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# A CAPACITY BUILDING APPROACH TO FIELD TEST AND VALIDATE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOLS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

## LITERATURE REVIEW

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## ACRONYMS

AG – Advisory Group  
CANS – Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths  
CBT – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy  
CCARM – Community Collaborative Action Research Model  
CFYR – Caribbean, Family, and Youth Resilience  
CJP – Crime and Justice Policy Lab  
C-YSET – Caribbean Youth Services and Eligibility Tool  
ESC – Eastern and Southern Caribbean  
FFT – Functional Family Therapy  
GREF – Gang Risk of Entry Factors  
GRYD – Gang Reduction and Youth Development  
IMC – Behavior Measurement Instrument (Instrumento de Medición de Compartimientos)  
JIFF – Juvenile Inventory for Functioning  
LAC – Latin America and the Caribbean  
LACLEARN – Latin America and Caribbean Learning and Rapid Response Task Order  
MAYSI – Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument  
PREVI-A – Risk Prediction and Intervention Assessment (Predicción y Valoración de la Intervención-ARRMI)  
RNA – Risk Needs Assessment  
RNR – Risk Need Responsivity  
SAF – Suitability, Acceptability, Feasibility framework  
SAVRY – Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth  
SAPROV- YV – Structured Assessment of Protective Factors for Violence- Youth Version  
SCL-90-R – Symptom Checklist-90-Revised  
TDF – Theoretical Domains Framework  
USAID – United States Agency for International Development  
VIP-RA - Violence-Involved Persons Risk Assessment  
YASI - Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument  
YLS/CMI – Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory  
YRAT – Youth Resilience Assessment Tool  
YRIE – Youth Resilience Inclusion Empowerment  
YSET – Youth Services and Eligibility Tool  
YSL – Youth Service Level  
YTT – Youth Targeting Tool (Herramienta de Focalización de Jóvenes en Riesgo)

# INTRODUCTION

Risk Needs Assessments (RNAs) are standardized processes through which trained professionals categorize an individual's risk of reoffending and determine what drives that individual's risk in order to identify the best intervention options. RNAs are helpful for tertiary-involved youth because they 1) offer a research-based approach into which youth are at highest risk for reoffending; 2) help justice system stakeholders reduce the risk of the youth they serve, improving outcomes for both the youth as well as the wider community; and 3) provide a standardized method of collecting data. As part of the USAID project "Community Collaborative Action Research Model: A Capacity-Building Approach to Field Test and Validate Risk Assessment Tools in Latin America and the Caribbean" (CCARM), the Crime and Justice Policy Lab (CJP) at the University of Pennsylvania will help two programs that serve court-involved youth in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) implement and/or improve on an RNA process. This literature will be shared with selected project partners to inform them about potential RNA tools they could use.

This report builds off of work already done by CJP in Massachusetts as well as by USAID in its 2021 [Practical Guide to Youth Risk and Need Assessment in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). Because the USAID Practical Guide provides an extensive list of potential RNA tools and their basic characteristics, in this literature review we aim to provide more depth on specific tools that are likely to be relevant to implementing partners. Given CCARM's emphasis on implementation, this review focuses heavily on logistical considerations surrounding various tools. This review provides CJP's assessment of each tool's relative advantages and disadvantages to help partners in making decisions about what tool to use. In the Annex, we highlight gaps in the research literature that CCARM could help address.

Crime and Justice Policy Lab is open to expanding this literature review if (for example) we learn that there are additional tools that partners are currently using but did not mention in our initial calls, or if we find tools outside the list provided that we want to suggest to pilot with groups that are currently not using an RNA tool.

## OVERVIEW OF RISK NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

This section is intended to be a general overview of Risk Needs Assessments for potential implementing partners. Content draws heavily from "[Risk Assessment in Juvenile Justice: A Guidebook for Implementation](#)" by Drs. Gina Vincent, Laura Guy, and Thomas Grisso, and we encourage you to read that resource for more detail (Vincent et al. Nov. 2012).

### **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY RISK?**

Risk refers to the potential for a negative outcome to occur in the future. In defining a situation as "high risk," people may be referring to either or both:

1. The *degree of harm*, or how severe an outcome will be if it happens. For instance, a behavior that could lead to serious long-term consequences for others (such as assault) will generally be considered “higher risk” than a behavior with fewer serious consequences (like shoplifting)
2. The *likelihood of occurrence*, or the chance that an outcome will occur. In this sense, a person would be considered “high risk” if they are likely to commit more crimes in the future

In the context of Risk Needs Assessments, RNAs typically refer to the second interpretation of risk. In other words, RNAs usually measure **how likely people are to reoffend**.

However, the degree of harm can be measured by focusing on specific outcomes. For instance, some RNAs and related studies measure only general recidivism as an outcome (the likelihood of committing *any* delinquent act). Others measure only violent recidivism (the likelihood of committing a *violent* act). Some RNAs and studies can measure both, or they measure other outcomes such length of time on probation (Childs et al. 2013).

It is important to decide what you are most interested in learning, so that you can select the appropriate outcome to measure. Once you have defined your outcomes of interest, you can decide whether a Risk Needs Assessment is appropriate to achieve that goal, and if so, what RNA tool you should use.

### **HOW IS RISK FOR YOUTH DIFFERENT FROM RISK FOR ADULTS?**

RNAs are used for both youth and adults. However, youth are different from adults in critical ways. Youth are still in a phase of rapid development, and their patterns of reoffending are often different from those of adults. The word “youth” can also encompass a wide age range. Some behaviors are considered adaptive or “normal” at some ages (such as substance use during teenage years, when experimentation is expected) and maladaptive or “abnormal” at different ages (such as substance use in preteen years) (Vincent et al. Nov. 2012). It is therefore very important to keep the unique characteristics of youth in mind through every stage of implementing an RNA.

These are some key points to keep in mind:

- Many youth offenders will not go on to reoffend, even if they receive minimal treatment. Most youth who commit offenses do NOT go on to become chronic offenders as adults. It is important to treat all youth as though their behaviors can be changed.
- There is a lot of evidence showing that contact with juvenile justice systems can *increase* a youth’s risk of future criminal behavior. Even lighter contact with the juvenile justice system, such as community service with little interaction with other misbehaving youth, has been associated with increased risk. It is thus important to only provide interventions to those youth who actually need them.

- Because of their rapid development and often changing circumstances, a youth's risk profile can change quickly. A youth who is considered "high risk" might easily be considered "low risk" just a year later.

This does not mean that juvenile justice interventions are never appropriate. Some youth will need to receive interventions in order to reduce their risk and the risk to others, and some youth will even need to be institutionalized. But RNAs can help ensure that interventions are targeted to the youth who will actually benefit from them.

