JIED Journal of Illicit Economies and Development

Social Control of Coca Production: Lessons from the Tropic of Cochabamba, Bolivia

POLICY COMMENTARY

BEATRIZ IRENE RAMOS
JEAN PAUL BENAVIDES
MARIA ALEJANDRA VELEZ
GILDA JAUREGUI
DAVID RESTREPO

*Author affiliations can be found in the back matter of this article

LSE Press

ABSTRACT

The Bolivian state stands out for its innovative policies in defence of the coca leaf and coca growers' rights, such as the 2004 Cato Agreement, signed between the state and coca growers to assign legal plots for coca cultivation and to launch a social control system for their monitoring. Based on interviews and secondary information conducted in the Tropic of Cochabamba, we argue that, although this system of coca social control faces some challenges, it leaves replicable lessons for Andean countries in terms of reducing conflict, promoting peace in coca-growing territories, and generating legitimacy for coca-growing activities. Bolivia's pioneering approach to legalising coca-growing areas serves as a transitional mechanism in the pathway towards a regulated coca economy.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Maria Alejandra Velez
Center for the Study of Security and Drugs (CESED), School of Economics, Los Andes University, Bogotá, Colombia
mavelez@uniandes.edu.co

KEYWORDS:
drug policy; coca crops; regulation; Bolivia; cocaine

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
Ramos, B.I., Benavides, J.P., Velez, M.A., Jauregui, G. and Restrepo, D. 2026. Social Control of Coca Production: Lessons from the Tropic of Cochabamba, Bolivia. *Journal of Illicit Economies and Development*, 8(2): pp. 16–26. DOI: https://doi.org/10.31389/jied.292

1. INTRODUCTION

Reducing coca hectares continues to be a key drug policy objective in countries such as Peru and Colombia. In Bolivia, however, this practice has been challenged in favour of vindicating coca farmers' rights and the traditional uses of coca leaves. The signing of the Cato Agreement in 2004 legalised family coca plots for the legal market and set forth an evolving communitarian supervisory system called Social Control of Coca Production (hereinafter SC).

This policy commentary discusses the literature on the SC system and coca leaf cultivation in Bolivia's Tropic of Cochabamba, alongside interviews with union members and experts in Bolivian drug policy.[1] Our analysis focuses on the Tropic of Cochabamba because it is the main territory where SC is implemented. It also hosts over one-third of Bolivia's total coca production (12,125 ha; UNODC and GEPB, 2025) and has played a leading role in the Bolivian movement to defend the right to produce and commercialise coca leaves. We argue that the implementation of a mechanism similar to SC can reduce violence in coca-growing territories across the Andean region, generate legitimacy for coca-growing activity, and advance the decriminalisation of coca farmers.

2. ILLICIT ECONOMIES AND VIOLENCE

Illicit economies, by definition, operate under social norms distinct from those governing legal markets (Arias and Grisaffi, 2021). The state's lack of control over these markets generates uncertainty and coordination challenges among the actors involved (Beckert and Dewey, 2017). In the case of drug economies, traditional frameworks identify multiple mechanisms through which they may generate violence. Goldstein (1985) outlines various scenarios where violence may arise, including: 1) disputes over territories between rival drug trafficking groups; 2) assaults and homicides used to enforce informal normative codes; 3) violent retaliation and punishment between different actors or organizations involved in drug production or trafficking; 4) the elimination of informers or competitors; and 5) other situations in which violence functions as a means to ensure the fulfilment of agreements.

However, various scholars have emphasized that actors in these markets often engage in self-regulation or governance structures that operate outside state control (Arias and Grisaffi, 2021). While violence may serve as a mechanism to manage the absence of state regulation over transactions, it is not the only one. Personal reputation, networks of trust, and selective cooperation with state agents have also been employed to ensure the enforcement of agreements (Beckert and Dewey, 2017). In the case of Bolivia's illicit cocaine economy, internal governance relies on systems of debt, trust among the various actors involved in production and trafficking, and negotiation with state authorities (Arias and Grisaffi, 2021).

Enforcement actions and policies, by contrast, may exacerbate violence, as they can trigger internal power struggles by killing or capturing drug trafficking leaders (Friman, 2009). The cohesiveness of the state security apparatus, for instance, can increase or reduce the visibility of violence perpetrated by drug trafficking organizations (Durán-Martínez, 2015). In Colombia, historical analyses have shown how interdiction efforts in marijuana-producing regions during the 1970s increased violence (Britto, 2020). More recently, research has shown how scarcity resulting from cocaine seizures leads to increased violence in Mexico—as higher prices generate competition among drug trafficking organizations (Castillo, Mejía and Restrepo, 2020).

