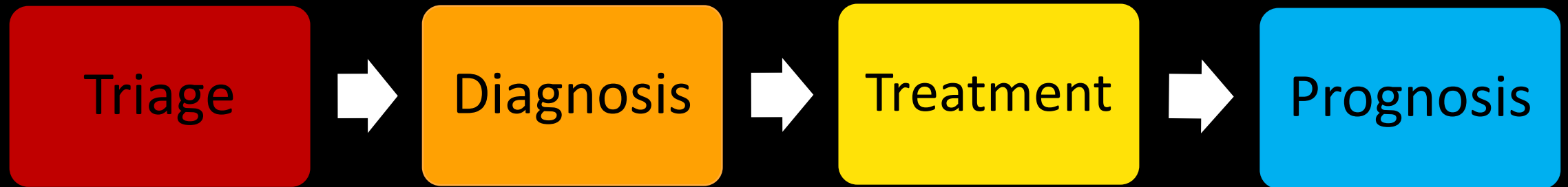# Bleeding Out

The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence –
And a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets

Treat community violence like a gunshot wound

Triage → Diagnosis → Treatment → Prognosis

Triage

The high price of homicide

- U.S. has 7x more homicides, 25x more gun homicides, than other high-income nations

- In 2020, there were 17,815 homicides, about 49 per day, in the U.S. – a 29% increase from 2019, with rates climbing in 2021

- Every homicide costs $10-19 million in criminal justice, medical, other costs (McCollister et al., 2010; Cohen et al., 2004; DeLisi et al., 2010)

- Most homicides are associated with community violence – also known as gun, gang, youth, or street violence
  - Since 9/11/01, 400+ died in domestic terrorist attacks, 550+ in mass shootings, 100,000+ due to community violence

Diagnosis

First fundamental: <u>focus</u>

- Majority of violence concentrates among "hot people"
  - In most U.S. cities, half of all murders involve less than .06% of the city's population (Lurie et al., 2018)
- Majority of violence concentrates in "hot spots"
  - In most U.S. cities, 4% of geography accounts for half of all crime (Weisburd, 2015) - serious violent crime, e.g. homicide, even more concentrated
- Violence also facilitated by a few "hot" behaviors such as illegal gun-carrying as well as gang and drug conflicts

First fundamental: <u>focus</u>

- In criminal justice, interventions focusing on highest risk places, people, and behaviors generate strongest effects
  - True for policing (Braga, 2015), gang prevention (Gravel et al., 2012; Petrosino et al., 2015), reentry (Hollin, 1999; Lipsey & Cullen, 2007)
- In public health, same is true
  - Targeted secondary and tertiary programs outperform primary prevention ones (Limbos et al. 2007)
- Displacement a concern, but "over 30 years of research evidence… suggests that crime relocates in only a minority of instances" (Johnson et al., 2014)

Second fundamental: <u>balance</u>

- Human beings respond to both rewards and punishments, i.e. incentives and disincentives

- Across policy spectrum, evidentiary support for both "soft" and "tough" approaches
  - Prevention diverts future offenders
  - Punishment deters or removes current offenders

- Best to combine immediacy of punishment with sustainability of prevention – no city has successfully used only one approach or the other

Third fundamental: <u>fairness</u>

- Community violence closely connected to legitimacy: less fairness leads to more violence
  - Procedural justice: lack of trust and confidence results in less compliance, more violence (Papachristos, Meares, & Fagan, 2012)
  - Legal cynicism: when communities do not believe in criminal justice system, they withdraw (Kirk & Papachristos, 2011)

Treatment

People-based approaches

- Use evidence- and community-informed strategies that are focused, balanced, and fair to take following 5 steps:
    1. Identify and engage those most at risk for community violence
    2. Once identified, engage and establish relationships
    3. Once engaged, stabilize by providing safety and security
    4. Once stabilized, treat unhealthy thinking, unsafe behavior, trauma
    5. Once treated, offer educational and employment opportunities
    6. Punish those who persist with swift and certain sanctions