### **WHAT IS A RISK NEEDS ASSESSMENT?**

A comprehensive Risk Needs Assessment is a process that is used to characterize a person and understand their circumstances. The goal of an RNA is to make the best decisions for intervention and management of a person's case in order to reduce risk.

A Risk Needs Assessment process may gather information from various places. For instance, an RNA may require a trained professional to conduct an interview with an offender and their parents/guardians, review police files, and review school records. A Risk Needs Assessment tool is used to compile this information to determine a person's overall risk of reoffending and identify the forces that are encouraging them to offend.

RNAs find their roots in the **Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR)** model. This model is based upon three principles:

1. Risk principle: The type and level of intervention must match one's risk of offending. In other words, high-risk youth should receive the most intensive services and should be monitored most closely. Lower-risk youth should receive fewer services and should generally have less ongoing contact with the juvenile justice system.
2. Needs principle: An individual's dynamic risk factors/criminogenic needs should be identified and targeted with proper treatment/intervention. In other words, if an RNA assessment show that family issues are driving a youth to offend, family interventions (such as Functional Family Therapy or FFT) would be a good fit. Similarly, if substance use is driving a youth to offend, then treatment for substance use disorders would be a good fit.
3. Responsivity principle: Interventions should be tailored to the strengths of the individual to maximize their effectiveness. For instance, imagine a high-risk youth that has many criminogenic needs that are driving their offending. In this case, it might be best to first provide services that the youth is most interested in. On the other hand, if that youth has limited reading ability, an intervention that relies heavily on reading materials (such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) might not be a good fit.

Studies have shown that programs that follow RNR principles lead to (on average) a 50% reduction in recidivism, while programs that do not consistently follow RNR have no effect on recidivism (Andrews & Bonta 2006).

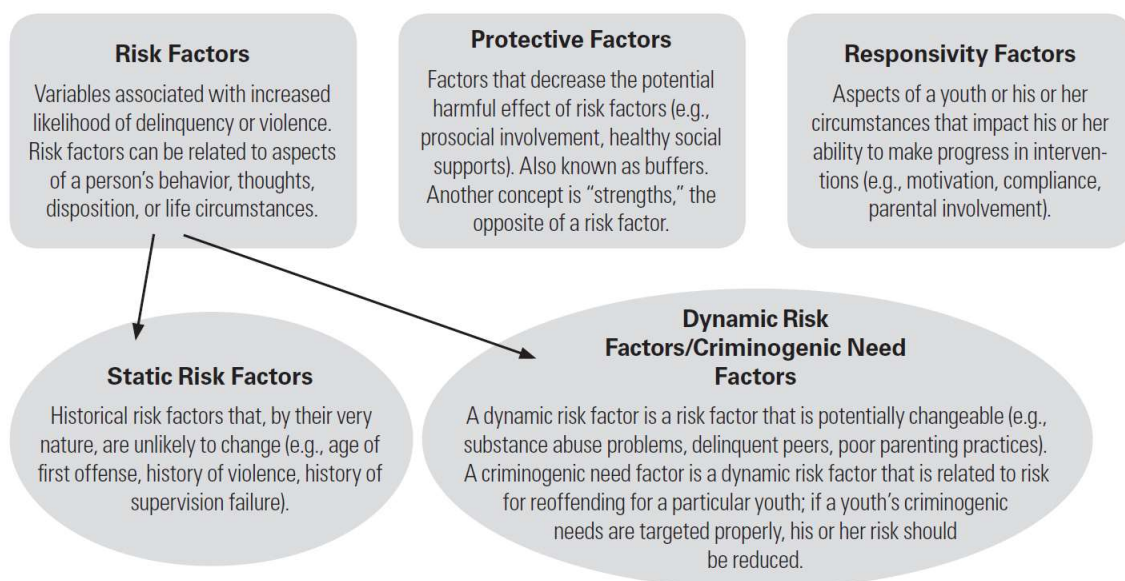
## HOW ARE RNA TOOLS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TOOLS?

- A risk assessment tool is not the same as Risk Needs Assessment Tool. Risk assessment tools are brief and help determine how likely a person is to experience a negative outcome. For instance, a risk assessment could help determine someone's likelihood of reoffending. Risk Needs Assessments, on the other hand, provide BOTH an evaluation of risk as well as detailed information that can help determine what interventions might help reduce risk.
- Mental health assessments are not the same as RNA tools. Mental health assessments are intended to identify youth who are in danger of harming themselves or others, and to identify those who need mental health treatment. However, mental health assessments may be relevant to RNA processes in that youth may require treatment for mental health issues in order for other interventions to be effective.

## HOW DO RNA TOOLS MEASURE RISK?

RNA tools include factors, or characteristics, on which youth are rated. Three types of factors are often included: risk factors, protective factors, and responsivity factors. A visual depiction of these factors is included below (Vincent et al. Nov 2012).

### Graph 1: Types of Factors Commonly Found in Risk Assessment Tools



As discussed, Risk Needs Assessments are intended to not only identify risks, but also to identify needs and guide intervention to reduce that risk. By identifying risk factors that can potentially be changed (dynamic risk factors/criminogenic needs), RNAs can help identify what associated interventions might be helpful. RNAs can help identify protective factors that can be strengthened, and they can help identify responsivity factors that would need to be addressed in order for an intervention to be successful. For instance, if a youth is assigned to receive Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), they will also require the ability to read the documents that are used in this type of treatment (Dara Drawbridge, advisory group call, 19 Mar 2023).

These are a few other key points to note about factors:

- Just because a youth has a risk factor, it does not mean that that factor is driving risk *in their particular case*. For instance, a substance use disorder is clearly “criminogenic” (associated with crime) if a youth is committing robbery in order to feed an addiction. However, if a youth is using substances merely to cope with challenges they are facing, it does not necessarily mean that the substance use is contributing to their delinquency.
- Some risk factors are considered to be especially strong predictors of reoffending. These are often referred to as the “Big Four” and the “Central Eight.” Four especially important factors (the “Big Four”) include a history of antisocial behavior (such as criminal history); antisocial personality pattern (such as having weak self-control); having antisocial companions (such as friends involved in crime); and antisocial cognition (such as positive attitudes toward crime) (Flores et al. 2017). The “Central Eight” includes the Big Four factors as well as these: issues in family and/or marital relationships (such as poor discipline practices from parents); poor school and/or work performance; low involvement in non-criminal leisure activities; and substance use disorders (Andrews & Bonta 2006).
- Risk factors are cumulative. In other words, the more risk factors a youth has, the higher their risk.
- Protective factors must be **above average** in order to buffer youth against risk. For instance, simply having a grandparent would not be considered protective. However, if a youth has an unusually involved and supportive grandparent who spends significant time with them, this could be considered a protective factor.
- Protective factors are not just the opposite of risk factors. For instance, struggling in school is a risk factor, but having good grades is not automatically a protective factor (Vincent et al. Nov 2012).
- Responsivity factors often do not contribute to a risk score. They are included in RNAs primarily to help guide treatment plans. For instance, if a youth is suffering from a mental health issue such as depression, this may interfere with their ability to attend and focus on other interventions. Other common responsivity factors include reading level, emotional maturity, and motivation to change (Borum et al. 2020).



