

# **Drivers of Conflict Study in Chimaltenango and El Quiché, Guatemala**

Conducted By:

The Center on Conflict and Development at Texas A&M University  
and the Conflict and Development Foundation

In Collaboration With:

Universidad San Carlos de Guatemala and  
Fundación para la Superación de la Ingeniería

## **Final Report**

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The Center on Conflict and Development at Texas A&M University (ConDev)  
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## **Executive Summary**

### ***Introduction and Background***

In Guatemala, organized crime and violence are corroding governance and imperiling democratic legitimacy. Criminal elements such as international drug traffickers, domestically based organized crime syndicates, and youth gangs have dramatically expanded their operations and are effectively waging a form of irregular warfare against government institutions.<sup>1</sup> Despite the fact that many studies have been published about the effects of the war, there is a need for conducting research that can help improve the effectiveness of development programs and policies for conflict-affected and fragile countries. Preparing a conflict analysis is a critical first step in crafting a development program that effectively prevents conflict or speeds recovery.<sup>2</sup> To address this need, the Conflict and Development Foundation (CDF) and the Center on Conflict and Development at Texas A&M University (ConDev), with matching funds from the Howard G. Buffet Foundation, launched the Drivers of Conflict Study in Guatemala to collect data on conflict affected communities. The purpose of this study was to: (a) identify drivers of conflict and main types of conflict affecting two rural communities; (b) determine to what degree those conflicts have affected the participant's households in the past two years; and (c) determine if aspects of underdevelopment such as social inequality, poverty and food insecurity make it more likely for a community to experience certain types of conflict such as gang violence, threat, theft, kidnapping, drug trafficking, extortion, police abuse and others.

Data was collected by two San Carlos University students in target communities of the Departments of Chimaltenango and El Quiché located in the Central and Western Guatemalan highlands through 400 surveys. Results have been analyzed by ConDev research assistants at Texas A&M University determining that the main types of conflict that affect those communities are: (a) poverty; (b) lack of education; and (c) lack of jobs and the main types of conflict affecting their communities are (a) theft; (b) gang violence; (c) kidnapping; and (d) threats.

### ***Hypothesis and Research Methodology***

The primary hypothesis of this study was that certain aspects of underdevelopment such as social inequality, poverty, and food insecurity cause conflict. The research methodology was based on a quantitative-qualitative, exploratory, non-experimental study with non-probability sampling (surveying) that helped establish existing relationships between conflict and aspects of underdevelopment such as social inequality, poverty and food insecurity. The units of analysis included two communities and households in two regions of the country (the Western Highlands and the Central highlands), based on a survey in public places and households (with a sample of 400), with assistance from local governmental institutions. The respective instrument (polling questionnaires) was developed by the Center on Conflict and Development and validated by San Carlos University. Information collected was entered into an Excel database by a Texas A&M University research assistant, and analyzed by a Texas A&M University graduate student using a statistical software (Stata). Data gathered through this project will be available for future studies to be conducted by CDF, ConDev, or their partners.

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<sup>1</sup> Brands, Hal. Crime, Violence, and the Crisis in Guatemala: A Case Study in the Erosion of the State. Strategic Studies Institute, 2010. Available at: <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB986.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> James Putzel, Do No Harm: International Support for Statebuilding (Paris: OECD, 2010). See the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium. Available at: <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/>. See also the Collaborative Learning Project's "Do No Harm" project. Available at: [http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project\\_profile.php?pid=DNH&pname=Do%20No%20Harm](http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project_profile.php?pid=DNH&pname=Do%20No%20Harm).

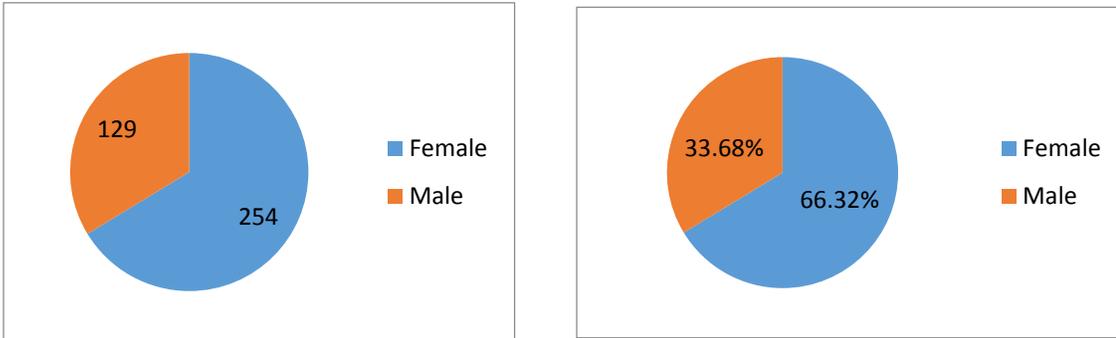
## Summary of Results

Results from this study helped establish that the main types of conflict affecting the target communities were thefts, protests and gang violence. The study also helped determine that factors such as poverty, lack of education and lack of jobs have an impact on expressions of social conflict like violence. Results are shown in the graphics below.

### Drivers of Conflict Study – Survey Results

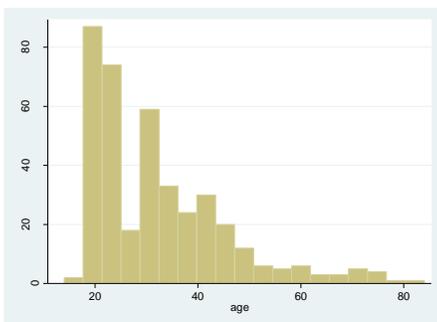
#### Respondent Profile

**Graphic 1:** Gender. Out of the 400 respondents, 66.32% were female and 33.68% were male.



Gender	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Female	254	66.32	66.32
Male	129	33.68	100.00
Total	383	100.00	

**Graphic 2:** Age. Age varied in the range from 14 to 84. Average age was 32.36 years.

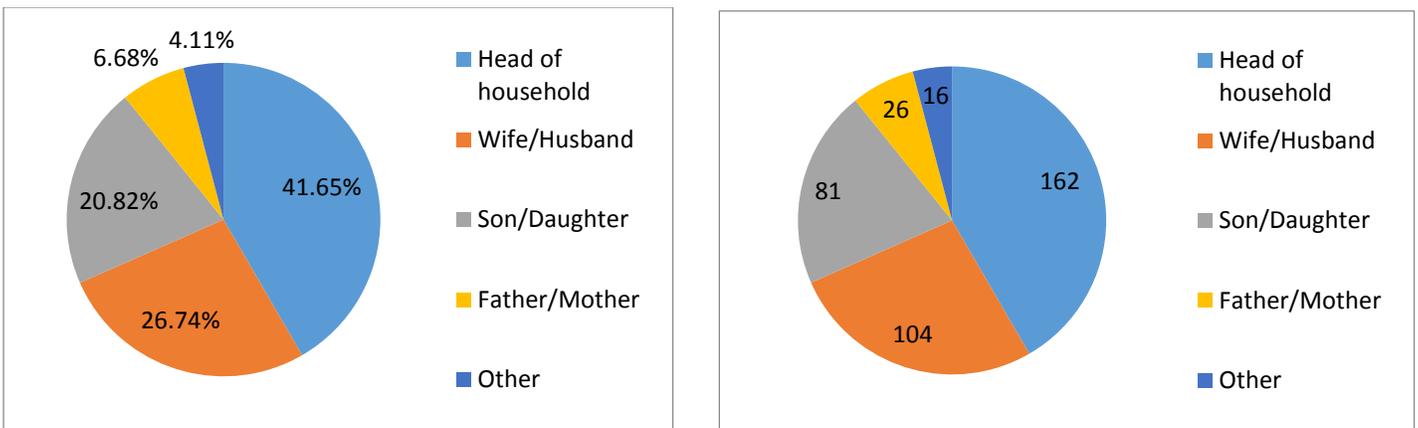


Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
age	393	32.36387	13.167	14	84

