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A framework for the quantification of organized crime and assessment of availability and quality of relevant data in three selected countries of Latin America and the Caribbean

Ernesto U. Savona, Marco Dugato and Lorella Garofalo[*1]

* Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore – TRANSCRIME, Milan, Italy
1. Corresponding author. Email: ernesto.savona@unicatt.it

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Abstract

Measuring Organized Crime (OC) is a challenge that policy makers and law enforcement agencies have to face. Enhancing knowledge on Organized Crime is central for taking effective measures and reducing its human, social and economic consequences. This can be particularly important for Latin American and Caribbean countries, since most of them are affected by serious problems caused by OC.

The aim of this paper is to suggest indicators for measuring OC and assess the current availability of data related to specific indicators of the region. First, the concept of OC has been divided into five dimensions (groups, activities, state response, enablers and civil society response) and related sub-dimensions. Then, for each of them a set of indicators is suggested. The resulting list should orient data collection, explaining what information is required for counteracting actions, and act as a road map for improving the quality and caliber of data. Starting from this framework, each country, according to its priorities and resources, can develop its own road map for data collection.

In the last part of the paper, a pilot study conducted to assess the availability of the suggested indicators within three Latin American and Caribbean states (Mexico, Colombia and Dominican Republic) is presented.

Contents

1. The Importance of measuring organized crime

Statistics are information for knowledge. Better quality information means better knowledge. The more we know about organized crime and its fluctuations, the better and more informed decisions can be taken for two main actions: preventing and controlling it and its consequences. That means knowing the opportunities that organized crime exploits and reducing them while developing policies and instruments, allowing law enforcement agencies to detect the organizations, to disrupt them, arrest their members and confiscate the proceeds of crime. That means: the better the information a country has on organized crime, the more effective policies and actions it can produce.

When assessing the phenomenon of organized crime, two main difficulties arise: conceptual borders and flexibility in its transformations. A planned collection of data on organized crime means overcoming these two challenges. For doing so, a monitoring activity should be planned; starting from what is useful and available at statistical level, moving to what is dispersed in many different sources. After analyzing the gaps of information and planning how to fill these gaps, we want to address these issues by suggesting a road map and a methodology that could help countries with serious problems caused by organized crime and poor data, in order to improve the quality of their data and reduce this problem. Latin American and the Caribbean countries combine these two elements.

1.1. Assessing what?

The concept of organized crime is broadly identified by the definition of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which refers to an organized criminal group as 'a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes and offences, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit'. In the context of the UNTOC, a serious crime is defined as a conduct constituting an offence punishable by a maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years or a more serious penalty. Based on such specifications, legal and operational definitions have been defined at country or regional level. For example, the criteria set out by Europol specify that at least six out of eleven pre-defined characteristics must be present for any crime or criminal group to be classified as organized crime[2].

Quantifying and understanding organized crime is very complex because it encompasses a number of dimensions which go beyond the identification of organized groups and the legal definition of crimes committed under the label of organized crime. Different types of information are needed to understand and dismantle organized crime, reducing its human, social and economic consequences, and removing the structural conditions that facilitate its existence. Qualitative and quantitative information is needed; some information relates to aggregates, other to individual cases or persons. This paper focuses on the aggregated quantitative aspect of measuring organized crime. It is proposed to frame quantitative information on organized crime in five main dimensions or clusters: the groups, the activities, the state response, the enablers and the civil society response. A complete view of the phenomenon is the result of the different views related to each of these dimensions/clusters. They are interrelated in a cost/benefit paradigm. Organized crime groups act by maximizing benefits and minimizing costs. Regardless of their size (small or large group), relations with other criminal groups, the activities they pursue, either in the criminal markets or in the legitimate ones, organized crime groups are influenced by the risk posed by law enforcement, by the advantages/opportunities posed by enablers and by the attention and the awareness of the civil society. Within this framework, other factors, such as corruption, lack of governance, social inequality, can be identified. An example of specific enablers is: professionals cooperating to facilitate money laundering schemes and financial mechanisms for making more difficult to trace the criminal transactions.

The five dimensions/clusters (groups, activities, state response, enablers and civil society response) can be divided into many different sub-dimensions that outline the organized crime phenomenon. The more they are known, the more precise the view of the phenomenon is and the more its strengths or weaknesses could be outlined. These strengths and weaknesses should drive policies and actions for dismantling this phenomenon. Strengths of organized crime quite often correspond to the weaknesses of the policies and actions against it and vice versa.

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2. The criteria set out by Europol (Doc. 6204/2/97 ENFOPOL 35 REV 2) specify that at least six of the following characteristics must be present, four of which must be those numbered (1), (3), (5) and (11), for any crime or criminal group to be classified as organized crime: (1) collaboration of more than two people; (2) each with own appointed tasks; (3) for a prolonged or indefinite period of time; (4) using some form of discipline and control; (5) suspected of the commission of serious criminal offences; (6) operating on an international level; (7) using violence or other means suitable for intimidation; (8) using commercial or businesslike structures; (9) engaged in money laundering; (10) exerting influence on politics, the media, public administration, judicial authorities or the economy; (11) determined by the pursuit of profit and/or power.

1.2. Where?

Geography plays an important role in the assessment of organized crime. Relevant criminal markets, such as the drug market, are influenced by geography, which helps connect supply with demand. When you have a drug demanding country, such as the United States, close to production countries, such as a Latin American and a Caribbean one, the connection is easily established and the trafficking routes are determined logistically and politically. Moreover, when the production of drugs, such as the cocaine production, is concentrated in particular areas, usually some groups are identified in criminal activities but not always. Drug trafficking, from production to transit and importation, in large scale identifies Latin American groups in Latin America and in the USA. The same happens for human smuggling and trafficking where demand and supply are clearly located. This phenomenon has typical features in the border between Mexico and United States and is different from other routes and typology of organized crime in other parts of the world. Geography is less relevant in global criminal businesses where commodities are non-linked to any production site.

This explains why geography should be considered when assessing organized crime. It could enter in all the four dimensions, characterizing the ethnicity of the members of the groups and their activities, having also relationships with politics and economics.

1.3. How?

The following paragraph deals with the different approaches used in literature and in practical experiences for assessing organized crime. These methodologies mainly belong to the Western World, where similarities in policies against organized crime progressively increase. In the last ten years, after the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, the process of harmonization of laws against organized crime has received a substantial impulse. The same could be said for law enforcement policies. Drawing from national experiences in the fight against organized crime, we know quite well what works and what does not, and what the conditions for successes and failures are. At the same time, we know what the main conditions for producing more success than failure are. Implementation makes the difference. Regarding Latin America and the Caribbean, we need to know the answers to some key questions:

- Which are the different organized crime groups in different parts of the country? What is their structure?
- What is their criminal activity? How do they infiltrate the legitimate business? How do they exploit the opportunities offered by geography and the economic system?
- What are the systematic interventions that could drive their fluctuations?
- How are current state policies (law enforcement and criminal justice) implemented? What are the weaknesses? What is lacking and what should be introduced and where?
- How widespread is the awareness towards organized crime issues? Which are the actors able to provide information or support OC victims?

To answer these questions, this paper has developed a framework for data collection, concentrated on five dimensions/ clusters containing sub-dimensions and related indicators (section 3). The list developed is comprehensive, but the data available are scarce according to the different countries where they are collected. These data are more a dream list than a real source of information. At the same time, they could orient the data collection explaining what could satisfy a basic information and for what, and what could be better developed for more precise actions.

1.4. Which data and for what: developing a road map

If the rationale of organized crime is to maximize benefits and reduce costs, the rationale of governments is the opposite: increase costs and reduce benefits. Their strategies should be oriented at developing a road map. Starting from what we know from theories, research, experiences and best practices in combating organized crime, it is possible to customize a road map based on a single country situation, where collected data and enacted/planned policies are reciprocally connected. The road map should gradually provide answers to the four questions outlined before, collecting and analyzing data at the "possible" level, where the word "possible" means what could be collected considering systematic obstacles, present and future capabilities and resources.

This road map explains, in a dynamic perspective, which data are useful for doing what. Data should be collected for each dimension (groups, activities, state response, enablers and civil society response) and could be at a basic or advanced level, depending on its availability and on the capability of the planning data collection on this topic. Data

collection within each dimension passes through two main levels. Each country, according to its priorities and available resources, can develop a road map for data collection with two main options: horizontal - going through the basic level of each cluster-dimension; or vertical - going, within one cluster, from the basic to the advanced level. In order to select an option, the State should be aware of its problems and the possible solutions that data collection could provide.

Having collected all the basic and advanced data is just the first step for measuring and comprehending the presence of organized crime in a country. Indeed each data level (basic and advanced) has its specific goal, but gives only partial information on the whole considered dimension. In order to develop the most comprehensive framework of each dimension, and thus create a deeper knowledge of the problem, basic and advanced data should be mixed. In the third paragraph more details on the road map developed for each dimension will be provided.

A customized process at country level for collecting qualitative information on OC

In order to develop the most comprehensive knowledge on organized crime, considering only quantitative data should not be enough. Since organized crime has its own specific features within each country, a set of qualitative information, from multiple sources, should be collected in addition to quantitative data. This process could be useful in order to customize data collection and interpretation. Qualitative information could be functional for filling the lack of the quantitative data collection and for better explaining, understanding and acting against organized crime.
Using this flexible framework for collecting quantitative data and the customized process for collecting qualitative information gives the chance to fill the gaps on organized crime knowledge arising from both possible missing quantitative and qualitative data, in order to monitor the functioning of policies and changing them when they do not work properly.

2. Methodologies for Measuring Organized Crime

2.1. The optimal mix: dealing with groups, activities and opportunities

In this section, the most relevant existing methodologies developed for measuring organized crime are outlined. The main difficulty arises from the lack of a common definition and because of the complexity of the issue [von Lampe 2004a]. The concept of organized crime is multi-faceted. It cannot be directly assessed and measured because it should be deconstructed and divided into different simpler elements, which can be directly measurable. These elements appear in the policy and academic discussion.

Going through the many definitions of organized crime developed by international organizations, LEA and Academia [Kenney and Finckenauer 1995; Adamoli et al. 1998; Albanese 2000, 2004; Levi 2002; Finckenauer 2005; Hagan 2006; van Dijck 2007], the key elements could be summarized as follows:

- Structured and organized groups;
- Participation in highly organized illegal activities at national, international and transnational level;
- Profit-oriented.

For a long time, approaches to organized crime have focused more on criminal groups and/or crime activities and less on the opportunities exploited for its development. Consequently, there has been the development of crime control policies for arresting the heads of the groups and their members and blocking the activities they carry out and, more recently, confiscating the assets they own. This approach, alone, has become inadequate to fight this phenomenon. Slowly it has come to the attention of policy makers and practitioners the possibility to enforce preventative measures directed to the reduction of those opportunities that make organized crime alive and strong. United Nations is the first international organization that, having for long time used the traditional approaches, has innovated on them [UNODC 2010, 1].

Since transnational organized crime is today driven by market forces, as any other legal activity, researchers, international institutions and law enforcement agencies believe that particular attention should be paid to the analysis of those illegal markets, their functioning and regulations. Strategies and policies aimed only at disrupting any criminal organization will never solve the transnational organized crime problem [UNODC 2010, 1]. The fight against organized crime should be addressed both at fighting criminal groups and dismantling illegal markets by removing any criminal opportunity (or vulnerabilities, from the law enforcement point of view) enabling organized crime activities.

Targeting only organized crime groups does not help to understand nor anticipate future changes in organized crime involvement in new and different products and locations. This will help to develop policies aiming to change the regulations and structures, which shape the particular illicit market in order to remove any possible opportunity/vulnerability that facilitates actions by criminal organizations.

The two approaches should not be considered as alternatives because they could be combined. This document slowly enters in the debate on what is organized crime and how to tackle it [Tusikov 2012, 103]. This is the optimal mix that today has not been developed as it should. The approaches considered in the next paragraphs are the traditional ones: groups and activities. Opportunities enter rarely, and quite often are low operationalized.

2.2. Top-down and bottom-up

There are two different methodologies: the top-down one and the bottom-up one. The top-down methodology is adopted whenever the aim is to break down the whole complex phenomenon and have a more specific and in-depth view, analyzing its sub-components. This methodology focuses on macro units of analysis and tries to move from the general view to the smallest and more specific sub-components. The bottom-up methodology focuses on the smallest unit of analysis or few single cases. It is adopted whenever the aim is to reconstruct the general view of the problem and assess it (in this case, organized crime). This methodology analyzes micro data with the purpose of evaluating the extent of organized crime within the considered area (macro level).

Existing academic studies on measuring organized crime, mainly focused on criminal groups, have sometimes adopted the bottom-up methodology or the top-down. Sometimes both methodologies have been adopted. The use of the top–down or bottom–up methodology depends on which data are available and what are the researcher's purposes.

The choice of an approach (group and/or markets) and methodology is very specific and it changes from case to case. Indeed, it depends on the particular social, cultural, economic and political features of countries/areas that constitute the object of the measurement. Due to these differences, organized crime will also be different from country to country, since

it changes according to the environment in which it operates. The following methodologies have all been developed in different European countries and in the USA, according to their particular organized crime scenario and socio-economic environment.

