels, narcotraffickers and their offshoots. In Sicily, the drug trade, while it did not generate the Mafia, became one of its core criminal activities. The interaction between these highly organized criminal entities such as the cartels and the Mafia and the drug trade gave rise to circumstances in which the organs of the state were obligated to defend the state itself and the public from the threat posed by these

organizations. In many ways, the Mafia and the cartels began to rival the power and wealth of the state in terms of capacity to monopolize violent power and economic resources. The Colombia cartels were in an enviable financial position compared to the financial and economic position of the Colombian government at different points in time. Both the Mafia and the cartels succeeded in infiltrating and corrupting public officials at all levels. The Mafia in Italy, and to a lesser extent the cartels in Colombia derived at least some of their strength from the fact that they served social functions neglected by the state. The Mafia was so strong precisely because it functioned as a de facto lawmaker and enforcer in a lawless region, protector and provider of social services. In its own way, it functioned as an alternative employer, insurance company, and security force. It even covered its members' funeral expenses.

As the state moved against the Mafia and the cartels, both unleashed wide scale killing of police, law enforcement and prosecutors, and in the case of Colombia, outright terrorism against the civilian population. In both cases, the criminal organizations succeeded in arousing popular revulsion against their actions, rather than indifference or support. In this sense, we can see that the criminal organizations, as powerful as they had become, over-reached when they thought to replace the state and ultimately challenge its very existence and legitimacy. Not content to simply corrupt the system and benefit from impunity and complicity, the Mafia and the cartels tried to act like states themselves.

But these were not popular insurgencies that could count on a repressed population to sustain them in an all-out struggle against the state, despite quasi-populist pretenses that made them originally appealing to certain sectors of the population. On the contrary, they were organizations that had not hesitated to use ruthless methods, and shed the blood of innocent people on a large scale. They had not hesitated to assassinate respected, high profile figures. As the Mafia moved into drug trafficking and the Colombian cartels converted drug trafficking into a global operation, the rules and methods of organized crime changed. In both cases, the State leveraged this popular revulsion to enact changes in legislation and to revitalize enforcement activities in an effort to finally crack down on the Mafia and the cartels. In both cases, civil society also arose energetically to ride the wave of popular disenchantment with organized crime.

Civil society in both Medellin and Palermo got an enormous boost from the anti-Mafia struggle, and in fact, helped to galvanize it. In Medellin and Palermo, civil society organizations began developing strategies and approaches to 'take back'

their streets, their youth and their children from the grip of crime. Also, we find in both sites that there has been an attempt to address root causes of underdevelopment that can contribute to crime, recidivism and drug use; poverty, insufficient schooling, lack of industry and job opportunities, deficient work skills among the labor force. More will be said about the civil society responses in subsections below.

3. Cape Town and the cities north of Boston

Compared with Medellin and Palermo, Cape Town and the cities north of Boston have much more in common with each other if we are considering their experience with drugs and crime. While both suffer from gangs that are actively engaged in drug use and drug trade, neither is subject to a wide-scale organized crime monolith that rivals the state. That is not to say that Massachusetts and South Africa have not experienced these problems. On the contrary, both have experienced organized crime from various places of origin, often brought with the immigrants who settled into both countries. But currently, the gang activity in Cape Town and Massachusetts, for all its corrosive characteristics, cannot directly pose a challenge to the government of either on the scale that the Sicilian Mafia and the Colombian cartels were at one time able to pose.

Law enforcement action against gangs in Massachusetts and Cape Town have been mostly ineffectual, but not because of the overwhelming power of organized crime. This is simply because a pure law and order approach to gangs can only be part of the solution. Indeed it must be part of the solution and should be considered 'necessary but not sufficient'. Neither gang landscape has been interested in or demonstrated the ability to engage in high profile assassinations of public officials or commit acts of terrorism meant to polarize the civilian population. The gang lifestyle in Massachusetts and Cape Town, regardless of how organized it gets, only gets organized to the extent it needs to in order to commit crimes, control sources of revenue or rival the power of other nearby gangs. It never rises to the level of open warfare with the state—either because of insufficient capacity and motivation among criminal elements, or because the state does a better job of displacing, preventing and prosecuting crime, or some combination of these factors.

