



## FACT SHEET

### Youth and Community Development Program

Youth in Central America are facing overwhelming challenges. According to the statistics from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala have the highest homicide rates in the world. Exacerbating the situation of youth violence in the Central American region is the fact that public spending on education (with the exception of Costa Rica) is, on average, a mere 3.5 percent of the GDP, which results in public schools that lack the adequate infrastructure, space, equipment and staff needed to provide students with the tools and development to help confront and overcome social problems.

Furthermore, students attend classes in their public schools only 4.5 hours on average each day, 61 percent do not study beyond ninth grade, and there is a direct correlation between school dropout rates and gang recruitment and activity.

Despite this discouraging data, there are school-based violence prevention models that have proven effective in reducing risks and in developing protective factors that promote students' positive development. The "Youth and Community Development Program: El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras" focuses on developing life skills, establishing support networks among youth, creating safe and stimulating learning environments, and providing access to extra-curricular educational and recreational activities. These activities provide youth with tools to make better choices in their lives, and discover their full potential, promoting positive alternatives to crime and violence.

This program is a Global Development Alliance (public-private partnership) between USAID and Glasswing International to leverage funding and support from private businesses to address citizen security threats in the region by creating safe environments for learning and recreation. The program increases educational opportunities for youth and fosters broad-based engagement to create safer and more resilient communities in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, bolstering community pride, opportunities, and greater citizen security.



*An all-girls soccer club fosters confidence and teamwork and promotes physical exercise.*

#### Youth and Community Development Program

**Total Program Investment:**  
\$7.4 million

**Time Period:** October 2012-September 2019

**Geographic Areas:** El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras

**Implementing Partner:**  
Glasswing International

**Partners:** Private sector companies such as Chevron, HanesBrands, and Walmart

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)

