Bridging Ideals and Reality

A Case Study of Community Policing Strategy 'Plan Cuadrante' in Post-Civil War Quetzaltenango, Guatemala

Michèle Josemans

Bridging Ideals and Reality

A Case Study of Community Policing Strategy 'Plan Cuadrante' in Post-Civil War

Quetzaltenango, Guatemala[1]

Master thesis LACS

Michèle Josemans

M.Josemans@students.uu.nl

3221911

Marie-Louise Glebbeek

---

[1] The picture on the front page is taken in the streets of Quetzaltenango in May 2011, by M. Josemans.

Abstract

Violence, crime, and insecurity have become increasingly important problems in contemporary society, as well in post-civil war country Guatemala. As a response to a rising need for solutions to this insecurity, community policing strategies are implemented worldwide. 'Plan Cuadrante' is an example of a community policing strategy implemented in several cities in Guatemala, under which highland town Quetzaltenango. The concept behind community policing strategies such as 'Plan Cuadrante' is that citizens become part of policing and work together with the police towards a more secure neighborhood or society for which mutual trust is needed in order to be successful. Unfortunately, fieldwork points out that this Western-oriented community policing ideal does not work as effective in transitional and divided Quetzaltenango. As a result of 36 years authoritarian rule and internal conflict, the police-community relationship is heavily disturbed in Guatemala and distrust on both sides blocks the way to successful community policing. As a consequence of the poor police-community relationship, absence of the police, and increasing insecurity in Quetzaltenango, citizens more and more turn to informal policing initiatives and take the law into their own hands in order to make their neighborhood safer. Citizen patrol groups and alarm systems are common examples of informal policing initiatives.

Preface

This thesis is the end result of a period full of valuable experiences, wise lessons, and a lot of hard work. However, this would not have been possible without the cooperation, help, and support of various persons. In the first place I want to thank the 'Plan Cuadrante' officers working at the division in Quetzaltenango, who were willing to share their experiences with me, gave me their confidence, and were patient with me when I fired numerous questions away every day. Because of them, I was able to get to know the persons behind the police uniform, which enriched my fieldwork experience for which I am very grateful. Thanks also goes out to the Guatemalan police force the PNC who provided me access to the field, with the help of Manon Derks. Thank you Manon for your time and effort in the beginning of my research. I also want to thank all the citizens living in Quetzaltenango who opened up their hearts to me and told me their personal stories which gave me interesting insights about the topics of my research. Although some citizens were afraid to talk with me, most of them gave me their trust, which resulted in many beloved contacts. Several civil society and human rights organizations were very helpful to me during my research, and provided me valuable information. Therefore I want to thank the 'Institute of Comparing Penitentiary Studies of Guatemala' (ICCPG), the Guatemalan Tourism Board (INGUAT), and the municipality of Quetzaltenango. My thanks go out to my dear family and friends, both in The Netherlands and in Guatemala, who supported me unconditionally during this period. Special thanks goes out to my grandmother Martí Dekány, who shared her own research experiences with me and has had a great influence on both my life and my studies. Finally, but not at least, I want to thank Marie-Louise Glebbeek, who coached me during this beautiful but sometimes difficult process. Thank you for your effort in guiding me into the right direction, for your expertise, the cozy conversations, and for giving me the chance to have this wonderful research experience in Guatemala.

Michèle Josemans

Utrecht, August 22, 2011

Contents

List of Illustrations

Pictures

Chapter 1: Introduction

In today's modern society violence and crime have become increasingly important issues, causing insecurity and the feeling of insecurity. In numerous places around the globe exists a rising need to find ways to solve this. Insecurity exists at the national level, but more visible at the local or community level. Citizens deal with a lack of safety within their neighborhood and specific policing strategies are needed to help them to feel secure. Community policing is a worldwide implemented policing strategy which tries to solve citizen insecurity by means of involving citizens in policing. Community policing requires a steady police-community relation in order to be effective. Within this strategy, citizens become part of policing and work together with the police towards a more secure neighborhood and even society. Research however points out that the originally Western community policing does not work as effective in non-western societies, such as in divided, post-war societies like Guatemala (Glebbeek, 2007:10). As a response to the absence of the police, citizens in those societies often turn to 'informal policing', of which citizen patrol groups and alarm systems are illustrations.

'Plan Cuadrante' is an example of a Latin American community policing strategy which originates from Chile and has been implemented in various Latin American countries including Guatemala. The by the Guatemalan police force 'Policía Nacional Civil' (PNC) adapted 'Plan Cuadrante', was first initiated in Guatemala-City in 2006, and later in Antigua Guatemala and Quetzaltenango. Quetzaltenango is the second largest city of Guatemala and is located in the western highlands of the country. Because of its more or less equally divided *ladino* and *indígena* population originating from all social classes, Quetzaltenango has a diverse and divided character. Being a divided city, Quetzaltenango forms an excellent setting in order to examine the community policing strategy 'Plan Cuadrante'. Whereas several studies are carried out about the functioning of 'Plan Cuadrante' in Guatemala-City and some in Antigua Guatemala, little is known about the strategy in Quetzaltenango. Studies on community policing have mostly been conducted in divided societies in Western countries, while information about this phenomenon in transitional and developing democracies such as Guatemala is scarce which makes my research innovative and of scientific and social importance. This thesis contributes to the scientific knowledge of the functioning of community policing strategies in post-conflict and divided societies by analyzing the outcomes and consequences of one particular community policing strategy. My research findings will generate insights for governments and policing institutions on community policing strategies and enables them to take possible outcomes and consequences into consideration. The social relevance of my research is that it might serve as an eye-opener for policy makers around the globe to make them adjust or even change their policing strategies in a way that local needs are taken into consideration so that police-community relationships can be improved and (the feeling of) insecurity in communities diminishes.

The title of this thesis, as can be seen on the front page, is: *Bridging Ideals and Reality. A Case Study of Community Policing Strategy 'Plan Cuadrante' in Post-Civil War Quetzaltenango,*

Guatemala. With this title I want to express the difficult task 'Plan Cuadrante' has in order to find an equilibrium between Western community policing ideals and Guatemalan reality. As will become clear in this thesis, Western countries or policing strategies, often overlook the readiness, poor police-community relationships, resources, government support, and often remaining military style policing tactics of transitional democracies such as Guatemala.

In this thesis I will describe how 'Plan Cuadrante' functions in Quetzaltenango, what the perceptions are of police officers and citizens on the current police-community relationship and on 'Plan Cuadrante' as a strategy, how it effects the security situation, and what the consequence is regarding the current police-community relationship and security situation in Quetzaltenango. The following central research question has guided my research and will be answered in this thesis: *How to describe and evaluate 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, in relation to the police-community relationship and perceptions of security?*

In order to find an answer to this question qualitative research was needed. Therefore, I conducted field research in Quetzaltenango for a period of four months, from the beginning of February until the end of May 2011. I carried out my research at various locations in Quetzaltenango where I could talk with and observe police officers and citizens. Most research activities took place at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office and the departmental head office 'La Comisaría 41'[2], during meetings with neighborhoods organizations, in community centers during security meetings, in several restaurants and coffee places where I had interviews with citizens, and in the streets. Participant observation, qualitative interviews, informal conversations, and analysis of secondary sources such as newspapers and television, were the main research methods used during my fieldwork.

I conducted my research among two different research populations; police officers and citizens. The majority of the police officers works at the division of 'Plan Cuadrante, although I also spoke to PNC police officers working at the Comisaría. The police officers represent both sexes and both *ladino* and *indígena* descent. They all fit into the age group of twenty to thirty years old and most of them originate from outside of Quetzaltenango. The majority of them only recently graduated from the police academy and directly entered 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango when the division was initiated in 2008. The local citizens live both in- and outside the assigned quadrants of 'Plan Cuadrante' and differentiate strongly in terms of demographical characteristics. These citizens are *ladino* and *indígena* men and women between twenty and eighty years old, belonging to all social classes. They are either actively participating in 'Plan Cuadrante' by means of membership of an organization active in security and neighborhood issues, just live in the assigned quadrants but do not actively participate, or are part of informal policing initiatives. I have personally spoken to all police officers and citizens mentioned in this thesis. In order to guarantee the readability of this thesis however, this will not be repeated constantly as I will speak about 'citizens' and 'police officers'.

---

[2] 'La Comisaría 41' here after will be called the Comisería.

Names of police officers and citizens are fictitious in order to guarantee their anonymity, except for names of police chiefs who have a public function. Furthermore, all pictures present in this thesis are taken by myself during my fieldwork in Quetzaltenango.

I will present my research findings in the following chapters. In chapter 2 I will explain the main theoretical concepts contributing to my research. First, I will describe models of insecurity, trust, othering, and the relationship between the police and its audience, after which I pay attention to the theory of community policing in general, and in Latin America specifically. Then, I will elaborate upon policing in post-civil war countries in which informal policing initiatives often play a significant role. In chapter 3, the theoretical concepts of chapter 2 are applied to the context of my research: community policing in post-civil war Guatemala. This contextual chapter reviews the Guatemalan police reform and describes community policing efforts and the police-community relationship in Guatemala before 'Plan Cuadrante' was implemented. Then I will introduce the community policing strategy 'Plan Cuadrante' and research location Quetzaltenango. Chapter 4, 5, and 6, present my empirical data in the light of the discussed theoretical concepts. Chapter 4 will describe how 'Plan Cuadrante' functions in Quetzaltenango, who the main actors involved are, which policing tactics are used, and what is the perception of PNC officers on 'Plan Cuadrante'. After that, attention is being paid to the police-community relationship in chapter 5. In this chapter concepts of interaction and trust are connected to the research findings obtained during my fieldwork and the impact of the divided character of Quetzaltenango on the current police-community relationship is being explained. Finally, chapter 6 gives an insight on the security situation in Quetzaltenango, describes the effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' as a community policing strategy, and displays the main consequence of the current police-community relationship and insecurity in Quetzaltenango; informal policing initiatives. I will end this thesis with a conclusion in chapter 7.

Chapter 2:Community Policing in a Divided Society

Introduction

This theoretical chapter I will describe community policing in a divided society. In the first paragraph I will give a short description of security in contemporary society, with the police as key actor involved. To provide efficient policing a good police-community relationship is required in all democratic societies. However, this relationship is often poor. To bridge the gap between police and communities, the policing strategy of community policing has been implemented. This will be explained in the second and third paragraph of this chapter, after which this strategy is put into context by analyzing community policing efforts in Latin America in paragraph 4. This paragraph illustrates policing in post-civil war countries, such as Guatemala, where police-community relationships are often heavily disturbed. In the last paragraph I examine the consequences of poor police-community relationships and increasing insecurity, described as 'informal policing'.

2.1. Insecurity and the Police - Community Relationship

In the global community of today large amounts of people feel increasingly insecure (Neild, 2003:278). Issues of public security [3] and policing have gained new prominence in the world. According to Duce and Pérez Perdomo (in Frühling, 2003:79;81), the perception of insecurity is socially constructed and does not only come forth out of the amount of violent crime involved, but also from the manner in which crime is experienced in society; translated into fear [4]. Within the notion of fear, the image of the criminal or conductor of crime is significant. People most often fear people who are 'not one of them' but 'the other'. People are afraid for the probability that they become victimized, and this stands alone from the statistical probability of being a victim. This social construction of fear is created through interpersonal communication, the media, and the way that society produces crime itself (Duce and Pérez Perdomo in Frühling, 2003:82). According to Mcllwaine and Moser (in Koonings and Kruijt, 2007:123), fear has outrageous consequences on people's spatial mobility which results in routinely avoiding certain areas of communities associated with danger and violence, also described by Rozema (in Koonings and Kruijt, 2007:64) when he uses the concept of 'fragmentation of space' of Restrapo, which demonstrates that fear has resulted in the

---

[3] Public security can be distinguished from national security in that it emphasizes protection of persons, democratic political institutions, and property from internal or external threats. National security focuses on the protection of the state from other state and trans-state actors, such as terrorism and organized crime (Bailey and Dammert, 2006:2).

[4] Fear can be defined as 'an emotion, or a feeling of coming up harm to one's well-being, either real or imagined. It involves an emotional, and sometimes physiological reaction to perceived danger' (Silverman, 2001:942).

limitation of many social spaces. Fear of crime is not only the direct result of criminal acts, but a sign of various daily insecurities about social, economic, and political issues such as unemployment and poverty (Dammert and Malone, 2006:3). The so called 'broken window theory' of Wilson and Kelling (1982) shows that whenever there is fear of crime among people it eventually leads to heightened levels of crime. Disorder in a community, like broken windows, makes citizens to withdraw from their community. This will lead to the decline of informal social control in the particular neighborhood and that is hypothesized to cause an increase in crime (Hinkle and Weisburd, 2008:1; Glebbeek, 2007:7). In the upcoming chapters it will become clear however, that this works differently in research location Quetzaltenango where citizens turn to informal policing initiatives as a response to disorder and rising insecurity.

Paradoxically, the police and the law system, have become a major source of insecurity themselves (Tulchin and Golding, 2003:1). According to Tulchin and Golding (2003:1;5), failure of states to respond to the sense of insecurity has direct consequences on civil society since citizens feel more secure when they feel that state authorities pay attention to the problem of insecurity and that the police are held accountable for this. Duce and Pérez Perdomo (in Frühling, 2003:82) add that when a large part of the population believes that the police do not respond to the collective needs of the citizens or when the police themselves are involved in criminal activities, confidence of the citizens in the police and the state decreases.

Citizens' most frequent contact with the state is with the police, which makes a good relationship between the two important (Neild, 2003:277). According to Weitzer (1995:1), good relations can facilitate police work in every area where police come in contact with citizens, whereas poor relations may damage interaction between police and citizens, make citizens unwilling to denunciate crimes, intensify the danger of police work, and lower police morale. The police have a key role in protecting citizens so that citizens can live in non-violent relations with other citizens and the state (Klockars in Newburn, 2005:443). The relationship between the police and the community in general is contradictory. On the one hand, the community wants the police to solve social problems and maintain order, but on the other hand it sees police' interference and law enforcement as an intervention in their private affairs (Manning in Newburn, 2005:197). Policemen in their turn, see citizens as 'the enemy' (Manning in Newburn, 2005:208). Similar to what mentioned before, communities have expectations from the police which policemen cannot meet. This creates a feeling of disappointment and frustration and can result in communities feeling alone and abandoned by the police and the enforcement of law. According to Manning (in Newburn, 2005:200), the bigger the difference between perceptions of the police and the community are about the degree and kind of order to be preserved, the more hostility it will create between the two. As a result, the police manipulate public appearances in order to gain and maintain public support (Manning in Newburn, 2005:205). Manning (in Newburn, 2005:207) states that in some suburban and middleclass communities the police create a degree of harmony by carrying out successfully their public demands. However, this is

mainly not the case in urban, lower class communities, where the police do not bridge the gap between the state and citizens. In these cases, citizens do not understand the police and vice versa and communication and understanding between the two is lacking.

Policing takes place in different types of societies. One type of society which the police tries to manage is the 'divided society', which is relevant to the context of this research (Brewer in Glebbeek, 2003:179). According to Brewer (in Glebbeek, 2003:280), divided societies deal with social conflicts about religion, ethnicity, race, or national origin. Moreover, people living in divided societies are often also divided in terms of social, political, economic, and geographical background (Brewer in Glebbeek, 2003:280). As a consequence of this diversity, 'othering' often occurs in divided societies. According to Lister (in Krumer-Nevo and Benjamin, 2010:695), othering is a process of differentiation and demarcation, in which difference is translated to inferiority. Othering in this way, creates a barrier between 'us' and 'them' which leads to social distancing (Krumer-Nevo and Benjamin, 2010:696). Othering is highly present in the divided society of Quetzaltenango, which will also become clear in the empirical chapters of this thesis.

In a divided society the police have to serve more than one community, which makes policing complicated. Often is seen that dominant groups in a particular community are being served, while other groups remain unheard. This is called 'selective law enforcement' (Brewer in Glebbeek, 2003:281). According to Brewer (in Glebbeek, 2003:281), police forces in a divided society frequently neglect criminal activities of the dominant group while special attention is paid to the behavior of minorities. In divided or fragmented societies, policy solutions to the problem of violence and crime are less likely to be successful and often create a gap and distance between social groups (Tulchin and Golding, 2003:5). Community policing is an attempt to bridge this gap.

2.2. Community Policing

Community policing is described by Goldstein (1979) as an organizational policing strategy in order to regain lost efficiency (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:441). With the degradation of the image of the United States police in the 1970's, the police was in search for new solutions to regain confidence of the public which resulted in the strategy of community policing (Clockars in Newburn, 2005:443) [5]. Through community policing, communities have been created by the police, where formerly neighbors were strangers (Clockars in Newburn, 2005:453). Citizens who share different socio-economic, political, ethnic and geographical backgrounds, which is the case in divided societies, have to manage to live peacefully in the same community. It is the task of the police to create a feeling of safeness within the community. Because of differences among groups and communities, community policing

---

[5] Clockars (in Newburn, 2005:449) describes a community as "a group of people with a common history, common beliefs and understandings, a sense of themselves as 'us' and outsiders as 'them', and often, but not always, a shared territory".

strategies work differently in different settings (Wilson and Kelling in Newburn, 2005:469; Fielding, 2005:460).

According to Wisler and Onwudiwe (2008:441), the main aim of community policing is to provide more equity and fairness, and putting emphasis on minorities and vulnerable groups. Furthermore, it should improve the police-community relationship and reduce fear among citizens, who have become active agents in this respect (Edwards, 2005:96). The police should involve the community in their police work in order to decrease violence and crime and thus insecurity. This gives communities the feeling that they matter in crime prevention in which reciprocity is a basic concept (Clockars in Newburn, 2005:452-453). The community becomes the 'eyes-and-ears-of-the-police' and a public forum for information exchange (Clockars in Newburn, 2005:450;451). Glebbeek (2007:10) however states that it should be noted, that this kind of 'partnership' can only be successful when there is mutual trust between citizens and police, which often is not the case in divided societies. Trust therefore is an important concept within community policing [6]. According to Anderson and Apap (2002:15), trust is essential for maintaining stable relationships and is fundamental for the maintenance of cooperation, which is highly required in community policing. Within community policing, trust in the police can increase police effectiveness and the legitimacy of police actions (Goldsmith, 2005:444). Furthermore, when the public view the police as trustworthy, public co-operation with the police is more likely, something which is significant in community policing. According to Goldsmith (2005:444), trust cannot be taken for granted due to its fragile character which depends on factors both within and outside police control.