**Graphic 3: Head of Household.** 55.70% of respondents were heads of household and 44.05% were not.



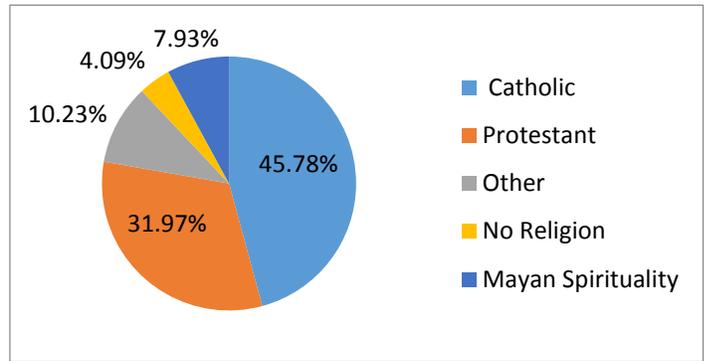
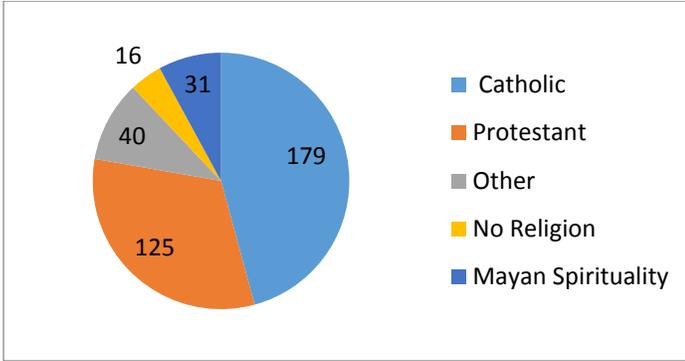
**Graphic 4: Type of Dependent.** 41.65% of respondents were heads of household, 26.74% were wives or husbands, and 20.82% were sons/daughters.



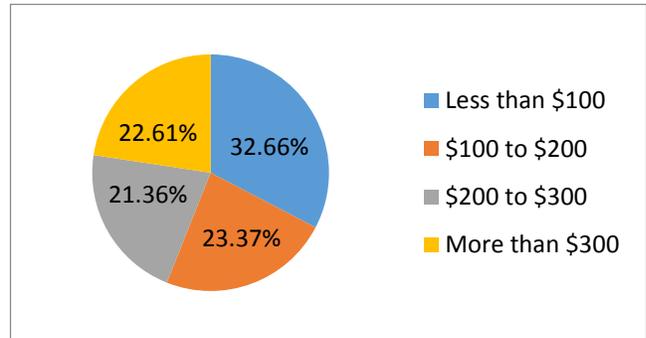
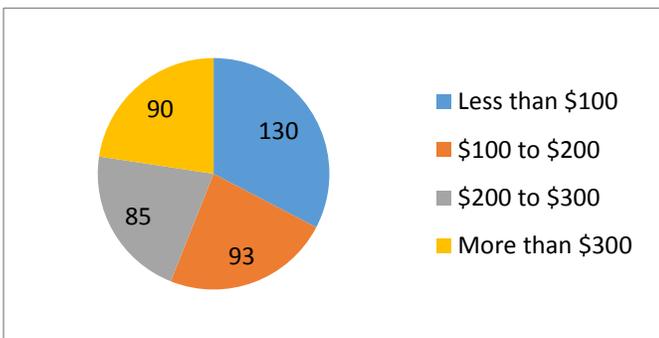
**Graphic 5: Ethnicity.** 59.85% of respondents were mestizo, 20.72% were white, and 18.67% were indigenous.



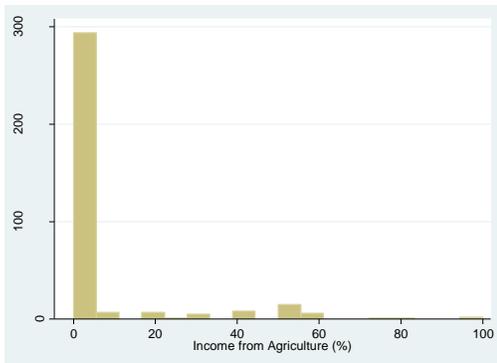
**Graphic 6: Religion.** 45.78% of respondents were Catholic, 31.97% were protestant, 10.25% were other, and 4.09% had no religion affiliation.



**Graphic 7: Monthly Income.** 32.66% of respondents earned less than US\$100 per month, 23.37% earned between \$100 to \$200 US Dollars per month, 21.36% earned between \$200 and \$300 US Dollars per month, and 22.61% made more than \$300 US Dollars per month. Amounts were calculated using official exchange rates from Quetzales to US Dollars.

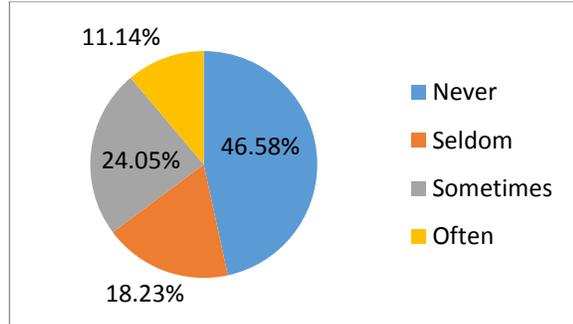
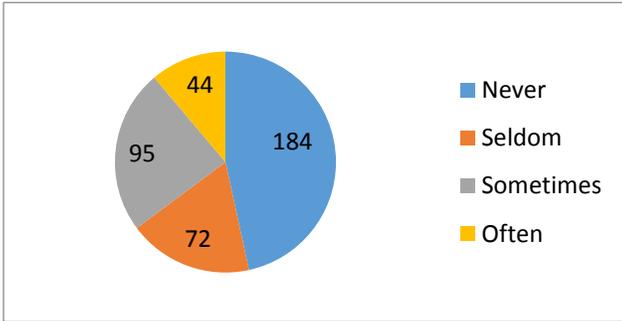


**Graphic 8: Income from Agriculture.** 84.15% of respondents received 0% income from production agricultural activities.

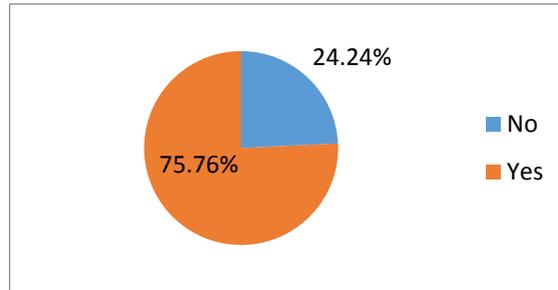
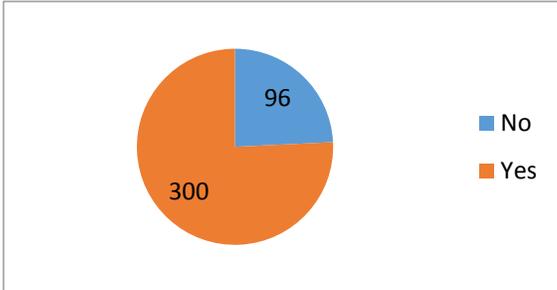


## Food Insecurity

**Graphic 9:** Hunger. The graphic shows whether any member of the family of the respondent went to sleep hungry for the last months. 46.58% never went hungry, 24.05% sometimes went hungry, 18.23% seldom went hungry and 11.14% often went hungry.