## CAN RNAs CAUSE HARM?

While RNAs can be very useful, they have limitations. If RNAs are used improperly, they can be ineffective or even harmful. The following are some things to keep in mind.

- RNAs should NOT be used to replace professional judgment. For instance, a judge or probation officer may use information from an RNA tool to *inform* their decisions, but they should not base their sentencing decisions only on scores. Each youth and their case should still be evaluated on an individual basis.
- An RNA designed for one stage of a criminal justice system should NOT be used in other stages without careful consideration and validation. For instance, using an RNA pre-trial could put a youth at risk of self-incrimination, so RNAs should only be used pre-trial if there is a strong reason to do so and there are strong legal protections in place.
- RNA tools that were developed and/or validated (tested for effectiveness) for one population might not be appropriate for another population. For instance, if an RNA uses arrest data in its calculations, the RNA might introduce racial bias because there are disparities in arrest rates. Black youth might be more likely to be labeled “high risk” than white youth, for example, which could cause harm if they are then put into unnecessary and damaging contact with juvenile justice interventions. RNA tools might require adjustments for different groups, so an RNA you choose should either have been tested in the population you are working with, or you would need to validate it (which can be a challenging process).
- As discussed, youth are different from adults, so an RNA process should be careful to consider the unique characteristics of youth. For instance, assessments conducted in the past may not accurately predict a youth’s current or future risk.
- Be certain to understand what outcomes you wish to measure, and what outcomes are measured by a given RNA tool. For instance, many RNA tools are poor predictors of sexual violence; if you plan to study sexual violence, you should seek an RNA tool specifically designed for that purpose.
- RNAs can only be expected to work if they are implemented properly. For instance, if an RNA tool is supposed to involve both an interview AND information from other sources, the person conducting the RNA must actually use all of these sources. If a person uses only information from an interview, the results might not be valid. **Clear written policies** and **ongoing evaluation** are also key to implementing an RNA properly.

## HOW SHOULD YOU SELECT AN RNA TOOL?

When selecting an RNA tool, you should ensure the following:

- The tool should be **empirically validated** (discussed below)

- The tool should include **dynamic risk factors/criminogenic needs**. Because an RNA is intended to help identify interventions that can reduce risk, the RNA tool must first identify needs that can actually be changed.
- The tool should allow for **discretion from the person administering the tool**. In other words, an RNA process should not just mean going through a checklist of items. The trained person administering the tool should consider a youth's entire situation and adjust scores if necessary. In practice, this means that a tool should either 1) be based on *Structured Professional Judgment (SPJ)*, or 2) allow for overrides.

Beyond these essential requirements, there are many factors that you may consider. Particularly for youth populations, you will want to ensure that you find a tool that balances risk factors with protective factors (Alarcon et al. 2022, Rennie & Dolan 2010, Navarro Perez et al. 2020). You will also need to consider logistics such as the time, cost, and training requirements of each tool. For instance, tools that are more expensive may involve more ongoing monitoring and quality control support, which can help ensure that the tool is being administered properly (Carolina Herrera, advisory group call, 1 Feb 2023). However, in cases where budget is limited, a more affordable RNA tool may be a better fit. In this case, it would be essential to train staff on the importance of RNA fidelity and establishing quality assurance processes.

### WHAT IS A VALIDATED RNA TOOL?

An RNA tool should be **empirically validated**, meaning that the tool is supported by research. Tools that are validated should generally meet all of these criteria (Vincent):

1. The tool is **replicable**, meaning that it can be administered in the same way every time it is used. Tools that are replicable will have manuals explaining how to use them.
2. The tool contains **empirically supported risk factors**, which means that it includes risk factors that research has shown to be associated with future delinquent behaviors.
3. The tool is **reliable**. This means that if multiple people are scoring the same case using the same tool, those people will give similar scores.
  - a. There should ideally be multiple studies that show that the tool is reliable, and some of these studies should have been run by people other than the developers of the tool.
4. The tool has demonstrated **predictive validity**, meaning that the tool is doing a good job of predicting who will reoffend and who won't. In other words, research studies should show that youth designated by the tool as "low risk" end up committing fewer offenses, while youth designated as "high risk" end up committing more offenses. While no tool can be expected to predict every *individual* case correctly, some tools perform better than others at predicting risk overall.
  - a. Again, ideally there should be multiple studies that show that the tool has good predictive validity, and some of these studies should have been run by people other than the developers of the tool.

## HOW SHOULD YOU USE AN RNA?

A Risk Needs Assessment will only improve outcomes for youth and communities if the results are used appropriately (Vincent et al. Mar 2012, Vincent et al. Nov. 2012). Details on how to apply RNA results are out of the scope of this literature review, but there are a few overarching points that you should always keep in mind.

- It is very important to set up **clear policies** that explain how RNAs should be used at every step of the process. Staff should receive an orientation training about RNAs and then should be surveyed for their opinions. Only then should policies be developed. Getting staff input is important to make sure that the policies are feasible and that staff are bought into the process.
- It is also essential that all staff **receive trainings** about how they are supposed to use RNAs in practice.
- RNA results should be used to match youth to services **according to their risk level**. Higher-risk youth should receive more intensive interventions, and low-risk youth should receive less intensive ones. It is often tempting to offer many services to all youth with an intention to help them. However, as discussed, unnecessary contact with the juvenile justice system generally increases a youth's level of risk.
- Youth should be matched to programs **based on their criminogenic needs**. In other words, if weak parenting practices appear to be the main driver of a youth's offending, then family-centered interventions would be a good match.
- RNAs must be accompanied by **structured case planning**. Every youth should receive an age-appropriate, individualized plan that follows a standard format (Viljoen et al. 2019). Ideally this plan should be created together with the youth and their family to gain their buy-in.
- It is very important to establish **strong, ongoing relationships with outside referral organizations**. This helps get everyone on the same page and ensures that you truly understand what services an organization does (and does not) offer.
- Whenever possible, it is best to refer to services that are **evidence-based**. For instance, many research studies have shown that CBT and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) are effective (NAMI 2007). These are some resources that provide lists of evidence-based programs:
  - Juvenile justice and youth prevention, intervention, and reentry programs: U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, [Model Programs Guide](#)
  - Youth Mental Health: NAMI, [Choosing the Right Treatment: What Families Need to Know About Evidence-Based Practices](#)
  - Foster care prevention/Support to children and families: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse](#)

## SUMMARY OF KEY RNA TOOLS

Rather than provide an exhaustive catalogue of RNA tools, this literature review was conducted to provide practical details on RNA tools that are likely to be relevant to CCARM implementing partners. This review builds off of work already done by CJP in Massachusetts as well as by USAID in its 2021 [Practical Guide to Youth Risk and Need Assessment in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). Potential RNAs were identified through these sources, recommendations from CCARM Advisory Group members, and by pursuing promising leads from research papers studied during the literature review.

