



**USAID**  
DEL PUEBLO DE LOS ESTADOS  
UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA



CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL

# ALIANZA JOVEN REGIONAL USAID - SICA

QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL - JUNE 2009



JULY 2009

This report was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Creative Associates International, Inc.

# **QUARTERLY REPORT**

**APRIL–JUNE 2009**

Prepared by  
CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC. (CREATIVE)  
For the  
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)  
El Salvador

## Table of Contents

<b>I. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT ADVANCES THIS QUARTER.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS QUARTER.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Result I: Jump Start Public-Private Initiatives for Gang Prevention Awareness, Rehabilitation and Reinsertion....	6
Component I: Preventing that young people enter gangs.....	8
Component II: Encouraging gang members to abandon gangs.....	18
Component III: Job opportunities for rehabilitated former gang members.....	19
RESULT II: Assess regional legal/justice frameworks and practices and multi-country policy and legal reforms to improve the treatment and rehabilitation of youth.....	21
RESULT III: Collaboration and Assistance to SICA to catalyze regional policy reform and harmonization; and gather relevant stockholders to spur development of policy initiatives an implementation of reforms.....	26
<b>ANNEX.....</b>	<b>27</b>
1. Media Articles .....	29
2. Analisis de la Situacion de la Region.....	33

## I. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT ADVANCES THIS QUARTER

This report covers the period of activities from April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, of the Regional Youth Alliance USAID-SICA (*Alianza Joven Regional* USAID-SICA (AJR)) also referred to as the Gangs Prevention Alliance for Central America. The AJR's efforts this quarter were focused on advancing the implementation of activities of Result I. Program staff and partners focused on establishing new partnerships, developing networks and carrying out four pilot Youth Violence Prevention camps as well as advancing the Result II advocacy phase in improving the Juvenile Justice systems in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. This quarter the AJR inaugurated two Outreach Centers (OCs) in Honduras and one in El Salvador. The Desafío 100 program made advances in San Pedro Sula with the launch of a second phase, benefiting an additional 24 former gang members. The Desafío 100 program has progressed in Tegucigalpa as 34 former gang member candidates were selected for job placement. Thus far three former gang members have been placed in jobs. The Desafío 100 program in El Salvador was initiated with the evaluation of over 70 former gang members. Additionally, the AJR has embarked on an effort to seek new partnerships as well as public and private sector alliances to aid in the creation of prevention networks.

This quarter the AJR signed agreements with *Fe y Alegría* to implement OCs in Melendez, Soyapango and Zacamil (13 de enero), Mejicanos. The AJR also signed agreements with youth camp groups, *Asociacion Scout de El Salvador*, *Conquistadores*, *Fe y Alegria* and *Exploradores del Rey*. These agreements lead to the piloting of youth violence prevention camps with participants from high risk communities in the greater San Salvador area.

The AJR reviewed proposals and the following agreements are in process:

USAID approved seven small projects to be implemented in Guatemala through OCs. These projects are in various stages of implementation.

Agreements have been reached with the Mayor and implementing partners to develop an OC in Choloma (greater San Pedro Sula area.)

A proposal for a small grant for a Street Soccer program in Las Ayestas, Tegucigalpa is almost complete.

A proposal for an OC in the Flores de Oriente, Nueva Suyapa, Tegucigalpa is in an advanced stage of development.

The AJR's activities generated significant media interest. Additionally there were several TV reports of the inauguration of the OCs in San Salvador and Tegucigalpa as well as the Desafío 100 launch in San Pedro Sula. Links to some of these print media reports can be found below.

1. <http://proceso.hn/2009/06/14/Metr%C3%B3poli/Inauguran.centros.de/14093.html>
2. [http://www.televiscentrotv.net/new/tvonline\\_noticia-detalle.php?noticia\\_id=9728](http://www.televiscentrotv.net/new/tvonline_noticia-detalle.php?noticia_id=9728)
3. <http://www.laprensa.hn/Ediciones/2009/05/27/Noticias/Mi-vida-cambio-hoy-tiene-sentido>

4. <http://www.laprensahn.com/Ediciones/2009/05/25/Noticias/35-ex-pandilleros-tendran-trabajo>
5. [http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota\\_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3507679](http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3507679)
6. <http://www.sica.int/busqueda/Noticias.aspx?IDItem=34413&IDCat=3&IdEnt=1&Idm=1&IdmStyle=1>

AJR produced one electronic Newsletter (2009-02), a copy of which can be found in Annex 1.

## II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS QUARTER

### *Analysis of Progress*

In the second quarter of 2009, the AJR has progressed in meeting its September 2010 targets. Thus far 22 communities have been assisted in crime prevention. This number is up from eight communities last quarter. This quarter the AJR has inaugurated two additional Outreach Centers bringing the total number to six OCs. The AJR has also awarded four sub-grants for implementation. The total number of youth that benefit from the Outreach Centers increased from 1,356 to 1,819. It is important to note that this figure does not include youth benefited by activities supported by small grants.

The AJR has piloted youth violence prevention camps with an estimated list of over 250 youth beneficiaries from the most violent communities of greater San Salvador. The prevention camps program were made possible through an alliance that provided small grants to the four main camping organizations in the country. The main goal of this program is to develop a methodology that can be expanded and replicated in the other countries.

The Desafio 100 program has expanded the second phase in Honduras with a launch in San Pedro Sula. There are an additional 24 beneficiaries in the program of which six have already been placed in jobs. In Tegucigalpa three beneficiaries have been placed in jobs of the 34 former gang members identified to participate in the program.

<b>IR 1 Strengthening Rule of Law</b>				
<b>Sub-IR Crime Prevention Programs Implemented</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline Year</b>	<b>Target Sept 2010</b>	<b>To June 2009</b>
<b>Result 1 Jump Start Public Private Initiatives for Gang Prevention</b>				
1.1	Communities assisted in crime prevention	2008 0	30	22
1.2	New Outreach Centers Established	2008 0	15	6
1.3	Sub-Grants Implemented (other than Outreach Centers)	2008 0	7 mid-size grants 27 small grants	7 small grants
1.4	Youth benefited by Outreach Centers	2008 0	3750	1,819
1.5	Desafio 100 youths provided with jobs	2008 0	450	35
1.6	Leverage Contributions raised	2008 0	1:1	pend.

<b>Result 2 Assess Regional Legal/Justice Frameworks and promote Juvenile Justice Policy Reform</b>					
2.1	Evaluation of National/Legal Frameworks/Policies and Best Practices validated by Working Groups and Regional Comparative Analysis Developed	2008	0	3 Evaluations Validated 1 Comparative Analysis Developed	3 Evaluations validated 1 Comparative Analysis Developed
2.2	Advocacy Strategies to influence National/Regional Legal Frameworks/Policies designed and implemented	2008	0	3	0
<b>Result 3 Collaboration and Assistance to SICA to catalyze regional policy reform and harmonization</b>					
3.1	Number of reforms and initiatives promoted by SICA to improve the juvenile justice system and juvenile violence prevention through assistance by AJR	2008	0	5	1

***Result I: Jump Start Public-Private Initiatives for Gang Prevention Awareness, Rehabilitation and Reinsertion***

On April 2, 2009 the fourth OC outside of Guatemala and third in El Salvador was inaugurated in the very violent neighborhood of Barrio Lourdes in the municipality of San Salvador. The AJR signed cooperative agreements with Fe y Alegria to develop an OC in the “13 de enero” neighborhood of the Zacamil district of the municipality of Mejicanos and in the Melendez neighborhood of the municipality of Soyapango. The OC in 13 de enero is an 18<sup>th</sup> Street gang enclave surrounded by MS territory. The first OCs in the greater Tegucigalpa area were inaugurated in the Villafranca and Buenas Nuevas communities in Comayaguela with cooperation from Save the Children Honduras and the Rotary Clubs of Tegucigalpa. Proposals to start additional OCs in Chamelecón and Choloma in San Pedro Sula and one in Flores de Oriente in Tegucigalpa are being developed with the partners.

Also during this second quarter several Terms of Reference for the implementation of OCs were prepared and distributed to potential partners in Honduras and El Salvador.

The AJR produced a video with the purpose of informing various audiences on the OC youth violence prevention methodology. This video contains information and testimonies from the beneficiaries of OCs operating in the three counties. The AJR was invited to make a presentation on the OC model on April 28<sup>th</sup> at the V Anti-Gang Convention that took place at Decamerón, El Salvador. The video was presented at the Conference, where AJR’s panel drew substantial interest from participants.

The OC Coordinators of El Salvador were invited to participate in a meeting with the Coordinators of the Guatemalan OCs to build a cross national learning network among them. Discussions were held on the OC model, lessons learned, and recommendations for adjustments

to the OC model. Potential partners and Coordinators of the Honduran OCs were invited to come to El Salvador to see in detail the operation of the El Salvador OCs.