Place-based approaches

- Use evidence- and community-informed strategies that are focused, balanced, and fair to take following 3 steps in violent micro-locations:
    1. Institute hot spots policing
    2. Follow up policing with place-making
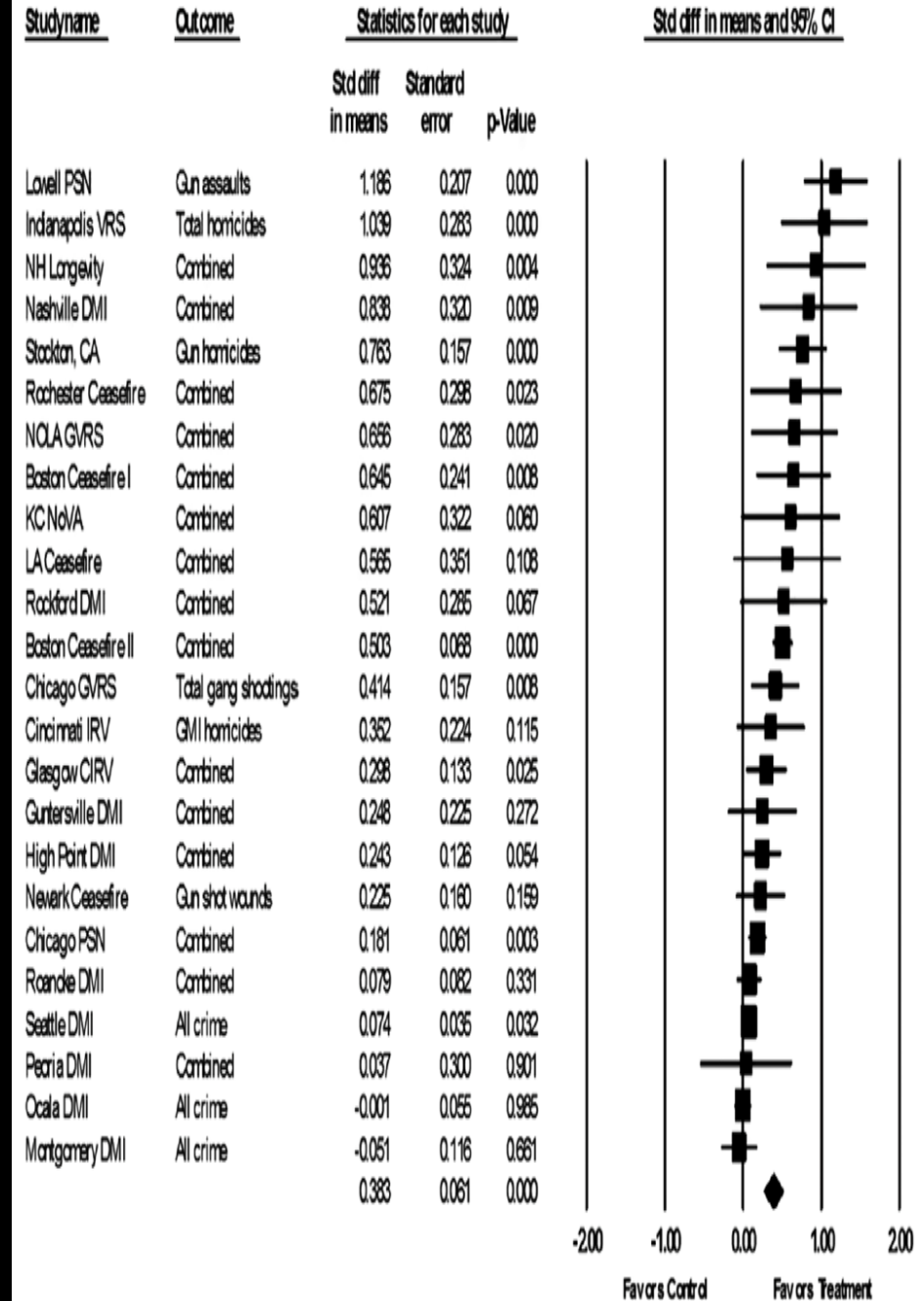   3. Supplement policing and place-making with community-building

Behavior-based approaches

- Broad-based efforts to address guns, gangs, and drugs in general not successful in reducing community violence

- To enhance effectiveness,
  - Reframe guns, gangs, and drugs as behaviors facilitating violence, i.e. gun-carrying, gang-banging, violent drug dealing
  - Focus on these behaviors among hot people and in hot spots

Focused deterrence

- Has elements of focus, balance, fairness

- Braga et al. (2018) performed systematic review, identifying 24 tests in total (0 RCTs)

- Vote-counting: 19 of 24 with "noteworthy" crime reduction effects
  - Gang and group violence: <u>12 of 12</u>