The following Risk Needs Assessment tools have been included in this review:

- SAVRY (Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth)
- YLS/CMI (Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory) and IGI-J (Spanish language translation)
- YSET (Youth Services Eligibility Tool)/GREF (Gang Risk of Entry Factors)
- C-YSET (Caribbean Youth Services Eligibility Tool)
- IMC (Instrumento de Medición de Compartimientos- Honduras adaptation of YSET)
- YTT (Youth Targeting Tool)
- YASI (Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument)
- PREVI-A (Predicción y Valoración de la Intervención-ARRMI)
- VIP-RA (Violence-Involved Persons Risk Assessment)

We have also provided summaries of some tools that may accompany RNAs in the Annex. These include:

- SAPROV-YV (Structured Assessment of Protective Factors for Violence- Youth Version)
- CANS (The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths)
- JIFF (Juvenile Inventory for Functioning)
- MAYSI (Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument)
- SCL-90-R (Symptom Checklist-90-Revised)
- YRAT (Youth Resilience Assessment Tool)

Interest has grown in instruments (such as the SAPROF-YV) that measure strengths/protective factors. For a list of such tools, the following resource may be helpful: Barnes-Lee A.R. & Petkus A., [A scoping review of strengths-based risk and needs assessments for youth involved in the juvenile legal system](#) (2023).

For more detail and more exhaustive lists of RNA tools, the following resources may be helpful:

- USAID, [Practical Guide to Youth Risk and Need Assessment in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)
- Public Safety Canada, [“Tools to Identify the Risk of Offending Among Youth”](#)
- Horcajo-Gil et. al, [“Assessment and management of the risk of criminal recidivism in juvenile offenders: A review of instruments”](#) (in Spanish)

Summaries of RNA tools

Tool	Outcomes	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
<p>SAVRY (Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth; Borum et al., 2002; 2006)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence, defined as an “act of physical battery sufficiently severe to cause injury that would require medical attention, a threat with a weapon in hand, or any act of forcible sexual assault” (Borum et al. 2020)</li> <li>• Also found to be predictive of general criminal or delinquent acts</li> </ul>	<p>The SAVRY is composed of 24 risk-related items and six protective items. The tool measures risk across three domains (historical, social/contextual, and individual/clinical factors) and is scored a non-numerical, three-level (low, moderate, and high) rating level for risk. The SAVRY also allows raters to list additional risk factors and additional protective factors. Although intended to assess the risk of committing violence, studies have found the SAVRY effective at estimating risk for general criminal or delinquent acts as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Population:</u> Youth 12-18</li> <li>• <u>Source of information:</u> Police or probation reports, mental health and social services records, and ideally multiple interviews with the young person and family</li> <li>• <u>Rater discretion:</u> Yes (Structured Professional Judgment tool)</li> <li>• <u>Training:</u> Only licensed health professionals may administer this tool.</li> <li>• <u>Format:</u> Pen/Paper and Computerized</li> <li>• <u>Average time to complete:</u> After information is collected, 10-15 minutes</li> <li>• <u>Language:</u> Many including English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese</li> <li>• <u>Cost:</u> Pay per use, described as expensive (Mettifogo et al. 2016)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavily studied around the world (Koh et al. 2020), so a case study would tie into existing literature</li> <li>• One of the strongest evidence bases for predictive validity</li> <li>• Has shown validity in many different types of contexts, including in correctional settings</li> <li>• Tool available in both English and Spanish, which might facilitate comparison</li> <li>• Relatively brief to administer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay-per-use pricing model may not be sustainable</li> <li>• Only licensed professionals may administer it (e.g., psychologists, social workers), which may not be feasible in the LAC context</li> <li>• Includes a limited number of protective factors</li> <li>• Most studies have been conducted with males</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Lucia Dept. of Probation and Parole is using this and could potentially guide other partners</li> </ul>
<p>YLS/ CMI (Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory, Hoge &amp; Andrews, 2002) and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Recidivism, precise outcome not specifically defined by the tool. Defined in initial validation study as “any conviction for an offense committed up to 6 months after the</li> </ul>	<p>A 42-item instrument designed to assess risk level, criminogenic needs, and strengths of youth who have committed criminal offenses. The tool measures risk across eight domains (prior or current offenses/dispositions, family circumstances/parenting, education/employment, peer relations, substance abuse, leisure/recreation, personality/behavior, and attitudes/orientation) and scores items on a present or absence scale (1 or 0 respectively). Total risk-needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tool available in both English (YLS/CMI) and Spanish (IGI-J), which might facilitate comparisons</li> <li>• One of the strongest evidence bases for predictive validity</li> <li>• Has shown validity in many different types</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mental health professional must administer it, which may not be feasible in LAC context</li> <li>• Pay-per-use pricing model may not be sustainable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A potentially strong choice for partners working with youth in detention</li> <li>• A potentially strong choice for those working with female populations</li> </ul>

