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# Gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago: A Rapid Evidence Assessment

Research commissioned by Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

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Conclusions in this report are those of the research author/s, not HMICFRS.

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# Executive summary

## Background

Trinidad and Tobago is a two-island nation in the Eastern Caribbean about seven miles off the northeast coast of Venezuela. As of June 2018, its estimated population was approximately 1.36 million people. Despite its small size and idyllic location, Trinidad and Tobago is also among the world's most violent nations, with increasingly high levels of gang-related homicide. Political corruption is also reported to be endemic throughout the public sector, including within the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS).

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) commissioned this Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) to examine the current state of research evidence on these issues. The aims of the review are twofold; (1) to provide an informed understanding of the nature and prevalence of gang homicide and police corruption in the country, and (2) to identify effective practices that the police can adopt to address these issues. The results from this review will increase understanding of how gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago could be tackled most effectively. The findings will contribute to the design of HMICFRS police inspection of Trinidad and Tobago.

## Main findings

### Nature and prevalence of gang-homicide

- The year 2000 marked a turning point in the prevalence of homicide within Trinidad and Tobago, with a sudden and sharp increase in the numbers and rate of homicide recorded between 2000 and 2018 following a period of relative stability since 1988.
- Research on homicide in Trinidad and Tobago confirms that the problem is fuelled largely by criminal street gangs. However, explanations for the marked upturn in homicide cannot be attributed to one specific event or reason, but rather a number of contributory factors.
- One dynamic that coincides with the abrupt increase was the splintering apart of street gangs that had previously been under the control of the Jamaat al Muslimeen, a radical Islamic group led by a former police officer and which occurred at around the same time as the violence in Trinidad and Tobago began to escalate. A related issue that fuelled the violence has been linked to competition for lucrative government contracts, which function as a public welfare program and are issued to community leaders to carry out public works projects. Unfortunately, these programs have historically been

infiltrated by criminal gangs, with intra-gang battles over contracts often resulting in fatalities.

- There is little evidence to suggest that the spike in violence in Trinidad and Tobago is primarily drug-related; rather the violence appears to be linked with a street culture, which normalises violence to defend social status and resolve perceived acts of 'disrespect'.
- An overwhelmed and under-resourced criminal justice system has resulted in failures to prevent and deter violence and hold offenders accountable. In the absence of a reliable and effective police presence in many high needs communities, gang leaders are legitimised and regarded as "community leaders" who exert their own form of informal social control over residents and activities in the area.

### **Effective strategies for tackling gang-homicide**

- Focused deterrence interventions, which increase police enforcement for those who continue to offend, while rewarding compliance and facilitating behaviour change through the provision of community and social support, have been associated with a significant reduction in gang homicide in the United States. Research evidencing their effectiveness elsewhere is scant and it is unclear which of the intervention components are most effective. Despite this, program effectiveness has been shown to improve in areas with higher 'collective efficacy'<sup>1</sup>, and where emphasis is placed upon the importance of fostering public trust in the police and interacting with offenders in a 'procedurally just' manner.

### **Nature and prevalence of corruption and consideration of measures to address the issue**

- According to Transparency International<sup>2</sup>, Trinidad and Tobago scored 41 on the Corruption Perception Index in 2018. Trinidad and Tobago was below the global average of 43 and, according to the scores on the CPI index, corruption deteriorated in Trinidad and Tobago between 2012 and 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> "Collective efficacy describes what residents are willing to do to improve their neighbourhoods ... at the core of collective efficacy is the willingness to intervene and the capacity for informal social control. In neighbourhoods with collective efficacy, neighbours agree on what is acceptable behaviour and reinforce it in each other." (Higgins and Hunt, 2016:19).

<sup>2</sup> Transparency International is a global, non-profit, non-governmental organisation responsible for producing the CPI. Based on expert opinion from around the world, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption worldwide. The CPI uses a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). (Corruption Perceptions Index, February, 2018)

- A systematic measure of police corruption does not exist in the country. However, a small body of research indicates incidences of corruption within the Trinidad and Tobago police, with links to excessive use of force, the illicit drug trade and gang involvement. Public opinion surveys reveal a widespread perception of police corruption. Much of this can also be attributed to the social and historical context of policing in Trinidad and Tobago, which has contributed to low levels of trust and confidence in the TTPS.
- A range of measures exist within Trinidad and Tobago to prevent and reduce corruption within the government and public sector bodies, however, implementation and adherence to these measures appears to be lacking.
- A number of determinants have been shown to influence levels of police corruption and are linked to the wider national and organisational culture in which a police force is embedded, as well as situational and individual factors such as police attitudes, beliefs and experience of alienation.
- Any strategy developed to address corruption within the TTPS will need to bear all of these factors into account and prioritise the need to address the apparent endemic political corruption within the nation in which the TTPS is embedded.

### **Effective police practice in relation to gang-related police homicide investigation and clearance**

- In many parts of the world, gang-related homicides are amongst the most difficult to clear and Trinidad and Tobago appears to be no exception. Gang-related homicides share a number of the 'environmental' characteristics most associated with challenging investigations, namely: the use of firearms; outdoor homicide scenes; offenders and/or victims with 'deviant' lifestyles; distant social relationship between victim and offender; and, crucially, the lack of (willing) witnesses to assist police and provide vital information (often due to distrust or lack of faith in police, a fear of speaking to police due to the likelihood of retaliation, and/or a street culture that values 'not snitching').
- Nevertheless, police can successfully investigate even the most challenging homicides and there are a number of 'organisational factors' that research has found to be associated with the probability of closing cases. Notably, these include: sufficient numbers of appropriately trained detectives being assigned to each case; avoiding overloading detectives with too many cases; swift and effective initial responses by first attending officers and detectives; robust information and evidence chains; standardised investigative procedure and practice; effective information management systems and managerial oversight; appropriate infrastructures and interagency working (especially between police, forensic science services and prosecutors); information sharing and collaboration across relevant police agencies and relevant

external agencies; effective briefings and debriefings; co-operation and collaboration with the community and the building of community cachet including the effective use of victim-witness advocates, crime tips initiatives and witness protection schemes; peer review of open cases and, finally, a police culture dedicated to innovation and characterised by dedicated/positive/optimistic approach to all cases.

- The bulk of research evidence on successful homicide case closure comes from the USA and UK and any attempts to transpose such practices to Trinidad and Tobago would need to be mindful of the complexities of policy-transfer from developed to developing nations and sensitive to local environmental contingencies. Of note, Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) evaluations highlight the importance of careful analysis of the problems to be tackled prior to implementing reform strategies, ideally with the assistance of skilled researchers to offer analytic support and undertake independent evaluations of interventions. The implementation of policy from one jurisdiction to another can fail if: inaccurate assumptions are made about the nature of the problem; there is resistance to change and a lack of fidelity to the original plans; those implementing change are not properly trained; there is a lack of supervision, management and accountability; and, finally, if there is insufficient appreciation of the inter-unit and inter-agency dynamics that exert a profound influence on the success of homicide investigations.

## **Implications**

Several implications arise from this rapid evidence review. The findings are of relevance for understanding how gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago might be tackled most effectively, and will be used to inform the design of an HMICFRS police inspection of Trinidad and Tobago.

Taking into account the unique context of Trinidad and Tobago is paramount when (a) considering whether and how to introduce any of the aforementioned measures to tackle gang-related homicide and police corruption and (b) how to go about undertaking an inspection of police in the first instance.

## **Tackling gang-related homicide**

- First and foremost, it is important to gather accurate insights into the nature of the gang-related homicide problem in Trinidad and Tobago adopting a Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) approach and the Scanning Analysis Response Assessment (SARA) model of analysis. Secondly, recognition that Police alone cannot prevent or successfully investigate gang-related homicide ought to underpin any gang-related investigation and prevention strategies.

- One way of thinking about optimising the national response to gangs and violence is thinking about prevention, intervention, and suppression. Interventions, which address the harmful social and community influences underpinning gang violence, have been shown to be the most effective. With this in mind, are there evidence-based initiatives in place to keep young people out of gangs in the first place and to teach them how to resolve conflict without the use of violence (prevention)? Are there evidence-based initiatives in place to entice gang members to leave their gangs or to encourage gang members not to use violence (intervention)? One such initiative – Project REASON – was recently found to be highly effective in Trinidad and Tobago but is no longer operating. We therefore suggest consideration is given to implementing a multi-agency intervention based on the Project Reason model. Finally, are the police using the most well-evaluated, evidence-based strategies to capture those who are engaging in repeated acts of violence and hold them accountable for their offences (suppression)? An assessment of whether the TTPS have the necessary personnel and technological capability to achieve this could therefore be undertaken.
- Interagency collaboration is vital in solving homicide, especially between police, forensic science services, prosecutors and the courts. To these ends, creating mechanisms for building effective communication between homicide detectives and external agencies is important. For instance, since the homicide problem in Trinidad and Tobago is largely a gun violence problem, finding ways to extract greater investigative value from every crime gun is essential. The police and the crime laboratory must have clear, effective interagency agreements in place about the timely collection, processing, reporting, and storage of all ballistic evidence (firearms, spent shell casings, and fired bullets) to ensure that investigators can make use of this evidence in clearing homicide cases.
- Many units within the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service have in-depth knowledge about the areas where homicide is most prevalent and the people who live there. Poor lines of communication make it difficult for homicide detectives to capture valuable information from their peers that can benefit their investigations.
- Provision of social support and adequate opportunities offering alternatives to gang crime also need to be in place. Police need to work closely with community-based agencies to ensure adequate resources are available.



- Previous interventions have been discontinued due to a lack of government support and funding. A comprehensive communication strategy could foster both national support for the intervention, (crucial for ensuring sustainability) and local support, a vital component for effective implementation of the initiative within communities.
- The nature of police/community relationships within Trinidad and Tobago is of particular importance, and improving these relationships would maximise the potential for any such intervention to succeed.

### **Tackling police corruption**

A number of national, organisational and individual factors have been shown to influence the prevalence of police corruption, all of which should be taken into account when developing any approach to reform the TTPS. It is however, important to recognise that the TTPS is embedded within, and influenced by, the wider system of governance in the country and addressing the alleged political corruption associated with the Trinidad and Tobago government is beyond the scope of this review. However, any reform is unlikely to reach its full potential without the support, recognition and investment from central Government, as has been shown with the discontinuation of funding for community policing initiatives previously.

Strategies should be considered that promote an organisational culture of integrity and by so doing, reinforce staff resilience to corruption. This would require:

- Leadership and senior officers within the force to be supportive of the reform process and 'set the example' to all officers of lower ranks.
- Recruitment processes that adequately assess officers for views and characteristics, which are supportive of an ethical and collaborative approach to policing.
- Investment in ongoing staff training and review for officers of all ranks, with a focus upon ethics, integrity and community policing methods.
- Links with job dissatisfaction, 'alienation' and corruption to be borne in mind, and police equipped with adequate resource and support to undertake their role. The stress and demand of the role would need to be recognised by management with responsibility for ensuring the provision of practical and emotional support to officers throughout the TTPS.
- A clear reporting process to be developed for officers of all ranks throughout the TTPS to report their concerns, with reassurance that all reports of corruption and/or misconduct will be dealt with fairly and transparently and crucially, that appropriate action will be taken.

- Emphasis on the importance of an independent police complaints process. Similarly, attention should be given to ensuring the existing regulatory framework and anti-corruption legislation is fully implemented and adhered to.

### **Considerations for police inspections**

Prior failed attempts to improve police investigative practice in Trinidad and Tobago by transferring strategies from Western developed nations provide important clues to inform more successful future attempts. We recommend that the following factors be considered:

- **Sensitivity to local conditions and contingencies.**  
Attempts to develop sophisticated or wholesale changes to how police in particular jurisdictions operate can falter where there is insufficient appreciation of local conditions and contingencies.
- **Awareness of the causes of prior policy transfer failure.**  
There is a need to be aware of, and attempt to mitigate against, the causes of prior policy transfer failure. It is worth reiterating here that the implementation of policy from one jurisdiction to another can fail if:
  - Inaccurate assumptions are made about the nature of the problem.
  - There is resistance to change.
  - There is lack of fidelity to the original plan.
  - Those implementing change are not properly trained.
  - There is a lack of supervision, management and accountability.
  - There is insufficient appreciation of networks of units and agencies involved in homicide investigation and their interdependence.
- **Interviewing a diverse range of individuals involved in homicide investigation.**  
The network of individuals involved in homicide investigation have different experiences and perspectives about 'what works' in homicide investigation as well as the particular challenges of investigating these offences. It will be useful to speak, both formally and informally, to detectives of different ranks and with varying levels of experience as investigators, as well as managers, patrol/community officers and those at other agencies who work with police to investigate homicide.

- **Studying unsolved homicides.**

Based on previous research in homicide investigation in both developed and developing nations, we recommend selecting and studying a set of unsolved homicides from the TTPS and speaking to the detectives and others involved in each case, including crime laboratory personnel, to try to determine what prevented the case from being investigated effectively and solved. That knowledge can subsequently be synthesised to identify patterns of problems or 'sticking points' within investigations.

- **Observing 'live' homicide investigations.**

Close observations of 'live' homicide investigations – including attendance at crime scenes – is an important methodology to adopt in order to unearth working practices on the ground. Steps could be put in place to ensure that inspection team members can be taken quickly to homicide scenes to observe initial crime scene actions and activities, and subsequently to observe all phases and aspects of a core number of investigations.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Purpose of the research

Trinidad and Tobago is among the world's most violent nations, with an average annual murder rate (from 2009–2018) of 32.9 per 100,000 inhabitants. More than three-quarters of these murders were firearm-related, with street gangs fuelling much of this violence. Given the contributions of firearms and gangs to homicides in Trinidad and Tobago, focusing on these issues is important for reducing serious violence in the country. Moreover, these issues take place in an environment characterized by endemic levels of political corruption and widespread public perceptions of corruption among legal authorities (Sookoo, 2017). Addressing both issues – the violence and the public corruption – will help to enhance the quality of life for residents of Trinidad and Tobago.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of the Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has commissioned this Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) in relation to gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago to a) provide an informed understanding of the nature and prevalence of these crimes in the country and b) to identify effective practice in relation to how police can address the issues. The results from this review will increase the understanding of how gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago can be tackled most effectively, and will contribute to the design of an HMICFRS police inspection (particularly in relation to homicide investigation and clearance).

## Policy and empirical context

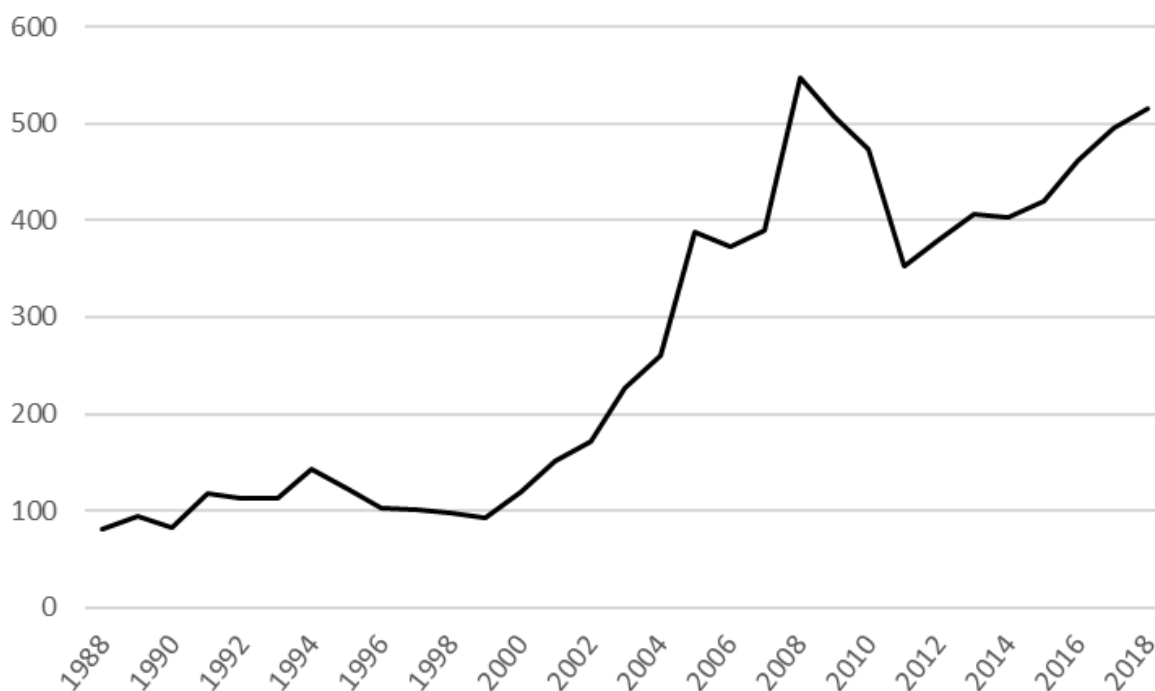
Trinidad and Tobago is a two-island nation in the Eastern Caribbean about seven miles off the northeast coast of Venezuela. As of June 2018, its population was estimated at approximately 1.36 million people.<sup>3</sup> Trinidad is the larger island and is home to the majority of the population as well as most of the nation's commercial and industrial enterprise. Tobago is a smaller island with just over 60,000 residents and its primary industries are tourism and fishing. Trinidad and Tobago is one of the wealthiest nations in the Caribbean, due largely to its production of petroleum and natural gas (Mulchansingh, 1971; Sergeant, Racha, and John, 2003). Trinidad and Tobago is also known for its contribution to music and the arts. The steel pan (a musical instrument) and the limbo (a dance) were both invented there, as well as various musical forms including calypso, chutney, and soca (Brown, 1990). Unfortunately, the nation is also now well known as one of the most violent nations in the world due to its high homicide rate.