Forced eradication policies, such as aerial spraying with glyphosate, also exacerbate socio-environmental conflicts in coca-growing regions (Rubiano et al., 2020). In Colombia, this strategy has been associated with increased violence: a 1% rise in sprayed area correlates with a 22% increase in guerrilla attacks, a 24% increase in armed clashes, and a 16% increase in

1 In November 2021, and during March and April 2022, we conducted 16 semi-structured interviews with coca farmers in the municipalities of Ivirgarzama, Chimoré, and Puerto Villaroel, in the Tropic of Cochabamba, to examine the perceptions and experiences of coca growers with the SC system. Participants included nine women and seven men from five unions. They were selected from the researchers' personal contacts and according to their union leadership positions. We also interviewed Bolivian drug policy experts to learn about the operation and impact of SC. In October 2022, visits were made to the Sacaba market and the DIGCOIN offices and to a union and a *cato* in Chimoré. Informal conversations were held with coca leaders and growers to inquire about the levels of supervision and monitoring of coca cultivation and the performance of the coca market.

civilian killings (Abadie et al., 2015). In Bolivia, between 1987 and 2003, violence in the coca-producing regions of the Tropic of Cochabamba was primarily perpetrated by state forces through forced eradication, militarization, human rights violations, and the harassment of social leaders (Gallardo, 2004).

Thus, the relationship between violence and the coca and cocaine economy is complex. Sociopolitical regulations, arrangements, and institutions—both formal and informal—are crucial elements shaping the functioning of illicit economies. As this commentary shows, coca production in the Tropic of Cochabamba illustrates that illicit economies are not intrinsically or necessarily violent, and that the presence or absence of violence depends on the interaction among community, state, and illegal actors.

3. SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF THE CATO AGREEMENT AND SOCIAL CONTROL OF COCA

In 1988, the Bolivian Anti-Drug Law 1008 authorised 12,000 ha of legal coca cultivation for domestic consumption in the traditional coca-growing areas of the Yungas region of La Paz (Figure 1), while mostly omitting the Tropic of Cochabamba (Farthing and Ledebur, 2015). Coca plantations in the Tropic had to be replaced by other products through forced eradication and Alternative Development Programmes (Grisaffi, 2015). This led to large-scale protests and violent confrontations during the 1980–1990s, especially in Chapare, constituting a long-lasting effort to defend the right to produce and commercialise coca leaves in Bolivia (Gutiérrez Aguilar, 2008). After decades of mobilization, in 2004, Carlos Mesa (president of Bolivia, 2003–2005) acceded to the coca growers' demands and allowed the cultivation of a limited amount of coca, per the Cato Agreement.

Figure 1 Departmental map of Bolivia. Source: Authors' elaboration based on data from GeoBolivia (2021).

The Cato Agreement granted 45,000 families the right to each cultivate one *cato* (1,600 m^2) of coca for the legal market (Farthing and Ledebur, 2015; Grisaffi, 2015; Llanos Layme, 2019). It also established SC, a supervisory system run from within the coca growers' unions. When Evo Morales became president in 2006, the national coca production limit was raised to 7,000 ha in the Tropic of Cochabamba (Farthing and Ledebur, 2015, p. 22).

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF SOCIAL CONTROL: GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS AND STATE INSTITUTIONS

Since the mid-20th century, the Tropic of Cochabamba has been governed locally by union organisations composed of 30–80 peasant members (Gutiérrez Aguilar, 2008; Spedding, 2004). The union organisations created union centres (*centrales sindicales*), which in turn formed federations, which coordinate local union actions for the defence of coca grower interests (Gutiérrez Aguilar, 2008). This form of organization became necessary to distribute the land for cultivation and settlement among several families, to organize collective activities to establish the new settlements, but most of all, to negotiate the recognition of the settlement before the authorities (Benavides, 2006; García Linera et al., 2010). The power of union organisations relies on the possibilities to mediate and regulate social life in the Tropic of Cochabamba.

State institutions were created or updated under the Morales government (2006–2019) to govern coca cultivation; the main institution is the Vice-Ministry of Coca and Integrated Development, under the Ministry of Rural Development and Lands. Another relevant governmental institution is the Vice-Ministry of Social Defence, which includes the *Fuerza de Tarea Conjunta* (Joint Task Force [FTC]), a military-police body in charge of eradication.

4. CHARACTERISING THE COCA SOCIAL CONTROL SYSTEM IN THE TROPIC OF COCHABAMBA

The concept of *social control* is based on community organisations that privilege collective over individual rights; it is a shared responsibility that involves the entire community (Grisaffi, 2019, p. 138). The Bolivian system of monitoring, licencing, and reducing coca crops has functioned and evolved since 2004. According to some, the initial conceptualization of SC was that of a regulation policy for the crops that are subject to control, whereby growers had to maintain a maximum permitted area (interview, 9 May 2022). It arose as an agreement between the state and coca growers to grant legal coca cultivation areas in the Tropic of Cochabamba, but its implementation has not been homogeneous or immediate. Thus, SC exists as a regulation mechanism in a context of drug prohibition.

