



# TECHNICAL GUIDANCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE TO ORGANIZED CRIME

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# ACRONYMS

<b>ACDS</b>	ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme	<b>kWh</b>	Kilowatt hour
<b>AOR</b>	Agreement Officer's Representative	<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	<b>LGBTI</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex
<b>C-TIP</b>	Counter-trafficking in persons	<b>MSI</b>	Management Systems International
<b>CARPE</b>	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment	<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>COP</b>	Chief of Party	<b>OCCRP</b>	Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project
<b>COR</b>	Contracting Officer's Representative	<b>PEA</b>	Political economy analysis
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo	<b>SIGAR</b>	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
<b>eCDT</b>	Electronic Catch Documentation and Traceability	<b>SMART</b>	Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool
<b>FPIC</b>	Free, prior, and informed consent	<b>TIP</b>	Trafficking in persons
<b>GIATOC</b>	Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime	<b>UNTOC</b>	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
<b>IJM</b>	International Justice Mission	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>INL</b>	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs		

# INTRODUCTION



The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau for Africa initiated research in 2018 on the development response to organized crime.<sup>1</sup> The resulting technical guidance aims to help USAID, other development actors, and other U.S. Government personnel design and implement more effective interventions to counter organized crime.

Rather than treating illicit activities discreetly, this guidance treats them as a whole and offers lessons and recommendations that may support multiple programming areas. While lessons included in the guidance may arise from a particular sector, they apply more broadly across all sectors. Therefore, the intended audience is wide-ranging: environmental staff working to address wildlife trafficking, illegal logging, and illegal fishing; economic growth staff working to address illegal mining, drug cultivation, and illicit finance; and health staff working to address counterfeit pharmaceuticals. The audience also includes democracy, human rights, and

governance staff and conflict and violence prevention staff working to address trafficking in persons (TIP), migrant smuggling, and gang-related crime and violence as well as corruption, impunity, and governance challenges in crime-affected contexts. The lessons and recommendations support stand-alone programming in each of these sectors and possible coordination across multiple sectors.

The guidance is organized into four sections. The introductory section lays out the development challenge posed by organized crime, the characteristics of organized crime, and the research methodology. The second section describes USAID programming trends in organized crime. The third section offers lessons learned and recommendations. Finally, the concluding section summarizes the research. The annexes contain a table of USAID core organized projects by country, the methodology used for the three case studies, and a list of additional resources and selected references.

## ORGANIZED CRIME AS A DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Organized crime has expanded dramatically in size, scope, and influence in the 21st century. Deregulation and improved infrastructure have facilitated the movement of both illicit and licit goods across the globe, and technological advances, such as the Internet and cell phones, have facilitated communications within criminal networks. Organized crime generates trillions of dollars in revenues every year, dwarfing legitimate markets in some regions.<sup>2</sup>

The World Development Report 2011 helped focus international attention on organized crime as a threat to development.<sup>3</sup> It stressed that organized crime thrives

in fragile states with weak institutions, but the damages extend to fragile and developed states alike. Subsequent World Development Reports have analyzed linkages between organized crime and specific development topics, including gender equality; jobs; risk management; mind, society, and behavior; digital dividends; governance and law; and education. Recognizing the salience of the issue, the U.S. Government identified transnational organized crime as a threat to national security in its 2017 National Security Strategy.

<sup>1</sup> The initial research focus on strengthening rule of law approaches to address organized crime expanded to consider development responses more broadly.

<sup>2</sup> World Economic Forum, State of the Illicit Economy Briefing Papers (Cologne: World Economic Forum, 2015), 3-6, [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_State\\_of\\_the\\_Illicit\\_Economy\\_2015\\_2.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_State_of_the_Illicit_Economy_2015_2.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> World Bank, World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development (Washington: World Bank, 2011), 2, <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-8439-8>.

*Organized crime poses challenges to many aspects of development. Namely, organized crime:*

- Corrodes public institutions, democratic processes, and the rule of law through the co-option or complicity of public officials, including political leaders, police, prosecutors, judges, and border guards. For example, criminal proceeds can distort political processes by funding campaigns, buying votes, or financing political thuggery. Similarly, criminal manipulation of justice and security systems can erode public faith in these institutions and popular legitimacy of the government as a whole.
- Chills participation in civil society organizations and political processes and deters investigative journalism because of attacks that crime groups perpetrate against activists.
- Fuels conflict and instability through funding non-state armed groups—such as the Unity and Jihad Movement in West Africa and the Taliban in Afghanistan—and through violent competition among rival crime groups, such as drug cartels in Mexico or competing drug rings in Guinea Bissau, which allegedly led to the double assassinations of the President and the Chief of Defense Staff in 2009.
- Increases business risks through extortion, piracy, or kidnapping carried out against business operations and staff; high levels of violence arising from cartel or gang warfare; and competition with counterfeit, illegal, or unregulated products. Organized crime may also contribute to broader market distortions (e.g., the Dutch disease where inflows of illicit profits may inflate the currency and make legitimate exports less competitive).
- Harms communities and individuals through the ravages of human trafficking, problematic substance use, and ineffective medicines, among other harms.
- Exploits and further entrenches gender and other social inequalities. For example, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, women, and girls may be at a heightened risk of sex trafficking and forced prostitution due to their lack of economic opportunity and protections. Youth may also be at a heightened risk of forced recruitment into criminal armed groups, such as the Lord's Resistance Army of central Africa and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.
- Threatens endangered species and damages ecosystems through wildlife trafficking and illegal and unregulated logging, fishing, and mining.

## ORGANIZED CRIME CHARACTERISTICS

USAID follows the definition of organized crime agreed to in the 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).<sup>4</sup> The convention defines organized crime as taking place when three or more people operate in a structured or networked way to repeatedly execute or commission serious crime for profit.<sup>5</sup> While the convention focuses on transnational organized crime, USAID and other development organizations focus on organized crime more broadly,

thereby including the domestic provision of illicit goods and services, extortion, corruption, and other organized crimes that may not involve a transnational dimension.

Organized crime falls into two primary categories: the provision of illicit goods and services as well as predation (Figure 1). In the first category, criminal groups provide illegal goods and services to paying customers. They provide illegal goods, such as cocaine, rhino horns,

<sup>4</sup> "United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto," adopted November 15, 2000, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Online: 5, <https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> UNTOC defines serious crimes as crimes that carry a maximum sentence of at least four years' incarceration. The Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (GIATOC) instead defines serious crimes as crimes that have a significant impact. See GIATOC, *Organized Crime: A Cross-Cutting Threat to Sustainable Development* (Geneva: GIATOC, 2015), 5, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/global-initiative-organized-crime-as-a-cross-cutting-threat-to-development-january-2015.pdf>.

and firearms, or illegal services, such as commercial sex, bonded labor, facilitation of migration routes, and money laundering. They also provide otherwise legal goods illegally, offering lower prices because their goods are unregulated, counterfeit, stolen, or smuggled to avoid taxes and tariffs.

In the second category, criminal groups prey upon organizations or individuals to extract payments. They use intimidation and threats to extort protection payments from business owners, workers, or individuals. They

use violence to ransom ships or individuals and stealth to appropriate identities and information through the Internet. With public officials, they offer bribes, often backed by the threat of violence, to secure contracts, concessions, and land or to manipulate government processes to their advantage (e.g., evade regulations or prosecution). The corruption of public officials may constitute a crime group's main activity or support a crime group's other activities.

Figure 1. Types of Organized Crime



## METHODOLOGY USED AND LIMITATIONS

This technical guidance results from a two-year effort to learn from USAID programming to address organized crime as well as the research and initiatives directed by academics, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), businesses, governments, and other donors. It draws from a literature review; five roundtables and corresponding white papers; a catalogue of USAID organized crime-related programming; a review of relevant USAID program reports and evaluations; interviews with key stakeholders engaged in countering organized crime; and virtual case studies of USAID programming managed by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Mission, Guatemala Mission, and Regional Development

Mission for Asia. The research benefited from 43 interviews with more than 100 staff members from USAID/ Washington,<sup>6</sup> Missions, and implementing partners.

Using the construct of organized crime described above, the guidance cuts across sectors that are often siloed. It examines innovations and lessons from multiple program areas to distill insights about how and why interventions work or fail to work, as well as how to better tailor them to a specific context to achieve the intended outcomes. It highlights innovations and lessons that are transferable across sectors as well as how and when coordination across related programs can strengthen their impact. It also considers how these interventions need to respond to the vulnerabilities

<sup>6</sup> Bureaus for Africa; Asia; Conflict Prevention and Stabilization; Democracy, Development and Innovation; and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).



of marginalized groups, including Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTI persons, and ethnic and religious minorities.

Given the nascent state of research on development responses to organized crime, the guidance has limitations. It does not benefit from knowledge produced through randomized controlled trials or similarly rigorous

research. It also does not provide an in-depth source of programming guidance for specific sectors. Rather, it provides guidance for USAID based on program experiences and research to date across different types of organized crime and development sectors in the hopes of improving the impact of programming in this critical area.

# 2 USAID ORGANIZED CRIME PROGRAMMING



## CORE AND CONTEXTUAL PROGRAMMING

USAID funds a range of interventions that counter organized crime. Core programming focuses specifically on organized criminal activities whereas contextual programming addresses organized criminal activities

in crime-affected contexts but may also address other issues. Figure 2 shows the main core and contextual programming that address organized crime at USAID.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 2. Core and Contextual Programming at USAID



<sup>7</sup> As civil society initiatives are often part of the programming in all core and contextual sectors listed here, they are not captured in a separate category.

## SECTOR TRENDS AT USAID

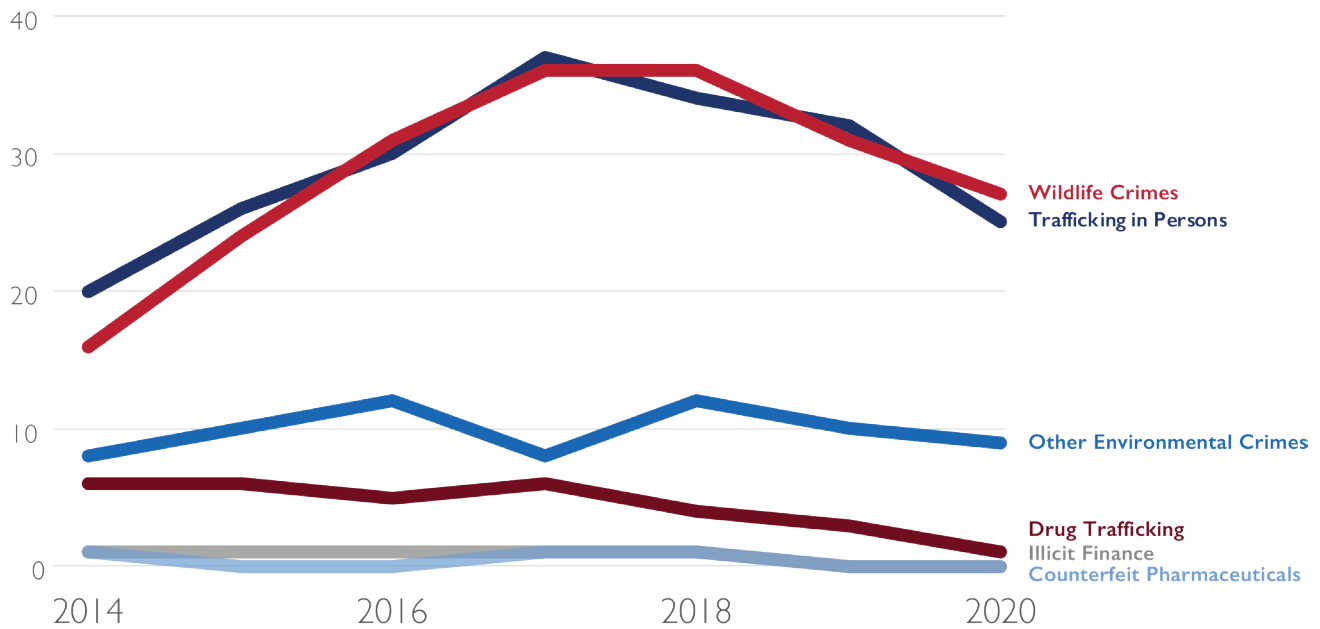
The research team developed a catalogue of USAID programming from 2014 to spring 2020. The team included projects identified by previous cataloguing efforts,<sup>8</sup> a search of all USAID Mission websites, searches on the Development Experience Clearinghouse, and interviews or emails with USAID staff.