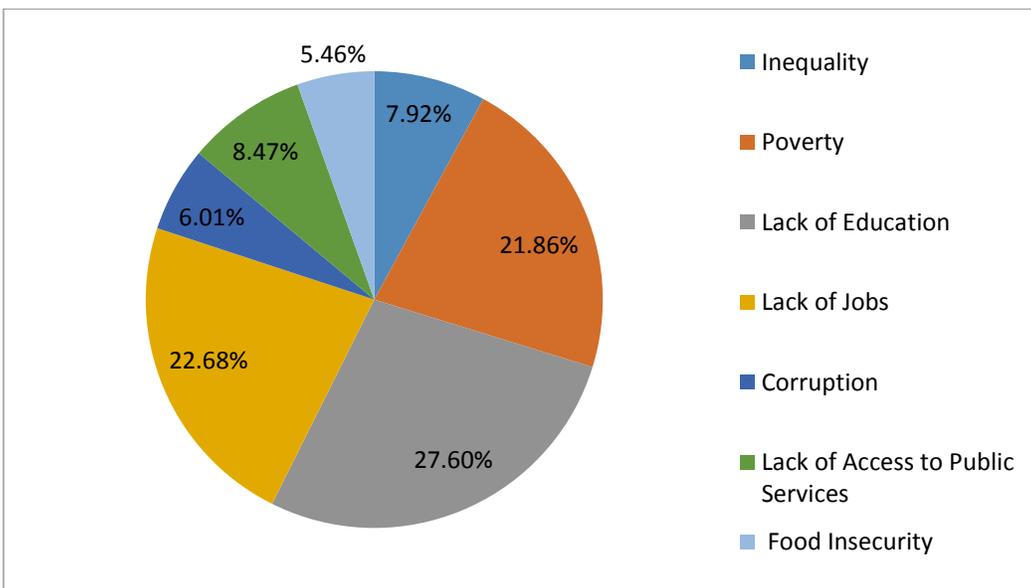


**Graphic 10:** Food worry. The graphic shows whether the respondent worried not to be able to buy food for the last 12 months. 75.76% worried and 24.24% did not worry.



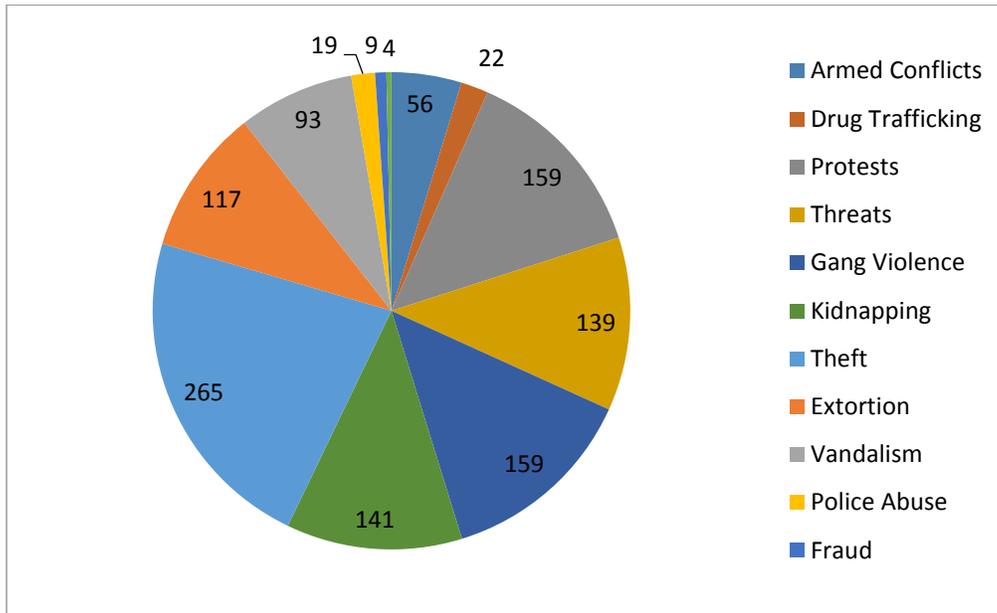
## Main Causes of Violence

**Graphic 11:** Main Causes of Violence. The three main causes of violence in the target communities were lack of education, lack of jobs, and poverty, followed by lack of access to public services, inequality, corruption, and food insecurity.



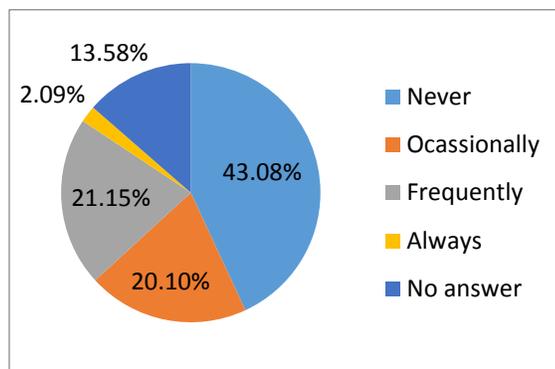
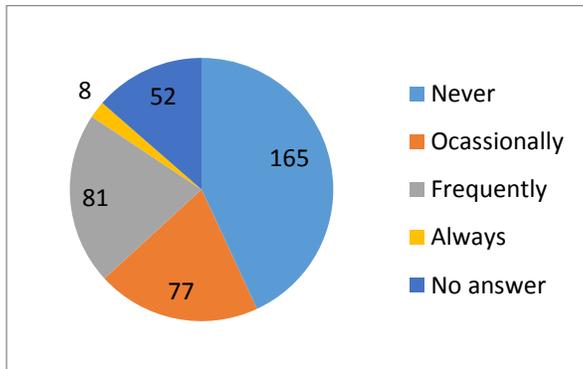
## Main Types of Conflict Affecting the Community

**Graphic 12:** Main Types of Conflict Affecting the Community. Based on the graphic below, the three main causes of conflict affecting the target communities were theft, gang violence and protests.

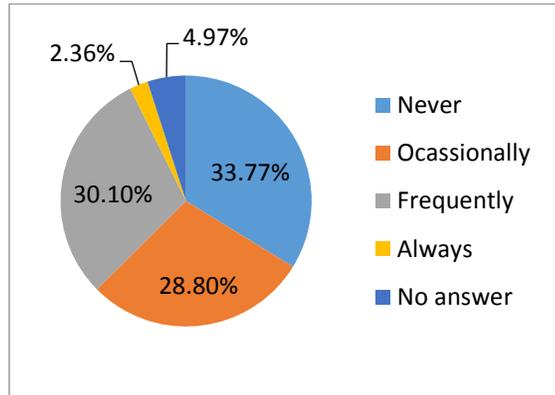
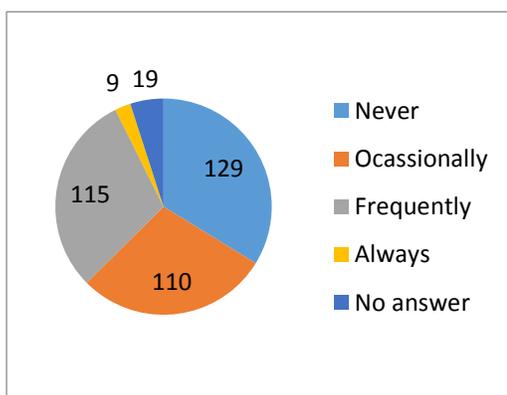


**Graphic 13:** The set of graphics below depict to what degree certain types of conflicts have affected the respondents' households in the past two years.