The Creative Associates team in Washington, DC and the AJR have been active in engaging Nortel regarding a possible GDA program that will provide computers and IT solutions to the growing network of OCs in the region.

Additionally the AJR Director, with the help of Creative Associates Washington staff has been exploring a possible grant from Seattle International Foundation for used computers for OCs. Mauricio Vivero, the Executive Director of this NGO, visited AJR OCs in El Salvador with AJR staff and met with USAID DG Director and AJR Project Director.

In the job placement arena, a second group of former gang members were evaluated and interviewed in San Pedro Sula, where 24 were selected as beneficiaries in the second phase of Desafio 100 launched in San Pedro Sula on May 26, 2009. The Desafio 100 evaluation process continued in Tegucigalpa, where 34 former gang members were selected as beneficiaries for job opportunities. Also out of 78 former gang members identified in El Salvador, 63 were tested and their final selection interviews are pending.

The AJR made significant progress in the organization of an awareness campaign called “For the Life of Honduran Youth”, which will be launched with the help of Honduran moral leaders. This campaign is aimed at improving the condition and opportunities of Honduran youth at risk and toward organizing a reality television show focusing on the struggle of former gang members in El Salvador and the need to offer them opportunities and a second chance.

The AJR has embarked on a wide effort to seek new partnerships and public and private sector alliances. Some of these are various companies at the national and regional level, NGOs that focus on volunteerism, NGOs that work in rehabilitation, government entities and municipal authorities, youth camp organizations and international donors/projects, that pave the way to increased joint activities and exploring new intervention models (camp alliances, volunteerism networks, rehabilitation innovation alliances and national and regional private sector alliances.)

There are many semi-abandoned or underutilized infrastructure found in El Salvador and Honduras that have important implications for regional programming. Program staff has found a considerable amount of infrastructure left over from municipal or donor community development projects. Most of the new OCs are being implemented in community centers and one in an abandoned school. The municipalities and the communities have not been able to develop volunteer initiatives or gain the support of the private sector to achieve sustainability. Some examples point to the fact that municipal involvement does not guarantee sustainability, but the weaving of that support with community, private sector and volunteer networks may assist in this regard.

## **Component I: *Preventing that young people enter gangs***

### **El Salvador**

#### **Achievements**

On April 2<sup>nd</sup> the inauguration of the OC in the very violent neighborhood of Barrio Lourdes, San Salvador, took place with the presence of USAID's Deputy Director and DG Director. This OC is the first one located in the city of San Salvador. The OC Coordinator is Pastor Carlos Artiga, who as a former gang member has the advantage of knowing firsthand the cycle of gang recruitment and is prepared to help youth avoid falling prey to gang life. Pastor Artiga joined and left the gang for the seminary in this same neighborhood.

In its first three months of operation 267 youth have benefited from the Barrio Lourdes OC. Among the beneficiaries many are wives and children of gang members who are now jailed or dead.

This quarter the six month financial support for the Lourdes, Colón OC ended though technical assistance still continues. The AJR has aided this OC in achieving sustainability, by involving the municipal authorities. Much of the financial assistance promised by the municipality has not materialized due to the financial crisis. In spite of this, the implementing church is investing its own resources and seeking donations. Pastor Jaime Guatemala has started to receive national and international recognition for his work with the OC. The AJR introduced him to European NGOs supporting prevention and rehabilitation initiatives and he was invited by them to Sweden. Additionally, through the AJR Pastor Guatemala and the Coordinator of the OC was invited to participate in a very successful panel at the V Anti-Gang Convention on April 28, 2009. The AJR is working with TIGO to provide free internet services to OCs that will lower some operational costs.

Some 147 new youth have benefited from the Lourdes Colón OC this quarter. In one particular case, the OC aided four youth from an impoverished family in obtaining national IDs as well as registering them with the municipal government. Without these documents they were not able to access any social services. The OC has also aided these youth in learning how to read and write.

Through the AJR's contacts, the Lourdes, Colón OC received an invitation by the National Volunteer Initiative to send two beneficiaries to attend a university level course on a scholarship, leading to a certificate in Volunteer Management. A male and female youth were chosen to participate in the course with a tuition cost of \$500 per person.

This quarter financial support also ended for the Mejicanos OC. The OC has changed locations and is now located 300 meters from the municipal market place. This change in location has made it more difficult for some of the original beneficiaries to attend, but it has increased

accessibility to a larger number of at risk youth as it is closer in proximity to three Mejicanos schools. The Mejicanos OC benefited 149 additional youth this quarter.

In June, the AJR signed Cooperative Agreements with Fe y Alegria to develop an OC in the “13 de enero” neighborhood of the Zacamil district of the municipality of Mejicanos (18<sup>th</sup> Street gang enclave surrounded by MS territory) and in the Melendez neighborhood (a community highly controlled by a gang) of the municipality of Soyapango,. *Fe y Alegria* is dedicated to primary education, high-school, and vocational and technical education. This organization is present in several areas of high vulnerability. The new OCs are close in proximity to Fe y Alegria’s vocational centers making collaboration among the entities more feasible.

The 13 de Enero, Zacamil OC will be located in a semi-abandoned Community Center. The Fe y Alegria officer in charge of the project (who is also an elected municipal councilmember), was able to secure funds of around \$4000 from the municipality of Mejicanos to install a new roof on the building. The AJR will provide a grant of \$19,400 (higher than the usual \$18,000 granted per OC) so the community will have the materials necessary to repair doors, windows and the sanitary system. Community members donated their time to complete these repairs and held a raffle to raise funds to pay for the cost of reconnecting electrical service. Due to all of these factors, it is evident that the process of setting up an Outreach Center equipped with the amenities to serve a community can be slow. Therefore community involvement in the building of the OC is key in establishing initial buy-in to its success.

The Meléndez, Soyapango OC will also be implemented in a Community Center that in this case is in better condition. The repairs will be small including painting and improving its electrical system.

During this quarter several meetings took place with the Cuzcachapa Coffee Cooperative, the Ingenio La Magdalena (Sugar Mill) and the Cooperative La Magdalena (a Coop of 300 small land owners that plant cane to be processed at Ingenio La Magdalena), all located in the municipality of Chalchuapa. They are interested in the implementation of OCs to benefit youth at risk from infiltration of gangs from the nearby Chalchuapa City as well narco-trafficking and people smuggling that takes place, as the area is located on the border with Guatemala.

Chalchuapa, located in the Department of Santa Ana, is considered to be one of the areas of with the highest levels of violence and gangs in the country. The AJR has not yet experimented in rural or semi-rural settings, although there are lessons learned from USAID funded Youth Challenge Program in Guatemala that has established OCs in Palín and Palencia.

The boards of directors of Ingenio and the Cooperative La Magdalena have approved funds and are offering spaces where OCs may be established. The organizations will provide the \$18,000 needed to set up the OC and only require technical assistance as well as assistance purchasing 8 computers at a cost of about \$4,800. The AJR has already given the organizations a Terms of Reference and they will present a proposal to the AJR for USAID’s consideration.

The AJR has also made contacts with the high risk communities in Apopa, one of the municipalities with the highest levels of gang presence and violence in greater San Salvador. In

particular, AJR staff have approached the Popotlán I and II and Chintuc II communities to build an alliance and a volunteer network in favor of prevention that involves the Iniciativa Nacional de Voluntariado (the National Volunteer Initiative), some Universities, the NGO Glasswings and the private sector.

The AJR team met with Mr. Juan Wright, president of Ingenio El Angel, to propose an alliance for prevention. Although Mr. Wright responded very positively and said that he was ready to convene the main companies operating in Apopa (Coca-Cola, Jumex and other), he was concerned with transparency of activities. AJR staff assured him that input from the private sector in lending their accountants and personnel as volunteers would be welcomed and this could ensure transparency of activities. Private sector personnel will be encouraged to help as volunteers in youth initiatives.

The AJR, along with the Iniciativa Nacional de Voluntariado, the Social Responsibility manager of Universidad Panamericana and by the Manantiales de Agua Viva association (a Catholic group of volunteer professionals) made a presentation of the OC model to the Apopa Municipal Council showcasing their willingness to form a volunteer alliance. The Council liked the OC methodology and agreed to recommend to the Mayor an alliance with the AJR and its implementing partners in establishing an OC.

### ***Prevention Camps***

The *Aventura Joven* pilot prevention camp program was designed this quarter. The youth camp coalition formed of Exploradores del Rey, Club de Conquistadores, Fe y Alegría and Scouts met at the AJR's office on several occasions. Individual agreements were signed with each organization to implement pilot prevention camps using common features and dynamics. The team will also design a prevention camp manual.

