



CREATIVE

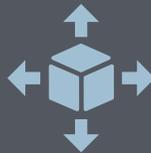
Practice Area

# Citizen Security



## STRATEGY

Creative uses evidence-based and contextualized methods to assess levels of risk for violence and determine appropriate interventions at the youth, family, community and government levels.



## DIFFERENTIAL

Creative cultivates partnerships to implement a holistic approach, combining data-driven programming, advocacy for public policies and a culture of learning.

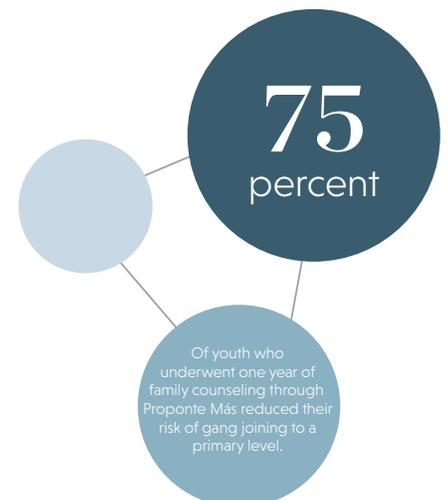


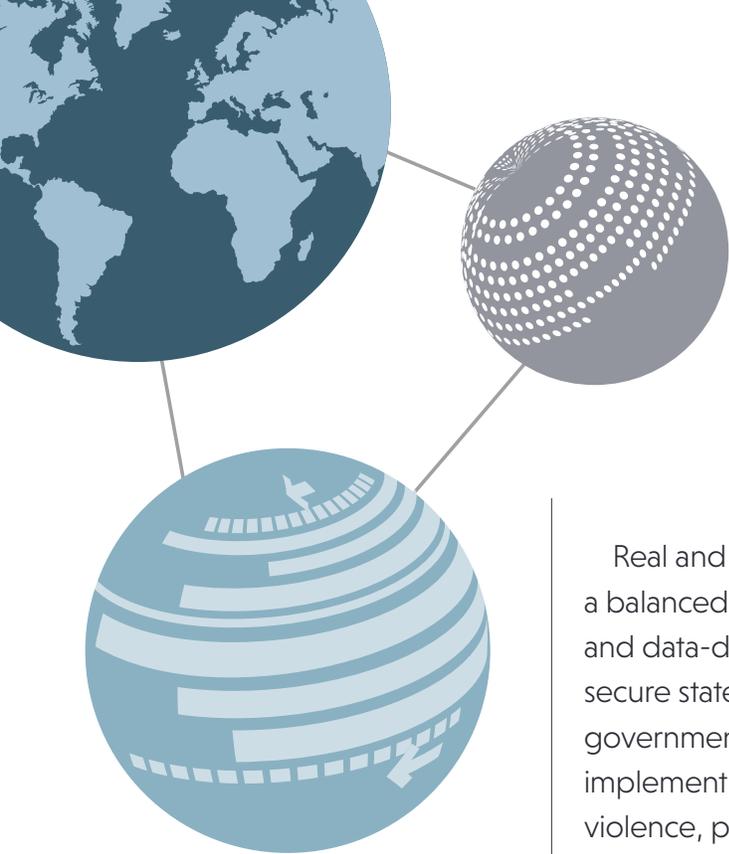
## GLOBAL RESULTS

Creative's programs help strengthen protective factors for youth in violence-prone contexts around the world and improve the ability of municipalities and civil society to rebuild resilience and security.

When citizens are secure and the rule of law is respected, communities can prosper.

However, for communities threatened by epidemic levels of violence, extremism and transnational crime, economic development and justice remain elusive. Creative Associates International takes an integrated and holistic approach to citizen security, recognizing that neither prevention programs alone nor a singular focus on law enforcement or suppression will promote peace and prosperity.





Real and lasting improvements to citizen security are achieved through a balanced approach that combines evidence-based social programs and data-driven public policies to create safer neighborhoods and more secure states. Working with communities, families, law enforcement and governments, Creative's programs empower citizens and institutions to implement holistic and proven strategies that bolster security, reduce violence, protect citizens' rights and restore the rule of law.