Graphic 13a. Armed Conflict

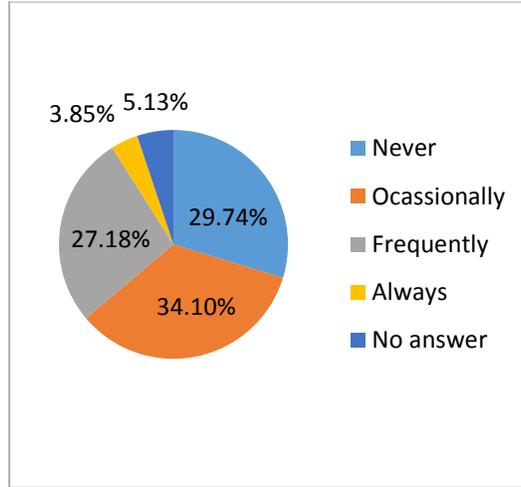
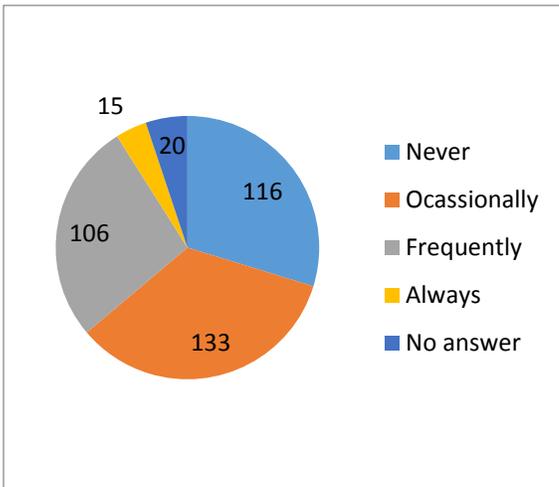


Graphic 13b. Protests

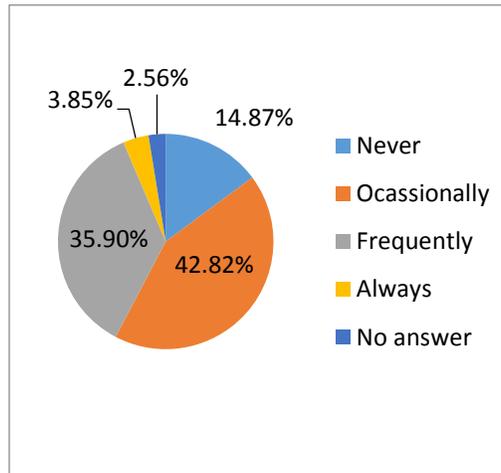
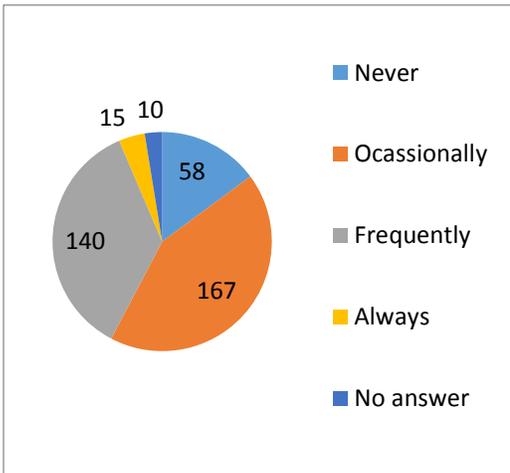


**Graphic 13 (Continued):** The set of graphics below depict to what degree certain types of conflicts have affected the respondents' households in the past two years.

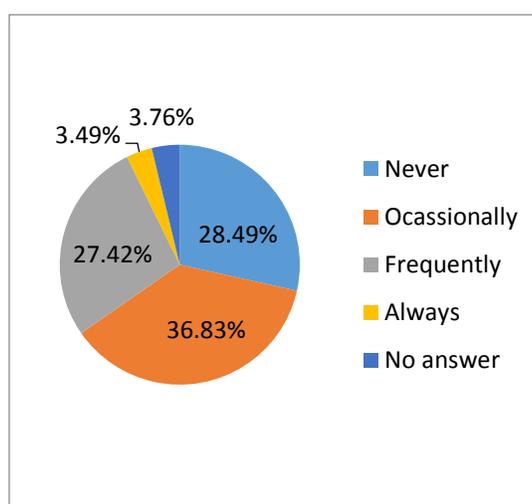
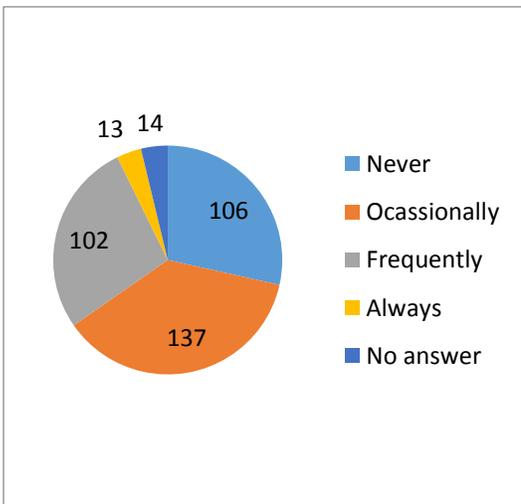
Graphic 13c. Gang Violence



Graphic 13d. Theft

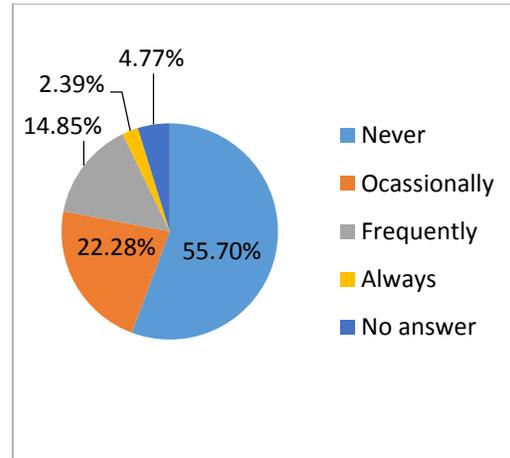
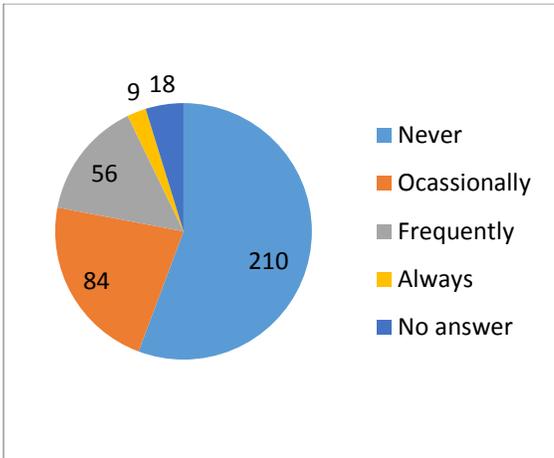