Examples of community policing strategies are: neighborhood watches, community meetings, community policing boards, problem-solving attempts that involve citizens, coordination of recreational activities for youths, and coordination of programs to reduce fear of crime among community members (Berg, 1999:73; Lum, 2009:793). Especially the latter example is important in community policing, due to its major influence on the effectiveness of the strategy. Fear among citizens in a divided society is primarily based on crime, especially crime that involves violent attacks by strangers or 'others' such as disorderly people like drunks, addicts, or mentally disturbed (Wilson and Kelling in Newburn, 2005:461). These people are not necessarily violent or criminal but bad-tempered or unpredictable. Mcllwaine and Moser (in Koonings and Kruijt, 2007:122), describe that stigmatization is a direct consequence of fear, which fosters social exclusion and isolation. Fear therefore alienates the individual from society, which is harmful for creating a sense of community and therefore has direct consequences for community policing (Tulchin and Golding, 2003:5).

Several critiques developed concerning community policing, questioning the efficiency of this strategy, since it has not proven to reduce crime rates (Klockars in Newburn, 2005:454). Furthermore,

---

[6] The definition of trusts rests on the beliefs of people reacting or not reacting in certain ways and requires reciprocity and moral obligation in terms of shared morals and values. Trust is of crucial importance in relationships between individuals who are members of the same family, organization, or national society (Anderson and Apap, 2002:15).

Fielding (2005:461) states that evidence has proved that community policing is particularly problematic in just those divided communities where crime rates are high and is believed that it has most to contribute, due to problems of definition, interpretation, implementation and evaluation. Another common critique, is that instead of making the police more responsive to communities, community policing increases police control over the community (Glebbeek, 2007:11). Moreover Klockars (in Newburn, 2005:454) argues that decentralization of command, by multiplication of precincts, fosters corruption.

One tactic of community policing to reduce fear among citizens is foot patrol. Research of Wilson and Kelling (1982) in the United States points out that foot patrol reduces citizens' fear of crime and positively affects citizens' perceptions of the police. According to Wilson and Kelling (in Newburn, 2005:466), citizens seem to feel more secure when police officers walk around in their neighborhood, than citizens in areas without foot patrol. The studied citizens tended to believe that crime reduced and that their neighborhood had become safer due to foot patrol. Citizens approached an officer on foot more easily for retaining their anonymity, than an officer in a car or on a motorcycle (Wilson and Kelling in Newburn, 2005:466). Besides that, they had a more favorable opinion about the police in general than citizens elsewhere. Foot patrolling officers felt a greater job satisfaction and a more favorable attitude towards citizens than officers in patrol cars or on motorcycles (Wilson and Kelling in Newburn, 2005:460). However, Clockars (in Newburn, 2005:455) argues that there is no evidence that foot patrolling can reduce or prevent crime. Skeptics argue that foot patrolling fools citizens into thinking that they are safer (Wilson and Kelling in Newburn, 2005:460). Furthermore it must be noted that it is not clear if foot patrolling and community policing in general, has the same effect on Latin American citizens as it has on North Americans. Community policing is a strategy invented in Western countries and it can be questioned if this policy works in non-Western countries, or might overlook the readiness and resources of non-Western communities for self-regulation (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:442;443).

2.3. Community Policing in Latin America

Community policing programs have been introduced on a small scale in Latin American countries from the 1990's onward (Glebbeek, 2007:9). 'Plan Cuadrante' is an example of a community policing strategy implemented in various Latin American countries. The strategy was introduced as a consequence of various factors, such as increasing insecurity rates, lacking professionalism and efficiency of public security forces, and the abuse of force, which explains why new models for preventing and controlling crime were needed (Frühling and Cancina, 2005:5). The outcomes and the effectiveness of community policing vary heavily between Latin American countries and depend mainly on the history of a particular country (Dammert and Malone, 2006:1, WOLA, 2009:35). In the

best case, community policing makes policing more transparent and responsive to community needs, whereas in the worst case, it produces repressive practices or supports the continued dominance of privileged sectors (WOLA, 2009:35).

Since many Latin American countries have a history of conflict between the police and its public, it is not surprising that difficulties arose in implementing community policing in the continent. Obstacles for successful community policing in Latin America are low levels of professionalism and motivation, considerable problems in controlling abuses and corruption, and weak infrastructure and funding (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:25; Glebbeek, 2007:9). In order for community policing to be effective in Latin American countries, changes in police skills and management are needed. However, these changes often are against the institutional culture and organization of Latin American police forces, and police officers involved do not always accept the grounds of the community policing model. (Glebbeek, 2007:9; Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:25). According to Frühling (in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:38), citizens' participation in community policing has not succeeded in redefining priorities for police action and citizens are ill-prepared to interact with the police which explains these difficulties. There exists a general lack of public confidence in the police in many Latin American countries (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:44).

2.4. Policing in Post-Civil War Countries

Transitional post-civil war countries are characterized by changes from authoritarian regimes to more liberal and democratic forms of governance. In practice, however, this often remains an ideology since 'new' governments maintain former authoritarian forms of governance and practices (Lum, 2009:788). Latin American postwar police forces are known for their highly militarized and hierarchical structures of control and command, in which respect and physical skills often are more important than communication and other skills (Glebbeek, 2007:9). Lum (2009:789) states that changes in governance are mainly visible in policing, being the most on-the-ground display of government authority. The police are central and critical actors in post-conflict countries because of the need for governments to guard the security and safety needs of their population (Pino and Wiatrowski, 2006:77).

According to Glebbeek (2003:42), police forces often lack the autonomy to generate changes by themselves in a new political order. They can undermine or reinforce democracy, but they cannot create it. Therefore, it becomes difficult for police forces to make a change when a regime is not dedicated to democracy. In post-conflict countries, there frequently exist unrealistic expectations about what the police will accomplish (Pino and Wiatrowski, 2006:76). In this context, citizens are needed to accomplish successful policing, which becomes difficult when a stable police-community relationship

and mutual respect is lacking. Transition to liberal and democratic regimes often go hand in hand with an increase in violence and crime, causing serious problems for the police such as social chaos, repressive crime control strategies used by police, police corruption which may foster transnational crime networks, and the lack of dedication to democracy of police and civil society (Pino and Wiatrowski, 2006:77).

2.5. Informal Policing in Response to Insecurity in Post-Civil War Countries

Post-civil war countries such as Guatemala often have poor police-community relationships and weak criminal justice systems that lack the capacity, resources, and political will to investigate and punish most crimes. In response, citizens are skeptic about official law enforcement efforts and see the authorities as incompetent (Snodgrass Godoy, 2002:644). Citizens therefore turn to 'informal policing' or bottom-up community policing, whereas community policing initiated by the state is called top-down community policing (Neild, 2003:292). Wisler and Onwudiwe (2008:428) define informal policing as 'policing of everyday life' or 'community-generated policing'. According to them informal policing can be described as a net contributor to local safety or de facto policing taking place (mostly) outside of the regulatory framework of the state (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:428). In recent years informal policing has gained popularity and is widely being practiced by communities in divided, incomplete and weak states; often post-conflict countries (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:427). Weak states often unwittingly create a 'policing gap', indicating a gap between public needs and the police ability to respond to this. States with such a gap might be tempted to tolerate or even encourage informal policing strategies to compensate their lack of policing capacity (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:435). In this context it can be argued that the Western idea of community policing of a state in search of a community works the other way around in divided societies; the community is in search for the state (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:427).

By means of informal policing citizens try to resolve personal conflicts or assert their positions within society (Neild, 2003:292). As a reaction to the acts or absence of the police, more and more citizens stand up against this, and unite in often violent ways (Huggins, 1991:3). Citizens speak back in the language of the law, which is in many post-civil war countries the language of violence, since they lack traditions of peaceful conflict resolution (Snodgrass Godoy, 2002:652). According to Neild (2003:283) informal policing initiatives weaken the effectiveness of public institutions such as the police. Functions of public and private security overlap and mixed spaces between public and private start to exist (Arias, 2009:23). The state's security function is being displaced to the citizenry (Argueta, 2010:13).

There exist various types of informal policing, with both a pacific as a violent character. Some people purchase their own security by means of 'gated communities' whereby citizens literally buy their own security and create a safe private zone through physical inaccessibility (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:431; WOLA, 2009:5). This private security is mostly purchased by people of the higher classes, while most poorer citizens who cannot afford to hire private security guards confront the problem more directly. Most of these citizens organize themselves pacifically by means of citizen patrols and alarm systems while some of them use 'vigilantism' as a strategy to fight insecurity. Vigilantism is a common form of informal policing in response to state ineffectiveness combined with a culture of violence and can be seen as self-defense of 'voiceless' excluded groups in society (Neild, 2003:284, Snodgrass Godoy, 2004:643). According to Huggins (1991:7), perpetrators of vigilantism can be private citizens, official state agents, or both. Vigilant groups use excessive violence, such as lynching, in order to gain more security in the community (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:430). The use of excessive violence distinguishes vigilant groups from for example neighborhood watches, who in general do not use this extralegal violence (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:430;435). Vigilante groups are also described as illegal extensions or alternative policing styles, as they 'help' the police where the police do not carry out its own tasks (Van Reenen in Koonings and Kruijt, 2004:33-34).

Chapter 3: Community Policing in Post-Civil War Guatemala

Introduction

The basic concepts of this thesis described in the former chapter will now be related to the context of the research. In the first paragraph I will discuss the Guatemalan police reform, after which I pay attention to community policing and the police-community relationship in Guatemala in paragraph 2. 'Plan Cuadrante' being an example of a community policing strategy implemented in Guatemala will be described in paragraph 3. Finally, I will focus more specifically on research location 'Quetzaltenango' in relation to 'Plan Cuadrante', its security situation, and informal policing initiatives in paragraph 4.

3.1. Police Reform in Post-Civil War Guatemala

Police reform is the most frequent response to perceptions of increased insecurity and refers to improving efficiency and effectiveness of police forces in preventing crime, and strengthens their accountability (Bailey and Dammert, 2006:2). According to Frühling (in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:16), the Guatemalan police reform has been one of the most wide-ranging police reforms in Latin America. Before the police reform, Guatemala had suffered from 36 years of internal conflict, which was the longest internal war in Central America (Argueta, 2010:5). In 1996, the final Peace Accords opened the way for democratization and social and institutional reform (Glebbeek, 2001:431). The Guatemalan police reform called for a new civilian police in order to replace the old police, which had a bad reputation due to repressive, politicized actions controlled by the armed forces (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:15). Glebbeek (2001:432) states that the former police was known for the use of violence, its involvement in political repression and crime, corruption, poor quality of competences and resources, and lack of knowledge of human rights and citizenship.

Several attempts were made to reform the police between 1986 and 1996 but none of them were successful due to military control, corruption and intimidation (Glebbeek, 2003:111). International donors were often involved in these attempts, but eventually lost interest as a consequence of the continuation of corruption, violence, military control, and the absence of real improvement (Glebbeek, 2001:434). According to Glebbeek (2003:111), during these attempts of reform, the military constantly blocked the way to police reform out of fear to lose control over internal security affairs.

Eventually, the new police force grew out of the peace agreements between the government and guerilla forces and was called 'Policía Nacional Civil' or PNC (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:30). With the PNC, there would be made a clear distinction between police and

military roles in order to break with the often violent, repressive, and subordinated character of the 'Policía Nacional' or PN; important for the construction of democracy and the rule of law in Guatemala (Glebbeek, 2001:432, WOLA, 2009:4). Within the reform, the total amount of police officers had to be doubled, and the motivation, skills, and orientations of the new officers had to be compatible with the principles of the rule of law and democracy (Glebbeek, 2001:432, WOLA, 2009:4). In 2006, the PNC consisted of 20,136 police officers who had to serve a population of 13,018,000 Guatemalans, which means that there was 1,55 police officer available for every 1,000 citizens (WOLA, 2009:8).

Although the old police forces were replaced, the level of police training was low, and a great amount of the 'new' police officers came from old security forces and entered the PNC after three months of training (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:30; Glebbeek, 2001:451). According to Glebbeek (2001:452), the police training within the PNC remained hierarchical, formal, and military-style. Furthermore, the army continued to play a significant role in domestic security (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:30). The Arzú government (1996-2000), who was responsible for the implementation of the police reform, mainly thought in short-term solutions, which eventually did not lead to a successful police force on the long run (WOLA, 2009:4). In order to have the police reform ready as quickly as possible, the government decided to incorporate the old PN personnel into the PNC, which resulted in the preservation of 'old' practices such as corruption, abuse, and incompetence. Of the PNC police agents 11,000 of the 19,000 had been members of the old PN (WOLA, 2009:4). Another short-term solution was the low-quality testing, selection, and admission of candidates for the Fifth Promotion (Glebbeek, 2003:143, WOLA, 2009:4). Candidates for the PNC were mainly motivated by economical reasons instead of the desire to improve the police force and the security situation in Guatemala, and their educational level was low (Glebbeek, 2001:452, WOLA, 2009:4). The reform was marked by deficiencies in terms of recruitment, equipment, training, leadership, and internal discipline, which undermined the efficiency, quality and professionalism of the PNC (WOLA, 2009:5).

3.2. Community Policing and Police-Community Relationship in Guatemala

Just as in the rest of Central America, several community policing initiatives were implemented in Guatemala as part of citizen security (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:29, Glebbeek, 2007:9). The PNC implemented various programs of community policing in Guatemala, such as police-neighborhood meetings, the organization of community activities, and spreading flyers about crime-prevention. The core of these initiatives are the local Citizen Security Councils 'Juntas Locales de Seguridad' or 'JLSs', which are a form of noncommercial private security boards. 'Juntas Locales' are invented to facilitate community participation as a way to gain citizens' confidence in the police,

gather information and support for the police, and improve the police-community relationship (WOLA, 2009:37; Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:30). JLSs are one example among others of civil organizations that support the state's role of social and political control (Argueta, 2010:22). In 2009, the PNC reported 1,029 JLSs countrywide, which are under the coordination and supervision of the General Sub directorate for Crime Prevention ('Subdirección General de Prevención del Delito') established in 2005 (Wola, 2009:37, Argueta, 2010:24). According to Frühling (in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:30), JLSs serve as an informal resource for the police, but work independently. They include representatives of several sectors of the local population such as the government, educational institutions, neighborhood committees, merchants, and businesspeople. Regardless of these community involvement attempts, JLSs have worked well in middle- and upper-class communities but failed in more economically depressed areas where crime is a more serious problem (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:30). According to Frühling (in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:30) and Argueta (2010:24), the model of the PNC has failed in lower class communities as a result of distrust between the police and citizens.

Members of JLS's often take part in other citizen organizations such as neighborhood committees called 'Comité Comunitario de Desarrollo' or COCODE. COCODE's are local citizen committees created by the government to focus on issues in a particular neighborhood such as infrastructure and security, and report to the municipality about these issues in order to improve the living conditions in their neighborhood (Kramer, 2010:27). The membership within a COCODE is not obligatory as citizens can decide themselves to be part of it or not. Every COCODE member has one specific task, such as being a representative of health, infrastructure, or security, which makes a person responsible for specific issues in the neighborhood (Kramer, 2010:27).

In 2004, a study was conducted by the Inter-American Human Rights Institute (IIDH) on community policing in Villa Nueva, Guatemala. This study showed that despite obstacles reflected in low levels of democratic culture, citizens were willing to participate in community policing whenever they have a concrete opportunity to do this (Frühling and Cancina, 2005:26). Frühling and Cancina (2005:26) therefore argue that the positive attitude of Guatemalan citizens towards community policing represents the opportunity of restoring the police-community relationship. However, as is shown in the Villa Nueva case study, the historically justified mistrust in the police, the possibility that the experience will be politically exploited, the lack of stability, and the creation of false expectations, strongly influence the degree of community participation in Guatemala (Frühling and Cancina, 2005:33). Distrust between police and community thus has prevailed in Guatemala, as did repressive tendencies of the police and the population (Frühling and Cancina, 2005:26).

3.3. 'Plan Cuadrante'

'Plan Cuadrante' is a form of community policing implemented in Latin America. 'Plan Cuadrante' or 'Quadrant Plan', originates from Chile and 'was designed to address increased crime in urban areas and the imbalance in the allocation of human and logistical recourses assigned to the various municipalities within the Metropolitan Region of Santiago de Chile' (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:25). According to Frühling (in Tulchin and Ruthenberg, 2005:26), 'Plan Cuadrante' was one of the first strategies that made community participation a part of crime prevention in Latin America. An important objective of the plan is to increase police presence on the streets by working in small quadrants. Theoretically, each quadrant has a precinct and a police unit under the command of an officer who is responsible for addressing the specific needs of the quadrant. It will turn out later however that this is not the case in Quetzaltenango. The responsibility for running a quadrant is to address and solve problems of the quadrants' population (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenberg, 2005:26). 'Plan Cuadrante' does not include changes in the internal organization of the police, subculture of the police, police training, or internal controls, although these are important elements that need to be changed in order to bring community policing into practice (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenberg, 2005:26, Fielding, 2005:462). It is not coincidental that this originally Chilean community policing strategy has been adopted by the PNC of Guatemala, since Guatemala and Chile kept close ties after they signed a co-operative agreement in 1991. Glebbeek (2001:435) argues that since that moment the Chilean police force occasionally has been involved in the training and technical assistance of the PN of Guatemala.

'Plan Cuadrante' has been implemented by former national coordinator PNC Commissioner Celso Batén López in several areas of Guatemala, such as Guatemala-city (El Progreso, Mixco and Vila Nueva), Antigua Guatemala, and Quetzaltenango (USAID, 2009:2). Research is carried out about 'Plan Cuadrante' in Guatemala-city and Antigua Guatemala by USAID (2009), Frühling (2005), and Fielding (2005), whereas little is known about the plan in Quetzaltenango.

3.4. Citizen Security, Informal Policing, and 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango

Quetzaltenango is the second largest city of Guatemala, located in the Western highlands. In the late 19th century, Quetzaltenango became a major centre for coffee trade which eventually led to the country's first bank established in Quetzaltenango (Boobbyer, 2002:202). Consequently, the city became an attractive place for investors which resulted in the economic and demographic growth of the city. The population of the department of Quetzaltenango is estimated at 771,674 inhabitants in 2010 (INE, 2010). During the internal conflict, Quetzaltenango has been more or less saved from

devastation and damage. Nevertheless, the city is deeply socially divided, just as other highland communities in Guatemala (Snodgrass Godoy, 2002:649). According to Rasch (2008:31), the city has a relatively mixed ethnic character, since almost half of the population is *ladino* and the other half is *indígena*. Quetzaltenango is also diverse in terms of class, and contains wealthy neighborhoods, such as 'gated communities', and lower class neighborhoods outside the city centre.