Latin America and the Caribbean are very different from Europe and the USA and, therefore, organized crime will also be different. Of course, none of the following methodologies can be fully adopted for assessing the extent of organized crime in Latin America and the Caribbean, but they can be a starting point for identifying the most suitable indicators/variables for measuring the presence of organized crime in those areas.

2.3 Top-down methodologies

The most relevant top-down approach for measuring organized crime has been adopted by Van Dijk [2007, 2008]. In order to measure the level of organized crime in each country, he developed the so–called "Composite Organized Crime Index" combining data on perceived prevalence of organized crime in the country, instrumental violence, grand corruption, money laundering and black economy. He calls them statistical "markers" [Van Dijk 2007, 40] of organized crime presence in a country.

The perceived prevalence of organized crime was operationalized into the "Organized Crime Perception Index", built up with data on organized criminal activities, such as extortion, drugs, people and arms trafficking as perceived by potential victims and independent experts. These data were gathered from:

  • World Economic Forum victimization surveys among CEOs of larger companies;
  • Merchant International Group assessment of organized crime risk.

As it concerns the instrumental violence marker, Van Dijk underlined that organized crime usually generates violence because it is a way of resolving conflicts. For this reason, he used rates of unsolved homicides by calculating the number of police-recorded homicides minus the number of convictions for homicides. These data have been drawn from the UN "Crime and Criminal Justice survey".

Grand corruption marker refers to the corruption of high-ranking public officers, judges and politicians. Bribes and benefits are given to any public official who can enable organized crime activities to be carried out or reduce the risk for criminals of being caught. A solid indicator of this marker was developed from data of the World Bank Institute.

Money laundering and black economy markers have been drawn from the World Economic Forum surveys among business executives. The assumption is that organized crime usually reinvests excess profits in the legitimate economy by means of financial operations in order to conceal the illicit source of money. Moreover, organized crime groups also use to invest in shadow economies.

This study has been conducted in many countries all over the world, including the most important in Latin America and the Caribbean. Indicators and markers (prevalence of OC, corruption, violence and black economy) used by Van Dijk provide a general framework of the extent of organized crime in a given country and refer to data usually available and easily accessible.

In a previous study, conducted by Buscaglia and Van Dijk [2003], the links between organized crime and corruption growth in the public sector has been studied in a large number of countries. The authors created an index combining objective factors linked to complex crimes in order to measure the prevalence of organized crime. The presence of organized crime in a country was assessed by means of indicators deriving from elements contained in investigations conducted by law enforcement agencies, as well as in the UN Organized Crime Convention and its protocols. Since the data from official police records do not provide reliable information on the extent of organized crime activities in a given country, the authors used the World Economic Forum business survey for measuring the costs imposed by organized crime on firms in order to assess the extent of businesses victimization. They ranked the countries according to this indicator and then, they correlated it with indices for corruption and violence (homicide). After that, they added other national data available on the main activities of organized criminal groups, such as credit card fraud and trafficking in drugs, persons, firearms, stolen cars and cigarettes. Therefore, the authors developed a composite index that includes indicators of five main activities (human trafficking, firearms, stolen cars and cigarettes, and fraud) and four secondary factors (costs of business, extent of the informal economy as a proportion of gross domestic product, violence and money laundering).

As stated before, this methodology could be adopted for assessing the presence of organized crime in Latin America and the Caribbean, since it uses macro indicators of illicit activities carried out by criminal organizations and secondary factors that can enable organized crime. Before doing so, it is necessary to have in mind the specific features of organized crime in these areas, in order to understand whether the same indicators and factors adopted by Buscaglia

and Van Dijk can be used.

In the USA, Maltz [1990] applied the first quantitative and critical approach to the evaluation of organized crime control efforts and of a conceptual framework for understanding and measuring the harm caused by organized crime. Harm is considered a useful concept for describing direct and indirect, as well as tangible and intangible effects of organized crime. The study provides a description of five typologies of harm and, at the same time, discusses the difficulties encountered in measuring them. The five typologies of harm are:

- **Physical** (e.g. murders, physical injuries);
- **Economic** (e.g. property losses caused);
- **Psychological** (e.g. intimation of witnesses);
- **Community** (e.g. impairment of the business community by extortion/protection racket);
- **Societal** (e.g. corruption of public officials).

The author further described why certain activities are labeled as organized crime. He concludes that there are many difficulties in labeling harm because "some activities are labeled as crimes because they generate harm (e.g. arson) and other activities generate harm because they are labeled as crimes (e.g. gambling) [1990, 47].

In Canada, Porteous [1998] conducted a study on the impact of organized crime related activities. He focused on the scope and impact of key activities in which criminals take part. These activities include: money laundering, illicit drugs, environmental crime, selected contraband, economic crime, illegal trade in immigrants, counterfeit products and motor vehicle theft. The different impacts taken into account were economic, commercial, social-political, environmental, violence generation, and on health and safety [Porteous 1998, 1]. He concluded that organized crime in Canada is very pervasive and is not limited to drugs and mafia-type incidents. Among all the illicit markets in Canada, the drug market is the one with the greatest impact.

Albanese [2008] proposed a model to assess the risk of organized crime in a given area. He considered illicit markets as unit of analysis. The purpose of his model was to assess the presence of organized crime in "areas that may or may not have a history of organized crime involvement" [2008, 263]. Albanese aimed at assessing comparative risk levels of criminal activities and illicit markets. He considered that, if illegal activities are properly assessed and ranked, targeting these activities will lead to tackle the high-risk organized crime groups involved. Through this approach, Albanese wished to identify higher risk products and markets in order to identify where criminals could be caught. The author identified three main categories of organized crime:

- Provision of illicit services;
- Provision of illicit goods;
- Infiltration of legitimate business.

Each one of these activities was further subdivided into more specific offences. The provision of illicit services encompasses:
- Commercialized sex (prostitution or pornography)
- Illegal gambling
- Human trafficking
- Subcontracting to others (to provide services such as illicit dumping of waste, trafficking in human organs, protected animal species or murder for hire)

The provision of illicit goods entails:
- Drug trafficking
- Property theft (vehicles, art)
- Counterfeiting (identity documents, software, DVDs, weapons)

The infiltration of business includes:
- Extortion of business owners
- Racketeering

- Money laundering
- Fraud

According to prior studies on illicit markets and organized crime [Albanese 2001; Edward and Gill 2002; Van der Beken 2004; Wilkins and Casswell 2003], supply, demand, regulators and competition represent fundamental dimensions for assessing which markets are at higher risk. Each of these dimensions can be further subdivided into specific indicators. Albanese's model is made up of 10 indicators for assessing organized crime risk. The model includes:

- **Supply indicators:** objective availability of product or service; easily transported/sold;
- **Regulation indicators:** ease to enter into market due to market regulations, skills needed, law enforcement capability and competence, and level of local government corruption;
- **Competition indicators:** history of organized crime in the market; profitability; harm;
- **Demand indicators:** current customer demand for product; nature of the demand;

These indicators can be combined into an index based on the perceptions and experiences of those who have knowledge of illicit markets and products. Albanese's model for measuring risk levels of criminal activities and illicit markets hasn't been developed for a specific country and, thus, the three main categories of organized crime can be successfully applied to Latin America and the Caribbean. However, the single offences identified within each category could be different according to the specific criminal scenario of the countries taken into account.

In Italy, Calderoni [2011] developed the so-called "Mafia Index" (MI) in order to assess the presence of mafia within the Italian provinces. The author provided an operational definition of "mafia" and selected the most appropriate indicators and variables according to specific criteria. The concept of mafia has been divided into four main dimensions: 1) presence of criminal groups providing illicit goods and services; 2) use of violence, threat or intimidation; 3) infiltration of the political system; and 4) infiltration of the economic system. Relevant variables have been selected according to:

- Availability of data for a sufficiently long period of time;
- Content validity;
- Criterion validity.

Only four variables successfully passed the three selection criteria and were included in the MI: 1) mafia-type associations; 2) mafia murders; 3) city councils dissolved by mafia infiltration; 4) assets confiscated from organized crime. Variables used in this study are very specific of the Italian mafia scenario. Therefore, they can't be applied to Latin America and the Caribbean context, where organized crime has different characteristics.

2.4 The bottom-up methodologies

Most of the studies using this kind of methodology have been developed by different law enforcement agencies (both European and non-European ones), within specific reports on organized crime aimed at assessing its threat or harm upon society. Moreover, some contributions from European and American academics have also been produced. In general, they are all focused on organized crime groups and their structure.

The German federal police agency Bundeskriminalamt (BKA) has been producing an annual report on organized crime since 1992, taking into account all criminal investigations carried out in a given year. The purpose of this report is to collect the knowledge from criminal proceedings classified as organized crime.

The information contained in the versions available includes:

- Number of organized crime cases;
- Number and types of offences committed by the suspects under investigation;
- Nationality of the suspects;
- Possession and use of firearms;
- The amount of damages and profits.

At first, this report was only quantitative-oriented but, due to concerns regarding police data, over the years, efforts have been undertaken to add a more qualitative dimension [von Lampe 2004]. Therefore, a structural analysis on the description and ranking of groups structure according to the so-called "organized crime potential" has been introduced [von Lampe 2004, 92]. It is an index to assess the level of organizational capacity and sophistication of criminal groups.

The index is made up of 50 indicators. Each one has been weighted on the basis of a survey carried out among officers of central organized-crime units who were asked to rank the importance of each indicator according to individual evaluations. As von Lampe said [2004, 93], "the methodology of the organized crime potential index implies that the occurrence of an indicator has the same significance under any circumstances and that any combination of indicators has similar implications as the individual values to the same score".

In 1993, the European Council decided to issue an annual strategic report on organized crime. The aim of this report should have been to provide information on organized crime within the European Union. Therefore, since 1994 the so-called Organized Crime Situation Report (OCSR) has been drawn up annually by the Drugs and Organized Crime Working Groups and, since 1998, by Europol in cooperation with the Multidisciplinary Group on Organized Crime (MDG) and the Contact and Support Network (CSN), under the guidance of the EU Presidency. This report was based on exchange and analysis of information collected by the Member States.

The first methodology consisted in putting together all the national organized crime situation reports, but in 1997, it was further developed and, since then, it has been based on different criteria, four mandatory and seven optional features [van Duyne and vander Baken 2009, 269]. In order to be recognized as organized group, each group had to possess the four mandatory criteria and two optional features.

The four mandatory criteria are:

    1) collaboration of more than two people
    2) over a prolonged period of time,
    3) and the suspected commission of serious criminal offences,
    4) for the purpose of profits and/or power.

The optional features are:

    1) separate role for each member
    2) use of some form of discipline or control within the group
    3) internationally active
    4) use of violence or other means suitable for intimidation
    5) use of commercial or business like structures
    6) engagement in money laundering and
    7) influence on politics, media, public administration, judicial authorities or the economy.

In 1998, a Contact and Support Network (CSN) was established in order to assess a new methodology and further develop it, with the purpose of ensuring better quality on the reporting process. Over the years, many changes have been proposed regarding [van Duyne and Vander Baken 2009]:

    • The structure and composition of the report;
    • The focus on the description of current and past situations to assessment of threats and risks related to future developments in organized crime;
    • Recommendations for EU law enforcement agencies.

The aim of these proposals was to develop an annual strategic report with the objective of planning and making the report clearer to users, in order to facilitate the collection of national contributions. Based on these suggestions, Europol decided to re-direct its OCSR to an assessment of relevant threats and risks posed by organized crime and to provide recommendations for preventing this phenomenon [van Duyne and Vander Baken 2009].

Table 1 - Dimensions and variables of criminal organizations in the Belgian report on organized crime

Dimensions	Variables
Efficiency	Expertise
	Dynamic of the group
	Reached performance
Durability	Social cohesion
	Developed counter-strategies
	Flexibility/adaptability

Since January 2006, Europol has been producing the Organized Crime Threat Assessment (OCTA) in order to support the development of a common intelligence model.

Moreover, in addition to Europol OCTAs reports are regularly published by:

• The Belgian Criminal Policy Service;
• The Criminal Intelligence Service Canada;
• The Dutch National Police Intelligence Service;
• The Northern Ireland Organized Crime Task Force;
• The UK Serious and Organized Crime Agency;

All of these reports aim to demonstrate that certain forms of organized crime are more threatening than others and thus helps policy-makers select strategic priorities [Zoutendijk 2010].

The one issued by Europol entails the following seven indicators for organized crime groups:

• International dimension
• Group structures
• Use of legitimate business structure
• Specialization
• Influence
• Use of violence
• Counter measures

In the Belgian report, the concept of criminal organizations has been subdivided into two dimensions: efficiency and durability, which, in turn, have been divided into three variables (Table 1).

These six variables have been subdivided into more variables (e.g. collective consciousness, organizational structure, know-how, information position, etc.). Methodologies for measuring the harm caused by organized crime upon society have been constructed by five different policing agencies:

• The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in the UK;
• National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) in the UK;
• The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in the UK;
• The Australian Crime Commission (ACC);
• The Netherlands Police Agency (in Dutch KLPD).