- Large effect size (.657) means significant impact on community violence

Study name	Outcome	Std diff in means	Standard error	p-Value
Lowell PSN	Gun assaults	1.186	0.207	0.000
Indianapolis VRS	Total homicides	1.039	0.283	0.000
NH Longevity	Combined	0.936	0.324	0.004
Nashville DMI	Combined	0.838	0.320	0.009
Stockton, CA	Gun homicides	0.763	0.157	0.000
Rochester Ceasefire	Combined	0.675	0.298	0.023
NOLA GVRS	Combined	0.656	0.283	0.020
Boston Ceasefire I	Combined	0.645	0.241	0.008
KC NoVA	Combined	0.607	0.322	0.060
LA Ceasefire	Combined	0.565	0.351	0.108
Rockford DMI	Combined	0.521	0.285	0.067
Boston Ceasefire II	Combined	0.503	0.068	0.000
Chicago GVRS	Total gang shootings	0.414	0.157	0.008
Cincinnati IRV	GMI homicides	0.352	0.224	0.115
Glasgow CIRV	Combined	0.298	0.133	0.025
Guntersville DMI	Combined	0.248	0.225	0.272
High Point DMI	Combined	0.243	0.126	0.054
Newark Ceasefire	Gun shot wounds	0.225	0.160	0.159
Chicago PSN	Combined	0.181	0.061	0.003
Roanoke DMI	Combined	0.079	0.082	0.331
Seattle DMI	All crime	0.074	0.035	0.032
Peoria DMI	Combined	0.037	0.300	0.901
Ocala DMI	All crime	-0.001	0.055	0.985
Montgomery DMI	All crime	-0.051	0.116	0.661
		0.383	0.061	0.000

Prognosis

Putting it together

- To succeed, cities must put principles and programs together
- Must act consistently with all three principles of focus, balance, and fairness – one or two not sufficient
- Must identify, implement, and coordinate people-, place-, and behavior-based programmatic strategies simultaneously
- Must include prevention, intervention, and enforcement components

Question: are cities capable of this?

Answer: yes, if they proceed one step at a time

Step 1: Agree on core principles

- Define the problem: "Unacceptably high rates of <u>lethal</u> and <u>potentially lethal violence</u>, committed in public spaces"
  - Lethal violence: measured by homicides
  - Potentially lethal violence: measured by shootings with injury
- Define the solution: "Homicides and shootings with injury will be reduced by a set of strategies that are both <u>evidence-</u> and <u>community-informed</u>"
  - Evidence-informed: drawing on best data and evidence available at time
  - Community-informed: gives voice to impacted individuals and communities

Step 2: Analyze the violence

- Perform analysis to identify, in most concrete terms, key people, places, and behaviors driving violence
  - People-based analysis: gang and group audits, homicide reviews, social network analysis
  - Place-based analysis: crime mapping
- Goal is short, specific list of names and addresses to focus on
- Analysis should blend quantitative and qualitative information, e.g. data and human intelligence

Step 3: Develop a plan

- Plan should be based on analysis
  - Include set of strategies (not one) that collectively are focused, balanced, and fair
  - Specifically address key people, places, and behaviors driving violence

- To select strategies,
  - Identify evidence-based options, then vet options with key stakeholders, <u>especially impacted individuals and communities</u>
  - Adapt those strategies to local context and circumstances

- Plan should be concrete, e.g. SMART goals

- Plan should also specify what is NOT covered by plan

Step 4: Implement the plan

- Task forces, working groups, or committees drive implementation
  - Should include only members with direct responsibilities for violence reduction
  - Should be roughly balanced between enforcement, non-enforcement
- Frameworks help align implementation of programs within plan
  - No one way to do framework, only test is usefulness
- Performance measurement, evaluations keep implementation on track
  - Performance measurement focuses on *outputs*, evaluation focuses on *outcomes*

Moving forward

- These strategies do not need new laws, big budgets, or institutional reform – can be done right now

- In the U.S., for an additional $30k in funding per homicide, cities can put policy portfolios in place to reduce homicide by 10% each year for 8 years, over 50% in total

- Across the nation's 40 most violent cities, this would save 12,132 lives, cost $899 million, and save $120 billion

But would this work in Latin America?

