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JÓVENES CONTRA LA VIOLENCIA – GUATEMALA, EL SALVADOR, HONDURAS

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization: *Jóvenes Contra la Violencia* – Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras
 Sector: Civic Society
 Project Title: Civic Technology for Citizen Security: EspantaCacos in the Northern Triangle
 Project Location: Santa Catarina Pinula, Guatemala; Santa Tecla, El Salvador; El Progreso, Honduras

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Improving the quality of crime data is a top security priority for the governments of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Citizens can play an important role in contributing to this end by reporting criminal activity to authorities. However, due to low trust in the police and the justice system, lack of information about how to report crimes, and costs associated with issuing a formal report, citizens often fail to report crimes. *Jóvenes Contra la Violencia* (JCV) – a regional organization with presence in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras – proposes a project to increase crime reporting via a web platform and a mobile application that reduces the costs associated with reporting criminal incidents.

The project involves four stages. In the first stage, JCV will update the digital platforms that they have already developed and adapt their functionality to other locations in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. The second stage consists of selecting crime hotspots for intervention based on official crime statistics in one municipality per country. The next stage involves promoting the digital platforms by delivering information to citizens in randomly assigned crime hotspots and by placing a dummy dressed similarly to the police called "EspantaCacos." In the final stage, JCV will inform the police about the crime hotspots identified through the digital platforms with the goal of increasing patrolling in those areas. The short-term goal of the project is to increase crime reporting, while the long-term goal is to reduce crime rates by encouraging police presence in hotspots. The sites selected for implementation are Santa Catarina Pinula in Guatemala, Santa Tecla in El Salvador, and El Progreso in Honduras. The evaluation will use randomized control trials (RCTs) in the three countries to provide comparative lessons.

3. IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

JCV is a youth organization promoting citizen security and awareness using various soft prevention strategies, including information campaigns and the use of new technologies. The organization has implemented more than 30 projects throughout Central America – especially in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador – in partnership with international donors such as USAID, NED, and Glasswing International. In addition, JCV has working relationships with key



security government institutions across the Northern Triangle region.

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PUBLIC POLICY PROBLEM

A key factor limiting the quality of crime statistics in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras is that citizens rarely report crimes. Non-reporting stems from a combination of low levels of trust in authorities and the justice system, lack of information on how to report crimes, and high costs associated with filing a formal report. This, in turn, compromises the effectiveness of police efforts in areas that need it most.

B. PUBLIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

To address the problems mentioned in the previous section, JCV proposes an intervention with the following objectives:

1. Reduce criminal activity by motivating citizens to report crimes via digital platforms
2. Provide police with more information about hotspots of criminal activity
3. Incentivize crime reporting by facilitating information to citizens about the process
4. Increase the presence of police patrolling in crime hotspots

C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY

The intervention consists of updating the digital platforms and promoting their use to identify criminal activities in randomly selected areas. The promotion campaign will be carried out in one municipality in each of the three countries. The expected short-term impact is an increase in reports of criminal activity through the digital platforms. JCV will then relay this information to police in each municipality with the objective of encouraging increased patrol presence in identified hotspots. The proposed activities will be accompanied by a monitoring and evaluation strategy using a randomized controlled trial (RCT). This evaluation will take into account the geographical proximity of hotspots to detect possible negative spillovers, such as crime displacement. Specific project activities include:

1. **Update digital platforms:** JCV has already developed a web platform and a mobile application to report crimes in Guatemala, which require adaptations for the Honduran and Salvadoran contexts. Prior to its launch, developers will test the functionality of the digital platforms with focus groups.
2. **Select hotspots for intervention:** Based on alliances reached with local authorities, JCV will obtain official micro-data from the targeted municipalities to identify crime hotspots at the block level. The team will then randomly assign some segments of streets within identified hotspots to receive the intervention and others to serve as the control group.
3. **Promote the use of innovative digital platforms:** The main activity of the project consists of promoting the web and mobile platforms in crime hotspots selected for intervention. JCV volunteers will carry out a door-to-door campaign, distributing promotional material with key information (fridge magnets) and the placement of dummies dressed similarly to police (EspantaCacos) in targeted areas.
4. **Promote police presence in hotspots:** Based on the data collected through the digital



platforms, JCV will relay information to the police in intervened municipalities with the goal of encouraging patrolling in these areas.

D. EXPECTED RESULTS

The results of the intervention will be measured at the street segment level by analyzing the data collected via the digital platform and comparing it to official crime data.

Short-term results:

1. Increase the number of web platform users
2. Increase the number of downloads of the mobile application
3. Increase the number of crime reports generated through the application.
4. Increase the number of geo-coded data on criminal activity

Medium-term results:

1. Increase the number of police patrols in crime hotspots identified by the digital platforms
2. Reduce the amount of criminal activity in hotspots

E. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

The short-term strategy depends on the public's adopting and using the digital platforms designed by JCV. This could be difficult in contexts with low literacy rates and low cell phone use. JCV will develop a communications strategy to ensure that the public understands how to use the digital platforms and will implement the project in urban areas with relatively higher cell phone and internet coverage.

The medium-term results depend largely on police support. There is a risk that police will not have the capacity to patrol the hotspots identified by the project. To alleviate this concern, JCV has a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Civil Police in Guatemala and Honduras and is working to formalize a similar relationship in El Salvador, and within the specific municipalities targeted for intervention in each of the three countries.

F. PRELIMINARY TIMELINE

Activity	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Collect context data	■							
Update web platform and cell phone application		■	■					
Develop a monitoring and evaluation strategy		■	■					
Consolidate alliances with government institutions		■	■					
Develop promotion and communication strategy		■	■					
Select street segments for the intervention		■	■					
Train web platform and cell phone application promoters			■	■				
Promote digital platforms in selected street blocks				■	■			
Collect administrative and digital platform data					■	■	■	
Second session of the Academy for Security Analysis								■
Preliminary data analysis								■
Some activities in this timeline were carried out by the implementing organization in June.								



G. BUDGET

Item	Project costs		Cost sharing		Grand total
	JJ for JCV	JCV	Other		
<i>Personnel</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>Fringe Benefits</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>Travel</i>	\$ 3,404	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,404	
<i>Equipment</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>Supplies</i>	\$ 11,996	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,996	
<i>Contractual</i>	\$ 34,550	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 34,550	
<i>Other</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Direct Charges	\$ 49,950	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 49,950	
Indirect Charges	\$ 5,050	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,050	
TOTAL	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,000	

