COSTA RICA
PROGRAM SUMMARY

In 2016, the Tourism Security Program of CICTE started the execution of a three-year project, funded by the government of Canada, which aims to strengthen the capacities of 11 Member States from Central America and the Caribbean on risk management, tourism security plans and public-private partnerships within the stakeholders of tourism, national security and others.

Given that tourist destinations are by their own nature considered soft targets, this program seeks to contribute to the strengthening of the capacities of strategic-level and operational-level public-private sector actors in the tourism industry. Furthermore, the program aims to guide the composition of a public private operational network (PPP).

In this regard, CICTE offered the government of Costa Rica to perform a Needs Assessment and follow-up technical assistance to guide the process to develop a Tourism Security Plan for a specific destination. These activities are scheduled to begin on July 2017.

OBJECTIVES

The execution of this plan will be divided into a two-day preparatory meeting with the involvement of public and private stakeholders in the tourism sector. Following the meetings, the project team will submit scenario based exercises to the participating stakeholders over a period of twelve-fifteen weeks using a dedicated electronic platform. Halfway this process, a webinar will be conducted to evaluate the progress and potential obstacles.

The final phase will be a two-day stakeholder review and implementation workshop where local authorities and the PPP Network will perform a final review and approve their security plan draft. The integrated tourism security plan activities will be carried out by staff from the OAS and UNICRI, along with subject-matter experts from the tourism industry and the international law enforcement community. The aim of these is to jointly develop a roadmap for a National Security Plan.

RESULTS

Among the expected results are, firstly, to gather relevant and precise information on the vulnerabilities and threats to the specific destination, as well as the existing processes and level of coordination; and to identify relevant partners and audiences to participate in the online technical assistance.

Based on the outcomes of the Needs Assessment, two representatives per agency will be selected and must subscribe to a Letter of Intent that will outline their responsibilities and will be signed by the leading agency of this process.

Finally, it is expected that through these meetings and online technical assistance, the government of Costa Rica will compile the necessary information to develop a Tourism Security Plan.
The Maritime Security Program aims to assist Member States to comply with international maritime security standards and best practices as well as to improve their overall maritime security capabilities on a national and regional level. This is accomplished by training maritime/port security officials to protect passenger transportation and trade; strengthen port capabilities to comply with the ISPS (International Ship and Port Facility Security) Code and other international port security standards/procedures; and identifying the vulnerabilities to mitigate the potential consequences in key ports of the region both on a national and regional level. The Maritime Security Program has a three-phase activity programmed for Costa Rica that focuses on assessing vulnerabilities and training needs in target ports and a follow-on training to mitigate vulnerabilities identified during the assessment process.

**OBJECTIVES**

Contribute to strengthening maritime/port security in Member States by identifying vulnerabilities and training needs through assessments, organizing workshops to prompt inter-agency and regional collaboration, and measuring the impact on the application of new strategies to improve maritime security overall in the Americas.

**RESULTS**

In conjunction with external experts, the program will lead a port assessment in a key port in Costa Rica in order to identify vulnerabilities and key training areas, using the ISPS Code as a baseline to assess the plans, policies, and security procedures currently in place at the port based on a survey filled out by port personnel. After the evaluation of the initial survey, the team of experts conducts a technical visit to the port and proposes the corresponding training modules.

Follow-on Capacity Building Training based on the assessment conducted during the first phase of the project. A comprehensive training module will be given to port and maritime security personnel on a national level in order to mitigate vulnerabilities and ensure the proper adherence to the ISPS Code and other international regulations.

Final evaluation three to six months post capacity-building training to determine the successful adoption of whether the recommendations provided by the experts. This will be done by observing changes in policies, plans, and procedures, measuring the scope of the impact in the personnel and evaluating whether the overall port security has been bolstered.
The Inter-American Network for the Prevention of Violence and Crime was created following the Resolution 2866 approved during the 44th General Assembly of the Organization of American States, held in Paraguay, in 2014. The Resolution reaffirms that the prevention of violence and crime is a strategic priority for the region and instructed the General Secretariat to establish a Network to provide assistance to Member States on the enforcement and implementation of public policies, programs and initiatives in the area of violence and crime prevention. Since then, the OAS Department of Public Security has been working on the creation and implementation of the Network and its activities, which has been officially launched on November 29th, 2017.

