Peace, Justice and Security

PADF’s Approach
As a region, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) has many reasons to be proud. Chief among them are economic growth, improvements in human development indicators, expanding democracies and active civil societies. In spite of these successes, the LAC region remains the most violent area in the world. While it accounts for only 9 percent of the global population, 33 percent of homicides worldwide are committed in LAC countries. At a regional rate of more than 20 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, crime and violence are a major concern for citizens. In recent years, Latin American and Caribbean cities have frequently been cited as some of the most violent in the world. Even within relatively safe cities, there are certain neighborhoods whose murder rates are double or triple those of war zones. In the majority of countries, the judiciary and the police—pillars of any effective citizen security strategy—are often affected by corruption and inefficiency.

In addition to the human costs, crime and violence impose a significant economic cost on the region. Crime reduces domestic and foreign investments, reduces international competitiveness and increases the operating costs of businesses at the micro level. Various estimates put economic losses from crime at between 2 and 12 percent of the GDP. Crime and violence are a complex phenomenon. For decades, the LAC region has experienced the negative consequences of both domestic and international criminal activity. Countries in the region face a number of issues from petty theft to gangs, money laundering, drug trafficking and illegal arms. Crime and violence have negatively impacted the economic, human and social development of the region. In short, crime prevents citizens from achieving their full potential.
Context, Causes, & Vectors of Crime & Violence

Limited access to education and high **DROP OUT** rates
High rates of youth **UNEMPLOYMENT**
Easy access to **WEAPONS**
Increased presence of **DRUGS**
Well-established **ILLICIT ECONOMIES**
Deteriorating **SOCIAL** fabric
Negative **FAMILY** structure and dynamics
Weak institutional **GOVERNMENT CAPACITY**
Limited use of **TECHNOLOGY** by law enforcement
Police organizations in need of strengthening or **REFORM**
Systemic failures of the **CRIMINAL JUSTICE** system
Inability of the correctional facilities to reduce **RECIDIVISM**
“The objectives of the programs and activities will be to promote good governance, sound administration, democratic values, and the strengthening of political institutions and civil society organizations. Special attention shall be given to the development of programs and activities for the education of children and youth as a means of ensuring the continuance of democratic values, including liberty and social justice.”

*Article 27, Inter-American Democratic Charter*

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**Our Philosophy**

The Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) believes that it is possible to improve the safety of our communities. We believe that well-designed, technically sound, data-driven and evidence-based policies that target the root causes of crime and violence can have a major impact. Our goal is to reduce crime, reduce fear, ensure the respect of human rights and promote social cohesion. Many examples in the region demonstrate that progress is within our reach. By bringing together the right stakeholders including governments, communities and the private sector, we can improve public safety.
PADF designs and implements projects that are tailored to the needs of the community. To do this, PADF draws on its long history of community engagement, employing well-honed strategies to maximize the voice of local stakeholders. PADF has a track record of collaboration with local stakeholders and grassroots organizations, which allows local voices to inform and shape program implementation and policymaking. We consistently tailor training and educational materials to the local context. We believe that “off the shelf” solutions have a limited ability to promote effective change. We believe in providing capacity building assistance to national organizations to ensure sustainability upon project completion. All of our projects are results oriented and measurable. We focus on activities that enhance trust among stakeholders involved at the local and national level.
Promoting the Sustainable Development Goals

PADF’s work supports Goal 16 of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals, which is dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels.
Our Principles
to Improve Citizen Security and Justice

Rule of Law and socio-economic development are mutually reinforcing.
Increased rule of law strengthens socio-economic development by creating an environment of trust in laws and the justice system. This in turn helps to improve the investment environment, creating a mutually reinforcing cycle. As a result, national policymakers and international organizations should simultaneously address both types of challenges at the local level. PADF recognizes the interrelated nature of both dimensions of development and works toward creating synergy between them.

Focus on evidence-based policies.
Policies and programs aimed to increase public safety should be based on empirical evidence about what works and doesn’t work. We look beyond policies that may “sound good” to the public or to policy makers, but in reality do not have any significant impact, to focus on those that have a proven record of producing positive results.

Institutions matter.
Citizen security and justice reform do not happen by chance or solely by the good intentions of individuals. Institutional buy-in matters a great deal. To create sustainable change, organizations responsible for crime prevention and citizen security must become benchmarks of effectiveness, accountability and transparency.