Just as in the country as a whole, citizen security has also become an increasingly important problem in Quetzaltenango. According to Kramer (2010:28), there are no reliable statistics about crime rates in Quetzaltenango, since crime rates kept by police precincts distinguish strongly from rates documented by the Public Ministry (Kramer, 2010:28). However it can be stated that Quetzaltenango has a relatively violent character, since the Quetzaltenango' police documented 226 robberies, thirteen thefts, nineteen murders, nineteen rapes, one kidnapping, 45 extortions, and 82 times domestic violence in the first two months of 2010 (Kramer, 2010:28). These numbers might be incomplete which might mean that the numbers are even higher. Due to the fact that delinquency is rising in Guatemala as a whole, it is assumable that crime rates in Quetzaltenango follow this trend (OSAC, 2011:1). Unfortunately, the number of national police officers has not increased simultaneously and the Guatemalan government of president Álvaro Colom (2008 – 2012) mainly focuses on the country's defense budget in terms of military expenditure in order to combat organized crime, drug smuggling, and other violent delinquency, instead of on public security (Jane's Sentinal Security Assessment, 2011).

Both on a national and on a regional level, gang members and disorderly people such as alcoholics and drug abusers are seen as the main perpetrators of crime in Guatemala (Human Rights Watch, 2011:1, Kramer, 2010:30). In reaction to insecurity in Quetzaltenango, citizens created patrol groups and alarm systems in order to prevent crime in their neighborhood and 'gated communities' can be found in every zone of the city (Kramer, 2010:46). Although vigilante groups do exist in whole Guatemala including Quetzaltenango, little is known about them, their nature and activities.

On the 8th of December 2008, 'Plan Cuadrante' was implemented in Quetzaltenango in order to reduce criminality and diminish insecurity (PNC, 2008). 'Plan Cuadrante' police officers work literally next to the 'normal' police or PNC, both in different zones. 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PNC are both part of the Comisaría, the departmental head office which regulates the PNC in the province of Quetzaltenango under supervision of sub commissary Alfonso Sacba Pop. The functioning of 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango will be described in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: The Functioning of 'Plan Cuadrante'

Introduction

In this first empirical chapter I will describe the functioning of 'Plan Cuadrante' located in Quetzaltenango. In the first paragraph I will introduce the division and provide information about its function, policy making, staff, and the zones where 'Plan Cuadrante' operates. Then I will explain what are the main actors involved in the police work of the division, after which I elaborate upon the policing tactics used by 'Plan Cuadrante' in paragraph 3. Finally, perceptions of PNC officers on 'Plan Cuadrante' will be described in paragraph 4.

4.1. 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango

Before the Chilean community policing strategy 'Plan Cuadrante' was implemented in Guatemala in 2006, former Guatemalan PNC official Celso Batén Lopez went to Chile in order to receive an extensive training of the *cabineros* [7], including information about the main tactics and strategies used within 'Plan Cuadrante'. Back in Guatemala, Batén got in charge of all three departmental divisions. He instructed the assigned chiefs and visited the different departmental divisions a couple of times a year in order to see if 'Plan Cuadrante' was put in practice properly the way it was meant by the *cabineros*. Nevertheless, it seems that the overall strategy of 'Plan Cuadrante' such as was meant by the *cabineros* and Batén got lost in Guatemala during the years since every division uses its own tactics and strategies and there does not exist an overall communication in this respect [8]. An illustration of this is the fact that missions of 'Plan Cuadrante' divisions in Quetzaltenango [9], Guatemala-City [10], and Antigua Guatemala differ [11], which are all part of the very same community policing strategy and PNC institution. It also appears that there exists internal confusion about the

---

[7] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' inspector Regino Hernandez García. May 27, 2011

[8] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' inspector Regino Hernandez García. May 27, 2011.

[9] Mission statement 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango as described in its leaflet: '*Vigilar, identificar factores de riesgo, establacer niveles de relación, confianza, conocimiento, comunicación e interacción con la comunidad e instituciones públicas y privadas, para mejorar la percepción de seguridad objetiva y subjetiva mediante la prevención, detección y persecución'*.

[10] Mission statement 'Plan Cuadrante' Guatemala-City: '*Brindar un mejor Servicio de Seguridad Ciudadana a nivel Profesional, mediante una excelente Relación y Cooperación entre Ciudadanía, Policia Nacional Civil, y otras Instancias del Estado, Sociedad Civil, Organizaciones Públicas y Privada's.*

[11] Mission statement 'Plan Cuadrante' Antigua Guatemala: '*Brindar un mejor Servicio de Seguridad Ciudadana a nivel Profesional, mediante una excelente Relación y Cooperación entre Ciudadanía, Policia Nacional Civil, y otras Instancias del Estado, y Sociedad Civil'.* See also the research of Judith Schols, 2011.

mission statement, since 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango has a different mission statement written on the walls of the office than described in its leaflets [12].

On the 8th of December of 2008, 'Plan Cuadrante' was initiated in Quetzaltenango, see the picture below of the office.

Picture 1.   The office or '*sede*' of 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango.

'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango started with a team of 85 police officers, including officers on permission and officers recovering from accidents, under the command of official II Abel Donaldo Juarez Fuentes [13]. This official still leads the division in 2011 with the help of an inspector and sub-inspector, who take over when the official is not available. Most 'Plan Cuadrante' officers entered the division directly after they graduated from the police academy in 2008, others worked a couple of years at PNC divisions elsewhere, and some of them are so called recycled police officers originating from the former PN. In general, 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are young men and women of twenty to thirty years old, originating from places outside of Quetzaltenango. The majority of them comes from the coastal area called Mazatenango, has a lower social status, and has a *ladino* or *indígena* ethnic background.

The 'Plan Cuadrante' personnel is divided into 'street' personnel or *'operacíones'* and office personnel called '*oficinistas'*. Some officers work both at the office and in the streets so that they are able to replace a colleague in case of illness. The police officers work in shifts, meaning that eighteen officers work in the streets per shift while four officers are present at the office. *Oficinistas* make days of sixteen hours, work continuously for eleven days and then rest four or five days, and police officers in the streets work seven days of sixteen hours divided in two shifts and rest four days. Before every new shift the chief who is in charge that day gives a so called *'formación'*, which is a little speech of

---

[12] Mission statement 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango as written on the wall of the office: *'Promover el acercamiento entre comunidad y policía nacional civil de forma pacífica y armonica a travez el respeto a la vida'*.

[13] The Guatemalan police hierarchy from below to the top: *Agente – Subinspector – Inspector –Oficial III – Oficial II – Oficial I – Subcomisario – Comisario – Comisario General*.

thirty minutes containing information about the focus of the day, certain dangers, and changes occurred during the last twenty-four hour. During a *formación* of the inspector of 'Plan Cuadrante' he said the following:

> Ladies and gentlemen, a new day is about to begin. As you all know, there have been some problems during the last days with store robberies in zone 3. We should not slacken our attention. We have to be alert so that we can catch these delinquents. The police officer who catches them gets a permission of five days. Let this motivates you and make sure you will be around when something happens so that we can capture them [14].

From this speech it seems that 'Plan Cuadrante' focuses mainly on the capturing of delinquents instead of preventing crime in small quadrants, which is described as the main objective of 'Plan Cuadrante' by Frühling (in Tulchin and Ruthenberg, 2005:26). The reason why quadrants of 'Plan Cuadrante' should be small is that police officers should pass by constantly so that citizens, including delinquents, notice the police presence in their neighborhood. This police presence should lead to a better relationship between citizens and the police resulting in more denunciations, a feeling of safety, and diminishing delinquency. In Quetzaltenango however, the assigned quadrants have the size of an entire zone which hinders the preventive concept of 'Plan Cuadrante' due to minimal patrolling and police presence. Edy de Leon, who is an employee of the municipality of Quetzaltenango, therefore does not talk about 'Plan Cuadrante' anymore, but about 'Plan Zonal' [15]. In the urban centre of Quetzaltenango live approximately 127,600 inhabitants, spread over an area of 120 square kilometres which is divided into eleven zones (Consejo Departemental de Desarrolo Quetzaltenango, 2006). Theoretically this would mean that each zone has the size of eleven square kilometres containing about 11,6 thousand inhabitants. As can be seen on the picture below, these zones vary heavily in size, shape, and population density, which makes it difficult to determine how many citizens each zone inhabits and thus how many citizens 'Plan Cuadrante' serves per zone.

---

[14] Observation during *formación* at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office. May 15, 2011.
[15] Interview employee of municipality Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. March 30, 2011.

Picture 2.   Zones covered by 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango (shaded by blue lines).

'Plan Cuadrante' is currently active in zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and occasionally in zones 6 and 7. Most of these zones are part of downtown Quetzaltenango and have an urban character, while the Comisaría covers more rural zones outside the city centre. In order to understand the context of 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango, some information is needed about the characteristics of each zone where it is active.

Zone 1 can be described as the historic city centre of Quetzaltenango. Most governmental and historic buildings are located in this zone as well as the central park. Most tourists live in zone 1 because of the high concentration of accommodation facilities, bars and restaurants, but also locals - mostly middle class families - live here. Nevertheless, zone 1 also includes marginal neighborhoods located on the borders of the zone. Zone 2 and 4 have a similar character since they are both zones with low commercial activities and are located on the border of the city centre. These zones are mainly inhabited by lower to middle class citizens and make a marginal appearance. Zone 3 is the high priority zone of 'Plan Cuadrante' or 'punto rojo' in which three patrol cars are active instead of one such as is the case in other zones covered. With market places 'La Democracia', 'La Terminal', which is located next to the central bus station used by both locals and tourists, and shopping mall 'La Pradera', zone 3 forms an attractive place for delinquents to operate. Most delinquency takes place in this area which makes it a relatively dangerous zone. In addition to its commercial activities, it also inhabits most universities and colleges and is home for citizens from all social classes. Zone 6 and 7 have a more rural character in comparison with the other zones and are located on the borders of the city, connected to the rural zones covered by the PNC. People of all social classes live in these zones, as both marginal and upper class neighborhoods or 'gated communities' coexist there. According to

'Plan Cuadrante' officers, zone 6 and 7 are only covered occasionally due to the lack of personnel, which will be explained subsequently.

Due to the different characteristics of each zone, delinquency differs per zone as well. As described above, 'Plan Cuadrante' puts emphasis on the zones in which most delinquency occurs. Zones with lower delinquency rates receive less police presence. Remarkably, most citizens and 'Plan Cuadrante' officers argue that most delinquents live in marginal neighborhoods which are non-priority zones of 'Plan Cuadrante'. Preventive policing should prevent citizens to commit criminal acts by focusing on these citizens living in marginal neighborhoods, and not only react when crimes occur and police presence is already too late. In this respect the preventive task of 'Plan Cuadrante' is not fulfilled.

The office of 'Plan Cuadrante' serves several purposes. In the different offices of the division, the daily planning of work in the streets is made and decisions are taken about which police officer will drive which patrol car, with which colleague, and in which zone of Quetzaltenango. Here it becomes clear that police officers circulate during their work which is against the main principles of community policing and 'Plan Cuadrante' of having a permanent couple of police officers patrolling the same quadrant on a daily basis. According to Frühling (in Tulchin and Ruthenberg, 2005:26), this is extremely important for successful community policing so that police officers to get to know the neighborhood and its population, and can address the specific needs of the quadrant.

Personnel issues such as work days, vacations, permissions, and illness are administrated at the office as well. A section at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office which deserves special attention is the section of finances and logistics which takes care of the resources of 'Plan Cuadrante' in terms of weapons, munitions, clothing, vehicles, and office material. This section is in direct contact with the PNC in Guatemala-city where 'Plan Cuadrante' has to solicit for materials in case something is lacking or broken. The capital has to approve the requests after which the Comisaría must supply the requested material to 'Plan Cuadrante' [16]. Unfortunately, this procedure is not as easy and efficient as it seems. Participant observation demonstrates that the patrol cars of 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango often have flat tires or other incapabilities, and stay unused at the office for a couple of weeks while 'Plan Cuadrante' is waiting for the approval of the capital or the supply of materials of the Comisaría (see picture 3). The lack of resources causes frustration among 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and has serious consequences for the efficiency and effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' in the streets which will be explained later on.

---

[16] Interview Official II Juarez Fuentes 'Plan Cuadrante'. April 26, 2011.

Picture 3.   Unused patrol cars standing at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office.

Besides of material problems within 'Plan Cuadrante', the division also deals with personnel issues. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Flor de Leon Sanchez explains: 'When Celso Batén left the institution and was replaced by Sacba Pop, there changed a lot within 'Plan Cuadrante'. Before we had 85 police officers, but under the command of Sacba Pop about twenty officers were transferred. Now various colleagues left us' [17]. As De Leon Sanchez says, 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango counted 85 police officers when it started in 2008, but things started to change at the end of 2009 when 'Plan Cuadrante' officers were gradually transferred to other PNC divisions in the country. At the beginning of 2010, 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango counted 73 police officers, which is a relatively low number in comparison with 71 police officers working for 'Plan Cuadrante' in Antigua Guatemala [18]; a city with three times less inhabitants than Quetzaltenango. However, eight new police officers have been sent from the capital city to 'Plan Cuadrante' Quetzaltenango in April 2011 as a response to requests for more personnel from Official II Juarez Fuentes. Most 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are skeptic about these new officers and say that the current amount of officers still does not cover their needs and does not make a significant difference in respect to the staffing problems of the division.

The 'Plan Cuadrante' office is not only the place where police officers work, eat, and sleep, but also the place for citizens to get into contact with the officers. Communication with locals takes place on the telephone when they call for help or want to make a denunciation, and at the office in case a citizen wants to report a crime, needs information, or hands in a request to arrange a meeting with 'Plan Cuadrante'. If a citizen wants to contact the office by phone, he or she can call three different telephone numbers so that the office is always within reach. Unfortunately, participant observation shows that there is only one police officer who answers the phone calls which sometimes still leads to unanswered calls. Citizens who come to the office to denunciate a crime, are received by the police officer present at the office who listens to the citizen and files a report about what happened, and sends it to the Public Ministry for further procedure. Denunciations are analyzed at the 'Plan Cuadrante'

---

[17] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Flor de Leon Sanchez. April 1, 2011.
[18] See also thesis of Judith Schols, 2011, about 'Plan Cuadrante' in Antigua Guatemala.

office every month so that delinquency patterns can be recognized. These statistics are sent to the Comisaría and archived in a file containing crime rates of the department Quetzaltenango. Denunciations made at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office vary from robberies of personal belongings to interfamilial violence, such as is the case of the family in the situation described below.

On Sunday the 10th of April a family from zone 1 in Quetzaltenango walks into the 'Plan Cuadrante' office. The police officer present at the office looks up from his paper work and tells them to sit down. The family consists of a men, two women, a teenage girl, and a baby. The police officer asks the family why they came to the office and one of the women starts to tell the story while she is crying. 'My ex-husband came to my house to see my daughters' homework. When my daughter showed her homework, he got mad and said that it was not good enough'. The police officer interrupts the story of the woman by asking about the specific relation between the woman and her ex-husband. The woman tells him that she has been divorced five years ago from her ex-husband but that he often visits them at her house and beats her up whenever he likes to. In the meantime, the little girl is staring at the ground while her mother talks about her father. The woman continues: 'He got mad because of her homework and started to shout at me and my father. Then my sister came in and she defended me. She told him to go away. Then he pushed her on the ground and hit on the table which broke. The table was made of glass and a big piece of glass fell into the foot of my daughter'. The police officer asks the girl to show him her foot and she stands up. She removes her shoe and shows her big toe covered with bloody bandage. The police officer examines the wounds and writes a report about what happened. The family waits for the police officer to read the report aloud while they are still in shock about the situation. Then the woman receives a phone call from her ex-parents in law who threaten her with her death if she reports what happened to the police. The woman seems confused but still wants to make the denunciation. 'He cannot do something like this, it is his daughter and he should be punished', she says. Then, the police officer reads the report aloud and the family signs the denunciation. The police officer tells the family members that they have to go to court tomorrow with this declaration, wishes them the best, after which the family goes home [19].

Denunciations of interfamilial violence such as the one just described are scarce, since many citizens are too afraid to report it to the police out of fear that the perpetrator takes revenge on them afterwards.

---

[19] Picture 4. Citizens reporting at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office. Picture taken during the denunciation described above.

4.2. Main Actors Involved

'Plan Cuadrante' cooperates with several governmental and public actors who contribute to the work of 'Plan Cuadrante' in crime prevention and improvement of the police-community relationship. One of the main actors involved in 'Plan Cuadrante' is the PNC itself and especially the Comisaría. 'Plan Cuadrante' is mostly in contact with the PNC and the Comisaría in case personnel, administrative, or material assistance is required. The communication with the PNC goes through general radio messages. Whenever a denunciation enters at the Comisaría about an area covered by 'Plan Cuadrante' or the Comisaría needs assistance from 'Plan Cuadrante', this is communicated via the radio situated at the office. The particular *oficinista* communicates the message to the particular police officer or patrol car. Although 'Plan Cuadrante' and PNC officers have different zones under their command, they often work together at crime scenes when both divisions get orders to go to the scene to control and supervise the situation. According to 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Estuardo Robles Gonzales, 'Plan Cuadrante' cannot not work independently from the Comisaría. He elaborates:

> In terms of police work, we work independently from the Comisaría but we depend on them in terms of certain administrative processes. When we report a denunciation we always have to send a copy to the Comisaría. We also depend on them in terms of resources and personnel, because they are the ones who have to supply it to us [20].

Another governmental actor involved in 'Plan Cuadrante' is the transit police or 'Policía Municipal de Transito Quetzaltenango' (PMTQ), with who 'Plan Cuadrante' is in contact in case of transit problems. Whenever citizens break the law in terms of transit, 'Plan Cuadrante' is called and takes over. PMTQ does not have the authorization to arrest people, but does have the ability to give fines. When the PMTQ cannot solve the problem itself, 'Plan Cuadrante' arrests the offenders.

In case of denunciations 'Plan Cuadrante' is connected to the Public Ministry (PM). Every denunciation made at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office is sent to the PM which has to investigate the matter. Furthermore, 'Plan Cuadrante' works together with the PM in case of deaths. When 'Plan Cuadrante' is confronted with a death of a human being, they call the PM for assistance. The PM investigates the crime scene, while 'Plan Cuadrante' writes a report that contains important data of the victim, states the information about the persons involved, and about what happened. After the report is handed over to the PM, there is no more communication between 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PM, and the PM takes over the case and investigates further.

Another significant partner of 'Plan Cuadrante' is the court. Whenever a delinquent is arrested and comes into the office of 'Plan Cuadrante', the police officer puts the delinquent in a cell for a couple of hours. In the meantime, 'Plan Cuadrante' officers write a police report about what the

---

[20] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Estuardo Robles Gonzales. May 12, 2011.

delinquent did and send it to the particular court. After 'Plan Cuadrante' hands in the report, the court examines the evidence and then decides and states the sentence.