The effort yielded a total of 298 projects. Most of the core projects are principally focused on organized crime, but some, notably those in the wildlife crime, other conservation crimes, and counterfeit pharmaceutical sectors, are more broadly focused with only a portion of a project’s funds directed to organized crime. For example, an environmental conservation project

may address the encroachment of pastoralists on nature reserves and destructive hunting policies as well as wildlife trafficking. For this reason, it is difficult to determine funding directed to organized crime by sector.

The cataloguing effort shows areas of emphasis in USAID programming. In terms of the number of projects, Figure 3 shows that wildlife crime and TIP<sup>9</sup> interventions are the dominant core programming sectors. However, drug trafficking has been another focus area in terms of funding, as USAID has funded a few very large projects to address drug cultivation in Afghanistan, Colombia, and Peru, with an average size of \$67 million.

Figure 3. Core Organized Crime Projects, Count by Sector <sup>10</sup>



In terms of contextual programming, crime and violence prevention has by far the largest number of projects (Figure 4). This reflects funding through the Central America Regional Security Initiative, Caribbean Basin

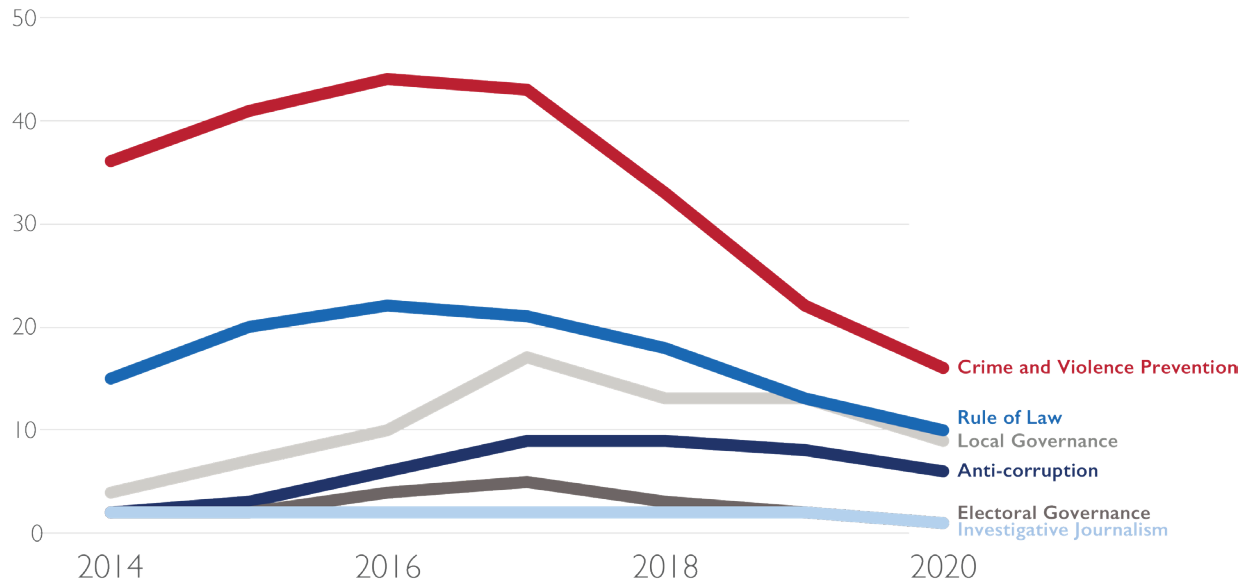
Security Initiative, and Mérida Initiative, which started to decline in 2017. The number of projects in other sectors has been lower and fairly stable.

8 The most relevant effort was reporting to the U.S. Council on Transnational Organized Crime in spring 2018 as mandated by Executive Order 13773, but USAID databases and program reviews on specific sectors provided further information.

9 TIP involves the recruitment, transportation, or receipt of persons through the use of force, fraud, or abuse of power for the purpose of exploitation. This includes child labor and child soldiers.

10 This figure counts all projects that were active--and not just projects that were initiated--in a given year.

Figure 4. Contextual Organized Crime Projects, Count by Sector

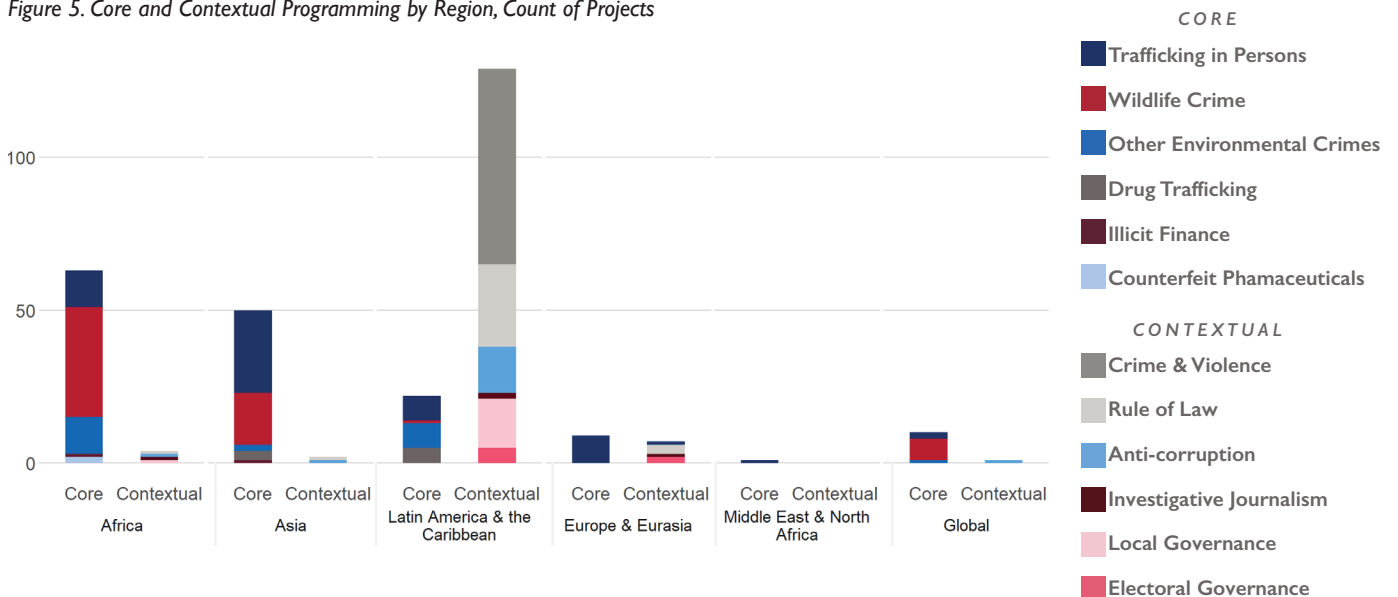


## REGIONAL PATTERNS AT USAID

The cataloguing effort highlights regional patterns in USAID programming (Figure 5). In terms of core programming, Africa and Asia have similar numbers of projects whereas Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC),

Europe and Eurasia, and Middle East and North Africa have far fewer projects. Regarding contextual projects, the LAC region has significantly more projects than the other regions.

Figure 5. Core and Contextual Programming by Region, Count of Projects



The dominant core sectors differ for each region. In sub-Saharan Africa, wildlife crime, TIP, and other conservation crimes are the dominant core sectors, whereas in Asia, TIP, wildlife crime, and drug trafficking are dominant. In LAC, drug trafficking and other conservation crimes are dominant, and in Europe and Eurasia, TIP is dominant.

The dominant contextual sectors also differ for each region. In LAC, crime and violence prevention has the most projects. In the other regions, crime and violence prevention as a sector does not exist, and the rule of law sector is larger than other sectors in contextual programming.

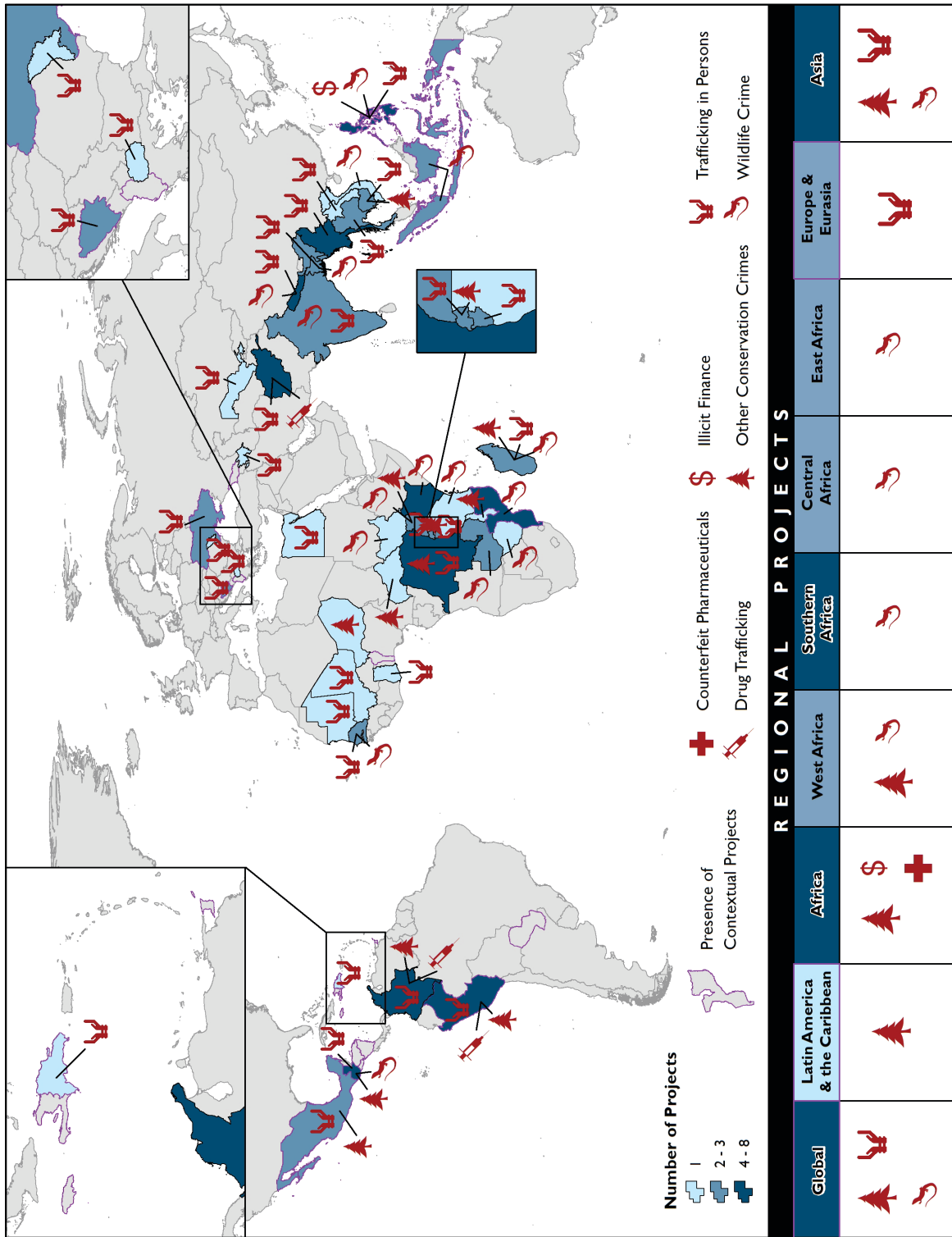
Regional patterns also emerge within each sector. Combating wildlife trafficking programming is concentrated in Africa and Asia but still present in LAC. Counter-trafficking in persons (C-TIP) projects are concentrated in Asia, Africa, and LAC. Projects that address other conservation crimes are concentrated in LAC and Africa. Efforts to counter drug trafficking are concentrated in Asia and LAC.

