

Tackling domestic violence with *Citizenship Culture*: an experience of social change in Barrancabermeja, Colombia

Javier Guillot

j.guillot@corpovisionarios.org

Corpovisionarios

STRIVE meeting

Changing Social Norms: Integrating Theory and Practice
Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, UK: January 28-30th, 2013





Antanas Mockus

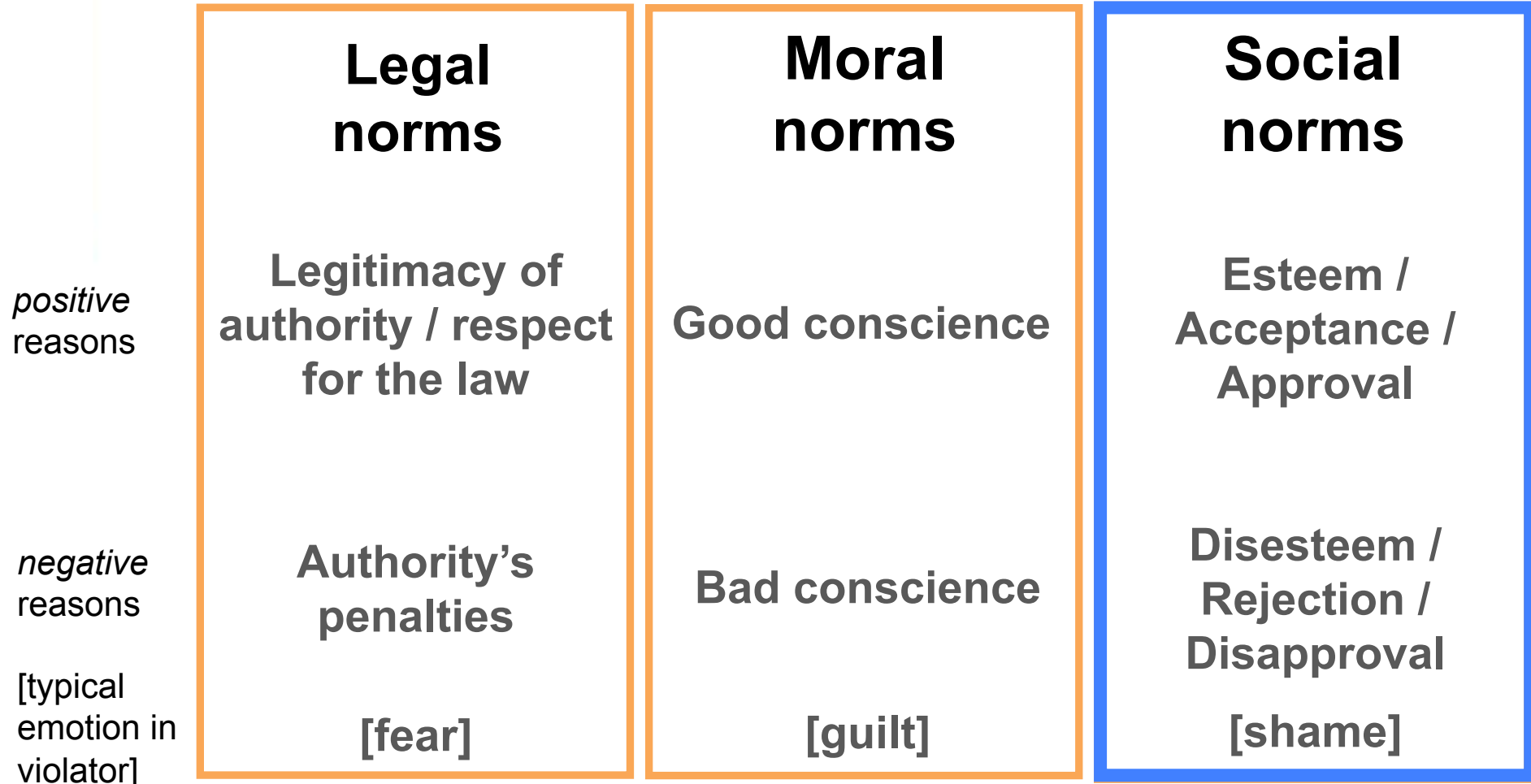


Talk structure

- 1. The core elements of *Citizenship Culture***
 - Connection with social norms perspective
- 2. One example from Mockus's mayorships in Bogotá, Colombia.**
- 3. Corpovisionarios's strategy against domestic violence in Barrancabermeja, Colombia: a recent case of success**
 - The social norms perspective at work
 - Results and lessons learned