Tool	Outcomes	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
IGI-J (Spanish translation)	<p>assessment or, for youths in custody at the time of assessment, any conviction for an offense committed up to 6 months after release." (Schmidt et al. 2005)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studies have also shown this tool to be predictive for violent reoffending (Hoge 2020)</li> </ul>	<p>scores can be utilized to obtain an Overall Risk Rating (ORR) categorized as low, moderate, or high risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Population</u>: Youth 12-18</li> <li><u>Source of information</u>: Interview with youth, review of case files, potentially interview with family members</li> <li><u>Rater discretion</u>: Yes (allows for professional overrides when necessary).</li> <li><u>Training</u>: Administered by a mental health professional who must attend a 3-day training with an exam.</li> <li><u>Format</u>: Pen/Paper and Computerized</li> <li><u>Average time to complete</u>: 30-40 minutes</li> <li><u>Language</u>: English (YLS/CMI) and Spanish (IGI-J)</li> <li><u>Cost</u>: Pay per use</li> </ul>	<p>of contexts, including in correctional settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes norms for youth in correctional settings</li> <li>Includes protective factors</li> <li>Includes gender-specific factors (e.g. pregnancy)</li> <li>Train-the-trainer approach may allow more LAC staff to be trained in the long run</li> </ul>		
YSET (Youth Services and Eligibility Tool)/Gang Risk of Entry Factors (GREF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of joining a gang</li> </ul>	<p>The YSET is also called GREF (Gang Risk of Entry Factors). This is a tool created by the City of Los Angeles for the GRYD program (Gang Reduction and Youth Development) in Los Angeles. The GRYD program provides both primary prevention and secondary prevention (Model) services to reduce gang involvement, with the YSET used to determine which rung of services a youth will receive. Model services include case management, linkage to other youth/family supportive services, multigenerational coaching using strength-based genograms, and problem-solving techniques to address participant and family needs.</p> <p>The risk factors used to determine eligibility for GRYD Prevention (Model) services include antisocial tendencies, weak parental supervision, critical life events, impulsive risk taking, guilt neutralization, negative peer influences, peer delinquency, family gang influence, and self-reported delinquency. Most questions are multiple choice or yes/no questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Population</u>: Youth 10-15</li> <li><u>Source of information</u>: Interview with youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USAID has developed projects based on the GRYD model before in LAC and continues to adapt the YSET and apply it to their work with local partners in LAC</li> <li>GRYD has a strong focus on family-involved interventions</li> <li>The initial study measuring predictive validity consisted largely of Latino/a youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not include protective factors</li> <li>Must be delivered by a mental health professional, which may not be feasible in LAC context</li> <li>Research literature is limited, and the research that exists is largely limited to GRYD/Los Angeles</li> <li>YSET has been described as long, concerns about survey fatigue (Stahlberg et al. 2022)</li> <li>Some concerns that the tool can alienate youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DAI is currently adapting this tool for use in the Caribbean to allow partners to select factors that measure outcomes most relevant to their populations (Randy Seepersad, advisory group call, 10 Feb 2023)</li> </ul>

Tool	Outcomes	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Rater discretion</u>: Yes, but limited- contractors can submit override requests to make a case that a youth has higher risk than determined by YSET, but these must be unanimously approved by a GRYD Review Committee</li> <li>• <u>Training</u>: Unclear</li> <li>• <u>Format</u>: Pen/Paper and Computerized</li> <li>• <u>Average time to complete</u>: Unclear, but some staff have described it as long and burdensome (Kraus et. al. 2017)</li> <li>• <u>Language</u>: English</li> <li>• <u>Cost</u>: Unclear (copyright belongs to the City of Los Angeles)</li> </ul>		because YSET is applied before trust is established (Kraus et al. 2017)	
<p>C-YSET (Caribbean Youth Services and Eligibility Tool)</p> <p><i>*Note: some papers describe this tool as simply the “YSET,” but those same papers also make it clear that the tool was modified for the Caribbean. This review will refer to the modified version as the C-YSET</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General delinquency, defined as “a variety score of different problem behaviors, including violent crime (5 items), property crime (3 items), drug use (1 item), drug selling (1 item), carrying a weapon (1 item), and truancy (1 item)”</li> </ul>	<p>The C-YSET includes 150 items, broken down into six sections. This tool was used in the context of Family Matters, a part of USAID’s Caribbean, Family, and Youth Resilience (CFYR) program, to identify youth at risk of engaging in delinquent behavior and refer them to family strengthening treatment (Stahlberg et al. 2022). However, this tool was also administered broadly by enumerators in order to collect data for an impact evaluation (Creative Associates 2020b). Data collected from this tool include socio-demographic information, risk factors associated with delinquency and other problem behaviors, perceptions of police, including trust in police and whether the police have treated them poorly in the past, involvement in delinquency, including violence, property crime, and drug use, youths’ assessments of contact and relationships with immediate and extended family members, and involvement with gangs and, if gang-involved, the characteristics of their gang (Cheon et al. 2022).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Population</u>: Youth 10-17</li> <li>• <u>Source of information</u>: Unclear, though appears to rely primarily on interview with youth</li> <li>• <u>Rater discretion</u>: Unclear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to be culturally relevant to the Caribbean context (conducted in Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Lucia)</li> <li>• Focus on family interventions could be ideal for a LAC context with fewer referral partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth and enumerators described the tool as long and burdensome (Stahlberg et al. 2022)</li> <li>• Limited research literature</li> </ul>	

Tool	Outcomes	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Training</u>: In the context of programming/referrals, the YSET is conducted by Family Counselors trained by the CFYR program. In the context of surveying for data collection, the YSET was conducted by trained enumerators</li> <li>• <u>Format</u>: Unclear</li> <li>• <u>Average time to complete</u>: Unclear, but described as long</li> <li>• <u>Language</u>: Unclear</li> <li>• <u>Cost</u>: Unclear, but this was a USAID-implemented tool</li> </ul>			
IMC (Instrumento de Medición de Compartimientos, USAID/Proponte Más)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of engaging in risky and delinquent behavior. Outcome measures include violent behavior, property crime, gang involvement, drug use, drug selling, carry a weapon, and truancy</li> </ul>	<p>A tool derived from the YSET, adapted for and implemented in Honduras, that measures the risk in adolescents of being associated with violent or problematic behaviors. The Proponte Más program emphasized the role of family counselors (Creative Associates 2020a). The tool includes 173 items that measure 38 factors (27 risk and 11 protective) and seven problem behaviors within four domains (community, school, family, peer/individual).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Population</u>: Youth 8-17</li> <li>• <u>Source of information</u>: Family counselor conducts interview</li> <li>• <u>Rater discretion</u>:</li> <li>• <u>Training</u>: USAID provided training to family counselors</li> <li>• <u>Format</u>: Unclear</li> <li>• <u>Average time to complete</u>: Unclear</li> <li>• <u>Language</u>: Spanish</li> <li>• <u>Cost</u>: Unclear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protective factors included</li> <li>• Detailed information on context (e.g. urban vs. rural youth, youth in school vs. out of school)</li> <li>• Focus on family interventions could be ideal for a LAC context with fewer referral partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Described as long and burdensome (Nahun Morales, advisory group call, 3 Feb 2023)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proponte Más program could be a template for combining RNAs with family assessments/interventions</li> </ul>
YTT (Youth Targeting Tool/ Herramienta de Focalización de Jóvenes en Riesgo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence (no specific definition provided by tool)</li> </ul>	<p>Tool created by the USAID Juntos para la Prevención de la Violencia (JPV) program in Mexico based on the SAVRY, but incorporating feedback from civil society and academic organizations. The tool has only modest differences from the SAVRY and includes a total of 20 items across three domains (historical, social/contextual, and individual/clinical factors). Individual items are scored from 0 (low risk) to 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More tailored to the Mexican context than the original SAVRY</li> <li>• Tool shared with 95 entities across Mexico as of 2020 (Corro et al. 2020)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very little research literature</li> <li>• No studies of predictive validity</li> <li>• Concern that length of interview would lead to invalid results</li> </ul>	



