

USAID Experiences with Community-Based Social Prevention Programs



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Latin American and
Caribbean Bureau

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Remarks by President Obama, Santiago, Chile,
March 21, 2011 –

“But we’ll never break the grip of the cartels and the gangs unless we also address the social and economic forces that fuel criminality. We need to reach at-risk youth before they turn to drugs and crime. So we’re joining with partners across the Americas to expand community-based policing, strengthening juvenile justice systems, and invest in crime and drug prevention programs.”

- Background
- USAID Programs
- Prevention
- Justice Sector
- Community-based
- Local Govt
- Youth
- Evaluation

USAID Citizen Security Programs

Mexico
Central America
Caribbean
Colombia



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USAID Experiences with Community-Based Prevention Programs

Social Prevention of Crime and Violence

- U.S. and LAC Experience: Solid Evidence for Prevention
 - Focus on underlying risk factors.
 - Cost-effective.
 - Eases pressure on prison system.

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The Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)

Focus on the Justice Sector

- High Impact Courts and 24 Hour Courts - Guatemala
- Criminal Procedure Reform - El Salvador
- Juvenile Justice Reform - Central America

Focus on Law Enforcement Capacity-Building

- Community-based Policing
 - Villa Nueva, Guatemala
 - El Salvador
 - Jamaica

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Focus on Community-Based Solutions

- Gangs are not the only problem.
- Entire community must be made resilient and resistant to crime and violence.
- Youth growing up in safer communities are less likely to face the temptation of crime and violence.
- Examples:
 - Centros de Alcance “Por mi Barrio” – El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, and Honduras
 - Community-Based Crime and Violence Prevention – El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Jamaica

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Focus on Local Government

- Long-term Sustainability
- Promoting Official Prevention Policies
- Municipal Crime Prevention Plans
- Diagnostics of Risk Factors
- Surveys on Citizen Perception of Insecurity
- Crime Observatories

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Focus on Youth

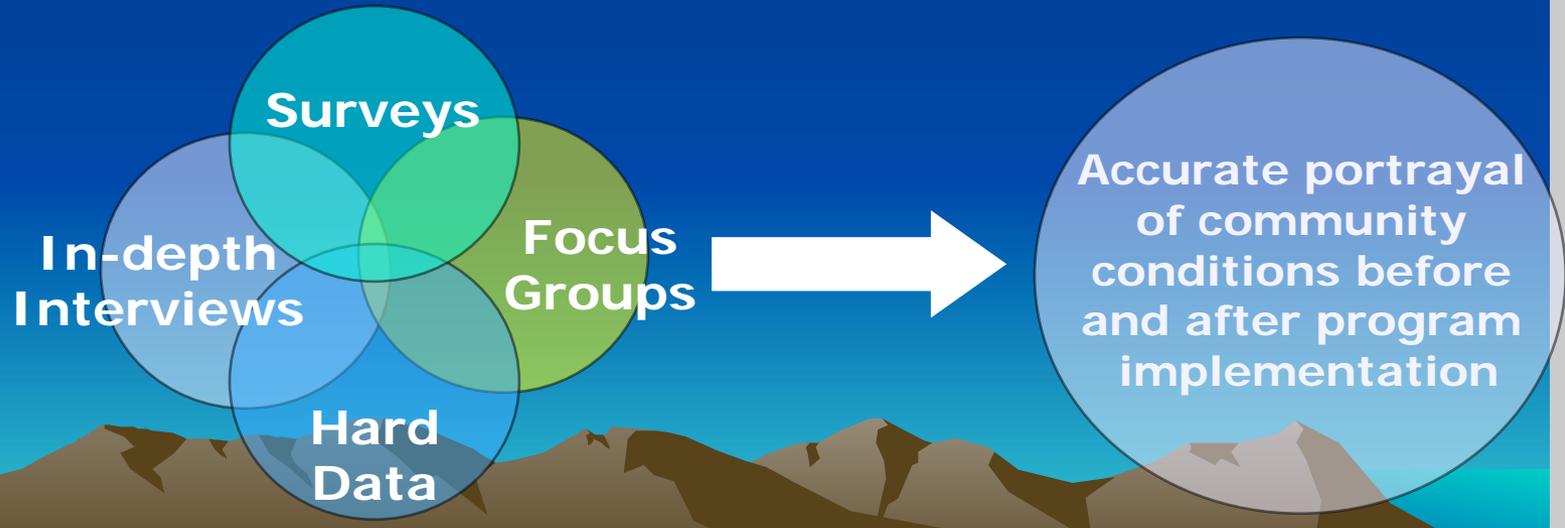
- Out of School Time Activities:
 - Centros de Alcance. Recreation, Life skills, and Vocational Training.
- Secondary Prevention and Juvenile Justice:
 - Targeting those youth most susceptible to gang recruitment.
- Advocating for Prevention Policies:
 - Youth Movements Against Violence