### **A public health, place-based approach to risk**

Creative embraces a public health, place-based approach to violence prevention. The public health approach treats violence as a disease; with careful diagnosis of those "infected" by violence, Creative targets interventions to interrupt transmission and implements preventative measures to protect those at risk.

At the same time, Creative focuses on applying holistic programming and multi-disciplinary interventions built on a place-based understanding of violence and its impact on communities and individuals.

Recognizing that youth within a single community will be at varying levels of risk, Creative's programs work to combine primary, secondary and tertiary level interventions, ensuring that young people have access to the services that fit their unique situation.

The majority of youth living in insecure communities will benefit from group activities such as community centers, afterschool programs and recreational initiatives. These primary prevention interventions have been the staple of Creative's youth work globally for more than 20 years.

In El Salvador, Creative's USAID-funded Crime and Violence Prevention Project has established a network of more than

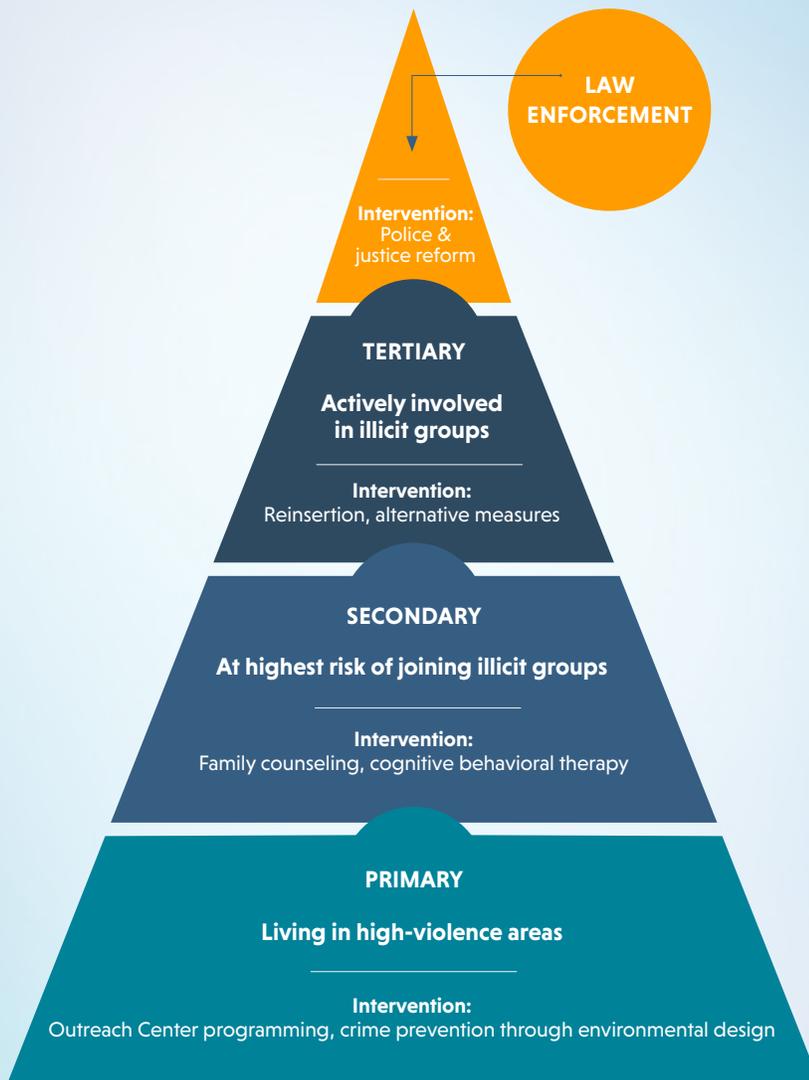
160 Outreach Centers to offer prevention services and opportunities for youth, from philharmonic orchestras to Microsoft certification trainings.

At the same time, the program has partnered with 55 municipalities to implement city-wide violence prevention programming, including rehabilitating previously dangerous public spaces into greenways, amphitheaters and places for families. Increased access to crime data through crime and violence observatories allows municipalities to make better-informed decisions about prevention.