A part from governmental actors, public actors play a significant role in 'Plan Cuadrante' as well. 'Plan Cuadrante' is in contact with various citizen organizations such as COCODE's and JLS's. COCODE's represent a group of citizens discussing various problems in their neighborhood, while JLS's focus is on security issues. Special meetings are organized by 'Instituto de estudios Comparados en Ciencia Penales de Guatemala' (ICCPG) or the Institute of Comparing Studies of Penitentiary Science of Guatemala, in a zone 3 restaurant twice a month to maintain regular contact between 'Plan Cuadrante' and representatives of local communities. ICCPG organizes these meetings in cooperation with the local municipality, the government, and the PNC, in order to raise awareness among citizens part of JLS's and COCODE's and authorities about human rights, democratic criminal politics, and promotes the importance of an organized civil society. During these meetings trainings take place in order to broaden the knowledge of citizens about themes such as citizen security, racism and discrimination, management of a group, and the importance of denunciating. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are present at these meetings to provide information about security related issues in Quetzaltenango and answer questions of citizens. If a COCODE or JLS wants to have a private meeting with 'Plan Cuadrante' in order to talk about security problems in their neighborhood it has to send a request to Official II Juarez Fuentes. 'Plan Cuadrante' also gives private presentations to specific citizen organizations in order to capacitate them in becoming a COCODE or JLS. After four presentations of 'Plan Cuadrante' about the above mentioned themes, a group of citizens can legally obtain the right to organize themselves. Being a legalized citizen organization such as a JLS or COCODE has some benefits for citizens, since they can submit requests for funds from the government in order to improve their neighborhood in terms of infrastructure, education, and social projects [21].

'Plan Cuadrante' is also in contact with citizens who are not part of COCODE's or JLS's, occurring at the office, on the telephone, or in the streets. This contact or interaction between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens will be described in detail later on in this thesis.

4.3. Policing Tactics in Practice

'Plan Cuadrante' officers in Quetzaltenango use one specific policing method in order to fulfil their main task which is preventing crime. This method consists of the tactic of constant car patrolling in the assigned quadrants of Quetzaltenango. In one day, a patrol car passes three or four times through the assigned area, depending on the size and priority of the quadrant. Two police officers work together to cover the same quadrant with the same police car every day to get to know a specific neighborhood in order to build a relationship with a particular group of citizens and prevent crime in a more effective

---

[21] Interview employee of municipality of Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. March 25, 2011.

way. According to the concept of 'Plan Cuadrante', citizens should recognize the specific patrol car and its police officers wearing orange vests so that they trust in 'Plan Cuadrante' and citizens easier report criminal or suspicious acts. Every patrol car has its own mobile telephone to which citizens can call directly in case of emergency, or they can call to the 'Plan Cuadrante' office which forwards incoming messages to the specific patrol cars. Telephone numbers of patrol cars are written on the patrol cars such as can be seen on the picture below, but generally are not known among citizens as a consequence of the lack of communication between citizens and 'Plan Cuadrante' officers. The number of the office however is more familiar to them, which is present in telephone books and communicated at the Comisaría. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers argue that they like the tactic of constant car patrolling because they are busy all day long and do not have to sit and wait at the office.

Picture 5.   Patrol car with telephone numbers.

A couple of months ago a new patrolling tactic called 'Plan 40' was implemented as a response to what happened to two 'Plan Cuadrante' officers who got shot by delinquents during patrolling the market *La Democracia.* Since then on, several patrol cars have two or four soldiers sitting in the back of the car wearing large weapons in order to provide protection to 'Plan Cuadrante' officers during their work. 'Plan 40' is an interesting and controversial policing tactic for a community policing strategy that wants to gain the confidence of citizens and diminish the borders existing between the police and the community. According to Glebbeek (2003:247), the military causes fear among most Guatemalan citizens as a result of its role in the internal conflict. Contradictory, most citizens embrace military policing practices such as 'Plan 40', which are often seen as the preferred methods for restoring order (Glebbeek, 2003:247). Also in Quetzaltenango most citizens feel even more secure with 'Plan 40' due to the abilities and weapons of the soldiers which should scare delinquents off [22].

---

[22] Several informal conversations with citizens about 'Plan 40'. March - May 2011.

This is also described by Glebbeek (2003:246) when she states that well-prepared and equipped military patrols might work as a deterrent, which is a psychological benefit. The police force is subordinated to the military in this matter, since most people argue to be not afraid of the regular police [23]. The picture below shows the mixture of 'Plan Cuadrante' with military style policing during an anniversary of a primary school in zone 1.

Picture 6.   'Plan 40' providing assistance.

'Plan Cuadrante' officers have access to several means to patrol, which are patrol cars, motorcycles, bicycles, and their feet. Participant observation however proves that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers only make use of patrol cars, while research of Wilson and Kelling (1982) proved that other forms of patrol such as foot patrol reduce citizen's fear of crime and positively affects citizens' perceptions of the police thus rendering a positive influence on the police-community relationship in an area. Although Wilson and Kelling (in Newburn, 2005:466) argue that citizens approach a police officer on foot more easily than an officer by car, 'Plan Cuadrante' officers believe that citizens prefer approaching a patrol car over a motorcycle or a police officer on foot. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz says: 'Citizens do not take a police officer on foot or motorcycle seriously. Citizens only talk to us when they really need something from us urgently, in other occasions they do not' [24]. The reason why Ortiz thinks that citizens do not take a motorcycle seriously is because a patrol car is much faster and that citizens only approach the police in case of an emergency and not for a chat. According to an employee of the Guatemalan Tourism Board or 'Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo' (INGUAT), who works together with 'Plan Cuadrante' in order to improve tourist security in Quetzaltenango, 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are not enthusiastic about foot patrolling and complain about the cold climate during the nighttime and

---

[23] Several informal conversations with citizens about 'Plan 40'. March - May 2011.
[24] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz. May 19, 2011.

the far distances they have to walk [25]. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers themselves bring up arguments of lacking personnel and the size of the quadrants as a reason why they do not use foot patrol or other patrolling measures. They say that the quadrants are too big to patrol by motorcycle, bicycle, or on foot, because it will take them too long to arrive at a certain location making their work less effective. According to the officers, the lack of personnel influences their tactics since quadrants seem even bigger because only two police officers cover a quadrant. 'Plan Cuadrante officer Estuardo Robles Gonzales argues: 'These tactics work, but not a hundred percent. We can only patrol by car and motorcycle because of the lack of personnel. Foot patrol is almost impossible. We only get out of the patrol car if we have to park and have a situation' [26]. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas adds: 'We know that foot patrol helps a lot with preventing crime, especially in parks and markets, but in large zones it is not effective. Something can happen around the corner but because a police officer is by foot he will not notice it' [27]. When analyzing the quote of officer Miguel Pas it seems that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are aware of the fact that other forms of patrolling might be more effective in order to prevent delinquency but that the lack of personnel is blocking their way. Is also shows that the police officers do not perceive their tactics as preventive at all, which also became clear earlier in the speech of the inspector of 'Plan Cuadrante'. It seems that police officers are more concerned with capturing delinquents in the act, than with crime prevention by means of conversations with citizens by being present in a certain neighborhood.This is remarkable since preventing crime by means of regaining confidence of the public is a main principle within community policing and 'Plan Cuadrante' and therefore it is a pity that tactics such as foot patrol are not integrated in the policing tactics (Clockars in Newburn, 2005:443) [28].

When 'Plan Cuadrante' just started off in Quetzaltenango however, a relatively personal and interactive policing tactic called 'Plan Puerta a Puerta' was implemented in order to gain familiarity among citizens by means of visiting citizens at home. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas explains about the plan:

> We had to distribute about 20,000 leaflets to houses in the sector we were covering. The
> leaflets contained the mission, vision, telephone numbers, and address of 'Plan Cuadrante'
> Quetzaltenango. We had to knock the door of every house and every store and tell the
> citizens who we were, what we were for, and how citizens could get into contact with us. We

---

[25] Interview INGUAT representative Luis Monzon Vasquez. April 27, 2011. During this interview Vasquez told that he was threatened with his death by 'unknown' people for wanting to implement foot patrol in Quetzaltenango. According to Vasquez, only the government and 'Plan Cuadrante' staff knew about the foot patrol plan and Vasquez hided for a couple of weeks in a house outside the city.
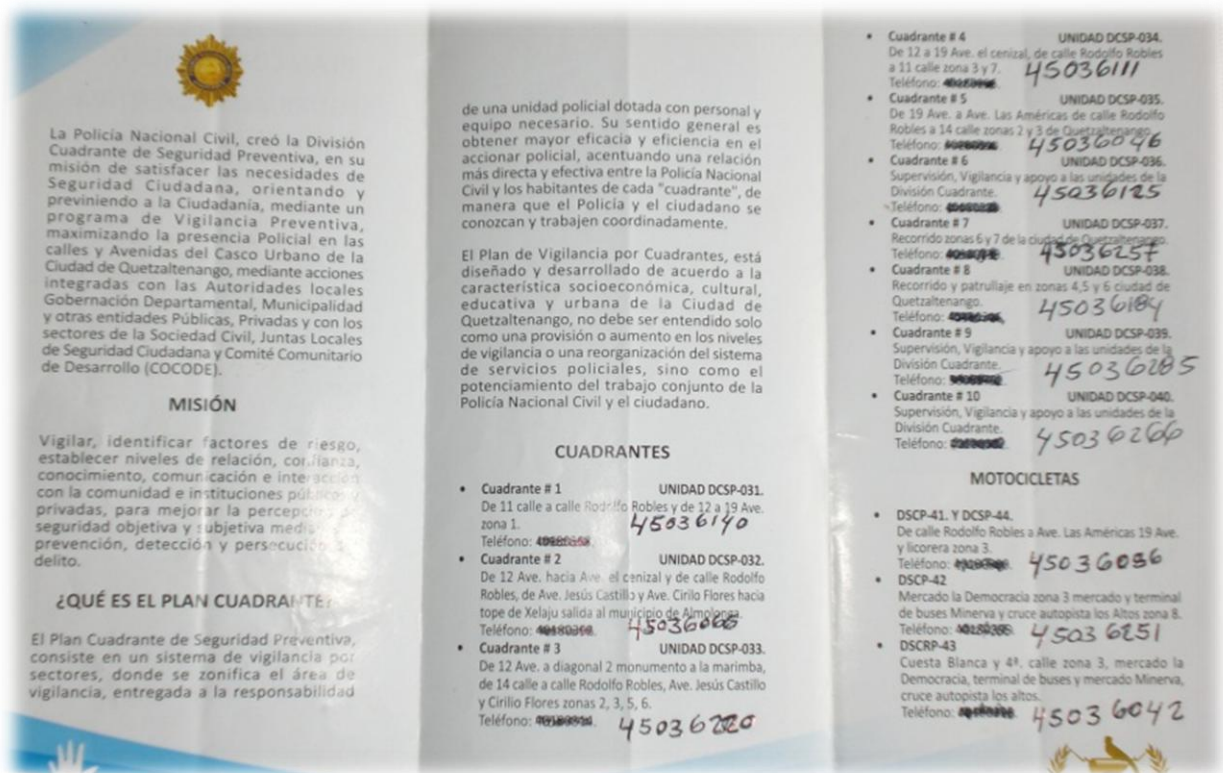[26] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Estuardo Robles Gonzales. March 4, 2011.
[27] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas. February 25, 2011.
[28] Manual Policía Nacional Civil, 2011. 'Organización y funcionamiento del Plan Cuadrante seguridad Preventiva Central'.

explained to the citizens which patrol car was covering their quadrant and gave them the telephone numbers of the office and the particular patrol car [29].

'Plan Puerta a Puerta' functioned for fifteen days when 'Plan Cuadrante' ran out of leaflets, which is not surprising regarding the 20,000 leaflets for a population of about 127,600 inhabitants. As a result, many citizens did not know about 'Plan Cuadrante', explains 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Estuardo Robles Gonzales: 'Whenever citizens were not home, we put the leaflet under the door but we were not able to explain the details to them anymore' [30]. It is probable that these citizens threw away the leaflet when they found it in their door step. Another flaw within 'Plan Puerta a Puerta' was that the mobile telephone numbers presented in the leaflets, were changed within a month of time due to budgets cuts. According to official II Juarez Fuentes, the PNC demanded all mobile telephones and telephone numbers of 'Plan Cuadrante' back which made patrol cars unreachable for citizens for a period of time. After that, new mobile phones and numbers were distributed by the PNC which resulted in uncertainty on the leaflets, such as can be seen on the picture below. Research of Glebbeek (2003:159) demonstrates that not much has changed in Quetzaltenango over the last decade in this respect, when she writes that the telephone line of the Comisaría was cut off because they could not pay the telephone bill of $US13,000.

Picture 7.   'Plan Puerta a Puerta' leaflet with new telephone numbers.

---

[29] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas. May 16, 2011.
[30] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Estuardo Robles Gonzales. May 12, 2011.

'Plan Puerta a Puerta' worked relatively for a small group of citizens, due to the above described factors. According to some 'Plan Cuadrante' officers the tactic should be implemented again in order to refresh the minds of the citizens and reach more citizens then in 2008 with the little material they had. Most citizens who did receive the leaflet were positive about the initiative of 'Plan Cuadrante' which might mean that the tactic would be received positively again. The question however remains how effective the spreading of leaflets is in respect to familiarity when contact in the streets between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and the population stays superficial and of low quality, which will be explained later on.

4.4.   Perceptions of PNC Officers on 'Plan Cuadrante'

Police officers who work at the Comisaría are enthusiastic about the work of 'Plan Cuadrante' and some of them even are interested in working at the division. According to PNC officer Victor Gonzales Perez [31], the whole PNC should work with specific sectors such as 'Plan Cuadrante' does and he thinks that it should be implemented on a national level. Remarkably, PNC officers complain about the same things as 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and say that they lack personnel and resources at the Comisaría, and that 'Plan Cuadrante' has more support of the PNC in that matter. PNC officer Gonzales Perez argues: 'The PNC has less personnel and resources than 'Plan Cuadrante' while we cover a bigger area and therefore are less effective in our work'[32]. Therefore, the PNC does not work with constant car patrols and only comes in action when requested by citizens, which has serious consequences for the police presence in rural areas of Quetzaltenango and the effectiveness of the PNC. It is also at this point where rivalry occurs between 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PNC. PNC officers argue that citizens' perceptions are more positive about 'Plan Cuadrante' than about the PNC, because they arrive faster than the PNC. Officer Josue Cifuentes who worked for both 'Plan Cuadrante' and PNC confirms this rivalry between the two divisions: 'We greet each other, but when 'Plan Cuadrante' first started we did not because there existed a lot of rivalry between us and them because they captured a lot of people. I noticed this while I was working with 'Plan Cuadrante'[33].

During a group conversation with three PNC officers it becomes clear that they look down on the 'Plan Cuadrante' officers in terms of work [34]. They argue that the only thing that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers have to do is car patrol, while police officers at the Comisaría have a lot more tasks such as visiting certain institutions. 'They cannot do anything without us', assures one of them', demonstrating the way PNC officers look down on 'Plan Cuadrante' officers [35]. These particular PNC officers see themselves as 'better' than 'Plan Cuadrante' officers because they are in contact with the public

---

[31] Interview PNC officer Victor Gonzalez Perez. March 24, 2011.
[32] Interview PNC officer Victor Gonzalez Perez. March 24, 2011.
[33] Interview PNC officer Josue Cifuentes. April 13, 2011.
[34] Group conversation PNC officers. May 11, 2011.
[35] Group conversation PNC officers. May 11, 2011.

ministry, court, and judges, while 'Plan Cuadrante' is 'only' in contact with the population. Police officers of other divisions might lack proper information about 'Plan Cuadrante' as they are definitely in touch with the same parties as the PNC demonstrated earlier in this chapter.

In order for 'Plan Cuadrante' to carry out its functions, tactics and strategies in Quetzaltenango, a steady police-community relationship is needed so that police and citizens work together towards the same goal of preventing crime and diminishing insecurity. In the next chapter, the characteristics and quality of the police-community relationship in Quetzaltenango will be described.

Chapter 5: 'Plan Cuadrante' and Police-Community Relationship

Introduction

Citizens' most frequent contact with the state is with the police. That makes a good relationship between the two parties important and essential for crime prevention and remaining order so that community policing can be successful (Neild, 2003:277). The relationship between the authorities and citizens has been profoundly disturbed and damaged given the violent past of Guatemala being a post-conflict country. This chapter examines the perceptions of both police and citizens about the police-community relationship, and the role that 'Plan Cuadrante' plays in this matter. First I will focus on the interaction between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens and the ideas behind this interaction. Then, I analyze perceptions of the police and citizens about trust in the police in general and specifically in 'Plan Cuadrante', after which I describe the influence of diversity on the police-community relationship in Quetzaltenango.

5.1. Interaction within 'Plan Cuadrante'

In order to measure the degree of trust between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens determining the quality of the police-community relationship, interaction between the police and citizens should be analyzed first. Within the principles of community policing interaction plays a significant role, since the police and citizens should work together in order to prevent crime (Clockars in Newburn, 2005:452-453). In this context it is important to know what kind of interaction takes place between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens and where and when this interaction occurs.

Interaction between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens occurs face-to-face in the streets or at the office while making a denunciation or just having a chat, but also on the telephone when citizens call the office or the mobile phone of a specific patrol car. Most interaction occurs on the phone and at the office, while contact in the streets remains relatively absent and superficial. Participant observation shows that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers do not step out of their vehicle to talk with citizens, although they say they do in interviews. Whenever a 'Plan Cuadrante' officer leaves his patrol car he usually buys something in the store or lets his shoes shine. As a consequence, informal conversations between citizens and 'Plan Cuadrante' officers hardly occur, as the officers stay in their vehicle and only wave at the citizens. According to many citizens the contact they have with the 'Plan Cuadrante' police is minimal and the actual interaction is limited to a wave and the words: 'Hi, how are you? See you!' or 'Call us for whatever!' [36]. Because of the exclusive use of the patrol car there is literally a huge gap

---

[36] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.

between police officers and citizens and there is hardly any interaction. The patrol car in this respect forms a great obstacle to police-citizen interaction.

'Plan Cuadrante' officers however claim that the situation is not as easy as citizens state. On the one hand, officers argue that citizens approach them more often when they are sitting in a patrol car because they think that the vehicle generates more respect towards them, also mentioned in the previous chapter. On the other hand, officers state that they cannot talk to citizens during car patrol either because they lack time due to traffic or crowds around them. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas argues: 'A police officer cannot talk to people when there is a lot of traffic or when there are a lot people present at one location' [37]. This quote affirms again that the patrol car forms a serious obstacle for the police in order to communicate with citizens, since it makes it impossible for police officers and citizens to communicate well according to both parties. Officer Miguel Pas also mentions another reason behind the lack of interaction with citizens and which in this case is the character of a particular police officer. He explains:

> Sometimes there is no communication with the population because of the unwillingness of the police element [38]. In every place in the world exist persons who are not communicative, who do not like to express themselves, or do not want to build a relationship with other persons. And of course persons with this character also exist within our institution [39].