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<sup>3</sup> [Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago](#).

Figure 1 shows the annual number of homicides in the nation during the 31-year period from 1988 to 2018. It illustrates that the violence remained relatively stable from 1988 to 1999. During that period, the annual number of homicides ranged from 81 to 143, with a mean of 105 and a median of 101.5. Beginning in the year 2000, homicides climbed for six consecutive years, reaching an annual total of 388 in 2005. After a brief dip in 2006, homicides continued climbing in 2007 and reached an all-time high of 547 in 2008. Since then, homicides have fallen and then risen, with the lowest number of homicides during this period (352) recorded in 2011.

**Figure 1: Annual homicide totals in Trinidad and Tobago, 1988–2018**

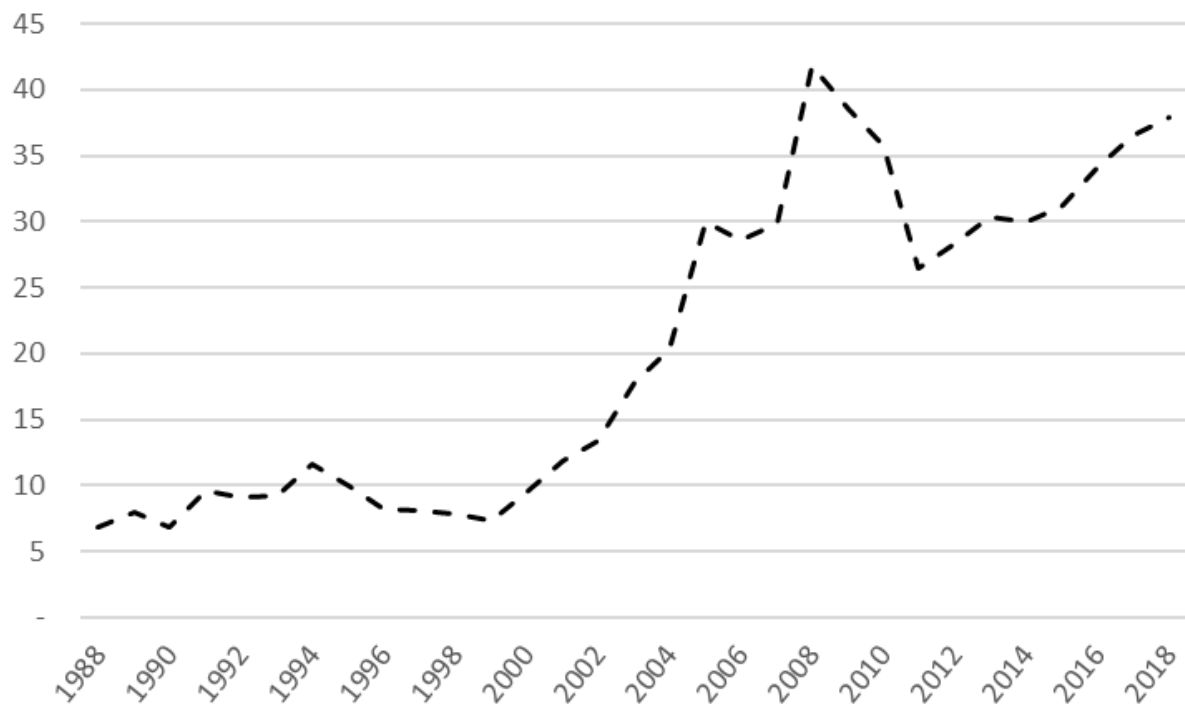


**Source: Data provided by Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) Crime and Analysis Branch between 2004 and 2019.**

Figure 2 shows the annual rate of homicides per 100,000 from 1988-2018. The chart shows that homicide rates in Trinidad and Tobago remained relatively stable from 1988-1999. During that period, the annual homicide rate ranged from 6.8 to 11.6, with a mean of 8.6 and a median of 8.2. While these homicide rates are high relative to Western Europe, they are on par with homicide rates in the United States during that period<sup>4</sup> and are low relative to many other nations in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

<sup>4</sup> From 1988 to 1999, the annual homicide rate in the United States ranged from a low of 5.7 to a high of 9.8, with a mean of 8.2 and a median of 8.6. These figures are taken from the Uniform Crime Reports for each of these years. See for example, [Crime in the U.S. 2017](#).

**Figure 2: Annual homicide rates per 100,000 in Trinidad and Tobago, 1988–2018**



**Source: Data provided by Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) Crime and Analysis Branch between 2004 and 2019.**

What factors account for the dramatic increase in homicides in Trinidad and Tobago over the past two decades? Research has not yet answered this question definitively. Numerous theories exist, many of which have little evidence to support them. One of the most likely explanations involves the role of street gangs and their involvement in violence. Another likely explanation involves the capacity of the criminal justice system to investigate and prosecute cases specifically, and to prevent and deter violent crime more generally. In this report, we discuss both of these explanations.

Readers will observe that much of the report focuses on what the police can do to reduce violence and address public corruption. Moreover, the report also focuses on reactive measures for addressing these issues. These were the foci requested by HMICFRS in commissioning this Rapid Evidence Assessment. The fact that the report does not focus on other potential measures for addressing these issues – such as public health interventions for preventing gang violence or legal reforms for reducing public corruption – should not be misconstrued as a lack of support for alternative measures.

## Aims and objectives

The principal aim of this Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) is to achieve a clearer picture of the nature of gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago and increase our understanding of how gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago could be tackled by Trinidad and Tobago Police.<sup>5</sup> Findings from this review will also be used to inform the development of an HMICFRS police inspection.

Specific research questions addressed by the review are:

- What is known about the nature and extent of gang homicide in Trinidad and Tobago?
- What police-led strategies for tackling gang homicide may be successful in the Trinidad and Tobago context?
- What is known about the nature and extent of police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago and how can this issue be addressed?
- What can be learned from the available evidence to inform police practice in relation to gang-related homicide investigation and clearance?

## Methodology

### Review of published works

To achieve the above aims within the available timeframe, we elected to conduct a Rapid Evidence Assessment of the literature. An REA is a transparent and systematic review of the evidence base, carried out in a shorter time-period using fewer bibliographic databases than would be accessed in a systematic review (Petrosino et al, 2015). While there is potential for REAs to result in more biased conclusions than full systematic or meta-reviews, we endeavoured to offset this issue by eliciting the guidance of an 'expert' in the field of homicide research in Trinidad and Tobago to both quality assure the review and provide access to additional sources of unpublished or 'grey' literature.

The approach employed to conduct the assessment was informed by the principles of Rapid Evidence Assessment methodology as set out in the CEBMa Guideline for Rapid Evidence Assessments in Management and Organisations (Barends et al., 2017) and the Government Social Research Service (GSR) Rapid Evidence Assessment toolkit.

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<sup>5</sup> TTPS would need to work with partner agencies to effectively tackle serious violence and our review necessarily considers research that adopts a multi-agency approach to tackling gang-related violence and homicide.

## Search strategies

The national and international peer-reviewed research literature was searched using two key Criminological and Social Science databases; Criminal Justice Abstracts and Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)<sup>6</sup> to ensure full coverage of both the Criminological and broader Social Science literature. Due to the timeframe within which the review had to be conducted<sup>7</sup>, it was not possible to complete a full search on a third database. In order to minimise the risk of missing key studies and to reduce the likelihood of publication bias, researchers also completed a 'cross-check' on the Web of Science database.<sup>8</sup>

Multiple searches were conducted across the two selected databases using combinations of different terms agreed a priori by the research team. The generic filters of peer-reviewed, academic journals in the English Language were applied across all searches. Date limiters were applied when searching for effective strategies in preventing and tackling gang homicide due to the prolific amount of published research in relation to this issue. Conversely, date restrictors were removed when searching for evidence relating to the nature and prevalence of gang-homicide and corruption in Trinidad and Tobago due to the comparatively few number of studies in relation to these issues conducted in that specific location. A total of 19 search queries were conducted and the titles and abstracts of over 1,500 studies screened. All results were stored, managed and reviewed using Endnote bibliographic software. For a full description of all searches undertaken and inclusion criteria applied, see the search protocol presented in Appendix 1.

In order to ensure important sources were not missed, and in view of the very specific remit of the review, a number of further 'hand' searches were conducted using the 'snowball' technique. This approach involves locating relevant references from the bibliographies of articles selected through the online database search. This has been shown to be a particularly useful method of locating important sources of information that may otherwise be missed. As Greenhalgh and Peacock (2005:1065) note, "systematic reviews of complex evidence cannot rely solely on predefined, protocol driven search strategies, no matter how many databases are

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<sup>6</sup> Criminal Justice Abstracts contains over 505,000 bibliographic records covering essential areas related to criminal justice and criminology in addition to over 320 full-text magazines and journals. The database provides coverage of 600 journals from around the world. ASSIA spans the literature of health, social services, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, race relations and education; the database abstracts and indexes over 500 journals.

<sup>7</sup> The review was conducted in four weeks, during March and April 2019.

<sup>8</sup> All studies relating to the subject area of Trinidad and Tobago were searched, yielding 1,389 results or 'hits'. These 1,389 articles were subsequently screened using the terms, 'gang\*', 'homicide' and 'corruption', eliciting 13 additional references. Once duplicates were screened out, this yielded one additional reference relating to corruption and one further study examining gang homicide.



searched. ... Citation tracking is an important search method for identifying systematic reviews published in obscure journals.”

### **Unpublished studies**

A brief search of the ‘grey’ literature was undertaken using the University of South Wales generic ‘Find It’ database. This resource provides access to articles for conference proceedings, technical papers, journals and newspaper articles. While this source facilitates a broad ‘skim’ of the literature, it is important to caveat that it was not feasible to undertake a full and comprehensive search within the short timeframe available. The research team also benefitted from the guidance of a key expert in the field of homicide and police practice within Trinidad and Tobago who provided invaluable advice and access to a number of important unpublished sources, all of which have subsequently been included within the REA.

### **Study selection and data extraction**

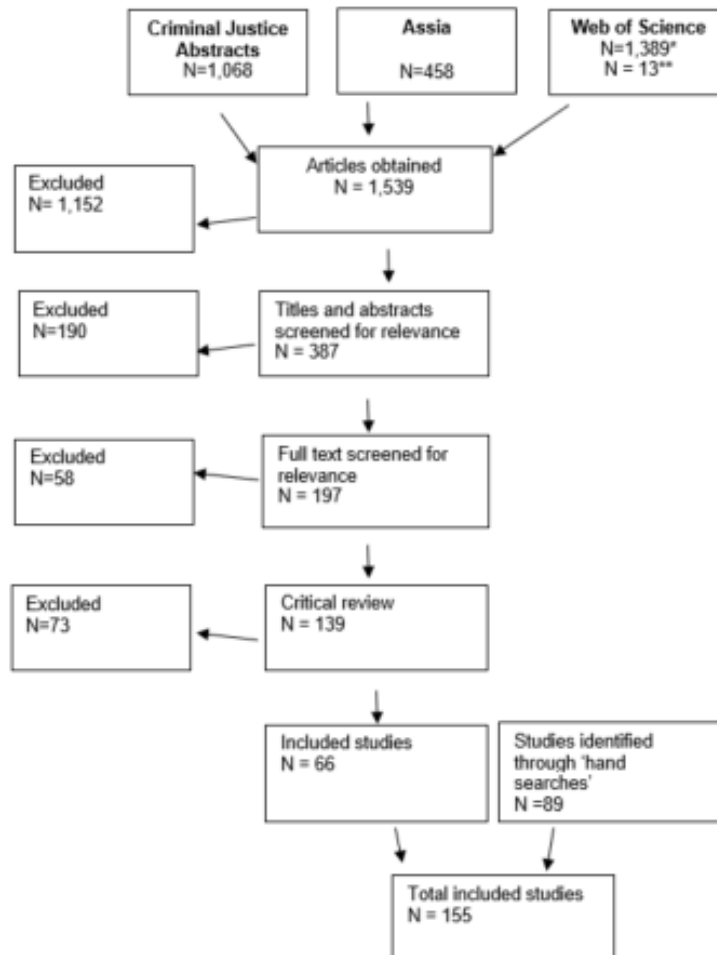
To maximise the potential of identifying all relevant studies and in view of the specific scope of the review, separate inclusion criteria were applied to searches addressing each of the key research questions (see Appendix 1 for full details of inclusion criteria). All references were screened using a three-stage process. Stage one involved a subject-based appraisal of articles conducted by one reviewer, based on their title and abstract. Studies covering issues deemed irrelevant to answering each of the research questions were deselected at this first phase of review.

Stage two of the screening process involved two reviewers collaboratively applying a ‘best evidence’ approach to study selection. To be selected at this stage, studies had to cover one of the five key themes or topic areas represented in the research questions namely; gang homicide in Trinidad or Tobago, police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago, effective police-led strategies for tackling gang homicide, effective practice for addressing police corruption and strategies for improving police homicide investigation and clearance. Reviewers were deliberately non-prescriptive when considering eligible study design, particularly in relation to articles specifically focusing upon the issues in Trinidad and Tobago and a range of methodologies were represented in the selected articles. Due to the proliferation of research examining effective strategies for managing gang-related violence however, emphasis was placed on locating and summarising evidence from relevant and high quality systematic reviews. Systematic reviews and/or meta-analyses were prioritised in this way, in order to garner a comprehensive review of the primary level evidence with minimal resource and to reduce the risk of potential bias associated with a rapid review of the primary evidence.

Stage three of the screening process involved locating the full text of each article. Each document was read by two reviewers independently and assessed for methodological quality and relevance with regards to answering one of the five key

research questions. Figure 3 below details the selection process at each stage of the review.

**Figure 3: Review and selection process of online databases<sup>9</sup>**



\*Web of Science included for 'cross-checking' purposes. N = 1,389 refers to all articles with Trinidad and Tobago in the Title or Abstract. N=13 refers to articles with Trinidad and Tobago AND gang OR homicide OR corruption

### **Insights and observational data from 'Expert' field-trip**

Professor Ed Maguire, an expert in the field of homicide research in Trinidad and Tobago, has visited the country on numerous occasions over the past fifteen years as part of his research. Where relevant, the research team have drawn upon the Professor's knowledge and experience of the country to provide 'on the ground' insights of gang-related homicide to complement the research literature presented throughout this report.

<sup>9</sup> Figure 3 documents the recorded online bibliographic database search. Figures presented exclude additional sources located through hand searching and review of the 'grey literature'.

## **Structure of the report**

The remainder of this report is divided into two chapters. Chapter 2 provides a review and summary of the available evidence in relation to the four key research questions of this Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA). The first part of the chapter focuses upon evidence regarding the nature and prevalence of gang-related homicide, followed by a review of effective strategies for preventing and reducing the issue. Available literature in relation to the issue of police corruption in the country is then reviewed and the chapter concludes with a consideration of the literature to inform police practice in relation to homicide investigation and clearance. Chapter 3 discusses the implications of findings arising from the reviewed evidence for policy-makers and practitioners.

