

Recent USAID Programs to Support Violence Prevention in Guatemala

Violence Prevention Project (VPP): This initiative addresses violence by providing educational, vocational, cultural and recreational opportunities for at-risk youth, facilitates trust and collaboration between communities and police, and supports national policies and programs on violence prevention. The project's activities are concentrated in 11 municipalities in the departments of Guatemala, Chiquimula and Alta Verapaz. Project counterparts include national level institutions such as the Police Reform Commission and the Ministry of Government's Vice Ministry for Crime and Violence Prevention in addition to municipal authorities and community stakeholders.

Youth Employability Program: This activity supported 300 at-risk youth between the ages of 18 and 25 who displayed leadership and technical skills. The program provided them with vocational training, life skills, and an internship with a Guatemalan company. Upon successful completion of their internship, companies were encouraged to offer youth full-time positions.

Municipal Alliance for Violence Prevention in Central America (AMUPREV): AMUPREV, began working in Guatemala in 2012 and has supported the municipalities of Palencia and Santa Catarina Pinula in the development of a municipal plan for violence prevention. They recently developed a partnership with the municipality of Mixco.

Security and Justice Sector Reform Program (SJSRP): Among other objectives, this activity supports the development of a career path for police, one of the elements under the Police Reform Commission. It also supports institution strengthening and reform initiatives in the Courts, Attorney General's Office, the Forensics Institute, Ministry of Governance and Public Defense Institute.

USAID's Partnerships: In October 2012, USAID and the City of Los Angeles signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to share lessons learned between the Mayor's Office on Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) and USAID. As part of this partnership, the first area of collaboration within a greater strategy is piloting the Youth Service Eligibility Tool (YSET) in select countries in Central America. YSET was developed originally as a joint venture between GRYD and the University of Southern California (USC) to diagnose those youth most susceptible to recruitment by gangs for focused interventions.

USAID/Guatemala's Health and Education Office (HEO): HEO is working to ensure youth have access to clearly defined and relevant education through the Lifelong Learning Project. In addition to improving early grade reading skills, HEO focuses on promoting equitable access, quality education, training services and youth engagement. Part of the funding for this Contract for alternative basic education and workforce training programs will come from HEO funds.

USAID/Guatemala's OBSICA: The Central American Observatory (OBSICA) under the auspices of the Central American Integration System (SICA acronym in Spanish) is a regional crime observatory that will gather crime data in the region. USAID/El Salvador has a regional program that will be supporting the development of a regional crime observatory for the Northern Triangle.

USAID/Glasswing: This is a regional CARSI-funded Global Development Alliances (GDA) that engages the private sector, local governments and individual volunteers in a collaborative effort to address the needs of at-risk youth and their communities. Over four years, this program will implement volunteer-led extra-curricular activities—such as glee clubs, science and discovery, sports and newspaper projects—in 32 schools. This program also includes the revitalization and rehabilitation of at least 75 schools in the three host countries, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

USAID/A Ganar: The A Ganar Program uses soccer and team sports principles to help youth in Latin America and the Caribbean learn life and entrepreneurial skills, or re-enter the formal education system. A Ganar strengthens local capacity to meet the education and employment needs of out-of-school youth through a four-phase integrated job training program focusing on: employability skills, basic math and literacy courses, vocational training and internships, and connections to private sector companies. By providing opportunities for at-risk youth, A Ganar works to decrease at-risk youth recruitment by gangs and organized crime.

USG Programs to Promote Citizen Security

INL has promoted the “Police Model Precinct” as a way of addressing the deficiencies in criminal investigation, crime prevention and police management. This model was implemented in Villa Nueva and in Mixco and is currently being expanded in Alta Verapaz. INL programs focus on building GOG interdiction and eradication capabilities, strengthening the capacity of the National Civilian Police (PNC), reducing demand, and strengthening the ability of law enforcement and judicial authorities to investigate and prosecute major organized crime organizations and their leaders. INL has also worked to support the efforts of the Police Reform Commission, providing advisors, expertise and equipment.