

# Towards a Theory of Change for Social Cohesion and Community Safety in Jamaica

**Baird A.**

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**Prepared for the United Nations Development Programme, Jamaica**

by Adam Baird, PhD\*

<https://flacso.academia.edu/AdamBaird>



## **Towards a Theory of Change for Social Cohesion and Community Safety\*\***

2015

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\*Adam Baird is a British academic and an expert consultant to the UNDP Crisis Response Unit in Latin American and the Caribbean. The author gratefully acknowledges the feedback from the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and UNDP offices in Jamaica, Panama and New York, in strengthening this report.

\*\*This is a modified version of the internal UNDP document. This version does not include sections on UNDP's Strategic Outputs for SCCS or UNDP's comparative advantages working on SCCS in Jamaica.

## 1. Introduction

In the decade preceding 2009, Jamaica was ranked among the top three countries for homicide worldwide, with the highest rate in the Caribbean; double the region's average rate of 30 per 100,000 population. There have been fluctuations in this rate, which dipped significantly 2009-2011, but according to 2012 statistics Jamaica is still ranked 7<sup>th</sup> globally for homicide (UNODC, 2014). Jamaica's long-term development plan and roadmap towards prosperity, Vision 2030, envisages an environment where Jamaica is *the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business*. This, however, requires a safe and secure environment.

Concerns about crime and violence appear regularly and rank high among citizens in public opinion polls. This widespread increase in crime and violence has generated a high perception of insecurity among citizens. The result is a decline in the public's trust regarding the capacity of government, and specifically law-enforcement agencies, to deal with these problems, exacerbating the sense of insecurity in the public and weakening the country's social fabric.

Citizen Security examined from a Human Development perspective refers to the institutional and social situation in which people can fully enjoy and integrally exert their liberties and rights. Specifically, Citizen Security provides the framework for addressing threats to public, social, political and economic order; that is, an environment of peace, justice and security. The UN Secretary General in his report 'In larger Freedom' emphasized the intrinsic relation between security, development and human rights. Accordingly, he said, "we will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights. Unless all these causes are advanced, none will succeed" (UN, 2005: 6).

Although political violence has decreased, which is welcomed, there has been a worrying increase in other forms of violence, especially domestic violence (inside the family) and social violence (outside the family). The high crime environment is increasing citizens' insecurity, hampering the development landscape, and is justifiably high on governmental agendas.

The high rate of lethal police shootings in Jamaica is often cited as evidence of the erosion of human rights. Over 2,048 civilians were killed by police during the decade from 1999 to 2009. This is one of the highest rates of lethal police shootings in the world. The Jamaica Constabulary Force's (JCF) reform and renewal process aims to change the culture of the force and with it, outcomes of police citizen encounters. In recent months police shootings have dropped dramatically according to the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM), although it remains unclear whether this has been brought about by the dissuasive influence of INDECOM investigations into lethal police violence, by reform within the JCF, or a combination of both factors.

Solutions for crime and violence go well beyond courts and the police. Thus, rather than placing emphasis on crime or solely violent crime, solutions must also incorporate violence

prevention. This can be achieved through greater emphasis on social rather than situational crime prevention strategies. In addition, the social and economic costs of violence highlight the importance of addressing violence at the domestic level, in particular against women and other vulnerable groups. Vulnerability is a relative concept that includes physical and social factors. Although vulnerability might often be a function of inequitable resource allocation in the society, “vulnerable groups” are those that suffer from an inequitable distribution of social power. These groups face threats arising from discrimination, exploitation or displacement given their socio-economic status.

Women suffer disproportionately from domestic violence. However, culturally speaking, Jamaica still considers gender-based violence (GBV) as “a woman’s issue” or “family dispute” limited to domestic life that must be treated in private or by women’s organizations. This tends to marginalize a critical issue that must be placed at the forefront of political decisions.

Social exclusion is a significant contributor to violence in communities since the affected groups and individuals lose confidence in the institutions designed to protect them, and often resort to violence in the pursuit of justice, security, and economic gain. The outcome is a negative cycle where the socially excluded are trapped in a hostile environment where ironically, they reproduce violence to secure their needs and pursue their interests. Several reports have documented the relationship between social exclusion and urban poverty, and violence in Jamaica.<sup>1</sup> These reports demonstrate the interrelationship between class, unemployment, inadequate housing and other conditions. Areas of social deprivation have their genesis in the social structure of Jamaica’s colonial past. These social stratifications have continued, multiplied and are now magnified. Although their greatest manifestations are in the multiple deprivations of west Kingston’s slums, known as garrisons<sup>2</sup>, in parts of Montego Bay and St. Catherine, and in communities such as Flankers, Norwood and Granville in St. James.

