



Crime and Violence Prevention

Data at a Glance

- In 2014 Mexico was classified as the 9th most dangerous country in the world (Mexican Citizens' Council for Public Security and Criminal Justice).
- Mexico is known as a drug state with increasing drug trafficking. Other major crimes include: extortion, kidnapping, armed robbery and sexual violence.
- In 2014, 16,000 young people were arrested for their participation in diverse types of crimes (Wilson Center).



Overview

Mexico has experienced an increase in narco-trafficking-related crime and violence in recent years, significantly affecting the country's security and economic growth, with an especially detrimental effect on opportunities and development for youth. Recent Government of Mexico (GOM) data shows the national murder rate steadily declining (peaking in 2011), which the GOM cites as evidences that its approach to reducing crime and violence is working. Despite the decline, many areas of the country continue to be shaken by violence as traffickers battle to fill the vacuum left by the deterioration of large cartels. Violence and rapid urbanization, particularly in Mexico's northern border cities, have contributed to increased crime rates and threaten the security and well-being of citizens.

Objective: Crime and Violence Prevention Models Replicated by Local Stakeholders

Under USAID/Mexico's Country Development Cooperation Strategy, for fiscal years 2014-2018, USAID is dedicating approximately \$90 million to advance crime and violence prevention by increasing collaboration between government, business, and civil society in target cities; strengthening government capacity to design and implement crime and violence prevention policies and plans, and increasing the ability of at-risk youth to play a productive role in their communities. Crime and violence prevention is a cornerstone of the Merida Initiative, a U.S.-Mexico partnership to improve citizen security in Mexico by fighting organized crime and building stronger more resilient communities.

USAID focuses on working with youth who are most at-risk for involvement with the criminal element. Efforts work on encouraging youth to stay in school, strengthening social integration and civic leadership, and offering opportunities to improve life skills and obtain self- or salaried-employment. USAID's tertiary prevention activities also include support to youth who have been in conflict with the law or are currently serving time in detention centers. USAID's technical assistance to the GOM is improving government entities' ability to design, implement, and monitor crime and violence prevention activities at the federal and local levels. Through partnerships encompassing government, private sector and nongovernmental organizations, USAID is supporting a holistic approach to address the drivers of violence and crime within communities. Through these efforts, USAID has assisted the Mexican government's ability to refine prevention models and strategies and enable partners to scale-up activities that are proven to work.

Key Achievements

- Since 2012, USAID's crime and violence prevention activities have collectively benefited over 35,000 at-risk youth through after-school and summer activities, leadership and vocational training, psychological support and employment opportunities in Ciudad Juarez, Monterrey and Tijuana.
- In 2015, USAID, in partnership with the GOM, developed an on-line catalogue ("eBook") with over 20 crime and violence prevention publications that present effective practices that enable GOM officials at the federal, state, and local level, along with CSOs to draw upon successful practices as they design, implement and evaluate prevention-based initiatives throughout Mexico.
- USAID supported the creation of Municipal Crime and Violence Prevention Committees in the cities of Tijuana, Monterey and Ciudad Juarez that bring together key community stakeholders, including representatives from local government, universities and private sector to develop and oversee municipal prevention initiatives. The Committees have been recognized as a best practice by the Federal Government and the model is being replicated in other cities in the country.
- In partnership with the International Youth Foundation, USAID's prevention efforts reached more than 9,000 at-risk youth in vulnerable communities in Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana who participated in summer camps, after-school activities, and employability programs. Approximately 70% of graduates gained employment, secured an internship, or returned to school within six months of completing the program.

USAID Crime and Violence Prevention Activities

Crime and Violence Prevention Program / Programa para la Convivencia Ciudadana, Implementer: TetraTech ARD

This crime prevention activity supports local institutions striving to promote social cohesion, and strengthens the institutional capacity of the GOM to formulate and implement evidence-based crime and violence prevention policies. Activities target national and sub-national efforts in Ciudad Juarez, Tijuana, and Monterrey.

Together to Prevent Violence ~ Juntos para la Prevención de la Violencia, Implementer: Chemonics

Encompassing a national scope, this crime and violence prevention activity supports sustainable institutional approaches to help prevent crime and violence by improving government capacity at the federal, state and municipal level, while also supporting a comprehensive approach to increase multi-sectoral collaboration and strategic partnerships in high crime communities.

Desarrollando Habilidades Aprendiendo Responsabilidades para Transformar el Entorno (DHARTE) Activity, Implementer: Alianza Heartland Mexico

This school-based activity works with at-risk youth, teaching them to build healthy relationships, acquire new life skills, and gain independence through social and economic entrepreneurship. DHARTE is implemented in four municipalities in Monterrey (Guadalupe, Santa Catarina, Juárez and Monterrey) and focuses on empowering youth to play a more productive role in their communities.

Juventud sin Prisión, Implementer: Reinserta

Implemented in targeted delegations and detention centers in Mexico City, this prevention activity supports at-risk youth (previously or currently incarcerated) in gaining the skills, confidence, mental and physical health and positive social connections crucial to living outside the penal system and playing a productive role in the community.

RedSumaRSE Initiative 2.0, Implementer: Via Educación

This public private partnership aims to strengthen citizens' ability to lead and manage community-based activities focused on crime and violence prevention and strengthen alliances among civil society organizations. This community-based prevention model is implemented in Monterrey supporting 2,000 citizens annually.

Schools Building Peace in Mexico, Implementer: Fundación Mexicana de Apoyo Infantil

This school-based violence prevention model aims to build a culture of peace among at-risk youth in 80 schools in marginalized high crime urban neighborhoods in the cities of Tijuana, Monterrey, Culiacan and Acapulco.