Tool	Outcomes	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
		<p>(critical risk), and these scores are summed into a cumulative score that uses the same four levels (low, moderate, high, and critical risk). Independent researchers in Mexico tried to create a shorter version of the YTT, but because most of the resulting variables were static, they determined they could only use the shortened assessment to predict risk of death by homicide (Hernandez Ochoa 2020).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Population</u>: Youth, no specific age range specified</li> <li>• <u>Source of information</u>: Interview with youth</li> <li>• <u>Rater discretion</u>: Unclear</li> <li>• <u>Training</u>: Professionals from careers such as psychology, sociology, and social work who receive a training in the tool</li> <li>• <u>Format</u>: Pen/Paper, unclear whether there is also a computerized version</li> <li>• <u>Average time to complete</u>: 1-2 hours in one session</li> <li>• <u>Language</u>: Spanish</li> <li>• <u>Cost</u>: Unclear, but forms are readily accessible online</li> </ul>		(Hernandez Ochoa 2020)	
YASI (Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument, Orbis Partners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Delinquency. Unclear precisely how the tool currently defines it, but early validation study included new referrals/arrests, felony and person offenses, and dispositions (e.g. placement, new probation) (NY/Orbis 2007)</li> </ul>	<p>A general risk-strength-needs-assessment for both general youth populations and high-risk youth. A pre-screen assessment with 34 items across ten domains is primarily utilized to assess an offender’s overall risk of recidivism, classified as low, moderate, or high. The full assessment has 90 items across ten domains that are utilized to produce risks and strengths scores across each domain. These items are scored using a 6-point Likert scale based on a semi-structured interview, with differing cut-off scores for girls. Information for the assessment can also be supplemented by a review of collateral sources such as police files, probation records, school records, and mental health reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Population</u>: General youth populations and high-risk youth, ages 10-25</li> <li>• <u>Source of Information</u>: Interview with youth, collateral sources also recommended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very comprehensive</li> <li>• Includes an abridged pre-screen for early case decisions</li> <li>• Includes both gender-neutral and gender-responsive items</li> <li>• 2-day training requirement is less stringent than for some other tools</li> <li>• Claims to have a trauma-informed approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not available in pen/paper format</li> <li>• Cloud-based platform may be a poor fit for LAC contexts where internet access is unreliable</li> <li>• Appears to not be available in Spanish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wider age range (10-25) might be ideal for partners who want to serve a broader population</li> <li>• A potentially strong choice for those studying female populations (Scott et al. 2019)</li> </ul>

Tool	Outcomes	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Rater discretion</u>: Yes- allows for professional overrides when necessary</li> <li>• <u>Training</u>: 2-day training session</li> <li>• <u>Format</u>: Computerized (cloud-based)</li> <li>• <u>Average time to complete</u>: 15-30 minutes for pre-screen, 30-60 minutes for full assessment</li> <li>• <u>Language</u>: English</li> <li>• <u>Cost</u>: Unclear. USAID Practical Guide states “pay per use,” a 2016 source states roughly \$500/year software subscription and \$400 for e-Training (Mettifogo et al. 2016)</li> </ul>			
PREVI-A (Predicción y Valoración de la Intervención-ARRMI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General recidivism, defined in validation study as “a situation in which a minor is currently serving a sentence for one or more offenses, has a pending court appearance for another offense, and has a prior criminal record”</li> </ul>	<p>A 64-item assessment designed to measure the risk of recidivism among juvenile offenders in Madrid, Spain. ARMMI (Agencia de la Comunidad de Madrid para la Reeducación y Reinserción del Menor Infractor) created this tool because they believed that other assessments were not specific enough for youth in detention. Items are grouped in six dimensions: 1) legal situation, 2) context and intervention, 3) school, occupational training, and work; 4) personal development, 5) socio-familial integration, and 6) social/interpersonal integration. Items are scored on a Likert type scale (from 0=never to almost never up to 3= always or almost always).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Population</u>: Youth who are in detention or on probation</li> <li>• <u>Source of Information</u>: Interview with youth, case file review, and other recommended sources (e.g. interview with parents, direct observation, psychological assessments)</li> <li>• <u>Rater discretion</u>: Yes- Structured Professional Judgment Tool</li> <li>• <u>Training</u>: Unclear, though the tool “is designed to be applied by juvenile delinquency professionals”</li> <li>• <u>Format</u>: Unclear</li> <li>• <u>Average time to complete</u>: 60 minutes</li> <li>• <u>Language</u>: Spanish</li> <li>• <u>Cost</u>: Unclear, copyright belongs to the Comunidad de Madrid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spanish-language tool may be more appealing to LAC partners</li> <li>• Validation study included youth of LAC origin</li> <li>• Created specifically for youth in detention, or who had recently been in detention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not validated in LAC context</li> <li>• Limited validation studies so far, and none by independent parties</li> <li>• Created for a higher-resource context (Spain) with many referral programs and pathways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinserta is using this tool and could potentially guide another partner implementing it</li> </ul>

Tool	Outcomes	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
VIP-RA (Violence-Involved Persons Risk Assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violent recidivism, based on the World Health Organization (2002) definition of violence: 'The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.' (Hare 2018)</li> </ul>	<p>Tool that aggregates seven existing psychometric and social risk assessment tools that were validated in other contexts. The creation of the VIP-RA was informed by the socio-ecological model as well as by the process of creating the YSET and the process for adapting the YSET in Honduras. Includes 89 items and covers domains – personal history, emotional dimensions, relationship/community dimensions, and past deviance – similar to past tools used to determine primary/secondary risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Population</u>: Youth (primarily men) ages 16-30 living in high crime areas</li> <li><u>Source of information</u>: Either a trained enumerator guiding a youth through questions, or self-completion by a young adult</li> <li><u>Rater discretion</u>: N/A</li> <li><u>Training</u>: Initial and refresher trainings for volunteers (education level unclear, but intended for non-clinicians)</li> <li><u>Format</u>: Tablet</li> <li><u>Average time to complete</u>: Unclear</li> <li><u>Language</u>: English and Spanish</li> <li><u>Cost</u>: None- open access or permission, based on non-propriety sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tool developers worked closely with local groups and researchers in Honduras to ensure linguistic and cultural appropriateness</li> <li>Includes items related to broader community cohesion and efficacy</li> <li>Minimal training required Clinicians not necessary to administer tool</li> <li>Ability of youth to complete the tool themselves might reduce risk of response bias</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Almost no research literature</li> <li>No data on predictive validity</li> <li>Does not include static risks (effort to avoid social profiling, but it is possible this may impact predictive validity)</li> </ul>	

# ANNEX

## A. METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

This literature review built off of Crime and Justice Policy Lab’s existing literature review for the Shannon Community Safety Initiative in Massachusetts and USAID’s 2021 [Practical Guide to Youth Risk and Need Assessment in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). Potential RNAs were also identified through recommendations from CCARM Advisory Group members and citation chasing from research papers studied during the review.