Local input is key for success.
Programs that are designed without input from the community are likely to fail. It is crucial to ensure inclusive decision-making at all levels of policymaking and implementation. It is always necessary to bring together key community stakeholders including local government, businesses, universities and grassroots groups to develop crime prevention initiatives.

Human Rights are an imperative.
Citizen security and justice programming must deliberately integrate human rights principles. Basic human rights including the freedom of information, protection against arbitrary detention and other fundamental freedoms are key elements of crime prevention and strengthening the rule of law. Our citizen security programs are designed to promote, respect and protect human rights.
Data collection and management are crucial for **successful programming**.

Data collection is necessary to have a clear baseline and diagnosis of the issues, but also to track and ensure progress. PADF designs survey tools and research instruments with program participants in mind. We develop data collection systems to continuously improve programs.

**Innovation is necessary for leapfrogging.**

There is usually resistance to creativity and innovation on issues related to public safety and justice. However, incremental changes are sometimes not enough. In some instances, thinking “outside the box” is the best solution.

**Crime reduction approaches are most effective when integrated.**

Activities that enhance citizen security such as community policing, anti-gang initiatives, criminal justice reform, strengthened social integration, civic engagement and closer collaboration between at-risk youth and law enforcement officials have the strongest, most sustainable results when linked to other programs. As one example, positive youth development programs like educational and workforce development for at-risk youth, can contribute to the security conditions of entire countries or large geographic areas, particularly in LAC, where a high proportion of youth confront difficult job markets.

**Families are critical support structures.**

The family dynamics of at-risk youth must be fully understood. We must target vulnerable families with program activities to create support networks that reduce risky behavior.

**Graphs and numbers do not tell the whole story.**

Statistics need to be understood and analyzed in a holistic way. Single indicators such as homicide rates cannot depict the complexity of a country’s national security. PADF believes that decision makers should be presented with a full picture that incorporates a combination of variables.

**Crime and violence are geographic phenomena.**

Crime and violence do not affect all communities equally. It is important to pay close attention to so-called “hot spots” instead of trying to reach every square mile of a country. PADF focuses its efforts on clearly defined geographic areas where most criminal activity originates. By focusing on particular provinces, municipalities, neighborhoods and even streets, we can achieve a more meaningful and lasting impact.

**Women and girls deserve particular attention.**

Issues of gender equality need to be considered when addressing the needs for policy reform or strengthening operational mechanisms to enforce the law. The vast majority of victims in cases of domestic violence are women. Women can also face additional burdens in their interaction with law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Female law enforcements officers and judges can also act as change agents and role models. Women’s voices and perspectives should be included in all aspects of programming and planning.
Areas of Expertise

Primary prevention
- Social crime prevention
- Strategies to reduce school-based violence
- Roll out of school curriculum to reduce violence and/or illicit behaviors, such as drug and alcohol consumption among adolescents
- Community policing
- Civil society involvement and private sector involvement in crime prevention strategies
- Crime mapping
- Programming to reduce gang involvement

Workforce development for at-risk youth
- Basic life skills
- Apprenticeship and mentorship programs
- Labor market assessments

Restorative justice
- Development of policy and legal frameworks to enhance restorative justice

Support to victims of violence
- Address the needs of victims of gender-based violence
- Provide services to victims of armed conflict

Capacity building of public and private organizations
- Training to enhance operational capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice actors
- Strengthening of policy making ability and case management systems
- Establishment of independent crime observatories

Juvenile justice reform
- Diversion services and referrals as alternative to full-length trial
- Alternative sentencing for adolescents in conflict with the law
- Prevention of recidivism among youth
- Training to government agencies to better use risk assessment tools

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Case Studies

Community, Family and Youth Resilience / Eastern and Southern Caribbean

As part of a consortium, PADF is currently implementing a program in St. Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis and Guyana aimed at increasing citizen security by addressing the needs of at-risk communities, families, and youth through primary and secondary crime prevention activities and, to a lesser degree, tertiary prevention.

The program design is based on a community public health model for crime and violence prevention. PADF is contributing to the program, which includes risk assessment tools, evidence-based interventions, rigorous evaluation and sharing of successful results and models through workshops and other dissemination strategies. PADF emphasizes meaningful civic engagement and positive youth development. The program is built on a comprehensive approach to reducing crime and violence. Goals include addressing the needs of victims and building community resilience.