## Chapter 2: Review of evidence

This chapter provides a synthesis of the empirical evidence in relation to the four key research questions that this review seeks to address. Firstly, we consider the nature and extent of gang homicide in Trinidad and Tobago and discuss effective strategies for tackling the problem. This is followed by a summary of the available evidence regarding the prevalence of police corruption in the country, along with a consideration of measures designed to address it. The final part of the chapter provides a review of research to inform police practice in relation to homicide investigation and clearance.

### What is known about the nature and extent of gang homicide in Trinidad and Tobago?

Street gangs have a long history in Trinidad and Tobago, having evolved from the warring “steel bands”<sup>10</sup> of yesteryear (Aho, 1987; Dudley, 2007). These neighbourhood-based steel bands often engaged in violence with one another. The novelist Earl Lovelace (1979) captured the essence of these rivalries using words that sound very much like a modern day description of street gangs:

“... those were the days when every district around Port of Spain was its own island, and the steelband within its boundaries was its army, providing warriors to uphold its sovereignty. Those were the war days, when every street corner was a garrison; and to be safe, if you came from Belmont, you didn’t let night catch you in St. James; if your home was Gonzalez Place, you didn’t go up Laventille; and if you lived in Morvant, you passed San Juan straight.”

The violence that occurred between rival steel bands often involved fists and sticks but rarely resulted in fatalities. This contrasts sharply with gang violence in Trinidad today, in which guns play a key role and violence is often fatal (Katz, Maguire, and Choate, 2011; Wells, Katz, and Kim, 2010).

Although the historical roots of violence in Trinidad and Tobago are evident, the specific sources of the abrupt increase in violence that occurred starting around the year 2000 are not so obvious. One dynamic that coincides with that abrupt increase was the splintering apart of street gangs that had previously been under the control of the Jamaat al Muslimeen, a radical Islamic group based in Trinidad and Tobago

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<sup>10</sup> A steel band is a group of musicians playing the steel pan, an instrument invented in Trinidad and Tobago in the 1930s. These neighbourhood-based steel bands evolved from earlier bands that played drums and other types of percussion instruments, particularly during the nation’s Carnival celebrations (Brown, 1990).

(Mahabir, 2012).<sup>11</sup> In 1990, the group, led by a former Trinidad and Tobago police officer, launched an unsuccessful coup d'état, killing 24 people (Searle, 1991). In the decade following the coup attempt, the Jamaat al Muslimeen asserted control over the neighbourhood-based street gangs throughout the country. However, in the late 1990s, certain street gangs began to rebel against the authority of the Muslimeen, with one prominent gang leader in Laventille threatening to kill any Muslim that entered his territory. As the influence of the Jamaat al Muslimeen over the neighbourhood-based street gangs began to diminish, conflict arose between these gangs (Adams, et al., 2018; Felix-John and Williams, 2013; Griffin and Persad, 2013). The use of guns meant that these conflicts were more fatal than the skirmishes between steel bands that occurred in previous generations (Maguire, et al., 2008). The splintering apart of the gangs occurred at around the same time as the violence in Trinidad and Tobago began to escalate. Therefore, it represents a plausible explanation for the changes in violence.

A related dynamic that fuelled the violence had to do with competition for lucrative government contracts. Trinidad and Tobago has a long history of issuing contracts to community leaders to carry out public works projects. These contracts function as a public welfare program that provide short term employment to people who are otherwise unemployed. Unfortunately, these programs, particularly the Unemployment Relief Programme (URP), have historically been infiltrated by criminal gangs (Maguire, et al., 2008, 2010; Parkinson, 2013; Singh, 2019). Battles over URP contracts have often turned deadly (Maguire, et al., 2008; Katz, Maguire, and Choate, 2011). The URP is just one example of a government program being infiltrated by criminal gangs. Another example is the Life Sport program, which was established in 2012 to provide educational and recreational activities for at-risk youth. The program was eliminated in 2014 after it was discovered that criminals had infiltrated the program and engaged in “fraud, theft, questionable payments, and other criminal activities” (Alexander, 2014). Given the long history of criminal groups taking over government programs, some criminologists have referred to the nation’s government as a “principal source of funding for gangs in Trinidad and Tobago” (Adams, Morris, and Maguire, 2018).

Research on homicide in Trinidad and Tobago confirms that the problem is largely fuelled by criminal street gangs. One study concluded that the spatial concentrations of violence it examined were “due largely to gang violence carried out by and against young men, primarily of African descent, using guns” (Maguire, et al., 2008: 69). The same study concluded that it was not the mere presence of street gangs that fuelled the violence, since there were dramatic differences in the extent of violence perpetrated by and against the nation’s different gangs. Instead, the major issue

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<sup>11</sup> One local official describes the Jamaat al Muslimeen as “a criminal gang with a veneer of Islamic ideology” (McCoy and Knight, 2017: 277). Another author refers to the group as “Allah’s outlaws” (Mahabir, 2012).

appears to be “the degree to which these gangs are immersed in conflict with other gangs and are willing to use violence to resolve disputes or defend their boundaries” (Maguire, et al., 2008: 84).

While many people speculate that the spike in violence in Trinidad and Tobago is primarily drug-related, there is little evidence to support this assertion. Much of it is based on more mundane issues such as disrespect, territoriality, and mistrust (Maguire et al., 2010). Researchers asked a gang leader why so many young people in Trinidad are shot and killed. He responded by saying “it’s a ranking thing”. He explained that for the young men in his community, respect is a serious issue and disrespecting the wrong person can get you shot. A second gang leader told the researchers that a deadly gang war had started over “small talk”, a term he used to describe petty disputes. A third gang leader told the researchers that a gang war started because he heard a member of another gang saying disrespectful things about him (Katz, Maguire, & Choate, 2011). These dynamics are consistent with the notion that a dangerous street culture has arisen in Trinidad and Tobago; one in which young men are highly sensitive to their own social status and resolve perceived acts of disrespect using violence.

The criminal justice system in Trinidad and Tobago found it very difficult to respond in a timely manner to the rapidly escalating levels of gang violence. Homicide clearance rates quickly plummeted as the escalating violence overwhelmed the investigative capacity of the TTPS (Maguire, et al., 2010). Other justice agencies also became overwhelmed. For instance, by 2005, the nation’s crime laboratory (the Forensic Science Centre, or FSC) had amassed a backlog of more than 2,000 unprocessed firearms-related cases. Maguire et al. (2010: 392) used the metaphor of a “leaky boat in calm seas” to describe how both organizations, in spite of their problems, were able to function reasonably well before violence in the nation began to rise sharply:

“... the employees of both organisations were able to bail water fast enough to remain afloat; the inefficiencies and insufficient policies and practices did not significantly impede the ability of police to clear homicide cases. As the increase in homicides emerged in 2000, the sheer volume of physical evidence increased as well. The TTPS and FSC strained under the added burden of more cases; it was not possible to bail quickly enough.”

These types of capacity issues continue to constrain the ability of the criminal justice system in Trinidad and Tobago to prevent and deter violence and hold offenders accountable.

These capacity issues embolden offenders and aggravate the problem. In many of the nation’s most distressed communities, gang leaders have become regarded as “community leaders” who exert their own form of informal social control over

residents and activities in the area (Griffith & Persad, 2013). As Maguire, et al. (2008: 86) conclude:

“Low clearance and conviction rates are among a number of reasons for the failure of formal social control, thus opening the door for criminal gangs and other antisocial entities to exert their own breed of informal social control. As illegitimate forms of informal social control begin to take on legitimacy in the eyes of the public, they challenge the basic authority and sovereignty of the state ...”

When residents turn to local gang leaders for protection or other resources, the criminal justice system loses perceived legitimacy.

### **Observational insight<sup>12</sup>**

“During my work in Trinidad and Tobago over the last 15 years, I have had the opportunity to interview many people living and working in the communities where gangs have established a firm foothold. I interviewed gang leaders, residents, members of the faith community, gang outreach workers, police officers, and other community stakeholders. The time I spent in these communities was invaluable for helping me to understand the nature of gangs and violence in Trinidad and Tobago. The gangs operate in desperately poor environments where citizens routinely turn to them for help. As a result, many of the gang leaders cultivate a reputation as community leaders. Trust in the police in many of these communities is low, though certain community policing initiatives (like the Hearts and Minds program) have been successful in cultivating trust. In certain communities, residents have difficulty leaving the community to go to work or school because doing so means crossing through enemy gang territory. It is an environment in which young men do not expect to live long, healthy lives. Exposure to violence is endemic among people living in the nation’s most violent communities. I visited homicide scenes where children were playing near the body of the murder victim while adults were listening to music and drinking beer.” Regular exposure to violence is traumatic and is known to produce a number of adverse psychological consequences for both children and adults (Maguire & Fishbein, 2016).

“While we were visiting a health fair in one distressed community, an enemy gang situated high up in the hills rained gunshots over the roof of the building which was occupied by children and the elderly. The police explained that the shooters were unable to shoot accurately from that distance; their only aim was to fire indiscriminately into the enemy gang territory across the street from the building where the health fair was held. Not long before this incident, a mother was gunned down in front of her children across the street. She was not gang involved – she was

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<sup>12</sup> This ‘observational insight’ is from Professor Ed Maguire, who has over 15 years’ experience of undertaking research on crime and the criminal justice system in Trinidad and Tobago.

simply standing in the wrong place at the wrong time. These are neighbourhoods where street culture has taken a dangerous turn and young men are willing to use lethal violence to resolve the pettiest of disputes. They are communities that could benefit from a thoughtful mix of evidence-based prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies. They are communities that are in desperate need of help.”

### **Key points**

- Recorded numbers and rates of homicide rose dramatically in Trinidad and Tobago after 2000 and, despite some dips since that time, remain high.
- The specific sources of the abrupt increase in violence are unclear, but one dynamic that coincided with the sudden increase was the splintering apart of street gangs that had previously been under the control of the Jamaat al Muslimeen, a radical Islamic group.
- A related contributory factor seen to fuel violence is competition for lucrative government contracts (some of which serve as public welfare programs) that are issued to community leaders. These programs have historically been infiltrated by criminal gangs, with battles over contracts often resulting in fatalities.
- There is little evidence to suggest that the spike in serious violence in Trinidad and Tobago is primarily drug-related; rather violence appears to be linked with a street culture, which normalises violence to defend social status and resolve perceived acts of ‘disrespect’.
- The criminal justice system in Trinidad and Tobago found it very difficult to respond in a timely manner to the rapidly escalating levels of gang violence and homicide.
- At the same time, other agencies that work with police to investigate violence became overwhelmed, such as the Forensic Science Centre.
- In the absence of a reliable police presence in many high needs communities, gang leaders became legitimised and regarded as “community leaders” and exerted informal social control over residents and activities in the area.

## **What strategies for tackling gang homicide may be successful in the Trinidad and Tobago context?**

In this section of the report, we examine the empirical evidence in relation to police-led strategies and interventions aimed at preventing and reducing gang-related serious violence and homicide.

Strategies to address gang violence can be grouped together into three broad categories; suppression, intervention and prevention (Klein and Maxson, 2006;



Maguire, 2013). Suppression involves the use of the criminal justice system to increase police enforcement, arrest and punish gang members. Historically, in many countries, including Trinidad and Tobago, this has often been the tactic adopted (Crichlow, 2016). However, research shows that while initially effective if implemented well, it is an incomplete solution, with an eventual return to pre-intervention levels of crime (Sherman, 1990b; Fritsch et al, 1999). Intervention techniques focus on those who are already gang-involved, addressing offending behaviour through provision of pro-social skills and opportunities (Maguire, 2013). The third category relates to prevention strategies, which are designed to target youths before they enter a gang and is an essential, albeit longer-term solution to the gang problem.

This review focuses explicitly upon studies with a target population of offenders who are already gang-involved in order to address the urgency of the situation in Trinidad and Tobago. The studies reviewed provide evidence of police-led approaches which generated significant reductions in the target crime and which may prove effective if implemented in Trinidad and Tobago. It is however, important to note when determining the appropriate response to the gang-related homicide issue in Trinidad and Tobago, that many of the strategies included here have been implemented and evaluated in large cities in the USA. Therefore, consideration will also be given to the implications of delivering such approaches in the Trinidad and Tobago context, along with factors likely to affect their efficacy when replicated elsewhere (Maguire & King, 2013).

### **Focused deterrence strategies**

Focused deterrence strategies, also known as ‘pulling levers’ policing programmes were first introduced in the United States during the nineties to tackle gang violence, street drug markets and repeat, high risk violent offenders. Their implementation coincided with the sharp decline in violent crime and homicide seen at the time and while many policy-makers and police were quick to claim credit for the reduction, others were less convinced and argued that much of the reduction could instead be attributed to a prospering economy, a reduction in drug markets and mass incarceration (Rosenfeld et al, 2005). Drawing upon the principles of focused deterrence, the Project Safe Neighbourhoods initiative has seen these strategies be more widely implemented across U.S cities and since 2001, over \$2 billion has been committed to this initiative (McGarrell, et al, 2018). More recently, these policies have also started to transfer to other countries<sup>13</sup>, principally to reduce gang-related serious violence, although their efficacy elsewhere has yet to be clearly evidenced.

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<sup>13</sup>For example, a focussed deterrence programme, the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) targeting youth violence, particularly knife crime and weapon possession was implemented in Glasgow, UK between 2008 and 2011. While initial results were encouraging, the project lacked independent evaluation and funding support and has since been discontinued (see Graham, 2016).

The core principles of this multi-agency approach, often referred to as comprehensive interventions (Spergel and Curry, 1993), are to increase police enforcement for those who continue to offend, while rewarding compliance and facilitating behaviour change through the provision of community and social support. A key element of these strategies is the emphasis upon the collective efficacy of communities to 'spread the message' that crime will not be tolerated, with those who persist in offending clearly informed that they will be subject to severe sanctions.

In response to the increasing popularity of focused deterrence methods, and in recognition of the need for a systematic inquiry of the extant evaluation research into their effectiveness, Braga and Weisburd (2012a, 2012b) conducted a review and meta-analysis of the existing empirical evidence. In their 2012 study, the authors grouped focused deterrence strategies into three broad categories. The first identifies those programs which draw upon the principles of the Boston Operation Ceasefire (Braga et al, 2001; Kennedy et al, 2006) and which take a multi-pronged approach joining criminal justice agencies, social support and members of the community to target gangs at the neighbourhood level. The second type of strategy aims to reduce crime related to street-level drug markets or Drug Market Intervention (DMI) programmes and the third targets repeat offending by high risk individuals through the imposition of more severe penalties upon those who continue to offend, while gaining the support of the community to reinforce the message that violent behaviour is morally unacceptable. Eleven eligible studies were identified and included in the review, six of which evaluated the crime reduction of strategies upon serious violence committed by street gangs; two examined their impact on crime related to street level drug markets and three focused upon outcomes in relation to individual repeat offenders. The findings indicated that ten of the eleven studies reported statistically significant reductions associated with the strategies, although the authors did highlight concerns regarding the lack of randomised controlled trials conducted and emphasised the need for further multi-site evaluation to be implemented. Despite this, the authors conclude that, "jurisdictions suffering from gang violence ... should add focused deterrence strategies to their existing portfolio of prevention and control interventions ... these new approaches to crime prevention and control generate noteworthy crime reductions" (Braga and Weisburd, 2012: 351).

In a more recent iteration of their 2012 study, Braga et al (2018) conducted a second systematic review and meta-analysis of the empirical evidence, providing further support for the efficacy of these initiatives in reducing gun homicide. This review identified 24 eligible studies, nine of which aimed to reduce drug-related crime with

the remaining 15 targeting gang-related serious crime<sup>14</sup>. Of the 24 studies included in their review, none were randomised controlled trials, although all were quasi-experimental in design, and half had matched comparison groups. Nine evaluations used non-equivalent comparison groups such as other cities or 'within-city areas' that did not benefit from the program. All studies evaluated the impact of the strategy upon the target crime.