Eligibility to participate in the legal coca market was only granted to farmers who cultivated coca leaf, had a union membership card, and were present on their land on the day of registration. These *catos* were legalised and are known as *catos sistemados* (systemised plots). The total quota of coca cultivation in the region is distributed among the existing *catos*. This has generated new tensions because many growers who participated in the *cocaleros*' struggles during the 1990s have not managed to register their *cato* (Pearson, 2016, pp. 148–149).

MONITORING IN THE SOCIAL CONTROL SYSTEM

Union-level monitoring involves regular inspections and the removal of excess plants, before UDESTRO makes its visits. Neighbours monitor the size of the coca fields among each other and report their complaints to the union and they carry out manual eradication. UDESTRO, in principle, visits coca fields periodically and, if surplus production is found, eradicates it. This eradication is not marked by violence, as it was before the 2004 Cato Agreement (Grisaffi et al., 2021). In theory, if the union and UDESTRO's control is ineffective, the FTC performs eradications. However, in practice, these visits rarely happen. The link between UDESTRO and union is the figure of the SC Secretary, who fulfil the formal task of controlling and surveilling the *catos* (Llanos Layme, 2019).

Monitoring must also be conducted at the federation level within the union. The federation's monthly meetings often cover compliance with *cato* sizes, strategies for limiting crop sizes, and review of individual cases (Farthing and Ledebur, 2015, p. 38). The coordination between state institutions and grassroots organisations is evident in these meetings, given the attendance

of union leaders and UDESTRO and government representatives (Grisaffi, 2019, p. 139). The DIGCOIN office supervises commercialisation and transport, ensuring that coca produced in the Tropic reaches the Sacaba market. Hence, there is an entire supervision chain along the processes of production, commercialisation, transport, and sale of coca.

SANCTIONS AS MEASURES TO CONTROL COCA CULTIVATION

Sanctions may be applied to individuals, the community, the union, or across the Bolivian *cocalero* movement. If crops exceed the *cato* limit, the community can eradicate them and prohibit the grower from further cultivating the plant for one year (Grisaffi, 2015, p. 9). Unions can impose fines, eradicate the crop, or prohibit its planting, among other actions (Grisaffi et al., 2021, p. 5). At the level of the *cocalero* movement, sanctions may entail returning to forced eradication (Grisaffi, 2019, p. 140). In practice, however, sanctions imposed by unions vary: *cato* surveillance takes different forms depending on the union (Pearson, 2016, p. 139), and some federations allow *cocaleros* to grow a certain amount of coca on unregistered *catos*, called *catos blancos*, or white plots. As interviewees explained, when reduction activities are carried out, the SC Secretary can advocate against the eradication of union's white *catos*.

SALE AND COMMERCIALISATION OF COCA LEAF

Commercialisation at the Tropic's coca leaf market is monitored by union members. Growers must take their dry harvest to the legal markets established by the state (Sacaba, in the city of Cochabamba) or to the primary markets—storehouses—in their municipalities. They must have an authorisation issued by their union centre to take their coca harvest to Sacaba—a small municipal market where middlemen and coca traders (commonly called *chhakas*) buy the crops for transport to the city (Llanos Layme, 2019). People who have a *cato blanco* can take their crops to the municipal warehouse or to Sacaba, if the union centre authorises them.

5. PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF THE SOCIAL CONTROL OF COCA

CONTROL AND EVOLUTION OF COCA LEAF SUPPLY AND PRICES

Since the SC system was implemented, the size of coca crops has fluctuated, with sharp drops in production nationally and in the Tropic between 2010 and 2015. More recently, there has been a sustained increase in the cultivated area, reaching a historical maximum (11,300 ha) since 2003 (Figure 2). This suggests that the SC had no significant effect on the reduction of coca leaf supply. However, the number of cultivated and eradicated hectares is much more stable and sustainable than in other countries in the region, and therefore coca prices.

