



PRESS RELEASE

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AGREEMENT TO PREVENT GANGS AND REHABILITATE FORMER GANG MEMBERS

SAN SALVADOR– Within the framework of the US-SICA Dialogue on Security carried out in Guatemala, the Secretary General of the Central American Integration System (SICA), Ambassador Aníbal E. Quiñonez, and the Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Paul J. Bonicelli, renewed on July 18 their commitment to carry out regional efforts on gang prevention and rehabilitation of former gang members. USAID is planning to assign this year an additional \$1 million under an existing grant agreement.

The grant agreement amounts to \$3 million and will be implemented over a three-year period.

The three objectives of this assistance include collaborating with public-private initiatives to prevent at-risk youth from joining gangs, providing opportunities and alternatives to youth to leave gangs, and providing services and rehabilitation to ex-gang members as a disincentive to re-enter criminal gangs.

Moreover, activities that assess legal/justice frameworks and practices in the region will be supported, promoting multi-country policy and legal reforms to improve the treatment and rehabilitation of youth, including juvenile justice system reforms in Central America and Mexico.

Finally, SICA will receive assistance to promote regional policy reform and harmonization and to support bringing together relevant stakeholders to spur development of policy initiatives and implementation of those reforms.

The implementation of the activities will be done through a cooperative agreement to a non-governmental organization or private volunteer organization to develop alliances that bring innovative approaches along with commitment from multiples levels of government, civil society and business in Central America to work together to prevent and mitigate the gang problem.

Those organizations interested to submit concept papers may obtain more information at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/gda/ (“Gangs Prevention in Central America”).

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