The AJR hired a consultant to work together with the camp organizations to draft a manual of camp exercises that will be piloted during the camps. The consultant visited each organization and drafted manual with inputs from staff and various existing documents. The consultant then trained camp personnel of each organization (leaders, "guides", commanders, etc) that will participate in the pilot prevention camps. In turn the camp organizations held preliminary sessions with participating youth in an effort to know each other. The consultant will gather information from the camp sessions to produce a draft manual of activities.

The AJR brought the Youth Challenge Program Desafío Prevención<sup>1</sup> team from Guatemala to participate in the first pilot prevention camp. The Desafío Prevención Team presented their methodology to the camp organizations detailing their methodology used in Guatemalan schools. The camp organizations brought former gang members to the presentation so they could learn the techniques of the Desafío Prevención team and replicate them in future camps.

The first two prevention camps organized by Exploradores and Conquistadores took place from May 8 - May 10, 2009. The camps ran. The Desafío Prevención team left a lasting impression on

---

<sup>1</sup> A team of former gang members that work as part of the USAID funded Youth Challenge Program traveling to schools in high risk areas of Guatemala raising awareness among the student body of the realities of gang life.

the participants since the consequences of joining gangs had a deeper impact coming from the personal experiences of former gang members.

The youth chosen to participate in the camps were very lively. They came from the most vulnerable neighborhoods of greater San Salvador, such as: La Fosa, Apopa, La Campanera, Iberia, Zacamil, Mejicanos, etc. For reporting purposes we consider that eventhough youth came from thirty seven different communities, at least four extended communities were susttantially benefited. There is evidence that many of these youth were already in contact with the gangs in their neighborhoods and even had collaborative associations with them, without full participation (or “brincados”.) Many participants viewed the gangs positively often times romanticizing the idea of being associated with one; confirming the idea that belonging to a gang is still sought after by Salvadorian youth. Although the objective of the prevention camp is to dissuade youth from joining gangs, the Desafío Prevencion team made it clear to the participants that they were not there to speak badly about the gangs, just to tell them about their own personal experiences.

The Desafío Prevención psychologist and team held dozens of one on one and small group counseling and quick therapy sessions. These sessions were sought after by the kids for the duration of the camp. The team corroborated that many of the participants that were seeking counseling were very attracted to and somewhat involved in criminal and gang activity. It is very common that gangs use very young kids to collaborate in extortion, drug distribution and even murder. An anecdote that indicates the effectiveness of the prevention camp approach include a young girl that was in contact with gangs prior to attending the camp and then changed her ways right after participating in the camp.

Due to the H1N1 influenza scare, local health authorities postponed the second two camps, which were to be organized at the Scout Camp in Chalatenango by the Scouts and Fe y Alegría. Scouts organized its pilot camp with the kids invited from the OCs of Mejicanos, Barrio Lourdes and Lourdes Colón. The OCs printed posters, visited schools to promote the camps and got parent or guardian authorization for the children to participate. The postponement of the camp caused frustration among the youth and the OCs took precautions to say that this postponement would not mean a cancellation of activities. The Fe y Alegría youth coming from the Zacamil and Soyapango communities<sup>2</sup> were slightly older and livelier. Many were youth at risks who received help from Fe y Alegria social workers. These youth were so frustrated with the postponement that a mini-camp was organized and they were taken on a day trip to a volcano and beach.

The last two camps were held simultaneously in Chalatenango. The two groups were held apart, as the Fe y Alegría camp was for more hardened youth. Two unarmed civilian clothed police were placed in this camp in addition to two uniformed armed Tourism Police officers to avoid any mishaps. The camps took place without major incidents and Fe y Alegría’s intention of integrating and achieving some trust between kids coming from rival territories was successful.

It is clear that most of these youth have very troubled lives and many are into drugs. It was understood that many youth had a connection with a gang or were planning to join. One of the

---

<sup>2</sup> These two communities have rivaling gangs. Youth from these communities although not in a gang, sympathize with one or the other.

participants had promised to join a gang and then changed his mind. This put his life in danger and Fe y Alegria is looking relocate him away from the neighborhood. Another youth was known to be a bus robber. This particular group had a more difficult time listening to the Desafio Prevencion team talk about their personal experiences.

The prevention police at the camp commented that they visit schools, but cannot be as effective as former gang members in dissuading youth from gang membership. Youth are skeptical and do not trust the police. The prevention police held discussions with the participants who complained of the treatment they receive from their colleagues. This exchange was useful and a learning experience for all.

The Scouts group was to some degree less hardened than the Fe y Alegria group, and was led by a very professional team of the El Salvador Scout Association (ASES) volunteers. The Scout prevention team was young, made up of university students and young professionals. The team was able to command respect from the participants. A good peer exchange and experience for all the participants.

Part of the approach was to have the two groups join together at the bonfire for some interaction. The participants did not want to leave and they said they gained “libras de amor” (referring to a popular local TV ad) by eating three good meals a day. The Desafío Prevención team had less opportunities to hold individual counseling/quick therapy and the groups. The four camp organizations employed techniques, exercises and dynamics that dealt with team work, collaboration, trust and leadership. Many of these were adopted from the draft manual prepared by the AJR.

The AJR’s Project Director participated in both camp sessions and can attest to their impact. The AJR will complete an evaluation of the camps to include in the manual as a step to creating a Prevention Camp Methodology that can be used as part of the intervention package offered to youth at risk in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. AJR program staff are looking at the Scouts, Conquistadores and Exploradores organizations to continue in the expansion of this methodology. Program staff also plans to collaborate with the Ministries of Education in each country to export the model to schools in areas where gangs are making major inroads. This model in conjunction with the Desafio Prevencion program could be expanded into El Salvador and Honduras.

South Com donated 500 tee shirts with the logo “Caminando por la Vida sin Violencia” (Walking through Life without Violence), and 493 Diaries to be distributed to youth in the last two camps. These donations were very effective in contributing to the bond between the leaders, camp volunteers and participants. The diaries were used to encourage youth to think about their future and map a “life plan”. The AJR will further explore this tool for inclusion in future camping activities.

### ***Alliances and Findings***

The AJR has embarked on a wide effort to seek out new partnerships and public and private sector alliances. The AJR has entered into a strategic alliance with the telephone company Tigo

to co finance the implementation of an OC with an initial \$9,000 donation. In this partnership, Tigo will be involved in the first stages of identification and implementation of new OCs in the San Salvador area. Tigo is particularly interested in supporting OCs in Mejicanos, Soyapango and Apopa. Through this partnership the AJR hopes to receive donated internet services as well as telephone cards for all OCs. Tigo is interested in forging alliances with the municipal governments in the areas with OCs.

With the assistance of the Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Costa Rica, Mr. Peter Brennan, the AJR established contact with Mr. Carlos Uribe, the CEO of Wal-Mart Central America. With the help of Mr. Uribe, the AJR made a presentation to a group of officers in charge of regional corporate social responsibility issues. The initial exchange with Wal-Mart Central America has been very encouraging with a follow-up meeting set for July 1 in San Jose, Costa Rica.

This quarter the AJR Project Director met with the new President of the National Council of Public Security of El Salvador (CNSP), in which Judge Aida Santos de Escobar offered full support and expressed her desire to work closely with the program. She will attend the inauguration of the next OCs and is interested in collaborating in the upcoming Desafio 10 Reality Show.

AJR staff organized a meeting with various regional NGOs with the goal of increasing volunteerism in the prevention field in El Salvador. Participating NGOs included the Iniciativa Nacional de Voluntariado, Universidad Panamericana, the Football Forever (FIFA) program and the Manantiales de Agua Viva Catholic professional volunteer group. The group decided to form an alliance to increase volunteer activities in prevention work. The first joint initiative will be to implement OCs in Apopa and enrich the local community with external volunteers supported by the alliance. Many of the volunteers will be university students that have to fulfill a 400 hour social service obligation to be able to graduate. Three local universities will participate. The AJR hopes that this and other initiatives that bring soccer programs and volunteers to OCs will expand the existing network and enrich current activities.

AJR staff visited the Metamorfosis Project in Santa Ana this quarter. Metamorphosis is a successful rehabilitation project with great potential for expansion. The AJR initially explored the idea of giving a grant to the Metamorfosis Project that would benefit former gang members currently in prison but with potential for parole. Realizing the limitations of working with this population, the AJR is now exploring along with USAID the possibility of funding the purchase of machinery for the already existing shoe-making small business. This microenterprise is headed by a former gang member, and employs five other former gang members. With the purchase of this machinery, the small business will be able to hire additional former gang members. Through this type of support the AJR hopes to avoid working with the population still serving jail terms, but support former gang members that have earned their freedom and have no relationship with the prison system. The Metamorfosis project is the most comprehensive rehabilitation project in the region and support to its reintegration component is strategic to the expansion of program beneficiaries. Funding the small business is also an effective prevention strategy given the current dismal job market.