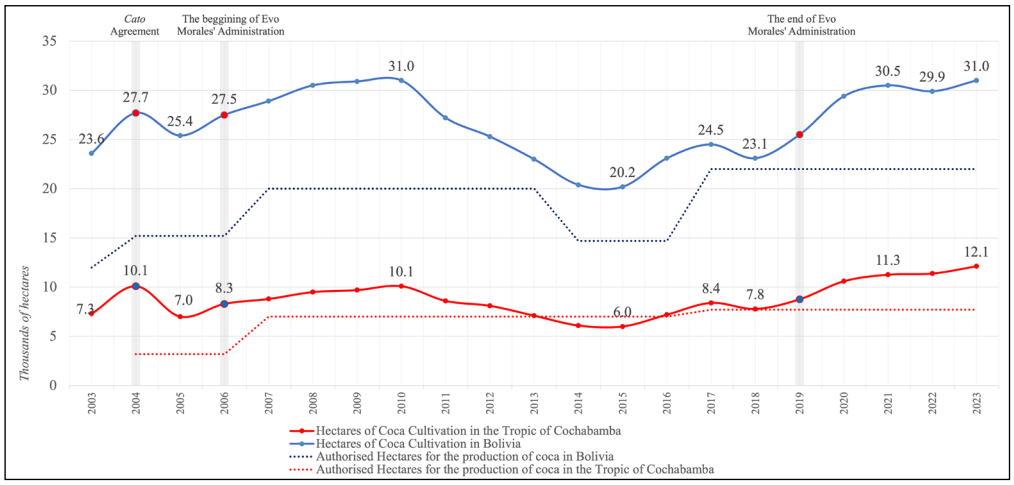

Figure 2 Hectares of coca cultivation in Bolivia and the Tropic of Cochabamba (2003–2022). Source: Authors' elaboration based on data from UNODC and GEPB.

Several authors agree that the SC system has become legitimate partly due to the price increase generated by production control (Farthing and Ledebur, 2015; Grisaffi et al., 2017; Ledebur and Youngers, 2013). Data show an overall increase in legal market prices since 1999, with a decline between 2005 and 2007 (Figure 3). However, prices have steadily declined since 2018, with an increase in 2023 (Figure 4). Factors such as the influx of coca leaf from Peru, the increased national leaf production and international market trends, may have contributed to this decline.

Figure 3 Average price of coca leaf in the Tropic of Cochabamba (1995–2009).[2] Source: Authors' elaboration based on data from UNODC and GEPB.

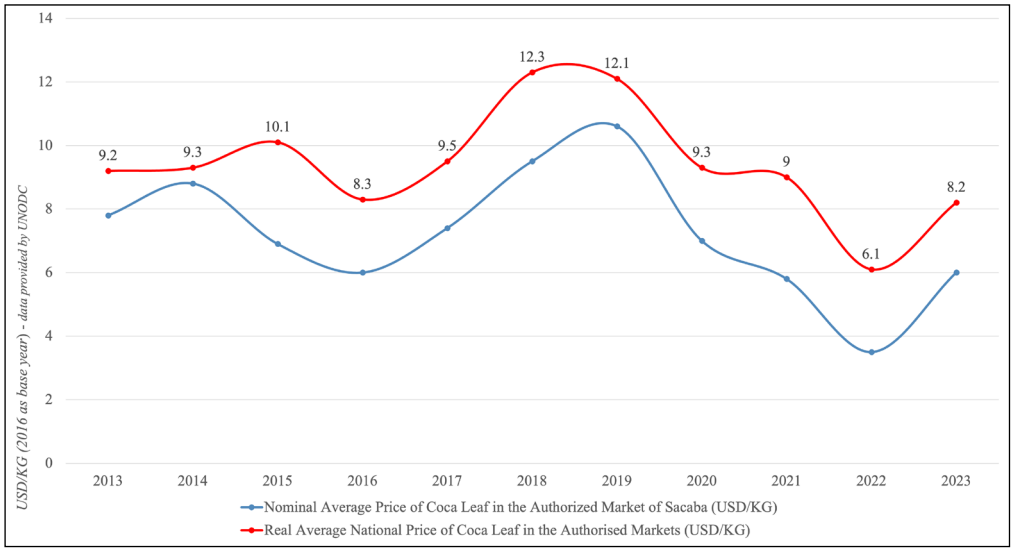

Figure 4 Average price of coca leaf in the Tropic of Cochabamba (2013–2023). Source: Authors' elaboration based on data from (2025).

Still, most interviewees perceived an overall decrease in coca prices. Previously, they earned enough money to afford education, housing, credit, and more (interview with *cocalero* peasant, 8 March 2022), but now prices are too low to cover the costs of the herbicides and fungicides used in coca cultivation (interview with *cocalero* peasant, 8 March 2022). Moreover, there are concerns about the fusarium pest, the cost of wages and transportation, and the low prices offered, and high quality demanded at the Sacaba market (Llanos Layme, 2019, p. 384).