Alongside Miguel Pas there are more 'Plan Cuadrante' officers who share his opinion and say that they are aware of the communicational incapabilities of some of their colleagues. Nevertheless, not one of them admits his or her incapability of communicating with citizens; they only talk about general others. Observation proved that these very same officers were never searching for interaction themselves while car patrolling. Analysis of perceptions of 'Plan Cuadrante' officers regarding interaction with citizens shows that they understand the importance of it, but day-to-day policing tactics have never been adjusted accordingly. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz demonstrates this awareness when he says: 'Official Juarez Fuentes tells us that we should approach citizens more and talk more with them. I know that this is important because only from the citizens we know who is a thief and who is not' [40].

Participant observation shows that there also is little interaction between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens during COCODE meetings organized by ICCGP every two weeks. Representatives of both 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PNC do not make use of co-operation with citizens. During these gatherings both parties are busy with different things; citizens are playing awareness

---

[37] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas. May 16, 2011.
[38] The term 'element' is often used by police officers when they speak about a police officer.
[39] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas. May 16, 2011.
[40] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz. May 19, 2011.

games; officers are playing with their mobile phones, even the leaders of the 'Plan Cuadrate' division are no exception from that matter.

The minimal interaction between 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens has some negative consequences in terms of trust described in the next paragraph. If there is no real co-operation on the one hand, citizens can create a feeling of distrust towards the police because the police is unfamiliar to them. The lack of trust on the other hand makes interaction difficult, if not impossible, which makes it a vicious circle.

5.2.   (Dis)trust in the Police and 'Plan Cuadrante'

'Plan Cuadrante' being a community policing initiative has the task to increase trust among citizens in the police and vice versa. That is a rather difficult task in post-conflict Guatemala where trust in the police in general has been damaged during the internal conflict. In those times the police had a military character and was known for the use of violence (Frühling in Tulchin and Ruthenburg, 2006:15; Glebbeek, 2001:432). Distrust in the police is still prevailing due to the systematic involvement of the police force in human rights violation and corruption in the past (Glebbeek, 2001:434). Although the police have been reformed, its violent past and bad image pursue the institution, which also becomes clear during field research in Guatemala. Both police and citizens agree that trust is lacking in the police and other state authorities in Guatemala. Though interestingly enough, most citizens have more trust in 'Plan Cuadrante' than in the PNC, which will be analyzed later in this chapter.

According to Glebbeek (2007:10), mutual trust is needed between the police and citizens in order to make community policing effective. This mutual trust contains the element of reciprocity, indicating that both police and citizens deliver their part in the police-community relationship. Also Clockars (in Newburn, 2005:452-453) argues that reciprocity has become a basic concept within community policing which only can be achieved when citizens get the feeling that they matter in crime prevention and become involved in police work. Most citizens in Quetzaltenango however, do not feel that they matter in crime prevention or become involved in the work of the police. Due to a lack of interaction with the police, reciprocity stays out and a feeling of distrust develops among citizens. According to most citizens the distrust derives from the attitude and behavior of the police towards citizens. Armando Santos, who is leader of a COCODE in zone 1, explains:

> Everything depends on the attitude of the police, because only in that way reciprocity will
> take place. What can you aspect from the community if delinquents are part of the police? In
> my street lived a delinquent who turned out to be the son of a police officer. The police

should investigate better who is part of their institution. They should purify themselves first [41].

Armando Santos demonstrates in this quote that citizens' trust is based on the performance of the police and that it is logical that there cannot be a feeling of trust if the police is involved with the delinquents, which is also described by Duce and Perdomo (in Frühling, 2003:82). Citizen Magdalena Sanchez says: 'They [the police] take care of the thieves or are friends with them. We are afraid to report crimes to the police, because they might be friends with the thieves. In that case we put our own lives at risk' [42]. Citizens such as Magdalena Sanchez do not want to contribute to the improvement of the police-community relationship and consequently of the security situation because of distrust in the police. Other citizens claim that the change in respect to trust should come from within; from the community itself. According to Weitzer (1995:1), one of the most direct consequences of distrust in the police and the poor police-community relationship is that citizens are unwilling to denunciate crimes which leads eventually to an unfavorable security situation in Quetzaltenango. Luis Rodriguez, a security representative of a COCODE in zone 3, thinks that Guatemala's violent past created a culture of fear and distrust which hinders the work of the police, especially for 'Plan Cuadrante' for which a trustful relationship with the community is essential. He argues:

> 'Plan Cuadrante' is doing its job while citizens are not helping them because they denunciate late or not at all. We do not have a culture of approaching and are a bit afraid of the police. The culture of not denunciating has been formed during the armed conflict. In those times, people had a lot of fear against the police because the police was very violent. In the 70's and 80's there were a lot of problems with that here. The police walked secretly in civil clothes and did a lot of bad things to innocent citizens. That is why trust in the police is costing so much effort nowadays. This is a bad development for Quetzaltenango, because the police cannot do anything without a denunciation. Without a denunciation the police thinks that nothing is happening while in the meantime crimes accumulate [43].

Rodriguez stresses that the police itself is to blame for the distrust created during and after the armed conflict, but that 'Plan Cuadrante' is doing a good job at this moment and is hindered by distrust of the population created in earlier times. Rodriguez tries to stimulate his neighbors in his COCODE to denunciate crimes and put their fear on the side for the sake of the security situation. His neighbors however argue that they do not feel confident enough to report crimes to the police or to have other kind of conversations with them due to their bad prior experiences. Edy de Leon, who is present at the

---

[41] Interview citizen Armando Santos. April 12, 2011.
[42] Interview citizen Madgalena Sanchez. March 11, 2011.
[43] Interview COCODE member Luis Rodriguez. April 11, 2011.

COCODE meetings organized by ICCPG as an employee of the municipality, understands these citizens well and says:

> When a person wants to help another person he should be respectful and friendly. The police is only friendly and respectful during official meetings, but in the streets they are not. If you enter a police station most police officers say: 'Who are you looking for?' They do not even wish you a good day. Citizens do not want to denunciate. They say: 'If they treat me bad, why would I denunciate?' [44]

Although trust in the police is missing in general, there is a difference between the amount of trust in 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PNC. Most citizens in Quetzaltenango have more trust 'Plan Cuadrante' officers because they think that they are higher educated and better trained, more friendly and polite, show up quicker, and do their work better than PNC officers. Analysis of interviews held with both 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and PNC officers demonstrates that there is no difference in the way 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are trained in comparison to PNC officers [45]. According to police officers of both divisions they all receive the same academy courses and it is not until graduation that it is decided where a police officer will be placed. A curriculum change since 2006 emphasized the importance of courses in 'citizen security' and 'community relations' since these were integrated in the training program of the academy and more importance was put on the police-community relationship then before [46]. This might mean that the quality of the training that police officers received after these changes differs from that of police officers who graduated earlier. Since most 'Plan Cuadrante' officers came directly from the academy in 2008, citizens might have a point here. However this does not mean that a 'Plan Cuadrante' officer who graduated in 2008 is better trained than a 'regular' PNC officer who graduated the same year, because the received training was the same. A factor that could have an influence here is the fact that the 'Plan Cuadrante' staff consists of mostly young and just graduated police officers, whereas at the PNC police officers have a longer history in the PNC or even worked for the PN, and only followed a three month academy course (WOLA, 2009:4). Therefore it might be the case that PNC officers perform habits of the old PN, which might be recognized by citizens and affirms their distrust.

Another reason which might explain why citizens share a more positive perception of 'Plan Cuadrante' officers might be the internal control at the 'Plan Cuadrante' division which is a lot stricter than at the PNC divisions and that might give citizens the feeling that the officers work harder or more serious. Various 'Plan Cuadrante' officers explained how the chiefs at their division control their staff on a daily basis during their patrolling rounds. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pedro Toj Mech, who also

---

[44] Interview employee of municipality Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. March 30, 2011.
[45] Interviews police officers 'Plan Cuadrante' and PNC. February – May 2011.
[46] Interview Official II Juarez Fuentes. April 26, 2011.

worked for the PNC a couple of years ago, explains the following about this internal control which he perceives in a positive way:

> Within 'Plan Cuadrante' we feel a pressure because the chiefs of the division are supervising us while we are patrolling. They check if we do our job and if we visit the right addresses and streets of our sector. At the PNC this is different. There the chiefs do not care about what you do and do not supervise you [47].

Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that there are also sufficient citizens who do not trust either of the police divisions and see 'Plan Cuadrante' as part of the, in their eyes, corrupt PNC. These citizens think that it depends on the police officer himself whether citizens can trust him or not, and that it does not matter if he works for 'Plan Cuadrante' or the PNC because it is all the same. A local merchant at the central park market says: 'They ['Plan Cuadrante' officers] never enter my shop and we do not have communication with 'Plan Cuadrante' at all, nor with the PNC. 'Plan Cuadrante' is the same as the PNC. Both of them took money from me' [48]. Another merchant adds: 'I do not see a difference between the PNC and 'Plan Cuadrante', both of them show up late. Once somebody robbed a store in this street and we called both the PNC and 'Plan Cuadrante'. 'Plan Cuadrante' never showed up, the PNC did' [49].

According to 'Plan Cuadrante' officers the influence that 'Plan Cuadrante' has on trust is significant. All of them say that citizens approach 'Plan Cuadrante' more easily than the PNC and denunciate more with 'Plan Cuadrante', which is an instrument to measure trust according to 'Plan Cuadrate' officers. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Angelica de Leon argues:

> Citizens have more confidence in 'Plan Cuadrante' and we can see that in the numbers of denunciations made with 'Plan Cuadrante'. Things that before the initiation of 'Plan Cuadrante' nobody denunciated are being denunciated now. Citizens recognize our police officers and do not talk in general about the police but about specific patrol cars or names. Every unit has its own sector and I think that this is positive for citizens because there is more confidence [50].

When comparing the above quote of officer De Leon with citizens perceptions in relation to denunciations it seems that De Leon has a point here. Most citizens who come to 'Plan Cuadrante' to report a crime come because of the good stories they heard of other citizens about the way 'Plan Cuadrante' handles denunciations and citizens themselves. Citizens argue that they have to wait a long time when they want to make a denunciation at the Comisaría, do not have enough confidence in the

---

[47] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pedro Toj Mech. May 24, 2011.
[48] Informal conversation merchant at the central park market in Quetzaltenango. May 19, 2011.
[49] Informal conversation merchant at the central park market in Quetzaltenango. May 19, 2011.
[50] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Angelica de Leon. April 7, 2011.

capabilities of the police officers there, and for some citizens the short distance to the 'Plan Cuadrante' office forms a reason behind this decision [51]. Nevertheless, statistics show that most citizens in Quetzaltenango denunciate at the Comisaría [52]. The reason behind this difference might be that citizens still are unfamiliar with 'Plan Cuadrante'. The Comisaría is well known in Quetzaltenango and for years citizens could only denunciate at this head office. Another reason could be that the PNC covers a larger area in Quetzaltenango than 'Plan Cuadrante' and therefore receives more denunciations. In practice there is no difference between denunciating with 'Plan Cuadrante' or the Comisaría, because all denunciations are sent directly to the Public Ministry. Unfamiliarity of citizens with 'Plan Cuadrante' might be as well the result of the failure of 'Plan Puerta a Puerta'. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers however share the opinion that 'Plan Puerta a Puerta' has had some serious results in terms of trust of citizens in 'Plan Cuadrante'. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas explains:

> Because of 'Plan Puerta a Puerta', 'Plan Cuadrante' progressed a lot in comparison with how it started. Because we visited the citizens they started giving us a little confidence. Some citizens opened their doors for us. There are always people who like it when a police officer visits them, but of course there are also many citizens who do not like that. For example families in which the police has captured a member of the family, of course these citizens were resentful when we visited them with our leaflets. But in general the people received us nicely. In the stores people also invited us for a drink and most of those people were very friendly to us [53].

'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pedro Toj Mech adds: 'Some years ago, the population had a lot of fear for the police. Now they visit the office of 'Plan Cuadrante' for whatever denunciation. I think this is because of 'Plan Puerta a Puerta'. They have more confidence now in 'Plan Cuadrante' because we offered them our support' [54]. When comparing both police' and citizens' perceptions on trust in 'Plan Cuadrante' it can be stated that officers are more optimistic about the influence of their division on citizens' trust. Although citizens generally have more confidence in 'Plan Cuadrante' than in the PNC, most of them remain suspicious and reserved due to lacking interaction.

5.3. Diversity in Police-Community Relations

Being a divided society, Quetzaltenango inhabits different social groups with diverse social, political, economic, and geographical backgrounds (Glebbeek, 2003:280). 'Plan Cuadrante' therefore has to

---

[51] Informal conversations with citizens at the office of 'Plan Cuadrante' before or after denunciating. Months February – May 2011.
[52] Statistics of the Comisaría: 'Registro numerico mensual de denuncias recibidas'.
[53] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas. May 16, 2011.
[54] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pedro Toj Mech. May 24, 2011.

serve more than one community, which makes policing complex. Whereas 'normal' police often serve a dominant group in a community, community policing divisions such as 'Plan Cuadrante' are meant to focus on minorities and bridge the gap between the state and these citizens (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:441). Unfortunately, until now this has not been the case in Quetzaltenango, where importance is put on the commercial sectors where crime occurs instead of searching the source of delinquency and prevent crime by improving the police-community relationship in marginal neighborhoods. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz explains why 'Plan Cuadrante' does not focus on marginal neighborhoods: 'Most delinquents live in marginal neighborhoods, but their delinquent acts take place in the city centre and that is why we try to protect the commercial area from delinquency' [55]. As a result, marginal neighborhoods stay relatively uncovered. According to Manning (in Newburn, 2005:207) however, citizens who live in these marginal neighborhoods are often mostly in need of crime prevention and a good police-community relationship because the police do not bridge the gap between state and citizens. A good police-community relationship in marginal neighborhoods could highly contribute to the prevention of crime if citizens have trust in 'Plan Cuadrante' to denunciate about their neighbors or family members before delinquency occurs. Citizens living in marginal neighborhoods in Quetzaltenango have less police attention and thus less security than people in better protected zones, which can be seen as a form of discrimination or exclusion, also described by Koonings and Kruit (2007:122). As a result a good police-community relationship remains absent. It might be the case however, that discrimination does not happen on purpose by the 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and that it is part of the strategy of focusing on the commercial city centre of Quetzaltenango. COCODE leader Edwin Rosales, who lives in marginal neighborhood Santa Ana in zone 1, elaborates: 'We feel ignored by the 'Plan Cuadrante' police and we have the feeling that we do not matter to them because we are not important enough. I think we are not important enough because the people in my neighborhood do not have money and therefore no power' [56]. The words of Edwin Rosales express the importance of economic status in the way the police treats citizens. Unfortunately, class positions and ethnicity play an important role in the police-community relationship in Quetzaltenango since discrimination based on these characteristics exist among both police and citizens. Participant observation demonstrates that both groups discriminate constantly based upon class and racial differences during conversations, which creates a strong feeling of othering. Othering, as described by Krumer-Nevo and Benjamin (2010:696) is a process of differentiation and demarcation in which difference is translated to inferiority. Othering creates a barrier between 'us' and 'them' which leads to social distancing, social exclusion, and feelings of insecurity. In Quetzaltenango, othering causes negative tensions in the police-community relationship because people get the feeling that they are being treated in a certain manner due to their class or ethnic characteristics, and not based on who they are or what they do, and also creates fear for the other.

---

[55] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz. May 19, 2011.
[56] Informal conversation COCODE leader Edwin Morales. May 12, 2011.

According to most lower class citizens the police pays more attention to higher class citizens in Quetzaltenango. This frustrates lower class citizens and disturbs the already weak police-community relationship even more. Civilian Magdalena Sanchez expresses her feelings about class differentiation:

> People with money value more. The police take better care of them. I have a friend who lives in a gated community and she says that when the police pass they always say: 'Take care, nice to meet you'. When the police pass near my house, they do not say anything. They never ask me if I am alright, they ignore me instead [57].

Civilian William Diaz agrees with Sanchez by saying: 'In neighborhoods with richer people the police treat them differently. If you have money being a citizen, the police supports you. If you don't pay they take you to prison, although you are innocent' [58]. In these quotes it becomes clear that citizens have the perception that the police only want money from them and that high class citizens therefore do not get into trouble because they are able to pay the police while low class citizens are not. Citizen Rocky Pas Choqui, who comes from a middle to higher class family and has been victim of extortions by the police, says: 'The police looks at how a person is dressed and what is his function in life. The police take an attitude of power and know what they can ask from whom. I feel bad about this situation because I am innocent and work hard for my money which is meant to support my family' [59]. When analyzing perceptions of both lower and higher class citizens, it seems that both of them feel that they are victims of class discrimination made by the police. It remains unclear however, if the police extort the citizens or if citizens offer money to the police themselves. Citizens remain neutral however about the role of 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PNC in discrimination and speak about 'the police' in general.

'Plan Cuadrante' officers deny discrimination used in their work and point the finger to citizens instead. Some of them argue that high class citizens treat them respectless. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Angelica de Leon explains:

> Sometimes there are people who have a higher economic position who see the police as inferior. They say that we are ignorant, that we do not know anything, that we cannot read nor write, and that we did not study at all. I think that some people who have a higher economic and social position often think that they know everything and often do not permit the police to help them [60].

---

[57] Interview citizen Madgalena Sanchez. March 11, 2011.
[58] Interview citizen William Diaz. March 18, 2011.
[59] Interview citizen Rocky Pas Choqui. May 13, 2011.
[60] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Angelica de Leon. April 7, 2011.

Participant observation during car patrol shows that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers do make class distinctions, perhaps unconsciously, in their work, as shown in the situation described below where a robbed higher class woman receives better service than a lower class college boy to whom happened the same.

The shift of 'Plan Cuadrante' officers Pablo and Luis is almost done when a radio message comes in about a robbery near *parque Bolivar* in zone 1. Pablo, who is driving the patrol car, and his colleague Luis sitting next to him glance at each other for a second and then drive fast to the assigned location. Then they see a women standing at the corner of a street near the park waving at the patrol car. The woman is nicely dressed, wears high heels, and appears to originate from a higher class *ladino* family. Officer Pablo stops the car and says: 'Can we help you?' The woman responds: 'I have been robbed!' While she is stuttering and in shock she continues: 'He took my brief case. I was just walking here and all of a sudden I felt somebody grabbing my purse from behind. It was a teenage boy on a bike with a green backpack. He went that way!' Officer Pablo asks the woman if she wants to accompany him to look for the thief. The woman does not hesitate and gets into the back of the patrol car. In the car, officer Luis asks for the personal data of the woman. Afterwards the woman tells Luis that her father works at the government of Quetzaltenango and that she will inform her father about the case so that he can help her. In the meantime, officer Pablo follows the directions of the woman in order to find the thief and drives around the city centre for about an hour. Unfortunately there is no sign of the perpetrator. Just when the officers are about to bring the woman home, a boy comes running towards the patrol car.