## **Obstacles**

The AJR has been in negotiations for a donation from the private sector organization CASALCO. This donation that would consist mainly of materials to repair the OC in 13 de enero has not materialized. Although the contribution had the approval of the Social Responsibility Committee of the organization, the members have not offered the expected in-kind contributions.

The spread of the H1N1 influenza virus in El Salvador affected attendance in the first set of prevention camps and had major implication for the second camps. Local health authorities cancelled one camp, and when the authorization was given, there was a natural delay. The prevention camp activities resumed when the AJR obtained a letter of authorization from the Minister of Health. The camp organizations had to screen participants for possible flu symptoms and as a result some were not allowed to participate. On the other hand some did not attend to avoid possible exposure to the virus. As a result of the 100 youth that were supposed to participate at each of the four camps 255 attended.

Although the AJR contracted a part-time consultant to assist with gathering leverage contributions and exploring possible alliances, part time involvement has not been sufficient.

The *Foro Salvadoreño de Escritores* (Salvadoran Writers Forum) never presented a proposal for a youth writing competition given the elections and transition of the government.

## **Next Steps**

The AJR plans to double its efforts in engaging the private sector in El Salvador. The team will continue to utilize the services of the fundraiser and promoter to expand its potential network of alliances.

The US Embassy and USAID assistance in liaising between the AJR and US companies operating in El Salvador and Honduras could play a large role in involving large private sector partners in prevention activities. The US Embassy in Costa Rica will assist the program in making connections with Costa Rica-based multinational organizations.

## **Guatemala:**

Seven small grants were approved during the quarter to support Outreach Centers in Guatemala become active crime prevention participants in their communities. The small grants were intended to position the OCs as crime prevention players and to involve the community and local government's participation in reducing violence. With the support from USAID's Youth Challenge Program, the seven small grants will be implemented in the next quarter. The AJR will to coordinate a simultaneous implementation of the 7 grants, develop a communication strategy around to raise awareness about the work of the Centers, and show the importance of developing innovative crime prevention actions to reduce youth violence. The inauguration of the seven small projects has been scheduled for August, 2009

		Value of Projects in Quetzales				
	Name of OC	USAID Donation	OC Contribution	Total	Duration in Months	Description of the Project
1	Palín Escuintla	Q19,710.00	Q31,600.00	Q51,310.00	6	Project Alert, prevention; Give talks in schools, private and public
2	Ciudad del Sol Villa Nueva	Q26,225.00	Q26,225.00	Q52,450.00	3	Renovation of sports stadiums in poor condition
3	Búcaro Mezquital, Villa Nueva	Q18,500.00	Q26,500.00	Q45,000.00	4	Festival for Life, arms control
4	Paraíso II, Zona 18 Guatemala	Q19,250.00	Q19,250.00	Q38,500.00	6	Recovery of abandoned and high risk areas
5	San Rafael II, Zona 18 Guatemala	Q19,154.00	Q38,000.00	Q57,154.00	3	Construction of a sports stadium, in a deserted area
6	Santa Catarina Pinula	Q18,650.00	Q87,000.00	Q105,650.00	6	Short films and film forums, to raise awareness and guidance among youth regarding prevention of crime and self-destructive behavior
7	Palencia Canton Ojo de Agua	Q18,450.00	Q18,450.00	Q36,900.00	6	Movie forum "I decide"

## **Honduras-Tegucigalpa**

### **Achievements**

#### **Tegucigalpa**

The AJR, along with implementing partners Save the Children Honduras and the Rotary Club of Tegucigalpa, inaugurated two OCs in Tegucigalpa, Honduras on June 11, 2009 in Villafranca and Buenas Nuevas. These two communities benefit immensely from Save the Children Honduras' experience in community organization. The US Ambassador to Honduras Hugo Llorens attended the inaugurations, where he gave a speech referring to the OCs as "sanctuaries of hope for youth." The Mayor of Tegucigalpa and Rotary Club Presidents were also present at the event.

The implementation of these OCs was made possible due to the volunteer work of 59 members of the community. They donated 3379 hours of volunteer work. This reinforces the importance and possibility of community involvement in prevention efforts, an essential element of the OC methodology. These two OCs will also benefit the neighboring communities to Villafranca and Buenas Nuevas, where Save the Children has community organization inroads: Dulce Nombre de Jesús, Brasilia, Rosalinda, Alemania, Las Pavas. San Juan del Norte, Brisas de la Laguna y Villa Cristina.

The AJR handed Terms of Reference to potential partners in the high risk areas of San Miguel and Flores de Oriente, Nueva Suyapa. The Evangelical Church in Flores de Oriente has presented a solid proposal in establishing an OC with help from their experienced volunteer network. The Flores de Oriente neighborhood is home to the notorious "Infiernito" (Little Hell) community and experienced a high homicide rate. The community would benefit immensely from the establishment of an Outreach Center as currently they do not have even a single internet connection. The future Coordinator of this OC is a former gang member that is now studying to become an English teacher. He is very capable and has the respect of the community.

The AJR has been discussing the implementation of the Street Soccer program in the high risk neighborhood of Las Ayestas, Tegucigalpa. Currently the faith based organization "Iglesia Punto de Impacto, has presented a proposal for an OC currently under discussion in this area. Red Viva, a network of Christian organizations involved in helping children and youth in Honduras will partner with Iglesia Punto de Impacto in this program. They will receive the grant and be responsible for the accounting and implementation reports to the AJR. Additionally, Red Viva will contribute to the OC with counterpart resources.

### **Obstacles**

The Rotary Clubs have not been able to fund more OCs. It was agreed that they would provide 50% of the cost for six OCs in the sum of \$54,000 but so far have only pledged to contribute \$1900 for the OCs in Villafranca and Buenas Nuevas. The organization was supposed to get matching funds from their US counterparts but have been unsuccessful thus far.

## **Next Steps**

AJR will work with the Rotary Clubs so they present matching grant requests to US clubs.

## **San Pedro Sula**

The US Ambassador in Honduras Hugo Llorens visited the OC Rivera Hernandez. This was considered an extraordinary event by the community which received local media coverage. Ambassador Llorens was accompanied by the Mayor and was satisfied by the activities of the OC.

In the last week of May, the Rivera Hernández OC concluded the first cycle of offered courses it began offering since its inception. A “graduation” ceremony was held for the young beneficiaries and diplomas were handed out. Although the certificates are symbolic, all students had to pass practical tests and exams. These exams help beneficiaries to value their efforts.

During this quarter the AJR identified a partner to implement an OC in the notorious Chamelecón area. The partner, an Evangelical Church, presented an initial proposal, and is formulating an accompanying budget. The Church is deciding the location of the OC and has thus far presented the options of converting church space or renting space in a separate location. Both of these scenarios present their own challenges as having an OC in a church is not optimal and renting space is not sustainable.

The AJR hopes that the local abandoned community center can be refurbished for \$7000 and used for the establishment of the OC. The AJR does not currently have the funds or mandate to make such an expense.

The AJR has also found a potential partner, the Pastoral of Human Mobility of the Catholic Parrish to establish an OC in the López Arellano neighborhood of the Choloma municipality part of greater San Pedro Sula. This area is riddled by gangs and violence. The Choloma municipality has the highest rate of population growth in Honduras, as many people move there to work in the nearby maquila. It is also the municipality with the highest homicide rates in the country, which are around 120 per 100,000 inhabitants. The municipality has a total population of 220,000 people.

The AJR visited the Mayor of Choloma, Mr. Leopoldo Cribeli Durón, along with the implementing partner, who is well liked by the municipality. The Mayor has assigned space, property of the municipality, to house the OC and has proceeded to make substantial repairs and improvement of the facility. The Mayor is focused on prevention, and sees the implementation of an OC as an important initiative. He would like to support the establishment of several OCs and work with the AJR in developing other related prevention activities. The Mayor has agreed in principle to financially support this OC after AJR’s initial funding assistance.

## **Obstacles**

Paz y Convivencia has not yet delivered the bakery and other operational equipment promised to the Rivera Hernandez OC due to a tax exemption issue. Paz y Convivencia has thus far contributed computers and air conditioning equipment to the OC.

Paz y Convivencia will contribute 50% of the costs of an additional OC in the city of San Pedro Sula if a second OC is established in Choloma or Chamelecón. The AJR expects problems with their delivery of these funds as they are dealing with a persisting tax exemption issue.

## **Next Steps**

The AJR will work to secure private donors to contribute toward the repairs of the possible site of the Chamelecón OC at the Community Center. If this is not possible, this project will wait for future program phases that may include funds to repair infrastructure.

USAID and the US Embassy in Honduras asked USAID/El Salvador and the AJR to explore the possibility of implementing an OC in Puerto Lempira, the capital of the Department of Gracias a Dios, located next to the Caratasca Lagoon and the Caribbean. The municipality is 11,547.5 square kilometers and has a population of about 23,000 inhabitants. This OC would directly deal with prevention activities for narco-trafficking.

