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Safe and Inclusive Cities Exchange 2017

EXCLUSION, VIOLENCE AND COMMUNITY RESPONSES IN CENTRAL AMERICAN CITIES: Guiding Policy by Explaining Variation.

FLACSO-Costa Rica

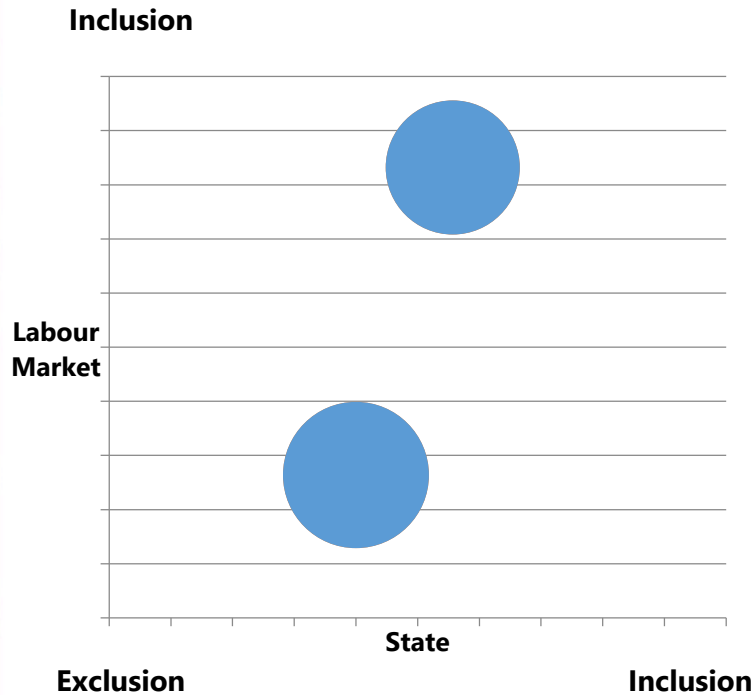
FLACSO-El Salvador

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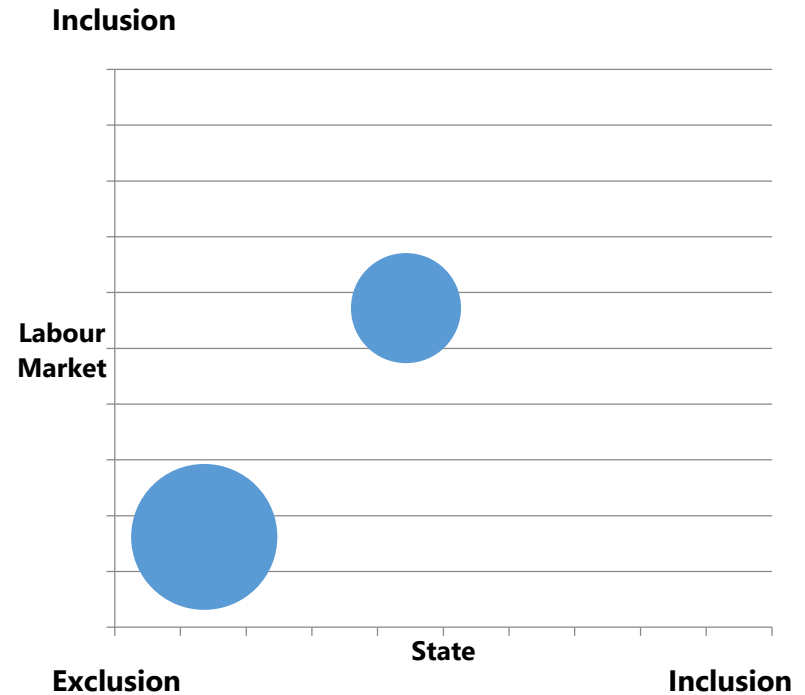
- Research question: Why communities in similar contexts of social exclusion have different expressions of violence?
- Hypothesis: the predominant dynamic of social exclusion, via the labor market or via the absence of the State, has a crucial impact on the kind of violence that becomes dominant in the community
- Methodology:
 - Universe: three urban communities in Costa Rica and six urban communities in El Salvador
 - Quantitative phase: a household survey to determine levels of social exclusion and manifestation of different kind of violence.
 - Qualitative phase: interviews to key informants, focus groups and workshops with children.

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Social exclusion/inclusion in communities of Costa Rica



Social Exclusion/inclusion in communities of El Salvador



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Dynamics of different types of violence by communities

Types of violence	Communities in Costa Rica	Communities in El Salvador
Contextual	Development of drug markets at the local level	Dispute and control of the territory by young gangs (maras)
Profit oriented	Robbery linked to drug use	Young gangs exercise extortions but they also offer protection against outside violence
Social	Violence inside the household and among neighbors	Resolution of extreme conflicts inside the household and among neighbors by the young gangs
These forms of violence tend to be silent and invisible		

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Issues for policy

- One cannot assume the existence of the community as an actor capable of preventing violence because of social and territorial differences among residents and the impact of violence in the territory.
- It is necessary to make visible the social forms of violence, intra-family and between neighbors, and give them the real importance they have.
- Youth gangs have an ambiguous role: they exert violence in the territory they control but regulate conflicts and offer protection against external violence to the community.

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