Mockus's starting point:

recognition of three different systems of norms that may regulate citizens' behavior



The *citizenship culture* challenge:
to **harmonize** these behavior-regulating systems

We now have a quite precise (and empirically supported) understanding of social norms

→ Thanks to
Cristina Bicchieri's
work (2006, 2012)

A social norm

is a  pattern of behavior

such that  individuals prefer
to conform to it

on condition that
they believe that

* most people in their reference group
conform to it
[empirical expectations]

* most people in their reference group
believe they should conform to it
[normative expectations]

**How do we change current social
expectations *or* create new ones?**



**What do I believe others
really do?**

**What do I believe others
think I should do?**

Why am I here today?

- Because some successful experiences, first led by Mockus and his team in Bogotá, and later by *Corpovisionarios* in Colombia, seem to reveal **key lessons** for addressing *that crucial question* in practice.
- We firmly believe that the **process of changing or inducing new social expectations** is an essential component of strategies that attempt to harmonize legal, moral and social norms.
- And that the **STRIVE community** gathered here may hopefully find this interesting – and more importantly, **teach us how to do it better!**

What features can explain the successes of *citizenship culture*?

- Investigation of target-issue with quantitative and qualitative tools, which then influence strategy design – “**epidemiological approach**”.
- **Creative interventions:** make unfamiliar the familiar, or familiar the unfamiliar, breaking routines and habits: **resort to art.**
- Turn target-issue into an object of collective deliberation and reflection: **make it visible!**

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Example: traffic behavior



Social regulation cards: 350 000 distributed,
very high visibility, citizens willing to try them out.

- **Foster new normative expectations**
consistent with legal norm compliance.

Example 2: traffic behavior



- **Mimes**: initially 40, then 400!
- Dramatic success in terms of visibilization, but replication *questionable*.
- **Further strengthened normative expectations**, promoted public discussion—it wasn't *just a show*.

