



Latin America and the Caribbean



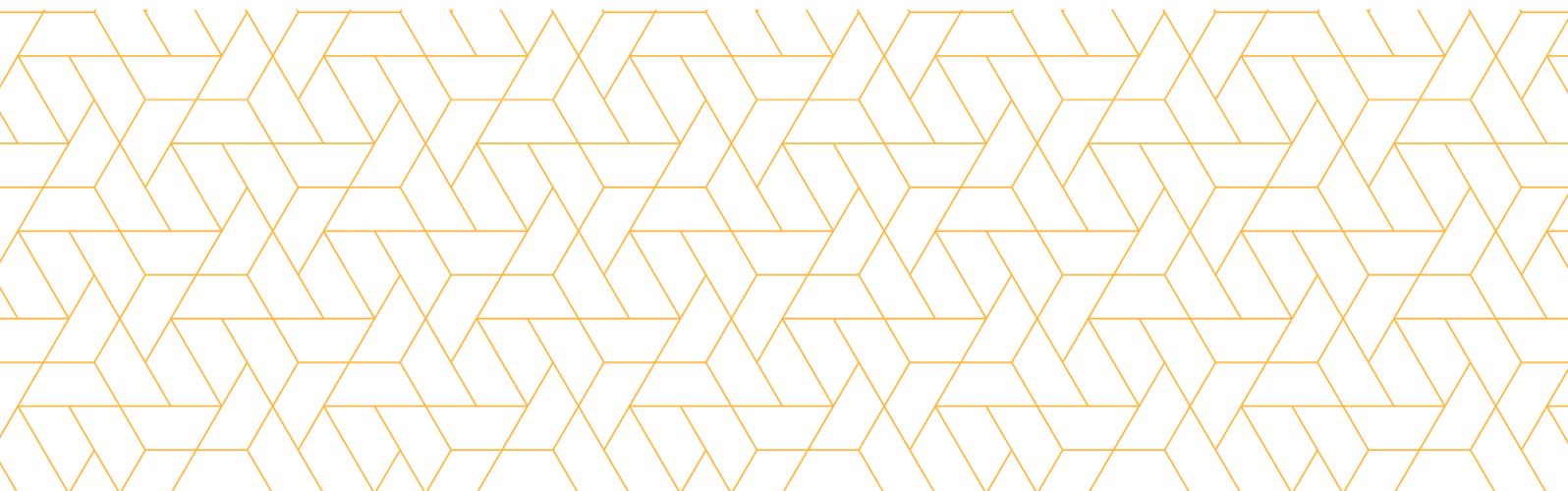
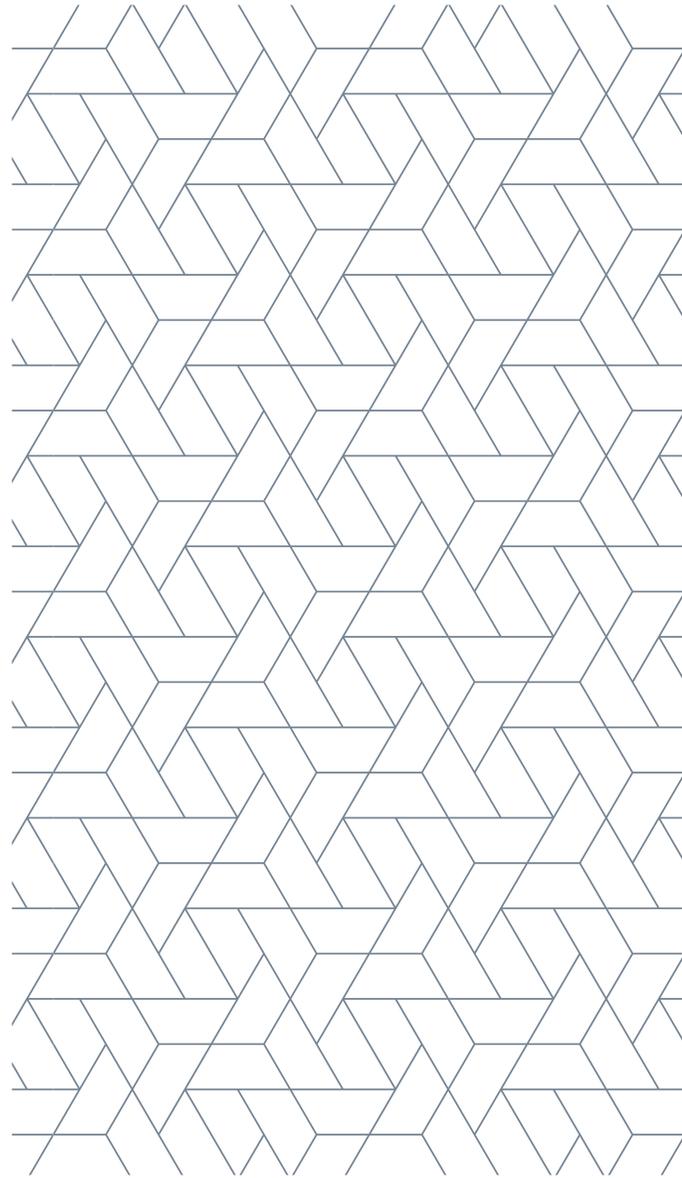
Overview

DCAF works with states, security sector institutions, and civil society in the Latin America and Caribbean region (LAC) to improve the governance of the security sector through inclusive and participatory reforms based on international norms and good practices.