The review found that focused deterrence strategies had a statistically significant positive effect upon the target crime, with 19 of the 24 eligible studies reporting a statistically significant reduction in crime. The Project Safe Neighbourhoods (Lowell), Indianapolis Violence reduction Partnership and Project Longevity (New Haven) studies reported the largest statistically significant effect size and the Seattle study the lowest. When statistical modelling was undertaken and program type taken into account, the gang/group type interventions reported the largest effect size, followed by the high-risk individual approach and the DMI interventions the least. The findings also indicated that focused deterrence programs did not result in crime displacement, rather, the crime control benefits tended to 'diffuse' into neighbouring areas and influenced connected groups that were not subject to the intervention. The authors determine that, 'these findings, in combination with the strong theoretical literature supporting the mechanisms of focused deterrence, provide solid support for the adoption of such programs by police agencies'. The multifaceted approach taken by agencies delivering focused deterrence was seen to be key to their success. While research indicates that traditional 'person-focused' oppressive policing techniques such as saturating an area with patrols and targeting the arrest of repeat offenders have not been shown to be effective in reducing crime (National Research Council, 2004), Braga et al (2018: 240) conclude that focused deterrence strategies are:

“designed to change offender behaviour through a blended enforcement, social service and opportunity provision, and community based action approach, are effective in controlling crime. Other key programmatic elements include strategic analyses of targeted crime problems and a well-developed communications plan designed to make targeted offenders understand the new regime that is being imposed on them.”

Notwithstanding the lack of rigorous randomised controlled design studies, the authors highlight a further weakness in the evidence base, namely the inability to

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<sup>14</sup> Eligible gang-violence related evaluations comprised Operation Ceasefire (Boston), Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership, Operation Peacekeeper, Project Safe Neighbourhoods (Lowell), Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence, Operation Ceasefire (Newark), Operation Ceasefire (Los Angeles), Operation Ceasefire (New York), Project Safe Neighbourhoods (Chicago), Operation Ceasefire II (Boston), Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (Glasgow), Group Violence Reduction Strategy (Chicago), Group Violence Reduction Strategy (New Orleans), No Violence Alliance (Kansas City), Project Longevity (New Haven).

identify which of the mechanisms or components of the focused deterrence strategy has the strongest impact on crime reduction. In their discussion of this issue, the importance of assessing the influence of 'procedural justice and collective efficacy' upon program outcomes is emphasised. They cite the quasi-experimental evaluation of the Chicago Project Safe Neighbourhood (Papachristos et al, 2007) as providing promising evidence for mechanisms that improve public perceptions of police legitimacy. The findings from the PSN evaluation indicated that fostering public trust in the police and interacting with offenders in a 'procedurally just manner' improved program effectiveness.

### **Implementation of gang 'truce' strategies**

While the body of evidence supporting the efficacy of focused deterrence strategies in the U.S is growing, what is lacking is a comprehensive evaluation of gang intervention strategies across other countries (Van Damme, 2017). In her 2017 paper, Van Damme considers the implementation of different types of gang interventions in El Salvador and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The author draws upon Rodgers (2009) typology of gang interventions as first, second and third generation to describe the initiatives used in these developing countries and their differing impact.

First generation interventions are described as repressive and enforcement focused, having the counterproductive effect of further stigmatizing and criminalising gang members. While these military style 'crackdowns' removed gang members from the streets and into prison, the homicide rate did not fall, violence increased and gangs became more organised, the latter largely attributed to the practice of imprisoning gang members together (Reisman, 2006).

Second generation interventions are defined in the paper as 'socio-preventative' initiatives and according to the author, most in the DRC and El Salvador have been implemented by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other (international) organisations. While many of the challenges faced by NGOs<sup>15</sup> undermined the success of the interventions delivered by them, the author highlights some successes in reducing gang membership and violence. One interviewee discussed two music projects targeting gang involved youth, 'Beta Mbonda' and 'Espace Masolo'. The former succeeded in that instead of being 'kuluna' (gang) the youngsters became musicians. The 'bashege' youth of Espace Masolo, on the other hand, were able to earn money using their newfound skills. In El Salvador, via the 'Civil Society and Governance' program, the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) worked

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<sup>15</sup> Such interventions typically suffered from a failure to adequately monitor and evaluate outcomes. Governmental support was also lacking which contributed to a dearth of funding and political will to develop wider implementation policies. Any successes were therefore small scale and viewed as a, 'drop in the ocean.' (van Damme 2017: Competition between NGOs also led to a lack of cohesion and collaboration in delivery of interventions. (van Damme, 2017).

with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), local governments and the Salvadoran Chamber of Commerce to improve the employment opportunities for youth at risk and gang members. The project reported a 25% success rate regarding employment and much of this was attributed to the importance of embedding the project within the local community and working with local authorities.

Finally, Van Damme introduces the notion of third generation 'politically driven' gang interventions, whereby a dialogue between gang leaders and the government is established with the aim of a 'truce', brokering benefits to both parties. One such example occurred in El Salvador in 2012, whereby the government supported talks between leaders of two rival gangs. In exchange for moving imprisoned gang members to lower security prisons, the gangs would reduce the homicide rate and during the truce, the homicide rate fell by 40% (Gurney, 2015). However, the number of extortions and other crimes increased and the number of so-called 'disappeared people' even doubled (Rauda Zablah, 2013). This was partly attributed to the fact that the truce did not consist of equal negotiations between the gangs and the government, but rather the gangs imposing their demands to the government in exchange for lowering the homicide rate (Van Damme, 2018). For example, on several occasions the gangs threatened with a strike of public transportation if the government would not obey their demands (Lemus, 2010). A quasi-experimental evaluation of this government-facilitated gang truce was conducted by Katz et al (2016). Findings indicated that the gang truce significantly reduced the homicide rate and did not result in significant displacement by crime type or method. However, the effects were temporary as the homicide rate began to increase slowly 12 months after the truce was agreed and had approached levels recorded before the truce after a further 16 months. In 2014, a new government resumed a repressive approach, removing benefits from imprisoned gang members. Following this declaration – and after the evaluation period – homicide rates in El Salvador increased to record highs (Katz et al, 2016). These findings echo that of other research into the effects of gang truces, which indicates that any beneficial effects are short-lived and may inadvertently lead to longer-term increases in crime (Ordog et al, 1995; Klein, 1995; Maguire et al, 2013).

A study offering some insight into the effects of gang truces in Trinidad and Tobago was conducted by Maguire, Katz and Wilson in 2006. At the time of the evaluation, five of the eight street gangs within the area of Palm Grove (a pseudonym) had brokered a gang-initiated formal truce. The researchers monitored the eight gangs for a period of six months after the start of the truce using interrupted time series analyses of police data on homicides, shootings, woundings and gunshots in the Palm Grove area. Researchers were also given access to police intelligence on gang conflict and motives for violence, and interviews were conducted with gang members and police working in the area. Findings indicated that although violent crime remained relatively stable during the period of evaluation, there was a small increase in the average number of gunshots and violent events after the truce. Interestingly,

while alliances were formed between participating gang members, the truce appeared to have had the unintended consequence of triggering new conflicts with gangs who did not take part.

In sum, although there is relatively little empirical research into the effects of gang truces, what little there is does not paint a promising picture. Indeed, Kodluboy and Evenrud (1993:285) conclude that although gang mediation may, “sometimes be necessary to forestall immediate violence or even prevent loss of life ... such mediation increases the risk of validating the gang as a legitimate social entity, thus buying short-term peace at the price of long-term persistence of the gang.”

### **Implications of delivering gang-interventions in Trinidad and Tobago**

While oppressive police enforcement tactics have been the primary response to crime in Trinidad and Tobago in the past, successive governments have since recognised that this approach has met with little success, as crime figures have continued to rise despite the many initiatives put in place (Seepersad, 2016). In their 2010 review of the gang problem in Trinidad and Tobago for example, Katz et al found that, despite the prevalent gang-crime issue, Trinidad and Tobago had no national primary gang prevention programming and that there was resistance within government ministries to implementing these kinds of initiatives. The study made six key recommendations which included (1) establishing a National Gang Prevention Steering Committee; (2) allocating funding to support the delivery of gang prevention initiatives; (3) recruiting experienced gang prevention managers and specialists; (4) raising awareness among policymakers regarding gang prevention practices; (5) implementing the Communities that Care (CTC) model and the Gang Resistance and Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program; and (6) implement a secondary gang prevention program<sup>16</sup>.

Within the last decade it appears that some of these recommendations may have been taken on board, as there has been a move towards developing interventions to address the harmful social and community influences underpinning gang-related violence, with an increasing recognition that preventative approaches are just as important as, or even more important than, suppressive approaches to crime control.

Many of these initiatives were implemented under the umbrella of the Citizen Security Programme (CSP), which was a primary violence prevention programme established in 2008 by the Ministry of National Security of Trinidad and Tobago (MNS), financed partially by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The programme aimed to reverse the increasing trend in violence and crime seen at the time. The CSP approach was active in 100 high crime communities throughout

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<sup>16</sup> Primary prevention programs are aimed at the general population, while secondary prevention programs target those at risk of becoming a gang member or of becoming involved in delinquency or crime (Katz et al, 2010).

Trinidad and Tobago between 2008 and 2015 and combined community action, assistance to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and institutional strengthening of the Ministry of National Security. Community action was the central 'lynchpin' of the programme, relying on collective efficacy to prevent crime and violence. The CSP was based upon an ecological model for violence prevention, focusing on the individual, family, community and societal risk factors (Olinger, 2015).

At the individual level, activities concentrated upon training residents in violence prevention skills, counselling services and referrals. At the family level, parenting support and education, counselling services, and referrals were the main activities supported by the programme; at the community level programme activities focused on school partnerships, the building of youth-friendly spaces, grant programmes to community-based organisations to develop micro-projects, the maintenance of common spaces in communities, and the development of community based violence interruption strategies. In addition, support was given to the police to develop activities aimed at facilitating community relations and public trust and funding was also directed at improving data collection, analysis and monitoring – including investment in improving crime and violence reporting and statistics. Finally, the programme also funded social and psychological support for police officers. At the level of the broader society, the promotion of public education through multimedia campaigns, the development of a violence prevention agenda and the strengthening of the Ministry of National Security Agencies was the main focus of the Citizen Security Programme activities (Olinger, 2015).

Key findings from a peer review of the CSP program indicated that homicides in CSP communities dropped by 56% between 2008 and 2013 compared with a national reduction of 26% for this same period, while wounding and shooting in CSP communities fell by 40% between 2008 and 2013 compared with a national reduction of 12% for this same period (CSP, 2014).

The review made a number of recommendations, central to which was the development of a comprehensive communication strategy, both at the local and national levels, in order to foster community and governmental support for the programme and facilitate a move away from repressive methods of crime control. The need to destigmatise youth was also emphasised in the report. On the international level, the review recommended that the Citizen Security Programme strengthen alliances with other international or regional organizations and platforms, including other UN agencies with different ranges of technical expertise, and CARICOM (Olinger, 2015). The report also highlighted a number of exemplars of 'best practice' including, (among others); 'Fight for Peace'<sup>17</sup>, 'Engaging Caribbean

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<sup>17</sup> The FFP project was founded in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to target at-risk youth, including those involved in and affected by crime and violence, and those not in school or employment. It uses sport as an entry point and also helps participants obtain access to the formal labour market and develop leadership skills (UNDP, 2015).

Youth<sup>18</sup> and the 'Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health'<sup>19</sup>. However, the impact of many of these approaches upon violent crime in the country was not rigorously evaluated, and it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about their effectiveness in the Trinidad and Tobago context.

One exception to this was the Cure Violence initiative, which was originally implemented in Chicago and represents a public health approach to violence prevention and reduction (Ransford and Slutkin, 2017). The Cure Violence initiative was adapted for implementation in Trinidad and Tobago as Project REASON (Resolve Enmity, Articulate Solutions, Organise Neighbourhoods) to tackle the increasing rates of homicide and violent crime across 16 'high needs' urban communities in the Port of Spain metropolitan area. The program was based on five key elements: street outreach to at-risk youth, public education, faith-leader involvement, community mobilisation, and collaboration with law enforcement. The key aims of the project were to:

- Prevent harm and reduce injuries associated with firearm-related violence.
- Proactively prevent the escalation of tension that is likely to lead to violence.
- Reduce the likelihood that high-risk individuals will engage in criminal and antisocial behaviour.
- Improve public perceptions of safety.
- Improve coordination and collaboration among stakeholders to enhance efficiency in delivering violence prevention services.

(Maguire et al, 2018, p. xi).

A full process and impact evaluation of the initiative was published in 2018 by Maguire et al, the results of which indicate that the project significantly and substantially reduced violence in the areas in which it was implemented, with the violent crime rate 44.9 percent lower than in the comparison area two years after its launch. Further, police calls for service for murders, shootings, and woundings dropped significantly in the treatment area but not in the comparison area. Finally, analysis of hospital admissions for gunshot wounds found that the hospital closest to the project treatment area experienced a significant reduction in gunshot wound admissions. A comparison hospital located 55 kilometres away did not experience a

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<sup>18</sup> UNDP is engaged in fostering youth and women in Governance and Citizen Security through entrepreneurial training, communication and a sensitization campaign on crime prevention and gender (UNDP, 2015).

<sup>19</sup> Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health: a toolkit developed with Men Engage Alliance, with support from UNFPA, that addresses strategies and lessons learnt for engaging men and boys (UNDP, 2015).



significant reduction during that same period. The authors conclude that, “three different data sources used in our impact evaluation suggest that Cure Violence was associated with a significant and substantial drop in violence during the time in which this intervention was put in place”. A cost effectiveness calculation indicated that Project REASON cost, on average, approximately US\$3,500 to US\$4,500 for every violent incident it prevented.

Three key elements were identified as contributing to the success of the project:

1. The use of ‘trained credible messengers’ to act as ‘Violence Interrupters’<sup>20</sup> and deliver conflict mediation, a technique used to interrupt cycles of violence and create new, ‘non-violent, non-retaliatory norms’ was emphasised. This approach prioritised the need to identify those at highest risk of perpetrating violence and to engage in mediation efforts intended to prevent the crime before it occurs. Individuals were then offered a variety of support services to address their practical needs and facilitate behavioural and attitudinal change. Assistance was also provided with education or employment referrals; mental health, alcohol, or drug treatment along with help reintegrating from prison into the community.
2. Project REASON benefitted from a strong support system through the Cure Violence headquarters staff in Chicago and received ongoing training and technical assistance.
3. The relationship between Project REASON staff and the Hearts and Minds<sup>21</sup> police officers in the Interagency Task Force was highlighted as a valuable resource.

Recommendations for improving delivery in future replications of the program included:

- A greater focus on increasing multi-agency partnerships to improve opportunities for community referrals and Social Service support.
- Developing targeted responses to each shooting incident in an intervention.

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<sup>20</sup> Individuals were typically already experienced outreach workers who had been involved with delivering interventions within the gang-afflicted communities and who had freedom to move between communities without reprisal.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Hearts and Minds was a program run by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF). Formed in 2004, the IATF is a branch of the Ministry of National Security that brings together members of the TTPS and the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF) to carry out joint crime control efforts in some of the highest-crime communities in Trinidad. The Hearts and Minds program, established in 2012, included a cadre of IATF officers that organized and participated in outreach efforts to increase community engagement between residents and the police and create prosocial opportunities for youth’ (Maguire, 2016).

- Strengthening the consistency of data entry and relying more heavily on data to inform strategic decision making.
- Selecting effective leadership to manage the day-to-day implementation of the program.

Despite strong evidence about the success of Project REASON in reducing violence, the program is no longer in operation.

### **Building trust: Police legitimacy in Trinidad and Tobago**

One of the key themes to have emerged from many of the studies reviewed in this section is the importance of the perceived legitimacy of the police and collaboration with the communities in which these interventions are delivered (Papachristos et al, 2007). As Braga et al (2018:239) note, “it seems particularly important to assess how elements of procedural justice and collective efficacy influence program outcomes. The findings from the Chicago Project Safe Neighbourhoods resulted in providing encouraging evidence for prevention mechanisms that would enhance public evaluations of legitimacy”.

However, while a specially trained team of ‘Hearts and Minds’ officers in the Interagency Taskforce (IATF) of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service were able to form collaborative relationships with Project REASON staff and participated in outreach efforts, which increased community engagement between residents and the police (Maguire et al, 2018), this historically has not been the case in Trinidad and Tobago.