## **Component II: *Encouraging gang members to abandon gangs***

The homicide rate has increased during the first half of 2009 in the region. The majority of the homicides are linked to gang violence. Solving the problem of gang violence requires cooperation from multiple sectors of society and the best way to raise awareness among these groups is through media.

As the negotiations with the TCS Network in El Salvador for producing the Desafío 10 Reality Show did not materialize, the AJR has maintained continual contact with two additional television channels as well as a production companies in El Salvador for the possibility of producing the show. The AJR has not achieved desired results in creating a reality television show because although the channels initially showed enthusiasm for this program, later retracted their support.

The AJR has made progress with Meridiano 89, a producer in El Salvador that has expressed interest and taken steps in developing alliances to promote the production of the reality television show in El Salvador.

The awareness campaign “For the Life of Youth” in Honduras is also expected to have a positive influence on youth involved in gang. This campaign is being planned with moral leaders of the country and counting with the pro-bono assistance of the advertisement company Mass Saatchi & Saatchi.

### **Component III: *Job opportunities for rehabilitated former gang members***

The Desafio 100 program is in various phases of implementation in El Salvador, Honduras. While in San Pedro Sula the program has completed a second launching, in Tegucigalpa the program is struggling to achieve the required support from the private sector. In El Salvador, the AJR is still selecting and evaluating various candidates and trying to gather the support of a skeptical private sector.

While the economic crisis continues to affect businesses, some larger companies continue to hire people as they need to maintain production levels. The AJR will continue to make efforts with these companies.

This quarter the AJR has achieved the following results:

#### **El Salvador**

With support from the Department of Rehabilitation and Assisted Living (DEPLA), the AJR completed psychological evaluations of 63 former gang members out of a total 78. The psychological evaluations were conducted by the Escuela de Derechos Humanos de la Procuraduría de Derechos Humanos. This process garnered trust between the candidates and their proponents. The candidates were nominated by at least 10 churches or organizations.

The program is processing the psychological test results with support from psychology students at the Central American University (UCA). These tests explore their intelligence levels, occupational inclinations, social adaptability, and personality. Through these results, the AJR will be better equipped to place each candidate in appropriate positions.

Due to the change in government slated to take place on June 1, 2009, the private sector has preferred to wait for the completion of the transition before participating in job placement activities. This has impeded the AJR's efforts in placing 100 former gang members in jobs. The AJR expects to start the interviewing process in the third quarter of 2009, hoping to have matched former gang members with a potential employer.

#### **Honduras**

##### **Tegucigalpa**

The Desafío 100 program in Tegucigalpa was born out of an agreement between the AJR, COHEP, CCIT and PNPRRS (the National Prevention Program which was to supply the former gang member candidates). In May, the alliance achieved the target number of former gang members that were selected in a first phase. The alliance tried to obtain jobs for these beneficiaries through the Chamber of Commerce (CCIT), unsuccessfully. The unsuccessful job placement efforts were compounded by the worst employment crisis in the history of Honduras as well as a 60% increase in the minimum wage rate.

The CCIT and COHEP provided names and telephone numbers of businessmen that the AJR could contact to seek employment opportunities. The AJR's Project Director made over 20 visits to local businesses in the area. Many business owners said that if it were not for the economic crises they would be amenable to help former gang members, but that in these moments they were being forced to downsize their labor force. Thus far only 3 participants out of 34 have been placed in jobs.

### **Next steps**

Next quarter the Project Director will meet again with Ms. Alin Flores, the new President of CCIT, who has promised to assist the program by putting AJR staff in contact with some of her associates. The AJR will double its efforts to place selected youth in jobs but will not recruit and screen additional candidates as jobs are harder to find.

Due to the economic crisis the AJR will augment its job placement efforts with skills and vocational training that may include paid internships/apprenticeships (paid by AJR) at various businesses, hoping the internship will result in a permanent position. The AJR hopes to partner with CADERH (a Honduran private vocational centers association) that has had success with this type of job placement model.

### **San Pedro Sula**

The Desafio 100 Phase II was launched in San Pedro Sula with 24 former gang members selected to participate in the activity. Additional participants included youth that participated in the first launch.

The AJR and local partner, Paz y Convivencia produced a testimonial video of beneficiaries and of some of their employers from the first phase of Desafio 100. This video was shown on the day of the second launching of Desafio 100. Local businessmen, new beneficiaries and the local community saw firsthand the impact of the Desafio 100 program in the lives of former gang members.

The selection process of the second phase was developed jointly between the AJR and Paz y Convivencia. The first part of the evaluations was conducted by a Paz y Convivencia psychologist and an AJR senior technical officer retained control of the final interview phase.

At the culmination of the evaluations, the AJR and Paz y Convivencia jointly sponsored a retreat where 24 beneficiaries attended, including 10 women. Some of these candidates were proposed by beneficiaries of the first phase.

The social workers employed by Paz y Convivencia also tried to find other opportunities for the former gang members from the first phase that for some reason have lost their jobs.

## **Obstacles**

There is a possibility that Paz y Convivencia will have to shut down in August if it does not receive funds from the Inter American Development Bank (IDB).

The economic crisis has also affected San Pedro Sula and as a result only 6 out of 24 beneficiaries Desafío 100 have actually been placed in jobs.

## **Next Steps**

If Paz y Convivencia has to close, the AJR will hire a part time counselor and psychologist to continue the services provided to the beneficiaries. There is commitment from Paz y Convivencia in assisting in the placement of all 24 former gang members that are part of the second launch of Desafío 100.

The AJR Project Director and Senior Technical Officer, accompanied by Paz y Convivencia staff, visited Grupo Kattan, a very large assembly plant close to San Pedro Sula, to present the Desafío 100 and the OC program. The program was well received by the owners which may result in some jobs opportunities. This has encouraged the Paz y Convivencia staff to make more presentations to local businesses and the AJR Program Director will also attend.

### ***RESULT II: Assess regional legal/justice frameworks and practices and multi-country policy and legal reforms to improve the treatment and rehabilitation of youth.***

The initial advocacy meetings carried out by the AJR during the months of February and March of 2009 in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, resulted in the formation of the Juvenile Justice Advocacy Coalitions in each of the three countries. The coalition is composed of experts, juvenile justice sector actors and civil society organizations. The coalition has agreed to coordinate efforts and support advocacy processes in each country aimed at improving their respective juvenile justice systems and creating favorable conditions for youth in conflict with the law.

The AJR presented the juvenile justice sector actors and civil society members present at the initial advocacy meetings with terms of reference for advocacy processes to be carried out by the Juvenile Justice Advocacy Coalitions in each country. The terms of reference consist of a \$15,000 grant which will be provided to each coalition to assist them in starting the advocacy campaign. The AJR also offered technical assistance in the design of their advocacy strategy. Funding for the implementation of this initiative will be awarded in each country through a civil society organization that has the administrative and financial capacity to implement the project.

In Guatemala the initiative hit a road block as problems arose in the country which affected the juvenile justice system by dividing the public on the issue of youth in conflict with the law, delaying the advocacy campaign. As a result only one follow-up meeting took place in the month

of May were only a few of the juvenile justice actors, including UNICEF participated. The AJR will look to restart this important effort in Guatemala.

During the months of April and May, in order to assist the coalitions formed in Honduras and El Salvador in defining their advocacy strategies, the AJR carried out advocacy workshops aimed at strengthening the skills and abilities of the members of the coalition. The AJR aided the coalition members in their advocacy and lobbying initiatives, assisted in defining the most important and urgent areas to consider in the advocacy process, and formulated guidelines for the design of the advocacy strategy. The two workshops were carried out by political advocacy expert Catalina Soberanis.

Furthermore, the AJR has continued discussions with SG-SICA and its Democratic Security Unit on possible initiatives that could be promoted at the regional level aimed at improving the juvenile justice systems in the region, including the implementation of the Second Regional Juvenile Justice Forum.

## **ACHIEVED RESULTS**

### ***Follow-up advocacy meetings carried out in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.***

During the months of April to June 2009, the various Juvenile Justice Advocacy Coalitions formed in the three Northern Triangle countries, carried out various follow-up meetings discussing the advocacy process and viable strategies in each country.

In Honduras the Juvenile Justice Advocacy Coalition is currently working on the design of the advocacy project proposal to be presented to the AJR, as well on the definition and construction of an advocacy strategy. The effort has been led by Attorney Burgos, Assistant of the Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court, IHNFA (Instituto Hondureño de la Niñez y la Familia), Attorney General's Office, and various judges. The AJR consultant Rigoberto Portillo has accompanied them during this process providing valuable technical assistance.