For each RNA tool, a literature search was conducted through the University of Pennsylvania Library’s Franklin Article+ search engine and through Google Scholar. (The University of Pennsylvania libraries include access to a wide range of databases including ProQuest, EBSCO, JSTOR, and PubMed, and Franklin Article+ searches included dissertations and theses). No language filters were used, and research papers in English, Spanish, and Portuguese were reviewed. When possible, systematic reviews and meta-analyses were used to determine the validity of tools. However, individual validation studies were closely reviewed in cases where there was limited literature about a tool (such as for the PREVI-A) or where the results were fairly recent (later than 2020). Individual studies were also reviewed in cases where they provided detail about specific populations, detail about implementation, or any potential insights into research gaps.

In addition to these literature searches, a general Google search was also conducted to identify any tools (such as manuals, procedures, training slides, or grey literature) that could be useful for implementation. When possible, logistical information about each tool (such as format and cost) was acquired directly from the instrument or the developer’s website. However, for many tools, this information was not clearly advertised and would require direct communication with the developer. In these cases, information was gathered from secondary sources, but some sources conflicted in the precise details. (For instance, the government of Canada and the University of Chile described the YASI as being intended for the ages of 12-18, but the USAID Practical Guide and the state of Vermont listed the age range as 10-25). In most cases these discrepancies were minor, and some were likely due to changes in the tools over time. Regardless, for any tools that are considered seriously by partners, we recommend that the details provided in this review be confirmed with the developer.

Outcomes measured were also sometimes difficult to define. Some tools were explicit on their outcomes of interest, being provided by either the developers (e.g. in the case of the YSET/GREF) or defined in initial validation studies (such as with the PREVI-A). In general, however, research studies often define variables such as “violence” and “recidivism” in different ways (Koh et al. 2020). In addition, tools that were originally intended for one purpose have often been tested for different outcomes. For instance, the SAVRY was created to predict violent recidivism, but many studies have since determined that it can also predict general recidivism.

Finally, the estimated time to complete assessments was also very hard to define. To some extent this is unsurprising, given that RNAs are supposed to be an individualized process that allows for professional judgment, and there will be variation in cases. However, some of this lack of clarity likely stems from the tools themselves. RNA tools are often accompanied by a list of recommended sources of information to use when conducting RNAs, but they do not clarify which are *required* as opposed to being simply recommended. This could have significant implications in practice. For instance, Vincent and her coauthors recommend always conducting an interview with the youth and their parents/guardians, both together and separately (Vincent & Guy 2013). However, this may pose logistical challenges if the parents are not present or are unwilling to participate.

## **B. RESEARCH GAPS AND AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY**

### *Literature and Practice Gaps*

Most recent literature of RNA tools in LAC consisted of student theses that were descriptive in nature. One student paper in Peru examined the content validity and interrater reliability of the SAVRY among a sample of youth who were processed or sentenced for breaking the law (Bedregal Corrales & Zuñiga Pineda 2020). However, no new predictive validation studies were uncovered. The research gap then persists on validation of RNA tools in the LAC context.

There is conflicting evidence on how often RNAs should be re-administered for youth. Because youth are in a rapid phase of development and their circumstances may change quickly, common wisdom is that youth need to be reassessed regularly. However, some studies have found that risk scores in fact do not change very much after the first assessment (Viljoen et al. 2016). Vincent and her coauthors recommend that reassessments be conducted every six months (or if there is a major life change for the youth), but the authors also emphasize that they recommend this “until more research is conducted in this area.” While the relatively short timeline of CCARM will likely limit this project’s ability to explore the ideal time frame of reassessment, we emphasize this as an area for potential future research.

For nearly all validation studies reviewed, some basic demographics were provided (such as race, gender, and national origin). However, precise locations were often lacking; authors would often mention only that the sample consisted of youth in a city or a general region of a country. Without more detailed information on geographic contexts, it is challenging to know whether instruments would be valid in distinct settings. For instance, in our Advisory Group calls, Charles Katz emphasized that while most RNA tools have been validated in dense urban contexts, these tools have not necessarily held up when transferred to areas with low population density. Katz emphasized that common RNA tools may then not be valid in small Caribbean nations with low population density (Charles Katz, advisory group call, 20 Jan 2023). In this project, we will leverage qualitative tools (such as interviews and focus groups) to paint a more thorough picture of each context and how it may affect implementation.

While there are many validation studies of RNA tools, there is relatively less research into the implementation of RNAs. Those studies that have been conducted have often identified significant gaps between theory and practice (Vincent et al. Mar 2012, Husseman & Liberman 2017). For instance, some studies have shown that youth are referred to mental health services even when their screenings did not indicate mental health needs (Vincent et al. 2021), or that corrections staff and probation officers inconsistently or rarely use RNA results to inform case management or supervision decisions (Miller & Maloney 2013, Viglione et al. 2015). Some studies have identified barriers and facilitators to the use of RNAs in decision-making, such as the beliefs of correctional front-line staff who are more or less compliant (Miller & Maloney 2013). However, there is still a need for more research into how RNA results are actually used. The CCARM activity's qualitative components will seek to explore how RNA results are used in practice.

In addition, many existing studies rely on retrospective RNA scores created from case files as opposed to studying Risk Needs Assessments that were actually conducted in practice. Evidence on the reliability of file-only assessments has been limited and mixed (Burl 2012), and generally prospective studies are preferable than retrospective studies (Vincent et al. Nov 2012). CCARM's emphasis on implementation science and the use of actual case studies (which will in turn be informed heavily by Dr. Vincent's [Guidebook for Implementation](#)) will seek to address this research gap surrounding implementation.