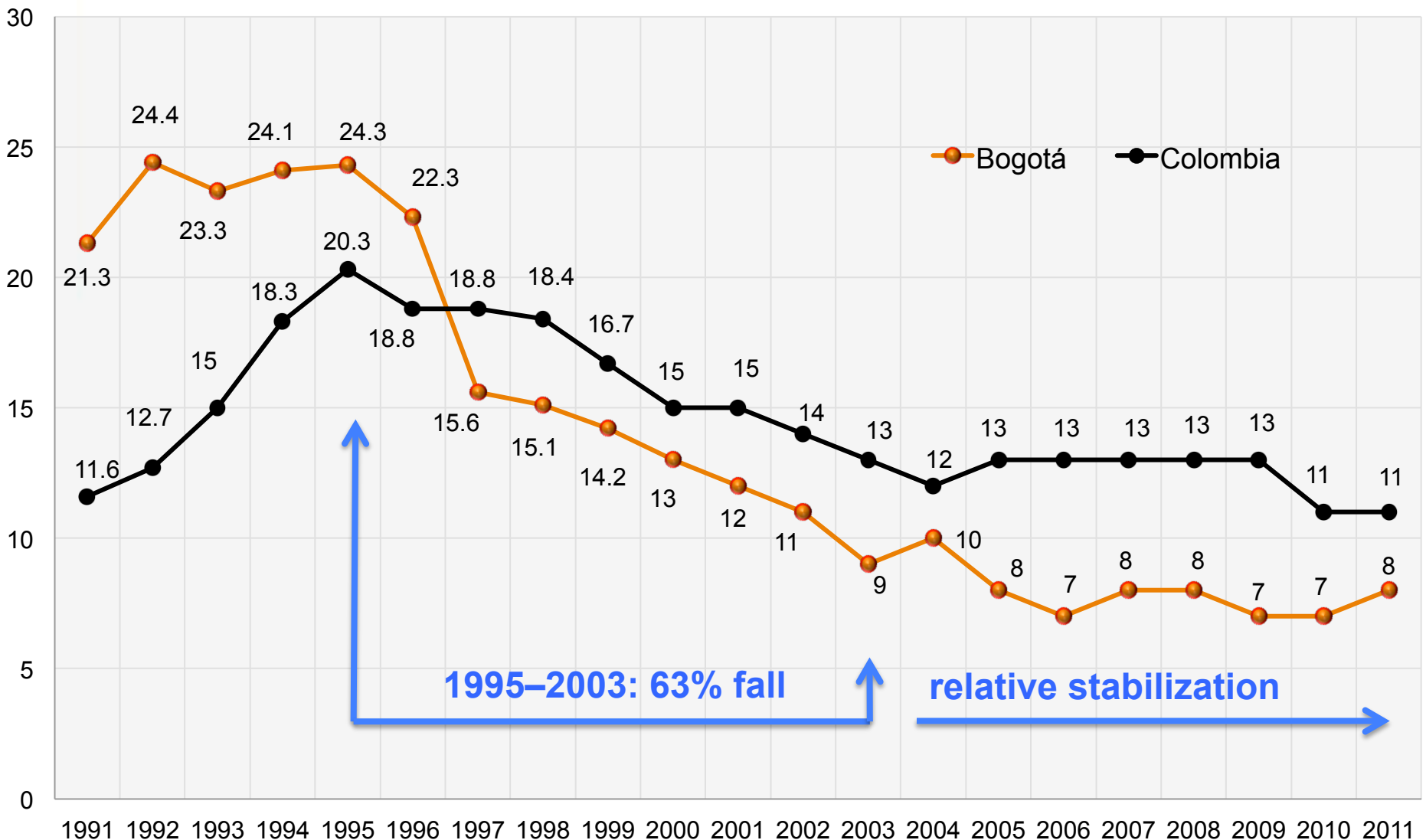
Example 2: traffic behavior



Estrellas negras (“black stars”): marked the spot of a death resulting from traffic accident. Later specified age and sex of deceased.

- Re-appropriation of a **common cultural symbol**, that simultaneously fostered self- and social regulation.

Traffic-related deaths in Bogotá and Colombia 1991 - 2011 (rate per 100 000 inhabitants)



Source: Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses (INML)
DANE Population Projections

A few key lessons

- **Extremely high visibility of every strategy-component:** crucial for changing and coordinating social expectations.
- Resort to artistic elements based on **culturally recognized symbols.**
- High importance of **previous research/diagnosis.** Simple replication across different contexts probably ineffective.
- **Formal institutional strengthening** may not only be effective in itself, it may also work as a *signal* that encourages trust.

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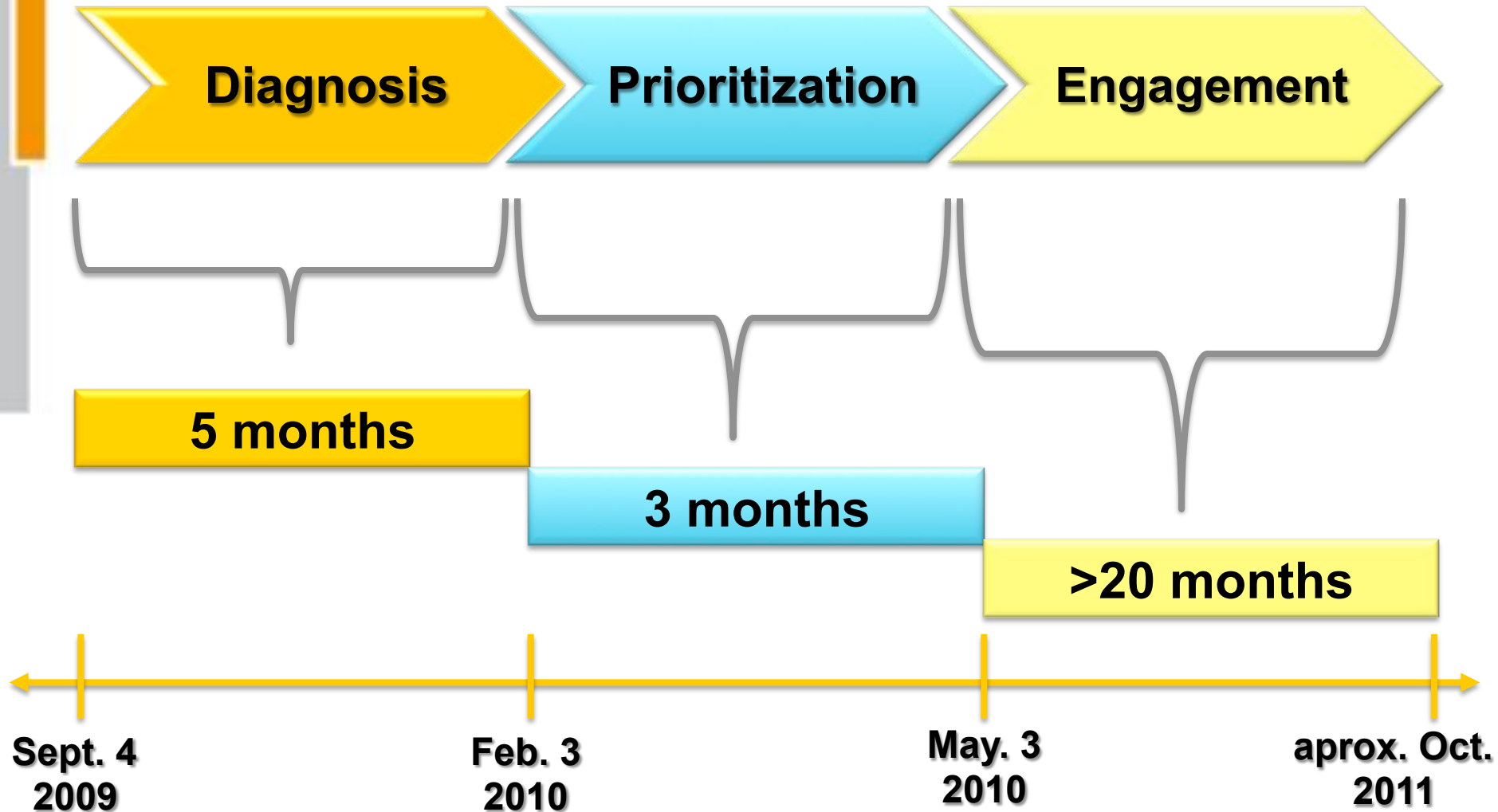
A non-profit independent organization that since 2007 performs research, provides consultancy services, and designs and implements actions to facilitate positive collective voluntary changes.