USAID's organized crime programming has tended to cluster in countries (Figure 6). During this five-year period, ten countries had four or more core organized crime projects.<sup>11</sup> This likely reflects available program funding and priorities within bureaus and Missions as well as the geographic concentration of organized crime.

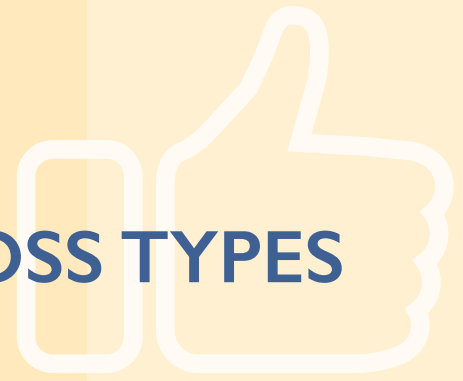
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11 This list includes Afghanistan, Burma, Colombia, DRC, Guatemala, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Peru, and the Philippines.

Figure 6. Location of Core Projects



# 3 LESSONS LEARNED ACROSS TYPES OF ORGANIZED CRIME



The following section lays out lessons learned in three categories: analysis, strategic approaches, and effective partnerships.

## ANALYSIS

The research identified two overarching lessons on the importance of analysis to guide interventions.

### **Lesson 1: Political economy analysis can help navigate power dynamics to advance reforms.**

Political economy analysis (PEA) recognizes that power dynamics shape reform trajectories. Politically informed approaches to reform aim for a “best fit” based on what is politically feasible and technically sound. Given the government complicity that often accompanies organized crime, this approach is critical for addressing it.

Ongoing PEA can help to operationalize the process of thinking and working politically. PEA examines the interests and resources of key actors and how they influence reform efforts. PEA looks at informal and formal institutions as well as power dynamics. Applying PEA to organized crime entails understanding the linkages between criminal, private sector, and political actors (which are not mutually exclusive) and the social structures within which they operate, including social and gender norms, discrimination, and stigma. This also entails understanding how crime groups are linked to or competing against other criminal structures. Rather than treating crime groups as outside social structures, PEA looks at the social, political, and economic embeddedness of criminal networks. This includes examining the incentives and risks that shape actors’ engagement in organized crime. Economic opportunities, the functioning of the state, social relations, and social norms are some factors that influence that engagement.

By looking at these dynamics among key actors, PEA can suggest possible pathways and entry points for countering crime. The analysis asks who has an interest in change, who has an interest in preserving the status quo, and what drives these interests. This understanding can help identify strategies that strengthen supporters, weaken opponents, and bring opponents on board. PEA should also consider gender and other social dynamics that may create different barriers and opportunities among actors and provide different perspectives on the operation and impact of organized crime. Thus, stand-alone PEAs or the integration of PEA into sectoral assessments can help guide projects both initially and on an ongoing basis.

PEAs can also help catalyze broader reform. In the Central African Republic, a study of diamond smuggling conducted by USAID’s Artisanal Mining and Property Rights project has had a significant impact on reform prospects. Using a PEA lens, the study clarified the excessive burdens of the formal systems for exporting diamonds (e.g., the Kimberley Process), the alternative trust networks that developed in the wake of the 2013 crisis, and patron-client relationships in government that sustain diamond smuggling. Whereas some government officials opposed the study’s release, others recognized how much the country was losing to neighboring Cameroon from the illicit trade and supported the opening for reform. After more than a year of discussions and advocacy, the government approved the public release of the PEA report and turned the PEA recommendations into an action plan for reforming the diamond sector.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Chief of Party (COP) and Advisor of the Artisanal Mining and Property Rights project, in discussion with the author, June 22, 2020.



**Recommendation 1: Use a PEA lens to think and work politically and help guide counter-crime interventions.**

**Guiding questions: Who has an interest in countering crime? Who has an interest in preserving the status quo? What drives these interests? What resources do they have to influence counter-crime efforts? How can interventions help strengthen supporters and weaken opponents?**

**Lesson 2: Government complicity in or opposition to organized crime shapes reform strategies.<sup>13</sup>**

In many countries where USAID works, governments are complicit in organized crime. The extent of complicity is largely determined by the quality of governing institutions, especially the rule of law. When the rule of law is weak, criminal organizations are more likely to offer bribes and officials are more likely to accept them or engage in criminal activities themselves, since they perceive the risk of doing so to be low. When the rule of law is strong, criminal organizations are less likely to engage directly with officials.

The degree of criminal infiltration also reflects the scale and scope of the criminal activity. As criminal activities become more visible and complex, it becomes necessary to co-opt higher levels of the state, essentially moving from low-level bribery of customs or law enforcement officials to higher-level officials.

Higher-level complicity is also more likely where illicit money is concentrated in fewer hands and represents a greater share of national income. For crime groups,

high profits make big bribes more affordable. For senior officials, high profits in illicit markets represent a notable source of wealth and power in the country, which they may seek to tap. This is especially true where there are fewer opportunities for making money in the formal economy.

The case studies conducted to inform this technical guidance underscore this phenomenon. In eastern DRC, many mines are controlled by armed groups with the involvement of the army, police, local or provincial authorities, village chiefs, local members of parliament, and the family of former President Kabila.<sup>14</sup> The Guatemala case study similarly highlighted government complicity in organized crime. One interviewee noted, “We see criminal groups becoming more embedded in the political system. In the past, political candidates were businesspeople, and narcos gave the money under the table. Now, the mayor is directly involved in the narco business.”<sup>15</sup> Strategies for tackling government complicity depend on the extent of the complicity and the opposition to crime<sup>16</sup> at different levels of government. Figure 7 shows four scenarios for reform.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> For more on government complicity, see Phyllis Dininio, *Government Complicity in Organized Crime – White Paper 2* (Washington: USAID, Bureau for Africa, 2019), [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00TSH2.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TSH2.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Michael Kavanagh, Thomas Wilson, and Franz Wild, “With His Family’s Fortune at Stake, President Kabila Digs In,” *Bloomberg News*, December 15, 2016, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2016-12-15/with-his-family-fortune-at-stake-congo-president-kabila-digs-in>; and International Peace Information Service, “Analysis of the interactive map of artisanal mining areas in eastern DR Congo: 2015 update,” Antwerp, October 2016, [https://ipisresearch.be/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Analysis-and-map-artisanal-mining-DR-Congo\\_v005-1.pdf](https://ipisresearch.be/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Analysis-and-map-artisanal-mining-DR-Congo_v005-1.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) of the Electoral Governance and Reforms project, in discussion with the author, April 27, 2020.

<sup>16</sup> The scenarios provide a heuristic device to distill the primary factors influencing reform strategies. For government opposition to organized crime, they consider only the opposition of high-level officials. Opposition of low-level officials may have some influence on reform strategies, but decidedly less than that of high-level officials.

<sup>17</sup> These scenarios were originally presented in Brooke Stearns Lawson and Phyllis Dininio, *The Development Response to Drug Trafficking in Africa: A Programming Guide*. Washington, DC: USAID, 2013.



Figure 7. Four Scenarios for Tackling Government Complicity

		GOVERNMENT COMPLICITY	
		Low-level Officials	High-level Officials
GOVERNMENT OPPOSITION	Strong: High-level officials oppose organized crime	Best scenario for direct interventions	Direct interventions possible but potentially destabilizing
	Weak: Relatively few high-level officials oppose organized crime	Direct interventions most effective when combined with increased political pressure	Direct intervention not advisable

The best scenario is found in the top left box, where complicity is confined to low-level officials, and high-level officials oppose organized crime. The box is shaded green to suggest that an array of initiatives can support anti-crime efforts.

The next best scenario is found in the bottom left box, where complicity is confined to low-level officials, but opposition to crime is weak. Mobilizing political pressure for reform may provide the best lever for advancing an anti-crime agenda in this scenario.

The second-worst scenario is found in the top right box, where some high-level officials are complicit and some oppose organized crime. Reforms are possible but may face strong backlash, and careful analysis of stakeholder interests and resources is necessary to identify possible entry points.

The worst scenario is found in the bottom right box, where high-level officials are complicit and relatively few high-level officials oppose organized crime. Direct interventions with government are not advisable, although support for civil society and international advocacy may be warranted.

**Recommendation 2: In high-crime contexts, recognize that government complicity is likely and assess scenarios for reform.**



**Guiding questions: Does organized crime represent a significant share of national income? Are specific criminal markets particularly lucrative and concentrated in fewer hands? Are high-level officials complicit in organized crime? Is there any high-level opposition to organized crime in government?**

## STRATEGIC APPROACHES

The research identified a number of lessons on strategic approaches to counter organized crime.

### ***Lesson 3: Addressing both incentives and risks is critical.***

Across criminal markets, incentives and risks shape who is likely to engage in organized crime for those both inside and outside of government. Incentives include limited opportunities in licit markets and a lack of public services that create a push toward illicit activity as well as the lure of increased wealth and status that create a pull toward illicit activity. Identities, social and gender norms, hierarchies, and insecurity may also play a role, and criminal networks may exploit these dynamics, such as toxic masculinity or gender inequities, to recruit members, but need and greed are often primary motivations for participating in crime groups. Balanced against these incentives are the risks of engaging in criminal behavior, which include imprisonment, fines, asset seizures, debarment, visa sanctions, violence, and a loss of standing in one's community.

A range of development interventions aim to reduce the incentives for engaging in criminal activity and thereby prevent it from happening. They seek to reduce the push factors for engaging in crime by supporting alternative livelihoods, education, health services, recreational activities, psychosocial services, civil rights protections, social and gender norm changes, and professionalization within the public sector. In addition, development assistance supports the community co-management of natural resources, such as forests, hunting preserves, and mineral resources, as well as the formalization of land titles, resource rights, and labor rights to enable community members to benefit from licit activities.

Other programs aim to reduce the pull factors for engaging in organized crime by shrinking criminal markets. They strive to decrease demand for illicit goods and services through social and behavior change communication campaigns and advocacy for more stringent laws. Efforts typically focus on specific illicit goods or services, such as rhino horns, conflict minerals, or forced

labor. For some of these efforts, development practitioners have joined a growing number of consumers, investors, activists, policymakers, and corporations to call for supply chains that are “clean”—that is, free from unethical or illicit activity, such as child or forced labor, human smuggling or trafficking, armed conflict financing, or illicit production or smuggling of goods. Development support for clean supply chains ranges from traceability and certification schemes to customs regulations and operations.

In addition to these preventive efforts, development programs aim to increase the risks of engaging in criminal behavior by supporting justice systems. They strengthen laws on criminal activities and the capacity of police, prosecutors, and judges to enforce the law, drawing on such tools as surveillance, undercover police, informants, witness protection, and asset seizures to conduct investigations and prosecute crimes. Judicial strengthening efforts may also include support for community policing, crime observatories, and the oversight of justice systems.