Graphic 13e. Vandalism

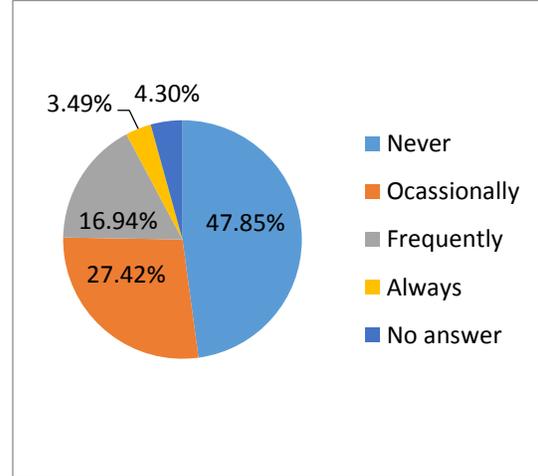
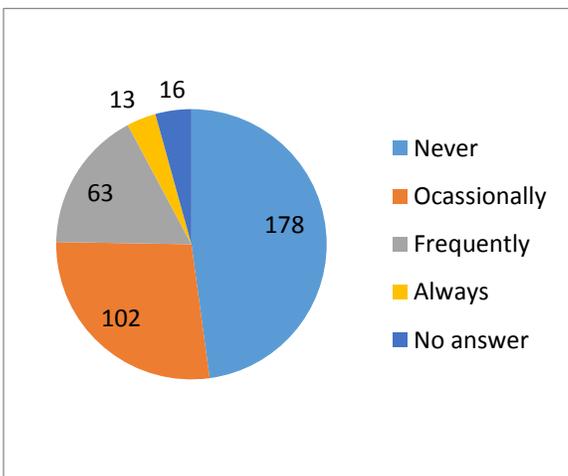


**Graphic 13 (Continued):** The set of graphics below depict to what degree certain types of conflicts have affected the respondents' households in the past two years.

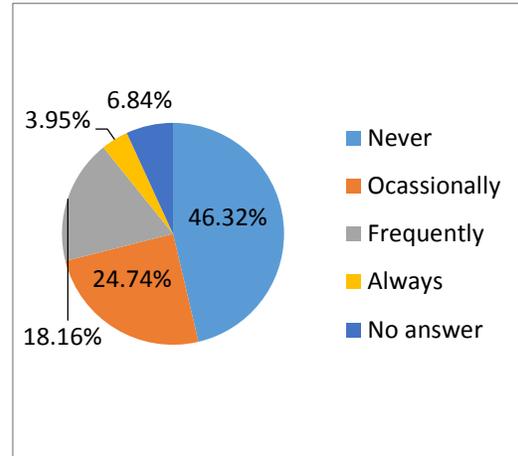
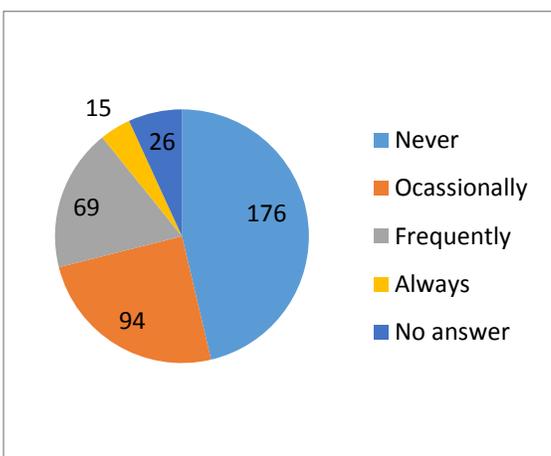
Graphic 13f. Fraud



Graphic 13g. Threats

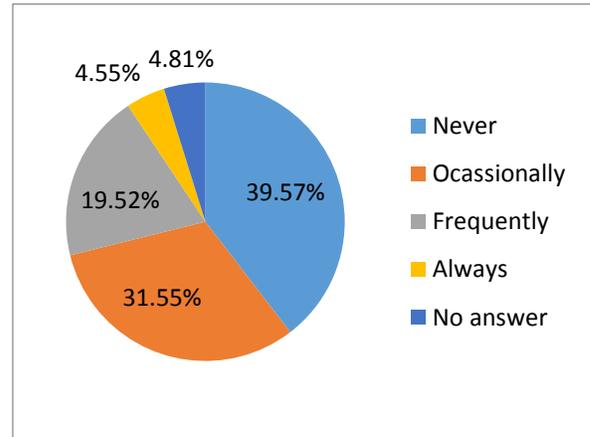
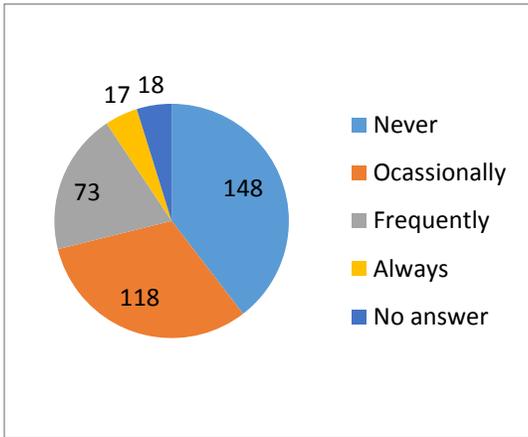


Graphic 13h. Drug Trafficking

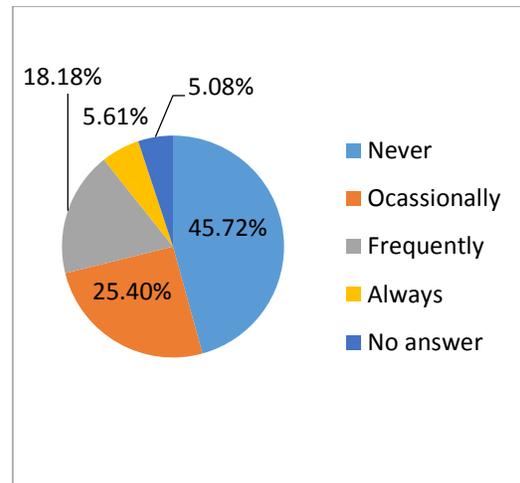
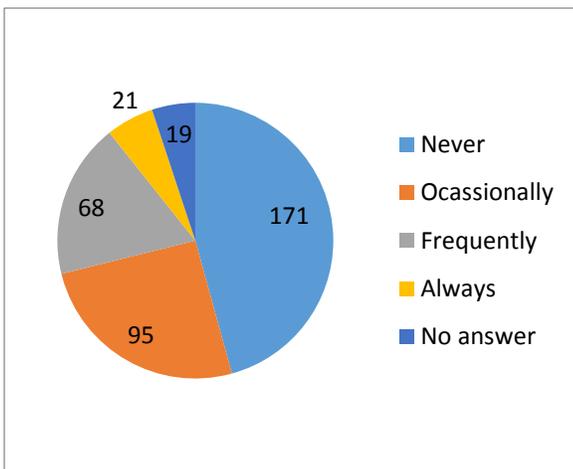


**Graphic 13 (Continued):** The set of graphics below depict to what degree certain types of conflicts have affected the respondents' households in the past two years.

