faced by people living in cities with failed public security and endemic community violence, and those living in cities experiencing open armed conflict, are comparable. Cities with embedded community violence and cities besieged by war are among the most dangerous places in the world to live.

The failure of public security

Many local governments lack the capacity to provide security for rapidly growing urban populations. In some cities, security forces include teenage boys who have had only a few days of training, and lack basic equipment such as handcuffs, flashlights and helmets.[25] Many security forces are also unable to recruit enough officers to keep up with the needs of growing cities, producing alarmingly low police-to-citizen ratios. The population of Cité Soleil, a two-square-kilometre slum in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, grew from 1,000 in the 1960s to an estimated 350,000 in 2003.[26] This growth strained the central government's ability to meet the needs of its citizens in a context of already weak state capacity.

The failure of public security also occurs in some slums because security forces are unwilling to provide it. Some urban areas are considered simply too dangerous to enter.

In 2001, almost half the cities in Latin America and the Caribbean had areas considered inaccessible or dangerous to the police due to organized violence.[27] In 1995, Mexico City was reportedly divided among 1,500 competing gangs.[28] Officers hired by the state to provide security may lack incentives to take the risks necessary to maintain public security in these areas because they are often paid meagre salaries and enjoy little job security. Police in Kabul, Afghanistan, for example, earned as little as US$16-18 a month in 2004.[29]

Contributing to the unwillingness

FIGURE 2.1 **Endemic community violence and the failure of public security in urban spaces**