It is an untidy young boy dressed in a college uniform wearing worn-out shoes. From his appearance one would assume that he comes from a lower class family. 'What's up?', says Pablo. 'I have been robbed! There was a man wearing a gun and he took my mobile phone'. Pablo tells the boy to get in the cargo hold of the patrol car and drives around for one minute and then says: 'Sorry, we cannot find him boy. Get out of the car'. The boy leaves the car and gives his address to the police officers so that they can inform him when the thief is caught, but characteristics of the thief are not written down. The boy stares defeated at the patrol car while it leaves to bring the woman home [61].

A part from class discrimination made by the police, citizens also mention discrimination based on ethnicity. Citizens do not have specific examples about this kind of selective law enforcement or racism, but argue that they know that *indígenas* are treated worse by the police than *ladinos.* According to them, the police makes racist remarks such as calling an indigenous person an '*indio*' [62], which is seen as a term of abuse in Guatemala. A merchant of the city-centre market argues: 'Most of

---

[61] Picture 8. Car patrolling with 'Plan Cuadrante'. Taken during car patrolling in Quetzaltenango.
[62] '*Indio*' can be defined in English as 'indian'.

the time those without money are *indígenas*. The police treats *indígenas* bad. I do not have experiences with this but my friends have and they told me a lot of negative experiences they had with the police' [63]. It remains relatively vague what a 'bad' treatment means, since citizens do not give too many details about it. When looking at the remark of the merchant it remains unclear if the treatment is based on class or race characteristics. If a police officer treats a low class *indígena* in a bad manner it is not clear if this is based on the fact that the person does not have money, out of racist thoughts, or just because he is considered a criminal.

'Plan Cuadrante' officers admit that discrimination exists in their division, but always talk about their colleagues who discriminate citizens and not about themselves. It remains remarkable however that both citizens and 'Plan Cuadrante' officers argue that discrimination based on race is a recurrent matter, since more than the majority of the 'Plan Cuadrante' officers in Quetzaltenango is, or consider themselves, *indígena* [64]. This racist behaviour can be explained as learned behaviour in the police institution which still is dominated by *ladino* police officers, especially on the top (Glebbeek, 2003:162). Given the racist past of Guatemala in general and low indigenous character of the Guatemalan police force in particular, it is not implausible that dominant ways of thinking are still present in the institution and at the police academy.

'Plan Cuadrante' officers who referred to other police officers making racial and class differences said that they themselves treat everybody in an equal manner and do not make exceptions, which can be interpreted as something positive. However it also means that 'Plan Cuadrante' does not adjust its policing tactics to different social groups in the citizenry. According to Wisler and Onwudiwe (2008:441), community policing should provide equality and fairness by putting emphasis on minorities and vulnerable groups and this should be a main policing tactic within 'Plan Cuadrante'. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Angelica de Leon admits: 'For us all social classes and races are equal. We do not adapt our tactics to this' [65]. It seems that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers acknowledge both equality and differentiation in their police work by on the one hand treating citizens in an equal manner and not adjusting policing tactics upon this, and on the other hand putting less emphasis on marginal neighborhoods in Quetzaltenango in terms of police presence.

As a consequence of fluctuating police presence of 'Plan Cuadrante', citizen security is not equally divided in Quetzaltenango. Perceptions on citizen security and the effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' are described in the following chapter, after which is focused on informal policing initiatives being the main consequence of insecurity and the current poor police-community relationship in Quetzaltenango.

---

[63] Interview merchant city-centre market Quetzaltenango. May 20, 2011.

[64] After the police reform, few efforts were made in order to reflect Guatemala's multicultural character by employing more indigenous people within the PNC. It is therefore remarkable that the majority of 'Plan Cuadrante' officers share an indigenous background, since Marie-Louise Glebbeek (2003:162) states that until 2000, the PNC management has had only little interest in actually encouraging the entrance of indigenous people, which might mean that some change has taken place in this matter.

[65] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Angelica de Leon. April 7, 2011.

Chapter 6: Effectiveness and Consequences of 'Plan Cuadrante'

Introduction

As citizen security has become an increasingly important issue in Guatemala and in Quetzaltenango, the role and the effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' on citizen security should be properly analyzed. In the first paragraph I describe the perception of police officers and citizens on the security situation in Quetzaltenango, after which I analyze their ideas on the effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' in this respect in paragraph 2. At last, I will pay attention to informal policing initiatives in paragraph 3, which increasingly arise in Quetzaltenango as a response on the current police-community relationship and augmenting insecurity.

6.1.   Perception on Citizen Security in Quetzaltenango

Citizens as well as 'Plan Cuadrante' officers perceive the current security situation as alarming. Over the last couple of years, the city increasingly must deal with robberies, extortions, violations, and other kinds of delinquencies, mostly committed by lower class youngsters. Although Kramer (2010:30) expresses that most delinquency is committed by gang members and disorderly people, it remains relatively difficult in Quetzaltenango to ascribe a certain label to delinquents due to the fact that most of them share the same characteristics. The majority of criminals in Quetzaltenango are marginalized male youngsters, who are often addicted to drugs or alcohol and may be part of a gang. Consequently, lower class boys with a careless appearance are easily seen as delinquents and become the scapegoats of society. As a result of familial disintegration, the lack of education and opportunities, and the feeling of being an outsider of society, youngsters often turn to delinquency and youth gangs. These factors are also portrayed in 'The Environmental Model' of Cruz (2007:24), who sees exclusion, community disorganization, and problem families, as the main influences, among others, on youngsters who join a youth gang. Cruz (2007:26) describes that exclusion produces social and economic vulnerability, of which poverty, economic instability, school drop-out, and unemployment are demonstrations, which become reasons for youth to escape to delinquency in order to improve their situation.

According Luis Monzon Vasquez, an employee of INGUAT, crimes in Quetzaltenango are committed by two groups of young men who are constantly set free from prison due to lack of evidence or denunciations [66]. Over the last two years, Vasquez has seen a significant change in the character of crimes in Quetzaltenango and argues that crimes have become much more violent in 2011

---

[66] Interview INGUAT employee Luis Monzon Vasquez. April 27, 2011.

in comparison with 2010. 'In 2010 there happened a substantial number of pick pocketing. In 2011, this has been replaced by assaults, which are much more violent' [67], argues Vasquez, who does not has a clear explanation for this change to violence. Other citizens also have seen a great change in citizen security and some of them even share the opinion that there does not exist such thing as citizen security in Quetzaltenango. When analyzing increase of crime and insecurity in 2011, it should be taken into account that it is election time in Guatemala, since the period of office of Álvaro Colom (2008 – 2012) is about to end. Literature points out that there exists a strong relation between crime rates and elections, which rise during election time, something which stands aside from the functioning of the police or 'Plan Cuadrante' in this respect (Fischer, 2002:7).

Many citizens consequently suffer personally from the insecurity existing in their neighborhood which has far going effects on their daily lives. As described by Rozema and Mcllwaine and Moser (in Koonings and Kruijt, 2007:64;123), fear of insecurity causes severe limitations on people's life and spatial mobility, resulting in avoiding certain places associated with danger and violence. This is also proven to be the case in Quetzaltenango, where citizens do not leave their houses at night out of fear. Citizen Armando Santos tells about the consequences of fear and insecurity for his life:

> In my house we made the rule that we do not leave the house after 6 pm. A neighbor who wanted to make a phone call at the central park was assaulted as well. Security does not exist here. I do not believe in a security that someone can go on the streets and nothing happens. I got used to staying home now [68].

This quote demonstrates the limitations of social spaces for citizens living in insecure communities. It becomes clear that citizens have adapted their way of living to the insecurity they are experiencing which restricts their freedom and possibilities. According to Duce and Pérez Perdomo (in Frühling, 2003:79;81), people are afraid of the probability of becoming victims of crime which stands alone from the statistical probability of being a victim. Citizens such as Armando Santos also perform this behavior and are afraid mainly due to interpersonal communication and messages of the media. Citizens want the insecurity to change, also expressed by citizen Armando Santos: 'Citizens want a change. With this situation we are forgetting that we are living. People are tired' [69]. Citizen Luis Rodriguez adds: 'I dream of a life without fear, that would be ideal. I have faith that this someday will be the case' [70].

Citizens are divided in how they perceive the cause of their rising insecurity. Such as described earlier by Dammert and Malone (2006:3), insecurity is not only the direct result of criminal

---

[67] Interview INGUAT employee Luis Monzon Vasquez. April 27, 2011.
[68] Interview citizen Armando Santos. April 12, 2011.
[69] Interview citizen Armando Santos. April 12, 2011.
[70] Interview Luis Rodriguez. April 11, 2011.

acts, but an indication of various daily insecurities of social, economic, and political issues such as unemployment and poverty. Most citizens in Quetzaltenango argue that the city has become less safe due to the economic crisis which resulted in unemployment, and think that unemployed people search for fast manners to gain money and therefore turn to delinquency. Unemployment is not only a problem in Guatemala, citizens argue that citizens from neighboring countries Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua come to Quetzaltenango to deal drugs or extort people. Others blame the Guatemalan family culture and disintegration as one of the reasons behind insecurity and say that parents do not teach their children the right morals and values. According to citizen Dimitrio Lopez, there does not exist a social, cultural, and educational basis anymore in Guatemalan society [71], also mentioned in 'The Environmental Model' of Cruz described above (2007:24). Most 'Plan Cuadrante' officers agree with this and mention the same factors which in their eyes contribute to youngsters taking the wrong path [72]. According to officer Miguel Pas, countless Guatemalans do not understand what is good and what is wrong. He sees it as a task for the government to solve this problem but also thinks that the government does not consider it a priority. Moreover, 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are convinced that most citizens do not take sufficient precautions to prevent insecurity, for example in terms of alarm systems. It is remarkable, that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are aware of the fact that the security that they provide is not sufficient for citizens in order to be safe and that measures such as alarm systems are needed.

There are also citizens who think that insecurity augmented as a consequence of population growth and argue that the amount of police officers did not increase accordingly. Citizens feel that there are not enough police officers in Quetzaltenango compared with the number of citizens and the violent character of the population. Many critic citizens blame the Guatemalan government for the lack of police and think that the PNC and 'Plan Cuadrante' could function better if the government would be more supportive in terms of resources and personnel. Citizen Rocky Pas Choqui explains:

> The state does not include security in their government plans, or not sufficiently at least. There are no resources, no personnel, and no professionalism within the Guatemalan police force. The government does not comply its promises to improve the security situation of this country. The insecurity in Quetzaltenango and in whole Guatemala is something structural I think because of the never chancing character of the government [73].

Since there will be no academy promotion this year on the police academy in Guatemala-City due to economy cutbacks of the government and disagreement upon access criteria of the police academy [74], this citizen could have a point here. This is a peculiar development since crime rates are augmenting in

---

[71] Interview citizen Dimitrio Lopez. May 13, 2011.
[72] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas. February 25, 2011.
[73] Interview citizen Rocky Pas Choqui. May 13, 2011.
[74] Conversation with Marie-Louise Glebbeek, August 17, 2011.

Guatemala as a whole and insecurity has become a serious national problem [75]. It appears that the Guatemalan government puts emphasis on other national issues such as politics and not on citizen security. Edy de Leon, who works at the municipality of Quetzaltenango, recognizes this pattern and thinks that the lack of government support has a serious impact on the performance of the PNC in general and 'Plan Cuadrante' in particular, which has its consequences for citizen security. De Leon explains:

> PNC and 'Plan Cuadrante' officers do not work like they should and the government does not care about it. The very same people who work for the government, commit the crimes. It does not suit them that the police is functioning good. The laws are there but the governmental agencies do not comply with them [76].

It becomes clear that De Leon has the opinion that the government is part of the delinquency by committing crimes themselves. According to De Leon, many well willing authorities of the ministry who did want to change the security situation and the functioning of the police, were fired or even killed, which makes security and the police in general a sensitive topic for Guatemalan politicians [77]. This might not be surprising in a country in which the government always had a significant influence on the police and the military, also proved in literature about the Guatemalan police reform by Marie-Louise Glebbeek (2003:111). Citizen Antonio Barrera recognizes politicizing of the police as well and argues:

> The authorities try to politicize the PNC and 'Plan Cuadrante' because they have their own secret agendas and therefore the police keep its deficiencies. The authorities boycott police presence because it goes against their interests. They care more about themselves than about security of the people [78].

If it is true what Barrera is saying and the Guatemalan government boycotts police presence on purpose, it might explain the overall personnel and resource problems within the PNC and 'Plan Cuadrante'.

Nevertheless, there are sufficient citizens who attribute the insecurity to internal factors within the PNC or 'Plan Cuadrante' and think that it does not has anything to do with the above described external factors. These citizens share the perception that the police should provide security no matter what problems they are facing, and think that the PNC is lacking capacity in this respect. Citizen Enrique Rodriguez says: 'The bosses of the PNC are irresponsible and that is why our situation is like

---

[75] Interview employee of municipality Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. March 30, 2011.
[76] Interview employee of municipality Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. March 30, 2011.
[77] Informal conversation employee of municipality Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. May 25, 2011.
[78] Interview citizen Antonio Barrera. March 11, 2011.

this at the moment, because they do not know how to choose the right personnel. A police officer should have the capacity to work in an institution that has to generate security' [79]. Citizens argue that 'Plan Cuadrante' should be more creative in its policing tactics in order to reach the same results with less personnel or resources, and have the feeling that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers hide themselves behind the institutional and governmental shortcomings instead. Moreover, citizens state that the majority of police officers come from other towns and villages outside of Quetzaltenango which makes them unknown to the population and the character of the city and unable to diminish insecurity. The PNC however, has other priorities in this respect such as preventing clientelism and corruption which arises more easy when police officers are working in their own city and already have a network.

Various solutions are given by citizens to solve the numerous security problems in their city. More and more citizens become aware of the fact that denunciating crimes contributes to improvement of the security situation so that the police know what is going on in the city. Some even think further and believe that the security situation can change if education at home and at school changes and morals and values become more important in Guatemalan daily life. Others believe that it would be much safer in Quetzaltenango if police officers would originate from Quetzaltenango so that they would know and understand the city and its population [80]. Furthermore, citizens argue that the police need to be better organized in order to diminish insecurity and more personnel is needed so that police cars can patrol constantly in every neighborhood. Citizens also realize that organizing themselves against delinquency works, because they have seen it happen in their neighborhood or in neighboring areas. In order to start these movements from below to diminish insecurity in Quetzaltenango a long way needs to be passed and a sense of community spirit is needed in order to be successful, something which is lacking in Quetzaltenango according to various citizens who say that people only care about themselves as a consequence of distrust.

When analyzing citizens perceptions on security, it is striking that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers do not point out the rising insecurity often mentioned by citizens. Instead, they argue that insecurity has diminished due to the effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante', which will be described in the next paragraph.

6.2. Effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' on Security

When 'Plan Cuadrante' was implemented in 2008 it got the difficult task to make an end to the ongoing criminal activities. Perceptions on the effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' on security in Quetzaltenango highly differs between citizens and 'Plan Cuadrante' officers. Whereas all 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are convinced that the division has and had a serious impact on citizen security, the majority of citizens sees only little to no difference between before and after implementation of

---

[79] Interview citizen Enrique Rodriguez. March 30, 2011.
[80] Interview citizen Enrique Rodriguez. March 30, 2011.

'Plan Cuadrante' in terms of security. According to most citizens, 'Plan Cuadrante' does make a difference in citizen security but think that it is far from being enough to make Quetzaltenango a safe city. Both citizens and 'Plan Cuadrante' officers think that 'Plan Cuadrante' works preventive because of its patrols which keeps delinquents think twice, although citizens argue simultaneously that the effort made by 'Plan Cuadrante' is still is not enough in order to get rid of the security problems they are facing every day. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers however, argue that Quetzaltenango would be a hundred percent safe if 'Plan Cuadrante' would cover the whole city. According to all of them, delinquency has diminished in Quetzaltenango due to 'Plan Cuadrante' which makes them believe that 'Plan Cuadrante' is a successful strategy. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers have seen a great change in security since the implementation of the strategy. Flor de Leon Sanchez explains: 'When we came here they robbed ten to fifteen vehicles every week, now this is much less. Now we hear less about car robberies and murders than before'. The question remains whether the city really has become safer such is argued by 'Plan Cuadrante' officers, or if 'Plan Cuadrante' does less than when it started such as argued by citizens described later. Statistics of the Comisaría point out that the amount of crimes committed in Quetzaltenango diminished in 2009 with the implementation of 'Plan Cuadrante' but climbed up again in 2010 which would mean that citizens could be right in this respect [81]. At the same time these statistics show that the amount of denunciations increased since the implementation of 'Plan Cuadrante' in 2008. It is not clear if that is due to the increasing trust of citizens in the police as a result of the work of 'Plan Cuadrante' or because delinquency increased.

There are also numerous citizens who do not perceive 'Plan Cuadrante' as an effective strategy for Quetzaltenango. Citizen Enrique Rodriguez, who does not feel more secure due to 'Plan Cuadrante', states: ''Plan Cuadrante' did not improve my personal security situation. Nothing got better. We have to call five to ten times for help and most of the times they do not even show up. How can a security institution have deficiencies?' [82]. Citizens such as Enrique Rodriquez feel increasingly frustrated about the insecurity in their neighborhoods and are disappointed about the little effect the promising 'Plan Cuadrante' has in their eyes on citizen security. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers in their turn, admit that their division's effectiveness has weakened recently. The lack of personnel and resources are given as the main reasons behind this ineffectiveness, causing serious consequences for citizen security. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Alejandra Paiz Cabrera explains the following:

> 'Plan Cuadrante' definitely has changed a lot in Quetzaltenango but its effectiveness has fell down during the last months because of the lack of personnel and resources. In earlier days we covered six or seven quadrants and only cover three or four quadrants at this moment, which of course has its effect on the security situation [83].

---

[81] Statistics of the Comisaría. *'Hechos negativos comisaria 41 2007 – 2011'*
[82] Interview citizen Enrique Rodriguez. March 30, 2011.
[83] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Alejandra Paiz Cabrera. March 22, 2011.