Indeed, research suggests that in many developing countries, public willingness to co-operate with the police may be motivated by fear and intimidation rather than any perceived legitimacy (Tankebe, 2009) and in areas where confidence and co-operation with the police is already low, aggressive police tactics may serve to make matters worse and further damage public trust (Manning 2001). Crucially, research has shown that individuals who experience unfair interactions with the police are more likely to commit crime or re-offend in the future (Sherman, 1993; Fine et al 2017). This is particularly pertinent in the case of Trinidad and Tobago, as Crichlow (2016:572) notes “the communities surrounding Port-of-Spain ... have experienced rising social and physical disorder. They have also experienced a strained relationship with the police arising from incidents of alleged police brutality”. Further, Kane (2005) states that, “any efforts on the part of the government to reform the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service would only achieve limited success if citizens do not believe that police officers are truly protecting and serving them”. Indeed, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service’s “assertive style of patrol” (Crichlow, 2016:574) does little to build positive relationships with local communities. Police officers are described as remote from the public, making little effort to build relationships with the local community, with the few patrols who do go out, described as reactionary and aggressive (Brogden, 2005; Wilson et al, 2011).

There have, however been some efforts to improve the reputation of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service; the 'Model Station Initiative' is one such example. Launched in 2007, this was piloted at five police stations and aimed to improve police-community relations and public confidence by adopting a 'policing for the people', problem-solving approach, organisational decentralisation and community engagement (Brogden, 2005). Model Stations were compared with five stations in matched comparison sites. Early evaluation results after one year of the initiative were mixed; while police officers in the Model Stations improved visibility through increased street activities, there was no appreciable change in the level of victimization for burglary, robbery, and assault. Nonetheless, citizens in the Model districts felt safer on several fronts after a year of the initiative. More importantly, the Model Station's performance on all perceived safety indicators exceeded on average that of the Comparison Stations. Furthermore, victims who reported their experience to the Model Stations were substantially more satisfied with the police response than were victims reporting to the Comparison Stations (Parks and Mastrofski, 2009). Unfortunately, despite high hopes for the transformative influence of this initiative upon the TTPS, its success was limited and this has been attributed to a discontinuation of the policy following governmental change (Crichlow, 2016).

One further example of note is the Gonzales Community Policing project, a community policing project implemented in 2006 in a high crime urban area in East Post of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The project aimed to: 1) reduce crime and victimisation, 2) reduce disorder, 3) reduce fear of crime and 4) improve police-citizen relationships. Its impact upon fear of crime and perceived safety was assessed in one of the first rigorous evaluations of community policing on these outcomes in a developing nation (Maguire et al, 2017). Citizen IMPACT<sup>22</sup> surveys were administered with 1,805 randomly selected residents over three waves of study between 2006 and 2008. Results were mixed, with no statistically significant difference measured on fear of crime or level of perceived safety between the treatment and comparison area during waves 1 and 2 of implementation (June – August 2006 and July – August 2007), although a small increase in fear of crime was recorded in the treatment area. Conversely, the treatment area experienced a statistically significant increase in perceived safety and small (though not significant) decrease in fear between Waves 2 and 3 (July – August 2007 and June – August 2008). The authors attributed this mixed pattern of results to the, 'uneven implementation' of the project with TTPS support and funding fluctuating dramatically over the life of the project (Maguire et al, 2017:13). The authors conclude that, 'results leave room for optimism. When implemented with commitment, community policing may be able to reduce fear and improve perceptions of safety in distressed communities, including those located in developing countries.' (Maguire et al, 2017:16).

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<sup>22</sup> 'I Matter: Public Attitudes on Communities in Trinidad' (IMPACT) survey.

More recently, Adams (2019) undertook research on residents' perceptions of police in Trinidad and Tobago, which illustrated that, despite a lean towards more community-oriented policing initiatives as evidenced by some of the initiatives described above, high levels of distrust in police prevail. For example, Adams (2019) conducted 40 semi-structured interviews with community members from a high-crime, low-income community in Trinidad and Tobago, to examine residents' experiences with police officers, and respondents' willingness to work with the police to clear criminal cases. The results indicate that due to a lack of institutional trust, citizens are unwilling to trust and work collaboratively with most police officers.

Research indicates that policing is more successful when officers have the trust and support of the community, and that this can contribute to the willingness of the community to take action in support of positive social change, often known as 'collective efficacy'. Indeed, such research has identified an inverse relationship between homicide and collective efficacy, (Sampson et al, 1997; Browning et al, 2004) which inevitably has important implications for the success of any police-led initiative in Trinidad and Tobago. The question of whether the police can reduce crime by improving collective efficacy in their communities is therefore an important one to answer.

In her examination of the relationship between collective efficacy and crime and disorder in Trinidad and Tobago, Kochel (2012) conducted a survey of 2,969 residents in 74 high crime neighbourhoods. Her findings indicated that even in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, residents had the capacity to build collective efficacy, and that residents who had higher levels of collective efficacy, reported feeling safer and experiencing fewer problems with loitering, burglary, street drug sales and crucially, homicide. On the other hand, police service quality as rated by residents was not found to influence levels of crime and disorder. Nonetheless, the actions of the police were found to influence collective efficacy, with officers demonstrating competency, community collaboration and respect contributing to feelings of solidarity in neighbourhoods, "helping them become more cohesive and self-policing" (Kochel, 2012:348). Conversely, the police variable most strongly correlated with crime and disorder was police misconduct. As Sampson (2002:222) notes, "to the extent that police are mistrusted ... cooperative efforts will fail even though all residents share a desire for lower crime rates".

Collectively, these findings have important implications for the delivery of any comprehensive gang-crime intervention in Trinidad and Tobago, and a priority for policy-makers and practitioners should be to foster positive, collaborative relationships between communities and the police. Key to the success of this will be the development of strategies designed to address public perceptions of police legitimacy and corruption, to which we will now turn.

## Key points

- Repressive, ‘crackdown’ style enforcement policing is ineffective in tackling gang-related violence in the long-term and may not be effective in the short term.
- Focused deterrence strategies, which take a multi-pronged approach, joining together criminal justice agencies, social support and community members to tackle gang-crime at the neighbourhood level are associated with statistically significant reductions in crimes such as homicide.
- Strategies of this type are associated with a ‘diffusion of benefits’ into neighbouring areas, also positively affecting groups not directly experiencing the intervention.
- It is not clear from the research evidence which particular elements of focused deterrence approaches are most effective. However, it appears that multi-agency, community-based approaches, which target offender behaviour and incorporates an element of opportunity provision are most effective.
- Targeted conflict mediation with high-risk individuals by ‘credible’ outreach workers, already integrated in local communities has been shown to be a successful technique within the Trinidad and Tobago context.
- Successful violence prevention strategies depend upon the ‘collective efficacy’ of local communities and their willingness to collaborate with police. The community element of such strategies can be negatively affected by low public confidence in, and mistrust of, police.
- Much of the research originates from the United States and consideration should be given to the cultural context of delivering any gang-crime strategy in Trinidad and Tobago. Of particular relevance is the low public trust in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the need to prioritise improving police/community relations as a foundation for the successful implementation of gang-crime reduction strategies.

## **What is known about the nature and extent of police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago and how might it be addressed?**

This section summarises the available literature in relation to the nature and prevalence of police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago, along with a consideration of measures to address the issue.

Corruption has widely been defined as “the abuse of public office for private gain” (Ofosu-Amaah et al., 1999: 3). However, major international conventions such as the

Inter-American Convention against Corruption (the OAS Convention) and the United Nations Convention against Corruption (the UN Convention) define a public official as, 'including persons carrying out a public function, such as provision of electricity and other utilities'. According to Transparency International<sup>23</sup>, the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranks 180 countries on their perceived levels of corruption based on assessments by financial analysts and opinion surveys of business people. In its 2017 rankings, Trinidad and Tobago was ranked 77th out of the 180 countries included in the index, with a score of 41. Trinidad and Tobago was below the global average of 43 and, according to the scores on the CPI index, corruption deteriorated in Trinidad and Tobago between 2012 and 2016 (Transparency International, 2017). Indeed, Victor Hart, Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Initiative, described the country as "a society of corruption" (Bruzual, 2010).

Research indicates that corruption in the government is often an important indicator of corruption in a police department<sup>24</sup> (Sookoo, 2015). When corruption is found in other government agencies, among judges, prosecutors, and politicians, and in the business world, it influences the ability of the police officer to account for his or her own behaviour (Newfield and Barret 1988; Roberg and Kuykendall 1993). In developing countries where there exist high levels of systemic political corruption, a corrupt government is more likely to use the police to fulfil their own goals, as well as tolerate other occurrences of low-level corruption (Sookoo, 2015).

Corruption within the Trinidad and Tobago Police Force remains an understudied area and while there does not appear to exist a systematic measure of police corruption in the country, there has been a small amount of research undertaken into the issue, along with a number of reports about police misconduct. Police officers have been accused of excessive use of force (Deosaran 2002) and have been linked to theft of state property as well as the possession of illegal narcotics and unlicensed guns and ammunition (Simon 2009). Not only have police been implicated in the theft of illicit drugs taken as seizure and held as evidence, they have also been suspected of being involved in the illicit drug trade (Figueira 2002) and of acting as informants to gangs (Parks and Mastrofski 2008). In 2012, the Police Complaints Authority in Trinidad and Tobago received 479 complaints relating to officers' alleged corruption, serious misconduct and reports of twenty-two fatal shootings, four deaths in police custody and two attempted murders (Sookoo, 2019). Ryan (2013) reporting

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<sup>23</sup> Transparency International is a global, non-profit, non-governmental organisation responsible for producing the CPI. Based on expert opinion from around the world, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption worldwide. The CPI uses a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). (Corruption Perceptions Index, February, 2018).

<sup>24</sup> Police corruption may appear in the form of bribery, misappropriation of funds; deceit, extortion abuse and misuse of power; treason, misuse of insider and confidential, information, fraud, perversion of justice; non-performance of duties, nepotism, approval of improper, fees, gifts along with speed money and entertainment; operations in black market; cronyism; illegal surveillance; and public personnel dealing with criminal actors (Transparency International 2000).

from research findings in “Prison Reform, the Justice System and Policing” noted that 30–40% of members of the police service were corrupt and were, “invisible members of associates of gangs or controller of their activities”.

Police corruption and misconduct (whether perceived or actual) has negatively influenced public trust (Kochel, 2012). A number of research studies have been conducted with members of the public in Trinidad and Tobago in recent years on the subject of police legitimacy, trust in police and links with perceived corruption, all of which point to a pervasive level of distrust of police in Trinidad and Tobago by members of the population. The lack of trust in police legitimacy amongst citizens in Trinidad and Tobago spans a continuum from perceptions that police are discourteous in their interactions with civilians, that they are incompetent and that they use excessive force, through to the most serious perceptions that police in Trinidad and Tobago are corrupt. Regarding the latter, various researchers have confirmed citizens’ beliefs that police officers are complicit in criminal activities and disclose witnesses’ identification to suspected offenders, leading to retaliatory violence (Adams, 2012; Maguire et al., 2010). Indeed, at a time when public opinion surveys indicated confidence in the police was low and homicides were rising at an unprecedented rate<sup>25</sup>, the police themselves suspected high-ranking police officials of corrupt practices, a view reinforced by the press (Mastrofski and Snipes, unpublished). The U.S. State Department expressed concern about police killings during apprehension, deaths of persons in police custody, and police abuse of prisoners (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2004).

Townsend (2009) cites a national opinion poll that revealed that only about one in ten citizens has confidence in the national police. Allegedly, with hard-working exceptions, police are seen as ‘corrupt, lazy, incompetent and impolite’ (Trinidad Express, 2009 cited in Townsend, 2009:35). Townsend himself undertook a Small Arms Survey of Trinidad and Tobago that included field research during 2009 and interviews with numerous police officers, public prosecutors, diplomats, civil servants and a range of citizens. The interviewees offered their insights mainly off the record (Townsend, 2009:13). Townsend explored connections among guns, gangs, and politics in Trinidad and Tobago and found that citizens and some senior members of government allege widespread police corruption (p.35). He cites one senior public prosecutor stating: ‘police corruption has become a crisis situation’ (p.36). Government members suggested various ways in which police may benefit from crime, most of which appeared to involve financial benefits to police such as facilitating/ignoring drug shipments, weapons rental to criminals, or citizen shakedowns for bribes.

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<sup>25</sup> Between 1999 and 2006 homicides rose from 7 to 28 per hundred thousand (Mastrofski and Snipes, unpublished).

Townsend also reported that Trinidad and Tobago's police-led efforts to curtail gun violence "are mitigated by the government's direct financial support to urban gangs via public welfare programmes. In exchange, come election days, these gangs have been frequently called upon to turn out loyal supporters and physically menace would-be opposition voters" (p.15). Townsend (2009) found that political officials are often complicit to the violence occurring inasmuch as they validate the presence of notorious gang leaders. Known gang members were appointed to government positions following meetings in 2002 between government officials and gang leaders. Gang members have since been awarded lucrative government contracts to clean up communities and partake in structural developments. The enduring problem is that even in the absence of outright political corruption, gangs hold a very influential trump card. At any time they can choose to increase or decrease the amount of violence. This gives them a powerful bargaining chip when seeking to extract favours from politicians.

In his 2016 review of the social and political context surrounding policing in Trinidad and Tobago, Crichlow describes how the perception that the TTPS have been used by successive regimes to carry out their political agenda was reinforced as recently as 2011, when the government declared a state of emergency as a crime-fighting strategy (Hutchinson-Jafar, 2011). Under a government widely believed to be politically entrenched in the Indian community, a number of Black males were arrested under suspicion of gang involvement and violent crime and released after a prolonged period of time without charge, leading to criticism that the arrests were racially motivated (Kerrigan, 2015). An alternative perspective is that the police had difficulty in building prosecutable cases on the people they arrested during the State of Emergency and therefore were forced to release them. Indeed, research has found that the State of Emergency was associated with a statistically significant reduction in hospital emergency ward admissions for gunshot wounds and stab wounds (Ramdass, et al., 2015). There is not sufficient data to draw credible inferences about whether the State of Emergency was racially motivated, but it does appear to have achieved its stated goal of reducing violence, at least temporarily, albeit at the expense of positive police/community relations in some parts of the country.

The ability to tackle police corruption lies in first garnering an understanding of its determinants. Police corruption has been linked to wider organisational and cultural factors within which police are embedded (Sookoo, 2015). Research has shown that national, organisational and police culture impacts upon levels of police corruption. Sookoo (2015) asserts that national culture has two dimensions; level of political corruption and public tolerance of corruption and both have been shown to impact upon police corruption (Pfaff, 2010). The second variable; organisational culture has several dimensions; ineffective leadership (Pfaff 2010), lack of punishment (Klockars, Ivkovic and Haberfeld 2000), reduced peer supervision (Klockars, Ivkovic and Haberfeld 2000) and lack of transparency in punishment



(Seaby 1993) all of which have been found to significantly impact upon police corruption. Similarly, in an examination of causes of excessive force by police in three Caribbean countries, Bennett (1997) explored three models of determinants; organisational, situational and individual. Organisational factors relate to policy and training. Situational factors include the nature of the complaint, and the interactions between complainant and officer. Individual determinants deal with the officers' attitudes, beliefs and demographic characteristics. Findings indicated that the strongest determinant of use of excessive force was organisational culture; the police agency with the most proactive leadership position against excessive force having the lowest incidence of its use. Officers' perceived severity of sanctions and citizens' perceived respect for the police were also significant predictors of the prevalence of excessive force.

In their 2005 study examining police integrity in the Trinidad and Tobago Police (TTPS), Mastrofski and Snipes surveyed 1,374 TTPS officers, representing over a quarter (27%) of the sworn personnel in the TTPS. The survey aimed to measure the extent to which external loci of control, (or rules and regulations – command and control model) and internal motivation, (or an officer's own values and moral compass – self-regulatory model) influenced inclination to act with integrity. Their findings indicated that the most powerful predictor of the inclination to act with police integrity came from the self-regulatory model, the officer's own values and his or her view of the seriousness of the misconduct. One element of the command-and-control approach did show significant, modest effects on the inclination to express disapproval informally (supervisors enforcing high integrity standards), but no command-and-control variables showed an impact on officially reporting misconduct. The authors concluded that these findings had important implications for the TTPS; suggesting that, 'merely making a more concerted effort to educate officers on what behaviours constitute violations of official policy could produce substantial increases in the inclination to police integrity' (Mastrofski and Snipes, unpublished paper).