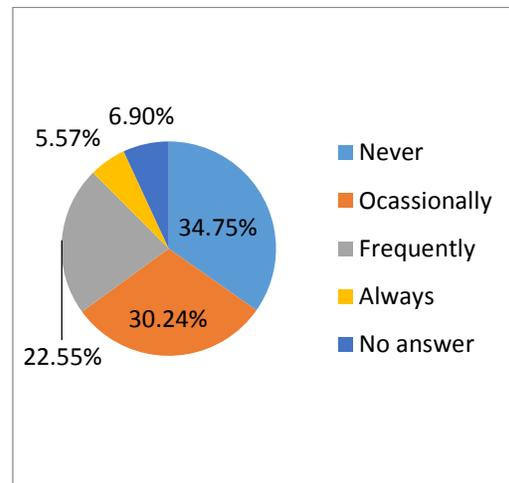
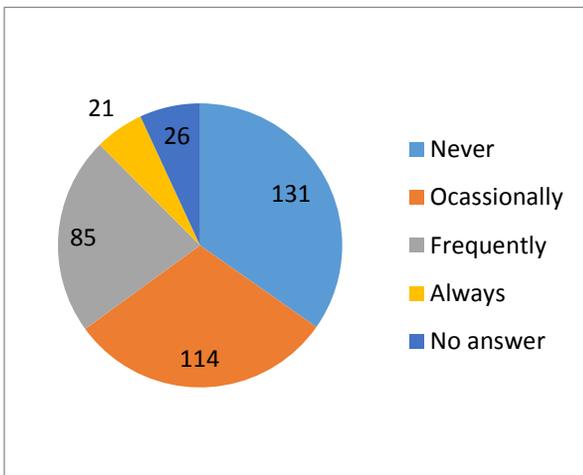
Graphic 13i. Kidnapping



Graphic 13j. Extortions

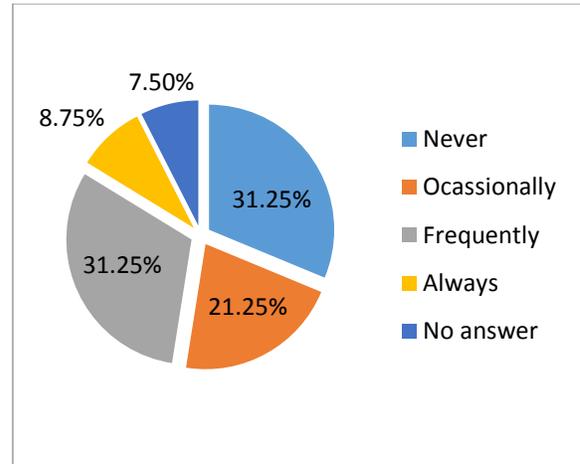
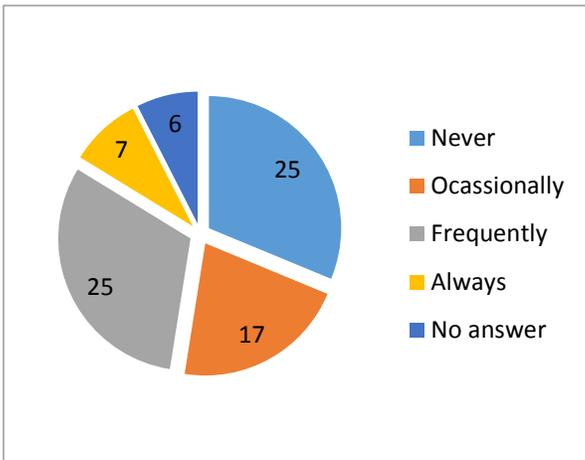


Graphic 13k. Police Abuse



**Graphic 13 (Continued):** The set of graphics below depict to what degree certain types of conflicts have affected the respondents' households in the past two years.

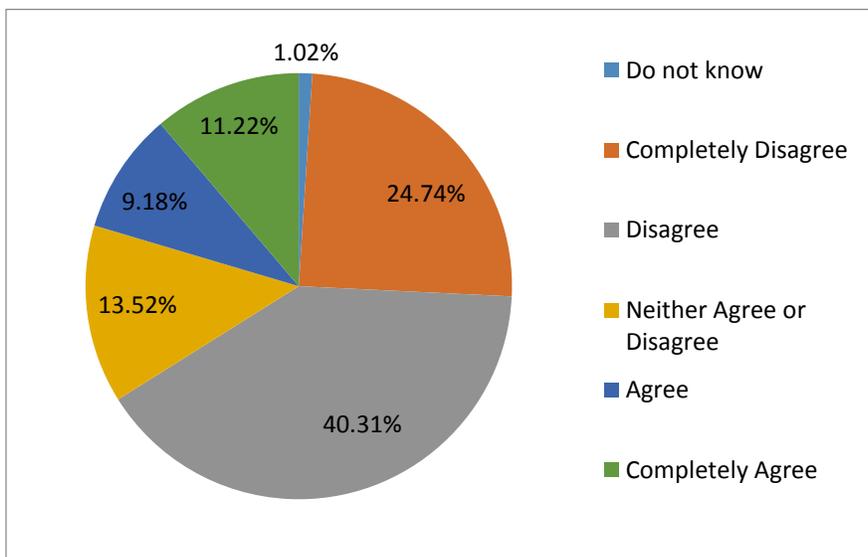
Graphic 13l. Other Conflicts. Other types of conflict mentioned included alcoholism and assault against women.



### Safety and Violence Perception

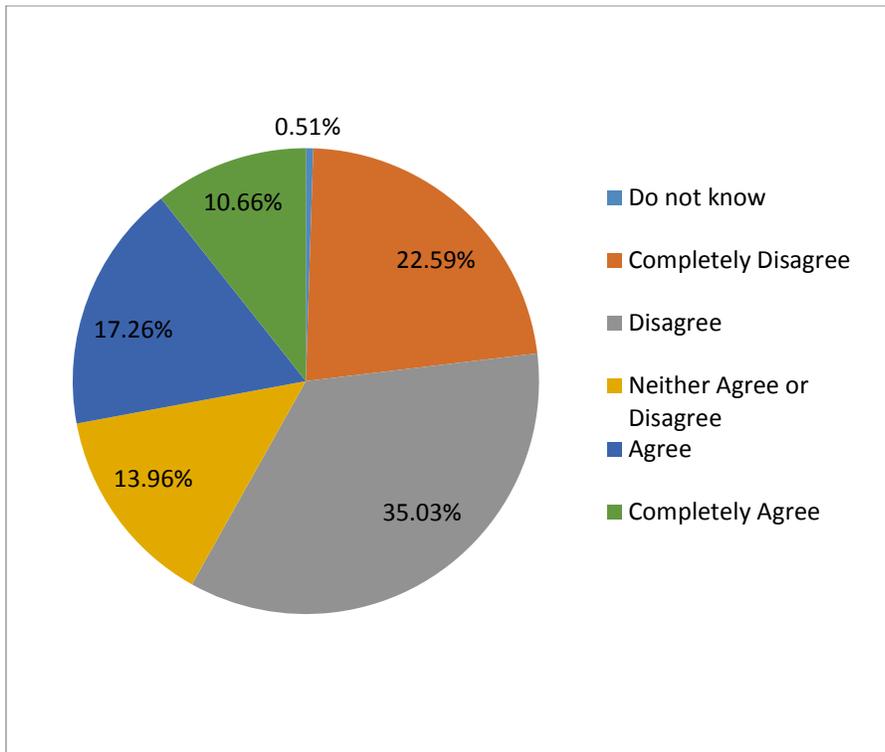
Graphic 14. Safety and Violence Perception. The following set of graphics illustrate answers to several questions regarding neighborhood safety and trust in the police; level of violence experienced in the communities; and the perception of violence by the respondents.