The organized crime of Massachusetts and Cape Town in some senses is more symptom and less cause of the grinding poverty and underdevelopment of the areas in which it operates. Of course, cause and effect eventually loop together and become cyclical, however, organized crime probably keeps Massachusetts towns

north of Boston and in Cape Town at a competitive disadvantage economically, without having actually caused what was actually pre-existing conditions. Poverty and exclusion also existed in Palermo and Medellin, but the effects of organized crime (and in Colombia, outright warfare and internal displacement) have profoundly deepened poverty and decay in those cities.

Gangs in the towns north of Boston and in Cape Town have neither been willing nor able to launch all out wars against civil society on the scale of the narcoterrorism or 'excellent cadaver' campaigns in Colombia and Sicily, respectively. While gangs have a violent grip on society in South Africa and in the United States and anywhere else they arise, the US and South African examples do not have the capacity or the will to fragment and alienate society as part of any deliberate strategy. Consequently the civil society response they arouse is lower than the popular outcry experienced in Colombia and Italy after the catastrophic excesses of organized crime in those countries.

The drug trade in both Massachusetts and Cape Town is a part of the gang culture, but it is not necessarily their main business. The political economy of gang life in both of these sites is more diversified than the struggle to dominate drug markets. And were they to attempt to do so, they could never aspire to the global status achieved by the Mafia and the Colombian cartels in the large-scale consolidation of the drug industry they achieved thanks in part to their geographic locations.

Organized responses to gang violence and the drug culture have come about in Cape Town and north of Boston—not from a rising tide of widespread popular consciousness—but rather from highly localized concern and activism. This is not a value judgment, but simply an analytical observation. While all four countries have a vibrant civil society sector characterized by exceptional leadership, visionary people and dedicated volunteers who are from the affected communities, the organized response to organized crime comes from somewhat different sources in the four sites reviewed here. In the United States, a long treatment and intervention tradition has evolved somewhat naturally into proactive gang intervention and an emphasis on prevention. Over time, the prevention community in all four sites acquires shared characteristics of dedication and programming. It remains to be seen if the South African and US examples will demonstrate long term sustainability or whether newer, different models will emerge to take their place. Both Sicily and Colombian prevention providers voiced concern that their prevention efforts will lose some steam as they move beyond critical turning points of extreme violence. It is an ironic byproduct of their initial success that they face a

problem of keeping the public focused on ongoing problems they still face.

Prevention Work Across the Four Sites

In all four sites we find a number of similar themes underlying prevention approaches, despite the divergent origins of the drug and violence problems in each society.

While the origins and the course of prevention efforts may be different across the four sites, there are interesting commonalities in terms of implementing prevention work, and we turn to this subject next. In this subsection, we look at five themes that may even be thought of as strategic goals espoused by the prevention organizations, citing examples from their work:

- The various holistic approaches to prevention work accomplished in all four sites
- Efforts to build a social safety net
- Culture or value change
- Institutional change
- Other innovations in prevention work

1. Holistic or multi-tiered approaches

ROCA's work in Massachusetts is based on a multi-tiered approach that combines gang intervention on the streets, community organization and empowerment, and programs for developing leadership and vocational skills of youth that come in off the street and stay involved. Additionally, ROCA makes serious efforts to work with (not necessarily by 'partnering' with) schools, social agencies and law enforcement bodies. In one sense, ROCA covers several areas at once that at other sites might be the mission of three or four different prevention organizations. Prevention organizations in Colombia, for example are highly diverse and mostly specialized; the most successful among them adopt a holistic approach to their work that is grassroots based, thrives on volunteers, and often relies on broad-based alliances with other organizations.