ILLICIT MARKET

While the amount of coca leaf diverted to the illicit cocaine market remains uncertain, Figure 5 shows a notable disparity between estimated potential coca leaf production (based on cultivated hectares) and the coca entering the authorised commercial market, suggesting a significant diversion to the illicit market. Some interviewees confirmed that coca leaf can be diverted to the illicit market. In Cochabamba, each affiliate must take a 50-pound package at least three times a year to the Sacaba market, however, individual annual production can be considerably higher: calculations made by Llanos Layme (2019) in three coca *catos* showed that the annual production of the first of these cases was 825 pounds, 753 pounds in the second case, and 487 pounds in the third one. During the visit made in October 2022 to a Tropic's union, we were also told that the amount harvested could be much larger than that of the required amount that should be taken to Sacaba (150 pounds per year). Furthermore, according to what some farmers explained during our visit to the Tropic, some traders come to their farms to pick up the production for the illicit market. This indicates that there are also important economic incentives to participate in the cocaine market and deviations from the legal market.

2 This period includes the years in which coca cultivation was illegal in the Tropic of Cochabamba.

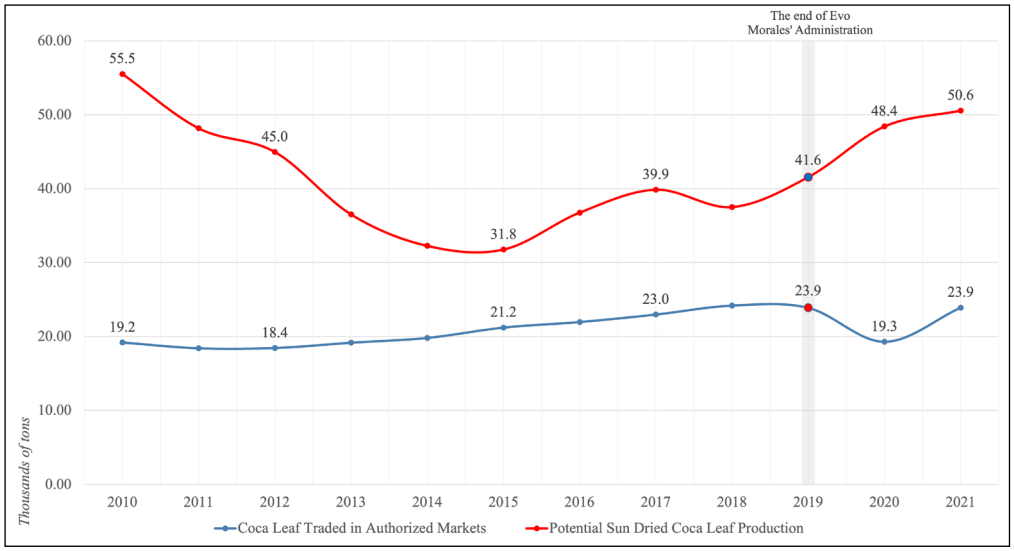

Figure 5 Potential sun-dried coca leaf production: Coca leaf traded in authorised markets (2010–2023). Source: Authors' elaboration based on data from UNODC and GEPB.

According to literature, these activities linked to cocaine production are intermittently carried out by peasants and *pichicateros* (cocaine base paste manufacturers), but many farmers claim this work is temporary and done to collect the capital needed to invest in their household economy to subsequently quit illegal activities (Grisaffi, 2019). Many people benefit directly or indirectly from this trade, including local stores, bars, builders, transport businesses, and other small businesses (Grisaffi, 2019).

VIOLENCE RELATED TO COCA PRODUCTION

One of the most fundamental changes resulting from SC has been the decline in violence by security forces and others in the coca-growing areas—one of the multiple forms of violence affecting these territories. Currently, the security forces' entry into the unions is consensual, coordinated with the leaders, and conducted without inspiring fear (interview with cocalero peasant, 11 March 2022). Coca growers perceive the SC programme as more profitable and efficient than former programmes and appreciate 'the current climate of peace and respect for human rights [and the] solid and fluid relationships between the grower-run programme and the unions' (Farthing and Kohl, 2012, p. 491).

In the Tropic of Cochabamba, SC has also been associated with lower levels of violence linked to drug production and trafficking compared to other coca-producing countries, such as Colombia. The peasants who were interviewed speak very little about the relationship between their communities and drug trafficking, as it is a sensitive subject around which silence prevails. However, they asses that the illicit cocaine market is not associate with violence on their territories. For instance, one interviewee noted that the education provided by the union prevents drug trafficking from unleashing violence the way it does in other countries (interview with *cocalero peasant*, 13 March 2022).