More recently, Sookoo (unpublished) studied police alienation and its links with corruption within the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. Her findings indicate that alienation was "a significant and most robust measure of lower levels of integrity ... alienation was a justification or rationalisation for engaging in unethical behaviour" (Sookoo, unpublished). Her research concluded that police officers who felt their work went unrewarded, had unsupportive relations with their peers, believed there to be a high crime problem in their division and felt alienated, exhibited values supporting lower levels of integrity, higher levels of corruption and unethical behaviour.

While one might assume from the above findings together with the country's ranking on the Transparency International CPI index that little has been, or is being done in Trinidad and Tobago to combat corruption, the country is a member of the Follow-Up Mechanism of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (MESISIC).

Membership of this convention provides for the implementation of various measures to combat corruption including, putting in place preventive measures, criminalising corruption and enhancing international cooperation.

In their review of steps taken to combat corruption in eight Caribbean countries<sup>26</sup>, of which Trinidad and Tobago was one, Hylton and Young (2007) report that there are a number of measures and legislation in place to prevent and reduce corruption in the member countries. These include recognising conflicts of interest, standards regarding conservation and use of public resources, reporting acts of corruption, declaration of assets, income and liabilities, transparency and access to information legislation and public engagement. Indeed, a number of laws in the country do exist to address corruption of public officials, including the Integrity in Public Life Act, the Prevention of Corruption Act, and the Police Complaints Authority Act.

However, in an examination of Parliamentary oversight and corruption in Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada, Stapenhurst et al (2018) assert that adherence to, and implementation of legislation is a problem. Allegations of corruption seldom work through the legal system, resulting in, “a scarcity of cases with legal outcomes”, with “... procurement processes [that are] not fully transparent [and that] government ministries bypassed or manipulated established procurement procedures to favor specific vendors” (US Department of Commerce, 2016, p.1-2 in Stapenhurst et al, 2018). In light of these failings, public perception of corruption remains high.

Hylton and Young’s review corroborate these findings (2007) concluding that while measures may have been established to combat corruption, “the evidence suggests that enforcement of these measures has not been as successful. The fact is that throughout the Caribbean there are allegations of misuse of government property or at least a certain level of disregard for the fact that the resources are those of the people. Yet, despite these allegations which are in many cases supported by objective evidence, not much appears to happen in terms of results” (Hylton and Young, 2007:260).

However, in the case of Trinidad and Tobago, the authors point to the conviction of a former Prime Minister on the grounds of corruption as evidence that some progress in this respect may be being made. Such public displays of action may go some way to dispelling the public perception of corruption across the region. Indeed, lessons may be learned from this with regards to improving public support for the police. The need for Trinidad and Tobago police officers to actively and positively engage with the communities in which they are based is emphasised throughout the literature and this report (Crichlow, 2016; Maguire, 2018). Further, any attempt to prevent and reduce police corruption will need to consider the implications of the research findings presented throughout this chapter (in particular; the nature of force

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<sup>26</sup> The eight countries examined were: Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

leadership, organisational culture and individual officer characteristics) in order to be effective. Underpinning all of this however, will be the need to address the alleged endemic political corruption across government within which the TTPS is situated.

### **Key points**

- To the best of our knowledge, there is currently no systematic measure of police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago.
- A small body of research exists, which highlights incidences of corruption within the Trinidad and Tobago police, with links to excessive use of force, the illicit drug trade and gang involvement.
- Public perception of corruption in the police is high. Much of this can be attributed to the social and historical context of policing in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Perceptions of corruption in the public sector are also high. In the 2017 Corruption Perception Index rankings, Trinidad and Tobago was ranked 77th out of 180 countries<sup>27</sup> and below the global average.
- A raft of laws and legislation exist within Trinidad and Tobago to prevent and reduce corruption within the government and public sector bodies, however, implementation and adherence to these measures appears to be insufficient.
- A number of determinants have been shown to influence levels of police corruption and are linked to the wider national and organisational culture in which a police force is entrenched, as well as situational and individual factors such as police attitudes, beliefs and experience of alienation.
- Any strategy developed to address corruption within the TTPS will need to bear all of these factors into account and prioritise the need to address the alleged endemic political corruption within which the TTPS is situated.

## **What can be learned from the available evidence to inform police practice in relation to gang-related homicide investigation and clearance?**

In this section of the report, we examine the empirical evidence in relation to policing strategies that can improve homicide clearance, with a particular focus upon gang-related homicide investigations. It is important to note that the available research literature rarely singles out gang-related homicide investigations. Rather, the body of work that exists examines homicide investigation and clearance more generally. That said, many studies acknowledge that some of the most

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<sup>27</sup> With a rank of 1 being the 'cleanest' and 180, the most corrupt.

challenging and difficult-to-solve homicide cases are those that occur amongst gang members. Most of the research evidence comes from the USA and, to a lesser extent, the UK, with some notable exceptions focusing upon Trinidad and Tobago. The studies reviewed here provide evidence of numerous approaches and strategies that appear to enhance investigative practice and homicide case closure. However, there are significant policy-transfer complexities that would need to be carefully considered in any attempt to bring investigative methods from developed nations to a developing nation like Trinidad and Tobago (Bissessar, 2000; Maguire and King, 2013).

### **Problem-oriented policing**

Problem-oriented policing (POP) defined narrowly entails “identifying and analysing community problems and developing more effective responses to them” (Goldstein, 1990: 3). It focuses on establishing “a better balance between reactive and proactive aspects of policing and creating, “a vehicle for making more effective use of the community and rank-and-file officers in getting the police job done” (Goldstein, 1990: 32)<sup>28</sup>. In 2018, Herman Goldstein, the father of problem-oriented policing, was awarded the prestigious Stockholm Prize in Criminology for his lifetime of work on police reform.

Since its development, POP has involved the use of certain tools, most notably the problem analysis triangle (PAT) and the SARA process (scanning, analysis, response and assessment) (Tilley, 2011: 382). PAT (which has links with routine activities theory, see Cohen and Felson, 1979) suggests that there are three notable features of crime problems: (i) an offender; (ii) victim/s and (iii) a location or characteristics of locations. Altering one or more of these three crucial problem features is said to remove or ameliorate the problem (Tilley, 2011: 383). The SARA process purports that problems have to be identified through an initial Scanning process and then studied in detail during the Analysis stage. A plausible Response to the problem can then be devised, the effectiveness of which should be determined through Assessment. As Tilley (2011: 383) puts it, “in practice there is a good deal of feedback and overlap between stages,” however “the point in problem oriented policing is that the problem and its analysis come first” (Tilley, 2011: 382).

POP has been adopted in jurisdictions all around the world to tackle a wide variety of problems ranging from mundane order maintenance issues to more serious problems like violent crime and homicide. The majority of applications of POP focus on the police patrol function, however the principles of POP are equally applicable to

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<sup>28</sup> In its broader context, POP is a “comprehensive plan for improving policing in which the high priority attached to addressing substantive problems, shapes the police agency, influencing all changes in personnel, organization and procedures” (Goldstein, 1990: 32).

the criminal investigation function in policing. Here we discuss a major evaluation of a POP approach for improving homicide investigation practices.

Braga and Dusseault (2018) used quasi-experimental methods to determine the effectiveness of the Boston Police Department's (BPD) problem-oriented policing approach to improve post-homicide investigative practices. The study covered a period ranging from 2007 to 2014; the BPD homicide clearance intervention started in January 2012. Prior to the implementation of the intervention, the BPD engaged in a POP approach to understand the underlying nature of their homicide clearance problem. This included a quantitative and qualitative analysis of current BPD homicide investigation policies and practices. The BPD engaged researchers from Northeastern University to assist in the completion of statistical analysis of 314 homicide victimizations between January 1, 2007, and December 31, 2011. Drawing on homicide case file information and interviews with homicide detectives, this analysis examined the influence of homicide case characteristics (e.g., circumstances, weapon used) and BPD investigative practices (e.g., response time, actions of first responders, number of detectives assigned to a case, use of computerised databases and forensic testing) on the likelihood that homicide cases were cleared. The BPD also convened a Homicide Advisory Committee staffed by homicide and district detectives, crime scene response officers, forensic and intelligence analysts, homicide prosecutors, and others to identify best practices and gaps in their investigative processes. The development of the homicide clearance intervention also drew upon best practices in other jurisdictions.

BPD reformed post-homicide investigative practices in a number of ways including (i) the assignment of additional detectives to the homicide unit, (ii) the standardisation of investigative procedure and forensic reviews, (iii) improved training for investigative personnel, and (iv) peer review of open investigations.

A key issue identified during the problem analysis phase of the project involved the variation in homicide investigation practices across individuals, police districts, and units involved in Boston homicide cases. Consequently, a key element of the intervention involved the development and implementation of a comprehensive set of standardised protocols to guide working practices. These included: the formal designation of a crime scene entry log scribe, the canvas supervisor role, formalised witness identification and management techniques, the formal assignment of responding district detectives to homicide unit detectives for on-scene and post-scene briefing, increasing the deployment of Forensic Group technicians to homicide scenes, the collection and transfer of evidence to the Forensic Group for storage and testing, and working with homicide prosecutors to prepare cases for prosecution.

The homicide unit, Crime Scene Response Unit (CSRU), and Forensic Group staff received extensive additional training in cutting-edge investigative techniques over the course of the intervention implementation. Finally, the BPD homicide unit

convened monthly peer review sessions for all open homicide investigations to ensure that all possible avenues for identifying responsible offenders were being pursued. A similar process was put in place to manage the processing and testing of physical evidence by Forensic Group. Over the course of the intervention period, new forensic technology was also acquired.

The evaluation concluded that the intervention significantly increased key investigative activities and improved Boston homicide clearance rates relative to the pre-intervention period and relative to clearance trends in other Massachusetts and U.S. jurisdictions. Using mixed effects logistic regression model results, the authors reported that the BPD homicide intervention was associated with a 43% increase in the odds that a homicide case was cleared relative to the odds that it was not cleared during the study period (p. 304). Put another way, the clearance rate increased by nearly 10% when a standard clearance rate definition was applied and by more than 18% when the clearance rate definition was extended to include cases awaiting grand jury decisions (p. 305).

Braga and Dusseault were unable to determine from their impact evaluation which BDP reforms were the most important in generating the observed improvements in the homicide clearance rate, though they emphasise the importance of a robust 'information chain' from witness statements and physical evidence that enhances the ability of officers to hold offenders accountable (p.307).

Perhaps most importantly, they note that:

“The BPD achieved the observed homicide clearance gains by engaging a problem-oriented policing approach. With the aid of academic research partners, the BPD analyzed homicide case characteristics that influenced clearances, identified gaps in their investigative and forensic practices and processes, and implemented a set of reforms that were tailored to the nature of their homicide clearance problem. Other jurisdictions interested in improving clearance rates for homicides or other crime types should *replicate this process rather than simply adopt specific tactics from the BPD approach*” (Braga and Dusseault, 2018:307, emphasis added).

Boston's experience with improving homicide case clearances highlights the importance of analysis prior to implementing reform strategies. One of the reasons that police reforms tend to fail is because they are based on inaccurate assumptions about the nature of the problem. The use of the POP methodology helped to ensure that the BPD understood the issues that needed to be addressed before seeking to address them. Consistent with the SARA model, the BPD teamed up with a skilled team of researchers to conduct a sophisticated assessment of the effectiveness of their reform efforts. This project serves as an exemplar on at least two levels. First, it illustrates clearly that even though POP is typically associated with police patrol, it represents a powerful framework for improving criminal investigations as well.

Second, the police-university partnership that facilitated this project enabled the BPD to take advantage of the university's strong capacity to provide analytical support to the benefit of the community.

### **Assessing and understanding homicide clearance**

There is a substantial academic literature on what factors influence homicide clearance rates (for reviews see Brookman et al., 2018 and Maguire et al., 2010). This body of research is too large for us to provide a detailed review, but here we present a brief review that focuses on some of the key concepts and findings in the literature.

In thinking about the wide variety of factors that might influence whether a case is cleared or not, Maguire et al. (2010) distinguished between "environmental" factors (i.e., all of the factors that are external to the police organisation, including incident characteristics, community characteristics, and the political environment) and "organisational" factors (e.g., police resources, policies and organisational arrangements, investigative practices, practitioner skills, and available technologies). There is evidence to suggest that a number of environmental and organisational issues influence whether homicide cases are cleared. By far, the largest body of research on these issues comes from the USA and has focused upon environmental factors, especially the characteristics of the homicide incident. We review that literature here briefly before moving on to consider in more detail, those studies that have tried to unravel the impact of organisational factors. Our greater focus upon organisational factors is necessary given the parameters of this evidence review with its emphasis upon police practice.

### **Environmental factors and homicide clearance**

By far, the largest body of research on environmental factors and homicide clearance has examined the role of incident characteristics. One of the most consistent findings has been that, after controlling for other variables, homicides involving firearms are less likely to be solved than those involving other weapons or no weapons (Alderden & Lavery, 2007; Litwin & Xu, 2007; Mouzos & Muller, 2001; Puckett & Lundman, 2003; Regoeczi, Jarvis, & Riedel, 2008; Roberts, 2007). A few other studies report contrary results (Bänziger & Killias, 2014; Jiao, 2007). A related finding is that homicides associated with other felonies (such as robbery) have lower clearance rates than those not associated with other felonies (Lee, 2005; Mouzos & Muller, 2001; Regoeczi, Jarvis & Riedel, 2008). The location where the homicide occurred is also thought to be important. For instance, Keel (2008), Wellford and Cronin (1999), Bänziger and Killias (2014), and Jarvis, Mancik, and Regoeczi (2017) all reported that homicides occurring outdoors have lower clearance rates than those occurring indoors. A similarly consistent finding is that homicides in private dwellings or other private places are more likely to be cleared (Addington, 2006; Jiao, 2007; Litwin & Xu, 2007; Mouzos & Muller, 2001; Regoeczi et al., 2008; Roberts, 2007).

However, others have found no significant association between location and detection (Marche, 1994; Puckett & Lundman, 2003; Riedel & Rinehart, 1996).

Findings are mixed regarding the characteristics of victims. Perhaps the greatest level of agreement is found in relation to race and ethnicity, which have often been shown to be associated with clearance rates. For example, using data from Chicago, Litwin (2004) found that cases with Latino victims were less likely to be cleared by arrest than those with White victims. Roberts and Lyons (2011) found that homicides involving Hispanic victims were less likely to be solved than those with White or Black victims, while DeCarlo (2016) found that homicides of young African American males who lived in cities with high poverty were particularly unlikely to be solved. In Britain, homicides involving Black victims are less likely to be solved than those with White victims (Brookman et al., 2017). Regarding other characteristics, Turner and Kosa (2003) found that immigrant, transient, homeless, or unidentified victims were overrepresented among cold cases in the United States (and hence likely to remain unsolved for many years). Several other studies, notably the large multivariate analysis by Wellford and Cronin (1999), have found no significant association between victim characteristics and clearances (see Addington, 2006; Puckett & Lundman, 2003; Regoeczi, Kennedy, & Silverman, 2000).

A related factor is victim lifestyle, which has also been found to influence the likelihood of detection. For example, Trussler (2010) found that homicide cases in Canada that involved gang and/or drug activity were less likely to be solved than those without these characteristics. Similar findings have emerged in studies in the United States (see, for example, Litwin, 2004; Turner & Kosa, 2003; Wellford & Cronin, 1999). In such cases, police may know the identity of the offender but fail to amass enough evidence to bring charges and clear the case, due to witness intimidation (Maguire et al., 2010).

More generally, Rydberg and Pizarro's (2014) analysis of homicides in Newark, New Jersey found that homicides with victims scoring high on their "deviant lifestyle scale" (determined by whether the victim was a gang member, drug dealer, involved in other illegal activities, or had a criminal history) took significantly longer to clear than those with victims who led non-deviant lifestyles. Similarly, Hawk and Dabney's (2014) qualitative research in a U.S. homicide unit revealed that investigators were heavily influenced by perceptions of victim deservedness. Investigators prioritized "true victim" cases over those in which the homicide was viewed as resulting from the victim's involvement in risky behaviours (such as selling drugs or being involved in gangs).

Finally, some researchers have found the victim-offender relationship to be one of the strongest predictors of homicide clearances, leading to the assertion that the more distant the social relationship between victim and offender, the less likely the case will be solved. Hence, "domestic" homicides typically have the highest



clearance rates (see, for example, Lee, 2005; Marche, 1994; Roberts, 2007; Roberts & Lyons, 2011).