In many cases, efforts to increase the risks of engaging in criminal behavior also need to address corruption. While weak justice institutions may reflect capacity deficits, they may also reflect complicit governments that deliberately starve offices of funds, interfere with meritocratic staffing, or limit the power of laws and prosecutorial tools. Addressing state complicity in organized crime requires efforts to strengthen accountability in government through enhanced anti-corruption laws, increased transparency, and strengthened checks and balances as well as social oversight, awareness raising, advocacy, investigative journalism, and other civil society initiatives.

Practitioners use these varied prevention and prosecution approaches across criminal markets. In general, a diverse array of prosecution approaches applies to all criminal markets, whereas specific prevention approaches apply to many but not all criminal markets (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Programming Approaches to Counter Organized Crime  
 ✓ indicates where programming could be applied.

	Wildlife Crime	Other Conservation Crimes	Trafficking in Persons	Counterfeit Pharmaceuticals	Drug Trafficking	Group-based Crime
<b>Prevention Approach to Reduce Incentives</b>						
Alternative Livelihoods: jobs, start-ups, agriculture	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Public Services: education, health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recreational Activities						✓
Psychosocial Support			✓			✓
Civil Rights Protection	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Social and Gender Norm Change	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Professionalism of Public Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Co-Management of Resources: permitting, monitoring	✓	✓				
Formalization of Rights	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Demand Reduction: laws, social and behavior change efforts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clean Supply Chains: laws, corporate policies, certification, customs	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>Prosecution Approach to Increase Risks</b>						
Laws on Criminal Activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Law Enforcement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Investigation and Prosecution	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Policing	✓		✓			✓
Crime Observatories	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transparency and Accountability in Government Institutions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Civil Society Oversight, Awareness Raising and Advocacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Investigative Journalism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

At times, USAID has combined prevention and prosecution approaches in the same project but most often, USAID has pursued them in separate projects. The advantage of combining them in one project is the coordination and information exchange across interventions that more readily happens. The advantage of separating them is the ease of identifying partners with the needed expertise in one area. In either case, activities should entail partnerships that engage various stakeholders with explicit coordination mechanisms to maximize results.

The balance between the two approaches diverges across the six core organized crime sectors. Projects targeting drug trafficking have supported prevention

alone and those targeting counterfeit pharmaceutical and illicit finance have supported prosecution alone. C-TIP projects have pursued both approaches but with a greater emphasis on prevention. Projects targeting wildlife crime, and to some extent other conservation crimes, have also pursued both approaches but placed more emphasis on prosecution. For example, the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) combines prevention and prosecution. On the prevention side, it has worked to counter wildlife and natural resource trafficking by supporting the governance of community forest concessions, alternative livelihoods, and public awareness raising on conservation. On the prosecution side, the program has trained,

equipped, and funded park rangers; hired legal experts to support the prosecution of poachers; and supported mobile courts.

As the case studies for this effort affirmed, interventions that prevent crime are a necessary complement to prosecution. An advisor in the Guatemala Mission noted, “In the case of extortion, we can arrest every gang member, but if youth aren’t given opportunities, new gang members will emerge.”<sup>18</sup> Similarly, an advisor in the DRC Mission observed, “People go the illegal route because there is no viable legal avenue.”<sup>19</sup> At the same time, prosecution is a necessary complement to preven-

tion. As one Chief of Party (COP) for a regional project in Asia noted, “There is only so much ‘carrot’ that can be put forward to counter trafficking in high-value wildlife products. Striking a strong balance with the ‘stick’ through partnerships with law enforcement agencies is also needed.”<sup>20</sup>

In high-crime contexts, prosecution is needed to disrupt criminal networks already in operation, but prevention is needed to reduce the ongoing supply of new members. As one interviewee suggested, prosecution is the “short game,” but prevention is the “long game.”<sup>21</sup>



### **Recommendation 3: Approach prevention and prosecution holistically.**

**Guiding questions:** *What is the constellation of incentives and risks for engaging in a specific criminal market? What incentives are particularly salient? What risks are relatively weak or nonexistent? How do incentives and risks differ among different individuals and groups? Are they different for women and girls than for men and boys? Do they differ depending on an individual’s position within the criminal network? Are there entry points for addressing these incentives and risks?*

### **Lesson 4: Social and behavior change efforts can help prevent and counter illicit activity.**

Social and behavior change efforts aim to change the behavior of a target group by changing individual attitudes and beliefs as well as social norms. Whereas awareness raising on laws and the impact of crime may change attitudes and beliefs, efforts to change social norms may need to focus on people’s beliefs about what others in their social group do, think, and expect of them and what is considered “normal.” Social norms can exert a powerful influence on behavior and act as a brake on interventions. For example, laws may ban the ivory trade, but social norms conferring status on ivory products or expecting customs agents to profit from

their position may sustain it. Similarly, gender norms that support inequitable access to rights and other protections can be more powerful than laws or policies, creating opportunities for exploitation, coercion, human trafficking, and other forms of violence.

Social and behavior change strategies may include any of the following approaches: facilitating group deliberation and reflection, publicizing trendsetters and “positive deviants,” creating a new reference group, encouraging public commitments or declarations, providing feedback on performance vis-à-vis the norm, supporting social norms marketing, disseminating messages through “organized diffusion,” supporting role models, and changing laws or regulations.<sup>22</sup> Social and behavior change efforts may target those directly engaged in illicit activities (e.g.,

18 USAID Guatemala Democracy and Governance Advisor, in discussion with the author, April 23, 2020.

19 AOR of the Virunga Electricity Distribution Grid, in discussion with the author, September 3, 2020.

20 COP of the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership, in discussion with the author, September 4, 2020.

21 Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) of the USAID Wildlife Asia program, in discussion with the author, October 6, 2020.

22 For more information on social and behavior change, see Diana Chigas and Phyllis Dininio, *Social Norms – White Paper 3* (Washington: USAID, Bureau for Africa, 2019), [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00TXDQ.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TXDQ.pdf).

decreasing government officials' acceptance of bribes or reducing violence perpetuated by criminal groups) or those who may be complicit, or they may address broader societal norms that create the environment conducive to the behavior.

Wildlife Asia has made social and behavior change a key element of its work. Responding to the political contexts and consumer dynamics in its focus countries, the project has developed different social norm marketing strategies to reduce the demand for wildlife. In Thailand, the effort has engaged fashion influencers on social me-

dia to broadcast the “beautiful without ivory” message to female consumers (Figure 9) and engaged religious and media influencers to broadcast messages challenging spiritual beliefs about ivory and tiger amulets in mass media. In China, the social and behavior change effort has used public service announcements, text message reminders, and videos on China’s top video website to promote general awareness of penalties for wildlife consumption under the 2017 Wildlife Protection Law since laws are an important determinant of behavior in the country.

Figure 9. Beautiful without Ivory Campaign Visuals



In DRC, the Tushinde Ujeuri project has facilitated group discussions and supported role models in their social and behavior change efforts. The project found that community discussion forums involving authorities were key to changing behavior related to TIP. Given the sensitive topic, the project used sketches to elicit reactions and discuss implications. Involving local authorities in these discussions encouraged them to take ownership of the issue. In this way, the project aimed to engage local authorities as role models and agents of change. As the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) noted, “When leaders change their behavior, it is easy for the community to change.”<sup>23</sup>

The Guatemala Biodiversity Project has supported a public declaration and role models in its social and behavior change efforts. Targeting complacency across the government, the project aimed to spur action to protect the environment. After the project arranged a two-day trip for the Attorney General to experience the beau-

ty and magnitude of the Maya Biosphere Reserve, she resolved to take action and in a social media announcement stated, “I call on every organization to help make this plan.” Eight months later, 23 government institutions signed the United for Environmental Justice Declaration to re-establish governance and control in protected areas.<sup>24</sup>

Recognizing that many factors may impede behavior change, projects often use social and behavior change efforts as a complement to other interventions. CARPE has raised public awareness to curb poaching through film screenings, posters, soccer tournaments, and informational stands, but also supported alternative livelihoods as some households poached wildlife to supplement their food resources. The Senior Technical Advisor for CARPE emphasized, “Awareness raising is a strategy that needs to support other benefits, not a strategy on its own.”<sup>25</sup>

23 AOR of the Tushinde project, in discussion with the author, June 11, 2020.

24 Advisors of the Guatemala Biodiversity Project, in discussion with the author, June 10, 2020.

25 Senior Technical Advisor for CARPE, in discussion with the author, May 27, 2020.

### Recommendation 4: Tailor social and behavior change efforts to target groups as a complement to other interventions.



**Guiding questions:** What behavior is the intervention trying to change? Who engages in that behavior and what motivates them to do so? What might incentivize behavior change? What messages may resonate with them? Are social or gender norms sustaining the behavior, and if so, how might the social and behavior change effort address them?

### Lesson 5: Interventions benefit from targeting.

Crime and violence prevention programs stress the importance of concentrating resources on the small clusters of people, places, and behaviors that are responsible for the majority of crimes and violence.<sup>26</sup> They recommend collecting and analyzing data to identify these clusters and then concentrating preventive services and law enforcement in those locales and sectors. In Guatemala, for example, USAID and the U.S. Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) have implemented a place-based strategy in Villa Nueva's Zone 12. The strategy includes community mobilization to prioritize needs; social services for at-risk youth; capacity building with the National Civilian Police; and an aggressive effort bringing together police, prosecutors, and judges assigned to the area to coordinate operations and ensure detainees are duly prosecuted and cases are adjudicated. This joint assistance contributed to a 35 percent reduction in homicides in the area from 2017 to 2019.<sup>27</sup>

The same logic applies to organized crime more broadly. To the extent possible, investigations of organized crime should look for networks of people, common routes and locales, and patterns of behavior rather than focusing on a specific person, place, and behavior associated with a specific case. The analysis should consider where, how, and with whom criminal activities tend to occur most often and help focus interventions on those clusters.

In some cases, clusters of illicit activity may arise when an organized crime group takes advantage of the same transportation routes and corrupt relationships along those routes to move multiple products in the same or different directions. In Mozambique, for example, crime groups have concealed rubies and ivory in containers of illicit timber.<sup>28</sup> In Mexico, cartels have used the same drivers and trucks to move drugs from Mexico into the United States and then arms into Mexico on the return trip.<sup>29</sup> Clusters may also arise in areas of contested sovereignty, such as the Republic of Moldova's Transnistria; in border areas, such as the Somali-Ethiopian-Kenyan border area or the Argentine-Brazilian-Paraguayan border area (Keefe 2013); or in alternatively governed areas, such as parts of the Sahel or eastern DRC.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Abt, "What Works in Reducing Community Violence: A Meta-Review and Field Study for the Northern Triangle," USAID, Washington, DC, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> COR of the Convivimos and Community Roots projects, email correspondence with the author, April 30, 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Simone Haysom, "Where Crime Compounds Conflict: Understanding Northern Mozambique's Vulnerabilities" (Geneva: GIATOC, 2018), 11, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TGIATOC-North-Mozambique-Report-WEB.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Firearms Trafficking: U.S. Efforts to Combat Firearms Trafficking to Mexico Have Improved, but Some Collaboration Challenges Remain" (Washington: Congressional Requestors, 2016), 3-4, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/680/674570.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> For more on criminal market convergence, see Phyllis Dininio, "Criminal Market Convergence – White Paper 4" (Washington: USAID, Bureau for Africa, 2020), [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00VVGXR.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00VVGXR.pdf).





