Measuring vulnerabilities to organised crime – developments

Noël Klima

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Contents

1. Research background
2. Major intermediate findings
3. Conceptualisation of vulnerability
4. Vulnerability in Criminology
5. Uncertainty and vulnerability
6. Resilience joins vulnerability
7. Continuing research
Background

- Key concern in approaching organised crime: building a knowledge base about the phenomenon allowing targeted and concrete action.
- Many assessments and contributions focus on perpetrators/groups/networks/...
- Vulnerability study takes different perspective (starting from the legal side).
- Aim: make statements about structures in the legal economic environment ... that could be exploited (by criminals).
- Methodology: more inductive, explorative, bottom-up.
Major intermediate findings

- Don’t mention the “organised crime”!
- Resilience joins vulnerability
Conceptualisation of vulnerability

• Origin: natural hazard research
• Expansion to other disciplines (e.g. disaster management, public health, climate impact, development, secure livelihoods, ...)
• No homogenised theoretical approach among diverse scientific communities (susceptibility to harm)
• No clear distinctions to terms like risk, resilience, hazard, harm (difficulty in communicating concepts)
• not static – varies over time and space (liquid), being modified by human action
• Research subject and context is crucial
‘Vulnerability’ in criminology

• Opportunity (aim: crime-, risk-, vulnerability prevention/reduction)
• Opportunity expresses the probability of crime
• But this is only fitting for **known** opportunities (using experience from the past)
• What about the unknown ones (uncertainty)?
Uncertainty and vulnerability

- Prediction of uncertain events impossible
- Failure of probability measurement (‘Black Swans’ or ‘New Surprises’ like 9/11, financial crisis, natural disasters, crime events,..)
  
  What if a crime cannot be prevented?
  
  Accept it and prepare to recover from the impacts (ex-post approach)
Resilience joins vulnerability

- Resilience applies to post-stress situations
- Capacity to ‘recover’ from negative impact or ‘bounce back’ to initial status
- Evolving from psychology/psychiatry resilience gained currency through ecology and spread to many other fields in natural and social science, and more recently economy
- But also heterogenic conceptualisations depending on the research subject and context (people and/or structures)
Vulnerability and Resilience
Continuing research

- How to conceptualize vulnerability and resilience within the context of crime and economic activity? What are possible indicators for vulnerability and resilience?
- Relationship between both concepts? (maybe flipside, ‘adaptation’ as link, one dealing with structure other with people, ...)
- Is there an overreaching concept with respect to economic activity and crime? (maybe robustness or sustainability, ...
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noel.klima@ugent.be
www.ircp.org
www.belspo.be

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