Similarly, in El Salvador, the advocacy group established as the "*Intersectoral Commission for the Reform of the Juvenile Justice System*", is now working on the advocacy project proposal to be presented to AJR, as well as on the design of the advocacy strategy itself. This group has been able to consolidate this effort in very little time as it has the commitment and vast experience of its members which include: the Commission of Judges and Magistrates of Juvenile Justice, Ombudsman Office (PDDH) Public Defenders Office (PGR), Juvenile Justice Unit of the Supreme Court of Justice and important civil society such the Central American Coalition for the Prevention of Juvenile Violence (CCPVJ), IUDOP, Orphan Helpers, and Plan International.

It is important to note that on May 14 the Intersectoral Commission on their own initiative presented a matrix of prioritized proposals regarding juvenile justice to the Security and Justice Commission of the newly elected government.

***Advocacy workshops carried out with the Juvenile Justice Coalitions in Honduras and El Salvador.***

Advocacy workshops were carried out with the members of each Juvenile Justice Coalition on April 27 and 28 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras and on May 28 and 29 in El Salvador, respectively.

During the workshops expert advocacy consultant Catalina Soberanis introduced the concepts of advocacy and lobbying, explaining how political processes could be influenced. The political context of each country was also analyzed in order to consider the best suited advocacy strategy for each particular case, considering the possibilities of openness and acceptance of the changes needed in the juvenile justice systems. On the second day of the workshop Mrs. Soberanis presented the groups with important tools for the analysis of the selected areas of advocacy, conducting comprehensive exercises for their application. Furthermore a strategic planning exercise took place, where participants were able to work on an outline for the advocacy strategy, using important strategic planning tools.

As a result of the workshops both coalitions were able to define and agree upon the areas to be included in the advocacy strategy, develop guidelines to provide follow-up to the workshop and a preliminary map of the route to follow in developing the advocacy strategy.

***Main areas defined and selected for the advocacy processes in Honduras and El Salvador and elaboration of the advocacy project proposals underway.***

The Juvenile Justice Coalition in Honduras and the Juvenile Justice Intersectorial Commission in El Salvador defined and agreed upon the areas to include in an advocacy strategy, taking as a basis the prioritized and detailed matrix elaborated by the AJR, and with the help of guidelines developed during the advocacy workshops. The areas defined were considered the most viable and urgent for advocacy and lobbying by the various groups considering the context of each country.

The Intersectorial Commission in El Salvador defined the following three areas of advocacy: 1) Development of institutional programs for rehabilitation and reintegration of youth in conflict with the law; 2) Establishment of a Restorative Juvenile Justice model; and 3) Establishment of an institutionalized juvenile justice training system to guarantee the continuous and progressive training of juvenile justice actors.

The Juvenile Justice Coalition in Honduras established as their main advocacy priority the establishment of social rehabilitation and reintegration programs, emphasizing alternative measures to imprisonment and environmental programs for youth in conflict with the law. Both groups established with the need to work with media in raising awareness of the issue.

Both groups have already begun working on the design of the advocacy project proposals to be presented to the AJR. Proposals from the two groups are expected to be presented in the month of July and grants (\$15,000 each) are expected to be awarded during the month of August.

*Talks continued with SG-SICA and other relevant stakeholders regarding the possibility of carrying out advocacy actions and/or processes at the regional level.*

During this second quarter, the AJR continued talks with SG SICA and its Democratic Security Unit regarding possible actions to take towards implementing key recommendations, such as the creation of the Central American Association of Juvenile Justice Operators and the execution of the Second Regional Juvenile Justice Forum to take place at the end of the year.

A possible partner in the execution of the second regional forum might be the Swiss Foundation Terre des Hommes currently working on a restorative juvenile justice project in Nicaragua.

### ***AJR Web Portal***

This quarter the AJR concentrated its efforts in the creation and compilation of materials for its web portal.

The main area of the website is the *Juvenile Justice Documentation Center* where the juvenile justice country evaluations of the Northern Triangle countries are housed along with respective comparative analysis, as well as the “Documento de Tegucigalpa”, and recommendations of the First Regional Juvenile Justice Forum can all be found. Other important investigations, assessments and information regarding juvenile justice in the region can also be found in this virtual center and is now available to actors working in the field.

This web portal also contains information regarding the programs and important activities being executed by the AJR, as well as news regarding prevention, youth violence as well as other related areas of interest in the region.

A “*Juvenile Justice Discussion Forum*”, where juvenile justice actors and others interested in the area will be able to comment and get involved in discussions regarding this important subject, is expected to be operational in the month of August.

This web portal will be running on the first week of July and can be accessed in the following address: [www.alianzajovenregional.org](http://www.alianzajovenregional.org).

## **PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED**

### **Guatemala**

In Guatemala, violence generated in juvenile detention centers in the first few months of the year, including the brutal killing of a teacher, moved public opinion into recommending reforms in the system, such as more severe penalties for minors and reducing the age of minors who can be prosecuted for a crime. These drastic measures proposed, also generated discussions regarding

the lack of rehabilitation and reintegration programs. This situation has been analyzed and established as a major issue in the country analysis conducted last year by the AJR.

Key juvenile justice government institutions such as the Secretaría de Bienestar Social in charge of rehabilitation and reinsertion programs had key personnel removed during the first months of the year. Current personnel do not have the background and commitment of those who participated in AJR's the evaluation process last year.

All the problems present in the country have generated a setback in the start of the juvenile justice advocacy process, as the various actors and civil society present during the initial advocacy meeting held in February, have concentrated their efforts on their own institutional activities and moving forward their own agenda. As a result only one follow-up meeting took place in the month of May were only a few of the juvenile justice actors, including UNICEF and the Juvenile Justice and Child Victim project of the judiciary.

There seems to be a lack of interest from the juvenile justice sector actors in Guatemala, including UNICEF, to make a coordinated effort and advocate for needed changes in the system, with each institution taking on scattered activities. For this reason, the AJR will prioritize efforts in the next months on the reconstruction of this important advocacy effort in Guatemala.

## **Honduras**

The recent events regarding the ouster of Honduran President Manuel Zelaya, may very well have a direct impact on our program and the advocacy effort being carried out in the country. Some of the institutions involved in the coalition such as the Supreme Court and the Attorney General's Office could run into severe problems given the situation in the country.

Activities of the Coalition are currently on stand-by due to the instability in the country.

The AJR will monitor closely the situation as it develops and will take the necessary steps regarding this result as appropriate and with USAID approval.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Proposals for the advocacy processes are expected to be received from the various coalitions in Honduras and El Salvador by the end of July. The AJR expects to sign agreements and provide the \$15,000 grants for each Coalition in the month of August. It is also expected that by the end of August advocacy strategies may also begin to be implemented in El Salvador and Honduras.

Within the next two months, the AJR will start to coordinate and collaborate closely with SG-SICA, as well as with Swiss NGO *Terre des Hommes* regarding the preparation of the Second Regional Juvenile Justice Forum. To this effect, the AJR plans to work closely with the Democratic Security Unit of SG-SICA.

In order to jump start the advocacy initiative in Guatemala, AJR will concentrate its efforts in the next month on rebuilding the advocacy effort in the country. In order to achieve this, AJR plans to carry out several meetings with important juvenile justice stakeholders in order to start-up a coordination effort once again.

***RESULT III: Collaboration and Assistance to SICA to catalyze regional policy reform and harmonization; and gather relevant stockholders to spur development of policy initiatives an implementation of reforms***

AJR continues to deepen its dialogue and collaboration with SICA. The fact that the Democratic Security Unit was finally implemented with the hiring of the first two experts (out of a total of five that will comprise the Unit), the full incorporation to the unit of an expert provided by Italian Cooperation and the commitment to prevention of the new SICA Secretary General of makes the institutional relationship more responsive.

The AJR is in frequent communication with the Security Unit members and Mr. Alexander Chacón, member of the unit, participated in the inauguration of the Lourdes Colón Outreach Center on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

SICA has requested that AJR continue its support to the efforts for better donor coordination in the democratic security field, particularly in prevention. In this regard, SICA will like to organize a follow up meeting to the initial coordination event it held (with the assistance of AJR) with donor/projects.

Mr. Erich Vilchez, Legal and Political Director of SICA, has pledged his support so PAIRCA II (when funds become available) co-finances the Second Forum of Juvenile Justice, which would take place towards the end of November of this year, probably in El Salvador.

During the July-December 2009 period all the activities of the Democratic Security Commission of Central America will be handled directly by SICA and not by the Pro-Tempore Presidency of the region (as Costa Rica, who will hold the presidency during the period, has not joined as a full member of the Commission.) Thus, all activities will be held in El Salvador and handled by SICA through its new Democratic Security Unit. This will facilitate allow for the AJR to interact and advance its agenda with SICA.

