



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## Mexico

# CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

### CONTEXT



**+35,600 homicides** committed, the fifth highest number on record.



The states with **the most homicides** in 2021 were **Guanajuato, the State of Mexico and Baja California.**



Civic courts directed **+96,400 under 18 offenders** to rehabilitation or alternative sentencing.

### OVERVIEW

In Mexico, 2021 was the fifth most violent year on record with 35,600 homicides reported. Concurrently, other violent and property crimes, such as assaults, muggings, public disturbances, and robbery, plague communities and fuel citizen insecurity. Crime and violence disproportionately impact Mexico's youth, who are both victims of violent crime at the hands of drug cartels while at the same time would-be recruits to join such groups and become hardened criminals. In addition, crime and violence are universally cited as core constraints to increased private sector investment in Mexico. Under the U.S.-Mexico Bicentennial Framework, both governments prioritize reducing crime and violence that threaten public security, undercut the credibility of public institutions, and damage local communities.

### OBJECTIVE: CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN TARGETED COMMUNITIES CONTINUALLY DECREASED

USAID partners with Mexican government authorities on multiple levels, civil society, the private sector, and academia to address community-level conflict and violence. USAID partners with law enforcement and first responders to more effectively address citizen security needs and build trust in the communities they serve. USAID particularly invests in youth, who often lack viable alternatives to lucrative illicit activities, making them ideal recruits for local and transnational criminal organizations. USAID supports civic justice, an alternative court system that directs lower-level offenders, primarily youth, away from criminal justice and toward rehabilitation. Activities use evidence-based prevention practices – ranging from cognitive behavioral therapy to vocational training to reintegration into families, labor markets, and communities – to help at-risk youth turn away from crime and reach their full potential.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AS A RESULT OF USAID SUPPORT



During FY 2020 **+93%** of youth recently **released from incarceration**, who participated in USAID programs, did not engage in criminal activities.



USAID partnered with the private sector, academia, civil society, and state governments to deter **+3,300 at-risk youth** from entering or returning to a life of crime during FY 2020.



**7 municipalities** adopted USAID supported **civic justice and community policing models**. Model to be expanded to a total of **32 municipalities**.

## USAID CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

**Violence Prevention and Reduction Activity (Chemonics International, Inc.)** \$19.4m, 2020-2024. This activity partners with municipal governments to reduce crime and violence in their communities by shifting from punitive criminal justice to preventative and proactive civic justice and problem-oriented policing. Addressing low-level crime and violence expeditiously through municipal civic justice courts frees up criminal justice system resources to focus on higher-impact cases while also helping offenders find new life alternatives.

**Social Reintegration Model for Juvenile Offenders (Reinserta un Mexicano)** \$1.3m (USAID) / \$1.3m (leverage) 2019-2023. This comprehensive reintegration program provides youth in detention centers in Mexico City, the State of Mexico, and Nuevo Leon with educational programs, job training, psychological and health support, and job placement to help them not revert to a life of crime and violence when they are released from detention.

**Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Youth on Probation Activity (Centro de Desarrollo y Atención Terapéutica (CEDAT), A.C.)** \$847,000 (USAID) / \$892,400 (leverage), 2020-2023. This activity aims to reduce recidivism rates for youth on probation in 27 municipalities in three states (Chihuahua, Jalisco, and Nuevo León) through cognitive therapy, access to education, and employment options. CEDAT trains local government institutions and civil society organizations in the cognitive therapy model, forges public-private partnerships, and advocates for state-level policy reform and resource allocation for alternative justice approaches.

**Awareness and Opportunities for Women in Prison Activity (La Cana, Proyecto de Reinserción Social)** \$900,000 (USAID) / \$900,000 (leverage), 2021-2024. This activity supports the rehabilitation and reintegration of young female detainees to reduce their likelihood of future violent behavior and recidivism. The activity provides targeted job-related skills training and wellness treatment for female youth in detention centers to increase their professional and social capabilities and facilitate the transition into their communities after detention. The activity also improves the working conditions of female inmates and promotes ethical businesses within the prisons.

**Financing Local Police under Civic Justice (Mexico Evalua, Centro de Analisis de Politicas Publicas)** \$750,000 (USAID) / \$750,000 (leverage), 2021-2024. This activity seeks – through strategic alliances with the private sector, donor partners, civil society, members of the federal and state governments, and local actors in the states of Mexicali and Ensenada – to improve working conditions and police capacity to respond effectively to local security demands. It focuses on resolving and mitigating conflict, insecurity, and violence within target communities.