Graphic 14a. Description: I feel safe walking through my neighborhood at night.

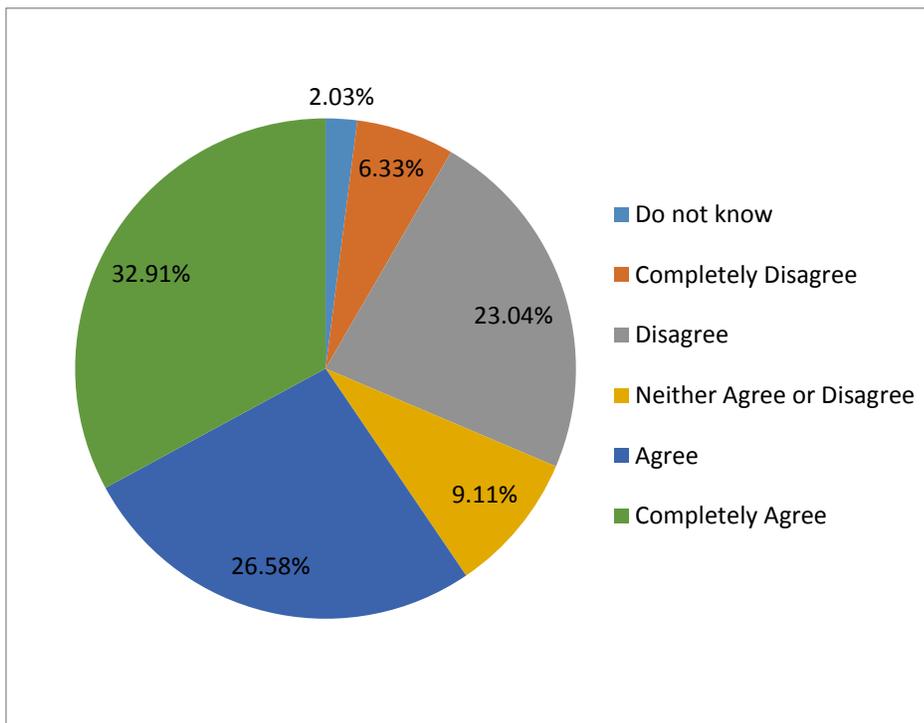


**Graphic 14 (Continued). Safety and Violence Perception.**

Graphic 14b. Description: I feel safe when I am alone in my house at night

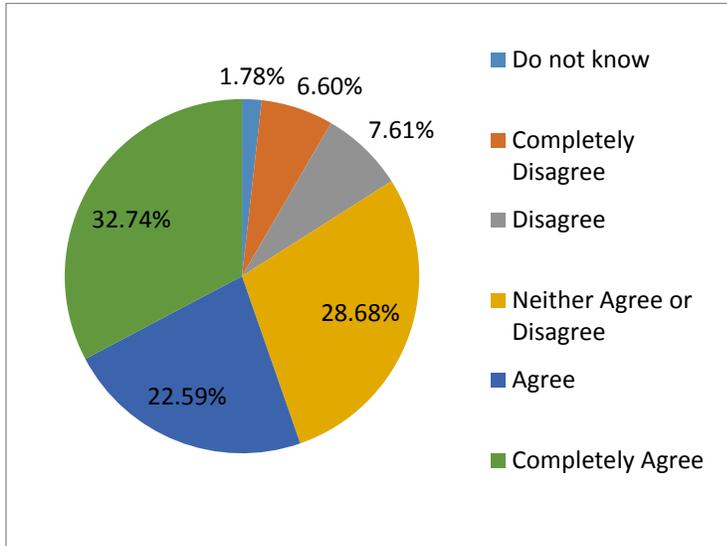


Graphic 14c. Description: The level of violence has risen in the last two years.

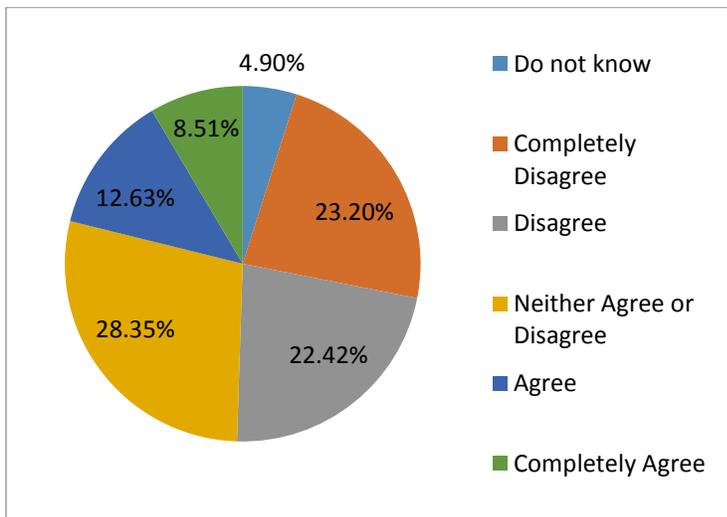


**Graphic 14 (Continued). Safety and Violence Perception.**

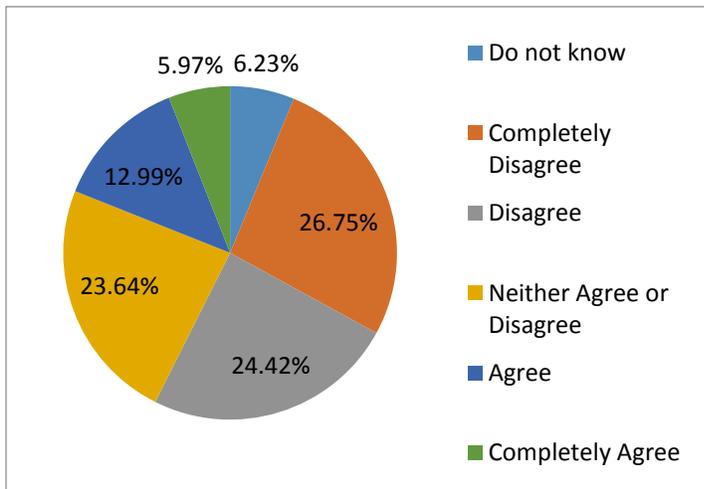
Graphic 14d. Description: Sometimes I hear gunshots in my neighborhood



Graphic 14e. Description: Police decreases the level of violence in the streets

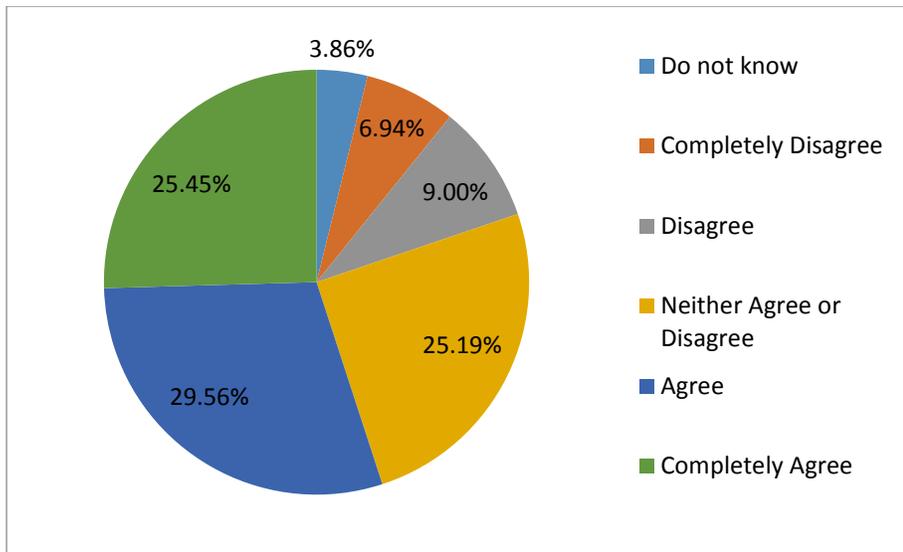


Graphic 14f. Description: I can trust the police.