**Recommendation 5: Use data to focus interventions on the people, places, and behaviors that are responsible for the majority of criminal activity.**

**Guiding questions: Who is part of the networks involved in the criminal activity? Along what routes or in what locales is crime concentrated? What kinds of violence, corruption, money laundering, or other behaviors accompany the criminal activity?**

### **Lesson 6: Specialized tools and knowledge in law enforcement, prosecutors' units, and courts strengthen the adjudication of organized crime.**

The prosecution of organized crime differs from that used for singular or limited criminal acts. Building a case against criminal networks and organizations requires a proactive investigation that collects information over time. This proactive approach may draw on informants, plea bargaining, undercover police, and surveillance tools as well as financial investigations and international cooperation. Reactive investigations, by contrast, commence after a crime is committed and rely on eyewitness testimony, defendants' confessions, and sometimes forensic evidence.

Within prosecutors' offices, context analysis units can help shift the focus from solving a specific case to identifying patterns in criminal incidents and discerning those people within the command structure of a crime group that are the most responsible for crimes, even if they did not carry them out. In Colombia, USAID supported a context analysis unit in the Attorney General's Office, which yielded good results. In one case, the prosecution led to prison sentences for 153 military officers, includ-

ing senior-level officers, for their involvement in extrajudicial executions. In Mexico, USAID has also supported context analysis units in several state-level prosecutors' offices, which has led to the dismantling of several lower-level organized criminal groups.<sup>31</sup>

Specific types of organized crime also require specialized techniques and knowledge. In Guatemala, USAID's Security and Justice Sector Reform Project helped the prosecutor's office design specific prosecution methodologies for specific crimes—such as corruption, extortion, homicide, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, customs fraud, and environmental crime. Whereas investigations against extortion may include analyzing bank accounts, phone records, and social media, investigations against wildlife trafficking include video cameras in preserves as well as remote and aerial monitoring, and investigations against migrant smuggling include interviewing victims, recovering evidence, and reviewing prosecutors' files from border zones (Figure 10). For each type of organized crime, investigators need to learn what type of information is useful, how to extract it, and how to present it. It is also important to understand how gender inequities may help instigate crimes or affect the victims' or witnesses' willingness to participate in investigations. These considerations are also essential for assuring that do no harm principles are followed and that vulnerable individuals are protected.

<sup>31</sup> Advisor, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Center, Bureau for Democracy, Development and Innovation, USAID email correspondence with the author, January 4, 2021.

Figure 10. Aerial monitoring showed there were 90 illegal landing strips in the Maya Biosphere Reserve in Guatemala



Specialized courts can also strengthen the adjudication of organized crime. In the Philippines, USAID has supported environmental courts to adjudicate environmental cases. Across 117 designated green courts, this “Green Bench” model has fostered a network of judges conversant in environmental crimes, laws, and procedures who receive environmental training in the Philippine Judicial Academy. Through the Wildlife Asia program, USAID is helping extend the model to Thailand.

In Guatemala, USAID has supported specialized training on environmental crime for park rangers, prosecutors, and judges, which is resulting in more cases being brought forward and increased sentencing. When the environmental prosecutor’s office and court were set up in Petén in 2015, there were only 19 convictions for environmental crimes, but one year later, that number increased to 55.

**Recommendation 6: Advance specialized tools and knowledge for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges.**



**Guiding questions:** For the primary organized crimes affecting a country, are there specialized law enforcement, prosecutors’ units, and courts? Is specialized training for specific crimes institutionalized or ad hoc? Do law enforcement and prosecutors have access to equipment, databases, and software for effective data gathering and analysis? Are there experts or consultants who can advise on gender dimensions, applicable forms of discrimination, and appropriate do no harm considerations?

**Lesson 7: Investigative work spurs law enforcement action and broader reform.**

Investigative work by journalists and civil society activists can lay the groundwork for law enforcement investigations. For evidence gathering, they are not bound by the same laws or legal jurisdictions as law enforcement. Most of their data are open source or purchased legally,

but some come through leaked sources, which law enforcement cannot use (such as the Panama Papers). In addition, investigative journalist networks enable research to cross borders. From different countries, journalists can share databases and undertake joint research. As a result, journalists have more latitude to conduct their research and can uncover wrongdoing that law enforcement often cannot. This sets up law enforcement to pursue these leads.



## Protective Measures

Efforts to counter organized crime can place individuals at risk. Assessing and mitigating risks is necessary in the design and implementation of programs to safeguard the well-being of staff, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. A range of protective measures can help mitigate risks:

- Security training can help individuals reduce their vulnerabilities and guide their responses to threats.
- Coalition building can link organizations in a broader movement to deter attacks and increase the support available to individuals.
- Securing support from local authorities can discourage attacks.
- Advocacy in partnership with a diverse set of stakeholders can help persuade governments to step up protections for activists.
- Resources, such as emergency response measures, legal support, psychosocial interventions, and personal support systems, can help activists face threats.

A range of protective measures can help mitigate specific risks that investigative journalists face:

- Training journalists to emphasize objectivity and neutrality in reporting and seeking information openly and through public channels rather than private or informal contacts.
- Providing anonymity by having the media organization provide the byline for investigative stories and not publishing the journalists' names.
- Dedicating emergency funds to assist journalists with the cost of legal proceedings or helping them go into hiding if they have received threats to their safety.
- Reducing geographic proximity between journalists and the criminal networks they are investigating, which may make retaliation against them more difficult.

The USAID-funded Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), a global network of investigative journalists, has tracked the impact of its investigations. Between 2011 and 2020, the project's investigations contributed to 317 official investigations and 510 arrests, indictments, and sentences.<sup>32</sup> As exposing organized crime and corruption is dangerous work, the network supports members' digital, legal, and physical security and provides some safety in numbers as it is harder to attack an entire network than individuals (see textbox).

Investigations can spur broader reforms. Revelations of government involvement in organized crime have unleashed protests and toppled leaders through resignations, no-confidence votes, impeachment, or removal from office in scores of countries. They have also led to the passage of new laws, such as unexplained wealth

orders, laws requiring transparency in political party financing, and ultimate beneficial owner laws requiring transparency in company ownership. Some investigative journalists partner with civil society to increase the impact of their work. For example, OCCRP is partnering with Transparency International to use evidence uncovered by its investigations to press for reforms to combat organized crime and corruption.

Other NGOs conduct the investigations themselves. In Colombia, the NGO PARES has analyzed links between political candidates and crime groups in congressional and presidential elections and issued reports identifying candidates with links to illegal structures. Their investigations have led to successful prosecutions against elected officials. Due to threats against their lives, the government provided security escorts and armored vehicles to the two chief investigators in this work.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> OCCRP, "Impact to Date," published March 31, 2020, <https://www.occrp.org/en/impact-to-date>.

<sup>33</sup> Advisor, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Center, Bureau for Democracy, Development and Innovation, USAID email correspondence with the author, January 11, 2021.

The EAGLE (Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement) Network combines investigations with activism and advocacy in one organization. Across nine countries in Africa, this network of small NGOs investigates wildlife crime, works with rangers and prosecu-

tors on cases, publicizes crimes and legal actions taken, and encourages governments to confront crime and corruption. It has shifted countries from zero wildlife prosecutions to a rate of one major trafficker arrested, prosecuted, and imprisoned per week.<sup>34</sup>



**Recommendation 7: Support investigative work by journalists and civil society as a complement to law enforcement and broader reform.**

**Guiding questions: To what extent do media include trained investigative journalists who are able to conduct investigations on organized crime and corruption? Are civil society organizations involved in investigations? Are investigative journalists, editors, media owners, and civil society activists subjected to threats or attacks or to defamation, sedition, or libel laws? Does law enforcement follow up on revelations? Do investigative reports spur broader reform?**

**Lesson 8: Programming needs to occur at multiple levels.**

Efforts to counter organized crime involve programming at multiple levels. They entail inclusively working with individuals, families, communities, and institutions at local, regional, and national levels to support prevention and prosecution. For example, the Convivimos project in Guatemala aimed to prevent violence in gang-affected areas through supporting the capacities of individuals, families, communities, schools, police, social services, mayors’ offices, and the central Ministry on Violent Prevention as well as strengthening the links between those levels through communication and interaction. This approach enabled the project to better understand vulnerable populations’ needs and activate the resources needed at different levels to address them.

Similarly, the Sustainable Mine Site Validation project in DRC works at multiple levels to counter trafficking in tin, tantalum, tungsten, and gold. The project supports multi-stakeholder committees to monitor mine sites and draft qualification and validation reports, which provincial monitoring committees then review. Commit-

tee members at both the mine site and provincial level include territorial administrators; state mining services; state security forces; traditional authorities; mining operators; civil society (including churches, women, and youth groups); and, where appropriate, traceability and due diligence system partners. If a qualification report identifies corruption or conflict, then committee members take mitigation measures at the appropriate level. If the illicit activity involves a high-grade officer with the army, for example, the army representative of the provincial committee may play a role in the mitigation effort. The project is also supporting a dialogue on funding qualification and validation missions, which bring together stakeholders from the local, provincial, and national levels.

Efforts focused on illicit trafficking should also consider the regional and international levels. As illicit trafficking transcends national borders, interventions may need to as well. Interventions may range from information sharing and coordination to more ambitious efforts aimed at the harmonization of laws, memoranda of understanding on policies, adoption of common traceability systems, and joint law enforcement training.

<sup>34</sup> Advisor, Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Center, Bureau for Democracy, Development and Innovation, USAID email correspondence with the author, January 11, 2021.

Where possible, USAID should seek to leverage regional and international initiatives and opportunities for collaboration. As a regional program, USAID's Wildlife Asia has demonstrated the efficacy of this approach. The program has capitalized on the Thai government's commitment to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for stronger laws and supported revisions to Thailand's Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act in 2019, making fines and jail time much more severe and enforcement more robust. The project has also leveraged peer pressure and the desire for harmonized treatment of crime by bringing officials from Thailand

and Laos together for wildlife enforcement training. Neither country desired Thailand's strong laws to push criminals into neighboring Laos.

Efforts to counter wildlife trafficking near the border of Guatemala and Belize have also required cross-border collaboration. While the two countries do not coordinate well together, given a dispute about the border, civil society organizations (supported by USAID and other donors through the Mesa Técnica partnership) in each country have come together and worked with their respective governments, which has enabled the two countries to collaborate ex-officially to counter the trafficking of macaws and parrots.

**Recommendation 8: Link programming at different levels and explore options for engagement with neighboring countries or international initiatives.**



**Guiding questions:** *Recognizing that programming will likely occur at multiple levels, are there mechanisms that can facilitate collaboration? Are there civil society partners, including women, youth, or other groups, who could contribute to the success of programming efforts at the local level? Given the transnational dimension of many organized crimes, are there regional or international commitments that the country has made? Are there common objectives that neighboring countries can work on together?*

**Lesson 9: In some contexts, interventions may call for a sequenced approach.**

Efforts to counter organized crime may clash with sensitive issues. Working to establish good will, trust, and relationships may need to precede programming in sensitive areas. For example, crime and violence prevention programs may need to gain entrée with high-crime communities by providing desired services, such as education and health care and/or income-generating or enrichment opportunities. Two crime and violence prevention projects in Guatemala addressed this challenge by offering cultural, artistic, and sports events to all members of a community, which opened doors and built relationships that generated referrals to more

targeted services for at-risk youth. Similarly, the projects supported expanded education programs, with a big impact on children and their families, which led teachers and principals to identify youth for targeted interventions. While referrals can sometimes over-ascribe risks to minority populations and under-ascribe risks to girls, the relationship building can help project staff understand community dynamics and adjust for these biases. The USAID manager of both projects commented, "Combining primary and secondary prevention<sup>35</sup> in a layered way is a key lesson learned."<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, C-TIP programs may require a sequenced approach. In some contexts, victims do not come forward to file complaints. They may feel at fault, vulnerable to stigma or reprisals, or as if their experiences do not

<sup>35</sup> Primary prevention targets the entire population and seeks to prevent violence before it occurs, whereas secondary prevention focuses on individuals or groups with several risk factors for crime and violence.