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Evaluation Design

- Random division of 100 similar communities
 - 33 treatment and 67 control communities
 - El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama
- 3 years – baseline, mid-point and final
- Multiple methods to collect data
- Vanderbilt University/LAPOP – AmericasBarometer



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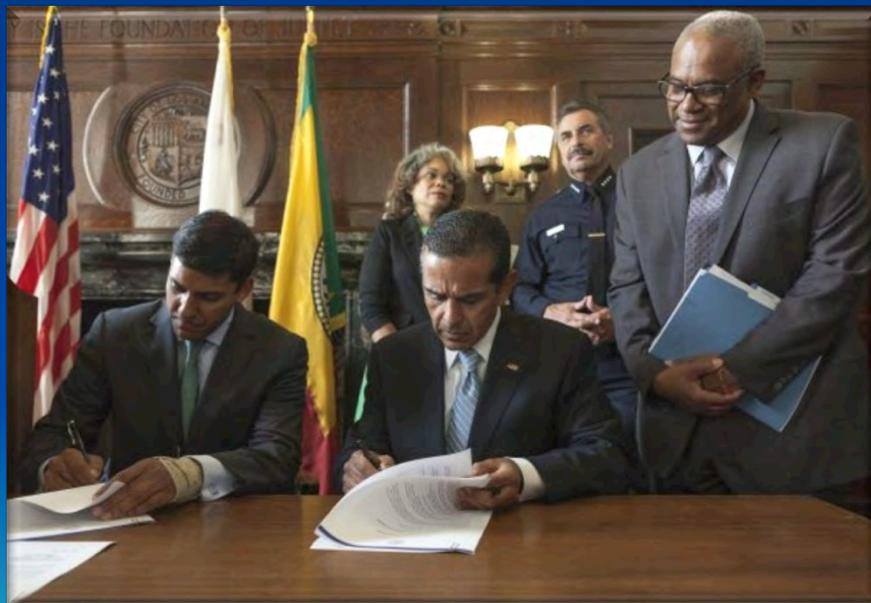
USAID Partnership with L.A.

"For years we've know that the city has exported its gang problem. But now we're known for exporting our gang solutions."

-L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, October 11, 2012

Three goals:

- 1.Improve citizen security in the LAC region;
- 2.Reduce risk factors that lead youth into criminal activity; and
- 3.Provide new opportunities for youth at risk



Sharing Best Practices on Municipal Crime Prevention Models

Study Tours to Colombia and Cities in the U.S.

Conferences to disseminate lessons learned:

- **Preventing Youth Violence in the Americas - 2011**
- **Honduras Learning Exchange - 2012**
- **Los Angeles Gang Prevention and Intervention Conference – 2013 & 2014**
- **Guatemala Conference on Youth Crime and Violence Prevention - 2014**



Where do we go from here?

- Public-private sector alliances on social prevention
- Integrated strategy: Prevention; Intervention; Reinsertion; Law Enforcement
- Greater geographic focus
- Targeting the most at risk for committing crimes
- Improved coordination at the country-level to oversee and manage various initiatives
- Focus on changing behaviors and less on changing gang identity