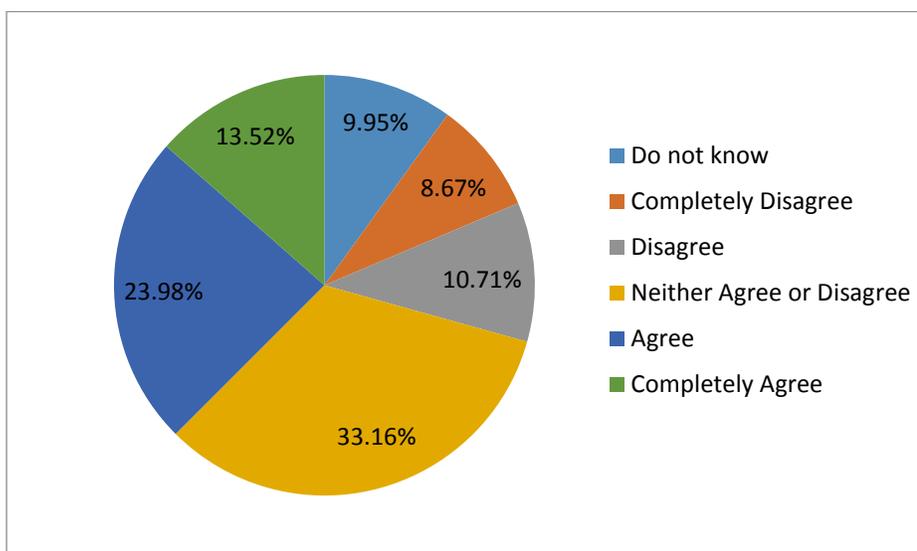


## Graphic 14 (Continued). Safety and Violence Perception.

Graphic 14g. Description: There are a lot of unemployed people in my neighborhood.



Graphic 14h. Description: Teenagers go to school regularly.



## Conclusions

We can conclude that in these communities, aspects of underdevelopment such as lack of education, unemployment, poverty, lack of access to public services, inequality, corruption, and food insecurity are drivers of conflict. This study determined that the main types of conflict were theft, gang violence, kidnapping and threats. Policies are needed that not only address specific socio-economic problems such as unemployment and lack of educational opportunities, but that also help remedy the deeper causes of conflict in Guatemala, particularly long embedded cultural inequalities, discrimination and prejudice.

## **Bibliography**

Brands, Hal. Crime, Violence, and the Crisis in Guatemala: A Case Study in the Erosion of the State. Strategic Studies Institute, 2010. <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB986.pdf>

Putzel, James. Do No Harm: International Support for Statebuilding. Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2010.

P1 Nombre del entrevistador \_\_\_\_\_ P2 Lugar de la entrevista \_\_\_\_\_ P3 Fecha de la entrevista \_\_\_\_\_

P4 Género del entrevistado:  Masculino  Femenino P5 Edad del entrevistado \_\_\_\_\_

P6 ¿Es usted la cabeza del hogar? (Si responde Sí, favor omitir la siguiente pregunta).  Sí  No

P7 Si no lo es, ¿cuál es su relación con la cabeza del hogar?

Esposa o Esposo  Hijo o hija  Padre o madre  Otro (favor especificar) \_\_\_\_\_

P8 ¿Cuál es su raza étnica?  Blanco  Mestizo  Mulato  Zambo  Negro

Indígena, favor especificar grupo \_\_\_\_\_  Otro (favor especificar) \_\_\_\_\_

P9 ¿Cuál es su religión?  Católico  Espiritualidad Maya  Protestante  Otra \_\_\_\_\_  Ninguna

P10 Favor describir a los miembros de su hogar

	Edad	Género	Aún en la Escuela	Años de Escuela	Empleado o Trabaja por sí mismo
1	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
2	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
3	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
4	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
5	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
6	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
7	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
8	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
9	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No
10	_____	_____	Sí / No	_____	Sí / No

P11 ¿Cuál es el ingreso mensual de su hogar, en promedio?

Menos de Q800 (-\$100)  Q800-1600 (\$100-200)  Q1600-2400 (\$200 - \$300)  Más de Q2400 (+\$300)

P12 ¿Cuál proporción de los ingresos de su hogar vienen de actividades agrícolas? \_\_\_\_%

P13 En su hogar, ¿alguien se ha ido a dormir con hambre durante el último mes?

Nunca  Raramente  Algunas veces  Seguido

P14 Durante los 12 meses pasados, ¿a usted le preocupó que se quedaran sin alimentos en su hogar antes de poder comprar comida adecuada?  Sí  No

P15 ¿Cuáles de estos conflictos cree usted que es la mayor amenaza para su hogar?

Conflictos armados  Protestas  Violencia por maras  Robos  Vandalismo  Fraude

Tráfico de drogas  Amenazas  Secuestros  Extorsiones  Abuso policial

Otro \_\_\_\_\_

P16 ¿A qué grado han afectado su hogar los siguientes conflictos durante los últimos dos años?

	Nunca	Ocasionalmente	Muy Frecuentemente	Siempre	Sin Opinión
Conflictos armados	<input type="radio"/>				
Protestas	<input type="radio"/>				
Violencia por Maras	<input type="radio"/>				
Robos	<input type="radio"/>				
Vandalismo	<input type="radio"/>				
Fraude	<input type="radio"/>				
Amenazas	<input type="radio"/>				
Tráfico de drogas	<input type="radio"/>				
Secuestros	<input type="radio"/>				
Extorciones	<input type="radio"/>				
Abuso policial	<input type="radio"/>				
Otros	<input type="radio"/>				

P17 ¿En su opinión, qué causa la violencia? Favor enumerar las 3 causas principales, colocando el número 1 en la causa mayor, el número 2 en la segunda causa y el número 3 en la tercer causa principal.

Desigualdad  Falta de educación  Corrupción  Inseguridad alimentaria  
 Pobreza  Falta de empleos  Falta de acceso a servicios públicos (agua, salud, infraestructura)

P18 Favor seleccionar la respuesta más adecuada

	Totalmente de Acuerdo	De Acuerdo	Ni de Acuerdo ni en Desacuerdo	Disagree	Totalmente en Desacuerdo	No Sé
Me siento seguro caminando por mi vecindario en la noche.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Me siento seguro cuando estoy solo en mi casa en la noche.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
El nivel de violencia en las calles ha aumentado los últimos dos años.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A veces oigo balazos de armas de fuego en mi vecindario.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La policía reduce el nivel de violencia en las calles.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Puedo confiar en la policía.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hay muchos desempleados en mi vecindario.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Los adolescentes van a la escuela regularmente.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Muchas gracias por completar esta encuesta para nuestro programa de investigación.