<sup>36</sup> COR of the Convivimos and Community Roots projects, in discussion with the author, May 4, 2020.

reflect gendered or other assumptions about trafficked individuals. By providing gender-sensitive victim services, C-TIP programs may generate trust and personal relationships with victims that open the door to work on prosecutions. C-TIP programs may also need to provide first-line detectors of TIP with information on how to recognize different signs of trafficking for women and girls, men and boys, LGBTI persons, and other vulnerable groups since awareness of TIP as a crime remains a challenge. First-line detectors could be teachers, health workers, police, or labor inspectors.

Other programming to counter organized crime may also benefit from this sequenced approach. One implementing partner in DRC noted, “We can’t do any work to prevent wildlife trafficking without having the communities on our side.”<sup>37</sup> In the case of the Community Resilience in Central Africa Activity, livelihood efforts near protected areas have generated goodwill with communities, which has led to increased reporting on wildlife exploitation and poaching.

### **Recommendation 9: Consider the need for sequencing.**



**Guiding questions: Are there sensitivities connected to the criminal activity that are likely to pose an impediment to programming? Are there interventions that can build trust, relationships, and good will that may enable other efforts to move forward?**

### **Lesson 10: Less sensitive programming areas may create entry points for addressing organized crime.**

Where there is significant government complicity or other sensitivities that caution against direct interventions to counter organized crime, broader reforms may make sense. Depending on the context, governance reforms, such as reducing money in elections, increasing transparency in government, streamlining government processes, or improving public financial management, may create entry points for addressing organized crime. For example, the Guatemala Mission did not devise a counternarcotics program per se, but the Electoral Governance and Reforms Project supported new campaign finance regulations, which helped reduce the influence of drug money in elections and deterred narco-traffickers from running for office.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, economic

reforms, such as tighter banking oversight, might be worthwhile investments that fall beneath the radar of those involved in organized crime and also benefit from the business community’s support. USAID is well positioned to address organized crime from these various entry points given the extent of development programming conducted across sectors.

Aligning with international initiatives may also provide less sensitive entry points for addressing organized crime.<sup>39</sup> International initiatives, such as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, or ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (ACDS), can provide powerful levers for addressing organized crime. These initiatives offer economic incentives for compliance through improved access to or terms in international markets and enable reformers to advance the business case for reducing crime while downplaying the more sensitive, punitive approach to reducing crime.

<sup>37</sup> COP of the Community Resilience in Central Africa Activity, in discussion with the author, July 9, 2020.

<sup>38</sup> AOR of the Electoral Governance and Reforms project, in discussion with the author, April 27, 2020.

<sup>39</sup> This finding also emerged in a study of USAID anti-corruption programming. See Phyllis Dininio and Brian Calhoun. USAID Anti-Corruption Program Efficacy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington, DC: USAID, 2018, [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00TCW8.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TCW8.pdf).

Compliance with U.S. or other foreign legislation may similarly leverage economic incentives to combat organized crime. For example, the U.S. Dodd-Frank Act created a demand for certified conflict-free minerals and provided a powerful incentive for the DRC govern-

ment to enact reforms, which USAID has supported. This has led to a drastic reduction in the control of tin, tantalum, and tungsten mines—known as the 3Ts—by armed groups in eastern DRC.

### **Recommendation 10: Review the potential for broader governance and economic reforms and international initiatives to address organized crime.**



**Guiding questions: Are there reasons to avoid direct interventions to counter organized crime? Are there broader reforms that may diminish crime groups' latitude of action? Are there international Initiatives that can provide entry points for addressing organized crime?**

### **Lesson 11: Embedding advisors in organizations can build capacity and foster relationships.**

Embedding technical advisors in organizations on a long-term basis is an effective way to build capacity. Advisors can serve as mentors and support on-the-job training. Instead of short courses or workshops, advisors enable continuous training, which promotes the uptake of information. In the Philippines, for example, USAID supported the International Justice Mission (IJM), which embedded U.S. investigators and police in the police unit responsible for TIP for one to three years. The advisors supported the unit through the entire process of reporting and investigations through prosecutions. This approach required a financial commitment, but it yielded good results. The number of minors available for purchase on streets and in bars that were hotspots for sex trafficking has plummeted between 75 and 86 percent in cities where IJM has worked.<sup>40</sup>

Embedded advisors can also foster personal relationships that help advance project objectives. In Guatemala, the Participación Cívica project embedded the Transparency and Accountability Senior Specialist one day per week for a year in the Commission for Open Public Management and Transparency. Because of the specialist's expertise, he was able to provide technical support on an ad hoc basis and participated in the commission's technical meetings. This allowed the project to gain key officials' trust and make progress on many of the government's transparency commitments.

However, donors need to exercise care when embedding advisors in local organizations. Managers need to support advisors' work by placing them alongside staff in a way that allows for an effective transfer of skills and knowledge. Moreover, salary differences can cause problems unless staff understand why an advisor is paid more, such as for having a specific expertise.

<sup>40</sup> Philippines: Fighting Cybersex Trafficking," IJM, accessed December 17, 2020, <https://www.ijm.org/philippines>.

### **Recommendation 11: Consider embedding advisors in organizations on a long-term basis.**



**Guiding questions: Is there a partner organization that is critical to the project's objectives? Is the organization in need of capacity building or technical support? Is management in the organization supportive of an embedded advisor? Would an embedded advisor be able to foster sustainable institutional change?**

### **Lesson 12: Technology can support counter-crime efforts in novel ways.**

Technology offers many tools for countering crime. For example, monitoring and reporting tools, sensing and remote sensing technologies, and DNA and database analysis can help detect criminal activities and strengthen forensic evidence. They can improve law enforcement and the prosecution of crime as well as support certification and traceability systems for clean supply chains.

The key to the uptake and effectiveness of these technologies is adapting them to local users and contexts. Working collaboratively with stakeholders to adapt technological tools to their needs emerges as a best practice across crime sectors. Adaptation may reflect differences in users' technological expertise, hardware, system capacity, Internet connection, financial resources, data requirements, and broader context, including addressing social biases and gender norms that may influence access to and the use of technology by different local users.

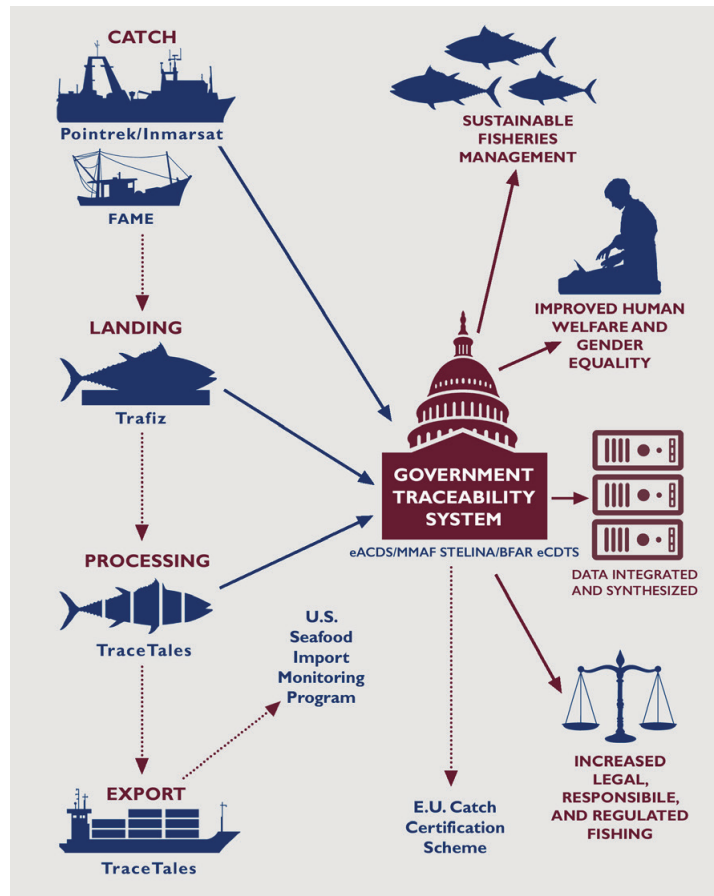
For example, the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership supported both the regional electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS) and national electronic Catch Documentation and Traceability (eCDT) initiatives launched by the governments of Indonesia and the Philippines. While the regional system offered a foundational structure for tracking seafood in the supply chain, the national systems responded to the legal and political structures and the particularities of the seafood industry in those countries (Figure 11). Through "trackathons" that involved technology entrepreneurs in the software challenge, the project also adapted the eCDT systems—originally designed for fishing fleets—for use by small-scale fishers, who have limited access to smartphones and tablets and low technological literacy.

Similarly, projects have customized monitoring and reporting tools to fit users' needs. The Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust in Kenya introduced the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) in a community conservancy where rangers were semi-illiterate. To address illiteracy, the Zoological Society of London Let's Work for Wildlife customized the data model with icons to represent animals and threats, rather than text. As a result, rangers who had finished primary school were able to successfully collect patrol data.<sup>41</sup>

41 SMART, Successfully and Sustainably Implementing SMART in a Community Conservancy where Rangers are semi-illiterate (SMART), I-2, <https://smartconservationtools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/SMART-case-study-MWCT-Short.pdf>.



Figure 11. USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership-supported Technology for Seafood Tracking



**Recommendation 12: Work collaboratively with stakeholders to design technological tools that fit their needs.**



*Guiding questions: Does the technology respond to local needs? Are there any barriers to its use and how are these barriers different among potential users? How can the technology be better tailored to maximize its usefulness?*

**Lesson 13: Alternative livelihoods need to be tailored to local preferences and contexts.**

Helping people shift to alternative livelihoods requires a nuanced understanding of local preferences and contexts. Such an understanding can influence the type of livelihoods supported and the kind of assistance provided for specific livelihoods, ranging from training and sup-

plies to credit, access to markets, and permits. Dialogue, interviews, surveys, and other kinds of research can help maximize community input and promote local buy-in. For example, CARPE interviewed illegal miners in Kahuzi Biéga National Park, DRC and learned that roughly half of the miners were not willing to leave the mining sector and those that were willing to consider alternatives would require a livelihood in the private sector and not farming. This information prompted the project

to support responsible mining opportunities outside the park in combination with business opportunities for illegal miners. By contrast, the project addressed illegal harvesting of timber in the Ituri-Epulu-Aru Landscape through support for shade cocoa cultivation, which the project learned was an acceptable livelihood for illegal loggers and provided an incentive to preserve the trees.<sup>42</sup>

Interventions also need to consider the business model for alternative livelihoods encompassing production and sales as well as the varying types of support different target populations may require. This may involve a wide range of activities, including the following: increasing access to capital; providing entrepreneurship and/or vocational training; supplying equipment; increasing market information; supporting producer associations to develop economies of scale; improving infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, and marketing centers; and reducing red tape and corruption around permits, titles, and regulations. Interventions often need sustained support. For example, those supporting high-value alternatives to illegal crop cultivation may need support for at least five years as perennial crops (e.g., vineyards and orchards) take four to five years to reach their full

production potential. Women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and other marginalized groups may need additional tailored interventions to address barriers to their participation, including gender norms, age hierarchies, or discrimination, or to align alternative livelihoods with their community practices and values.