This report lays out a strategy to promote Social Cohesion and Community Safety (SCCS) to strengthen the Rule of Law (ROL), the enjoyment of rights, and support the development Jamaica seeks. As such it is the planning tool to plot a pathway towards the development change we seek, referred to in UN terminology as a Theory of Change<sup>3</sup>; identifying the challenges faced and proposing how these can be tackled based on experience and evidence. To propose this strategy, the report first defines SCCS; then makes a problem statement

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<sup>1</sup> Clarke, Colin (2006) *From Slums to ghetto: Social Deprivation in Kingston, Jamaica*. IDPR, 28 (1) 2006; Moser, Caroline and Holland, Jeremy. (1997) *Urban Poverty and Violence in Jamaica* (Washington D.C.: World Bank. and Levy, Horace (2001) *They Cry Respect: Urban Violence and Poverty in Jamaica*. UWI Mona: Centre for Population, Community and social Change.

<sup>2</sup> Garrisons are specific communities with political and criminal affiliations elaborated upon later in this document.

<sup>3</sup> Theories of Change are a planning tool in development that plot possible pathways to development change based on experience and evidence. By so doing, TOC help explain and clarify the logic and assumptions underlying the achievement of results over time. This allows governments, other stakeholders and evaluators to check if the argument makes sense and assess if progress is being made, as planned, or requires a change in approach. TOC are, therefore, a practical way of anchoring results-based management in the realities of development (UNDP Strategic Plan, 2013).

highlighting the challenges of the Jamaican context; asks if this is an opportune moment to work on SCCS in Jamaica; makes assumptions for effective strengthening of SCCS; defines strategic pillars, called *outputs* here, in SCCS; and finally, outlines the role and competitive advantages of the UNDP.

## ***2. Defining Social Cohesion and Community Safety***

Social Cohesion is a concept that has received significant attention recently given its potential for reducing a range of insecurities; it is about the sense of community in society, how members of that community live and work together, and how this affects quality of life. Social Cohesion is linked to previous concepts such as social fabric, social capital (Putnam, 1993) and shared norms, where a cohesive society is characterised by resilient social relations or networks (Moser, 2009) between members of the community with a pronounced focus on the common good. This should be reflected in the shared values of the members of society that demonstrate responsibility for others and the community as a whole. Social Cohesion is quite a slippery concept and difficult to quantify but can be measured, and defined, by the strength of social networks and the degree to which people trust one another; their trust in the functioning and fairness of national institutions; and the presence of the common good as an expression of solidarity, helpfulness, and people's willingness to abide by just social rules and participate equally in society (Nemeroff, Chambers, & Narcisse, 2005: 49; Dragolov et al., 2014; see also see Figure 1. next page). In short, Social Cohesion implies three key *outcomes*<sup>4</sup>:

1. Strong social relations and community network;
2. Positive ties and trust between citizens and institutions which promote the full enjoyment of rights; a coordinated framework & established links between civil society and government;
3. Positive attitudes and norms supporting the common good

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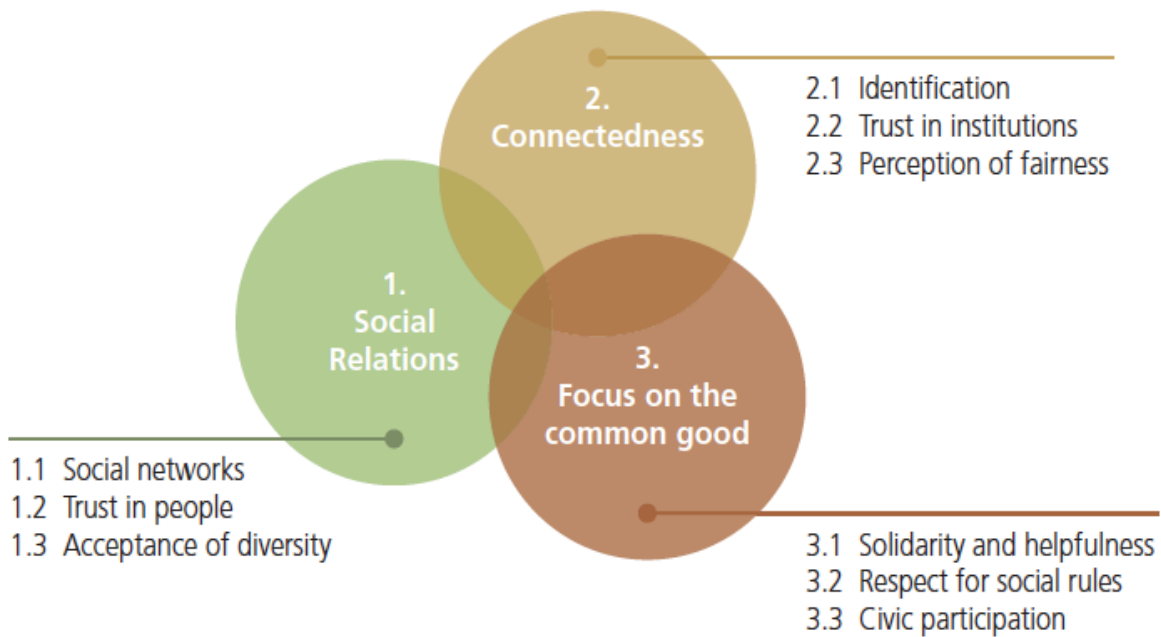
<sup>4</sup> The key outcomes are adapted from Dragolov et al (2014) to include a rights based perspective.