Mr. Juan Daniel Alemán, Secretary General of SICA, has pledged his support to engage ANEP in El Salvador, so it honors its commitments to prevention expressed in the Agreement signed with the AJR, particularly in promoting job opportunities for former gang members. Mr. Alemán has called Mr. Federico Colorado, President of ANEP (with whom he has a close relationship) on several occasions to schedule a joint meeting, but unfortunately it has been difficult to find an opportunity when all parties are in San Salvador. Mr. Alemán has assured that he will make this meeting happen and the AJR will continue to insist on this appointment. Mr. Alemán has also pledged to assist with other Salvadoran business organizations.

## **ANNEX**

## 1. Media Articles

<http://proceso.hn/2009/06/14/Metr%C3%B3poli/Inauguran.centros.de/14093.html>

### Inauguran centros de alcance “Por mi Barrio” en Comayagüela

Autor del artículo: **Proceso Digital**



Tegucigalpa - Para alejar a los niños y jóvenes de las pandillas, violencia juvenil y las drogas, el embajador de los Estados Unidos (EEUU), Hugo Llorens, el alcalde capitalino Ricardo Álvarez y representantes de varias organizaciones de cooperación, inauguraron dos centros de alcance “Por mi Barrio”, en las colonias Villafranca y Buenas Nuevas de Comayagüela.

Los centros cuentan con talleres de computación, electricidad, reparación de electrodomésticos y bicicletas, manualidades, corte y confección, belleza y barbería, entre otros, donde los niños y jóvenes serán capacitados en el área de su conveniencia, apoyados por redes de voluntariado formadas por los vecinos de la zona

Llorens destacó que la presencia del edil capitalino en este tipo de eventos, demuestra el compromiso de la municipalidad del Distrito Central con el proyecto y con las iniciativas que ayudan a reducir la criminalidad en la ciudad.

“Me es muy grato contar hoy con la participación del alcalde Ricardo Álvarez; su presencia demuestra el compromiso de la municipalidad de Tegucigalpa con centros como este y con iniciativas que ayuden a mejorar el tema de la criminalidad. Los EEUU de América también está comprometida en apoyar esfuerzos que mejoren la paz y la seguridad en Honduras”, refirió el diplomático.

Añadió que para su país el programa de los centros de alcance es motivo de orgullo, por lo que espera seguir apoyando estas actividades para beneficio de los jóvenes, que son verdaderos agentes de cambio para el país.

Álvarez por su parte señaló que con un solo joven que se aparte de las drogas, el vicio y las

maras, sería suficiente porque es una vida la que se salvará de estos flagelos, "pero estoy seguro que será más de uno; estos cambios son los que requiere Honduras, que no sigamos siendo indiferentes, que nos unamos".

"Porque si hay algo que ha funcionado bien es cuando se une la sociedad, cuando se unen los organismos internacionales, los rotarios, las alcaldías, los gobiernos centrales para generar los verdaderos cambios que se requieren para mejorar la vida de la gente que más necesita", aseveró el jefe edilicio.

El apoyo brindado a estos centros es un importante gesto de amistad y cariño del gobierno de los EEUU hacia la juventud, "que sí va a ser un mejor futuro para todos nosotros", puntualizó. Los centros de alcance estarán bajo la responsabilidad de Save the Children Honduras y su instalación contó con el apoyo de la Alianza Joven Regional, que es un programa conjunto de la Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo internacional (USAID) y el Sistema de Integración Centroamericana (SICA), y el Club Rotario.

<http://www.laprensa.hn/Ediciones/2009/05/27/Noticias/Mi-vida-cambio-hoy-tiene-sentido>

LaPrensa.hn » San Pedro Sula

1 de 4 en San Pedro Sula [SIGUIENTE](#) »

## “Mi vida cambió, hoy tiene sentido”

**Ex pandillero está feliz porque tiene trabajo, al igual que otros 24 ex mareros**

**26.05.09** - Actualizado: **26.05.09 09:34pm** - Lisseth García. Redacción La Prensa: [doris.garcia@laprensa.hn](mailto:doris.garcia@laprensa.hn)

**CALIFICAR**

Actualmente 5/5 Estrellas Actualmente 5/5 Estrellas

1 calificación actual: 5 votos: 2  [16 comentarios](#) **Imprimir** **Enviar**

**SAN PEDRO SULA,**  
**HONDURAS**

"No es fácil salir de las maras y de las drogas, se necesita valor porque nuestras vidas están en riesgo. El pueblo no necesita un presidente que mande a matar a los pandilleros, sino que les ayude a cambiar". Esas frases son parte del testimonio de un ex pandillero que decidió cambiar su vida y que gracias a la oportunidad que tuvo a través del programa Desafío 100 que impulsa el Proyecto Paz y Convivencia y Alianza Regional Usaid-Sica, podrá tener un trabajo digno con la empresa privada.

Ayer 25 ex pandilleros se incorporaron activamente al mercado laboral, lo que permitirá mejorar su calidad de vida y la de su familia. El grupo de jóvenes es apoyado por la Asociación Hondureña de Maquiladoras, AHM, y la Cámara de Comercio e Industrias de Cortés. Ellos son el segundo grupo de ex pandilleros que han logrado reinsertarse al mercado laboral, hace seis meses lo hizo otro grupo de 26 jóvenes en riesgo social que hoy son los testimonios fieles de que cuando los seres humanos tienen un sueño y trabajan de forma constante pueden convertirse en hombres y mujeres de bien, dijo el director de Paz y Convivencia, Jacobo Regalado. Los jóvenes y las autoridades de Paz y Convivencia instaron al sector empresarial que todavía no se ha unido a esta iniciativa a que se sumen a la labor.

Regalado explicó que la inserción laboral de los jóvenes en riesgo es parte integral del componente 2 de prevención social de la violencia y delincuencia juvenil y del sub componente "Capacitación laboral y promoción del empleo juvenil" que tiene como objetivo favorecer la integración de jóvenes en riesgo social y menores infractores para propiciar un cambio de actitudes y valores y su integración a la sociedad.

Los muchachos que ya están trabajando desde hace seis meses en diferentes empresas privadas de la ciudad y que son parte de la primera etapa de Desafío 100 relataron sus testimonios y cómo el trabajo y ganarse un salario digno ha cambiado sus vidas.

"Mi vida cambió, me sentí feliz y emocionada cuando recibí el primer salario ganado honradamente, hoy mi vida tiene sentido y nosotros somos el ejemplo de que merecemos una segunda oportunidad", dice

Silvia Hernández, ex pandillera.

**Protagonista**

JACOBO REGALADO,

Director de Paz y Convivencia

Las gestiones de la dependencia que dirige generaron que los empresarios decidieran darle trabajo a los ex pandilleros.

<http://www.laprensa.hn/Ediciones/2009/05/25/Noticias/35-ex-pandilleros-tendran-trabajo>

## 35 ex pandilleros tendrán trabajo

El programa **Desafío 100** ha logrado brindar la nueva oportunidad

**24.05.09** - Actualizado: **24.05.09 09:01pm** - Lisseth García. Redacción La Prensa: [doris.garcia@laprensa.hn](mailto:doris.garcia@laprensa.hn)

**CALIFICAR**

Actualmente /5 Estrellas Actualmente /5 Estrellas

1 Calificación actual: votos: 0  15 comentarios **Imprimir** **Enviar**

**SAN PEDRO SULA,**  
**HONDURAS**

Primero 26 jóvenes ex pandilleros lograron superar las barreras y hoy tienen un trabajo en la empresa privada que les permite llevar el sustento diario a sus familias. Mañana lo harán 35 más que decidieron desafiar obstáculos y están listos para reinsertarse en la sociedad y el mercado laboral.

Los 61 jóvenes forman parte del programa Desafío 100, una iniciativa del Programa Alianza Joven Regional, Usaid- Sica, en alianza con la oficina de Paz y Convivencia, la Cámara de Comercio e Industria de Cortés y la Asociación Hondureña de Maquiladores,

Esta alianza permite reunir a cien jóvenes ex pandilleros y a cien empresarios dispuestos a ofrecerles trabajo para que puedan rehacer sus vidas y convertirse en hombres y mujeres de bien.

Los muchachos reciben una oportunidad de trabajo. Antes de tener su empleo participaron en un proceso de evaluación, pruebas psicológicas y entrevistas que indiquen que están listos para reinsertarse en la sociedad.

El director del programa Paz y Convivencia, Jacobo Regalado, explicó que la inserción laboral de los jóvenes en riesgo es parte integral del componente 2, "Prevención social de la violencia y delincuencia juvenil" y del subcomponente "Capacitación laboral y promoción del empleo juvenil", cuyo objetivo es favorecer la integración de jóvenes en riesgo y menores infractores para propiciar un cambio de aptitudes y valores y, lo más importante, la integración a la sociedad.

Con la reinsertación de los primeros seis jóvenes el año anterior, muchos muchachos han mostrado interés en buscar una segunda oportunidad, explicó Regalado. Son presentados a sus empleadores en una ceremonia de emparejamiento ante la sociedad.