- Following and advancing the *Citizenship Culture* approach.
- Strong reliance on social-norms perspective.

One recent success:
domestic violence reduction in
Barrancabermeja, Colombia



“There is love without jealousy”: domestic violence reduction in Barrancabermeja, Colombia



Diagnosis:

A multi-method, interdisciplinary approach

- ❖ *Citizenship Culture Survey* – Barrancabermeja.
- ❖ Qualitative component: individual interviews and focal groups.
- ❖ Analysis of secondary data: quantitative indicators, information about government and NGO programs currently in place.
- ❖ Direct observation of behavior (ethnography!).

Part of diagnosis: 2 902 children's drawings

Question: **what is your city like? Draw it!**



Colegio: isTituto venticer marzo
Nombre: Giovanna
Curso: 4=5

LA CIRA-INFANTAS
PETROL Uno oportunidad para crecer

CER
CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS REGIONALES



Alcaldía Municipio de Barrancabermeja

Barrancabermeja
donde el amor es clave

CORPO VISIONARIOS

➤ Strongly hinted at **empirical expectations**.

CORPO VISIONARIOS

The results: five critical problems



1. **Motorcycle-related deaths**
2. **High violent homicide rates: “lives lost”**
3. **Domestic violence**
4. **Misuse of public space**
5. **Cultural approval of illegal behavior**

Community-led prioritization: a fundamental component

Besides involving the community in its own process of change (“we ‘own’ this change”), community-led prioritization contributes to:

generating common knowledge
by fostering **open, visible discussion**

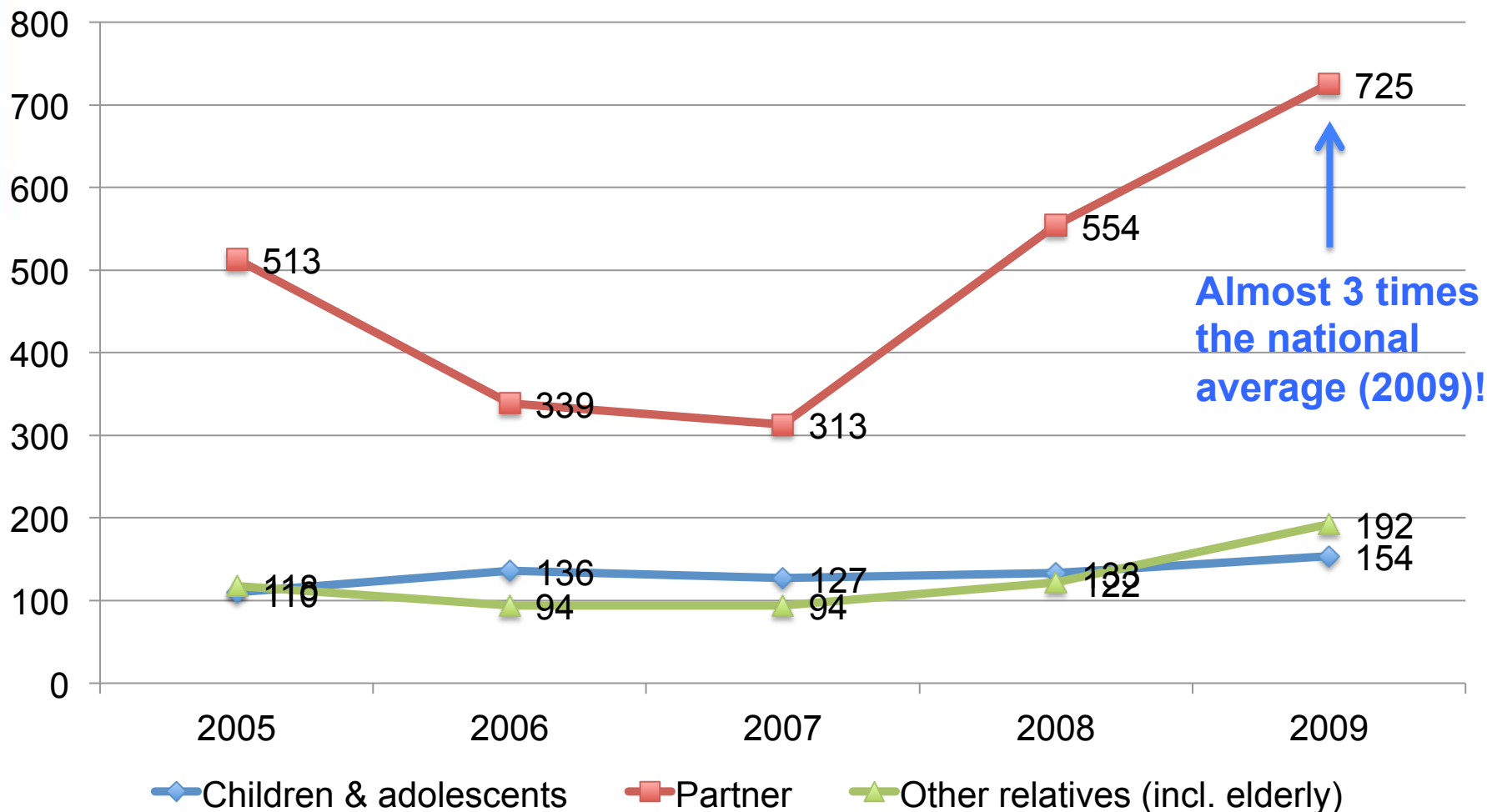
- *I now know that what usually happens here is... (empirical expectations).*
- *But also, I now know that others know that what usually happens is...*
- *And I may acquire new beliefs about what others believe should be done (normative expectations).*

Participation in community-led prioritization leads to a belief/feeling of **co-responsibility for change** (it's not only *them* who have to work to change this – I am part of the solution).



Trustworthy baseline indicator

Domestic violence cases disaggregated by type
Barrancabermeja, Colombia, 2005 - 2009



Concrete actions for a concrete issue

**“There *is* love without
jealousy”**

Invisible theater: partner violence



- A local theater group performed 75 open (public space) **scenes of partner violence**.
- When someone intervened: “*this is theater!*”
- **Discussion among spectators emerged spontaneously and was also led by the actors, who had been previously trained on the topic.**

“...it was on those moments of shock, followed by the desire to ‘do something about it’ (even if many times that something almost turned into more violence), and then to engage in *dialogue* with friends, family, or with strangers, that a space for change was finally opened on the surface of routine and shared meanings, that the consciousness that we do have the possibility of change in our very hands (literally here) was introduced. It was on those moments that the circle of violence was broken in the most powerful way...”

- Yamin, P. *An Engaged Pedagogy of Everyday Life* (2012).



Whistles against abuse



- **20 000 whistles were distributed**, along with a pedagogical card that included usage instructions and “tools for communicating better”.
- **Distribution process highly visible** in local media (radio, TV, press)

Vaccine against violence



- Strategy was highly visible in **local, community-trusted media**.
- Actually taken very seriously!
- Led by professional psychologists.

Hora cero: a collective decision to enact change



- **“Hora cero” (zero hour: new starting point) against abuse**
- Massive event in city’s central plaza
- Creation of **new normative and empirical expectations**

The key component: **CELAN** (jealousy hotline)



Línea para celos anónimos CELAN 123

“Deactivating violence”

10 psychologists in charge, trained in deactivating violence-triggering emotions during the call and in providing therapeutic and pedagogical care after the initial call.