The program uses tools such as surveys, community mapping, labormarket assessments and the provision of technical gather support at the highest policy levels. We also work to establish crime prevention committees at the local level. Additionally, the program provides financial and technical support to local nongovernmental organizations and community-based groups to conduct crime prevention activities.
Juvenile Justice Reform / Suriname

For three years, PADF implemented a program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to promote positive youth development and juvenile justice reforms. The Kari Yu! Program was designed to provide basic life skills, vocational training, job placement and coaching services to youth who have left school, are at risk of dropping out or who have been in conflict with the law.

The project had two goals: (i) Expand opportunities for vulnerable youth between the ages 15 and 24; and, (ii) support and strengthen the juvenile justice system to make it more responsive to the rehabilitative needs of the youth in Suriname. The project achieved positive results: over 700 youth secured employment and many started their own small businesses. A significant percentage of participants returned to school or pursued technical and vocational training. About 440 youth completed internships in private sector companies. Additionally, the program developed a "National Resocialization Plan" which brought together juvenile justice operators, case managers and other stakeholders to implement reforms to better address the needs of adolescents in conflict with the law. Finally, a referral network was established to support the social and economic needs of at-risk youth living in crime-ridden neighborhoods.
Workforce Development for At Risk Youth / Belize

As part of the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), PADF improved the economic livelihoods of at-risk youth living in five marginalized communities in Belize through the “Youth Engagement Services” (YES) project. The project provided employment opportunities either through self-employment or through job placement, as a mechanism to reduce the levels of crime and violence, by targeting its root causes, such as unemployment.

Participants between the ages of 18 and 24, half of them women, received basic life skills training, entrepreneurial education and business advisory services. They competed for seed capital toward the establishment of their own small business. The certification program was facilitated in partnership with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) under the Belize Trade and Investment Development Services (BELTRAIDE). Private sector members mentored or provided internships for program participants. In total, 16 new enterprises were established through YES Belize. The project also facilitated recruitment drives and job placements, primarily within the business outsourcing processes sector. A total of 544 youth attended these events, with 144 placed in jobs.
Secondary Prevention / Colombia

In close collaboration with the Organization of American States (OAS) and Colombia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PADF has worked in crime-ridden municipalities to address the needs of a growing number of youth who are being targeted by criminal networks. By constructing community centers or “Casas Ludicas,” the goal of the project is to provide safe spaces where youth can receive integrated services such as outreach, counseling, remedial education, sports activities, as well as access to computers. The project has had enormous success in preventing young people from being recruited by armed groups.

To date, PADF Colombia and the Colombian government have built 22 youth centers throughout the country, four recreational facilities, two community cafeterias, a bicycle racetrack and a rugby field, serving more than 75,000 families.

These centers are operated by municipalities and serve as focal points to organize community groups to address the underlying social issues that drive youth to criminality, drug use and trafficking. One of PADF’s most important contributions has been helping the Ministry work with municipalities to facilitate community engagement to operate the centers. A sustainability plan is developed with the mayor and community leaders in each municipality and local budget resources are required for ongoing operating costs.

Urban Resilience for Peaceful Coexistence / Haiti

A combination of demographic and socioeconomic risk factors, institutional policies, and insecurity have actively undermined the political stabilization process in Haiti. In recent years, rising crime and violence has perpetuated conflict, adversely affecting the efforts of reconstruction and national development.

In order to reverse this trend of conflict and chaos, PADF began implementing the Urban Project for Participatory Development (PRODEPUR) in 2009 with support from the World Bank, the Japanese Social Development Fund and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). PADF has worked closely with Haiti’s Bureau of Monetization of Development Aid Programs (BMPAD), local civil society organizations and community groups.
PADF has worked to build the capacity of community organizations, assisting them in defining their priorities and providing technical expertise to increase their ability to implement critical interventions in the areas of health, education, micro-enterprise and infrastructure. PRODEPUR fosters accountability and transparency while building social capital to alleviate violence that hampers development.

PADF has established a Local Participatory Development Management Council in each target area. Comprised of community members, municipal councils, government officials and local stakeholders, each council works with PADF to manage community projects. More than 900 representatives from community-based organizations are actively engaged in these councils, increasing transparency and accountability.