Beyond the research on incident or case characteristics, a smaller body of research has examined the influence of community characteristics or context on homicide case outcomes. For instance, Borg and Parker (2001) found that a number of community characteristics were associated with clearance rates, including residential segregation, level of education, and residential mobility. By contrast, Roberts (2014) found that jurisdiction-level poverty, residential instability, racial segregation, and population size had no effect on investigative outcomes. Similarly, Litwin (2004) found that, whereas home ownership rates had a significant positive effect on homicide clearance rates, several other community characteristics (including income, unemployment, education, population, and homicide rate) had no effects. Research has also revealed that disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods can sometimes be characterised by high levels of ‘legal cynicism<sup>29</sup>’ (Kirk and Papachristos, 2011 cited in Braga and Dusseault, 2018). Cynical views of police and the criminal justice system may disincentive witnesses to share information on homicide to police or to give evidence in court against charged suspects (Braga and Dusseault, 2018).

### **Organisational factors and homicide clearance**

Systematic research on the influence of “organisational” factors is less common than research on environmental factors. We review what is known below, paying extended attention to some recent studies that have focused upon the challenges of successfully investigating gang-related homicide.

Keel et al (2009) surveyed 55 police departments in the United States to test the effects of five sets of factors on murder clearance rates, including three police-related categories: management practices, investigative procedures, and analytical methods. They concluded that formal training of homicide detectives improved clearance rates, as did the use of analytical tools, such as blood splatter and statement analysis. Furthermore, they suggested that managerial oversight could marginally improve agency clearance rates through the mobilisation of necessary resources, as could the implementation of witness protection programs to increase levels of cooperation with the police. This is one of the few studies that has highlighted the impact of investigative skills and experience. Earlier evidence on this issue is contradictory. Whereas Marche (1994) found detective experience to be positively related to homicide clearances, both Chaiken et al. (1977) and Puckett and

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<sup>29</sup> Defined as “a cultural frame in which people perceive the law as illegitimate, unresponsive, and ill equipped to ensure public safety” (Kirk & Papachristos, 2011, p. 1190; see also Sampson & Bartusch, 1998).

Lundman (2003) reported, counterintuitively, that level of detective experience was unrelated to outcomes.

Roberts (2014) found that the only organisational variable with a significant effect on homicide clearance rates was police workload; agencies with larger workloads had lower clearance rates. This finding is consistent with an early analysis of the effects of police organisational factors upon clearance rates by Chaiken, Greenwood, and Petersilia (1977), who also found that larger caseloads were associated with lower clearance rates.

One of the most comprehensive studies of organisational factors is the abovementioned study by Wellford and Cronin (1999), who examined 798 homicides that occurred in four large U.S. cities between 1994 and 1995. They identified 51 factors that had a statistically significant relationship with the probability of closing a case, 37 of which were said to be to some extent within the control of the police. They highlighted as particularly important a swift response to the scene (i.e., within 30 minutes of the crime being reported) and comprehensive investigative practices. Other relevant evidence comes from qualitative studies. For example, Carter and Carter (2016) examined effective investigative practices in seven law enforcement agencies in the USA that had at least 24 homicides in 2011 and had a clearance rate of 80% or higher. They were also able to make broad comparisons with other jurisdictions with low rates. They concluded that high homicide clearance rates by these agencies were facilitated by adequate resourcing, a strong community policing presence, collaboration with external agencies, and a culture dedicated to innovation.

Carter and Carter (2016:172) also observed that the most successful departments demonstrated “exceptional cooperation and collaboration with community members via the victim–witness advocate and crime tips initiatives”. Victim-witness advocates and the Victim-Witness Resource Officer (the role introduced by BPD as part of their POP approach to improving homicide investigation processes and practices) share some characteristics with the British Police Family Liaison Officer (FLO)<sup>30</sup>. Though the benefits of the FLO have yet to be formally evaluated or assessed, it is a role that has been acknowledged as an integral part of contemporary British homicide investigations. Foremost, FLOs are trained investigators tasked with gathering information and helping to assess what evidence and intelligence relatives may be able to offer the investigation. In addition, the FLO is a conduit between the family and the investigation, ensuring that the family understand the process and are provided with as much detail as can be shared regarding the progress of the investigation. Brookman and McGarry (2015) concluded that the FLO role represents the “strategic heart” of major crime investigation bringing numerous benefits

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<sup>30</sup> The role of dedicated FLOs in homicide cases emerged in the United Kingdom in the aftermath of the Stephen Lawrence murder as part of a raft of significant investigative reforms (see MacPherson, 1999).

including: enhanced victim profiling; better family and community impacts; improved trust and confidence in the police; potential inroads into difficult-to-reach and hostile communities; and superior community intelligence models.

In England, Feist and Newiss (2001) examined police files and reports associated with six difficult-to-solve homicide cases. They found that the initial actions of the senior investigating officer (SIO) were critical in briefing, debriefing, and motivating other officers on the investigation. They also emphasized the importance of carefully evaluating the large volumes of information that can accumulate in the early days of an investigation. Relatedly, based on a qualitative study of homicide investigation in England, Innes (2003) observed that failure to prevent “systemic overload” of information could result in establishing too many lines of enquiry and pursuing the wrong leads, thus reducing productivity. Furthermore, Innes suggested that “compliance drift” (deviations from standard practice or regulation) can creep into the work of detectives during long-running cases, due to pressure to get results or, in some cases, repetition and boredom.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police in the USA (IACP, 2013) explored the administrative environment that supports homicide investigations and highlighted ten ways in which law enforcement executives could positively impact homicide investigation outcomes:

- Invest heavily in understanding investigators (including what their needs are, how they work, and how they can best succeed at their work).
- Systems for standardised and structured management of investigations.
- Mandate information sharing.
- Support investigations with appropriate resources.
- Assess response to victims/survivors.
- Build up/reinforce partnerships.
- Build community cachet (“the community is the lynchpin to solving homicides”).
- Manage political and public expectations of homicide investigations.
- Measure homicide numbers and closure (“you cannot evaluate and improve what you do not measure”).
- Measure beyond closure (e.g. consider the community impact of investigations and the potential to reduce and prevent homicide).

Most recently, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA, 2018) published findings from its comprehensive assessment of the homicide investigation policies and practices in

five US police departments: the Baltimore Police Department, the Cleveland Division of Police, the Houston Police Department, the Miami Police Department, and the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police. The project sites were chosen based on criteria that included: a recent rise in homicide rates, homicide clearance rates that were decreasing and/or were below the national average, and a commitment of the police departments' leaders to improving homicide investigation procedures. Nine key findings and countless recommendations were provided. Of relevance to our evidence review are the following key findings:

- The development and provision of written policies and procedures that provide clear, comprehensive, and current guidance on how to conduct an effective homicide investigation.
- A consistent, formal process for selecting patrol officers to become detectives, for assigning detectives to a homicide unit, and for selecting homicide supervisors.
- The provision of consistent, formal, and comprehensive investigations training for both new and veteran investigators.
- Staffing and caseload management.
- Supervision, accountability and oversight.
- Internal co-ordination and team approach.
- External co-ordination (with community and prosecutors).
- Expanding digital evidence and crime analysis capabilities.

Brookman et al., (2018) undertook qualitative research in both the United States and Britain in order to better understand the factors that influence whether homicide cases are solved. Based on 101 interviews conducted with homicide investigators (57 in the United States and 44 in Britain), and over 700 hours of ethnographic shadowing and observation of homicide investigations they outlined three organisational factors that positively impacted case outcomes. Firstly, the quality of homicide detectives played a central role in whether homicides were investigated effectively. These qualities included a robust work ethic alongside relevant experience, knowledge, and skills. In addition, the quality of the work of patrol or uniformed officers – who often are the first to attend the scene of a homicide – was observed to be potentially important to the outcome of an investigation. Second, the availability and effective use of resources was highlighted including making best use of science and technology. Despite major advances in science and technology, it was apparent that there were frequently challenges in using it to best effect. These included (digital) information overload, excessive time demands on detectives to make sense of information, systemic delays in processing intelligence or evidence generated from new technologies, and,

lack of training to keep pace with advances in science and technology. Third, it was widely agreed that the culture and attitudes of detectives (and other officers) could have an impact on case outcomes. In particular, shared opinions about particular kinds of victims, suspects, and communities influenced not only levels of investigative commitment to particular cases, but also how detectives interacted with members of the community in question.

Brookman et al. (2018) emphasised the importance of the nexus between detectives' perceptions of particular kinds of homicides, offenders, victims, witnesses, and communities; their expectations about the solvability of cases and, in turn, the commitment of energy and resources. They observed that many detectives in the United States, expected that getting witness cooperation in certain communities – typically, deprived inner-city, multi-ethnic areas – would be a difficult process. In some such cases, they responded by simply “going through the motions” when canvassing local residents (almost resigned to not receiving any assistance).

They also acknowledged that some kinds of organisational change, especially in culture and attitudes, are notoriously difficult and slow to bring about but ultimately necessary. They nevertheless recommended some shorter-term strategies that could produce positive change relatively quickly. For example, enhanced detective training, rewarding the most committed detectives, pairing up detectives with different skill sets and work ethic and the establishment of schemes in which different police departments and homicide squads can learn from each other in a systematic way.

Braga et al., (2018) explored 465 homicide incidents that occurred between 1st January 2007 and 31st December 2014 in Boston, focusing in particular on the influence of investigative resources on homicide case outcomes. Of particular relevance to our evidence review, they also examined the challenges of gang-related and drug-related homicide and undertook exploratory group comparisons to distinguish investigative differences in gang and drug homicides relative to non-gang and non-drug homicides. Gang and drug homicides comprised nearly two-thirds of total homicides in Boston and had the lowest clearance rate (43%). Gang and drug homicides in Boston were 69% less likely to be cleared relative to homicides emanating from nondomestic personal disputes and arguments. BPD homicide detectives cleared nearly three-fourths of non-gang and non-drug homicides during the study period.

The analysis by Braga et al. (2018) suggests that gang and drug homicides generate fewer pieces of physical evidence at the initial crime scene relative to other kinds of homicides. They reasoned that decreased physical evidence at gang and drug homicide scenes may offer, at least, a partial explanation for declining homicide clearance rates in an era of improving forensic technology and analysis. When gang and drug homicides occurred in Boston, more officers were on-scene to canvass for witnesses and evidence, and more witnesses were identified on scene.

However, despite these apparent advantages, investigators conducted fewer post-scene interviews with witnesses (that they determined was likely due to community cynicism towards police and a 'no snitching' code). The authors concluded that gang and drug homicides remain particularly difficult to clear due to a lack of physical evidence and witness cooperation but nevertheless concluded that while inherited case characteristics matter (i.e. event characteristics), enhanced investigative resources and improved practices increase homicide clearances.

Finally, Maguire et al (2010) examined the factors that contributed to a rapid decline in homicide clearances in Trinidad and Tobago from just over 70% in 1999 to 24% in 2005. Data for the study were collected from December 2004 to March 2006 by a team of researchers working regularly in Trinidad and Tobago. The team were given unfettered access to all elements of Trinidad and Tobago's criminal justice system and gathered detailed and wide-ranging qualitative and quantitative data including 'official' data from the Homicide Bureau of Investigations (HBI), 242 interviews and numerous observations and 'ride-alongs'. The authors spent approximately 240 days in Trinidad and Tobago studying crime and criminal justice issues.

The authors offered three broad categories of explanations for the dramatic decline in homicide clearances: environmental factors, organisational factors and higher order effects. The predominant environmental factors identified were a dramatic increase in homicides, a simultaneous shift in case characteristics (i.e. an increasing proportion of homicides involving gangs and guns) and citizen unwillingness to cooperate with police investigators (due to fear and distrust of the police, and fear of reprisal from criminals). At the organisational level, Trinidad and Tobago did not have the appropriate infrastructure in place to respond to a large increase in the number of homicides. Officers with little formal training in homicide investigations or crime scene management became overwhelmed with the volume of homicides and the criminal justice system did not have the proper infrastructure in place for collecting information necessary to clear cases (such as witness statements, photographs and physical evidence).

Finally, Maguire et al (2010) identified higher order effects whereby environmental factors and organisational factors influenced one another (a reciprocal relationship) and interacted with one another (a multiplicative relationship). "For example, lengthy delays in forensic evidence processing led some investigators not to submit physical evidence, especially ballistic evidence, for forensic analysis. Without this evidence, forensic services could not link ballistic evidence to crimes and criminals, which not only decreased clearance rates, but also presumably led some active offenders to continue offending. Similarly, as clearance rates dropped, citizen confidence in the ability of the police to protect them from retaliation by offenders decreased, producing lower levels of citizen cooperation. As citizens shared less information with police, investigators stopped doing neighbourhood canvasses and eliciting information from citizens. By pulling back, police investigators ensured that they

would not receive useful information from communities, and with less contact, citizen confidence in the police continued to drop” (Maguire et al., 2010: 393).

Many of the aforementioned studies recognise the challenges of changing organisations such as police and the existence of resistance (Carter and Carter, 2016). As Braga and Dusseault (2018: 307) put it, “changing police organizations and their cultures is very difficult work ... and can take considerable political will and persistence”. Some of the studies also allude to an equally important issue – that of policy transfer complexities, to which we now turn.

### **Policy transfer: risks and challenges**

The aforementioned studies have all taken place in either the UK or USA and it is difficult to determine whether, or to what extent, the findings might be applicable in the context of homicide and its investigation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Maguire and King (2013) specifically examined the transfer of criminal investigative methods from developed nations (USA, Canada, and the UK) to a developing nation (Trinidad and Tobago). A team of researchers collected data in Trinidad and Tobago between December 2004 and July 2010. In this publication, the authors rely upon qualitative data gathered from interviews and observations with police, crime laboratory and government officials. In total, hundreds of employees from various units and divisions throughout the TTPS were interviewed, including administrators, uniformed constables, general criminal investigators, homicide investigators, crime analysts and intelligence officers. In addition, individuals from other criminal justice agencies were interviewed, including the Ministry of National Security, the crime laboratory, the prisons, the courts and other defence and intelligence agencies. In addition, the researchers conducted unsystematic observations primarily intended to familiarise the research team with the TTPS and its personnel.

Three criminal investigation reforms introduced in Trinidad and Tobago based on practices in Australia, Canada, the UK, and the USA were studied in depth: (i) automated ballistic imaging (ii) DNA profiling and (iii) efforts to restructure the Homicide Bureau of Investigations in the TTPS. The authors discovered that all three reforms encountered substantial implementation problems. To illustrate (taking restructuring as an example), the American advisers recommended forming a full-service homicide unit that would have centralised responsibility for all homicide investigations in Trinidad and Tobago. They also recommended new structures and processes that would address the ‘near complete absence of accountability’ in homicide investigations (Katz and Maguire 2005, p. 9). Finally, they recommended increasing the size of the homicide unit from 41 to 140 officers. Maguire and King report that “on the surface, the advisers’ recommendations were acted upon hastily”. However, in reality, four important variables led to eventual implementation failure (p. 354). Firstly, many of those transferred into the new homicide unit had no previous investigative experience and were given insubstantial training. Second, the liaison who was assigned full time to assist with implementation was burdened with

other duties and unable to translate the proposed reforms into reality. Third, as the new unit was being established, some homicide officials began to resist outside influence and, finally, the reorganisation “was implemented without fidelity to the original plan” (p. 355). Ultimately “... this reform was doomed to fail because the structures necessary for it to succeed were never taken seriously” (Maguire and King, 2013:355-356). As they explain:

“The lack of supervision, management and accountability took its toll in a newly formed unit consisting of employees who had not worked together before and who lacked a work-group culture used to addressing problem performance or rewarding success and apprehending criminals” (Maguire and King, 2013:355).

One of a number of important messages that emerges from Maguire and King’s research is that understanding the transfer of criminal investigation methods into Trinidad and Tobago means paying close attention to the network of agencies (and units within agencies) responsible for pieces of the criminal investigation process as well as the agency that oversees them. This includes The Ministry of National Security that oversees all law enforcement agencies in the nation, other units with specialised criminal investigation responsibilities (such as the Special Anti-Crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago, SAUTT)<sup>31</sup> and the crime laboratory. Improving criminal investigations is not simply a matter of adopting new technologies or altering structures and practices within a single agency (Maguire et al. 2010). “Large-scale reforms must take place within and among multiple interdependent agencies to be effective” (Maguire and King, 2013: 357).