El coordinador del programa Desafío 100, Salvador Villeda, destacó que han tenido convivios con los jóvenes que ya tienen un empleo para motivarlos a seguir esforzándose. "De su comportamiento y desenvolvimiento dependerá que las empresas le abran puertas a otros jóvenes que también necesitan una oportunidad".

Mañana en el Centro Cultural Infantil se realizará el evento en que 35 jóvenes conocerán a sus empleadores y darán testimonios.

Los jefes de recursos humanos de las empresas que brindarán oportunidad a los jóvenes han sostenido diversas reuniones con OPC.

En Honduras, el programa Desafío 100 es piloto y se buscará extenderlo a otras ciudades. Guatemala ya lo puso en práctica

[http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota\\_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3507679](http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3507679)

San Salvador

## Capacitan a jóvenes en el barrio Lourdes



Panificación es uno de los oficios dirigido a los jóvenes. FOTO EDH / ARCHIVO

El Diario de Hoy

Jueves, 2 de Abril de 2009

En programas de computación, mantenimiento y reparación de computadoras, cocina, panadería, soldadura, cosmetología y hortícola urbana, podrán inscribirse niños, adolescentes y jóvenes residentes del barrio Lourdes, en esta capital.

Esto gracias a que la Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional (USAID), la Unidad de Seguridad Democrática del Sistema de Integración Centroamericana (SICA) y el ministerio evangelístico Abba Padre, inauguraron ayer el Centro de alcance "Por mi barrio".

Encabeza este centro de capacitación el pastor Carlos Artiga, de la iglesia evangélica Abba Padre, quien antes fue pandillero, pero que ahora se dedica a prevenir que niños y jóvenes se involucren en estas agrupaciones.

En este centro también se brindará asistencia a familiares de pandilleros fallecidos o en prisión.

Además, en este lugar los jóvenes podrán involucrarse en actividades deportivas, artísticas y de entretenimiento que les permita tener otras opciones que les ayuden a integrarse de mejor manera a la sociedad.

Este centro está, ubicado en el corazón de un área de alta incidencia de violencia juvenil.

## 2. ANALISIS DE LA SITUACION DE LA REGION

En los tres países donde desarrolla sus actividades el Programa Alianza Joven Regional USAID-SICA, durante el trimestre, han sucedido sendos eventos, algunos de los cuales están modificando los escenarios de trabajo del Programa. En Mayo, el presidente de Guatemala fue acusado de asesinato mediante un video dejado por la persona fallecida, el abogado Rodrigo Rosenberg. Este hecho levantó una cadena de manifestaciones en contra y a favor del mandatario. En el Salvador, por primera vez en su historia y mediante elecciones, un partido de izquierda gobernará el país después de veinte años de poder del mayor partido de derecha. Si bien el hecho sucedió sin cuestionamientos, la etapa de transición y el inicio del gobierno posteriormente, están marcando nuevos modos de actuación. En Honduras, y contra pronósticos, casi al final del trimestre, el ejército de ese país de acuerdo con el poder judicial, depuso al presidente de la República, expulsándolo del país y haciendo uso de los recursos constitucionales el Poder Legislativo nombró a un nuevo presidente, llamando a los hechos sucesión forzada.

<http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20090511/pais/100336/>

Los tres acontecimientos, como realidades, abren coyunturas sensibles que condicionan enormemente el rumbo de las acciones de prevención.

En el caso de El Salvador, un hecho importante pero poco relevante, fue la oferta de diálogo que las dos pandillas más importantes del país hicieron al nuevo gobierno. En el comunicado, llaman al nuevo gobierno a “tomar acciones que puedan dar espacios de soluciones a la problemática de la violencia... que se llame a un diálogo... y proponer alternativas”

<http://noticias.terra.es/mundo/2009/0530/actualidad/las-pandillas-piden-a-funes-abrir-el-dialogo-para-acabar-con-la-violencia-en-el-salvador.aspx>

Contemporáneamente, en el primer mes del nuevo gobierno, sucedieron trescientos sesenta homicidios, es decir, una media de doce diarios. De estos homicidios, algunos de ellos parecen ser verdaderos desafíos a las nuevas autoridades y a la justicia; dos mujeres menores de edad, junto con un hombre, fueron asesinados y tirado sus restos frente a la Fiscalía de Soyapango, un lugar en la periferia de San Salvador y con proliferación de pandillas. En la tercera ciudad más importante del país, una serie de homicidios en los que los cuerpos fueron quemados, desató alarma en la población por la brutalidad de los mismos.

<http://www.laprensagrafica.com/el-salvador/lodeldia/43606-2138-homicidios-en-el-primer-semester-de-este-ano.html>  
[http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota\\_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3693291](http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3693291)

En Guatemala, el escándalo del video incriminatorio al presidente de la República, puso a ese país en dos grupos de confrontación: aquellos que protestaron contra el presidente (Plaza Italia) y los que lo apoyaron (Plaza Central). Si bien en el video, la persona fallecida habla de pruebas contundentes, estas no fueron presentadas y elementos posteriores hicieron sospechar la utilización del trágico evento como un instrumento de desestabilización al gobierno. Por otro lado, las primeras declaraciones presentaron a un presidente nervioso, agresivo y amenazador; lejos de la figura serena e inteligente que había mostrado en otras oportunidades. El video en youtube, visto por miles de personas, e incluso mostrado en las grandes cadenas de noticias y principales periódicos del mundo, dañó más la imagen del país y mostró la debilidad institucional y del sistema de justicia. Esa debilidad se expresó semanas después cuando el Ministro de Gobernación destituyó a las máximas autoridades de la policía contra la opinión de

numerosos sectores de la sociedad civil y la anuencia del presidente. Semanas después el mismo ministro habría sido cesado en sus funciones.

En fin, el hecho más alarmante, fue la destitución del presidente de la República en Honduras. Tal acontecimiento ha sido llamado “Golpe de Estado” por unos y “sucesión forzada” por otros. El hecho como tal plantea desafíos impredecibles; muchos de los fondos de cooperación han sido “congelados” hasta que se retorne a la normalidad; ningún país latinoamericano ha reconocido al gobierno de facto y al interior del país, la sociedad se divide y protesta ya sea a favor o en contra. De los tres acontecimientos en la región, uno fortalece la consolidación democrática (El Salvador), otro desafía la institucionalidad (Guatemala) y el tercero pone en riesgo la estabilidad de la región (Honduras).

En estos escenarios, el derecho a la vida sigue siendo una deuda incumplida. En el semestre, en El Salvador sucedieron dos mil ciento treinta y ocho homicidios generando un incremento de novecientos ochenta y tres respecto al mismo período del año anterior. En el caso de Guatemala, ocurrieron en el primer semestre de 2009, dos mil novecientos treinta y cuatro homicidios, es decir, setecientos noventa más que el primer semestre de 2008 convirtiéndose así, en el periodo más violento en los últimos veinticuatro años en el país. En el caso de Honduras, si bien no se dispone de datos específicos, la tendencia de diez homicidios por día persiste.

<http://www.laprensagrafica.com/el-salvador/lodeldia/43606-2138-homicidios-en-el-primer-semestre-de-este-ano.html>

<http://www.sigloxxi.com/noticias/29588>

Tanto en El Salvador como en Guatemala, los choferes de autobuses sigue siendo uno de los sectores con más víctimas de la violencia; normalmente es consecuencia del incumplimiento de la renta o extorsión que las pandillas imponen. Se podría inferir incluso que el delito de extorsión, quizá sea uno de los más numerosos y menos denunciado; esta actitud ciudadano no hace sino empeorar la solución ya que se banaliza el mismo.

Al mismo tiempo, el comercio sufre los daños de la violencia. En el centro de la capital de El Salvador, fue decretado una especie de “toque de queda” obligando a los comerciantes a cerrar sus negocios antes de las horas acostumbradas; en Guatemala, las extorsiones tocaron a más del cincuenta por ciento de la población según testimonios de personas involucradas en áreas vulnerables.

[http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota\\_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3761446](http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota_completa.asp?idCat=6375&idArt=3761446)

En fin, el paso de la droga por la región es otro de los hechos que resaltan en el trimestre. Cada vez parece más evidente la relación entre los grupos delincuenciales de la región con los carteles mexicanos; en Guatemala consideran que más de dos mil pandilleros están contratados como sicarios. Los Zetas de México serían quienes operan en la región.

<http://www.prensalibre.com.gt/pl/2009/junio/25/323813.html>

Los escenarios parecen difíciles. Violencia, delincuencia, criminalidad, narcoactividad, debilidad institucional son solo parte de las dificultades a superar y sobre las cuales desarrollar acciones que permitan a los más vulnerables tener mejores oportunidades o por lo menos estar mínimamente protegidos de la victimización.