Finally, there were relatively few studies that examined incremental validity (the extent to which an assessment tool added new information beyond existing tools and practices) in the context of youth. While research in this space is limited, initial results are promising. In particular, there is some evidence showing that some tools that measure protective factors (such as the SAPROF-YV), when combined with tools that primarily measure risk factors, can improve overall predictive validity (Patricny et al. 2022, Kleeven et al. 2022). More insight here is important because if a tool (or many of its items) has limited incremental validity, it is not likely to be used by partners in a sustained way. For instance, Orphan Helpers in Honduras had been cited as an example of a "success story" in RNA implementation. In our discussion with Orphan Helpers, however, we learned that they had in fact stopped using the YSET tool because it was burdensome and yet did not capture information they felt was relevant to a youth's case (Nahun Morales, advisory group call, 3 Feb 2023). In a CJP project examining Civic Justice in Mexico, we recently learned that the adoption of a psychological screening tool had imposed significant logistical burdens because police had to wait during the time the tool was completed. Police representatives stated that while they understood the importance of the tool, they also wished for it to be shortened as much as possible while still being able to achieve its aims. While this question of incremental validity is beyond the scope of CCARM, we wish to highlight the importance of supporting this type of research.

### *Understudied Populations*

Few RNAs have been validated for youth in correctional facilities, and there is little research on implementation of RNAs in these settings (Vincent et al. Nov 2012, Loza 2018). If CCARM were to work with a partner (such as Reinserta) that is actively working with youth in detention, the case study might help address this gap.

While there has recently been more research focused on female offenders, there are still relatively few studies that examine the predictive validity of RNA when tools are used for females (DeMatteo et al. 2016). While non-gender-specific risk assessments have generally performed well for both males and females, it is still important to consider the need for gender-sensitive tools. The population studied by the CCARM activity will be largely determined by which partner is selected, but we still emphasize the importance of ongoing research into RNA assessment and sex and/or gender.

In addition, there is insufficient attention to “dual-status” or “crossover” youth, who are youth who have interactions with both juvenile justice and child welfare systems. In the United States, nearly half of the adolescents in the juvenile justice system are dual-status at a given time, and nearly two-thirds have had some child welfare involvement at some point (Kohler 2017). Child welfare and juvenile justice systems often use similar assessment tools and similar practices in developing case plans. However, poor coordination between juvenile justice and child welfare systems can lead to youth being overstudied and potentially over-supervised, which as discussed (in the context of juvenile justice) can lead to increased risk of future delinquency. Despite the continued challenges in coordinating services, some promising practices have been established in some U.S. jurisdictions (Herz et al. 2012). Our previous work in the Caribbean indicated that there is often significant overlap between these systems, largely because child welfare agencies were severely under-resourced. This overlap between systems (and potential lack of coordination) may be highly relevant to the LAC context, so we encourage programs and studies of RNA tools for court-involved youth to also consider the role of child welfare systems in context.

### C. TOOLS THAT CAN SUPPLEMENT RNAS

Tool	Purpose	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations for Potential Partners
SAPROF-YV (Structured Assessment of Protective Factors for Violence- Youth Version)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure protective factors</li> </ul>	Tool designed for ages 12-18 to provide a comprehensive assessment of protective factors in youth. This tool is intended to be used in conjunction with a risk-oriented instrument. Includes 16 dynamic protective factors (four resilience, six motivational, three relational, and three external) (Kleeven et al. 2022). The SAPROF-YV focuses on the near future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary results show predictive validity for violent and nonviolent reoffending, with a stronger effect than the SAVRY protective factors have (Kleeven et al. 2022)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively new tool with limited research base</li> <li>• Not validated in LAC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A potentially valuable supplement for partners currently using tools that focus heavily on risk factors</li> </ul>
CANS (The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies strengths and needs</li> </ul>	Multi-purpose tool developed to support care planning and level of care decision-making, to facilitate quality improvement initiatives, and to allow for the monitoring of outcomes of services (Praed Foundation 2021). The CANS was developed from a communication perspective to facilitate the linkage between the assessment process and the design of individualized service plans including the application of evidence-based practices. The CANS gathers information on child/youth's and parents/caregivers' needs and strengths. The CANS is intended for youth ages 6 through 20.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open domain tool, free to use with training and certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment forms available in Spanish, but unclear whether training is as well</li> </ul>	
JIFF (Juvenile Inventory for Functioning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies behaviors and symptoms that affect how a youth functions in everyday life</li> </ul>	Designed for youth ages 5-19 who are referred to juvenile justice, child welfare and school counseling (Hodges 2007). Measures 10 different areas of functioning (e.g. school/job, family life, friends, alcohol and drugs). Meant to be completed by youth and, when possible, the parent or other caregiver. Results should be used to create an individualized service plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-administered tool may reduce respondent bias (MHS 2022)</li> <li>• No training required</li> <li>• Written at a 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level</li> <li>• Can be used for rapid assessment (takes 15 to 30 minutes)</li> <li>• Some evidence of predictive validity for reoffending and non-completion of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computerized format may not be feasible in all LAC settings</li> <li>• Unclear whether the tool is available in Spanish</li> <li>• Limited independent research into predictive validity</li> </ul>	



			diversion programs (Hodges 2011)		
MAYSI (Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health needs</li> </ul>	Mental health screening tool for youth aged 12 to 17 in the juvenile justice system (Orbis Partners). Designed to identify those at immediate risk of harming themselves or others so that they can be connected to a more comprehensive mental health assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audio-assisted self-assessment may be easier to administer than tools administered by a professional</li> <li>Available in Spanish</li> <li>Available in both pen/paper and web-based formats</li> <li>No per-case cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not a full mental health assessment</li> </ul>	
SCL-90-R (Symptom Checklist-90-Revised)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General psychological distress</li> </ul>	Tool used to assess a range of psychological problems for individuals aged 13 and up. 90 items on a 5-point rating scale. The tool has demonstrated validity for general psychological distress in a wide range of clinical and nonclinical populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available in multiple formats (pen/paper, computer, online)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay per use</li> <li>Should not be used to assess individual types of psychopathology (Hildenbrand et al. 2015)</li> </ul>	
YRAT (Youth Resilience Assessment Tool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth resilience</li> </ul>	Tool developed as part of the USAID Youth Resilience Activity project in Colombia (which runs from 2020 to 2025). The tool is intended for young people aged 10-29 (with different questions for ages 10-14 and for ages 15-29). The target population includes disengaged child soldiers, former offenders, migrants, survivors and/or at risk of intrafamily violence or gender-based violence (GBV), and those in vulnerable socio-economic conditions or at risk of recruitment and utilization. Includes four levels of resilience as well as 19 sub-constructs within the resilience levels. Results are intended to inform youth resilience plans and family cohesion plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes being centered in a trauma-informed, conflict-sensitive, Do No Harm approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No research literature</li> <li>Does not appear to have been validated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being considered by Entrena in the Dominican Republic</li> </ul>

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