Moreover, ethnographic data suggests that the presence of cocaine trafficking does not necessarily lead to high levels of violence. This may be due to the power of community organisations (interview, 9 May 2022). According to Grisaffi (2021), the drug trade is part of a local moral order in the Tropic that prioritises reciprocal relationships and community welfare. In Bolivia, control over territory and crop is held by the unions, who are locals. In coca and cocaine transactions, mutual obligations arise, linking these actors to dense networks of mutual dependence (Grisaffi, 2021).

Quantitative data also indicates that Bolivia exhibits lower levels of violence and crime than other coca-producing countries, such as Colombia. As illustrated in Figure 6, over the last decade, Bolivia has consistently maintained a lower rate of intentional homicide victims per 100,000 population than Colombia. While Bolivia's rate has ranged between 3,5–6,58 homicides per 100,000, Colombia has fluctuated between 22,73–27,22. Although homicides rates only capture the most extreme form of violence, they remain a reliable indicator of explicit victimization.

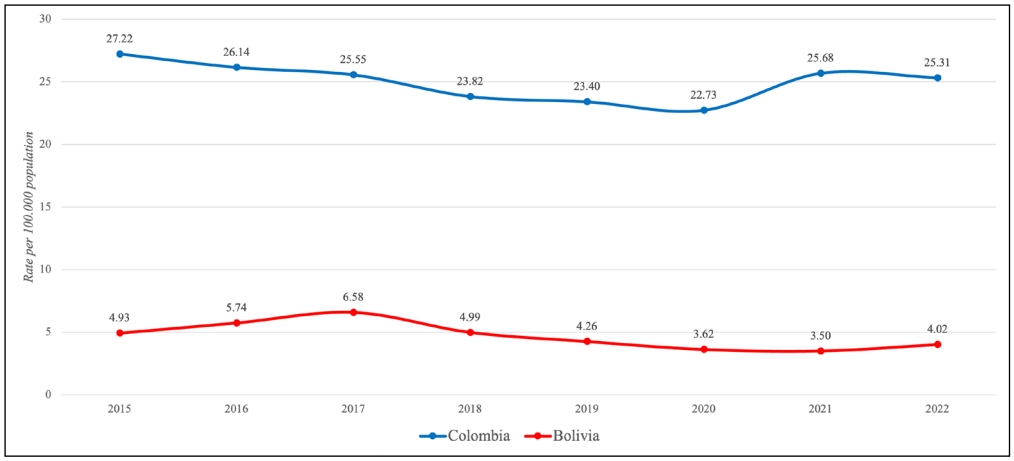

Figure 6 Victims of intentional homicide in Colombia and Bolivia (2015–2022). Source: Authors' elaboration based on data from UNODC.

Additionally, Bolivia records lower levels of criminality overall. According to Global Organized Crime Index—which assigns scores from 0 to 10 to reflect the level of organized crime in a country—, Bolivia scored between 4.30 (2021) and 4.45 (2023). In contrast, Colombia's scores ranged from 7.66 (2021) to 7.75 (2023). This index incorporates indicators such as the presence of criminal markets (including cocaine) and networks involved in drug trafficking, among other factors.

The available evidence on violence in Bolivia, and specifically in the Tropic of Cochabamba, underscores the importance of sociopolitical context not only in shaping illicit economies but also in determining how violence is regulated, mediated, and expressed. SC has contributed not only to reducing conflict between security forces and coca growers but to reinforcing the authority of community organisations. This, in turn, enhances the unions' capacity to regulate social relationships within coca-growing territories.

However, the existence of regulatory and governance structures led by community organizations does not imply the absence of non-violent conflict or tension in these territories. As previously noted, the presence of *catos blancos* in the interviewees' unions appears to reflect the tensions and problems that arise from the limited number of licenses for coca cultivation. In such situations, negotiation becomes essential for enabling or sanctioning unregistered *cocaleros* to grow a certain amount of coca (Pearson, 2016).

Moreover, at the union level, the figure of the SC Secretary has generated friction, as it is often perceived as 'the union snitch' and, in some cases, has become a nominal position maintained solely to meet formal union requirements (Llanos Layme, 2019, p. 365). Additionally, as Brewer-Osorio (2021) explains, there are conflicting political interests regarding coca policy between the regions of Yungas de La Paz and the Tropic, particularly around the distribution of licenses for legal coca production.