Tusikov [2012] reviewed and analyzed these methodologies in order to underline both, positive and negative aspects. These five agencies have similar purposes in their assessment of organized crime. The assessments are intended

to guide law enforcement decision-making and government policy-making in the fight against emerging risks from organized crime.

Outcomes are used to guide institutional decisions and resources in tackling organized crime. With the exception of MPS, these methodologies are designed to measure harms at the national level. The agencies operationalized organized crime-related harms by focusing on criminal network-specific attributes and activities or sector-related harms, such as the collective damage from organized crime-related vehicle crime [Tusikov 2012]. In general, law enforcement risk assessments are intended to direct rational and evidence-based decision-making by allocating resources toward high-risk issues [Albanese 2008; Vander Baken 2004a].

All of these law enforcement reports (European and non-European) have been issued for developing effective strategies and policies aimed at tackling organized crime in each given country. Therefore, the methodology and variables used within those reports have been chosen after a specific assessment of the organized crime problem and its features in each country. The same methodology could be adopted within Latin American and Caribbean countries, following an in-depth evaluation of the problem (organized crime), in order to choose the best possible variables suitable for that specific scenario.

Besides institutional reports, there are few scientific studies on how to assess the threats and risks of organized crime, developed by Belgian, Dutch and North American authors (see also Albanese in 2.1). Von Lampe [2004a] developed a model for measuring organized crime. According to him, the most common approach to assess organized crime is the one focused on "a diffuse concept of criminal groups which encompasses a wide variety of patterns of criminal cooperation, regardless of their concrete function and structure" [2004a, 230]. He considers criminal networks as the key empirical referent and he specifies the properties and dimensions in order to distinguish among different types of criminal networks. This specification has to be done, considering the broader context in which criminal networks operate. Von Lampe suggests a model that represents three dimensions and their relation with the concept of criminal networks: the task environment, the broader social context and the institutional framework.

Criminal networks are influenced also by their own social and institutional context. The social context refers to the social and cultural factors enabling the misuse of social relations for criminal cooperation [Kleemans and van de Bunt 1999; Paoli 2002], as well as the economic factors creating much more opportunities for developing criminal relations. The institutional influence is given by the type, direction and intensity of law enforcement actions. For assessing organized crime in Germany, von Lampe suggests using existing data on macro level, such as the official crime statistics and the statistics on organized crime cases that are included in the annual situation report of the BKA; while, on the micro level, individual cases contained in judicial records and media accounts can be used.

Kortekaas' work [see in Zoutendijk 2010] aims at identifying the risks of changes in organized crime due to developments in ICT. He suggests a two-step risk analysis: identification of threats first, and then their assessment and judgment. Threats are identified by speaking with experts or by studying open sources; then, they are judged by assessing their probability and identifying negative consequences.

According to Zoutendijk [2010], the methods developed by Peter Klerks and by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (the Sleipnir method) consist of a methodology to assess the threat posed by a criminal group. Each of them provides a list of attributes (respectively 28 and 19) on which a group can be scored. The higher the score, the more threatening a group is. The single organized crime constitutes the unit of analysis of both studies. In Klerk's study, variables (e.g. sophistication, violence, geographic scope, place of business) have been selected according to his personal opinion. The author gives different scoring ranges to each variable. In the Spleipnir method, each variable (e.g. corruption, links to criminal extremist groups, monopoly) receives a score on a four-point scale: high, medium, low and nil (and unknown if no data are available). The RCMP used the so-called Delphi-survey amongst Canadian law enforcement officers working on organized crime to identify, define and rank the variables. Through this survey, law enforcement officers were asked to give their opinion on the attribute list. The survey was repeated several times until some sort of consensus was reached.

2.5 Mix of top-down and bottom-up

The following two methodologies focus on both criminal groups and illegal activities, and adopt either a top-down or a bottom-up methodology. As already underlined in the previous paragraphs, these methodologies have been developed for assessing the presence of organized crime in Europe. They aim at measuring organized crime risk by means of several indicators and variables regarding criminal groups, activities, law enforcement effectiveness and impact upon society. In order to evaluate which methodology and indicators can be used in Latin America and the Caribbean, the following methodology represents a good example to be followed.

TRANSCRIME
Joint Research Centre on Transnational Crime
Centro de Excelencia para INFORMACIÓN ESTADÍSTICA DE GOBIERNO, SEGURIDAD PÚBLICA, VICTIMIZACIÓN Y JUSTICIA

13

Vander Beken and the Ghent University's crime research group [2004b] developed the "risk-based methodology" for measuring organized crime in Belgium as part of the Belgian Annual Report on Organized Crime. The measurement is based on:

- Environmental scan;
- Estimation of criminal networks;
- Analysis of legal and illegal markets.

Vander Beken thinks that measuring organized crime is not just considering "organized crime groups in isolation, nor illicit markets in isolation, but an analysis of the interdependencies between these elements and the wider economic spectrum" [2004a, 479]. The assumption of this methodology is that the higher the capacities of criminal groups, the greater the opportunities in illegal markets are. Also, the higher the vulnerabilities in particular sectors of the licit economy, the higher the risks for society are.

The environmental scan aims to identify the most relevant trends in the external environment and the overall objects of the agencies involved. Vander Beken [2004a] subdivided the environment into four sectors:

- Political
- Economical
- Social
- Technological

He aims at ranking criminal groups according to their threat level, which is given by the will, expectations, resources and knowledge of the group. These four variables are turned into attributes on the basis of which criminal groups are assessed. Attributes are selected according to the lists developed by Klerks and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Vander Beken created a list of 21 attributes: discipline, intelligence gathering, deadly violence, violence, monopoly, sophistication, risk attitude, accessibility for law enforcement, strategy, insulation, corruption, group size, groups working with other local or global groups, scope, level of finances, mobility, expertise, infiltration, continuity and multiple enterprises. He also suggests making an analysis of the involvement of organized crime in legal and illegal markets, both on a macro and micro level. In order to do that, "the actual levels of organized criminal involvement in illicit markets can be ascertained by looking at law enforcement intelligence, record of involvement, prosecutions, etc." [Vander Beken 2004a, 495-499].

The second methodology is developed within project IKOC : "Improving Knowledge on Organized Crime to Develop a Common European Approach (IKOC)" [Savona 2009]. This methodology adopted aims at assessing organized crime risk by measuring the probability of organized criminal activities and their impact. It combines elements of both approaches listed above (criminal groups and markets). The two elements are the followings:

Crime risk = Probability (Threat) x Impact (Harm) [3]

This methodology considers organized criminal activities as the unit of analysis for the calculation of both probability and impact. Probability is the element of the above risk assessment formula which determines the likelihood of a given criminal event to occur. Probability is defined through different indicators referring to the following areas:

• **Characteristics of organized crime groups involved in a given crime:** indicators related to the characteristics of the organized crime groups involved in carrying out the criminal event. The likelihood of a given crime occurring is linked to the evaluation of the seriousness and organizations of the criminal group involved. The more dangerous and well equipped the group, the more likely the crime will occur again. Indicators used are: the links/cooperation between groups involved; the geographic distribution; specialization/use of expert knowledge; intimidator power by the use or threat of violence; the use of corruption, legitimate business structures and ITC.

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3. This formula was firstly introduced by the Queensland Crime Commission [1999] and was then incorporated and further developed by other studies such as Black et al. [2000] and Vander Beken et al. [2004].

• **Law enforcement risk for a given crime:** indicators related to the risks posed by the effectiveness of law enforcement activities for criminals committing the given event. The more efforts focus on a specific crime, the less likely it is that the particular crime will be committed again. Savona [2004] stated that the law enforcement risk refers to the probabilities of being identified, arrested, convicted and having assets confiscated. Indicators used are: probability of conviction for a given crime; probability of having the proceeds of a given activity confiscated.

As regards the impact of organized crime activities, the object of this study was to measure the harm and not the costs of the consequences of organized crime. The cost is a notion borrowed from economics. There are private costs, paid by the agents organizing the activity considered, and external costs, meaning the costs paid by third parties. The sum of all those costs gives the gross social cost. In the case of organized crime, the benefits for the criminals and the cost for the collectivity, thus producing the net social cost of organized crime, should also be taken into consideration.
In the IKOC project, the authors did not want to measure the social cost of crime, but the harm. The harm encompasses all costs which can be measured and can be easily understood by the policy makers. According to the author's opinion, when the public decision maker wants a brief opinion of the risk posed by a certain organized criminal activity, the calculation horizon must not exceed the year. This is why the harm is a measure which indicates the cost of the consequences of a criminal activity, as perceived or assessed, in the current year. Harm then constitutes a concept which is less based on theory than the social cost, but it is much more operational for measuring the risk.
Harm can be measured by means of assessing the tangible consequences of a given organized crime activity. These consequences can be divided into two categories:

• **Primary damage from crime:** it involves the direct cost of crime for actors in economic and social life. It is measured by the damage inflicted on companies and people prior to any eventual compensatory transfer. The measurement is quantitative and an approach inspired by law and economics is adopted. All offences implying compensation are subject to an evaluation by the courts. This evaluation considers objective as well as subjective aspects of the damage. The indifference of an individual to a situation in which an act has been committed (and compensation is received for that) or not is an optimal compensation. On the other hand, some crimes and offences are subject to compensation of victims by insurance companies. The indemnities paid by the courts and the insurances seem to constitute a market value indicative of the damage caused by the different crimes. Indicators used are: direct loss for the victims of the given organized crime activity; loss of the taxes which would have been paid by the legal business sector if its turnover included the illegal market share.

• **Cost of public response to crime:** it is the sum of all public spending engaged in the fight against crime (police budget, judicial system spending, etc.). Most of these public spending is devoted to prevention and fighting crime. It describes the current level of this spending. Indicators used are: public expenditure on policing; cost of judicial system; cost of correctional institutions.
Harm has been assessed for some examples of main organized crime activities such as: counterfeiting, drug trafficking, frauds, tobacco smuggling, trafficking in stolen vehicles, trafficking in arms, money laundering and corruption, illegal trade in immigrants and trafficking in human beings.

2.6 Conclusions

In this second section, existing methodologies for measuring organized crime have been presented and reviewed. Each of them has its own specific features, purposes and design, and has been developed for assessing the extent of organized crime in a given country/area. Some of them are only quantitative-directed, while others entail both qualitative and quantitative approaches for measuring the extent of organized crime. All of them have been developed within European countries and the USA, and thus, they can't be directly applied to Latin America and the Caribbean, due to differences in socio-economic aspects. However, they can be considered as a starting point and the different methods can be combined in order to choose the most suitable indicators/variables for measuring the presence of organized crime in studied areas.

The methodologies using only a top-down or a bottom-up approach can be useful if the purpose is to assess a specific issue (groups or activities), but they are focused only on one side of the problem. Therefore, if the aim is to have a complete view of the whole complex phenomenon of organized crime, it is necessary to combine and use both approaches. In order to measure organized crime in the most exhaustive way, it is recommended to adopt the most inclusive methodology, analyzing the criminal groups as well as the illegal markets in which they carry out their activities. Moreover, it is also important to include and assess the extent of specific pathological conditions, situations and factors which could facilitate the spreading of organized crime and assure protection to its members. But, at the moment, this is not highly considered by the literature, which brings in turn an opportunity for study.

3. Indicators for measuring organized crime in Latin America and the Caribbean

The methodology for measuring organized crime proposed in this paper is based on a mix of the existing methods. From one side, a top-down method will be applied when identifying and decomposing the main dimensions that are useful for studying and comprehending organized crime. From the other side, a bottom-up approach will be used in order to provide a set of indicators intended to analyze the specificities of organized crime in Latin American and the Caribbean countries. The dimension/cluster or enablers opens a window to innovative methodology dealing with opportunities.

In order to allow each single country to analyze the presence and activities of organized crime groups, according to the different level of details in which the data is collected within its territory, a wide number of indicators for each dimension is listed and ranked from the general (basic) to the most specific ones (advanced). In other words, for each dimension, a list of overall information that should be available in all the countries will be provided and, in addition, some more specific indicators are suggested in order to obtain more precise and effective analyses of this phenomenon.

To conclude this brief introduction, it is also important to highlight that the list of indicators proposed in this paper is exclusively aimed at identifying a general framework to assess the presence of organized crime groups in a country and the elements which could increase or undermine their harmful effects. So, this list should be considered as a starting point to be used for addressing more specific analysis.

3.1. Dimensions and sub-dimensions of organized crime in Latin America and the Caribbean

As outlined in the first part of this paper, the concept of organized crime is extremely varied and multi-faceted. Therefore, an analysis aimed to measure the presence and the extensiveness of this phenomenon should necessarily start from the identification of the different facets composing the general concept of organized crime and its activities.

Based on the review of the existing methodologies on organized crime (see paragraph 2), this phenomenon can be divided into four main components:

• **Groups:** this category includes all the information about structure, dimension and organization of the criminal groups, active in the considered area.

• **Activities:** this dimension analyzes the extent of the legal and illegal markets where organized crime groups can obtain or invest money as well as other specific activities that they may have to carry out in order to assure the existence of the organization.

