

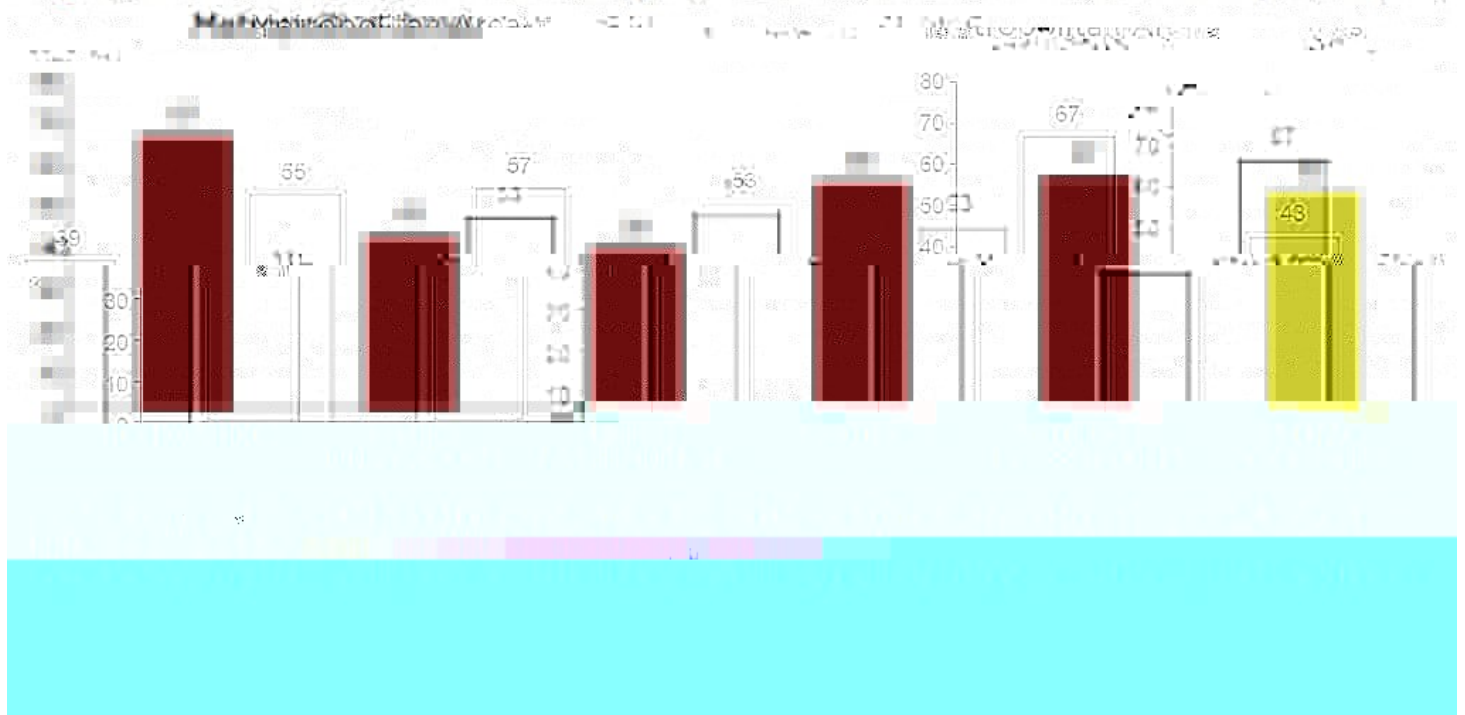


When it comes to understanding crime and violence, police records only tell us half the story (literally). But to design effective crime prevention and reduction policies we need the other half. While an important source, police statistics only capture a portion of crimes due to under-reporting and under-recording[1]. In the case of the Caribbean, the most prevalent crimes are the most underreported (assault and threat) and the most vulnerable victims (women and youth) are the least likely to report. This can lead policymakers to make poor decisions regarding policies and the allocation of resources. [Victimization surveys](#) enable us to measure the phenomenon from a primary source – the victims themselves – but such surveys are conducted less frequently in the Caribbean than in many other world regions.

The recent IDB publication, [Restoring Paradise in the Caribbean: Combating Violence with Numbers](#) (executive summary in English and Spanish [here](#)) examines the crimes that are not reported to the police according to victimization surveys of individuals and businesses. This blog post will give you a glimpse of the other half of the story.

### ***How many crimes go unreported?***

**Figure 1.1: Percentage of Five Crimes Reported to the Police in Five Caribbean Capital City**



. Meaning that for every ten crimes that happen, we only “know” of five. This has enormous policy implications. The highest reporting rates were found in New Providence, The Bahamas and the lowest in Kingston, Jamaica (39%) and Bridgetown, Barbados (43%). Reporting is close to the international average (49%), significantly higher than in Latin American capital cities (35%) for all five crimes examined here (car theft, burglary, robbery, theft of personal property, and assaults and threats).[2]

, with lower reporting in Belize (20%) and Barbados (24%).



crimes are not registered by the police.

[2] Comparative results on reporting rates from the International Crime Victimization Survey database per world region are provided in the report Appendix 1.2.

[3] For details on both the percentage and number of individuals reporting for the five types of crime, see Appendix 1.1 of the report.

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