6. CONCLUSION

The Bolivian experience with SC has challenged two assumptions about coca and cocaine economies: that these economies are inevitably violent and that coca-producing countries are doomed to prohibition under the global anti-drug regime. Bolivian coca farmers carry out collective work, exercise local governance, and organise their economy as part of a social movement. They have established a system of regulation and supervision of the coca economy and marked a path toward the legitimation of coca-related activities.[3]

The achievements of SC are evident in the reduced conflict between security forces and coca growers, the increased respect for human rights, less violence related to cocaine production and trafficking, and the moderate initial increase in coca leaf prices (although decreased

3 Since November 2025, a new Bolivian government has taken office. The new anti-drug czar has signalled a change in coca policy emphasizing eradication as well as other measures against illegal production. This new approach may affect the SC system and could reactivate tensions with the coca growers' movement in Bolivia. The current situation requires further research. Nevertheless, our recommendations regarding SC for other Andean regions remain relevant.

over time due to external factors). Yet, the SC system has its limitations. First, some farmers who participated in the cocalero movement were not granted legal coca-producing plots, and new cocalero peasants have also been unable to access legal cultivation rights. Second, the SC system has failed to address the incentives driving coca crop expansion, particularly those linked to persistent demand along the cocaine supply chain. Third, the failure of coca industrialization has limited the development of alternative markets capable of absorbing the coca production currently destined for cocaine manufacture.

Still, the Bolivian experience can serve as a reference for coca economies of the Andean region that seek to implement participatory systems of control to integrate communities, ethnic groups, and farmers and to develop a market for non-psychoactive coca uses. However, the adaptation of the SC system to other countries is far from mechanical because all drug policies depend largely on local environments and contexts (Felbab-Brown, 2012, pp. 21–22). Nevertheless, in Andean regions, the initial priority in drug policy should be the reduction of violence in coca-growing territories, and the state must grant greater political viability to proposals from coca community organisations, since they help prevent violence (Farthing and Kohl, 2012). This is essential to address impoverished communities, generate benefits beyond drug control, and protect human rights (Farthing and Kohl, 2012, p. 493).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors thank Patricia Chulver and Diego Giacoman for granting us interviews, and the researchers of the Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social (Center for the Study of Economic and Social Reality [CERES]), especially Roberto Laserna, for their comments and contributions to this work.

FUNDING INFORMATION

This research was funded by CERES and Centro de Estudios sobre Seguridad y Drogas (Center for the Study of Security and Drugs [CESED]).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Maria Alejandra Velez is part of the editorial board and Strategy Committee of JIED. The authors have no competing interests to declare.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

B.R., M.A.V., and D.R. conceptualized the research ideas. B.R., J.P., and M.A.V. contributed to the overall research design. G.J. and J.P. led the data collection. B.R. and M.A.V. conducted the analysis and prepared the initial draft. B.R., J.P., M.A.V., and D.R. participated in editing the manuscript.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

Beatriz Irene Ramos orcid.org/0009-0008-6198-816X
Center for the Study of Security and Drugs (CESED), School of Economics, Los Andes University, Bogotá, Colombia

Jean Paul Benavides orcid.org/0000-0001-5251-0166
Instituto de Investigaciones Socio-Económicas, Universidad Católica de Bolivia, Bolivia; Centro de Estudios sobre la Realidad Social y Económica (CERES), Bolivia

Maria Alejandra Velez orcid.org/0000-0002-8916-8808
Center for the Study of Security and Drugs (CESED), School of Economics, Los Andes University, Bogotá, Colombia

Gilda Jauregui orcid.org/0000-0002-1783-5384
Centro de Estudios sobre la Realidad Social y Económica (CERES), Bolivia

David Restrepo
Center for the Study of Security and Drugs (CESED), School of Economics, Los Andes University, Bogotá, Colombia

REFERENCES

Abadie, A., Acevedo, M., Kugler, M. and **Vargas, J.** (2015) *Inside the War on Drugs: Effectiveness and Unintended Consequences of a Large Illicit Crops Eradication Program in Colombia*. Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Arias, E. and **Grisaffi, T.** (2021) *Cocaine: From coca fields to streets*. Duke University Press. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1515/9781478092322

Beckert, J. and **Dewey, M.** (2017) *The architecture of illegal markets. Towards an Economic Sociology of Illegality in the Economy*. Oxford Academic. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198794974.001.0001

Benavides, J. (2006) *Syndicalisme et pouvoir local. Les planteurs de coca du Chapare (Bolivie) 1980–2005*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Université des Sciences et Technologies de Lille 1.

Brewer-Osorio, S. (2021) 'Turning over a new leaf: A subnational analysis of "coca yes, cocaine no" in Bolivia', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 53(3), pp. 1–28. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022216X21000456

Britto, L. (2020) *Marijuana boom: The rise and fall of Colombia's first drug paradise*. University of California Press. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520974265

Castillo, J.C., Mejía, D. and **Restrepo, P.**(2020) 'Scarcity without Leviathan: The violent effects of cocaine supply shortages in the Mexican drug war', *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 102(2), pp. 269–286. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1162/rest_a_00801

Duran-Martinez, A. (2015) 'To kill and tell? State power, criminal competition, and drug violence', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(8), pp. 1377–1402. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002715587047

Farthing, L. and **Kohl, B.** (2012) 'Supply-side harm reduction strategies: Bolivia's experiment with social control', *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 23(6), pp. 488–494. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2012.06.004

Farthing, L. and **Ledebur, K.** (2015) *Habeas coca. Control social de la coca en Bolivia*. Global Drug Policy Program, Open Society Foundation.