• **State response:** this category summarizes information regarding the measures for preventing and counteracting organized crime activities adopted by the authorities of each country in terms of law enforcement activities, efficiency of existing laws or policies and efficiency of the justice system.

• **Enablers:** this dimension embraces a wide range of indicators useful for describing the general situation of a country from a social-economic and institutional point of view. In particular, the critical elements that could facilitate the diffusion of organized crime will be considered.

• **Civil society response:** this dimension takes into account the main actors who are able to raise the attention towards organized crime, to provide information and support victims in order to reduce the impact of organized crime upon society.

This classification allows researchers to focus their analysis not only on one aspect of organized crime (e.g. structure, markets, etc.), overcoming some of the limits of previous studies on this topic (see previous paragraph on existing methodologies for measuring organized crime). In order to obtain a range of indicators as thorough as possible, each of these dimensions has been divided again into different sub-dimensions, as shown in Figure 1, and for each one a set of indicators (differentiating basic and advanced ones) and relative possible data sources have been identified and listed. Obviously these are general suggestions conceived for providing an extensive coverage of almost all the aspects included in every dimension. In the real world, obtaining two or three indicators for each sub-dimension can be considered acceptable for reliable estimates of the phenomenon[4].

It should also be taken into account that several types of statistical data can legitimately be included in more than one dimension: for example, persons arrested for organized crime can be considered as an indicator of 'Groups' and/or of

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4. At this stage, only 'primary' statistical variables have been identified; on the basis of such variables, several indicators for analytical purposes can be identified. Examples of such indicators are: rates over the population, attrition rates, number of homicides by firearm, etc.

'State response'. This reflects the fact that indirect indicators are often used to get information on the variables of interest and such indicators are often at the intersection of two or more of the framework dimensions. In the next paragraphs, each sub-dimension will be analyzed highlighting its distinctive relevance for measuring organized crime in Latin American and the Caribbean countries, and the related road map for data collection and analysis will be suggested.

Figure 1- *Dimensions and sub-dimensions of organized crime concept*
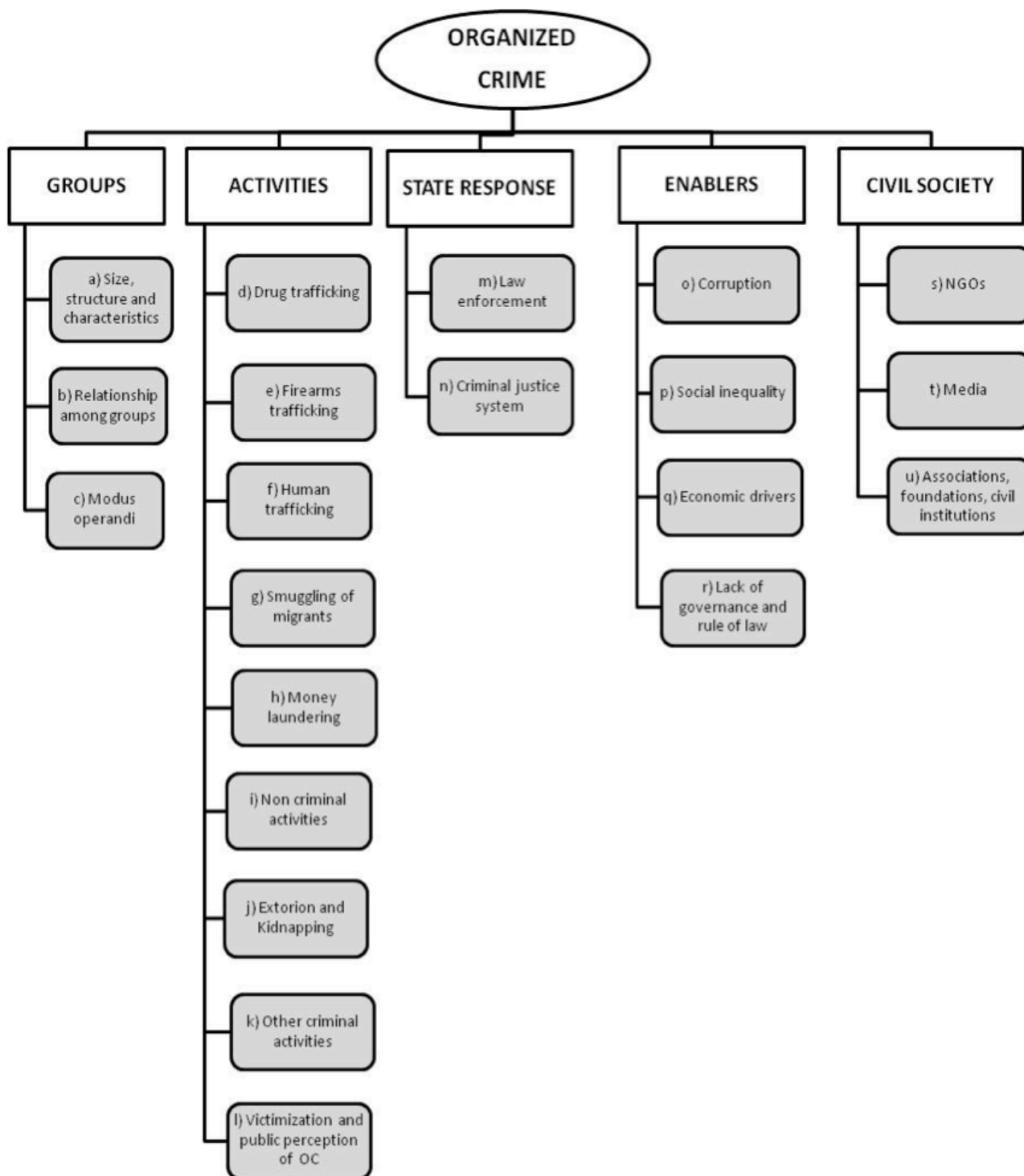
3.2. Indicators for the GROUPS dimension

This dimension identifies some general characteristics of the structure and organization of the active criminal groups in the country, such as the structure, size, type of organization and environment of influence. In particular, in this paper we propose a functional approach to study organized crime groups: rather than simply focusing on the shape of the structure or on the internal lines of command (hierarchies or networks), we suggest a more operative approach aimed at detecting which groups are actually present in the studied country, if they have a relevant weigh in the national context and how they behave in relation to other criminal groups, civil population or State authorities and institutions. The more is known about these groups, the more effective the strategies developed for disrupting them will be. The road map developed for GROUPS dimension (and also for the other ones) encompasses two different steps: data collection and analysis. It suggests the data that should be collected and which kind of analysis could be conducted.

a. Data Collection
> *Basic*
>> • Information on criminal groups active in the country, such as who they are, size, number of members involved.
> *Advanced*
>> • Information on internal structure of the organization or of the criminal groups.
>> • Typologies of criminal cooperation/relationship among groups.
>> Data collected at the basic level provide general information on each active criminal group in the country; while those collected at the advanced level are needed to assess the organization and cooperation within and among criminal groups.

b. Data Analysis
After having collected both types of data, they can be mixed for modeling and mapping criminal networks, maximizing efficiency and profits.

Figure 2 – Road map for GROUPS dimension
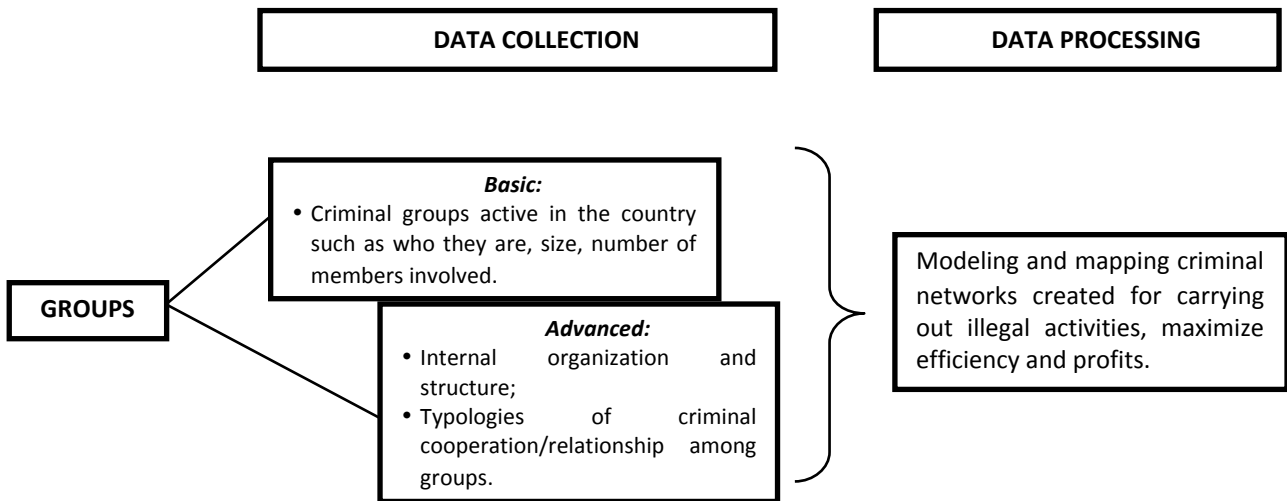
Size, structure and characteristics

The first aspect that has to be considered is the actual dimension of the organized crime groups in a country. This information, with respect to country size and population, is fundamental for understanding whether the presence of organized crime is actually a main criminal problem or a marginal phenomenon.

Besides, another crucial point must be distinguished among the organized crime groups operating in the country, which are traditionally rooted there and the ones based in other countries. Indeed, the activities of a group and its relationship with the social environment can be considerably different, depending on whether the group is a homegrown one or not. Generally, speaking native language groups are probably more involved in activities requiring an effective control of the territory (e.g. extortion or drug production), while non-indigenous groups could be mainly focused on trade activities (e.g. trafficking of illegal goods or money laundering).

This aspect is particularly important for Latin America and the Caribbean, which are traditionally characterized by a strong concomitance of local organizations and radical fringes deeply rooted in specific regions, with larger criminal groups usually operating in more than one country.

In the table below (Table 4), some suggested indicators useful for collecting this information on organized crime groups, as well as other relevant data on their general characteristics, are summarized. As mentioned before, the indicators are listed from the most general to the most specific one.

Table 2 – Suggested indicators for analyzing size, structure and characteristics of OC groups

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		Ministry of Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC)
a.1	Number of organized crime groups active in the country	
a.2	Number of active members of organized criminal groups (number of suspects for organized crime)	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
a.3	Number of anti-government armed groups involved in organized crime	
a.4	Number of indigenous and/or non-indigenous groups	
a.5	Number of indigenous organized crime groups involved in other countries	
a.6	Number of organized crime groups directly or indirectly involved in political activities	
a.7	Most relevant criteria for affiliation (ethnic, family, local, youth, etc.)	

Relationship among groups

The second element that should be taken into account for identifying the characteristics of organized crime presence in a country is the type of relationship among different criminal groups. Understanding whether an organized crime group cooperates with other ones in managing illegal activities or defining the existing level of competition and conflict among them are crucial factors for fully comprehending the nature of organized crime threat for a country.

Indeed, if connections among groups are mainly friendly and based upon cooperative deals, it will be very tough for law enforcement agencies to adopt effective counteracting measures, since the organized crime groups will probably join together against them. On the contrary, a high level of conflict can undermine the strength of each single group, but usually involves also a high and widespread level of violence in the areas with a relevant presence of organized crime[5]. In Table 5, some proxy indicators for assessing this sub-dimension are shown.

5. This is the case of Mexico that has recently experienced a significant spread in drug cartels-related violence [Beittel 2011, 2009].

Table 3 – *Suggested indicators for analyzing the relationships among OC groups*

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
ADVANCED INDICATORS		Ministry of Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC)
b.1	Number of inter-groups homicides	
b.2	Number of court cases involving different organized crime groups cooperating in the same illegal activity	
b.3	Number of cases of cooperation among groups (i.e. for drug-trafficking)	

Modus operandi

The last part of the organized crime general characteristics that should be collected for measuring the strength of criminal groups in a country embraces data and information regarding the general methods used by organized crime groups for reaching their goals. In particular, these methods can be divided into two main categories, according to the implication or not of the use of violence.

Violence is always recognized as one of the constitutive elements of organized crime [Finckenauer 2005; Hagan 2006]. Violence or threat of violence are usually addressed to anyone who acts, also involuntary, as an obstacle to organized crime activities or are used to maintain control over the territory. The latter includes "alternative" and non-physically violent methods used by organized crime group to reach their goals (e.g. by obtaining public/civil representatives support).

Assessing how often an organized crime group resorts or not to any kind of violence in carrying out its activities can be a very important starting point for a country in order to analyze it and plan efficient countermeasures. Indeed, if the data show a predominant role of violence against civilians in an organized crime group modus operandi, it can be hypothesized a lack of popular support or an increased need to reaffirm a territorial hegemony. On the other side, a relevant number of civilians or public officers, directly or indirectly supporting organized crime, can be read as the willingness of the organization to operate mainly "offstage".