'Plan Cuadrante' officer Silvestre Lemus adds: 'The lack of police officers has most of all impoverished citizen security. Everyone asks why 'Plan Cuadrante' let down the security. Patrol cars are there in order to provide security, but there are no police officers' [84]. This change in effectiveness is also noticed by citizens in Quetzaltenango. According to most of them, 'Plan Cuadrante' worked more effectively in 2008 and 2009 resulting in citizens appreciating the work of the division. Citizen Enrique Rodriguez says: 'In the beginning, 'Plan Cuadrante' was effective in resolving conflicts and preventing crime and acted immediately' [85]. According to citizens there are various reasons behind this change in effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante', such as that 'Plan Cuadrante' stabilized itself during the years and has become unmotivated. COCODE leader Armando Santos explains:

> 'Plan Cuadrante' now stabilized itself and it seems that commodity and passivity are coming with that. When we find our commodity we do not worry ourselves anymore about going forth or progressing in our work. 'Plan Cuadrante' stabilized itself and its effectiveness is going down. That is what I have seen and I think that is fatal for 'Plan Cuadrante'. They think that now everything is done. 'Plan Cuadrante' was supposed to be a success [86].

Representative of the municipality of Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon, who was highly involved in the implementation of 'Plan Cuadrante', thinks that the reason behind the changing character of 'Plan Cuadrante' has been the change in police leadership of 'Plan Cuadrante' in 2009 [87]. According to De Leon, the orange vest is the only remaining difference between 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PNC, which he perceives as a nonfunctioning institution. He tells:

> From 2009 on, the Comisaría started to pull and observe 'Plan Cuadrante'. They trained the 'Plan Cuadrante' officers to be honest and not corrupt. When 'Plan Cuadrante' started this was the case and it was an improvement for security, but now it has changed totally. They came to work with responsibility, but not anymore. They lost the confidence of the people. Now they do not comply anymore with their function of being a community policing strategy [88].

It becomes clear from what De Leon is saying that he thinks that the PNC play a significant role in the currently bad functioning and ineffectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' and that lost confidence of citizens is a visible proof of that. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers seem to agree with this when they mention the lack of support from the PNC, and indirectly the government, in terms of personnel and resources is the major reason behind their ineffectiveness. According to 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Estuardo Robles

---

[84] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Silvestre Lemus. April 15, 2011.
[85] Interview citizen Enrique Rodriguez. March 30, 2011.
[86] Interview COCODE leader zone 1 Armando Santos. April 12, 2011.
[87] Interview employee of municipality Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. March 30, 2011.
[88] Interview employee of municipality Quetzaltenango Edy de Leon. March 30, 2011.

Gonzales 'Plan Cuadrante' could be really successful if the government and the PNC would support 'Plan Cuadrante' in terms of materials, personnel, recourses, and knowledge [89]. Until this support does not exist, 'Plan Cuadrante' will not reach a higher level, he says. According to officer Robles Gonzales, 'Plan Cuadrante' does work in Chile, where the government is more supportive than in Guatemala. When analyzing this perception it seems that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers are willing to work harder and more effectively but that they need more support from the government and the police institution to fulfill this. This lack of support discourage 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and several 'Plan Cuadrante' officers express that they are unmotivated in their work due to these depressing circumstances which also affects the team spirit of the division [90]. Nonetheless, 'Plan Cuadrante' officers have to fulfill their duty of generating security and preventing crime regardless the setbacks, and more effective ways of working needs to be found.

6.3. Consequences of Insecurity and the Current Police-Community Relationship in Quetzaltenango

The above described insecurity in Quetzaltenango and current police-community relationship also have its consequences. According to Manning (in Newburn, 2005:200) when communities have expectations of the police which policemen cannot meet, it creates a feeling of disappointment and frustration which can result in communities feeling alone and abandoned by the police, the state and the enforcement of law resulting in diminishing support for state-democracy. Citizens who see the authorities as incompetent to protect them often turn to 'informal policing' initiatives (Snodgrass Godoy, 2002:644). In accordance with this theory, informal policing initiatives have widely developed over the last five years in Quetzaltenango. In many neighborhoods delinquents are warned about the consequences of committing a crime by means of wall paintings, such as can be seen on the picture below.

Picture 9.   *'Vecindario organizado contra la delincuencia'* [91]

---

[89] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Estuardo Robles Gonzales. March 4, 2011.
[90] Several informal conversations with 'Plan Cuadrante' officers. February – May 2011.
[91] Translation in English: 'Citizens organized against delinquency'. Wall painting in a neighborhood in zone 1.

Informal policing or citizen security initiatives exist in every part of Quetzaltenango, both in the city-centre as in outskirt neighborhoods. Informal policing thus exists in neighborhoods with high police presence of 'Plan Cuadrante' and in neighborhoods covered by the PNC, showing that these initiatives do not only exist in neighborhoods with a 'policing gap'. Apparently, citizens still feel insecure in their neighborhood although the police is around, and feel the need to provide more security themselves. Within informal policing, citizens literally take over the job of the police and start organizing themselves by means of citizen patrols and alarm systems. Citizen patrol groups in Quetzaltenango consist of twenty to thirty organized neighbors who patrol once or twice a week in their neighborhood [92]. Most of these groups contain volunteers, both men and women, patrol on different days of the week so that delinquents do not know when they operate. The majority of citizens who are part of these groups use masks so that delinquents cannot recognize them to guarantee their privacy. When citizens go out to patrol they get together at a certain place and time in their neighborhood and walk through every street of their area for a couple of hours. Sezar Lopez, leader of a citizen patrol group in marginal neighborhood *La Colina* located in zone 5, explains how his group arose a couple of years ago as a response to fear of crime:

> Three years ago, there was a lot of delinquency in another neighborhood close by and we thought that it might come here as well. So we started taking measures to prevent delinquency in our neighborhood. We felt the necessity to organize us as neighbors because of this insecurity (mainly drug traffic). The representative of security of our COCODE started to organize this group. When we started we patrolled every day, every day another street. Now we patrol only once a week because it has become quiet here and as a result of our patrols delinquency kept away [93].

In general citizens part of a security initiative such as Sezar Lopez think that their initiatives cleaned up their neighborhood and keep delinquents away. Lopez: 'Criminals do not enter our neighborhood anymore because of our organization' [94]. However, many citizen patrol groups often step over to an alarm system. Alarm systems are seen as a relatively safe form of neighborhood protection because of the relatively low risk and less time-consuming character. Citizen Magdalena Sanchez, a shop owner who earlier gave her pessimistic opinion about the police, tells what consequences the insecurity has for her personal life and about the alarm system that she has in order to protect herself (see picture 10):

> In my shop I have an alarm bell in case of thieves entering my shop. The alarm is connected to my husband's leather shop next door and when something happens I push the button and he comes out to help me. The insecurity makes me feel scared and I am afraid to leave the

---

[92] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.
[93] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.
[94] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.

house. I do not feel secure in my shop either; they robbed me many times and I could not do anything because they had weapons [95].

Picture 10.   Alarm system in second hand clothing shop in zone 1.

Armando Pantuj, a retired soldier who is part of another group of citizens in *La Colina*, tells that a alarm system existing of whistles works better in his neighborhood then the citizen patrols they carried out a couple of years ago. Now he and his neighbors only go out when citizens use the alarm in case of an emergency to scare the delinquent away. Pantuj explains why the patrols did not work out in his neighborhood:

> We lack communication and commitment in my neighborhood. Many neighbors did not want to be part of our patrol group because they did not want the responsibilities. Because of the lack of communication, the alarm system works fine because at least in this matter we communicate by using the whistles. My neighborhood is really calm at this moment [96].

The problems that Pantuj faces with his neighbors is a common problem in citizens security organizations in Quetzaltenango. Many groups face internal problems with group members who do not want to patrol anymore because they do not want the responsibilities, are too afraid of what might happen during patrolling, or fear that a delinquent recognizes them and takes revenge. This affects the effectiveness of the group initiative and often results in the breakdown of the group. COCODE leader Armando Santos of *Barrio San Antonio* located in zone 1 is not supportive towards participating in citizens patrols because he thinks it is too dangerous for citizens. He says:

---

[95] Interview citizen Magdalena Sanchez. March 11, 2011.
[96] Interview citizen Armando Pantuj. March 29, 2011.

> We do not want to patrol in our neighborhood because the situation does not permit it. It is
> not worth it to organize ourselves in that way because it is too dangerous and we do not want
> to obligate our neighbors to participate. We rather give them a whistle system to warn other
> neighbors and telephone numbers so that they can call the police if something happens [97].

Although organized citizens work in order to make their own neighborhood safer, they share the opinion that providing security still belongs to the tasks of the police. Citizen Armando Pantuj says the following about 'Plan Cuadrante': 'I think that 'Plan Cuadrante' should comply to their function. They are paid with our taxes to do it. The people only ask them to do their job. Security is for everybody [98]'. This quote reflects the dissatisfaction that exists among citizens about police work in their neighborhood resulting in a weak police-community relationship which is the most significant reason why citizens organize themselves against delinquency according to Snodgrass Godoy (2002:644). Citizens in Quetzaltenango however, do not express that they distrust the police, but state that the police presence is insufficient for the delinquency problems they are facing in their neighborhood. Citizens think that police presence is low because of the lack of personnel and not because of the weak relationship with the neighborhoods. Citizens part of citizen security initiatives are open for more contact with the police so that they can work together, which indicates that these citizens are not distrusting the police and have confidence in the competences to improve the security situation in their neighborhood. Sezar Lopez confirms: 'We do not see the police as an enemy and they really need to enter our neighborhood in order to improve our relationship with them and to fight insecurity' [99]. Sezar Lopez tells about the relationship between his patrol group and the police, which he believes is not different from the relationships with other neighborhoods without an informal policing initiative:

> They [the police] know about our patrolling initiative and support it. We have contact with
> both the PNC and 'Plan Cuadrante'. We call them so that they make a round in our
> neighborhood. 'Plan Cuadrante' patrols our neighborhood during the nights but during day
> time they rarely pass. When we see 'Plan Cuadrante' police we talk to them in the streets but
> it does not goes much further than that [100].

Lopez feels that 'Plan Cuadrante' and the police in general back up his neighborhood patrols. This matches the literature about informal policing which argues that weak states such as Guatemala, where the police is absent, might be tempted to tolerate or even encourage informal policing strategies to compensate their lack of policing capacity (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:435). Lopez thinks that the police support their initiative because they strive for the same goal which is crime prevention, but says

---

[97] Interview COCODE leader Armando Santos. April 12, 2011.
[98] Interview citizen Armando Pantuj. March 29, 2011.
[99] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.
[100] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.

that there does not exist an overall communication about this with the police [101]. It seems that Lopez is right about his feeling that the police supports his initiative, since all interviewed 'Plan Cuadrante' officers perceive citizen initiatives positively and think that these initiatives help them with doing their work. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pablo Barrios even thinks that citizen initiatives prevent crime, just as declared by citizens, and says: 'These initiatives do help to improve citizen security, there is less crime because of these groups' [102]. According to 'Plan Cuadrante' official II Juarez Fuentes citizen initiatives are a usable tool to find out who is willing to strive against delinquency and who not, which for him makes a person suspicious and a possible delinquent. It seems that Juarez Fuentes sees informal policing groups as something that every 'good' citizen should do, whereas it also includes some risks for citizen security and law enforcement. Some 'Plan Cuadrante' officers however mention the conditions under which citizens should organize themselves. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pedro Toj Mech gives his perception on informal policing groups:

> I think that it is positive that neighbors organize themselves in order to fight delinquency in their neighborhood. They denunciate and call the police and hand over the delinquent to us. In this way, delinquents are more afraid in certain neighborhoods because they know that the citizens will react if they commit a crime. Citizens always have to call the police because if they do not and take the law into their own hands, they themselves are committing a crime and we have to arrest them because of law breaking [103].

The quote of Toj Mech demonstrates that he is well aware of the eventual risks that citizen security initiatives can bring. 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas is also conscious of this fact and thinks that there is a tendency of using violence in every group of people.
He argues:

> I think that there are always one or two persons within a citizen group with bad intentions who want to lynch a delinquent. I do not agree with these kind of collective punishments because I think that it is the task of the authorities to decide what happens to a delinquent [104].

Official II Juarez Fuentes emphasizes that 'Plan Cuadrante' never got into conflict with informal policing groups and says that he is very happy with the civilians because they back 'Plan Cuadrante' up and respect police presence. Juarez Fuentes continues: 'Citizens call us fast when something happens and we arrive immediately before something serious could have happened. On top of that, we as 'Plan Cuadrante' have always insisted at meetings that citizens create a 'Junta Local de Seguridad'

[101] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.
[102] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pablo Barrios. February 24, 2011.
[103] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Pedro Toj Mech. May 24, 2011.
[104] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Miguel Pas. May 16, 2011.

in their neighborhood and explained them what to do and what not to do in dangerous situations. In this way they know what their rights and their obligations are as citizens' [105]. What Juarez Fuentes is saying here reflects the notion that he is aware of the possibility that citizens could cross the line when the police does not arrive in time. It seems that he is willing to take that risk by prioritizing citizen participation in crime prevention as a reinforcement of the police.

Citizens part of a security initiative affirm the opinion that they always call the police whenever something happens in their neighborhood and say that they do not take the law into their own hands because of the absence of the police. Sezar Lopez elaborates: 'Until now we never had the opportunity to grab a thief because they always ran away. But I think that if we had the opportunity, most of us would call the police instead of using violence and taking the law into our own hands' [106]. It seems that there are no agreements among citizens in the patrol group of Lopez which makes the thin lines visible between pacific informal policing in terms of citizen patrols and alarm systems, and vigilantism known for the use of extralegal violence such as lynchings (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:430). Citizen Armando Pantuj, who has problems with delinquent youngsters in his neighborhood, also argues not using violence in his organization:

> We are only there to prevent crime, not to treat them [youngsters] bad. We understand their situations and the problems these *patojos* [107] have. They only hang in our neighborhood when they have problems. We never captured a thief by ourselves. We are conscious enough not to make mistakes. Things such as lynching's do not appear in our neighborhood. I think this happens more in areas where neighbors are highly organized and where they do not have confidence at all in the authorities who do not show up when it is most needed [108].

This quote of Pantuj is somewhat contradictory, since he mentioned before that the police is not doing its job in his neighborhood and that they are absent, just like in the situation described above. This might mean that his neighborhood has the same characteristics as neighborhoods where lynching's do occur but that his neighborhood organization is of a different and less explosive caliber. Furthermore it seems that citizens in his neighborhood have not entirely lost trust in the police such as in other neighborhoods. It remains doubtful though if citizens who are part of these initiatives would be honest about violence used by members in their organization. However, some organized merchants at the city-center market of Quetzaltenango do admit that they use violence against thieves at the market and beat them up until they cannot walk anymore, which practically is the objective of vigilantism so that a delinquent is not able to form a threat again for the community (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2008:430).

---

[105] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' official II Juarez Fuentes. April 26, 2011.
[106] Interview citizen Sezar Lopez. March 23, 2011.
[107] '*Patojos*' can be defined in English as 'boys'.
[108] Interview citizen Armando Pantuj. March 29, 2011.

Merchants argue that they call the police afterwards to hand him over [109]. One merchant who attended security courses during COCODE meetings of 'Plan Cuadrante' explains the reasons behind the beating up:

> Whenever we catch a thief we use violence. We beat him up until the police comes. We do not let the victim die or suffer really bad, but we do take 'care' of him In the courses with 'Plan Cuadrante' they told us that we cannot use violence against thieves. But why can't we when thieves are violent against us as well? Two merchants were killed recently. Moreover we beat them up because we know that they will be free within a day because of the failing law system here [110].

The quote above shows that citizens do not only use violence against delinquents because of the absent police forces, but also because of the impunity, dysfunctional police and law system that exist in Guatemala. It seems that citizens get frustrated with the fact that delinquents are set free and therefore use violence in order to teach them a lesson. Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz agrees with this fact and thinks that citizens take the law into their own hands because of the weak criminal justice system, also mentioned by Snodgrass Godoy (2002:644) [111]. Ortiz argues:

> I think people lynch because they are tired of so many robberies and they want to live in peace. They do not do it because of the lack of police. They take justice into their own hands because they think that we let the delinquent go after one day, but that is not the case. Everything depends on the laws and court. We can only detent a delinquent for six hours; after six hours it becomes an illegal detent.

In general 'Plan Cuadrante' officers and citizens deny the fact that citizens in Quetzaltenango use violence or lynch, while there exist numerous stories of citizens who say that lynching's occurred at marketplaces *La Terminal* and *La Democracia*. Merchants working at these markets mainly come from indigenous villages outside of Quetzaltenango who according to citizens still have the customs of lynching when somebody robs something at the market. In Guatemala many citizens share the idea that lynching is a Mayan punishment or '*castigo maya',* and therefore point their finger towards *indígenas* when lynchings occur. There do not exist Mayan fundaments however, that prove that lynching is a manner within Mayan culture to solve conflicts (Salazar, 2002:5). During a COCODE meeting of the ICCGP in March this year, special attention was paid to the *castigo maya* with the objective to raise the awareness among citizens that lynching has nothing to do with Mayan culture or Mayan ways to punish perpetrators.

---

[109] Informal conversations with merchants at the central park market. May 19 and 20, 2011.
[110] Informal conversations merchant city-center market Quetzaltenango. May 19, 2011.
[111] Interview 'Plan Cuadrante' officer Erick Ortiz. May 20, 2011.

During participant observation at the office of 'Plan Cuadrante' a police officer showed pictures of delinquents who were bleeding heavily. When the police officer was asked why these delinquents were bleeding, he said that they were almost lynched by merchants at market *La Democracia* which proves that physical punishments do occur. Contradictory, during interviews the very same police officer claimed that lynching's do not exist in Quetzaltenango. Here it becomes clear that our definition of a lynching, which indicates using violence in order to punish a person with death as a possible outcome, might differ from the definition used by 'Plan Cuadrante' officers who only speak about a lynching in case someone actually dies. This situation displays the discrepancy that exists around the topic of violence and informal policing. While police officers argue that they only support pacific citizen security initiatives, they are aware of the physical punishments taking place in their working area and know that there only exists a thin line between what is acceptable by law and what is not. In this way they put themselves and citizens in a vulnerable position.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Insecurity has become a prevailing problem in the global community of today. All over the world people feel increasingly insecure, also in Latin America where crime and delinquency currently have become daily business. Community policing strategies have been implemented in entire Latin America, as well in post-civil war and divided Guatemala, as a response to rising insecurity. 'Plan Cuadrante' is an example of a community policing strategy applied in Guatemala with the main objective of diminishing insecurity by means of improving of the police-community relationship. This however, is a difficult task in a place where trust in the authorities is missing as a consequence of 36 years of internal conflict. In order to write a thesis about 'Plan Cuadrante', research has been carried out in Western highland city Quetzaltenango in a four month period from the beginning of February until the end of May 2011. The following central research question has been answered by means of qualitative research among both police officers and civilians: *How to describe and evaluate 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, in relation to the police-community relationship and perceptions of security?*

Community policing strategy 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango deviates from the central concept of community policing and the original Chilean framework of 'Plan Cuadrante', which becomes clearly visible in this thesis. Preventing delinquency by means of patrolling in small quadrants is essential within the theory of community policing, which is not the case in Quetzaltenango where police officers work in large zones. Consequently, 'Plan Cuadrante' does not fulfils its preventive task due to the fact that a patrol car only passes three to four times a day through the assigned quadrant. This results in unfamiliarity of citizens with the patrol cars and its police officers, and a way for delinquents to figure out when to operate. Moreover it appears that 'Plan Cuadrante' focuses on high priority zones in the city centre of Quetzaltenango where the majority of delinquency occurs, instead of on marginal, socially excluded neighborhoods where the majority of criminals reside and stable police-community relationships and crime prevention is most needed. According to Wisler and Onwudiwe (2008:441), the main aim of community policing is providing equity and fairness and putting emphasis on vulnerable groups in society, which obviously is not integrated in the functioning of 'Plan Cuadrante' in Quetzaltenango.