During the life of the project, more than 260 small programs have been implemented in Haiti, including six (6) larger, community-wide interventions. The project has also been at the forefront of disaster response in the most vulnerable neighborhoods. On average, PADF’s work directly benefits 10,000 people per month, with an additional 60,000 indirect beneficiaries monthly.
Primary Prevention / Caribbean

PADF’s Resistance and Prevention Program (RAPP) promotes the use of social crime prevention methodologies in The Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname. This program is funded by the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). RAPP is a unique regional effort that uses a collaborative, multi-agency approach to preventing crime and violence. RAPP aims to enhance the capacities of young people, police, justice sector and other government officials to work together on citizen security challenges. The program also works to build mutual trust between law enforcement and the community, particularly at-risk youth, to identify and anticipate the common causes of crime before they develop.

RAPP utilizes four mechanisms to achieve its objectives:

1. **Capacity building courses** provide law enforcement, the judicial sector and other officials with training on social crime prevention methodologies;

2. **Experiential learning activities** for at-risk youth including mock courts and job shadowing allow them to better understand the criminal justice system.

3. **Youth and community dialogues** provide a safe space for conversations between law enforcement agencies and local stakeholders on topics such as bullying and teen dating abuse and ways to overcome them.

4. **Community Action Plans (CAP)** are small projects that generate opportunities for law enforcement, community members and youth to work together to promote security and improve their own neighborhoods.
Workforce Development and Conflict Stabilization / Haiti

PADF partnered with the United Nations Mission for Stabilization in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to support the Haitian government in its efforts to promote human rights and poverty reduction for low-income women and youth. The project improved the employability of at-risk youth by offering vocational training. Courses were also adapted to foster an environment of peaceful coexistence in order to reduce community violence.

A key strategic focus is to provide seed capital that can produce immediate employment opportunities in some of the most insecure areas of Port-au-Prince, such as Cité Soleil.

PADF trained vulnerable young men and women in masonry, cosmetology, car maintenance, carpentry, among other skills. PADF also provides workshops for local businesses willing to employ trainees so that they gain practical experience. The program supports small startup businesses, so that beneficiaries can quickly generate productive income. PADF works diligently to strengthen community organizations and other stakeholders in order to produce sustainable results.
Services to Victims of Violence and Conflict / Colombia

PADF is a strong partner of the Government of Colombia, serving to operationalize its post-conflict reconciliation and reintegration policies. Our programs are designed to support internally displaced families and other groups affected by the civil conflict. In this context, PADF has worked with both the Colombian government and USAID to implement numerous programs targeting displaced youth, those vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups, and youth living in conflict zones.

For example, under a reintegration program for Colombian families displaced by violence, PADF developed the labor market skills of 1,246 at-risk youth between the ages of 17 and 29 in the departments of Antioquia, Bolívar and Cauca, using an integrated educational model with an emphasis on computer technology. PADF also supported the implementation of a musical education project in collaboration with local partners to benefit 10,000 at-risk youth in 20 municipalities, creating opportunities for training and socio-cultural integration. PADF has provided technical assistance in the city of Cartagena through vocational training, job placement, counseling. We also work with at-risk
youth to design and implement business plans to improve their income as entrepreneurs.

Finally, we have worked with displaced members of the Afro-Colombian Community Council on projects that build social capital, improve infrastructure and produce handicrafts. These initiatives have had a positive impact for those displaced by violence and armed conflict.

School-Based Violence / Colombia

In partnership with the Colombian Ministry of Justice and Law, PADF implemented the “Nuestro Tiempo es Ahora” (Our Time is Now) program, aimed at preventing violence against children. The project provided training to teachers, parents and justice sector officials to address the needs of youth. Training focuses on a review of the legal framework and strategies to raise awareness to the challenges that children and adolescents face. The program has been successful at reducing risk factors including recruitment into armed conflict and violations against personal freedom, including the right to sexual identity.

Additionally, the program has worked to reduce school-based violence, bullying and alcohol and drug consumption. PADF also provides parenting classes and follow up support to those involved in the program.
About PADF

The Pan American Development Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, brings together diverse stakeholders to improve livelihoods, strengthen communities and civil society, foster greater respect for democracy and human rights, and improve disaster preparedness and response in Latin America and the Caribbean. Established by the Organization of American States in 1962, PADF has worked in every country in the region. In the last decade, PADF has reached more than 92 million people, investing more than $600 million in development resources throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.