Violence Prevention: How can faith Leaders save lives?
What do we know and how do we use it to reduce violent crime by 50%?

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Edna Chavez, a 17 year old from Los Angeles, spoke about her brother’s murder to half a million people in Washington, DC for “March for Our Lives,” in 2018,

- ... I lost more than my brother that day. I lost my hero, I also lost my mother, my sister, and myself to that trauma and that anxiety. . . .
- .... (police departments in schools) continue to profile and criminalize us. Instead, we should have a department specializing in restorative justice. We need to tackle the root causes of the issues . . .
- Policy-makers, listen up! . . . [F]und mentorship programs, mental health resources, paid internship and job opportunities.
- . . . We need to focus on changing the conditions that foster violence and trauma!

That death is a tragedy, a thousand is a statistic, but these annual statistics are ¨not inevitable¨, they are ¨preventable¨

• 500,000 homicides (US 16,000, Mexico 36,000)
  • many more deaths than armed conflict and terrorism combined
  • Fewer deaths than COVID in 2020 but more over two years
• 25 million rapes (US 1.2 million, Mexico 500,000)
  • 1 in 3 women in a lifetime
• 1 billion child victims of violence (US 50 million, Mexico 20 million)
  • Victims of physical, sexual or psychological violence
• $7 Trillion (7,000,000,000,000) (US Half trillion, Mexico 5% GDP)
  • ... lives lost, persons injured and traumatized, long term ill healtlh, lost GDP, corrupted criminal justice and failed democracy ...
World Leaders committed at UN General Assembly to transformations to get results in our Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, including:

**TARGET 5.2**
Reduce significantly the number of victims of sexual violence by 2030.

**TARGET 16.1, 16.2**
Reduce significantly the number of victims of homicide and violence against children by 2030.
Root causes and risk factors of those tragedies, include lack of life skills, adverse childhood experiences in the family, youth exclusion, inequity and guns...

Examples:
- gap rich poor
- ethno-cultural heterogeneity
- availability of firearms
- social acceptability of impunity

Examples:
- poor family cohesion
- monitoring
- parental skills
- male control

Examples:
- firearm(s) in the household

Examples:
- victimization
- witnessing victimization
- lack of social/problem-solving skills
- firearm(s) in the household

Examples:
- low cohesion
- negative peer influences
- isolation of women/family

Examples:
- gap rich poor
- ethno-cultural heterogeneity
- availability of firearms
- social acceptability of impunity
These causes and risk factors are not solved by more police and incarceration as multiple studies show and is illustrated by a simple comparison between Chicago and Toronto.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chicago</th>
<th>Toronto</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>2.71 million</td>
<td>2.96 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>$54,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police officers</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>5,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarceration rate per 100,000</td>
<td>564 (Illinois)</td>
<td>107 (Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicides</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>78</td>
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Today, we have “solid violence prevention science” on what reduces crime. We have multiple government/academic sources that identify the same proven solutions, but we are not using them.
Scientific evaluations of clinical trials identify a short list of solutions that reduce crime by 50% or better than the typical system of police, courts and incarceration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of intervention</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Illustration of intervention</th>
<th>Less crime</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Services to Young Males</td>
<td>Cure Violence; Youth Inclusion</td>
<td>Street workers outreaching to young men to interrupt gang affiliations and mediate violent conflict</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting and Early Childhood</td>
<td>Multi-systemic; positive parenting; enriched childcare</td>
<td>Therapists work in home, school, community 24/7 to provide parents tools to transform lives of troubled youth</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital-based</td>
<td>Emergency room and epidemiology with victims</td>
<td>Works with victims of violence in emergency wards to deal with trauma and abandon violence</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Curricula</td>
<td>Life skills; Becoming a Man; Stop now and</td>
<td>Develops self-management skills such as decision-making, problem-solving, goal setting, and coping with anxiety</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Governments have agreed at UN ECOSOC to 7 essentials for implementation, but do not use them.

Permanent Offices of Violence Prevention and Community Safety

Informed by Crime Prevention Science and Data

Planning using Diagnosis, Mobilisation of Partners, Implementation, and Evaluation

Mobilizing Sectors Able to Tackle Causes

Adequate and Sustained Funding

Standards and Training for Human Talent

Public Support and Engagement

UN ECOSOC, 1996, 2002, 2010; UN-Habitat, 2019 Waller, 2019
Cities that plan and implement using principles from the list of seven have reduced violence by 50%

Cities above the world average for homicides of 6 per 100,000

• **Bogota, Coahuila and Diadema** are examples of reductions of more than 50%.

• **Boston** reduced gun violence by 60% in 1990’s but did not sustain or invest adequate funding and so had reinvent the strategy in the 2000s – several cities such as **Oakland, Richmond, Stockton**, are imitating;

Cities below the world average for homicides of 6 per 100,000

• **Glasgow** achieved a 50% reduction within 3 years of using a violence reduction unit to complete diagnosis and plan and sustained further reductions – **London and UK regions** adopting the unit and planning;

• Ontario mandates municipal community safety and well-being plans but no results yet.
What is adequate and sustained funding? What do public want?

- Funding for targeted programs
  - Equivalent to 10% of CJS
- Funding for office of violence prevention, training, data
  - per citizen equivalent to cost of cup of coffee
- Surveys show the majority of the public and victims want prevention
- Advocacy groups, particularly mothers, want prevention
Benefits of 50% reduction in violent crime are
• lives saved and persons safe
• health, economic development and governance

Lives Saved Per Year
• 250,000 lives saved (US 8,000, Mex. 18,000)
• 12 million fewer women raped (US 500,000, Mex. 250,000)
• 500 million fewer child victims of violence (US 20 million, Mex 10 million)

Economic Benefits per Year
• 2% of global GDP (US $60 billion, Mex. 2% GDP) after smart investment of 10% equivalent of CJS
• Invest in futures of young men/ women
What are key resources for faith leaders to access the conclusions from the science?


How can faith leaders influence the shift from punishment to prevention for UN Agenda 2030?

1. Increase awareness about the evidence
   most effective and cost effective way to combat violence is prevention
   - Need for material for sermons, religious services, discussion groups, and social media exchanges, including online resources like videos

2. Train human talent
   able to develop, implement and evaluate local and national effective plans of actions
   - Need for professional development material for faith leaders on violence prevention to support their congregants and for community outreach

3. Sustain investment in proven and successful programs
   proportional to reducing loss of GDP and lives and to past increases to criminal justice
   - Need for call to shift from punishment to prevention to save lives
Become part of International Movement to Accelerate Decisive Action Now

• Reducing Violent Crime in Latin America
  • Best practice reduce violent crime with senior government and city representatives from 17 countries, organized by UN Institute on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (ILANUD) in Costa Rica.

• The Peace in Our Cities campaign
  • Seeks to galvanize a movement of sub-national authorities, targeted thematic partners people, mayors, and city governments to halve and transform urban violence by 2030.

• Global Parliament of Mayors

• UN Habitat
  • System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements:

• UNODC, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP
ACT NOW

Transform our World

Reduce violent crime by 50% by 2030:

- Use UN guides to invest in adapting proven solutions and city successes;
- Raise awareness of successes, mobilise civil society, get smart investment;
- Save lives, prevent trauma, increase GDP, protect human rights.

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