DCAF assists the police, parliament, media, and civil society through innovative capacity building and producing tailored knowledge products that contribute to a more effective, transparent, and inclusive security sector that is properly overseen and accountable to the people it serves.

Our engagement covers the following thematic areas:

- » Strengthening the institutional effectiveness and integrity of police services within a framework of human rights and meritocracy;
- » Supporting civil society and security institutions to promote gender equality and respond effectively to gender-based violence;
- » Contributing to more gender-sensitive police services;
- » Assisting legislative bodies to oversee the security sector;
- » Promoting mutual accountability between the police, media, and civil society leaders.



Highlights

› **HONDURAS: ASSISTING THE REFORM OF THE NATIONAL POLICE**

DCAF has been working in Honduras since 2013 and opened a dedicated field office in Tegucigalpa in 2018. As part of the Citizen Security Programme funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, DCAF provides strategic and technical support to the Secretary for Security and Honduran National Police with its ongoing reform process. The programme aims to increase the institutional integrity and effectiveness of the police within a framework of human rights and meritocracy.

› **COLOMBIA: PROMOTING MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY BETWEEN THE POLICE, LOCAL MEDIA, AND SOCIAL LEADERS**

With the support of the German Federal Foreign Office, and in collaboration with Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa (FLIP), DCAF promotes mutual accountability between the police, local media outlets, and civil society leaders by fostering understanding and respect for each other's rights and duties, strengthening the oversight role of journalists and civil society leaders, for example through the use of social media, and enhancing the capacity of the police to engage with the media.

› **CHILE: SUPPORTING THE POLICE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ASSEMBLIES AND COMMUNICATION IN LINE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS**

In collaboration with the European Union Facility, DCAF is accompanying efforts of the Chilean Ministry of Interior and the national police force to strengthen their capabilities in the area of management of public assemblies and conflict de-escalation. We also support on internal and external communications with a focus on crises situations in line with human rights standards and good governance practices.

› **COLOMBIA: STRENGTHENING LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT OF THE SECURITY SECTOR**

In collaboration with the Folke Bernadotte Academy and the Swedish Government, DCAF is supporting the Colombian Congress to strengthen their oversight of the security sector. Through workshops, conferences and webinars, DCAF shares and promotes good practices and lessons learned. DCAF also develops tailored knowledge products, such as a baseline study on legislative oversight in Colombia.

› **COLOMBIA: IMPROVING THE SECURITY DIALOGUE BETWEEN RURAL WOMEN AND THE POLICE**

With support of the Norwegian government, and in collaboration with Corporación de investigación y acción social y económica (CIASE), DCAF contributes to the peace process by creating opportunities for women to voice their security needs. DCAF develops recommendations for the police on how to improve women's access to security through inclusive consultations with women in rural areas affected by armed conflict, while offering capacity building workshops on gender to the police. Through this work we reach women from all ages and backgrounds, including indigenous and afro-descendent women, and former combatants.

› **COLOMBIA: SUPPORTING GENDER-RESPONSIVE POLICE SERVICES**

Through the support of the Norwegian government, DCAF is helping the Colombian police conduct a gender self-assessment using a methodology to collect baseline data and assess challenges and opportunities for gender mainstreaming. Through this participatory self-assessment, which involves over 90% of all members of the police force, DCAF contributes to meeting the different security and justice needs of men and women, and supports their equal participation within the institution.

Context



Despite the progress made in reducing homicide rates between 2015-2019, Latin America and the Caribbean remains the world's most violent region, with high numbers of lethal and non-lethal violence, femicide, prison overpopulation, and impunity. The migration crisis and mass protests in recent years have further put the social contract and democratic institutions in the region to the test. Despite sub-regional and country-level differences, the lack of security remains a key challenge for the whole region.

The relationship between the security sector and civil society remains complex. Armed forces continue to play a significant role in domestic security. Disproportionate use of force, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, further militarises public security and limits civilian oversight, resulting in a failure to address root causes of violence.

However, the region also provides fertile ground for successful advances in the prevention of violent conflict through investment in police training, reform of the criminal justice and security sectors, and social development programmes. These advances are implemented under the paradigm of citizen security, a home-grown concept that embraces the security-development nexus and focuses on localised strategies to create the conditions that help prevent the outbreak of violence.

DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance is committed to making people more secure through accountable and effective security and justice. We help national and international entities to deliver security that respects human rights, upholds the rule of law, and is democratically controlled by:



Helping to improve the way national security sectors are governed



Guiding the development of sound, sustainable security governance policy



Promoting locally owned reforms that are inclusive, participatory, and gender responsive

DCAF pursues five main activities:



Providing technical expertise to nationally led SSG/R processes



Capacity building for state and non-state actors



Publishing research and knowledge products



Promoting internationally recommended good governance practices



Advising on security sector-related legal and policy questions



For more information, please contact:

Cristina Hoyos
**Head, Latin America and
the Caribbean Unit**

✉ c.hoyos@dcaf.ch

DCAF Geneva Headquarters

P.O.Box 1360
CH-1211 Geneva 1
Switzerland

✉ info@dcaf.ch

☎ +41 (0) 22 730 9400

www.dcaf.ch

🐦 [@DCAF_Geneva](https://twitter.com/DCAF_Geneva)

🐦 [@DCAF_LAC_Unit](https://twitter.com/DCAF_LAC_Unit)

