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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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.\textsuperscript{1} 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.\textsuperscript{2} 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.

\textit{Drivers of Conflict Study in Chimaltenango and El Quiché, Guatemala}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cum.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>66.32</td>
<td>66.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>33.68</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Obs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>32.368</td>
<td>13.167</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**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.

![Pie chart showing the distribution of responses to the question on other conflicts.]

**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.

![Pie chart showing the distribution of responses to the question on feeling safe at night.]

Do not know
Completely Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Completely Agree
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.

![Unemployment Pie Chart]

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

![School Attendance Pie Chart]

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


CDF Encuesta sobre Conflicto                      # de Encuesta: GUA____

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Edad</th>
<th>Género</th>
<th>Aún en la Escuela</th>
<th>Años de Escuela</th>
<th>Empleado o Trabaja por sí mismo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
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<td>Sí / No</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Sí / No</td>
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<td>Sí / No</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sí / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?
□ Conflicto 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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflictos armados</th>
<th>Nunca</th>
<th>Ocasionalmente</th>
<th>Muy Frecuentemente</th>
<th>Siempre</th>
<th>Sin Opinión</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestas</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violencia por Maras</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robos</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalismo</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraude</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenazas</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tráfico de drogas</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secuestros</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extorciones</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuso policial</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otros</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

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