### **Key points**

Based on the evidence reviewed, the following lessons can inform police practice in relation to gang-related homicide investigation and clearance:

- An understanding that certain kinds of homicide are particularly challenging to investigate and close. For instance, gang and gun related homicides are very difficult to solve, especially those with no witnesses or those that occur in areas with low levels of witness co-operation.
- Adopting the principles of Problem-Oriented Policing is a useful avenue for (a) determining the nature of the problem to be resolved, (b) analysing it comprehensively, (c) responding to it, and (d) assessing whether the responses are effective.
- Any strategies developed will benefit from efforts to improve trust and co-operation between police and community.

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<sup>31</sup> This agency was disbanded in 2011 and no longer exists.



The following 'environmental factors' tend to be associated with the most challenging homicides to investigate and, by extension, with lower homicide clearances:

- Homicides involving firearms.
- Outdoor homicide scenes.
- Homicides where the victims are gang or drug involved or otherwise involved in a 'deviant' lifestyle.
- Homicides where the victim and offender have a distant social relationship.
- Disadvantaged neighbourhoods where citizens are characterised as harbouring high levels of 'legal cynicism' and are dis-incentivized to co-operate with police or Criminal Justice System (CJS) more generally.
- Neighbourhoods where citizens are fearful to speak to police.

The following 'organisational factors' tend to be associated with improved or most successful homicide case closure:

- Sufficient detectives assigned to each case.
- Detectives who have been appropriately trained and possess the necessary skills.
- Appropriate caseloads assigned to detectives.
- Swift and effective initial responses by first attending officers and detectives.
- Robust information and evidence chains from crime scene to court.
- Standardisation of investigative procedure and practice.
- Effective information management systems.
- Effective supervision and managerial oversight.
- Appropriate infrastructures and interagency working (especially between police, forensic science services and prosecutors).
- Information sharing and collaboration across relevant police agencies and relevant external agencies.
- Effective briefings and debriefings.
- Co-operation and collaboration with community members.
- Positive police-community relationships and the building of community cachet.

- Effective use of victim-witness advocates and/or victim-witness resource officers and crime tips initiatives.
- Peer review of open cases.
- Witness protection schemes.
- Police culture dedicated to innovation.
- Police culture characterised by dedicated/positive/optimistic approach to all cases.

Reform and policy-transfer issues:

- Transfer of policy from one jurisdiction to another must be sensitive to local environmental contingencies.
- Lessons from Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) evaluations highlight the importance of analysis prior to implementing reform strategies.
- Similarly, POP evaluations illustrate the importance of reformers teaming up with skilled researchers to (a) help to analyse the problem and offer analytic support (b) provide independent evaluations of interventions.
- POP evaluations suggest that replicating the process of POP rather than adopting specific tactics is the most effective approach when considering reforms in different jurisdictions.

The implementation of policy from one jurisdiction to another can fail if:

- Inaccurate assumptions are made about the nature of the problem.
- There is resistance to change.
- There is lack of fidelity to the original plan.
- Those implementing change are not properly trained.
- There is a lack of supervision, management and accountability.
- There is insufficient appreciation of networks of units and agencies involved in homicide investigation and their interdependence.

## **Chapter 3: Discussion and conclusions**

In this final section of the report, we consider the implications of the findings arising from the review for policy-makers and practitioners attempting to respond effectively to the issues of gang-homicide and perceived police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago. We end by considering how the findings might inform the design of an HMICFRS inspection of police in Trinidad and Tobago.

### **Implications of findings**

Several implications arise from this rapid evidence review that are of relevance for determining how gang-related homicide and police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago might be tackled most effectively, and are useful for informing the design of an HMICFRS police inspection of Trinidad and Tobago.

Taking into account the unique context of Trinidad and Tobago is paramount when (a) considering whether and how to introduce any of the aforementioned measures to tackle gang-related homicide and police corruption and (b) how to go about undertaking an inspection of police in the first instance. The small island developing states in the Caribbean, including Trinidad and Tobago, have endured decades of reformers visiting from the developed world to implant their own structures, practices, and policies. The reforms that are implemented most successfully are those that are endorsed by key local stakeholders and that are carefully synthesised with existing local practices.

### **Tackling gang-related homicide**

First and foremost, it is important to gather accurate insights into the nature of the gang-related homicide problem in Trinidad and Tobago adopting a Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) approach and the Scanning Analysis Response Assessment (SARA) model of analysis. Secondly, recognition that Police alone cannot prevent or successfully investigate gang-related homicide ought to underpin any gang-related investigation and prevention strategies.

Although police receive the brunt of the blame for Trinidad and Tobago's violence problem, the most effective solutions are those that draw on a variety of stakeholders. One way of thinking about optimising the national response to gangs and violence is thinking about prevention, intervention, and suppression. Interventions which address the harmful social and community influences underpinning gang violence have been shown to be the most effective. With this in mind, are there evidence-based initiatives in place to keep young people out of gangs in the first place and to teach them how to resolve conflict without the use of violence (prevention)? Are there evidence-based initiatives in place to entice gang members to leave their gangs or to encourage gang members not to use violence

(intervention)? One such initiative – Project REASON – was recently found to be highly effective in Trinidad and Tobago but it is no longer operating. We therefore suggest consideration is given to implementing a multi-agency intervention based on the Project Reason model. Finally, are the police using the most well-evaluated, evidence-based strategies to capture those who are engaging in repeated acts of violence and hold them accountable for their offences (suppression)? An assessment of whether the TTPS have the necessary personnel and technological capability to achieve this should therefore be undertaken. This simple model provides a template for how to implement an effective, coherent policy response to gangs and violence in Trinidad and Tobago.

Interagency collaboration is vital in solving homicide, especially between police, forensic science services, prosecutors and the courts. To these ends, creating mechanisms for building effective communication between homicide detectives and external agencies is important. For instance, since the homicide problem in Trinidad and Tobago is largely a gun violence problem, finding ways to extract greater investigative value from every crime gun is essential. This will require police and the crime laboratory to have clear, effective interagency agreements in place about the timely collection, processing, reporting, and storage of all ballistic evidence (firearms, spent shell casings, and fired bullets) to ensure that investigators can make use of this evidence in clearing homicide cases. This is just one example of how building effective communications between homicide detectives and external agencies can influence homicide case outcomes.

Many units within the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service have in-depth knowledge about the areas where homicide is most prevalent and the people who live there. For instance, the divisional task forces work in these areas regularly and have useful knowledge about gangs and violence. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) detectives assigned to police stations also tend to have useful knowledge that could benefit homicide investigators. Poor lines of communication make it difficult for homicide detectives to capture valuable information from their peers that can benefit their investigations.

Provision of social support and adequate opportunities offering alternatives to gang crime also need to be in place. This requires police to work closely with community-based agencies such as substance misuse, employment / training / education and housing providers in order to ensure adequate resources are available.

Previous interventions have been discontinued due to a lack of government support and funding. A comprehensive communication strategy could be developed to foster both national support for the intervention, crucial for ensuring sustainability, and local support, a vital component for effective implementation of the initiative within communities.

The nature of police/community relationships within Trinidad and Tobago is of particular importance, and attention to improving these relationships would maximise the potential for any such intervention to succeed. This will require initiatives to improve public trust by; embedding the TTPS within communities (organisational decentralisation), taking a collaborative, community-focused policing approach and tackling alleged corruption (see recommendations below).

## **Tackling police corruption**

A number of national, organisational and individual factors have been shown to influence the prevalence of police corruption. It is however, important to recognise that the TTPS is embedded within, and influenced by, the wider system of governance in the country and addressing the alleged political corruption associated with the Trinidad and Tobago government is beyond the scope of this review. We therefore limit the implications of our findings to the reform of the TTPS. However, any reform is unlikely to reach its full potential without the support, recognition and investment from central Government, as has been shown with the discontinuation of funding for community policing initiatives previously.

Strategies should be considered that promote an organisational culture of integrity and by so doing, reinforce staff resilience to corruption. This would require:

- An emphasis from senior officers within the force upon ethical standards and a zero tolerance approach to corruption. This will require leadership and senior officers within the force to be supportive of the reform process and 'set the example' to all officers of lower ranks.
- Recruitment processes that adequately assess officers for views and characteristics, which are supportive of an ethical and collaborative approach to policing.
- Investment in ongoing staff training and review for officers of all ranks, with a focus upon ethics, integrity and community policing methods.
- Links with job dissatisfaction, 'alienation' and corruption to be borne in mind, and police to be equipped with adequate resource and support to undertake their role. The stress and demand of the role would need to be recognised by management with responsibility for ensuring the provision of practical and emotional support to officers throughout the TTPS.
- A clear reporting process for officers of all ranks throughout the TTPS to report their concerns, with reassurance that all reports of corruption and/or misconduct will be dealt with fairly and transparently and crucially, that appropriate action will be taken.

- Emphasis on the importance of an independent police complaints process. Similarly, attention to ensuring the existing regulatory framework and anti-corruption legislation is fully implemented and adhered to.

## **Considerations for police inspection**

Prior failed attempts to improve police investigative practice in Trinidad and Tobago by transferring strategies from Western developed nations provide important clues to inform more successful future attempts. We recommend that the following factors be considered:

### **Sensitivity to local conditions and contingencies**

Attempts to develop sophisticated or wholesale changes to how police in particular jurisdictions operate can falter where there is insufficient appreciation of local conditions and contingencies. To illustrate, attempting to develop British or American style processes of communication, working relations and evidence flow between police and Forensic Science services are likely to fail where the basics of sound evidence collection at the crime scene requires attention in the first instance. In short, realistic expectations of what can be achieved within key milestones might be an appropriate starting stance.

### **Awareness of the causes of prior policy transfer failure**

There is a need to be aware of, and attempt to mitigate against, the causes of prior policy transfer failure. It is worth reiterating here that the implementation of policy from one jurisdiction to another can fail if:

- Inaccurate assumptions are made about the nature of the problem.
- There is resistance to change.
- There is lack of fidelity to the original plan.
- Those implementing change are not properly trained.
- There is a lack of supervision, management and accountability.
- There is insufficient appreciation of networks of units and agencies involved in homicide investigation and their interdependence.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the network of individuals involved in homicide investigation have different experiences and perspectives about 'what works' in homicide investigation as well as the particular challenges of investigating these offences. We recommend speaking both formally and informally to detectives of different ranks and with varying levels of experience as investigators, as well as managers, patrol/community officers and those at other agencies who work with

police to investigate homicide i.e. staff at the Forensic Science Centre and prosecutors.

### **Study unsolved homicides**

Based on our research in homicide investigation in both developed and developing nations, we recommend selecting and studying a set of unsolved homicides from the TTPS and speaking to the detectives and others involved in each case, including crime laboratory personnel, to try to determine what prevented the case from being investigated effectively and solved. This approach (akin to a Homicide Prevention Working Group) can be incredibly enlightening and allow investigators to determine clearly 'what went wrong' in particular cases at particular moments. This knowledge can subsequently be synthesised to identify patterns of problems or 'sticking points' within investigations. These insights can help to formulate a clear set of ideas about how to move forward.

### **Observe 'live' homicide investigations**

Close observations of 'live' homicide investigations – including attendance at crime scenes – are an important methodology to adopt in order to unearth working practices on the ground. Decades of qualitative criminological research illustrate the benefits of first hand observation to understanding the phenomena under investigation. Understanding homicide investigation is no exception. Steps could be put in place to ensure that inspection team members can be taken quickly to homicide scenes to observe initial crime scene actions and activities, and subsequently to observe all phases and aspects of a core number of investigations. There are various approaches to observing investigations such as these. One approach is to 'shadow' particular detectives throughout their tasks, another is to try to 'see' as much of the investigation as possible by moving between detectives on squads or teams who are, necessarily, engaged in different investigative activities. Depending upon the size of the inspection team it may be possible to adopt both approaches in order to capture as full a picture as is practically possible within the inspection timeframe.

# Appendix 1

## Search documentation

- What is known about the nature and extent of gang homicide in Trinidad and Tobago?
  - What is known about the nature and extent of police corruption in Trinidad and Tobago and how might it be addressed?
1. No date limiter applied.
  2. Trinidad and Tobago specific.
  3. Current (i.e. not historical papers).
  4. Homicide gang or firearm related (i.e. not femicide, infanticide/familial, suicide or serial and perpetrator not victim-focused).
  5. English language.
  6. Peer reviewed journals.

	<b>Criminal Justice Abstracts</b>	<b>Assia</b>
S1 ab(Trinidad and Tobago) AND ab(homicide) OR ab(murder)	18	9
S2 AB (Trinidad and Tobago ) AND AB(gangs or gangsters or crime or street gangs or co-offending)	35	8
S3 AB ( trinidad and tobago) AND AB gang*	10	0
S4 AB (Trinidad and Tobago) AND AB (violence or AB crime or serious crime) OR AB (gun*) OR AB (weapons) OR AB (drug*)	6	17
S5 AB (Trinidad and Tobago) AND AB (corruption)	5	2
S6 AB (Trinidad and Tobago) AND AB (police)	26	5



S7 AB Trinidad and Tobago AND police misconduct	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>41</b>

- What police-led strategies for tackling gang homicide may be successful in the Trinidad and Tobago context?
- What can be learned from the available evidence to inform police practice in relation to gang-related homicide investigation and clearance?

1. Date limiters applied (see table).
2. Not location specific.
3. Systematic/meta reviews prioritised.
4. Randomised Control Trials and quasi-experimental reviews selected where available. Qualitative and case-study approached considered where subject specific and considered to add value to the review.
5. English Language.
6. Peer reviewed journals.

	<b>Criminal Justice Abstracts</b>	<b>Assia</b>
TI target* AND AB homicide NOT sexual NOT family	1	0
ab(Target*) AND ab(homicide) NOT ab(family) NOT ab(sexual)	69	39
Dates 2010 – 2019 AB target* AND AB gang*	58	70
AB Tackl* AND AB homicide	7	2
AB Tackl* AND AB gangs	14	8
AB Tackl* AND AB gang violence	5	3
Dates 2010 – 2019 AB target* AND AB ( homicide or murder ) NOT AB sexual NOT AB ( domestic violence or domestic abuse	68	82

or intimate partner violence ) NOT AB filicide NOT AB suicide		
Dates 2010 – 2019 AB deterrence AND AB ( homicide or murder)	19	10
AB deterrence AND AB ( gun crime)	5	2
AB deterrence AND AB gang*	30	8
AB Homicide clearance	41	10
ab(tackl*) AND ab(drug crime)	13	18
AB Caribbean AND AB Homicide OR murder	16	5
AB Caribbean AND AB gang*	8	0
AB Caribbean AND AB gun*	2	3
2015 – 2019 AB Prevent* AND AB ( homicide or murder )	139	52
2015 – 2019 AB Reduc* AND AB (Homicide or murder)	190	53
2015 – 2019AB Investigat* AND AB (Homicide or murder)	225	20
2015 – 2019 ab(reduc*) AND ab(gang*)	54	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>417</b>

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Fiona Brookman is Professor of Criminology at the University of South Wales. She conducts research mainly in the areas of policing, violence and homicide. She has undertaken ethnographic research of homicide investigation in Britain and America as well as research into homicide prevention and reduction in the UK context. She currently leads a Leverhulme-funded project exploring the role of forensic science and technology in homicide investigation. Fiona is Director of the Criminal Investigation Research Network (CIRN) and a member of a Home Office Expert Advisory Panel on Serious Violence Policy.

Anna Clancy is a Research Fellow at the University of South Wales whose main interests lie in the fields of resettlement and rehabilitation, substance misuse and domestic abuse. Having worked in both the Civil Service (Home Office) and academic environments with a wide range of stakeholders and policy-makers, she has developed an ongoing commitment to delivering 'real world' research with insights of practical value to practitioners and policy-makers while also contributing to the academic literature.

Edward Maguire is a professor of criminology and criminal justice at Arizona State University, where he also serves as associate director of the Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety. He received his Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from the State University of New York at Albany in 1997. Professor Maguire's research focuses primarily on policing and violence. He is also interested in the application of criminology to the study of crime and justice issues in the developing world, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean. He has been doing research on policing, violence, and gangs in Trinidad and Tobago since 2004.