In 60 of Honduras' most violent communities, the USAID-funded Convive! program brings together citizens, police and government actors on a range of community development initiatives that restore public spaces once dominated by gangs. In neighborhoods where trust between the people and the police runs low, having a common purpose and reclaiming space for the community has proved the first step toward rebuilding a trusting relationship.

Within the same marginalized communities are youth at higher risk levels for joining groups with a propensity for violence. Creative has pioneered cutting-edge strategies to reach those most at risk of joining these groups through individualized services that engage families to lower youth risk factors for violence and

# Four Levels of Violence Prevention



Creative addresses the problem of violence holistically, working across a continuum of interventions based on risk level.



strengthen protective factors.

These secondary prevention programs have yielded measurable results in some of the most violent communities. For example, the USAID-funded Proponente Más program in Honduras has reduced youth risk factors significantly through a unique family counseling model that works with the family system to mitigate risky behaviors and build resilience.

Of more than 450 youth at the secondary risk level who underwent a year of counseling, 77 percent dropped their risk factors to a primary level, meaning they are no longer considered to be at risk.

Risk factors including neutralization of guilt, antisocial tendencies and impulsive risk-taking saw the largest decrease.

Creative's programs also reach youth at an even higher level of risk – first-time or nonviolent juvenile offenders – with targeted support to offer exit ramps from violence and improve their chances of reintegration after a period of detention. In addition to support for these youth and organizations that serve them, Proponente Más and other Creative programs have made informed policy recommendations and facilitated national and international dialogue to improve juvenile justice.

Across all levels, the overarching goal is to increase protective factors or “resilience.” Violence prevention efforts are most effective when they are concentrated across all three levels of risk and engage families and communities.

For example, the three-country USAID Community, Family and Youth Resilience program in the Eastern and Southern Caribbean matches youth with interventions based on their level of risk, from community activities that promote positive youth-police contact to family counseling for youth most at risk, and reintegration support for those leaving the juvenile justice system.



“By concentrating resources in an at-risk neighborhood, targeting at-promise youth and applying evidence-based strategies that focus on places, people and behaviors, we expect to improve the security situation in the target countries.”

Enrique Roig, Director of Citizen Security Practice Area

## Evidence and adaptation

Millions of kids live in high-violence neighborhoods across the globe, but only a very small minority is likely to get involved in groups that commit violence – a critical distinction for designing programs that lead to greater impact and cost-effectiveness.

Those youth most at risk of joining a criminal or illicit group can be identified using the Youth Service Eligibility Tool, or YSET – a diagnostic that evaluates youth risk along a series of nine risk factor scales at individual, family and peer dimensions. If a youth presents four or more risk factors, such as family gang or violent extremist affiliation, peer delinquency or impulsive risk-

taking, he or she is considered high-risk.

Creative programs in Central America, the Caribbean and North Africa empirically assess youth risk for violence, which ensures a proper diagnosis of the problem and a tailored intervention to address it. Creative’s programs use the YSET and other evidence-based methods to evaluate progress and measure changes in a youth’s risk factors for violence over time.

By tailoring interventions to meet the specific needs of individuals and localities and applying them with initiatives driven by data, Creative’s citizen security programming is strengthening security, stability and opportunity in high-risk communities around the world.

## Citizen security in the rule of law context

Creative embeds rule of law expertise in its programming to empower citizens and institutions to increase security, protect human rights and safeguard justice.

Working with justice sector institutions, law enforcement, communities and families, Creative seeks to build sustainable systems and solutions to address rule of law and civil society dynamics that contribute to violence.

When governments have the political will, knowledge and tools to implement changes that support the rule of law, the justice sector can do its part in fostering overall development and security.

## About Us

Creative Associates International works with underserved communities by sharing expertise and experience in education, economic growth and transitions from conflict to peace. Based in Washington, D.C., Creative has active projects in more than 25 countries. Since 1977, it has worked in more than 90 countries.



Get in touch!

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