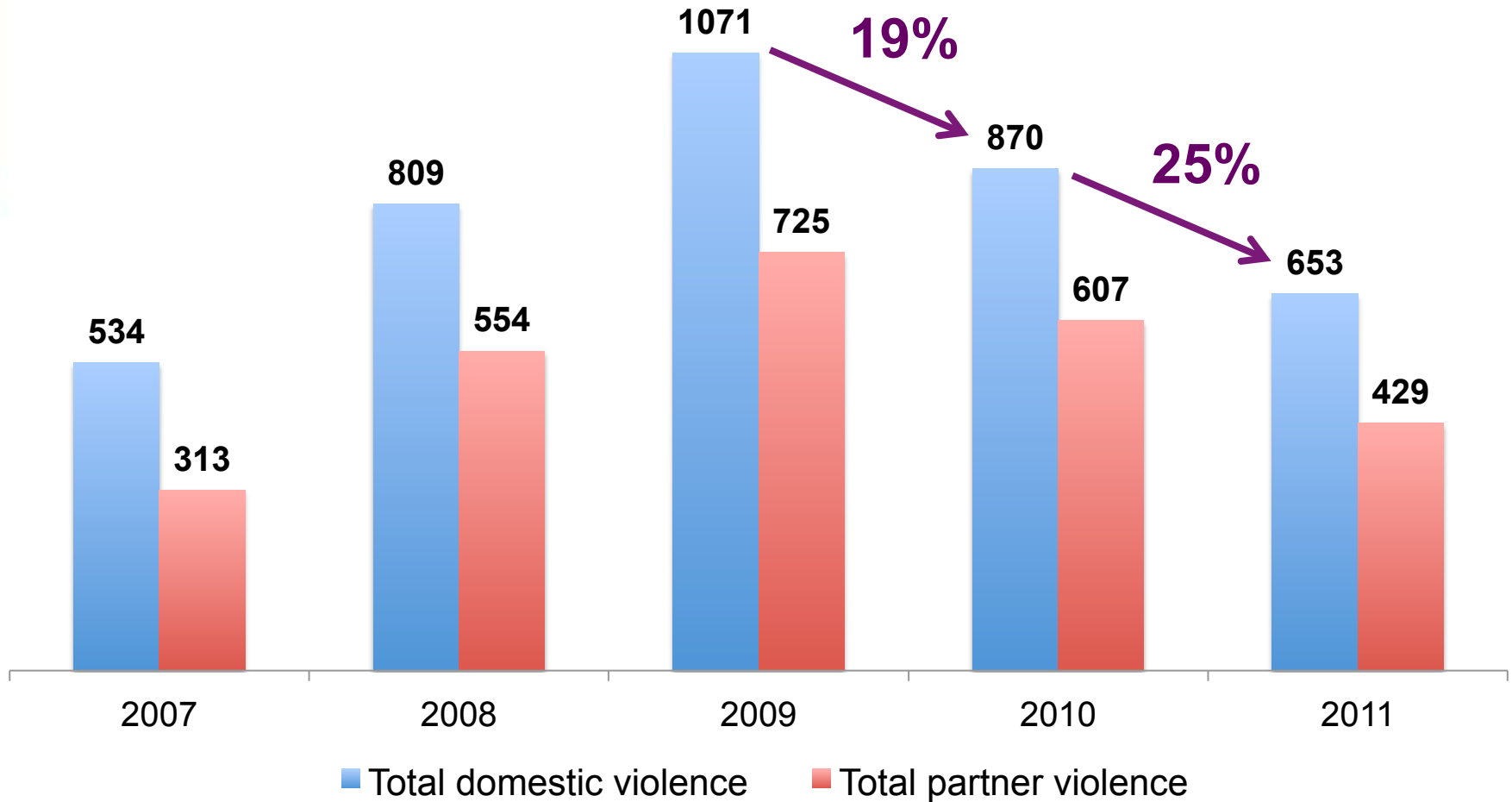
- **Important not only in and of itself, but also to foster social-norms based regulation.**

...and crucial relations with the local media and government institutions

- Joint work with local **journalists**: training on treatment of topic (*essential!*).
- Joint work with local **media**: both to broadcast information (align empirical expectations) and to produce ‘positive’ messages.
- Creation of the “**Citizens for Good Treatment Network**”, led by students and local community police: has visited more than 1 500 households to date, to raise awareness and provide information.
- Coordination of **local government institutions** that deal with domestic violence.