Having open doors, providing safe space for young people that need an alternative to the dangers of the street and gangs, and providing them with something

substantive once they come in; whether it is recreation, counseling, job training or some combination, are also part of the grass roots, multi-tiered approach. The Y in Medellin, as well as the Gela and Sortino Centers in Sicily, and the Ilitha Nabantu and NICRO organizations in Cape Town have adopted similar holistic approaches. To the extent that organizations in these other countries work with law enforcement, they are either trying to advocate for victims or create opportunities to improve community-police relations, in contrast with ROCA's outright efforts to have the courts adopt alternate sentencing procedures aligned with ROCA's internal principles. Also, by providing programs for non-addicts as well, they help re-integrate kids endangered by drugs or gangs into more productive, healthy society.

2. Efforts to build a social safety net

The needs of the population in both Colombia and South Africa are so great that they appear to exceed the state's ability to create the conditions to meet them. In Colombia, there is at least one organization that explicitly tries to build a social safety net, so that people who are economically vulnerable will not hit bottom. While it is not claimed that this organization (COMFAMA) can ever meet all the social safety net needs in Medellin, it is nonetheless notable the extent to which civil society groups attempt to fill in for the failings of the state. COMFAMA of course, relies on an alliance between business owners and workers for its financial base. In South Africa, the Manenberg Township plan is a successful joint effort bringing together business, government and community groups to keep youth out of gangs. Ironically, in Cape Town, where a social safety net is critically needed, the post-Apartheid reconstruction of society is far from complete.

3. Culture or value change

Several of the prevention practitioners reviewed in the study desire to change certain aspects of the cultures in which they operate, because they identify such aspects as barriers to social development. Cultural change is interesting precisely because it involves a people asking themselves: 'How do we contribute to the grave social problems we are confronting? How do we change ourselves as a part of the solution to those problems?' It is important to note that the term *culture change* is chosen not because the prevention community is involving itself in making judgments about national and ethnic cultures, which are complex and change very slowly in any case. It is the unhelpful attitudes, values, norms and practices that make us complicit in our own suffering that are being challenged by some in the prevention community.

In Cape Town, male violence against women and denial about family problems are confronted head on by some practitioners. In Palermo, the culture of lawlessness has been identified as a kind of popular complicity with the criminal dimensions of organized crime, reflected in small behaviors and attitudes from individual to individual. Some of the efforts there were deliberately targeted at getting people to change just those small behaviors that when multiplied across the population, amount to a permissive environment for the Mafia. The Sortino center tries to instill a sense of acknowledgment of drug problems in families, in contrast to the denial that sometimes results from a cultural emphasis on shame. In Massachusetts, ROCA's projects among the Cambodian community seek to help them emerge from their isolation and distrust after having survived or escaped Pol Pot's genocide. By asking them to set aside passivity, ROCA seeks to empower them to take responsibility for the leadership and fate of their communities and to give their youth alternatives to gangs, which became a distorted way of developing a sense of identity, belonging and power.

The cultural transformations, while extremely difficult to measure and evaluate, at least have the merit of explicitly putting on the table for discussion issues that silently contribute to the problems these organizations are trying to address.

4. Institutional change

Two institutions in particular seem to be the focus of some work related to prevention: schools and law enforcement. Schools are sometimes run by religious institutions, and certainly the Catholic Church (Sicily and Medellin) and Islam (among the colored population in Cape Town) have played a role in this work. Prevention work focusing on the schools aims to integrate into the curricula and the mindset of educators that prevention of drug use and social violence are critical components of young people's education. Some of this aims to make schools safer, introduce non-violent means of conflict resolution in the schools and reduce the likelihood that the school is the place where a young person learns to take drugs and join gangs. Several organizations in Cape Town and attempt to do this. The Cape Town Drug Counseling Center is one example of curricular integration and training. In Colombia, the Prevention Program for Young Students has the same goal, but the method differs and relies on an elective approach that gets kids talking about their challenges and drug issues. In Palermo, the Impastato Center long ago created a school-based curriculum on lawfulness.