To achieve adequate scale, interventions should also assess the likely number of jobs that available resources will create. Some sectors are more labor intensive than others and generate more jobs. For example, wheat cultivation is not as labor intensive as poppy cultivation, and support for wheat through some alternative development programs in Afghanistan left more laborers without work than before.<sup>43</sup> The Virunga Electricity Distribution Grid Project in eastern DRC has estimated the number of jobs created for each kilowatt hour (kWh) of energy generated in its electricity grid. The project promotes small and medium enterprises through access to electricity, loans, and business support. It calculates that each 100 kWh used each month supports 1.4 jobs, which offer an alternative to armed groups and associated criminality. Exceeding project goals, former armed group members constitute 10 to 12 percent of employees in supported enterprises.<sup>44</sup>

**Recommendation 13: Understand community preferences and analyze the business model for alternative livelihoods.**



**Guiding questions: What alternative livelihoods do target beneficiaries prefer? What are the constraints for making the preferred livelihoods viable? Can the project support alternative livelihoods at sufficient scale?**

**Lesson 14: Coordinating counter-crime efforts across a Mission’s portfolio may improve results.**

USAID programming to counter organized crime usually involves specialists working in different sectors. Coordination across sectors may improve both project design and implementation. Coordination may improve

42 Wildlife Conservation Society, Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation (CAFEC): Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega (MTKB) Landscape - Final Report (Washington: USAID, 2019), 71.  
 43 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), Counternarcotics: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan (Arlington: SIGAR, 2018), 121, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-18-52-LL.pdf>.  
 44 Virunga Fondation, PERSPECTIVE : 100,000 emplois pour le Nord-Kivu : Support aux Entrepreneurs par un accès à une énergie fiable et à des microfinancements (London: Virunga Fondation, 2020), 3-4.



information on criminal networks and markets, leverage relationships and interventions from one project to others, and direct efforts to key drivers of criminality.

For example, the DRC Mission is addressing illegal gold mining through several programs. As an implementing partner of CARPE noted, “Illegal gold mining is the single biggest disaster. It drives other issues, such as illegal logging, wildlife crime, and insecurity.”<sup>45</sup> To tackle the issue holistically, programs across several sectors address illegal gold mining from different angles. CARPE supports alternative livelihoods for illegal miners; the Integrated Governance Activity supports local governments’ management of mining royalties; Solutions for Peace and Recovery supports conflict analysis and advocacy that address illicit mining; and Tushinde supports awareness raising around child labor, forced labor, and sexual exploitation in mines as human rights violations.

The Guatemala Mission provides another example of strong coordination across sectors. Initially, the Environment Office added biodiversity funds to the Security and Justice Sector Reform Project and created an environment justice component. The project helped establish the country’s first Environmental Court and Environmental Prosecutor’s Office; raised awareness of laws and penalties associated with environmental crimes; and trained park guards and justice sector personnel in how to recognize, respond to, and prosecute environmental crimes. The Democracy and Governance Office subsequently provided input into the design of a biodiversity project, which continued the environmental justice work. In the view of the Rule of Law Advisor, “Inter-office coordination has been extremely successful.”<sup>46</sup>



**Recommendation 14: Capitalize on programming synergies across sectors.**

**Guiding questions: Does the mission have organized crime programming in more than one sector? If so, are the projects gathering information or building relationships that are relevant for other sectors? Is the mission able to effectively utilize the information or relationships?**

## EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The research identified three lessons on the importance of partnerships.

**Lesson 15: Collaboration improves program effectiveness.**

Efforts to counter organized crime often involve a large number of stakeholders, but a lack of understanding, information sharing, and coordination hinder collaboration. Regular exchanges and joint trainings can promote

cooperation across stakeholders. USAID can play a key role as a convener or support the establishment of enduring collaboration structures. Its role as a convener can be especially meaningful to help overcome feelings of distrust or hostility among stakeholders. In DRC, the Integrated Governance Activity played an important role as a convener given a legacy of hostility between local government and civil society.<sup>47</sup>

45 Advisor of CARPE, in discussion with the author, June 17, 2020.

46 USAID Guatemala Democracy and Governance Advisor, in discussion with the author, April 23, 2020.

47 COP of the Integrated Governance Activity, in discussion with the author, June 19, 2020.

USAID has also fostered inter-institutional collaboration. In Guatemala, the Security and Justice Sector Reform Project supported a coordination unit that brought together judges, prosecutors, public defenders, and police in each region to discuss case management processes as well as specific themes, such as collaborating witnesses and telephone recordings. The monthly exchanges allowed for issues to be discussed and relationships to develop. In one case, police complained they were arresting gang members for extortion, but the judges were dismissing the cases. The prosecutors and judges clarified the information they needed in the police reports and the procedures that needed to be followed.

A related project has taken inter-institutional collaboration one step further. Guatemala's Youth and Gender Justice Project launched the Integral Attention Model for Childhood and Adolescence, a one-stop shop for justice and social welfare services from 11 different entities that streamlines and coordinates institutional responses to the needs of children and adolescent victims of crime, including TIP. Considered one of the project's signature accomplishments, the model has improved the speed and quality of the criminal investigation process and substantially reduced secondary victimization. A lesson learned more broadly across C-TIP programs is the need to support holistic case management that

links justice services (e.g., victim protection, due process, prosecution, legal defense, and rehabilitation) with social service provision (e.g., health, education, violence prevention, municipal services, treatment, and social protection).

In addition to fostering collaboration among local institutions, USAID should also work closely with its inter-agency and international counterparts as coordinated efforts are more likely to result in system-wide reform than those undertaken by any single entity. The relevant counterparts will depend on the organized crime activity and current priorities and initiatives of those counterparts. Within the U.S. Government, the U.S. Department of State (notably INL), the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Department of Defense more commonly support counter-crime initiatives in other countries. Among international organizations and foreign governments, the main sources of counter-crime assistance include the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Development Programme, European Commission, International Criminal Police Organization, and individual European governments. Across the international assistance portfolio, the Mission should consider points of overlap, gaps in assistance, and USAID's comparative strengths and weaknesses.

### ***Recommendation 15: Promote collaboration through meetings, joint trainings, or coordinating bodies.***



***Guiding questions: Who are the primary stakeholders involved in a particular line of effort? How well do they work together? Do they have any aligned interests? Are there mechanisms in place to foster collaboration? What are the barriers to collaboration?***

## Programming in Partnership with Marginalized Communities

Communities are invaluable partners for fighting organized crime. Yet marginalized communities, which may include Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTI persons, and ethnic and religious minorities, are frequently more vulnerable to organized crime. They may live in less secure areas; have less access to political, economic, and social resources; and suffer from the negative repercussions of stigma and discrimination.

For example, Indigenous Peoples tend to have a greater communal reliance on natural resources and advocate for environmental preservation. This heightens Indigenous communities' vulnerability to natural resource crime and can lead to violence or threats targeting vocal advocates from Indigenous communities. Due to historical discrimination and marginalization, Indigenous Peoples generally do not have the platform or resources to engage with governments, donors, or other actors who work to combat and resist organized crime. In addition to the vulnerability of

marginalized groups themselves, within marginalized groups, some individuals will experience greater vulnerability to criminal activities due to social inequalities, such as unequal gender norms or unprotected civil rights.

To ensure that marginalized communities are fully included in fighting organized crime and improving their protection from criminal activities, program design and implementation should intentionally identify and integrate marginalized groups. This involves meaningful consultation with marginalized groups throughout activity design and implementation to fully incorporate their perspectives and concerns and support their participation. These consultations should follow do no harm protocols; ensure free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC); and consider the contextual factors that shape how marginalized groups are impacted by criminal activities. Additionally, mitigation and rapid response measures should be collaboratively planned with marginalized groups to protect against backlash or other negative responses.

### Do No Harm

Do no harm approaches will differ based on context and the specific needs of the affected marginalized groups, including recognizing the compounding vulnerabilities for some group members. However, all do no harm approaches should include engaging a representative sample of the community to understand the risks, concerns, opportunities,

and preferences related to programming to fight organized crime; prioritizing the safety and well-being of community members in designing and implementing program activities; and developing planned outcomes and learning approaches that also meet the development needs and goals of marginalized groups.

### Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

FPIC is an essential element of all programming, but specifically when working with marginalized communities. Marginalized groups should have the opportunity to give or decline consent in an inclusive process that includes women, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTI persons, and others who may have fewer opportunities to participate

in community decision-making but have specific concerns about giving consent. Consultation to obtain consent should also consider how marginalized groups wish to participate in programming and how their participation aligns with their own needs and community development goals.

**Lesson 16: Communities are a key partner in the fight against organized crime.**

Local initiatives and commitment are key to deterring organized crime. Interventions can strengthen community capacity and ownership in a variety of ways. To reduce gang activity, the Convivimos and Community Roots projects in Guatemala have helped establish community violence prevention commissions to develop violence prevention plans. The plans may entail vocational training, programs for free time, psychological services, activities with police, or flexible education. The commissions tap into municipal resources across offices to sustain interventions, such as resources for the construction of parks or lighting or more police in an area. As a result of this process, the communities are more empowered to work for solutions and engage with police as partners.

Granting resource rights to communities can serve as another way to deter organized crime. Resource rights give communities the incentives and means to manage resources sustainably and deter their exploitation. In DRC, USAID's CARPE is supporting community forest concessions, which the Community Forest Decree authorized in 2016. The government has granted more than 80 community forest concessions since then. The project is supporting local development committees to develop sustainable forest management plans to reduce

deforestation, support diversified livelihoods, and produce equitable benefits. However, there are two risks: One is that the concessions are not financially viable, and the second is that the structure is captured by local elites who use it to benefit their own businesses. Accordingly, CARPE is focusing on the business model and internal governance structure of community forest concessions.<sup>48</sup>

Engaging communities in monitoring can also deter organized crime. Many programs have established community patrols that work in conjunction with local law enforcement to patrol and report on illegal activities. In Indonesia, for example, Fauna & Flora International has established Tiger Protection and Conservation Units, which place three community rangers in a patrol team with a park ranger. The park rangers provide arresting authority and connection with the law enforcement community, while community rangers provide access to local information networks. The six units have been invaluable in deterring poaching threats, including the removal of thousands of snares.<sup>49</sup> Working with communities, particularly with vulnerable or marginalized groups within communities, should be based on a clear understanding of local dynamics to avoid aggravating existing tensions, such as disputes over rights to Indigenous Peoples' land, and to follow do no harm principles. Protection measures should be considered for civil society activists (see textbox).

**Recommendation 16: Empower communities to deter organized crime while mitigating risks.**



**Guiding questions: Are communities cohesive and able to develop shared plans? Are communities empowered to take advantage of licit activities that provide an alternative to organized crime? Are community resources captured by elites or managed more equitably? Are community initiatives vulnerable to attack by crime groups? What measures can mitigate these risks?**

<sup>48</sup> Senior Technical Advisor for CARPE, in discussion with the author, May 27, 2020.

<sup>49</sup> Elizabeth Lauck, Combating Wildlife Trafficking Case Study Compilation: Capacity Building for Enforcement and Prosecution (Washington: USAID, 2018), 16-17, [https://issuu.com/rosehessmiller/docs/compiled\\_-\\_cwt\\_synthesis\\_and\\_cases](https://issuu.com/rosehessmiller/docs/compiled_-_cwt_synthesis_and_cases).

### **Lesson 17: The private sector is a key development partner.<sup>50</sup>**

In many contexts, the private sector has relationships, resources, and knowledge that can support development efforts to counter organized crime.<sup>51</sup> Identifying how these efforts can address companies' concerns and interests is key to private-sector engagement. Clarifying the business case is more likely than appealing to philanthropic motivations to generate high-impact and sustained engagement. Individual champions can pilot an approach and demonstrate the benefits for profits, operational or security risks, customer relations and reputational considerations, preferred supplies, or employees, which can incentivize other companies to replicate the approach.

