The goal of the Community-Based Crime and Violence Prevention Project is to improve citizenship security by building on government and civil society capacities, at the local and national levels, in order to better understand crime and violence patterns, plan and implement prevention activities, measure the initiatives’ impacts and replicate best practices across municipalities.
The Project provides specialized technical assistance to citizen security issues and competitive grants funds that finance a wide variety of prevention activities that are conducted locally, in close collaboration with Inter-Institutional Work Groups (IIWGs), Prevention Councils and Committees in all participating municipalities.

### Conceptual Framework

#### Understanding the Problem of Violence

**Risk Factors (Causes)**
- Income disparity and unemployment
- Lack of public services
- Decentralized families
- Gender-based violence and child abuse
- Drug abuse and school drop-out rate
- Firearms and youth gangs or maras

**Outbreaks (Effects)**
- High crime rates (homicides, extortion, etc.)
- Fear, insecurity and victimization
- Insufficient public/private investments in prevention
- Elevated economic and social costs of violence
- Threat to governance and economic growth
- Undermining development and human rights

The Project provides specialized technical assistance in citizen security issues and competitive grants funds that finance a wide variety of prevention activities that are conducted locally, in close collaboration with Inter-Institutional Work Groups (IIWGs), Prevention Councils and Committees in all participating municipalities.

#### Implementation Model for Community-Based Crime and Violence Prevention

**The Four-legged Table**

**Actors who make up Inter-Institutional Work Groups (IIWGs), Municipal Crime Prevention Councils and Committees**

- National Government (Public safety, Education, Health, Justice)
- Civil Society (NGOs, Churches, Foundations, Private Sector Companies)
- Local Governments (Public, Education, Health, Members, Social Promoters)
- Municipal Crime Prevention Councils and Committees in the 13 areas of intervention.

**Population at Risk**
- Community policing, etc.
- Education, culture, community organization, gender equality, entrepreneurship, vocational training, youth leadership, etc.

**Objective:**
- to reduce the number of offenders in the mind to long term

**Situational / Physical Prevention**
- New infrastructures, public lighting, rehabilitation of youth centers, community policing, etc.

**Objective:**
- to reduce opportunities for committing crimes, improving security in the short term

**Prevention through Policy and Information**
- Prevention policies, crime observatories, municipal by-laws, baseline studies and impacts evaluation

**Objective:**
- to achieve sustainability, more public/private investments and greater visibility for crime prevention

**Results Obtained as of April, 2011**

- Creation of 13 Inter-Institutional Work Groups (IIWGs), with participation of approximately 500 people from 12 municipalities, working in over 60 communities, with half-a-dozen national government agencies, and more than 25 civil society organizations, who are carrying out sub-projects that respond to locally-developed crime prevention plans.
- Crime Reduction and improvement of citizen security in ALTAVISTA (population: 80,000), as demonstrated in the study: “Main Findings of Evolution of Crime and Violence in the Altavista Neighborhood, 2007-2009”.
- Technical assistance and financial support to over 50 sub-projects carried out by NGOs and Foundations, implemented in close collaboration with Interinstitutional Work Groups, Prevention Councils and Committees in the 13 areas of intervention.
- Strengthening of Municipal Crime Observatories through sub-grants, technical assistance, information technology, 3G cell-phone hot-spot mapping, used by Police and forensic medicine and for criminological analysis.

**Lessons Learned**

- The social prevention of violence is a complex process that requires holistic responses.
- A combination of prevention, law enforcement, and justice—with the active involvement of communities, municipalities, civil society, and the private sector—is required to reduce crime and rebuild citizen confidence.
- Crime and violence need to be addressed locally, through participatory prevention plans, that include gender equality and youth-at-risk considerations.
- Participatory, crime prevention involves step-by-step capacity building processes of multidisciplinary and inter-institutional work teams in the field.
- Achieving buy-in and support from the private sector is an arduous but worthwhile process.
- Citizen participation in violence prevention must be open to all, especially to youth.