Table 4 – *Suggested indicators for analyzing OC groups modus operandi*

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC), population-based victimization survey
Violent methods		
c.1	Number of intentional homicides	
c.2	Number of intentional homicides related to organized crime	
c.3	Number of attempted homicides related to organized crime	
c.4	Number of intentional homicides targeting members of organized crime	
c.5	Number of intentional homicides committed with firearm	
c.6	Number of attempted homicides committed with firearm	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
Violent methods		
c.7	Number of homicides targeting government personnel/representatives of institutions (e.g. politicians, policemen, judges)	
c.8	Number of homicides targeting members of the civil society (e.g. journalists, bloggers, businessmen, citizens)	
c.9	Number of assaults/threats against members of institutions, civil society, general public	

	Alternative methods	National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC), population-based victimization survey
c.10	Number of elected representatives and civil servants arrested/prosecuted/convicted for organized crime (or having facilitated organized crime)	
c.11	Number of members of the civil society, media representatives arrested/prosecuted/convicted for organized crime (or having facilitated organized crime)	
c.12	Number of state representatives arrested/prosecuted/convicted for organized crime (or having facilitated organized crime)	

Suggestions for data analysis

According to the data collected (basic or advanced), different analysis should be conducted in order to modeling and mapping criminal networks operating within the country. Having collected basic data on the groups that are actually present and their connections, it should be possible to model the system of relationships among them in order to detect profitable alliances. It should be also possible to map the distribution of groups all over the country to understand whether they overlap or not. The use of basic and advanced data on modus operandi will lead to analyze the strategies applied by criminal groups to carry out their activities, such as violent methods or silent infiltration within society and legal world.

GROUPS dimension: qualitative information to be collected
- *The organizational structure of OC groups;*
- *The different visibility and relationships with citizens;*
- *Most relevant criteria for affiliation (ethnic, family, local, youth gangs, etc.);*
- *Fragmentation, collusion/competition among OC groups.*

3.3. Indicators for the ACTIVITIES dimension

This dimension includes information about profitable activities usually carried out by organized crime groups in order to obtain or invest money or to assure the existence of the organization. In particular, its aim is to analyze the extent of the main illegal (or almost legal) markets in which organized crime groups are typically involved in. Collecting data on both illegal and legal activities is fundamental for law enforcement agencies in order to define effective actions and policies. The choice of these activities follows two main directives: first, they should require a high level of organization and coordination between the parties involved and also guarantee great profit margins. Second, they have been selected according to the specificities of organized crime in Latin American and the Caribbean countries.

For most of those activities, indicators have been chosen for assessing:

- The extent of the market
- The amount of goods/services traded
- The role of the country in the supply chain
- The level of conflict among groups (or factions) involved

Obviously, identifying this information is essential for law enforcement agencies in order for them to define effective actions and policies. Regarding this, it should not be forgotten that most of these activities are and have been possible thanks to a widespread social consensus, especially in deprived areas, since they bring employment opportunities and social improvement.

Four main categories of organized crime activities should be distinguished: a) illegal markets; b) infiltration in legal

markets; c) appropriative activities, such as extortion; d) functional activities, such as corruption, use of violence and homicides. In this section, organized crime activities will be listed following this categorization. Since functional activities are useful for facilitating other activities or reaching specific criminal purposes, they will not be listed in the ACTIVITIES dimension. Therefore, indicators for the use of violence (including homicides) will be described in the GROUPS dimension, because they help understand the competitive relations among groups and/or institutions; while indicators for corruption will be listed in the ENABLERS dimension, because corruption is, in the case of organized crime, an instrumental behavior for maximizing economic benefits (corruption of a public official to get a public contract) and/or for minimizing the risk (such as corrupting law enforcement personnel and judiciary). The road map suggested for collecting and analyzing data on activities the following one:

a. Data Collection

Basic

- Number of offences related to the most important organized crime activities in the country;
- Seizures of illegal goods and amount of human beings trafficked/smuggled;
- Information on secondary/common criminal activities, which may be carried out by organized crime.

Advanced

- Estimates of both economic and non-economic profits
- Routes and country's role in the traffic
- Reinvestment of illicit profits in legal and/or illegal activities

Data gathered at the basic level aim at assessing the extent of both organized crime and common criminal activities. Data collected at the advanced level have the purpose of quantifying profits and revenues and their reinvestment in legal and illegal activities.

b. Data Analysis

Basic and advanced data can be combined in order to:

- assess the extent, organization and structure of illegal markets in the country;
- analyze choices and strategies undertaken by organized crime.

Figure 3 - *Road map for ACTIVITIES dimension*
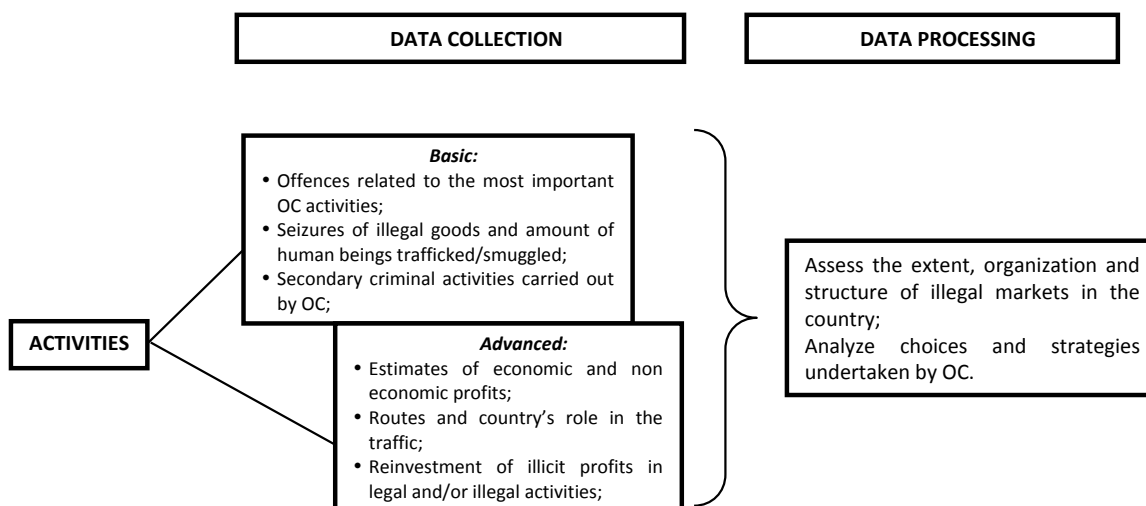
ILLEGAL MARKETS

Drug trafficking

According to the latest report on world drug [UNODC 2011], drug trafficking is undoubtedly one of the main sources of income for organized crime groups in South and Central America. Indeed, a large number of Latin American countries are drug producers and the largest share of their illegal economy is based upon the production and the selling of illegal

drugs. Besides that, this market is also important for those countries located along the trafficking routes, especially for those bordering with consumer countries, the USA above all [UNODC 2011].

The drug market is also a very profitable business for organized crime groups although it requires a lot of human and financial resources in order to face the threats posed by States or by competing organized crime groups to maintain the control over the territory (for managing production and/or for controlling trade routes).

Table 5 – *Suggested indicators for analyzing the illegal drugs market*

	Suggested indicators:	Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC)
d.1	Number of homicides related to drug-trafficking	
d.2	Number of attempted homicides related to drug–trafficking	
d.3	Total amount of drug seizures (if available by type, purity, destination and origin)	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
d.4	Estimates of drug production by type	
d.5	Country's main role (production, transit and/or destination country)	

Firearms trafficking

The firearms market traditionally follows the drug trafficking flows, but in the opposite direction. Indeed, while organized crime groups usually sell drugs in richest states to get money, they need to buy firearms from the same countries to maintain their military power and ensure their illegal trades [Goodman & Marizco, 2010]. Furthermore, different insurgent organizations or radical fringes requiring weapons for their activities are still present in Latin America and the Caribbean, and organized crime groups can easily capitalize on this situation using the open routes for exporting drugs to import firearms [UNODC 2010]. Studying the evolution of this market can also be significant for forecasting where it is more likely to expect an increase of violence connected with the activities performed by the organized crime groups.

Table 6 – *Suggested indicators for analyzing the firearms market*

	Suggested indicators:	Possible sources:
B ASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC)
e.1	Number of offences for firearms trafficking related crimes	
e.2	Total amount of illegal firearms and ammunitions seizures (if available by type, destination and origin)	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
e.3	Main role of the country (production, transit and/or destination country)	

Human trafficking

Human trafficking is a criminal activity involving the illegal recruitment of human beings, especially in poor and deprived areas, and their transportation to a different area or country in order to exploit them in criminal or illegal activities, such as prostitution and illegal work [UN, 2000a]. This crime, which implies a high level of complexity, is often managed by organized crime groups which can exploit existing routes used for other illegal trades controlled by them [Transcrime, 2010]. Organized crime groups can get profits from this trade by directly exploiting trafficked people (i.e. using them for

Table 7 – *Suggested indicators for analyzing human trafficking*

	Suggested indicators:	Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC); reliable NGOs or organizations related to trafficked people
f.1	Number of offences for human trafficking related crimes	
f.2	Number of trafficked people (if available by citizenship)	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
f.3	Country's Main Role: sending, transit and/or destination country	

drug production) or by acting as intermediate or procurer for other organizations.

Illegal trade in immigrants

Illegal trade in immigrants refers to criminal organizations assuring to a person an illegal entry into a country in exchange for some kind of payment. Unlike human trafficking, this crime does not implicate exploitation of the persons smuggled [UN, 2000b]. Considering that a large number of people in Latin American and Caribbean countries live below the poverty line and near the presence of contiguous rich and deprived area (i.e. the Mexico-United States border or the Straits of Florida between the USA and Cuba), it is reasonable to think that the guarantee of a safe border violation can provide high profits to organized crime groups.

Table 8 – *Suggested indicators for analyzing illegal trade in immigrants*

	Suggested indicators:	Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC); reliable NGOs or organizations related to immigrants
g.1	Number of offences for smuggling of migrants related crimes	
g.2	Number of smuggled migrants (if available by citizenship)	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
g.3	Main role of the country: sending, transit and/or destination country	

INFILTRATION IN LEGAL MARKETS

Money laundering

Money laundering refers to the methods used by organized crime groups to invest the profits obtained from other illegal activities, concealing the illegal origin of such property. In other words, it is the process that allows criminal organizations to utilize these illegal proceeds in legal activities or investments. Usually, the money is laundered by depositing large amounts of cash, typically fragmented in small portions, into a bank account or another financial institution. Therefore, tracks of this illegal activity can be found checking the movements of large sums of cash money or non-regular or suspicious financial transactions or trades [FAFT, 2012].

This activity is particularly important for Latin American organized crime groups, since they usually have huge amounts of money, derived mainly from drug and firearms trafficking [UNODC 2010], to be laundered.

Table 9 – Suggested indicators for analyzing money laundering

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
ADVANCED INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC);), National Central Bank or similar economic institutions
h.1	Total amount of seizure of bulk cash	
h.2	Number of suspicious transactions reported	

Non-criminal activities performed by organized crime groups

Organized crime groups do not use all their proceeds of crime for financing illegal activities, nor spend them for leisure and management costs. A variable part of their profits is usually invested in the legal economy, partially for money laundering and partially for increasing their incomes [Transcrime 2007]. Knowing the sum and the kind of properties or companies the organized crime groups tend to invest, helps a country to increase the control measures in the most vulnerable or exposed economic sectors to organized crime.

Trying to estimate the presence of organized crime in the legal economy is a tough goal to achieve. Nevertheless there are some proxy variables that can be used, the most important of which is the number of confiscated goods from organized crime members (Table 12). Indeed, assuming that the seizures are not strongly biased by the law enforcement activities (i.e. they are not concentrated only in few economic sectors excluding the others), we can consider them as a good estimate of organized crime groups investment portfolios.

Table 10 – Suggested indicators for analyzing the non-criminal activities performed by OC groups

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
ADVANCED INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Police forces, Organized Crime State Commission, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others), National Central bank or other economic-financial institutions.
i.1	Number of companies confiscated from members of an OC group (per type and value)	
i.2	Number of real estate confiscated from members of an OC group (per type and value)	
i.3	Personal property confiscated from members of an OC group (per type and value)	

APPROPRIATIVE ACTIVITIES

Extortion and kidnapping

In addition to the main core activities already presented, organized crime groups are usually involved in a subset of corollary criminal activities, specifically aimed at providing additional income to the organizations. In this sub-dimension, the principal types of activities have been summarized. Particular attention is paid to extortion and kidnapping, since organized crime groups are quite commonly involved in these crimes. Indeed the latter require a high level of organization that can be found only in specialized groups having a solid knowledge and control on the physical environment and social fabric.

On the contrary, extortion not necessarily has to be conducted by very specialized groups. Nevertheless, this type of crime requires the extortionists to have an attested "bad name", otherwise their threats will not be considered credible and they will probably fail to succeed in their goal. Organized crime groups can usually count on this kind of trustable criminal reputation, especially if they are deeply rooted in the local milieu. Furthermore, extortion can also be used by criminal organizations to consolidate their presence and control over a region.

