Gun violence
Survival and prevention

Alex Galvez
Transitions Foundation of Guatemala
Fatal gun injuries

• 300-500,000 deaths by guns each year
• 80% of gun deaths are in crime, not conflict
• Highest rates are in Central America
• Guatemala homicide rate: 32/100,000 (in 2009 it was 46/100,000)
Non-fatal gun injuries

• For every gunshot victim who dies, at least 3 (?) survive
• Gunshots =#1 cause of spinal cord injury in Guatemala
• I am one of those survivors
1992: On an ordinary day, my life changed forever.

A gunshot left me with paraplegia.

Two years in hospital.

< This is me with my friend Hugo who was in the hospital for polio, 1995.
Prevention

• Most gun violence occurs in countries with very poor hospital systems, like Guatemala’s

• Poor treatment, no rehab, no after care, no info for patients or families on living with a spinal cord injury

• After hospital discharge > pressure sores, infections – I was about to die

• I was lucky, someone took me to USA where 2 years of wound care, surgery, rehab saved my life – or prevented my death
Transitions Foundation

• Organization helping people with mobility impairments
• Wheelchair workshop
• Prosthetics clinic
• Print shop
• Basketball team
• Advocacy
• Funding: donations, Rotary, small grants from Australia and Switzerland
Advocacy against gun violence

• We are founding members of IANSA, advocating to stop the proliferation of guns around the world.

• We coordinate the IANSA Survivors Network.
Life as a survivor - Stigma and discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survivor of:</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>car crash</td>
<td>&quot;innocent victim, deserves support&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>landmine</td>
<td>&quot;innocent victim, deserves support&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gunshot</td>
<td>&quot;is he a gang member? If I give him a job, will he bring me problems?&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economic consequences

• Poverty for the survivor and his family.
• Most gunshot survivors are young men of working age.
• The family loses his income and has new costs for his care.
• His mother, sister or niece gives up her job or her studies to care for him. So the family also loses her income and her potential.
Life as a survivor – Health consequences

• In poor countries services are not available or affordable.
• Many people survive the shooting but die later from secondary health problems – pressure sores, infections, organ failure.
• Their deaths are not registered as resulting from gun violence. But they should be recognized as slow homicides.
Bryan Godínez, age 16

- Died Monday 7 Sept 2015
- 3 years after being shot while playing soccer in his neighborhood
- < This is Bryan at a press conference in Nov 2014
- He belonged to Sobreviviendo Violencia, our new survivors’ network
you should 'own' this concept, it really resonates with people
Cate Buchanan, 10/05/2014
• Building capacity for advocacy, organizing, media on gun control, violence prevention, disability

• Launched in 2015 Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence

• We need funds for this work!
• The first book on what happens after people are shot and survive.

• Starting the conversation on assistance to gunshot survivors.
Gracias!

Alex@TransitionsFoundation.org

- facebook.com/TransitionsFoundationofGuatemala
- facebook.com/sobreviviendoviolenicia
- www.sobreviviendoviolenicia.org
- www.survivinggunviolence.org