The results: **marked reduction (2 yr: 39%)**

Total cases, domestic violence and partner violence
Barrancabermeja, Colombia, 2009 - 2011

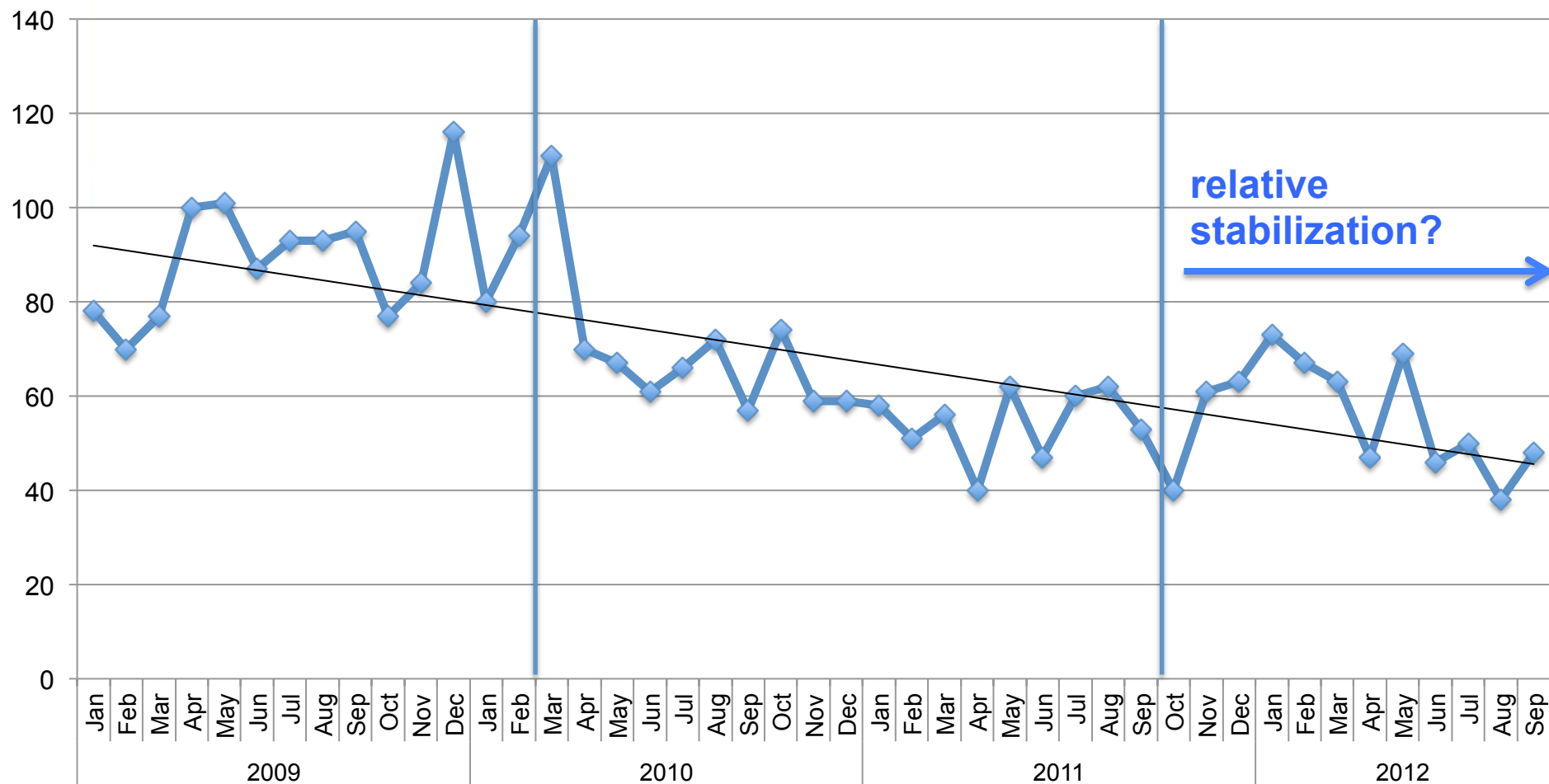


Prioritization/engagement program start: February 2010.

Source: Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses.