Table 11 – Suggested indicators for analyzing extortion and kidnapping

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC), population-based victimization survey
Extortion		
j.1	Number of victims of extortion	
j.2	Number of reported offences	
Kidnapping		
j.3	Number of victims of kidnapping	
j.4	Number of reported offences	

OTHER INDICATORS REGARDING ORGANIZED CRIME ACTIVITIES

Other criminal activities

The collection of information regarding other criminal activities (e.g. trafficking in stolen vehicles, usury, cigarettes smuggling, counterfeiting of goods and medicines, counterfeiting of documents and money, trafficking in natural resources, etc.) connected with the specific distinctiveness of organized crime in each country is proposed.

Table 12 – Suggested indicators for analyzing other criminal activities

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC); population-based victimization surveys; Government office issuing driving licenses and vehicle registrations
k.1	Number of criminals arrested (for each type of crime)	
k.2	Number of offences (for each type of crime)	
k.3	Total amount of goods seizures (if needed for each type of crime)	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
k.4	Sending, transit and/or destination country (if needed for each type of crime)	

Organized crime victimization and public perception of organized crime activity

One of the main problems regarding the measurement of crime using official data is the underestimation of the criminal phenomena, or of part of it, caused by unreported events or by inefficiency in the data collection system. To overcome this problem, the analysts can resort to population-based surveys specifically aimed at measuring the crimes suffered by a representative sample of citizens, regardless of the fact that they have reported them to the police or not. Thus, it is possible to get an estimate of the difference between the real level of crime and the one recorded in the official statistics, commonly called "dark number". This method can be particularly relevant for analyzing organized crime, especially in those countries where the trust in the law enforcement agencies and in the justice system is quite low, a common situation in Latin America [UNODC 2008].

These surveys can also be used for identifying how the population perceives the presence and the role of organized crime groups in their territory. This aspect can be fundamental to understand whether the criminal organizations can find some kind of support among parts of the population and whether their activities are perceived as being harmful or useful for the economic and social development of the area.

Table 13 – Suggested indicators for analyzing the level of victimization and perception of safety connected with OC

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
ADVANCED INDICATORS		Population-based victimization surveys
I.1	Population who has been victim of OC (Number, percentage or rates per inhabitants, if available by type of crime)	
I.2	Number of victims of threats from members of OC groups	
I.3	Percentage of population who has been victim of threats from members of OC groups (or rates per inhabitants)	
I.4	Population's perception of safety	
I.5	Population's perception of OC presence (or threat, prevalence, support, etc.)	

Suggestions for data analysis

According to the data collected (basic or advanced), different analysis should be conducted in order to assess the extent, organization and structure of illegal markets in the country and to analyze choices and strategies undertaken by organized crime groups. Having collected basic and advanced suggested indicators on each illegal activity (drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, etc.) will help in producing information on that specific market, such as demand, supply, flows or quantity of illegal trafficked goods. Advanced indicators on money laundering and assets confiscated from organized crime members will help in assessing the amount of profits that come from the illegal world and the strategies undertaken when profits are reinvested in the legal economy.

ACTIVITIES dimension: qualitative information to be collected
- *Illegal markets trade routes;*
- *Infiltration of OC in the legitimate economy (setting up red flags);*
- *Cultural drivers behind OC activities;*
- *Demand and supply dynamics in illegal markets.*

3.4. Indicators for the STATE RESPONSE dimension

The following dimension shifts slightly the focus of the analysis from the collection of data regarding the organized crime groups active in a country to the analysis of the background elements that generate opportunities for organized crime influencing directly or indirectly the diffusion and the evolution of this phenomenon. This dimension is directed to identify the level of state response to the activities of organized crime groups and, in particular, the efforts made by law enforcement agencies, as well as the structure and effectiveness of the criminal justice system for counteracting and preventing organized crime threats. The aim is to analyze what works and what does not and what should be done to improve the state response. The criminal justice system, including law enforcement agencies (LEA), belongs to the risk component. The better its performance is, the more risk is imposed upon organized crime.

The road map developed for the STATE RESPONSE dimension is the following:

a. Data Collection

> *Basic*
>> • Existence of legal provisions that criminalize and punish organized crime–related offences per se.
>>
>> • Information regarding activities of LEA (arrests), prosecutors, courts (convictions) and prisons.
>
> *Advanced*
>> • Resources allocated to the criminal justice system and law enforcement agencies by the State.

Data collected at the basic level are needed to gather information on the actual fight against organized crime (existence of specific provision and law enforcement actions). Data collected at the advanced level are required to quantify the amount of resources addressed to the criminal justice system by the State.

b. Data Analysis

Basic and advanced data can be combined to analyze the performance of the law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system in order to assess the state response effectiveness in counteracting organized crime.

Figure 4 - *Road map for STATE RESPONSE dimension*
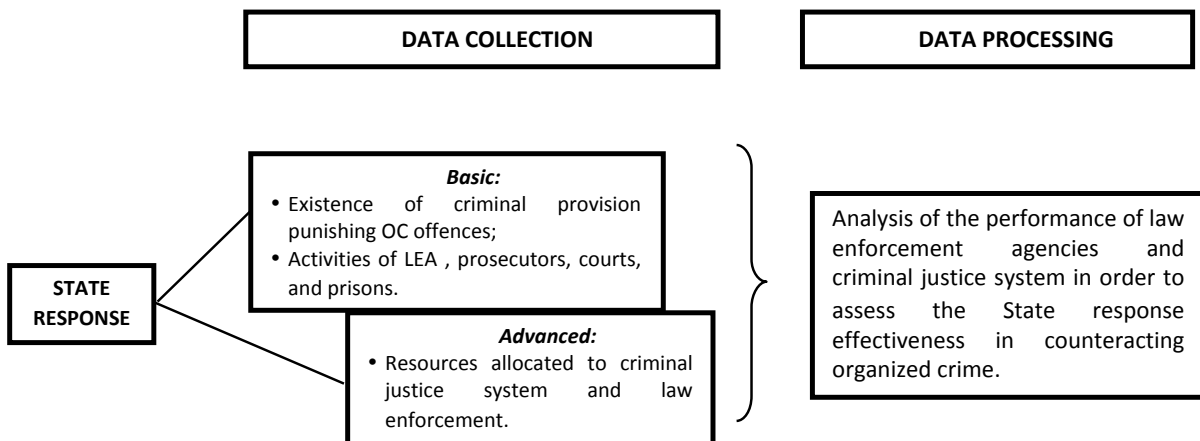
Law enforcement

An appropriate law enforcement activity is probably one of the most important elements of the state response to organized crime. An effective police force should be able to respond to the organized crime dangers by both counteracting the criminal activities and preventing the spread of the phenomenon. This increases the risk for organized crime members of being arrested and reduces the economic profitability of their investments in criminal activities, thus forcing them to increase their expenditure [Transcrime 2007].

The suggested indicators (Table 2) are intended to assess the law enforcement efficiency in tackling organized crime and the quality of police forces activities. They are aimed at measuring not only the military aspect of the law enforcement activities, but also their goodness in terms of number of available resources and relationship with the population.

Table 14 – Suggested indicators for evaluating the efforts by law enforcement

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized crime state commission; Police forces; Judiciary acts; International institutions (e.g. UNODC), Population-based victimization surveys.
Law enforcement activity		
m.1	Number of people arrested for organized crime[6]	
m.2	Number of people arrested for drug production (if available by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers)[2]	
m.3	Number of people arrested for drug trafficking (if available by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers) [2]	
m.4	Number of people arrested for drug possession (if available by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers) [2]	
m.5	Number of people arrested for firearms trafficking-related crimes[2]	
m.6	Number of people arrested for human trafficking-related crimes[2]	
m.7	Number of people arrested for smuggling of migrants-related crimes[2]	
m.8	Number of people arrested for money laundering-related crimes[2]	
m.9	Number of people arrested for extortion-related crimes[2]	
m.10	Number of people arrested for stolen vehicles trafficking [2]	
m.11	Number of people arrested for kidnapping[2]	
m.12	Number of people arrested for intentional homicides	
m.13	Number of people arrested for attempted homicides	
m.14	Number of intentional homicides for which the offender has been identified by the police (clearance rate)	
m.15	Number of kidnappings for which the offender has been identified by the police	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
Resources addressed to law enforcement		
m.16	Number of policemen (resources addressed to law enforcement)	
m.17	Presence of police forces specifically addressed to fight organized crime (if available also the number of those policemen)	
Population's confidence		
m.18	Reporting rate to the police (if available by crime)	
m.19	Population's confidence toward police (or any other measure assessing population's trust, attitude, support, etc.)	

Criminal justice system

Another fundamental sub-dimension constituting the state response is the effectiveness and strength of the criminal justice system. Indeed, the risk of a strict punishment is an aspect that could determine the opportunity structure for organized crime groups, acting as a deterrent for the recruitment of new members or simply making their illegal activities less suitable. Clearly, this positive effect is guaranteed not only by the presence of a specific legislation against organized crime, but mainly by the reactivity of the penal system and the certainty of sentences.

Besides, the information about the number of people prosecuted, convicted or detained for organized crime or related crimes and their relevance, taking into account the total number of proceedings, can be considered as an estimate of the organized crime presence in a country, as well as an estimation of the ability of the criminal justice system of a country to counteract organized crime.

---

6. If available, also information on the number of operations against each illegal activity should be collected

Table 15 – *Suggested indicators for evaluating criminal justice system effectiveness*

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		
Prosecutors activity		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Justice (or others), judicial statistics. National Criminal Law.
n.1	Number of people prosecuted	
n.2	Number of people prosecuted for organized crime	
n.3	Number of people prosecuted for drug production (if available, by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers)	
n.4	Number of people prosecuted for drug trafficking (if available, by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers)	
n.5	Number of people prosecuted for drug possession (if available, by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers)	
n.6	Number of people prosecuted for firearms–related crimes	
n.7	Number of people prosecuted for human trafficking–related crimes	
n.8	Number of people prosecuted for smuggling of migrants–related crimes	
n.9	Number of people prosecuted for money laundering–related crimes	
n.10	Number of people prosecuted for extortion–related crimes	
n.11	Number of people prosecuted for vehicles theft	
n.12	Number of people prosecuted for stolen vehicles trafficking	
n.13	Number of people prosecuted for kidnapping-related crimes	
n.14	Number of people prosecuted for intentional homicides	
n.15	Number of people prosecuted for attempted homicides	
Courts activity		
n.16	Total number of people convicted	
n.17	Number of people convicted for organized crime	
n.18	Number of people convicted for drug production (if available, by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers)	
n.19	Number of people convicted for drug trafficking (if available, by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers)	
n.20	Number of people convicted for drug possession (if available, by type of drugs and citizenship of traffickers)	
n.21	Number of people convicted for firearms–related crimes	
n.22	Number of people convicted for human trafficking–related crimes	
n.23	Number of people convicted for smuggling of migrants–related crimes	
n.24	Number of people convicted for money laundering–related crimes	
n.25	Number of people convicted for extortion–related crimes	
n.26	Number of people convicted for vehicles theft	
n.27	Number of people convicted for stolen vehicles trafficking	
n.28	Number of people convicted for kidnapping-related crimes	
n.29	Number of people convicted for intentional homicides	
n.30	Number of people convicted for attempted homicides	

Prison system		
n.31	Total number of inmates	
n.32	Number of inmates detained for organized crime	
n.33	Number of inmates detained for drug production	
n.34	Number of inmates detained for drug trafficking	
n.35	Number of inmates detained for drug possession	
n.36	Number of inmates detained for firearms–related crimes	
n.37	Number of inmates detained for human trafficking–related crimes	
n.38	Number of inmates detained for smuggling of migrants–related crimes	
n.39	Number of inmates detained for money laundering–related crimes	
n.40	Number of inmates detained for extortion–related crimes	National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Justice (or others), judicial statistics. National Criminal Law.
n.41	Number of inmates detained for vehicles theft	
n.42	Number of inmates detained for stolen vehicles trafficking	
n.43	Number of inmates detained for kidnapping-related crimes	
n.44	Number of inmates detained for intentional homicides	
n.45	Number of inmates detained for attempted homicides	
Legal framework to fight organized crime		
n.46	Any existing criminal provision punishing organized crime–related offences per se (if it exists, collect the sentencing range)	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
Resources addressed to criminal justice system		
n.47	Number of courtrooms	
n.48	Number of judges	
n.49	Number of prosecutors	
n.50	Number of specialized anti-organized crime prosecutors	

Suggestions for data analysis

Based on collected data (basic or advanced), different analysis should be conducted for evaluating the performance of law enforcement agencies and criminal justice system in order to know whether the state response can be considered as effective in tackling organized crime or not. For instance, as Van Dijk already did, unsolved homicides[7] can be calculated with the purpose of evaluating the performance of the system in general. Moreover, using data on arrests, prosecutions and convictions, will facilitate the calculation of the percentage of arrests that result in prosecution and finally in convictions over the total number of arrests.

7. The number of unsolved homicides, as used by van Dijk, is given by the number of police-recorded homicides minus the number of convictions for homicides.