The interaction among the members of the Network takes place on in-person meetings that are carried out across the Americas and through its Website, where members can exchange experience and knowledge in the discussion forums, chats and learn more about different initiatives, policies and program in the area of crime and violence prevention around the world. The Website also features a variety of multimedia resources such as news, blog posts, videos, etc., available to its members.

Following the same Resolution a Fund for voluntary contributions was created to cover direct and indirect costs, which will not generate interest and is non-refundable. The Fund is managed by the DPS.

OBJECTIVES

To establish a dialogue and consultation mechanism, and foster the exchange of experiences, information, best practices, data and points of view among member states and different stakeholders on the issue of crime and violence prevention.

To facilitate the interaction and cooperation among different sectors to increase knowledge and promote the development of more efficient and effective policies, initiatives and programs to prevent violence and crime and to create safer and more peaceful societies in the hemisphere.

RESULTS

In 2016, the Network was officially launched during the event “Latin America and the Caribbean in action to reduce homicides” that took place at the OAS Headquarters. Additionally, in the same occasion, the Website of the Network, where the members have the opportunity to access a variety of publications, best practices, news, videos, among other materials and interact with other experts, professionals and people interested in the area of crime and violence prevention was made available through the OAS Website.

In the next months and years, it is expected, through the Network, to provide technical assistance to member states for the development and evaluation of actions, policies, and programs; provide inputs for the formulation of actions, policies, and programs; increase horizontal cooperation among States in the framework of prevention and promote interaction and exchange of knowledge and practices among different actors and stakeholders.
PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Department of Public Security (DPS) has created the Inter-American Network for Police Development and Professionalization as a mechanism for international cooperation to strengthen the police capacity to address security challenges. The Police Network seeks to generate police skills adapted to new security situations in the region and to promote the exchange of best practices and lessons learned. The structure of the Police Network is based on a needs-assessment carried out by DPS, with the support of AMERIPOL, which allowed the identification and understanding of the main challenges and knowledge gaps regarding police training.

The Interamerican Police Network is structured in four main pillars: (i) development and implementation of a training curriculum, with on-site courses and virtual courses, that seeks to answer the knowledge needs identified in the needs-assessment and to reduce the asymmetries among the police forces in the Americas; (ii) creation of a permanent network for cooperation with the goal of strengthening the training process through the continuous exchange of information and knowledge between police officers and the training institutions and instructors; (iii) horizontal cooperation that promotes the exchange of information, experiences, and best practices among police institutions (iv) certification of police forces in excellence management.

OBJECTIVES

To contribute in a systematic and ongoing manner to the strengthening of professional development of OAS Member States’ police institutions. Its specific goals are: (i) to develop a police knowledge management system based on on-site and virtual training; (ii) to promote a comprehensive and holistic approach that includes continuous training and exchange of knowledge and best practices among police institutions, as well as certification in police management; (iii) to generate greater coordination among Member States to address present and future public security challenges; and (iv) to add scientific value in the professional development of police officers through accreditation of the courses by renowned universities.

RESULTS

In the framework of the Interamerican Police Network, with the support of strategic partners, the DPS has carried out a needs assessment to identify the main challenges and gaps in police training; an educational guide for the on-site police training was developed based on the conclusions of the needs-assessment. The curriculum and the material for this training are being finalized and they will be validated by the strategic partners of the Police Network. Simultaneously, the first edition of the training is being organized and it is expected to take place at the Police Academy of Honduras in 2017. The DPS has also elaborated a mapping of the police institutions and their processes certified in quality management in the hemisphere.

It is expected that in the following years the Interamerican Police Network trains at least 340 police officers to promote the program in the OAS Member States during a one-month on site police course and 200,000 officers on the virtual platform, who will be connected through a network for police cooperation and exchange of experiences. The police network also aims to add scientific value in police professional development through accreditation of the courses offered by renowned universities and foster horizontal cooperation among police institutions in the Americas.
PROGRAM SUMMARY

The OAS Department of Public Security, in coordination with IOM and UNHCR, is implementing this Program to help prevent and strengthen the capacity to prosecute crimes related to irregular migration in Mesoamerica.