Reform of law enforcement is the focus of civil society efforts in several of the sites studied, although it too takes different forms from site to site. ROCA seeks nothing less than to change the way justice is addressed and uses its model of restorative justice to both create a sense of accountability in the perpetrator and to create a sense of healing in the victims. While the merits of this approach are open to debate, its intent is to transform the way the Massachusetts social service agencies, police and courts deal with ROCA's client population. In Cape Town law enforcement has long been a code word for state repression and the creation of better relationships between crime-ridden communities and the police who patrol them is the subject of work done by organizations such as UMAC. Ilitha Labantu promotes change in the way women victims of violence and rape are treated by the police and courts when trying to obtain justice. In both Medellin and Palermo, the goal for law enforcement has been simply to get them to do their job, enforcing law – and live to tell about it. Colombia has certainly been the recipient of a great deal of bilateral assistance from the United States in terms of law enforcement against the drug traffickers. In Palermo, Italy as in the United States, a legal framework permitting better enforcement has been created and the transformation required in Colombia, Italy and South Africa is to get law enforcement to arrest and successfully prosecute criminals. ROCA, in Massachusetts, in a different context, does not emphasize this.

5. Other innovations in prevention work

In some organizations we find novel characteristics of their prevention strategies. Two in particular stand out in Colombia, because they succeed in establishing a dialogue between youth at risk and the rest of the community by having youth put on theatre and other performances. Corporacion Ser Humano and Barrio Comparsa use this at the core of their methodology of prevention. The Gela Center in Sicily incorporates photography and music into its prevention activities as a healthy outlet and hobby for youth that require skill, practice, discipline and focus in order to master. The Lighthouse in Cape Town has former addicts make fine paintings and crafts out of found objects, which they sell in the local market, giving them both a sense of creativity and of becoming a useful member of society. ROCA's key innovation is its use of the circle of peacemaking as a tool for dialogue, accountability and healing. Leaving aside the issue of alternative justice, the circle of peacemaking, derived from Native American and other indigenous traditions of collective decision making, teaches youth to express themselves positively, to communicate their feelings constructively and feel adequately heard. These two basic communication skills—speaking constructively and listening actively--so poorly practiced in general, are building blocks of our ability to build healthy

relationships. South Africa's Chrysalis program, a cross between Outward Bound and boot camp, provides youth with an alternative to gang initiations as a manhood-development process. It develops a sense of self-esteem and leadership skills. Youth go back to their home communities and provide a strong alternate power-base to help other young people opt out of the gang lifestyle.

Concepts For Supporting Further Demand Reduction Work

A number of concepts that emerge from the four studies can be considered promising practices that lend themselves to programming if used and adapted in other countries and contexts. These include the primary role of civil society organizations in drug and violence prevention; the ongoing need for functioning agencies of the state; early intervention in the lives of youth before they become drug users, gang members or subjects of the criminal justice system; and the key role of effective programming for prevention and treatment. Each of these concepts is discussed in detail here.

Civil society matters

Clearly one of the key lessons to be derived from the review of the four countries' approaches to drug demand reduction and prevention is that civil society matters. (Civil society of course refers to NGOs, but also to religious institutions, academia, neighborhood associations, and individuals who act upon their sense of social responsibility.) Government either cannot (South Africa, Colombia) or does not effectively (Massachusetts, Italy) set out to recapture youth from the dangers of drugs and gang violence and other manifestations of social violence. Whether the methods of the state are geared mostly to criminal justice approaches (all four) or are overwhelmed by the circumstances and needs (Colombia and South Africa especially) there are a number of reasons why civil society has been an effective and engaged actor in prevention and intervention.

1. Those most responsible for their own communities and children

Communities addressing their own needs take ownership of the solutions. Some of the most effective organizations reviewed here are deeply embedded in their communities, either because the staff and leadership come from the community, or ex-gang members are running programs, or because community volunteers are relied upon, or because the organization knows intimately the profile of the people it serves.