Yes!
(with caveats)

Triage

- Latin America is world's most violent region
  - Majority of world's most homicidal cities, nations located there (UNODC, 2019)
  - Regional homicide rate is 24/100,000 – 4 times global average (UNODC, 2019)
  - Average rate masks diversity – El Salvador's homicide rate (62) 17x higher than Chile's (4) (UNODC, 2019)
- Average annual cost of crime, violence conservatively estimated at 3% of GDP – about same as region spends on infrastructure (Caprirolo et al., 2017)

Diagnosis

- In Latin America and globally, community violence looks much the same
  - In U.S., 77% of homicide victims male, 52% between 17 and 34 years old, 73% committed with firearm
  - In Latin America, 90% of victims male, 50% between 15 and 30, 75% use firearm
- Community violence similarly concentrated
  - In El Salvador, violence driven by less than 1% of population (NNSC, 2018)
  - In Colombia, 99% of homicides concentrated in less than 4% of street addresses (Mejia et al., 2015)
- Community violence also responds similarly to principles of balance and fairness

Caveat #1: capacity challenges

- Success of *Bleeding Out* strategies depend heavily on certain capacities, such as rigorous implementation, a well-defined theory of change, and strong partnerships with key stakeholders (Abt and Winship, 2016)

- Absence of "elements of effectiveness" can limit effectiveness in any setting, but especially so in Latin America

- Example: focused deterrence
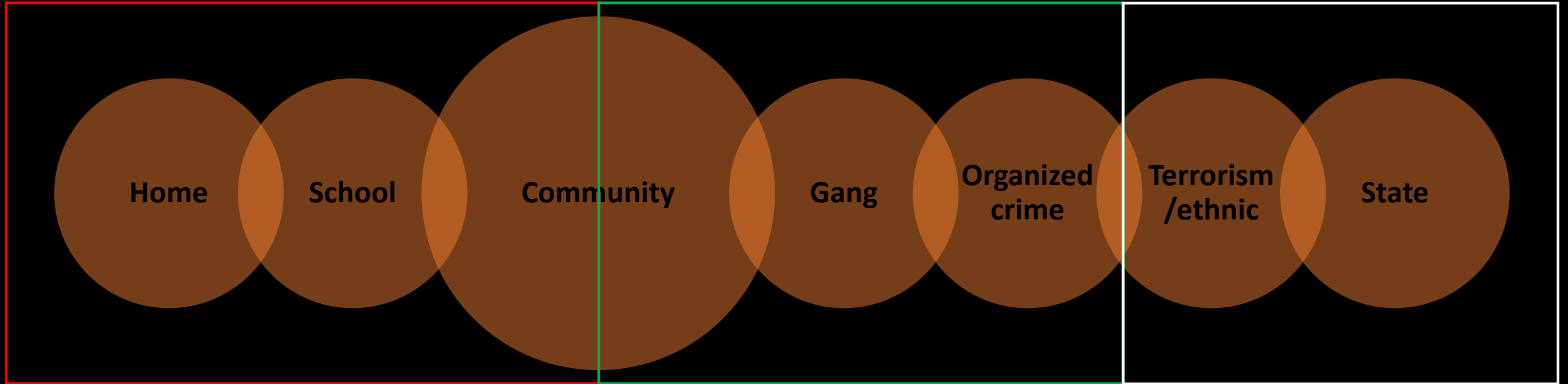
Caveat #2: community violence only

- Community violence poses enormous challenge to region, but many Latin American nations also suffer significantly from other forms of violence
  - Community violence probably responsible for plurality of homicides in region
- Strategies to address one form not effective for others, so strategies outlined in *Bleeding Out* limited to reducing community violence specifically

Interpersonal	Criminal	Political

Home   School   Community   Gang   Organized crime   Terrorism/ethnic   State

rarely lethal   frequently lethal
occurs in private   occurs in public
involves intimates   involves strangers
involves few   involves many
expressive   instrumental
unplanned   planned
no weapons   weapons
common   uncommon

Caveat #3: institutional, systemic reform needed

- Programmatic innovation, by itself, insufficient to remedy high rates of violence in certain LACs

- Programs must be aligned with broader and deeper reforms to institutions and systems

- Specifically, high impunity rates in region reflect system-wide breakdown – cannot be addressed with programmatic tinkering

Recommendations for Latin America

1. Prioritize homicide reduction, creating anti-homicide plans that include but not limited to community violence

2. To reduce community violence, adopt strategies that are focused, balanced, and fair, experimenting with evidence-informed programmatic strategies

3. Create evidence-informed strategies to reduce other forms of homicidal violence, particularly domestic and organized criminal violence

4. Emphasize institutional and systemic capacity-building and reform, with special emphasis on reducing everyday impunity for homicide

Thank you!