The program is implemented in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Dominican Republic, with an integral approach based on 3 strategic lines of action: 1) support current efforts in the area of prevention of crimes related to irregular migration and to prevent the migration of children and adolescents by focusing on interventions in schools; 2) combating the networks of organized crime, seeking their dismantling so that fewer people are victims of these crimes; and 3) protection of the migrant population in need of special attention and specific protection.

OBJECTIVES

Promote and support strategies for the prevention of crimes related to irregular migration, especially in those areas with high propensity for migration; Create and strengthen human and institutional capacities to combat the smuggling of migrants; And to promote the formulation and implementation of policies for the protection of the human rights of migrants, particularly groups in vulnerable contexts like women, children and adolescents, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and LGBT persons.

RESULTS

There is a national diagnostic report elaborating on the legislative situation regarding irregular migration in the country; seven officials were trained as national trainers in border control, human rights and victim identification, who carried out a local workshop for 30 other government officials and will continue to carry out replicas of the course; at the same time we are coordinating workshops for the justice sector in identifying and prosecuting trafficking networks. Also, we are developing a network for the exchange of information and alerts to combat the smuggling and trafficking of migrants, which will be complemented by trainings on the development of effective techniques for collecting statistics related to irregular migration.

In terms of protection, an inter-institutional meeting is being organized to contribute to the coordination of public and private efforts to protect irregular migrants, in order to generate the necessary conditions for the adoption of agreements for the implementation of special programs that deal comprehensively with the needs of Irregular migrants.
PROGRAM SUMMARY

Within the framework of the Central American Security Strategy (ESCA), and in particular the D.B.3 Project for “Strengthening Programs for the protection of victims, witnesses and other individuals involved in criminal investigations in Central America” and also in accordance with the priorities identified by countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Department of Public Security (DPS) of the OAS developed this initiative to strengthen the institutions specialized in assistance and protection of victims and witnesses.

This initiative aims at improving the capacities of the institutions responsible for providing assistance and protection services for victims and witnesses in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic, through work in five lines of action: (1) the joint identification of relevant mechanisms and procedures being applied in each country; (2) the elaboration of diagnostic reports of the standards, policies, programs, government institutions and civil society, responsible for the protection and assistance to victims and witnesses in each country; (3) the elaboration and implementation of an instrument (Manual or Protocol) that presents the best common approach for the subregion for the assistance and protection of victims and witnesses; (4) the training of national officials with relevant competencies on this matter; and (5) facilitating and documenting the horizontal exchange of experiences in assistance and protection of victims and witnesses among these countries.

OBJECTIVES

Strengthen the specialized institutions responsible for offering assistance and protection services to victims, witnesses, and other individuals involved in investigations or judicial proceedings so that they are able to provide a uniform, coordinated and efficient response; generate consensus among institutions; reduce bureaucratic processes; and improve the efficiency of the State to provide protection and assistance in a comprehensive, timely and specialized manner. At the same time, we support the implementation of the “Central American Convention for the protection of victims, witnesses, experts and other individuals involved in the investigation and criminal proceedings, particularly in drug trafficking and organized crime”.

RESULTS

Among the results achieved by this initiative, it is worth noting the elaboration of diagnostic reports of the standards, policies, programs, government institutions and civil society, responsible for the protection and assistance to victims and witnesses in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic; the development and validation of a "Manual for the assistance and protection of victims of crime in Central America" and a "Protocol for the implementation and operationalization of the Central American Convention for the protection of victims, witnesses, experts and other individuals involved in the investigation and criminal proceedings, particularly in drug trafficking and organized crime"; a proposal for the redesign and strengthening of Honduras’ Witness Protection Program (based on a technical horizontal exchange with counterparts from El Salvador); and the elaboration of a document/questionnaire with shared criteria for considering the profiles of candidates that could be eligible for protection and transfer to Guatemala and/or El Salvador, within the framework of the Central American Convention, as well as a list of the official documents that should accompany an official request of this nature.