The results: reduction and stabilization (up to 58% month vs. same month)

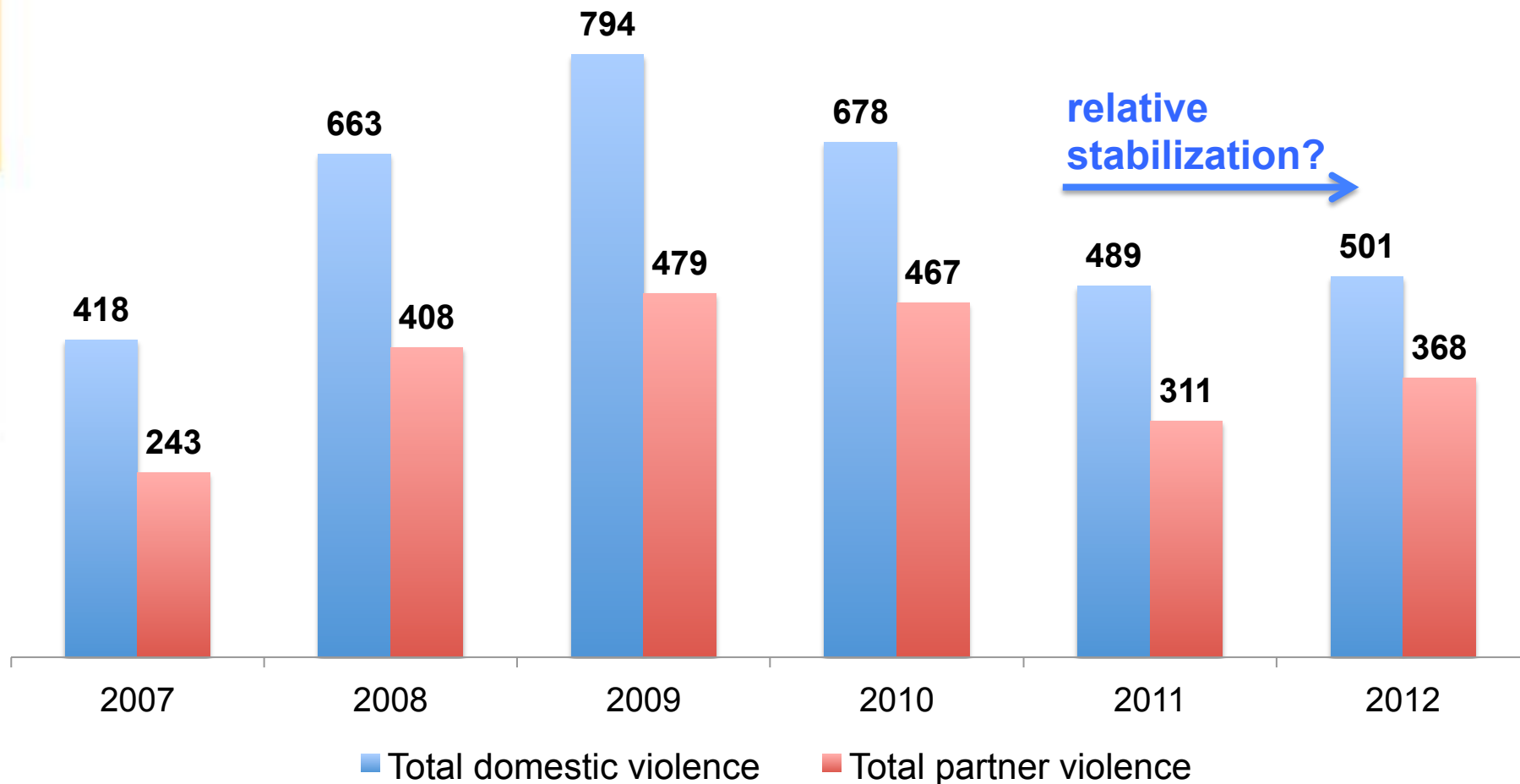
Total domestic violence cases, month to month
Barrancabermeja, Colombia, 2009 - 2011



Source: Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses.

The results: the question of stabilization

Total cases, domestic violence and partner violence, Jan. - Sept.
Barrancabermeja, Colombia, 2009 - 2012



Prioritization/engagement program start: February 2010.
Source: Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses.

Some challenges and open questions

- More powerful impact evaluation: go beyond correlation to establish evidence for *causation*.
- + distinguish between different strategy components (is this really feasible in practice?)
- For how long does one need to implement a social-norms based strategy in order to achieve sustained reduction? Is that extremely case- and context-dependent? How can one secure sustained funding (and political support, in some contexts)?
- When and how does a narrowly-targeted strategy (e.g. on jealousy/PV) start changing **broader normative frameworks** (e.g. *machismo*)? Nested norms?

Thank you!

Javier Guillot

j.guillot@corpovisionarios.org



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