2. As members of the community, they are also the most directly affected

Here the role of the business community and community policing come into focus. By asking the private and public sectors to also share in the stake of creating healthier communities, they are in turn improving their own chances of success whether as businesses or public agencies such as the police.

3. Access to private resources

Where a well-developed donor community exists or at least where practitioners have an understanding of local and international donor communities, access to private resources is key to creating sustainable programs. Public agencies in all four countries have suffered with budget cuts, re-ordering of budgetary priorities, politicization of the budgetary process and other challenges to adequate funding. In some senses, the public sector organizations make better funders than implementers, especially when they entrust important prevention work to the most competent civil society organizations, and fund them at the same time. This is the situation with ROCA in Massachusetts, with several Cape Town organizations, and with prevention work in Sicily as well.

4. Access to cutting edge methods of prevention, intervention and treatment

Civil society, alternately competing with and supplementing the responsibilities of the state, often stays competitive by remaining on the cutting edge of methodologies for achieving its goals. In all four countries reviewed, either think tanks, universities or other research centers contribute ideas, concepts, and even content to programs. This helps keep them fresh, in tune with research that is relevant to the work they do, and can contribute to the successful implementation of their work. INL sponsored networking and knowledge sharing activities in Cape Town. Sicily and Medellin engage in their own practitioner exchange program. Sharing promising practices increases the sense of empowerment and common cause across cultures and national borders.

5. Ability to mobilize people directly affected in legitimate ways

In all four countries, an element of empowerment can be appreciated in many different organizations. The Sicilian civil society organizations and public-civil society partnerships often explicitly set out to shake people out of their passivity and lethargy and goad them to political action, either by supporting legislation, attending a protest or gathering signatures. There are other meaningful ways of bringing people together, such as the work accomplished by wives of assassinated Mafia victims working with the wives of former Mafiosi. Corporacion Region in Colombia accomplishes the same task—that of legitimate mobilization—as a complement to its other intervention work. We have already mentioned ROCA's work with the Cambodian community above.

In spite of these considerations, civil society confronts other challenges. In some cases, the civil society sector is itself unprepared to mobilize and take action and suffers from the broader skill deficits and social problems plaguing the rest of society. The South Africa case demonstrates this. In Colombia, there is a chronic lack of resources for the work that civil society seeks to undertake. Thus, some investment in the skills and abilities of civil society groups to carry out this work is necessary as part of any support for it. In Cape Town, there was the transition from Apartheid, and in Sicily and in Medellin, there were the periods of catastrophic violence which catalyzed social action. Once the immediate sense of urgency subsides, there is need for the prevention community to find new and more sustainable ways to gain public interest and mobilize action.

Partnering with the agencies of the state

1. Effective criminal justice and legislation

There is of course, still a role for the state and its agencies. Only the state should be the party responsible for criminal justice and while we recognize that it is a limited aspect of drug and violence prevention, it is essential that the state does this well. The inability of the police in Cape Town to effectively police communities and uphold laws or gain trust only contributes to the problems there, including vigilantism. Where other state agencies are functional, such as probation, social services, courts and others, their role too needs to be carried out. Sometimes legislative issues are part of the problem, and thus need to be considered in creating solutions. For example, the relative impunity of young violent offenders in Colombia and Italy contributed to the use of children and youth as hit men—or 'babykillers'-- in those countries.

2. Transformation and Political leadership

There are other benefits from involving state agencies and political leaders in prevention work. ROCA not only partners with the agencies of the state, but directly involves them in its approach to youth work, and in the process, seeks to transform their ways of dealing with youth. The strategic partnering involved in the Italian and Colombian cases provides the opportunity for politicians to take a more positive stand on a grave social problem and even to get involved, although there is always a danger that politicians may get involved more for their own political benefit than that of to the public institutions they serve. The SRI experience in Italy is an example of a case where prevention practitioners became disenchanted with political figures that seemed to take too much credit for the efforts of civil society groups and individuals.

