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FISCALÍA DE SECCIÓN CONTRA EL DELITO DE EXTORSIÓN, MINISTERIO PÚBLICO DE GUATEMALA

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization: Fiscalía de Sección Contra el Delito de Extorsión, Ministerio Público de Guatemala
Sector: Prosecutors
Project Title: Improving Victim Assistance for Extortion Cases
Place of Project: Guatemala City, Guatemala

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project seeks to improve services for extortion victims in Guatemala City. This project is focused on caring for victims who personally file complaints of extortion incidents with the Public Ministry (MP) of Guatemala. Extortions are an issue of great concern for Guatemalans. Beyond their economic impact, threats of extortion have psychological effects on victims that are not generally considered as part of the crime reporting process. If not addressed properly, these psychological effects can alienate citizens from security and justice institutions over the long term. Although the impact of violence on victims is well-documented, little is known about the psychological and behavioral effects of extortions. In line with the efforts of the Public Ministry of Guatemala to enhance victim services, this project seeks to improve the attention that extortion victims receive and to encourage others to report this crime.

3. IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

The Ministerio Público's Fiscalía de Sección Contra el Delito de Extorsión is tasked with addressing the extortion problem in Guatemala and providing assistance to victims that file complaints. The Prosecutor's Office has specialized knowledge of the issue and works directly with victims. In 2016, the Office of Immediate Service of the Prosecutor's Office against Extortions served more than 2,400 extortion victims just in the department of Guatemala.

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PUBLIC POLICY PROBLEM

Extortions are an issue of principal concern to Guatemalans. However, due to low levels of trust in the authorities, fear of filing complaints, and lack of knowledge about government resources for extortion victims, this crime is seldom reported. Besides their economic costs, extortions generate psychological effects that can be intensified during the reporting process, risking the revictimization of victims.



B. PUBLIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

In line with the Democratic Criminal Policy of the State of Guatemala, and based on the problems indicated above, the pilot intervention proposed by the Public Ministry has the following strategic objectives:

1. Improve citizen trust towards the Ministerio Público
2. Improve victim services for those who report extortions to the Ministerio Público
3. Minimize the revictimization of extortion victims that file complaints

C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY

The program will be implemented and evaluated with a randomized controlled trial (RCT) strategy. The intervention consists of implementing an improved service protocol for extortion victims. The protocol will be randomly assigned to extortion victims based on the day they file a complaint. The rest of the victims will receive the services that are currently offered by the Specialized Prosecutor. By comparing the average results of the victims that receive the enhanced services versus the average results of those who receive the usual services, it will be possible to identify the causal effect of the intervention.

The associated activities with the new service protocol for victims that file complaints with the Prosecutor's Office also include:

1. **Specialized psychological services:** improve services for extortion victims with the objective of providing specialized psychological care to those who file extortion complaints
2. **Improve and standardize the process:** homogenize the complaint process and the prosecutor's work methodology
3. **Awareness and empowerment for personnel:** improve the personnel capacity of the Public Ministry with standardized protocols for addressing extortion complaints

D. EXPECTED RESULTS

The project's results will be measured at the individual level with a satisfaction survey for recipients of the services after the complaint process.

Short-term results:

1. Raise public awareness of resources available through Public Ministry's Office Against Extortions.
2. Increase trust and satisfaction of extortion victims towards the Public Ministry.
3. Reduce stress levels of extortion victims

Long-term results:

1. Increase the number of extortion complaints filed with the Public Ministry
2. Increase the number of cases classified as extortion and addressed by the Public Ministry's Office Against Extortion
3. Increase the number of arrests of people accused of extortion

E. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

A potential challenge is the reluctance of individuals to participate in the satisfaction surveys.



To address this problem, the user satisfaction survey will be integrated into victim services. Another challenge is that the staff responsible for implementing the new protocol may be slow to adopt it. Training, sensitization, and supervision are expected to help overcome this challenge.

F. PRELIMINARY TIMELINE

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Select the days on which the intervention would be applied							
Develop a monitoring and evaluation strategy							
Develop the new protocol of services for victims that file complaints with the Prosecutor's Office against Extortion of the Ministerio Público							
Elaboration of training modules of the new protocol of services to victims that file complaints with the Prosecutor's Office against Extortion							
Train psychologists, prosecuting staff, and advisers of the National Civil Police							
Implement the intervention							
2nd session of the Academy for Security Analysis							
Preliminary analysis of data							

G. BUDGET

Item	Project costs		Cost sharing		Grand total
	JJ for MP	MP	MP	Partner needed	
<i>Personnel</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Fringe Benefits</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Travel</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Equipment</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 56,000	\$ 56,000
<i>Supplies</i>	\$ 24,871	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24,871
<i>Contractual</i>	\$ 27,030	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,030
<i>Other</i>	\$ 3,099	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,099
Total Direct Charges	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 56,000	\$ 111,000
Indirect Charges	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 56,000	\$ 111,000

