



## FACT SHEET

### Justice Sector Strengthening Project

USAID’s \$21.4 million Justice Sector Strengthening Project helps reduce impunity through support for criminal justice reform, promotion of judicial transparency, and enhancement of citizen participation in judicial reform efforts. Strengthening the capacity, efficiency and accountability of the judicial system supports USAID efforts in the area of security.

The project provides assistance to establish and strengthen training schools in the Supreme Court, Prosecutor’s Office and Public Defender’s Office. Demonstrating increasing sustainability, with the project’s technical guidance, the schools primarily use their own trainers and infrastructure to train new entrants and provide continuing education to prosecutors, public defenders, and judges. USAID also supported the design and implementation of a master’s degree program in forensic medicine to improve the use of evidence in criminal cases and sponsored a leadership program for mid-level judicial officials.

Public assistance units in judicial centers help improve the quality of services and access to justice. The project also provided technical assistance to introduce a new electronic system for court notifications, increasing efficiency as well as reducing risk for traditional process servers. Rapid response units in the Attorney General’s Office reduce case backlogs through streamlined procedures for non-complex cases, decreasing completion time from an average of 540 days for a full trial to just 39 days. USAID also supports interagency collaboration among the police, prosecutors and forensics to improve criminal investigation.

USAID is helping to expand community policing to improve public confidence in the police to reduce crime. Nearly 100 percent of police officers have received basic community policing courses that were developed with USAID assistance. The project also provides specialized training for police in leadership, group management, human rights, problem solving and communication. Over 15,000 community members have participated in community policing outreach activities, including vocational training, forums, sporting events, and street fairs.

USAID is helping to establish 25 victims’ assistance centers within police units, public defenders’ and prosecutors’ offices, and justice centers that provide access to legal, medical, and psychological counseling. The Government of El Salvador is responsible for managing and financing these assistance centers.

To strengthen judicial transparency, USAID promotes merit-based selection and promotion of judges and works with the Supreme Court to strengthen units that are responsible for investigating malpractice by judges and attorneys. With USAID also supports citizen participation campaigns to encourage public awareness and oversight of justice sector reforms.



*An agent of the National Police (PNC) talks with students at a public school in San Salvador. The community policing initiative builds trust between the police and citizens to coordinate violence prevention.*

<b>Justice Sector Strengthening</b>
<b>Total Program Investment:</b> \$21.4 million
<b>Time Period:</b> March 2013-March 2018
<b>Geographic Areas:</b> Nationwide
<b>Salvadoran Government partners:</b>
<b>Supreme Court Attorney General’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, National Judicial Council, National Civil Police</b>

For more information on USAID El Salvador and USAID Central America Regional programs call: (503) 2501-3411; 3344; 3432 or visit: [www.usaid.gov/el-salvador](http://www.usaid.gov/el-salvador)