**Figure 1** The three domains of social cohesion and their respective dimensions

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**Social cohesion**

Characteristic of a collective  
Multidimensional  
Measured at the micro, meso and macro levels



**SOURCE: (Dragolov, Ignácz, Lorenz, Delhey, & Boehnke, 2014)**

Four characteristics of social cohesion imply that it:

- (i) Is a continual process rather than an end state
- (ii) Involves a definition of who is included and who is excluded, to whom members of society owe solidarity, and to whom they do not
- (iii) Requires and is based upon shared values and normative assumptions; and the enjoyment of fundamental rights
- (iv) Pays attention to the strengths and weaknesses of institutions for conflict resolution - particularly democratic ones.<sup>5</sup>

Individual membership, attitudes and behaviour have been used to define groups as more or less cohesive. Typical measures of social cohesion include:

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from: Jenson, Jane (2002). "Identifying the Links: Social Cohesion and Culture." *Canadian Journal of Communication* Vol. 27, No. 2. 2002.

- Belonging – isolation: that means shared values, identity, feelings of commitment;
- Inclusion – exclusion: concerns equal opportunities of access;
- Participation – non-involvement;
- Recognition – rejection: that addresses the issue of respecting and tolerating differences in a pluralistic society, and;
- Legitimacy – illegitimacy: with respect to institutions.

A socially cohesive society is not simply a homogenous non-diverse society. Among its usages is the notion that social cohesion is all which brings people together. Social cohesion equates with the reduction in disparities, inequalities, discrimination and social exclusion. As such, it has to be based on analysis and acknowledgment of concrete forms of discrimination stemming from traditional and current power relations and discuss ways to address them.

It requires strengthening social relations, interactions and ties - that is reducing social exclusion<sup>6</sup> and fomenting participation and inclusion, in particular of those who traditionally are not heard and/or were not able to develop capacity and trust towards their integration at an equal basis with more empowered sectors in social and political decision taking. UNDP understands the concept to indicate tolerance of, and respect for, institutional, social and individual diversity based on a perception of dignity of every person, equal rights for all and access to social mechanisms to promote and protect them. Where social cohesion levels are low, it “results in increased social tension, violent crime, targeting of minorities, human rights violations, and, ultimately, violent conflict.”<sup>7</sup>

Social cohesion emphasizes common values and a civic culture based on mutual respect; a conducive social environment and democratic order, social control based on common values; social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities; cooperative and mutually communicative social networks and effective use of social capital; as well as territorial belonging and identity.<sup>8</sup>

It is logical to relate social cohesion to community safety, which is vital in Jamaica given the levels of violence. Socially cohesive communities have an increased capacity to resist, reduce and prevent violence and crime, ‘cultures of violence’ (Galtung, 2002), and other insecurities (Abello Collak & Pearce, 2009; Baird, 2013; UNDP, 2012). Conversely, as cohesion diminishes, vulnerability and the possibilities for violence and insecurity increase. Hence social cohesion should be understood as both an essential component of, and a compliment to, the overall aims of community safety.

Finally it is necessary to highlight the relationship between socio-economic exclusion and social cohesion: Exclusion is a major predictor of community violence and contributor to the breakdown of social cohesion. However, despite the importance of this topic for societal wellbeing, praxis and evidence-based empirical insights are few and far between in Jamaica.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid at pg. 14, citing Berger-Schmitt R. Social Cohesion as an Aspect of the Quality of Societies: Concept and Assessment. EU Reporting Working Paper No. 14, Centre for Survey Research and Methodology, 2000, pg 6.

<sup>7</sup> UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (2009) Community Security and Social Cohesion. Pg. 14

<sup>8</sup> Beauvais, C. and J. Jenson. (2002) *Social Cohesion: Updating the State of Research*. Canadian Policy, Research Networks, Canadian Heritage, Ottawa. 2002.

In this report efforts aimed at enhancing social cohesion are understood pragmatically; as a means to achieve a change in social relations at the community level that enable community mechanisms to prevent and react more effectively to violence and crime; to strengthen the capacity of authorities to implement the rule of law; thus creating a more favourable environment for development.

### **3. Problem statement**

**Underlying politico-economic challenges to SCCS.** In the 2010 Index of Social Cohesion, Jamaica ranked 56th, behind Costa Rica, Cuba and El Salvador; the only Caribbean nation behind is Haiti (Foa, 2010; USAID, 2013). According to recent studies, determinant factors for socially cohesive countries are high levels of wealth (GDP) and equality (Gini coefficient), indicative of sound socio-economic and political development (Dragolov et al., 2014). Whilst a broad discussion on wealth and income distribution is beyond this strategic report, it should be stated at the outset that the success and sustainability of SCCS is linked to overall development progress. As high-level UN discussions in New York on post-MDG goals indicate, security is a key guarantor of development. Whilst Jamaica has made encouraging progress in terms of the Human Development Index since the 1980s (UNDP, 2013), economic inertia and insecurity set back greater progress - recent economic growth over the decade between 2003-2013 averaged just 0.52%<sup>9</sup>. Crime and violence in Jamaica are both an outcome and cause of stymied socio-economic development linked to the political economy of the country, and present a formidable obstacle to reaching Jamaica's target of 'developed country status' laid out in the Vision 2030 national development plan<sup>10</sup>. That said, it is encouraging that a key aim of Vision 2030 is to 'create a safe and secure society'<sup>11</sup> as an integral part of the development plan.

Jamaica, as with other Caribbean countries, has a long history of inequality. This includes inequalities in social and political power, which is expressed in how state protection is distributed and how rights and freedoms are treated. This is an historical pattern that still shapes the distribution of the protective resources of the state and how the rights of different groups including the most vulnerable are catered for. Citizens' security is about profoundly changing this relationship between the state and the citizenry by making the institutions more responsive and accountable to the people that they serve. This fundamental change entails greater social integration, which may be brought about by efforts to resolve the problems of social exclusion and marginalization of large sections of the population, tacking state security practices that disregard rights, and by placing greater emphasis on human development.

**Institutional weakness and challenges in good governance as obstacles to development.** Post independence, political decision-making at the highest level in Jamaica has remained

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<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/jamaica/gdp-growth-annual> Annual Growth Rate in Jamaica averaged 0.52 Percent from 2003 until 2013, reaching an all time high of 4.30% in the fourth quarter of 2006 and a record low of -4.50% in the second quarter of 2009. GDP Annual Growth Rate in Jamaica is reported by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica. Jamaica's large shadow economy and lax tax regulations have translated into persistent fiscal deficits and heavy dependence on remittances. High energy costs and high unemployment persist.

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.vision2030.gov.jm/Overview/GuidingPrinciples.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.vision2030.gov.jm/Overview/Vision>



largely confined within an elitist regime, described by one academic as ‘a self-defensive system’ that insulates itself from any meaningful shift towards plurality, transparency and broader inclusion. Beyond the well-documented challenges of corruption<sup>12</sup> and clientelism that weaken national institutions and have undermined Jamaica’s developmental progress, there is an ‘open secret’<sup>13</sup> of linkages with organised crime at various levels of the political sphere. Such political concerns severely debilitate Jamaica’s prospects for the democratic governance required to build trustworthy and fair institutions to support SCCS. To break with such traditional politics will require a new generation of political leadership practising a new form of statesmanship.

The repeated stalling of the Commission of Enquiry (COI), described by one commentator as ‘a minefield set up to fail’, is indicative of the politicisation of what should be objective institutional processes. This reflects the lack of separation between state institutions and government at crucial junctures. Jamaica’s political regime also suffers from: underfunding (and sometime politicisation) of institutional mechanisms of oversight and accountability; short-termism and personalisation of institutional policies<sup>14</sup>; and limited inter-ministerial communication. This corrodes the institutional capacity to support SCCS.

The greatest social disarticulation and the highest levels of insecurity are seen in poor urban areas. Clientelism<sup>15</sup>, namely the political patronage of organised groups at the margins of the law to secure votes (very notably in West Kingston) in the post-colonial era, has proved to be the genesis of social disorder. Such organised groups evolved into criminal gangs, hence they did not emerge *in lieu* of the state, but in collusion with perverse elements of the state - this has been seen before in a number of countries, for example, Brazil (Arias, 2006; Pearlman, 2010) and Colombia (Baird, 2012). A tipping-point in this relationship occurred with the increase in illegal drug flows through the country, namely cocaine in the late 1990s, which brought in significant revenues allowing these groups to evolve into criminal gangs beyond the control of politicians. The recent assassination attempt on MP Mackenzie in April 2014 is not entirely unpredictable in this environment, where the balance of power between local politicians and organised armed groups is delicately balanced. Moreover, the alleged collusion between political powers and *Don Dudus* Coke was widely suspected as the reason for the stalling of his extradition request to the USA.

**There are strong challenges to the Rule of Law (ROL) and a culture of violence** in many, but not all, poor urban districts. National homicide rates in Jamaica in 2012 were measured at

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<sup>12</sup> An independent evaluation of UNDP Jamaica’s ‘Civic Dialogue for Democratic Governance’ project in late 2005 stated that communities consistently identified corruption as one of the priority issues for action. Moreover, the perceived level of public sector corruption according to Transparency International on a scale of 0-100, where 0 means that a country is perceived as highly corrupt and 100 means it is perceived as very clean, Jamaica scores 38 out of 100 which signalling high levels of corruption. See <http://www.transparency.org/country/#JAM>

<sup>13</sup> Several respondents – both national and international - interviewed during this mission referred to this ‘open secret’, whilst expressing a certain resignation that nothing could be done about it. Also see forthcoming: Marston, K., *A Comparative Analysis of the Dynamics of Political-Criminal Networks in Jamaica: The Role of Elites in Facilitating the Narcotics Trade*

<sup>14</sup> One Minister suggested that a particularly policy would only continue whilst he was in office, and that he did not know how long that would be.

<sup>15</sup> A political order that depends on relations of patronage – the simplest expression of which is buying votes.

39.3 per 100,000 (UNODC, 2014), the 7<sup>th</sup> most violent country in the world, but in the principal locations of insecurity - poor urban neighbourhoods or garrisons - homicide levels are far higher. Here the social contract between the citizenry and the state has largely broken down, and there is very little trust in government or state institutions. This will be elaborated upon below, but in short, this distrust is a cumulative and historical process where communities have been largely abandoned by the state in terms of welfare provision, the protection of economic and social rights, and legitimate socio-economic inclusion, whilst experiencing ineffective and corrupt political representation. This has opened space for the emergence of gangs and organised crime acting as de facto power-holders within excluded and frustrated communities. At the same time, the fight against crime and violence by security forces and the justice system raised concerns about the use of illegitimate force and the respect of fundamental human rights, in particular the right to life and security. This is reflected in the historical pattern of extrajudicial killings in poor urban areas, with heavy-handed, even 'spectacular', policing tactics to remove gangs such as the Tivoli Gardens incursion in 2010. Although the government has created mechanisms to investigate hundreds of alleged police abuses, unsurprisingly the police, and more broadly speaking the state, are still perceived by many locals as unaccountable, arbitrary and invasive. This reinforces normative support for gangs or other criminal groups as 'legitimate powers' in poor neighbourhoods. As trust and reliance on state security forces has been weakened over time, this makes the reform and renewal of public security policies paramount. This has to be prioritised as one of the 'game changers' for social cohesion and community safety.

The Jamaican Constabulary Force (JCF) has previously been criticised for acting with impunity, including allegations of corruption; in response to this in recent years the JCF has been going through a process of reform under the Ministry of National Security (MNS), seeking to strengthen law enforcement practices, including community oriented policing practices. The JCF also work under significant conditions of duress and there are a large number of shootings against the police in a society that has ready access to firearms. Given such complexities, despite security sector reform and international cooperation, the JCF has struggled to mainstream or operationalise more locally collaborative and inclusive Community Policing policies throughout the organisation. This is also because they are still largely aligned to military style services both in organisation and appearance; have little or no operational decision making by lower ranks, and; tend to have a 'reactive' provision of security mentality (UNDP, 2014). The Constabulary Force Act itself makes specific reference to the JCF as being partially under military organisation and discipline.

**A culture of violence.** In these contexts we can speak of multiple, mutually-enforcing violence<sup>16</sup>. Poor urban communities have been fragmented by insecurity and three-dimensional 'chronic violence' i) over a sustained period of time and across generations, ii) at a high level of intensity, and iii) persistently located in specific communities (Adams, 2012; Pearce, 2006). This deeply entrenched insecurity corrupts positive social values where high levels of violence and crime are sanctioned, accepted or tolerated 'as the norm' - this refers to

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<sup>16</sup> Structural, direct and cultural violence, and a range of social, domestic, sexual, psychological, youth and gender based violence.

both violence by community members (mainly gang members) and by the JCF / JDF<sup>17</sup>. This entrenches a ‘culture of violence’ (Galtung, 2002), the polar opposite of SCCS.

Local disillusionment with the state and failure to assert ROL gives the *Dons* a platform as local power-holders. Such communities are not in a state of ‘anomie’ (Durkheim, 1915), meaning chaotic and ‘normless’, rather *Dons* provide structure as local sheriffs, judge and jury, who use violence to assert their influence. This of course, poses a significant challenge when trying to develop SCCS as the de facto local power holders in some of the most difficult neighbourhoods are not state institutions but criminals<sup>18</sup>. In communities such as Tivoli Gardens, norms, values and ‘cohesion’ are shaped by these illegal structures. Safety is perceived in a different way within the community compared to many views from the ‘outside’, therefore building SCCS must be approached sensitively with informed approaches.

Furthermore, gangs and criminal structures are organic or endemic to host communities – comprised of resident sons, brothers, cousins, fathers, and uncles - providing significant economic support to a number of families, hence are embedded deeply into these communities. The lack of SCCS in garrisons such as Tivoli Gardens is reflected by the absence of the ROL, failing institutions, and social relations articulated around cultures of violence and the logic of the *Don*.

The lack of social cohesion and the generation of urban violence in poor garrisons can be framed by considering legitimate versus illegitimate opportunities, particularly for young people. Disaffected youths frustrated by their lack of social mobility and opportunities – in other words stuck in cycles of poverty with limited state support - feel a hopelessness some have described as ‘social death’ (Vigh, 2006). In such contexts of limited legitimate opportunities, relatively bountiful illegitimate opportunities become attractive when ‘the gang is the one business that’s always hiring’ (Hagedorn, 2008). Such ‘opportunities’ are deeply gendered; boys and young men are likely to enter into gangs of their own volition. Likewise, vulnerable girls and young women are drawn to criminals and gang members who parade ‘relative riches’ in the poorest neighbourhoods. These processes break down SCCS by supporting, inadvertently or not, a ‘gangster culture’, promoted through the heroic identification with cultural figures such as dancehall musician *Vybz Kartel*, currently serving a life sentence for multiple murder counts.

**Gender Based Violence (GBV).** Violence in communities affects women and men differently. The majority of homicide victims across Jamaica tend to be poor male youths; whilst there is an extremely high incidence of male-on-female GBV, which is largely hidden from view. Lamentably Jamaica, and the Caribbean small island nations as a whole, have some of the highest levels of rape in the world (UNDP, 2012). GBV has a particularly corrosive effect on the pillars of social cohesion - strong social relations, the common good, and positive trust and ties between citizens – because it impacts both domestic and social environments.

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<sup>17</sup> On interviewee during the mission referred to the ‘sanctioning’ of extra judicial killings carried out by the police by locals fed up with the failing justice system.

<sup>18</sup> In Spanish Town a mission visit to an impoverished part of the community was cancelled, as the local politician had not cleared this with the local gang leader or *Don*.

**Pacification as opposed to transformation.** Given the legacies of political corruption and clientelism, coupled with intergenerational socio-economic exclusion in poor urban garrisons, simply exerting punitive forms of policing in communities will fail in the long-run when not accompanied by welfare and other development initiatives clearly linked to rights realisation. Efforts have been made in Jamaica to focus on social intervention methods which should be supported, particularly those coordinated by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) such as the Community Renewal Program, but such processes need time and long-term investment to take effect, and of course, continued political will and the adequate use of resources. Unfortunately when socio-economic issues remain unresolved, punitive policing policies can reflect the pacification of the disenfranchised as opposed to meaningful socio-political transformation or the construction of SCCS.

Undeniably, since the Tivoli Gardens incursion in 2010, crime and violence rates dropped across West Kingston as a result of this ‘shock’ to Dudus Coke’s criminal organisation. This opened a small window of opportunity to reach out to the local population with welfare services and to establish ROL and to promote SCCS. However, that opportunity was missed and inevitably violence has been rising since 2011. Further, the Tivoli incursion created what is known in drug trafficking research as the ‘balloon effect’, where criminals are squeezed in one area, they expand or spill-over into another – in this case moving to St. Catherine and Spanish Town, and as far away as Montego Bay.

**Capacity limitations of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in supporting SCCS.** There are numerous active civil society organisations (CSOs) working on issues linked to SCCS, these include: academic groups with a focus on intervention such as the Violence Prevention Alliance; women’s groups such as Women’s Inc, Sistren and Women’s Affairs; youth focused initiatives such as Youth Crime Watch Jamaica, Peace Clubs, RISE and Mustard Seeds; human rights based groups such as s Jamaican’s for Justice, the Council on Human Rights, and National Integrity Action. A number of CSOs also collaborate with community level state programs such as Peace Management Initiative and the Victims Services Unit. This range of CSOs is an important platform to promote SCCS further.

However promoting CSOs as a platform for SCCS requires organisation, and coordination bodies such as CivJam and Jamaica Civil Society Coalition have stalled or unwound completely in recent times. Organisations themselves suffer the same maladies as CSOs worldwide; they are underfunded and beholden to short-term project funding; further, there have been a plethora of plans linked to Citizen Security broadly defined, but there has been generalised frustration with implementation and delivery, as one NGO worker noted ‘plan can’t eat’. Finally, what is most notable in the Jamaican context is that CSOs lack the clout to build momentum for any significant socio-political change at a civic or state level. One academic noted that he has been waiting a lifetime for civil society to pressurise an elitist state into reform, but that this was not likely to happen anytime soon. Unaided, it seems that CSOs will be limited in their capacity to support SCCS. (The role of civil society in interpreting and articulating social and economic issues, and collaborating with government in resolving the issues, is a key mechanism of social cohesion. This will be highlighted in the strategic outputs below).

#### ***4. Current opportunities to promote greater safety and an enabling environment for development through strengthened social cohesion with communities***

There is a groundswell of political will to tackle issues relating to crime and violence, reflected in the Vision 2030 national development plan mentioned earlier, which aims to ‘create a safe and secure society’<sup>19</sup>. Politicians are of course, politically motivated, and showing tangible results in reducing insecurity is one of, if not the most, pressing political issue in the country. This has created receptiveness by a number of ministries where work could be further developed in SCCS. For example, the Ministry of National Security, through ‘Unite for Change’ under Minister Bunting is promoting a ‘cure’ to crime and violence by using the public health or epidemiological approach. Whilst there are significant challenges for the implementation of such an approach, the Strategy Implementation Framework is perhaps the most progressive in any ministry to date in Jamaica. This is a strong political statement. Furthermore, senior figures in the JCF are open to progressive ideas to reduce insecurity, although implementing these approaches through rank and file officers remains a challenge.

There is also a strong appetite from the PIOJ and the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD) to look at empowering, coordinating and strengthening the role of communities in the reduction of insecurity – this is a key operational area of SCCS. The PIOJ developed the Community Renewal Program (CRP) in 2010, running in three phases in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The CRP is wide-ranging and ambitious program which addresses several key elements related to SCCS, focusing on vulnerable communities to develop key areas such as; social inclusion, participatory governance, and safety and justice, whilst identifying both youth and women as key beneficiaries. Such approaches should be supported and complimented by any further SCCS initiatives. Whilst the panorama in Jamaica is undoubtedly difficult, there are a number of important political figures pushing for change and promoting progressive ideas linked in to the broader projects of Citizen Security, Social Cohesion and Community Safety. Although many IDPs are frustrated with the lack of Jamaica’s institutional capacity to take over programs in what is a ‘crowded tent’ of Citizen Security initiatives, right now appears to be an opportune moment to present ideas around SCCS in Jamaica.

Furthermore, there is significant regional momentum within different countries and across a range of organisations including the UNDP working on security issues. This provides opportunities for ‘south-south’ learning from the different ways in which similar issues have been addressed in challenging contexts such as Jamaica’s. As a final thought, it is also conceivable that best practices emerging from Jamaica in SCCS can be rolled out to Caribbean neighbours in the future.

#### ***5. Assumptions***

Whilst there are a number of best practices in the areas of ROL and Citizen Security that contribute to the broader aims of Social Cohesion, there are few strategies or indicators for

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.vision2030.gov.jm/Overview/Vision>

measuring Social Cohesion itself, particularly in the Jamaican context. Therefore some assumptions should be made around the promotion of SCCS, drawn in part from the problem statement above, and from lessons learned from experiences in relevant practices in Jamaica and beyond. For example, in the region we are aware of the limitations of punitive *mano dura* (heavy handed) policing tactics; from development programs we know of the benefits of participatory processes; from global experiences with independent commissions of enquiry we know importance of government promises and guarantees of ‘no repetition’ of illegitimate state violence, and; we recognise the importance of strengthening institutionality around promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development. In Jamaica we have seen successes with the UNDP supported projects ‘Parish Safety and Security Committees’ and the ‘Civic Dialogue and Democratic Governance’ consultation. Whilst this is not a complete list ‘lessons learned’, such knowledge helps to develop more pragmatic *strategic outputs* in SCCS, from which planning and projects can be soundly developed as a systematic Theory of Change. Assumptions:

**Understanding SCCS as a Polity.** Social Cohesion is a driving force for change that consolidates democratic values into social institutions, thereby strengthening governance while creating confidence amongst the citizenry (USAID, 2013). Social Cohesion should therefore be understood as a polity - a form or process of civil government and organized society. *Strategically, as a polity, SCCS must be promoted from above with good governance and institutional rigour, and simultaneously from below via civil society and local forms of government.* Implicitly then, the more fluid and productive the interface is between the two, the stronger SCCS will be. Neither the citizenry, nor state institutions can determine social cohesion, and hence wellbeing, alone, but the state should take leadership in efforts to promote cohesion, bringing in civic participation.

**Citizens must not only participate in, but also be the protagonists of their own safety and development.** Efforts to build SCCS must involve the participation, empowerment and ownership of processes by the community. Ownership of projects by recipient populations acts as a guarantor for the sustainability and legitimacy of programming in SCCS. Further, national level consultations such as ‘Civic Dialogue for Democratic Governance’ have had positive resonances and similar processes can be used to develop SCCS planning nationally. Non-participatory approaches will not succeed in building social relations, connectedness, trust in institutions and community-led safety.

This is in line with a Human Development perspective, in which the ordinary citizen is central to solving the problem of insecurity, and that participation via stable and open structures can help to bring about positive changes in the philosophy, policy and governance of security, therefore it is worthwhile to examine the relevant attitude sets and behavioural responses of the people who are beneficiaries.

There is also room for optimism. According to some perception surveys<sup>20</sup> the majority of people feel that problems can be resolved; that negative crime trends can be reversed and that their societies can become safer. This is a general and somewhat diffused optimism that stands

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<sup>20</sup> UNDP, Caribbean Human Development Report 2012. Human Development and the Shift to Better Citizen Security, UNDP 2012

in contrast to hopelessness. A more grounded and important indicator of this attitude is their assessment of the capacity of their country or state to better manage and indeed to solve the problem of insecurity.

**SCCS requires women and girls, youth, and other population specific focuses to be most effective in terms of their voice being heard and participation ensured.** Particular attention must be given to the specific vulnerabilities on the one hand and capacities, on the other, of each demographic/social group. In Jamaica, gender equality in all its elements represents a major challenge, but can now count on a national policy (2011), which should guide interventions by the UN. An important factor underlying violence against women in Jamaica is their economic vulnerability compared to men. Many women depend to a great extent on men to access economic resources. With limited access, women can have difficulties in exiting the vicious circle of abusive and violent relationships. Therefore, improving the economic security of women is an important strategy to prevent and/or redress gender violence. In this regard, it is necessary to make further efforts to reinforce prevention and sensitization in terms of violence against women in the educational and social environments, bringing in the support of social organizations given their proximity to communities and families.

**Community policing approaches support social cohesion.** Punitive policing approaches are essential deterrents for crime, but are limited in their capacity to build positive values and relations in violent communities, and do not focus on violence prevention by treating the foundational causes of insecurity; *mano dura* policing policies across the LAC region have proved to be counterproductive; other complimentary processes are necessary, e.g. Community Policing, conflict resolution and dispute settlement mechanisms, a focus on victim attention, counselling and trauma, progressive first responses to youth in conflict with the law, gender based focuses, etc.

**Trust cannot be built between citizens and institutions unless there are functioning mechanisms of oversight and guarantees.** Such as; effective police oversight bodies, ombudspersons or public defenders, independent human rights mechanisms, commissions of enquiry, etc, which generate civic trust in state and government through the fairness and transparency of institutions.

**Efforts to build SCCS depend on broader development initiatives.** The foundational causes of insecurity and weak social cohesion are multiple and linked to historical social, political and economic exclusion. Holistic approaches to SCCS are complimentary to, and interdependent with, broader development initiatives. In short, it is challenging to build social cohesion amidst systematic processes of exclusion.

**Building SCCS must also be understood as a long-term normative project for change.** Moving from a 'culture of violence' to a civic culture of peace is an incremental, long-term aim and both a cause and result of the implementation of SCCS initiatives.

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