Policing tactics used by 'Plan Cuadrante' do not correspond to community policing tactics portrayed in the literature or to 'Plan Cuadrante' tactics implemented in Chile. A perfect illustration of this is 'Plan 40', where soldiers assist 'Plan Cuadrante' officers during car patrol while sitting in the back of the car showing their immense weapons. Community policing tactics of 'Plan Cuadrante' are thus mixed with military style policing tactics of the PNC or even the former PN, which does not rhyme with overall community policing ideals of regaining confidence of the population and being easily accessible. Furthermore, important tactics such as foot patrol are not carried out. Officers use one specific policing tactic which is constant car patrol through the assigned quadrant. Although

officers have various patrolling means available at the office such as bicycles, motorcycles, and their feet, only patrol cars are used. Research of Wilson and Kelling (1982) points out that ways of patrol in which police officers can have more direct contact with citizens, improves the police-community relationship, and consequently diminishes feelings of insecurity among citizens. The 'broken window theory' shows that fear of crime among citizens eventually leads to heightened levels of crime, and therefore foot patrol is a significant tactic within community policing. 'Plan Cuadrante' officers argue though that patrols are only possible by car, due to the size of the quadrants and shortage of personnel, something which is the main cause of most problems within the functioning of 'Plan Cuadrante' according to police officers. Moreover, an overall policy making within 'Plan Cuadrante' in Guatemala is absent, since there is little to no communication about policing tactics and mission statements of 'Plan Cuadrante' divisions distinguish.

The relationship between citizens and authorities in Guatemala has been profoundly disturbed during the internal conflict and mutual trust does not exist. Perceptions of both police officers and citizens demonstrate that 'Plan Cuadrante' faces a difficult job in regaining confidence of its public and consequently interaction hardly occurs. Interaction plays a significant role within the principals of community policing, since both police and citizens should cooperate in order to prevent crime. Although interaction takes place at the 'Plan Cuadrante' office and on the phone, interaction is relatively absent and sporadic in the streets. As a major consequence of patrolling by car, an immense border keeps existing between the police and citizens to approach each other. Observation shows that officers do not step out of their vehicle in order to talk with citizens and just drive through the different neighborhoods which makes the patrol car literally an obstacle to interaction. Citizens do not easily approach 'Plan Cuadrante' officers either as a result of distrust in authorities and the police in particular and the fact that the patrol car drives by. Most citizens in Quetzaltenango do not trust the police which is based on the perception that the police is in contact with delinquents or is incapable in supplying security. Consequently, citizens do not feel comfortable enough to report crimes due to the existing distrust. Nevertheless, citizens' perceptions proof that some of them have more trust in and interaction with 'Plan Cuadrante' officers, who they perceive as friendlier, more honest, less corrupt, and more effective than PNC officers. A significant part of the population of Quetzaltenango however, does not trust in any of these police divisions, does not see a major difference between the two, and the existence of two different police divisions in the same city causes confusion among many citizens.

This thesis also gave outcomes on another dimension of the police-community relationship in Quetzaltenango, which is the fact that the relationship is heavily liable to discrimination based on class and ethnic characteristics. While 'Plan Cuadrante' officers deny the fact that discrimination exists within their work and argue that they treat citizens equally, participant observation and citizens' perceptions prove differently in which the concept of 'othering' plays a significant role by creating a barrier between 'us' and 'them'. Citizens argue that the police treats them in a certain manner based on their class position or *ladino* or *indígena* background, while 'Plan Cuadrante' officers point their

finger to higher class citizens who would look down on them. It has become clear that 'Plan Cuadrante' officers acknowledge both equality and differentiation within their work. On the one hand officers claim to treat citizens in an equal manner and do not adjust policing tactics to citizen's class position or ethnic background. On the other hand they argue that they put less emphasis on marginal or underprivileged neighborhoods in Quetzaltenango in terms of police presence which can be seen as a form of discrimination or social exclusion.

The security situation in Quetzaltenango is critical and citizens feel more and more insecure which has an unprecedented impact on people's daily lives and spatial mobility due to fear of crime, as described by Rozema, Moser and McIlwaine (in Koonings and Kruijt, 2007). Police officers and citizens appoint several causes behind this rising insecurity, from which the most striking one is the role of the government which cuts on security expenses such as police academy promotions and police equipment. Although the Guatemalan government promises to fight insecurity, little support is actually given in order to realize this and make police divisions do their job effectively. Some citizens however argue that crime has gotten worse as an outcome of the non-functioning of 'Plan Cuadrante' and the PNC, which should be placed however in the context of current presidential elections and accompanying violence. Although 'Plan Cuadrante' officers complain about personnel and resource deficits, and innovative solutions to these institutional problems stay out, insecurity in Quetzaltenango and in Guatemala as a whole increases while the government does not respond to the collective needs of its population and seems to have an interest in a non-functioning security system.

The effectiveness of 'Plan Cuadrante' on insecurity in Quetzaltenango is minimal. When the division started in 2008, 'Plan Cuadrante' captured a lot of criminals and gained respect of PNC officers and citizens. Both police officers and citizens however have seen a significant change in this respect as an outcome of government cutbacks in police elements and resources, resulting in unmotivated police officers who argue to not have the time for interaction with citizens due to the size of quadrants and staffing problems. As a consequence of rising insecurity and the poor police-community relationship, citizens increasingly turn to informal policing initiatives and organize themselves by means of patrol groups and alarm systems in order to provide security in their neighborhoods where the police do not supply it. Citizens part of such an initiative still see preventing crime as the main task of the police, but argue that they cannot sit and wait for the insecurity to get even worse. Remarkably, 'Plan Cuadrante' officers stimulate informal policing initiatives while they are aware of the thin line between pacific and violent policing extensions, which matches literature of Wisler and Onwudiwe (2008: 427) describing that weak states might be tempted to tolerate or even encourage informal policing strategies in order to compensate their policing incapacity.

Concluding; in this thesis it has become clear how 'Plan Cuadrante' functions and what the perception is of both police officers and citizen on this division, the current police-community relationship, the security situation and its consequences. Although 'Plan Cuadrante' has made some change in Quetzaltenango in terms of police presence (though not enough) and the degree of

accessibility of the police, mutual trust and interaction remain generally absent. This case study of a community policing strategy in a divided, post-civil war democracy, demonstrates that Western countries and the Western orientated community policing strategy might overlook the readiness, resources, and government support of non-Western communities for self-regulation, also questioned by Wisler and Onwudiwe (2008:442). It can be questioned if 'Plan Cuadrante' has a chance to succeed while operating next to PNC divisions who still use repressive military style policing tactics. Community policing is not embraced by the whole police institution and there does not exist a decentralization of policy making, which is highly needed for such a strategy to be effective and should be clear to both police officers and citizens.

Quetzaltenango still has to pass a long, steep way in order for 'Plan Cuadrante' to be a successful community policing strategy, bridging Western ideals and Guatemalan reality. First, all involved parties should get on the same page and strive for the same goal. Wounds of the past need to heal so that trust and interaction between the police and citizens can recur and preventive policing gets a fair chance, something which both police officers and citizens deserve. The question remains however, if community policing strategies such as 'Plan Cuadrante' are implemented as a result of the increasing pressure of international society, or if it is a true desire of the Guatemalan government and the police.

References

Anderson, Malcom, and Apap, Joanna

  2002 *Striking a balance between freedom, security, and justice in an enlarged European Union.* Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.

Argueta, Otto

  2010 'Private security in Guatemala: the pathway to its proliferation'. In: *GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies.* No. 144.

Bailey, J. and Dammert, L.

  2006 *Public security and police reform in the Americas.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Berg, Bruce L.

  1999 *Policing in modern society.* Woburn: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Boeije, Hennie

  2005 *Analyseren in kwalitatief onderzoek. Denken en doen.* Amsterdam: Boom Onderwijs.

Boobbyer, Claire

  2002 Footprint Guatemala Handbook. Bath: Footprint Handbooks Ltd.

Bradburd, Daniel

  1998 *Being there: the necessity of fieldwork.* Washington: Smithsonian series in ethnographic-inquiry.

Cruz, José Miguel

  2007 *Street gangs in Central America.* San Salvador: UCA Editores.

Dammert, Lucia and Malone, Mary Fran T.

  2006 'Does it take a village? Policing strategies and fear of crime in Latin America'. In: *Latin American politics and society*. Vol. 48, No. 4, pp. 27 – 51.

DeWalt, Kathleen M. and DeWalt, Billie R.

  2002 *Participant Observation, a guide for fieldworkers.* Lanham: Alta Mira Press.

Duce, Mauricio and Perèz Perdomo, Rogelio

  2003 'Citizen security and reform of the criminal justice system in Latin America'. In: *Crime and Violence in Latin America. Citizen Security, Democracy, and the State*. Frühling, Hugo, Tulchin, Joseph S, and Golding, Heather A. Pp. 69 – 92. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Edwards, Charles J.

  2005 *Changing policing theories for 21th century societies.* Annandale: The Federation Press.

Ericson, Richard V.

  2005 'The police as reproducers of order'. In: *Policing key readings*. Newburn, Tim. Pp. 215 – 240. Oxford: Willan Publishing.

Fielding, Nigel G.

  2005 'Concepts and theory in community policing'. In: *The Howard Journal*. Vol. 44, No. 5, pp. 460 – 472.

Frühling, Hugo

  2003 'The impact of community policing and police reform in Latin America'. In: *Toward a society under law. Citizens and their police in Latin America.* Tulchin, Joseph S. and Meg Ruthenburg. Pp.15 – 52. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Frühling, Hugo and Cancina, Azún

  2005 'Community and problem-solving policing'. In: *Community based crime and violence prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean.* The World Bank.

Glebbeek, Marie-Louise

  2003 *In the crossfire of democracy. Police reform and police practice in post-civil war Guatemala.* Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers.

Glebbeek, Marie-Louise

  2009 'Mano Dura: Fighting Crime, Violence, and Insecurity With an Iron Fist in Central America'. In: *Police Use of Force: A Global Perspective.* Kuhns, Joseph B. and Knutsson, Johannes. Pp. 63-73. Praeger Security International

Glebbeek, Marie-Louise

2001 'Police Reform and the Peace Process in Guatemala: the Fifth Promotion of the National Civilian Police'. In: *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 431-453.

Glebbeek, Marie-Louise

N.d. 'Policing the public: Police – society Relations in Postwar Guatemala'. Unpublished article, Department of Anthropology, Utrecht University.

Goldsmith, Andrew

2005 'Police reform and the problem of trust'. In: *Theoretical Criminology.* Vol. 9, pp. 443-470.

Hinkle, J.C. & Weisburd, David

2008 'The irony of broken windows policing: A micro-place study of the relationship between disorder, focused police crackdowns and fear of crime'. *Journal of criminal justice.* Vol. 36, pp. 503 – 513.

Huggins, Martha K.

1991 *Vigilantism and the state in modern Latin America. Essays on extralegal violence.* New York: Praeger Publishers.

Human Rights Watch

2011 'Guatemala'. Country Summary January 2011.

Klockars, Carl B.

2005 'The rethoric of community policing'. In: *Policing key readings*. Newburn, Tim. Pp. 442 – 459. Oxford: Willan Publishing.

Kramer, Elmer

2010 'Burgerveiligheid in Xela'. Bachelor dissertation, Department of Anthropology, Utrecht University.

Krumer-Nevo, Michal, and Benjamin, Orly

2010 'Critical poverty knowledge. Contesting othering and social distancing'. In: *Current Sociology*. Vol. 58(5), pp. 693:714.

Lum, Cynthia

2009 'Community policing or zero tolerance? Preferences of police officers from 22 countries in transition'. In: *British Journal of Criminology*. Vol. 49, pp. 788 – 809.

Maguire, Mike, Morgan, Rodney, and Reiner, Robert

2007 *The Oxford handbook of criminology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Manning, Peter K.

2005 'The police: mandate, strategies, and appearances'. In: *Policing key readings*. Newburn, Tim. Pp. 191 – 214. Oxford: Willan Publishing.

Mcllwaine, Cathy and Moser, O.N. Caroline

2007 'Living in fear: how the urban poor perceive violence, fear and insecurity'. In: *Fractures cities. Social exclusion, urban violence & contested spaces in Latin America.* Koonings, Kees and Kruijt, Dirk. Pp. 117 – 137. London: Zet Books Ltd.

Neild, Rachel

2003 'Human rights NGO's, police and citizen security in transitional democracies'. *Journal of human rights.* Vol. 2: no. 3, pp. 277 – 296.

Pino, Nathan and Wiatrowski, Michael D.

2006 *Democratic policing in transitional and developing countries.* Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

PNC

2011 'Manual Policía Nacional Civil; Organización y funcionamiento del Plan Cuadrante Seguridad Preventiva Central'. Sub-dirección General de Operaciones Policía Nacional Civil. Guatemala C.A.

PNC

2011 *'Hechos negativos Comisaría 41 2007 – 2011'*. Oficina de Operaciones Comisaría 41, Policía Nacional Civil. Quetzaltenango.

Rasch, Elisabet D.

2008 'Representing Mayas: indigenous authorities and the local politics of identity in Guatemala'. PhD dissertation, department of anthropology, Utrecht University.

Reenen, Piet van

  2004 'Policing extentions in Latin America'. In: *Armed actors. Organised violence and state failure in Latin America.* Koonings, Kees and Kruijt, Dirk. London: Zed Books.

Rozema, Ralf

  2007 'Medellín'. In: *Fractures cities. Social exclusion, urban violence & contested spaces in Latin America.* Koonings, Kees and Kruijt, Dirk. Pp. 57 – 70. London: Zet Books Ltd.

Salazar, Krista Victoria Aguirre

  2002 'La repercución de los linchamientos en la imagen internacional de Guatemala'. Guatemala-City: Universidad Franisisco Marroquín. Instituto de estudios políticos relaciónes internacionales.

Samaha, Joel

  2006 *Criminal justice.* Belmont: Thompson Wadsworth.

Schols, Judith

  2011 'Agents of change. A case study of community policing in La Antigua Guatemala'.   M.A. Thesis, Department of Anthropology, Utrecht University.

Silver, Allan

  2005 'The demand for order in civil society: a review of some themes in the history of urban crime, police, and riot'. In: *Policing key readings*. Newburn, Tim. Pp. 7 – 20. Oxford: Willan Publishing.

Snodgrass Godoy, Angelina

  2002 'Lynchings and the democratization of terror in postwar Guatemala: implications for human rights'. In: *Human Rights Quarterly*. Vol. 24, pp. 640-661.

Snodgrass Godoy, Angelina

  2004 'When "justice" is criminal: Lynchings in contemporary Latin America'. In: *Theory and Society*. Vol. 33, pp. 621 – 651.

Tulchin, Joseph S. and Golding, Heather A.

  2003 'Introduction: Citizen security in regional perspective'. In: *Crime and Violence in Latin America. Citizen Security, Democracy, and the State*. Frühling, Hugo, Tulchin, Joseph S. and Golding, Heather A. Pp.1 – 12. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

USAID

2009 'Community-based policing/Guatemala rule of law indefinite quantity contract'. Report on 1st quarter activities January – March 2009.

Wilson, James Q. and Kelling, George L.

2005 'Broken windows: the police and neighborhood safety'. In: *Policing key readings*. Newburn, Tim. Pp. 460 – 472. Oxford: Willan Publishing.

Wisler, Dominique and Onwudiwe, Ihekwoadba D.

2008 'Community policing in comparison'. *Police Quarterly.* Vol. 11: pp. 427 – 439.

Weitzer, Ronald John

1995 *Policing under fire: ethnic conflict and police-community relations in Northern Ireland.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

WOLA

2009 'Protect and serve? The status of police reform in Central America'. Washington office on Latin America, June 2009.

Websites

1L   'Puerta a puerta', jefatura de Quetzaltenango, policia Quetzalteca, noticiero primera linea'

N.d.   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wm-quVeDwus. 2.45 min, accessed December 23, 2010.

Consejo Departemental de Desarollo Quetzaltenango

2006 'Gerencia para la reconstrucción de Quetzaltenango. Unidos para un mejor departemento'. http://www.segeplan.gob.gt/stan/Reconst/ReconstQuetzaltenango.pdf, accessed August 17, 2011.

ICCGP

N.d.   About mission and vision of ICCGP. http://www.iccpg.org.gt, accessed June 15, 2011.

IFES White Papers

2002 'Electoral conflict and violence. A strategy for study and prevention' by Jeff Fisher. http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/untc/unpan019255.pdf, accessed August 19, 2011.

INE

2002 'Proyecciones de población con base en el censo 2002'. http://www.ine.gob.gt/index.php/demografia-y-poblacion/42-demografiaypoblacion/207-infodemo2010, accessed January 17, 2011.

Jane's

2011 'Sentinel Security Assessment – Central America and the Caribbean. Defense budget Guatemala'. http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-Central-America-And-The-Caribbean/Defence-budget-Guatemala.html, accessed August 19, 2011.

OSAC

2011 'Guatemala 2011 Crime and Safety Report'. https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportPDF.aspx?cid=10789, accessed July 20, 2011.

PNC

2008 'Plan Cuadrante en Quetzaltenango. Esperan reducir los actos delictivos en esta región' http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20081209/pais/82628/, accessed December 23, 2011.

UNDP

2011 'Central America spends US$4 billion for security and justice in 2010' http://www.beta.undp.org/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2011/06/22/am-rica-central-destin-u-4-000-millones-a-seguridad-y-justicia-en-2010.html, accessed on August 10, 2011.