

armed gangs with 100,000 members cause 70% of all crime. Some gangs have expanded into organized criminal empires with thousands of members, complex organization, and aggressive recruitment strategies, competing in open armed combat for territorial expansion.

These trends underline the need for robust and effective security sector reform. Efforts to develop more responsive law enforcement have led to innovations such as community policing, in which local residents and police work together over time to establish relationships of mutual cooperation and trust. In Bogotá, Colombia, community policing has helped to cut homicide rates in half in the past decade, and has inverted community perceptions of the police, from predominantly negative to overwhelmingly positive.

The affordability and availability of **small arms** in cities means that some gangs are better armed than police. Many of these guns end up in the hands of children living in slums, who are at heightened risk of gang recruitment. Between 1978 and 2000, more people, particularly children, died in armed violence in the slums of Rio de Janeiro than in Colombia, a country that is actually experiencing civil conflict. Yet urban armed violence is largely neglected by international actors.

An exploration of the human security risks faced by children growing up in slums is overdue. In the past two decades, a substantial international framework has emerged to protect war-affected children and child soldiers. A focus on these "**urban child soldiers**" calls into question the distinction between urban and rural settings of armed conflict, and calls for special protection for these vulnerable civilians.

The remaining two sections explore the unique aspects of cities that can enable opportunities and mitigate challenges for human security. Part III examines the notion of "**conflict-resilient cities**" – cities in which population density and social capital potential can provide valuable conflict prevention opportunities. This resilience can help buffer a city from external conflict, or help prevent the escalation of violence beyond urban boundaries. Cities can attempt to oppose violent state policies, as the mayor of Belgrade attempted to do in 1996-1997. In post-conflict contexts, resurgent cities can symbolically or financially support national peace processes, for example, Sarajevo's swift ethnic reconciliation which contributed to Bosnia's recovery from civil war.

Part IV proposes that **urban governance** is one of the key human security tools that can be used to combat conflict and the failure of public security. Since cities host the level of government that is closest to the people, this