3. Asset seizure

Finally, only the state has the mandate and the power to seize the assets of those involved in drug trafficking activities and organized crime related to it. By publicly making use of property in this way, as the Italians and Colombians have done, a powerful message is sent to the public; gains from the drug trade are not only subject to seizure, but will ultimately be used to deprive the drug traffickers of recruits and users. It is unclear whether this would be as effective in Massachusetts and Cape Town, given the lower profile and status of the gangs in both places. This aspect remains unexplored in both of those sites.

Early intervention at critical decision points for prevention of first use?

While prevention of drug use is a difficult challenge to take on (and difficult to measure), several organizations in each country reviewed act on the recognition that it is easier and less costly than the alternatives of drug treatment, prosecution, and incarceration. ROCA, as a comprehensive program, deals extensively with youth and young adults already involved in drugs and gangs. However, it explicitly programs and budgets for youth who have not yet gotten involved but are considered at risk of doing so. In fact, this concept is part of ROCA's original strategic direction, which combines street outreach with provision of positive on-site activities including music, art and physical education. Several organizations in the other countries also emphasize this truly preventive dimension by targeting at-risk youth, such as Project Chrysalis in South Africa and Corporacion Ser Humano

in Colombia. Activities in all three at this stage share characteristics of cultural life and activities that engage the 'at-risk' person.

Effective programming?

Creating effective networks where different organizational strengths are understood in order to achieve specialization and appropriate referrals is something that occurs in all the sites, but to different extents. Both in Italy and in Colombia, network-creation seems to have been a part of civil society's development in the anti-drug and anti-violence struggle. It is not clear to what extent that is the case in Massachusetts given the focus on a single organization. That said, it has been noted that ROCA too works hard to build relationships with academia, substantive experts in and out of the US, and with the institutions of the state, as well as other providers of services the complement ROCA's mission. Still, ROCA is by no means an umbrella organization. South Africa, like Italy and Colombia, has some organizations that are just that: coordinating bodies for many other organizations. Corporacion Picacho in Medellin and Libera in Sicily are just two examples of this. Given the paucity of resources and skills relative to need, the network approach makes a great deal of sense.

This requires trust and collaboration across organizations and sectors, as well as simply knowing each other and sharing knowledge. The challenges of the political landscape are sometimes not conducive to this collaboration. The LCG/DOS showcases in South Africa were an interesting way to create opportunities to develop collaborative relationships that had not really existed before. Participants expressed a wish to participate in further showcases in the future. Several of the organizations studied here partner with research institutes and colleagues within their country or in other countries who have promising practices and methodologies to share. All the country studies demonstrate at least some level of this type of partnering. In South Africa and Italy there are some organizations with a strong relationship to a drug treatment program in the United States, and this partnership at least provides guidance and templates of treatment and counseling approaches.

In at least Colombia and South Africa, practitioners expressed the need for better referral networks amongst themselves, which means that they essentially want to be able to screen a potential client population and direct that person or group to the organization best-suited to their particular needs. This can happen spontaneously, but would work more consistently and effectively as the product of deliberate coordination among prevention practitioners who would focus on their own

strengths, understand and support the competencies of others and channel people to the appropriate place.

This review of four countries' experience with prevention activities gives us insight to the need for civil society to get involved and stay empowered, to be as savvy or savvier than elements of organized crime, to be at the cutting edge of intervention and drug prevention methods, to reach out and share ideas and methods with practitioners in other parts of the world, and to try new things when all else fails to stop the cycles of violence in their communities. And they have to do all this without the resources of the state, or in some cases, without even a well-developed donor community or local tradition of philanthropy. Obviously this is a tall order. And yet they are doing it, succeeding where governments often do not succeed, and creating productive partnerships with the government that strengthen both government and civil society as they confront common enemies of drug addiction, economic underdevelopment and social violence.