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STATE RESPONSE dimension: qualitative information to be collected
- *Early preventing policies toward youths or disadvantaged people for minimizing the risk of future recruitment by OC groups;*
- *New legislation and new regulations to reduce opportunities for crime;*
- *Complexity and efficiency of the criminal justice system;*
- *Policies addressed to OC victims.*

3.5. Indicators for the ENABLERS dimension

This dimension comprises a set of background information useful for analyzing the social, economic and institutional situation of a country. All these elements can be considered as enablers of organized crime, since their presence can facilitate or even cause the rise of organized crime groups.

Indeed, the evolution of organized crime (and of almost every other criminal phenomenon) is strictly connected with the opportunities offered by a specific territory or a country in general. These opportunities, which can be seen in terms of socio-demographic conditions, create a large availability of potential new members to recruit, as well as an economic structure that facilitates the development of illegal trades or investments. Also, the presence of weaknesses in the State structure and organization can cause organized crime infiltrations. The aim is to identify those elements and situations which could facilitate the development of criminal organizations and their activities all over the country. The road map suggested to collect and analyze data concerning enablers of organized crime is the following one:

a. Data Collection
> *Basic*
> - Socio-demographic factors that can be considered as enablers of criminal activities.
> - Economic factors that can be considered as enablers of criminal activities.
> - Legal framework against money laundering and confiscation of criminal assets.
> *Advanced*
> - Extent of corruption (petty and grand).
> - Legality (rule of law and lack of governance).
> - Weaknesses in the political system.

Data collected at the basic level are needed to gather information on socio-demographic and economic factors; while data at the advanced level are needed in order to know the extent of corruption, rule of law and weaknesses in the political system.

b. Data Analysis

After having collected both basic and advanced data, they can be mixed in order to model the opportunities structure created by the enablers.

Corruption

In general terms, we speak of corruption when someone is asked or expected to make some kind of unofficial payment (e.g. cash, goods, gifts, holidays, etc.) to public officials, politicians or other private subjects to get things done in the normal business operations. Actually, this is one of the main indicators used for revealing the extent of the so-called informal sector of the economy of a country and the presence of usual practices of bending the existing rules or laws [Transcrime, 2007].

The suggested indicators (Table 16) aim at evaluating the prevalence of "petty" and "grand" corruption. This distinction is important to understand whether, in the country, there is a prevalence of a widespread corruption system or there are just minor cases [Van Dijk 2008].
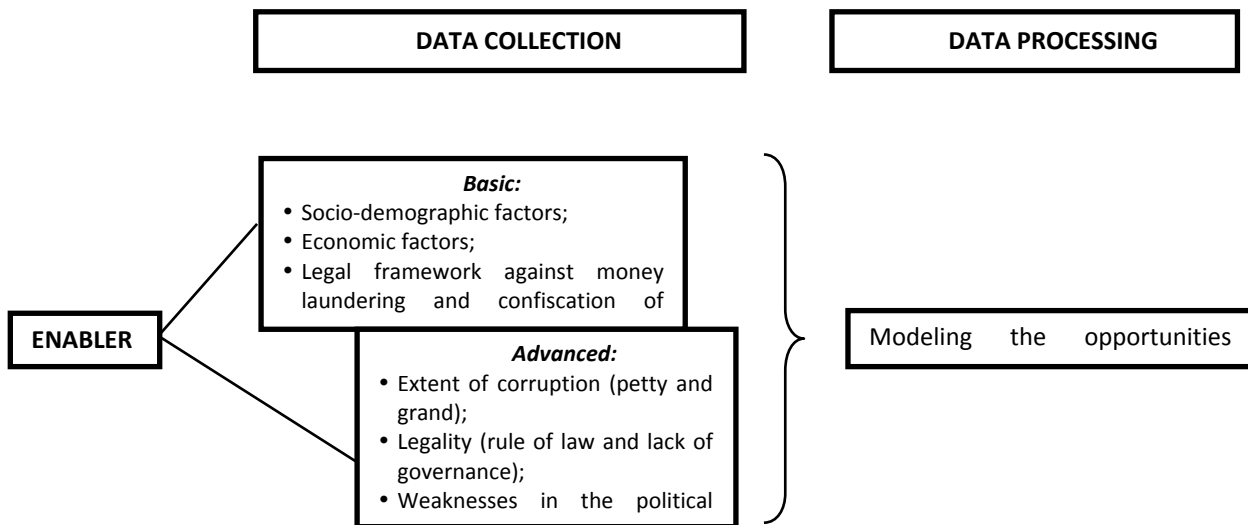
Figure 5 - Road map for ENABLERS dimension

Table 16 – Suggested indicators for analyzing corruption

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
ADVANCED INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC), population-based victimization surveys.
Petty corruption		
o.1	Number of corruption-related offences regarding civil servants	
o.2	Number of civil servants arrested/prosecuted/convicted for corruption	
o.3	Number of civil servants arrested/prosecuted/convicted for bribery	
o.4	Number of corruption trials in which civil servants are involved	
Grand corruption		National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior/Home Office (or others); Organized Crime State Commission; police forces; Judiciary acts; international institutions (e.g. UNODC), population-based victimization surveys.
o.5	Number of corruption–related offences regarding high ranking officials and elected representatives	
o.6	Number of high ranking officials and elected representatives arrested/prosecuted/convicted for corruption	
o.7	Number of high ranking officials and elected representatives arrested/prosecuted/convicted for bribery	
o.8	Number of corruption trials in which high ranking officials or elected representatives are involved	

Social inequality

The indicators composing this sub-dimension aim at assessing the extent of social inequality within a country. This information has been chosen as an estimate for identifying the population who is socially or economically disadvantaged. Actually, many social and criminological theories stated that people with limited resources can be considered much more likely to be involved or become victim of organized crime activities [Bourguignon, 1999]. Especially in countries with wide internal disparities, becoming a member of organized crime groups can be used by members of the lower classes as a mean of social advancement.

Table 17 – Suggested indicators for analyzing the level of social inequality

	Suggested indicators:	Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, international institutions (e.g. World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank)
p.1	Percentage of unemployed population	
p.2	Percentage of unemployed youth population	
p.3	Percentage of inactive population	
p.4	Percentage of population living under the poverty threshold[8]	
p.5	Percentage of population not completing first-level education, e.g. primary school	
p.6	Percentage of population using the Internet	
p.7	GINI coefficient on income	

Economic drivers

This sub-dimension aims to assess specific characteristics of the national economy which may act as organized crime enablers or create opportunities for organized crime groups. In terms of opportunities, it is important to observe whether the most relevant or valuable economic sectors in a country are also the areas in which organized crime presence tends to be significant, or whether the legal commercial flows among countries actually reflect the routes of illegal traffics.

Clearly, as for the other sub-dimensions, it is worth remembering that the proposed indicators (Table 18) are only a batch of the possible useful indicators for collecting this information. For each country, the best set of variables should be selected starting from the existing data.

Table 18 – Suggested indicators for analyzing the main economic drivers in a country

	Suggested indicators:	Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, international institutions (e.g. World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank)
q.1	Gross domestic product (GDP)	
q.2	Import–export as a percentage of the GDP[9] (or any other measure of the degree of openness of the economy)	
q.3	National informal economy estimates[10]	
q.4	The most relevant economic sectors	
q.5	The most important commercial partners according to the amount of commercial trading	

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8. Since it can be different from one country to another, usually the international agreements consider as threshold less than $1.25, $2 or $2.5 a day.
9. Available at the Inter-American Development Bank website.
10. These estimates have been calculated by the International Monetary Fund, the International Labour Organization and the World Bank. However, if available, it is important to collect the same information released by the country.

Lack of governance and rule of law

The last set of indicators of the organized crime enablers has the objective of assessing the level of governance and rule of law within the country. This information is useful, since an inefficient justice dispensation, or a disorganized, unstable or unresponsive political system, can facilitate the infiltration of organized crime groups or reduce the effectiveness of state reactions against their activities.

Besides the following indicators (Table 19), other existing information, which could be considered more appropriate for describing the country scenario, should be collected.

Table 19 – Suggested indicators for analyzing lack of governance

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
ADVANCED INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, court documents, population-based surveys, international institutions (e.g. World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank)
r.1	Political stability and absence of violence, by the World Bank	
r.2	Rule of law indicator by the World Bank	
r.3	Average duration of criminal and civil proceedings	
r.4	Public confidence in courts (or other measures regarding population's trust/confidence in the justice system)	
r.5	Existence of other conflict adjudication systems (e.g. mediation or arbitration)	

Suggestions for data analysis

Based on the collected data (basic or advanced), different analysis should be conducted for modeling the opportunities structure and identifying the factors that have the greatest influence in enabling the spread of organized crime in a given country. First, by using statistical tools, it should be possible to create different association and correlation in order to understand if there is a significant relation among basic and advanced indicators and which are the most related ones. For instance, association and correlation can be assessed between social inequality indicators and lack of governance ones. Moreover, indicators on economic factors could be related with those on corruption.

Indicators for enablers can be associated and correlated with other indicators belonging to previous dimensions. For instance, it could be assessed whether there is a relationship between the performance of law enforcement agencies (state response dimension) and the extent of corruption, between the lack of governance and the criminal justice effectiveness, or between economic drivers and the main illegal activities carried out by organized crime groups.

ENABLERS dimension: qualitative information to be collected
* *Level of legality culture;*
* *Efficiency of the political system;*
* *Extent of the informal sector;*
* *Economic sectors which are more likely to be infiltrated by OC.*

3.6.   Indicators for the CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSE dimension

According to the definition adopted by the World Bank, civil society entails "non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations". Civil society is an ensemble of nongovernmental institutions that are nonviolent, self-organizing and permanently in tension with the governmental institutions that enable their activities (Keane 2009).

This dimension takes into account the main actors who are able to raise the awareness towards organized crime issues

(Civil associations, foundations and institutions), to provide information (Media) and to support victims (NGOs) in order to reduce the impact of organized crime upon society. Civil society plays a fundamental role in the fight against organized crime and in the support provided to its victims (e.g. trafficked people). Indeed, all of the organizations encompassed in the civil society may be helpful also in preventing crime in general, prompting the reform of criminal justice and protecting victims of organized crime. Civil institutions have an important role in making society sensitive to organized crime issues. Indeed, keeping the level of public awareness high is fundamental for raising the public debate on this topic and keeping it lively.

The road map suggested to collect and analyze data concerning civil society is the following one:

a. Data Collection

Basic

• Information on the development of civil society and its commitment in raising public awareness and debate on organized crime but also to crime and violence in general.

• Information on how many and which typologies of civil organizations and media there are in the country.

Advanced

• Initiatives for victims of crime, promoting security and awareness on organized crime or reducing violence;

• Level of support given by the State to civil society.

Data collected at the basic level are needed to gather general information on civil society and its main features; while data at the advanced level are needed in order to know how many and which initiatives for victims of crime, promoting security and awareness on organized crime or reducing violence are undertaken and the extent of the support given by the State to civil society.

b. Data Analysis

After having collected both basic and advanced data, they can be mixed in order to assess the effectiveness of civil society in responding to organized crime.

Figure 6 - Road map for the CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSE dimension
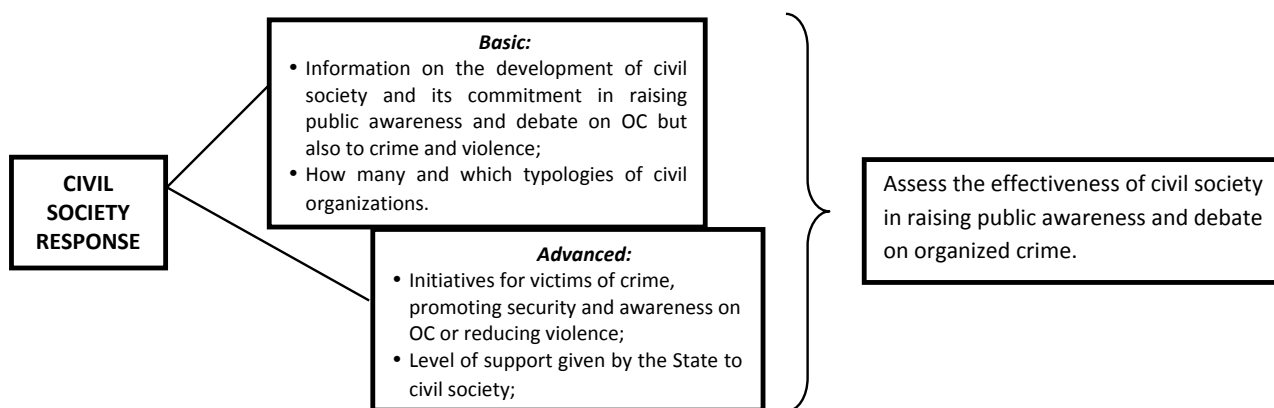
NGOs / Media / Civil associations, foundations and institutions

The set of indicators regarding civil society aim at assessing its extent and strength within the country. Moreover, they should be useful for understanding how much support is provided by the State in order to facilitate civil society institutions in fulfilling their tasks. Indeed, the more widespread and "stronger" the civil society is, the more the awareness towards organized crime is.

Besides the following indicators (Table 20), other existing information, which could be considered more appropriate for describing the country scenario, should be collected

Suggestions for data analysis

Based on collected data (basic or advanced), different analysis should be conducted for evaluating the effectiveness of civil society in responding to organized crime and reduce its impact upon society.

