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## FACT SHEET

# USAID CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT

USAID is supporting El Salvador's national security plan to make communities safer and provide youth with alternatives to gangs and illegal immigration. The project works with the Salvadoran government, local authorities, community and church organizations, and business leaders, in taking effective actions to reduce crime and violence in urban areas with high crime and high out-migration.

USAID has reached 64 municipalities, including 31 high crime municipalities prioritized under El Salvador's security plan, to address the specific problems in these municipalities.

One particular concern in all municipalities is keeping vulnerable youth away from gang recruitment and illegal migration. As alternatives, USAID, together with municipal authorities, helped establish 168 youth centers nationwide where approximately 40,000 children and adolescents can study and receive tutoring; learn computer and other vocational skills; take music, dance, and art lessons; engage in sports activities; and meet with friends in a safe place

under adult supervision. The centers also provide workshops that help teenagers construct life plans, develop social skills and establish short and medium term goals.

At municipal job training centers, youth can learn a vocational skill or receive Microsoft computer certification for better employment opportunities.

Youth philharmonic orchestras give children and adolescents a chance to learn a musical instrument and gain confidence while bringing communities together through music.

The project also supports municipal prevention centers that offer specialized services for women and youth, conflict mediation, job placement, and psychosocial counseling. In addition, USAID provides funding for specific municipal projects, such as public parks or sports and recreation centers and crime prevention campaigns that foster harmony, community pride, and civic action.

After initial support from USAID, most of these youth centers, municipal councils and philharmonics are now run by the municipalities.

Private sector support for crime prevention is a key component of the project. Microsoft, for example, provided computers and software for the youth centers and established Microsoft training academies. Other companies are sponsoring youth centers or providing courses and training for youth center coordinators and volunteers in working with vulnerable youth.

A major component of the project includes the recuperation and revitalization of public spaces, in high crime urban hubs, a proven approach for reducing crime and violence and for increasing public perception of safety and well-being so that people envision a better life in their community.

Finally, the project is providing training and support to formerly gang-involved men and women, allowing them to redirect their lives and become contributing members of the community.

## CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT

TOTAL PROGRAM INVESTMENT: \$39.8 million

TIME PERIOD: March 2013 – December 2019

GEOGRAPHIC AREA: Urban areas with high crime and high out-migration (31 priority municipalities under El Salvador's security plan)

### PARTNERS:

- Ministry of Justice and Public Security
- Municipalities
- Private Businesses
- Community Organizations

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