Felbab-Brown, V. (2012) 'The policymaker's Hippocratic oath', *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 23(1), pp. 21–22. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2011.07.002

Friman, R. (2009) 'Drug Markets and the Selective Use of Violence', *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 52(3), pp. 285–95. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10611-009-9202-4

Gallardo, M.C. (2004) 'Movimiento cocalero en Bolivia: Violencia, discurso y hegemonía', in *V Congreso Chileno de Antropología*. Colegio de Antropólogos de Chile AG.

García Linera, A., Chávez, M. and **Costas, P.** (2010 [2004]) *Sociología de los movimientos sociales en Bolivia: Estructuras de movilización, repertorios culturales y acción política*. Plural Editores.

GeoBolivia. (2021) *Mapa de la República de Bolivia.* 2nd ed. GeoBolivia.

Goldstein, P. (1985) 'The Drugs/Violence Nexus: A Tripartite Conceptual Framework', *Journal of Drug Issues*, 15(4), pp. 493–506. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/002204268501500406

Grisaffi, T. (2015) 'Control social en Bolivia: Una alternativa humana a la erradicación forzosa de cultivos de coca' [Paper presentation], *XI Reunión de Antropología del MERCOSUR (XI RAM)*. Montevideo, Uruguay, 30 November–4 December.

Grisaffi, T. (2019) *Coca yes, cocaine no: How Bolivia's Coca growers reshaped democracy*. Duke University Press. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1515/9781478004332

Grisaffi, T. (2021) 'Why is the drug trade not violent? Cocaine production and the embedded economy in the Chapare, Bolivia', *Development and Change*, 53(3), pp. 576–599. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12696

Grisaffi, T., Farthing, L. and **Ledebur, K.** (2017) 'Integrated development with coca in the plurinational state of Bolivia: Shifting the focus from eradication to poverty alleviation', in *Bulletin on Narcotics* (vol. 61, pp. 131–157). UNODC at Vienna. Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/bulletin/2017/Bulletin_on_Narcotics_V1705843.pdf. https://doi.org/10.18356/98360021-en

Grisaffi, T., Farthing, L., Ledebur, K., Paredes, M. and **Pastor, A.** (2021) 'From criminals to citizens: The applicability of Bolivia's community-based coca control policy to Peru', *World Development*, 146(1), p. 105610. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105610

Gutiérrez Aguilar, R. (2008) *Los ritmos del Pachakuti. Movilización y levantamiento popular-indígena en Bolivia (2000–2005)*. Tinta Limón.

Ledebur, K. and **Youngers, C.** (2013) 'From conflict to collaboration: An innovative approach to reducing coca cultivation in Bolivia', *Stability*, 2(1), pp. 1–11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.aw

Llanos Layme, D. (2019) 'Chapare en tiempos del cato de coca', in A. Spedding, B. Huanca, ans D. Llanos (Eds.), *Kawsachun coca. Economía campesina cocalera en los Yungas y el Chapare* (pp. 352–393). Editorial Mama Huaco – Fundación PIEB.

Pearson, Z. (2016) *Coca sí, cocaína no? The intimate politics of international drug control policy and reform in Bolivia*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Ohio State University.

Rubiano Lizarazo, M., Vélez Lesmes, M., Díaz, D. and **Ramos Torres, B.** (2020) *¿Reanudar la fumigación aérea con glifosato de cultivos ilícitos en Colombia? Un resumen de la literatura científica*. Universidad de los Andes. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1992/70011 (Accessed: 8 May 2025).

Spedding, A. (2004) *Kawsachun coca: economía campesina cocalera en los Yungas y el Chapare*. PIEB.

UNODC and **GEPB.** (2025) *Informe de monitoreo de cultivos de coca, 2023*. Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Bolivia/Bolivia_monitoreo_2023.pdf (Accessed: 8 May 2025).

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
Ramos, B.I., Benavides, J.P., Velez, M.A., Jauregui, G. and Restrepo, D. 2026. Social Control of Coca Production: Lessons from the Tropic of Cochabamba, Bolivia. *Journal of Illicit Economies and Development*, 8(2): pp. 16–26. DOI: https://doi.org/10.31389/jied.292

Submitted: 21 October 2024
Accepted: 26 November 2025
Published: 25 March 2026