Having collected basic and advanced suggested indicators on each civil society institutions (NGOs, Media, associations etc.) will assist in enhancing knowledge on that specific institution, such as the extent of their diffusion or the most prevalent typologies. Advanced indicators on the amount of funds addressed by the state, the population's perception or the number of initiatives undertaken will help in assessing the strength of civil society in contrasting organized crime and the level of awareness within society.

***Table 20** – Suggested indicators for analyzing civil society*

Suggested indicators:		Possible sources:
BASIC INDICATORS		National Institute of Statistics, population-based surveys, international institutions (e.g. UN, World Bank)
NGOs		
s.1	Number of active NGOs in the country	
s.2	Typologies of NGOs most prevalent in the country	
Media		
t.1	Number of television networks	
t.2	Number of newspapers	
Civil associations, foundations and institutions		National Institute of Statistics, population-based surveys, international institutions (e.g. UN, World Bank)
u.1	Number of civil associations, foundations and institutions	
u.2	Typologies of associations, foundations and institutions most prevalent in the country	
ADVANCED INDICATORS		
NGOs		
s.3	Number of initiatives for victims of crime, promoting security and awareness on organized crime or reducing violence	
s.4	Amount of funds addressed by the government	
s.5	Population's perception of NGOs commitment in promoting security and awareness on organized crime or reducing violence	
Media		
t.3	Number of articles/TV reports on organized crime issues	
t.4	Number of people who daily read newspapers	
t.5	Population's perception of media	
Civil associations, foundations and institutions		
u.3	Number of initiatives for victims of crime, promoting security and awareness on organized crime or reducing violence	
u.4	Amount of funds addressed by the government	
u.5	Population's perception of the effectiveness of civil associations, foundations and institutions in promoting security and awareness on organized crime or reducing violence	

CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSE dimension: qualitative information to be collected

- *Typologies of NGOs, associations, foundations and institutions most prevalent in the country;*
- *Level of tolerance expressed by civil society institutions towards organized crime issues and victims;*
- *Private initiatives undertaken in response to organized crime issues and victims;*
- *Relationship among the different civil society institutions.*

4. Assessment of data availability in three selected countries

The overall aim of this study is to identify data/indicators and other information useful for measuring the incidence of organized crime and evaluating the countermeasures adopted by public actors. In this last part of the paper, a pilot exercise has been conducted to assess the availability of these suggested data in Latin American and the Caribbean countries. In particular, the research has been focused on three countries, one for each of the three main Latin American regions (Caribbean, Central America and South America). The selected countries are:

- Mexico (Central America)
- Dominican Republic (the Caribbean)
- Colombia (South America)

These countries have been chosen because of to the high level of accessibility to their data/information and due to their representativeness in terms of organized crime presence. Indeed, all of them are affected by serious problems connected with the activities performed by the organized crime groups.

In this section, the results of a preliminary availability assessment and data collection, conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Mexican Institute of Statistics and Geography (Spanish: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, INEGI), will be presented. For each dimension (criminal groups, activities, state response and enablers) UNODC-INEGI referents have searched for and collected basic and advanced available data[11]. These results have been listed and analyzed in order to understand the level of completeness and the weaknesses of each country in the collection of data about organized crime. In the last part of this section, some general methodological suggestions useful to condensate all the information into few general indexes will be presented.

4.1. Results of the pilot research on data availability

Groups

In Mexico, there are 9 out of 22 necessary indicators for criminal organized crime groups. Most of them belong to the basic level and give information on which groups are active in the country and the number of their members, on the use of violent methods and on the relationships among these groups. Therefore, it is possible to achieve a good knowledge about active organized crime groups in the country and their basic features. Indicators belonging to the advanced level regarding only the criteria used for affiliation and the number of homicides involving members of the civil society. There are no available indicators concerning the use of non-violent methods. There is also a lack of helpful information for assessing the internal organization and structure of criminal groups.

In Colombia, there are 8 out of 22 available indicators. Most of them relate to group characteristics (both basic and advanced level) and give the possibility of gathering information on which organized crime groups are active in the country; while 4 indicators (belonging to the basic level) regard the use of violent methods, such as the number of intentional homicides, those committed with firearms and those involving representatives of institutions and civil society. There are no available indicators on the relationship among groups and the use of indirect methods.

In the Dominican Republic, only the number of intentional homicides and those committed with firearms is available. In this case, any knowledge about organized crime groups active in the country is possible, together with their main features and internal organization. Mexico and Colombia are undoubtedly on the right track regarding the collection of data about active organized crime groups. Nevertheless, in both countries, improvements should be implemented regarding the collection of advanced information and, in particular, the use of non-violent methods by the organized crime groups. On the contrary, the data situation in the Dominican Republic is definitively worse, since no reliable information on this dimension exists.

Activities

In Mexico, activities indicators are available for drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, human trafficking, illegal trade in immigrants, extortion and kidnapping, both at basic and advanced level. Therefore, it is possible to have an almost complete knowledge on which are the most relevant illegal activities carried out by organized crime groups and of the

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11. The pilot research on data availability did not take into account the fifth dimension (civil society) since it has been added within the framework after suggestions given by the expert meeting held in Aguascalientes (Mexico) on 20th May 2012.

illicit markets general structures. On the contrary, there are no available indicators to assess both economic and non-economic profits and their reinvestment in legal and/or illegal activities. Moreover, nothing is collected on other criminal and non-criminal activities while there is very few information about population's perception of safety and organized crime at the advanced level.

For Colombia, indicators available are those regarding drug trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, extortion and kidnapping (both at the basic and advanced level). There are also indicators for money laundering related offences and counterfeit money. As for Mexico, there are no available indicators for assessing profits and their reinvestment in legal and/or illegal activities.

In the Dominican Republic, indicators availability, both at the basic and advanced level, concern only drug trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and kidnapping. On the other hand, indicators regarding the advanced level are not available and do not enable the assessment of illegal profits and their reinvestment.

Once again, Mexico and Colombia have a larger number of available data than the Dominican Republic. In particular, it should be possible to have a sufficiently defined vision of some criminal activities, since for some activities there is both basic and advanced information. However, data about legal activities or investments conducted by organized crime groups is totally missing. The Dominican situation is again strongly inadequate for providing valid and usable information.

State response

State response indicators represent the greatest part of information listed in the previous framework. In Mexico, more than half of the suggested indicators are available. Almost all of them regard the basic level of data collection, while only few belong to the advanced level. Considering this, it is possible, at the basic level, to gather a great amount of information on the activities performed by law enforcement agencies (people arrested), prosecutors (people prosecuted), courts (people convicted) and the prison system. At the advanced level, it should be possible only to evaluate the amount of police forces, judges and courtrooms in order to partially assess the level of resources addressed to the criminal justice system and law enforcement.

In Colombia, there are very few available indicators. Most of them belong to the basic level, giving information on the total number of people arrested, prosecuted and convicted. The only distinction is for people involved in money laundering activities or homicide. Therefore, it is possible to evaluate precisely only law enforcement and criminal justice system activities against these particular types of crime, often only partially connected with organized crime. Advanced data are available for the number of policemen, judges and prosecutors. At this level, the partial amount of resources addressed to law enforcement and criminal justice system can be assessed.

In the Dominican Republic, there are even less available indicators. At the basic level, there is information on the total number of people convicted (and those convicted for intentional homicides) and on total inmates. There are no data at all on law enforcement agencies and prosecutors' activities. As for the advanced level, information is available only on the number of judges and policemen.

In conclusion, the Mexican situation can be considered quite good, although improvements should be made, especially regarding data on people arrested for different crimes. In this country, the data collection should be mainly focused on obtaining advanced information. On the contrary, for Colombia and Dominican Republic, indicators are unequivocally lacking. In these countries, huge efforts should be made in order to obtain an adequate picture of the State response to organized crime. Practically, acquiring these data is fundamental for understanding the weakness of the system and for a better management of the available resources.

Enablers

Indicators for this last dimension are the most available in all the three selected countries. Mexico basically collects all the indicators concerning socio-demographic and economic factors and legal framework. Only the percentage of unemployed youth population is not available. Therefore, indicators belonging to the basic level can be considered as complete, allowing the assessment of those of them to have a greater responsibility at enabling an organized crime spread. Looking at the advanced level, there are few indicators for corruption (not so for grand corruption), legality (lack of governance and rule of law) and weaknesses in the political system. In this case, the assessment of the advanced indicators that concur in facilitating organized crime is much more difficult.

In Colombia, all the indicators of the basic level are available. On the other hand, there is very few information regarding the advanced level. Nevertheless, few indicators for corruption (both petty and grand) are available (e.g. number or bribery offences, number of concussion offences, number of influence peddling offences). Only 2 out of 5 indicators for legality and weaknesses in the political system (political stability/absence of violence indicator and rule of law indicator)

are available.

Political stability/absence of violence and rule of law indicators are available also for the Dominican Republic. They are the only information concerning the advanced level. Corruption indicators are not collected while socio-demographic and economic factors and information on the legal framework are partially available.

ENABLERS dimension is the one with the most complete set of available indicators in each of the analyzed countries. The only deficiency is the lack of indicators about corruption in Colombia and Dominican Republic. Nevertheless, the collected data could allow a satisfactory understanding of the socio-economic factors that could enhance or mitigate the role of organized crime within each country.

Conclusion

The list of indicators proposed in this paper aims to identify a general framework to assess and measure the presence of organized crime in a country, together with those factors that could increase or weaken its impact on society. Therefore, this list should be considered as a starting point to be used for addressing a future more specific analysis on this topic, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Nevertheless, this paper aims to be an ideal framework rather than a list that could be completely filled out nowadays. At the same time, it helps to direct data collection, explaining which indicators can satisfy basic information on organized crime and which could be considered more advanced for a much more accurate analysis.

The pilot study suggests that data actually available are generally scarce in all the selected countries, especially in the Dominican Republic. Mexico, above all, and Colombia have a discreet amount of indicators, but they are not always sufficient for conducting neither qualitative nor quantitative analysis of the organized crime presence in the country. There is a lack of data, although to a different extent, regarding almost all the four dimensions (criminal groups, activities, state response and enablers). This scenario highlights the difficulties and weaknesses in data collection processes and suggests future improvements.

4.2.   *How to use this information for measuring organized crime*

Collecting all these data, or just a part of them, is just the first stage for obtaining an estimate of organized crime presence in a country. Indeed, this large amount of information needs to be managed and refined in order to make it more comprehensible and useful. This process is fundamental for enabling the planning of effective practices and targeted policies. The complexity of this procedure arises two main questions that have to be answered:

• How is it possible to assess whether the values of the collected data show a high or a low level?

• How to condensate all this information in few values for representing the different characteristics of organized crime in each county?

The first issue is a quite delicate problem to work out. Indeed, before expressing whether a value is actually high or low a benchmark should be defined. However, this can be quite tricky due to the lack of a homogenous coverage of at least a basic set of indicators for all Latin American and the Caribbean countries, as well as to the difficulties connected with the data comparability. A possible solution could be to compare the value of each indicator with the mean of the available values for the same indicator in all the other Latin American and the Caribbean countries. In practice, each indicator should be standardized by dividing its value by the mean value recorded all over the region: in this way, if the final result is above 1, the indicator reveals a low value of the related phenomenon and vice versa.

In order to solve the second problem, a methodology for reducing complexity summarizing a lot of indicators in a fistful of parameters should be used. A straightforward and easy way to obtain this result is creating a single index for each sub-dimension, which could condensate all the information regarding each one of these particular aspects of the phenomenon under study.

In practice, the average value of all the standardized indicators included in each sub-dimension will be considered as the index expressing this particular aspect. Clearly, a positive or negative sign will be assigned to each indicator, according to the supposed relationship with, or effects on, organized crime (i.e. in the second sub-dimension, the number of inter-groups homicides will be considered as negatively related to the level of collaboration among organized crime groups, while the number of court cases involving different organized crime groups cooperating in the same illegal activity will be considered as a positive indicator).

This process results in 17 indexes that can be used for assessing the level of organized crime in all Latin American and then Caribbean countries, and expressing differences among many possible aspects of this phenomenon. This methodology is aimed at producing more intelligible results without losing complexity.

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Authors

Ernesto Ugo Savona

Professor of Criminology at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan since 2003. He is also Director of TRANSCRIME, Joint Research Centre of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore and the Università degli Studi di Trento. His research activity has centered on the following topics: analysis of crime statistics, law and social change, effectiveness of legislation, organized/economic crime and criminal justice systems, crime and economics and corruption. He has recently concentrated his research on developing a methodology to measure the impact of legislation.

Marco Dugato

Researcher at TRANSCRIME since October 2009. His main research fields are: crime statistics, urban security, spatial risk assessment, public policies evaluation, well-being survey, victimization surveys, organized crime, use of GIS and other applications for crime mapping and spatial analysis. He is Adjunct Professor of Crime Statistics at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan.

Lorella Garofalo

Researcher at TRANSCRIME since October 2011. Her main research fields are: organized crime, social network analysis and crime statistics. She is also a candidate of the International Ph.D. in Criminology at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan.