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PAGE 1

Q1: Project Name
Social cohesion: The missing link in overcoming violence and inequality

Q2: Report Author(s) and Institution
Vanessa Barolsky Human Sciences Research Council

Q3: Period covered by the report (MM/YY to MM/YY)
November 2015 to March 2016

PAGE 2: Findings

Q4: Did you have any unexpected research findings? If yes, please describe them.Describe any unexpected, unusual, or counter-intuitive findings coming out of your research project.

Social cohesion can exacerbate violence when it takes the form of vigilante or gang violence.
Social cohesion can help residents cope with high levels of violence but through violent means e.g. vigilante violence.
Localised, neighbourhood cohesion can undermine national level cohesion that seeks to bring together citizens across neighbourhood boundaries
Citizens in Cidade de Deus and Tabajaras in Rio de Janeiro and in Khayelitsha, Cape Town do participate in informal networks and have collective efficacy but this may be expressed in violent terms for example vigilante violence.
Violence prevention interventions can undermine social cohesion if they don't take into account local conditions and are not participatory.
Fear of crime is not associated with negative effects on social cohesion and has only a small impact on interracial trust in South Africa.
Men and women are equally fearful of crime in South Africa.
An increase in social cohesion is not associated with reduced fear of crime in Brazil, although this finding is not conclusive due to lack of data on fear of crime and social cohesion in Brazil.
The analysis of homicide in Brazil showed that socio-economic variables can have a lag effect of up to 20 years, i.e. they only have an impact on rates of homicide after 20 years

Q5: Discuss the gender dimensions of your findings.Discuss your project's gender analysis. Describe any findings that incorporate a gender analysis. Describe the implications of your research for different groups of men and women.

All quantitative analyses were disaggregated by gender.
In Brazil an analysis of data on fear of crime and gender supported the literature that argues that women are generally more fearful of crime than men.
However, in South Africa the empirical data contested this literature by showing that men and women are equally fearful of crime in South Africa.

The research in Khayelitsha indicated that women participate in public violence as spectators and occasionally as participants. This relates to young women encouraging gang fights as well as women in the community participating in vigilante action.

They are also involved in violence in the private realm such as, in one example, the stabbing of a friend. Such violence was not questioned by other young women in a focus group.

Male focus group participants in Khayelitsha did not generally acknowledge that violence against women is a pervasive problem and saw it as a 'rare' event.

In Rio de Janeiro the data collection process was restricted by gender dynamics as to a large extent only women were prepared to speak to the researchers.

In South Africa it was found that there is a correlation between the number of men in the population and murder rates but the extent of the male population did not appear to be associated with other forms of violent crime

Further research needs to be carried out on the gendered dimensions of social cohesion.

Q6: What areas for further research are emerging from your project?In particular, are there any topics that would be relevant for a future program that builds on SAIC?

What are the gendered dimensions of social cohesion? There needs to be further investigation of how gender impacts on or is shaped by social cohesion and how this helps us understand and respond to violence.

What is the role of the state in building social cohesion in ways that can assist in preventing violence. What impact does the state currently have on social cohesion and violence prevention?

What does the 'rule of law' mean in communities characterised by informality and an ambiguous relation to the law and the state?

How do violence prevention interventions interact with informal environments in ways that support local resources and capacity rather than bypassing them?

How do we mobilise local and sometimes informal forms of regulation and conflict resolution for violence prevention?

What is the relationship between fear of crime and social cohesion in Brazil? There is a significant absence of data on fear of crime and social cohesion in Brazil. Research which deepened these areas would be beneficial for understanding the potentially negative effects of fear of crime on social cohesion.

PAGE 3: Influence, Outcomes, Impact, and Contributions to Change

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Q7: Has your project or research contributed to/influenced any policy or practice changes? If yes, describe the change and how your research contributed to it.

To date, there has been no measureable change attributable to the project, though the project is positioning itself to contribute to change in the short and medium term.

The last quarter of the project has primarily focused on producing outputs that could disseminate the results in an accessible manner so that they are more likely to have an impact on policy and practice.

A video, research brief and infographic are currently being completed. These will be made available on the Safer Spaces website in South Africa and the HIVE website of the World Bank.

A blog on the South African research has been published on the Safer Spaces website.

In South Africa and Brazil workshops were held to disseminate the results of the research to key stakeholders. In South Africa subsequent to our most recent workshop, the Western Cape Department of Community Safety has approached the HSRC for more information and engagement around our research.

In Brazil, key stakeholders, including a former leader of the UPP, a community leader in a favela where the UPP had been implemented and the Secretary of Public Security, were discussants for the research at a recent stakeholder workshop.

The research in Brazil has contributed to ongoing policy discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of the UPP project by showing the complexity of its impact as both reducing violence and social cohesion.

In addition, in South Africa, as part of this study, a special edition of the South African Crime Quarterly journal , will be published in April focusing on the relationship between social cohesion and violence.

A launch of this edition on 21 April will assist to raise the profile of the conceptual and policy debate about the relationship between social cohesion and violence and its potential impact on violence prevention.
A book proposal has been accepted by the HSRC press for a book on the research findings.
HSRC press is an open source publisher so the new data and analysis generated by the project will be widely accessible.

Q8: Are there any upcoming opportunities to influence policy or practice, such as a parliamentary debate, an international conference, a UN report, etc? Describe how you expect your research to contribute to that process and how you plan to engage with it.

Key policy makers that will be engaged around the research in South Africa include the Secretariat for Safety and Security, Western Cape Department of Community Safety and VPUU.
In Brazil forums where this research will be disseminated and where the research team is already engaged, include the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into police killings, the Public Security Commission of the Rio de Janeiro and State Council for the Defense of Human Rights.

Q9: Capacity development: Provide final cumulative details on how many women and men have developed skills or learned from your project. (NB: This will include those previously reported.)Example: Over the entire project, 55 field workers (40 women, 15 men) were trained. 5 Fieldwork supervisors (3 women, 2 men) were trained. 212 undergraduate students (127 women, 85 men) were exposed to research and methodologies developed in the project. 6 graduate students (2 women, 4 men) participated in the project as research assistants.

This remains the same as reported in the fifth technical report.

Q10: Has your project leveraged any new funds to support current or new work that builds on SAIC? If yes, provide details on the work being supported, the funder and the amount of funding.Example: The Embassy of the Netherlands provided $10,000 to produce three additional policy briefs on the research.

No

Q11: Describe your engagement with other SAIC researchers and any associated activities or outputs not previously reported. Is SAIC working as a network for you? In what ways?

The major new engagement with other SAIC researchers in this quarter has been the joint workshop that was held with SAIC researcher Richard Matzopoulos on March 14. We jointly reported on our findings on VPUU and other aspects of our research.

Detailed feedback about the SAIC network was provided in the fifth technical report.

Q12: What can IDRC do to maintain the SAIC network after the projects close? What would make the network valuable to you?

If there are funds available, it might be valuable to have a small focused workshop that brainstorms around the key emerging research and policy issues from the programme and to identify the critical issues to focus on going forward and for which proposals for further funding should be written (either from the IDRC or elsewhere).

Journal articles are a key requirement for most researchers. It would be valuable to find a way of linking researchers together to work on journal articles. IDRC could contribute by asking researchers to share information/abstracts of articles they are working on so that counterparts can see if there are any synergies. IDRC could also ask people to identify potential areas that they would like to collaborate in writing about, for example social cohesion.

Another network could focus specifically on the policy and practical implications of the research and integrating this in a way that could make a contribution to key global discussions on violence, security and safe cities.

Q13: Provide details on any outputs (books, journal articles, infographics, videos, etc) or activities from your SAIC project that are not yet completed. Please provide expected completion dates.

Edited book to be published by HSRC Press on research. Expected publication December 2016.

Finalised infographic-end April 2016
Finalised video-mid April 2016
Published SACQ journal-mid-April 2016

Q14: Discuss any lessons or insights that are relevant to other SAIC projects, the SAIC program, or future work. These could be related to challenges, ethical practice, substantive issues, methods, etc.Responses could focus on substantive and/or administrative issues.

The IDRC has an important focus on policy and practical impact of the research. However, local research environments can be politically complex and contested or there may be problems in governance and implementation. This may mean that evidence based policy or research is ignored or refuted, because it does not confirm current orthodoxies or is addressing issues that are not considered a priority at a particular juncture.

It would be useful if there was a substantive engagement between IDRC and grantees regarding the complexities of policy and practical influence and a realistic discussion of what the possibilities are, how these can be maximised and what are the likely limitations.
Impact on policy and practice also need to be differentiated and defined as far as possible, so suitable strategies can be adopted for each, or one or the other chosen.
It would also be valuable for grantees from countries in the global south to collectively grapple with these difficulties. Engagement with grantees operating in the global north could also provide useful opportunities for learning.
Collective gatherings could perhaps have speakers from organisations particularly focused on influencing policy or practice addressing grantees to assist in thinking through the possibilities.

Q15: Please share any other feedback that you have for IDRC.Summarize recommendations with respect to the administration of the project, its scope, duration, or budget.

It is recommended that future projects are also funded over a 32 to 36 period. This was a valuable component of the SAIC programme. This length of time allows for in-depth research and innovations in methodology that are often not possible in shorter duration projects where quick results are required.