The engagement of individual companies in development efforts can have a particularly powerful impact where they exert a large influence on their communities. In DRC, USAID is prioritizing work with "anchor institutions" in its country development cooperation strategy. The Mission is focusing on large-scale industrial mines and privately managed national parks in eastern DRC as potential anchor institutions that can support a range of development efforts, including responsible minerals trade and the stewardship of wildlife and forests. This strategy recognizes that anchor institutions have made long-term commitments to a geographic area, have well-established networks with law enforcement bodies, and are providing revenues to local governments.

At the same time, broadening commitments from individual companies to industries as a whole can support the reach, effectiveness, and sustainability of such initiatives. Associations can communicate messages to all members, represent groups' broad needs and interests, support research and analysis, convene members when key decisions need to be made, and identify individual companies for pilot initiatives. In Thailand, for example, fishing associations played a vital role in the government private-sector partnership supported by the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership. The fishing associations facilitated coordination with the government to design and test eCDT systems, including clarifying roles and responsibilities and resolving data confidentiality and access issues.

Involving the private sector in multi-stakeholder partnerships with government and non-governmental stakeholders helps build trust and integrate diverse interests into common goals. Multi-stakeholder partnerships also benefit from the resources, expertise, connections, and social capital of different groups. In El Salvador, for example, the USAID-funded Bridges to Employment project has worked with a range of partners to help at-risk youth find new or better employment so they will be less vulnerable to gang recruitment. Partners have included the National Youth Institute, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education, National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprise, National Institute for Professional Training, technical and professional training institutions, Salvadoran Industry Association, Salvadoran Chamber of Information and Communication Technologies, and individual companies.

### **Recommendation 17: Support business champions and broader multi-stakeholder industry partnerships.**



**Guiding questions: How is the private sector affected by organized crime and what role could it play in countering it? Are there laws, voluntary standards, or other initiatives to promote crime-free supply chains or crime-sensitive business practices? Are there initiatives to support alternative livelihoods in crime-affected areas? Are there individual champions who can serve as examples for others or business associations that are interested in advancing efforts to counter organized crime?**

<sup>50</sup> For more information on private-sector engagement, see Phyllis Dininio and Lisa Poggiali, *Private Sector Engagement in Countering Organized Crime – White Paper 5* (Washington: USAID, Bureau for Africa, 2020), [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00VWNT4.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00VWNT4.pdf).

<sup>51</sup> See USAID Private-Sector Engagement Policy for more information: [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid\\_psepolicy\\_final.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid_psepolicy_final.pdf)

# 4 CONCLUSION



Organized crime thrives where the rule of law is weak, so responses often aim to strengthen justice and security institutions. This work is important, but where governments are complicit and crime is extensive, capacity building for law enforcement and prosecution is not enough. Research for this technical guidance suggests that efforts to counter organized crime need to assess and navigate political dynamics; approach prevention and prosecution holistically; support focused and specialized law enforcement; explore links to other crime sectors, development reforms, and international initiatives; and support partnerships across institutions and with communities and the private sector. In summary, the research suggests the following recommendations:

## ANALYSIS

1. Use a PEA lens to think and work politically and help guide counter-crime interventions.
2. In high-crime contexts, recognize that government complicity is likely and assess scenarios for reform.

## STRATEGIC APPROACHES

3. Approach prevention and prosecution holistically.
4. Tailor social and behavior change efforts to target groups as a complement to other interventions.
5. Use data to focus interventions on the people, places, and behaviors that are responsible for the majority of criminal activity.
6. Advance specialized tools and knowledge for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges.
7. Support investigative work by journalists and civil society as a complement to law enforcement and broader reform.
8. Link programming at different levels and explore options for engagement with neighboring countries or international initiatives.

9. Consider the need for sequencing.
10. Review the potential for broader governance and economic reforms and international initiatives to address organized crime.
11. Consider embedding advisors in organizations on a long-term basis.
12. Work collaboratively with stakeholders to design technological tools that fit their needs.
13. Understand community preferences and analyze the business model for alternative livelihoods.
14. Capitalize on programming synergies across sectors.

## EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

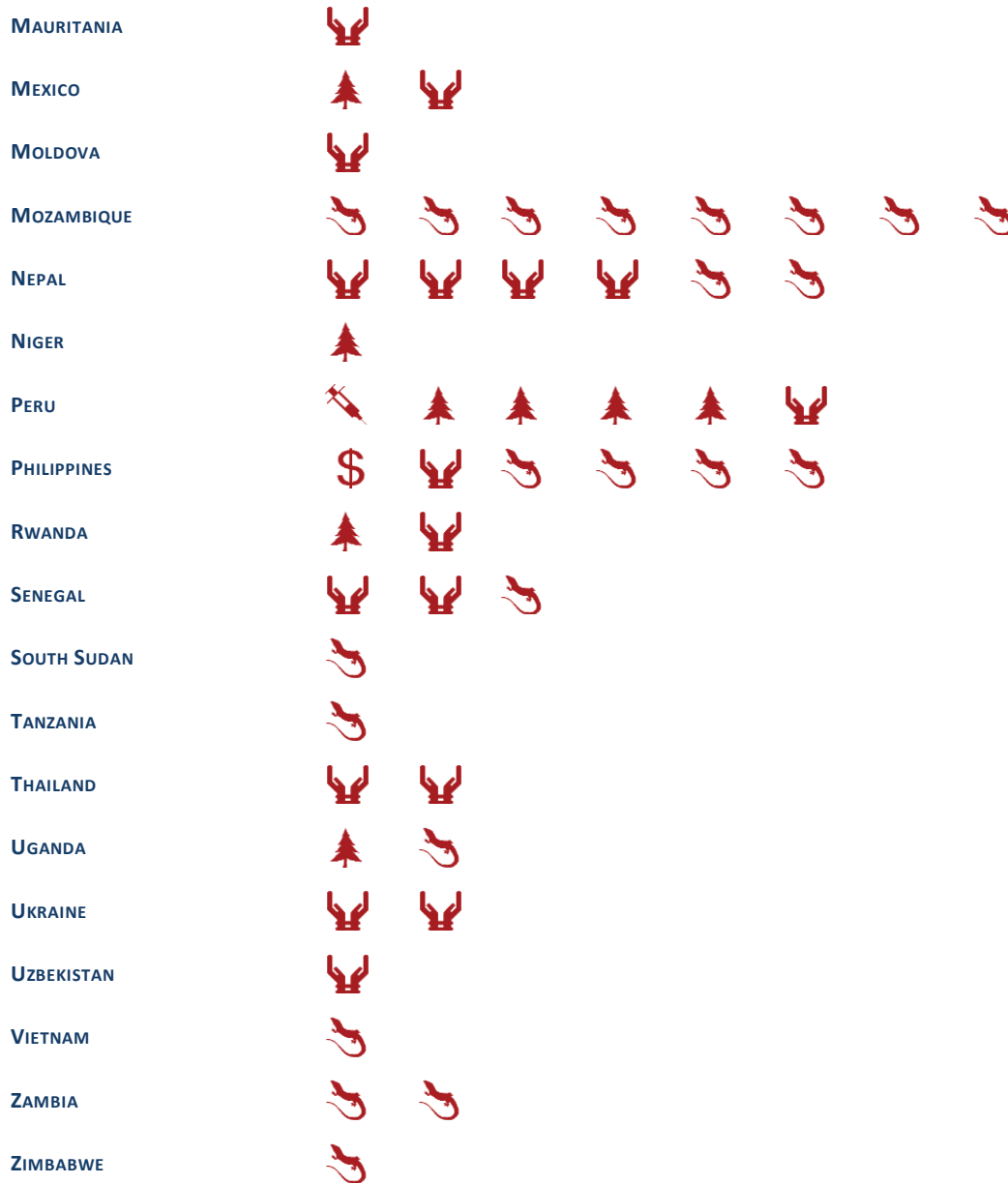
15. Promote collaboration through meetings, joint trainings, or coordinating bodies.
16. Empower communities to deter organized crime while mitigating risks.
17. Support business champions and broader multi-stakeholder industry partnerships.

The lessons and recommendations identified in this technical guidance provide considerations to help shape these efforts.

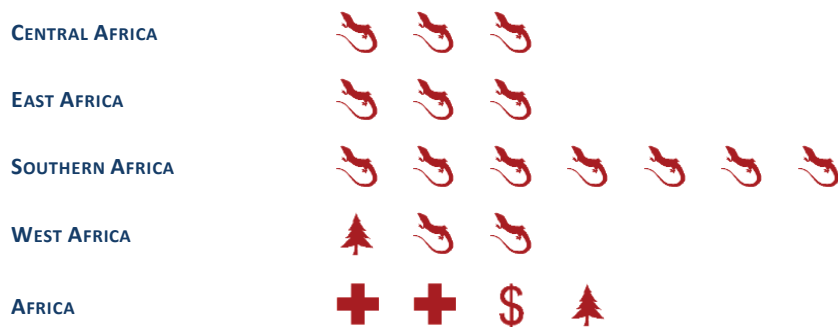
# ANNEX I: TYPES AND NUMBER OF CORE PROJECTS

Types and Number of Core Projects by Country Operating Unit

Country Operating Unit	Project Type 1 (Syringe)	Project Type 2 (Syringe)	Project Type 3 (Syringe)	Project Type 4 (Hands)	Project Type 5 (Hands)	Project Type 6 (Tree)	Project Type 7 (Snake)
AFGHANISTAN	1	1	1	2	2	0	0
AZERBAIJAN	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
BANGLADESH	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
BURMA	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
BURUNDI	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
CAMBODIA	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
COLOMBIA	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
EGYPT	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
GHANA	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
GUATEMALA	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
INDIA	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
INDONESIA	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
KENYA	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
LAOS	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
MACEDONIA	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
MADAGASCAR	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
MALAWI	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
MALI	0	0	0	1	0	0	0



**Types and Number of Core Projects by Regional Operating Unit**





ASIA



EUROPE & EURASIA



LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN



GLOBAL



# ANNEX II: CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

This research included case studies with three USAID Missions (DRC, Guatemala, and the Regional Development Mission in Asia) selected for their concentration of programming to counter organized crime across a range of sectors and their geographic diversity. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, field-based research was replaced with an extensive document review as well as virtual meetings with implementing partner COPs, technical staff, and USAID AOR/CORs and advisors.

The following projects were included in the case studies:

## ASIA

- Asia C-TIP Program
- USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership
- Wildlife Asia Program

## DRC

- Artisanal Mining and Property Rights
- Commercially Viable, Conflict-Free Gold Project
- Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
- Community Resilience in Central Africa Activity
- Integrated Governance Activity
- Solutions for Peace and Recovery
- Sustainable Mine Site Validation Project
- Tushinde
- Virunga Electricity Distribution Grid

## GUATEMALA

- Community Roots
- Convivimos
- Electoral Governance and Reforms Project
- Guatemala Biodiversity Project
- Mesa Técnica
- Participación Cívica
- Security and Justice Sector Reform Project
- Protecting Victims, Providing Services, And Preventing Human Trafficking in Guatemala
- Urban Municipal Governance
- Youth and Gender Justice Project

# ANNEX III: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## ORGANIZED CRIME WHITE PAPERS

1. Dininio, Phyllis. *Capacity Issues, Consequences and Complicity – White Paper 1*. Washington: USAID, Bureau for Africa, 2019. [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00TNJP.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TNJP.pdf)
2. Dininio, Phyllis. *Government Complicity in Organized Crime – White Paper 2*. Washington: USAID, Bureau for Africa, 2019. [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00TSH2.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TSH2.pdf)
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