

Project Information

- **Country:** Nicaragua
- **Project Name:** Project to Strengthen of Civil Security Network for Youth and His Family, Project for Enhancing Integrated Service Delivery for Social Risk Prevention and Attention for Families and Communities (Technical Cooperation)
- **Cooperation Period:** 2007 - 2010 / 2012 - 2016
- **Implementing Organization:** Ministry of Family, Adolescents, and Children

1. Background and Project Summary

Deterioration of public security in Nicaragua is apparent as seen in the increase in the number of crimes from 28,005 in 1990 to 104,103 in 2005. Two-thirds and one-twelfth of the crimes are committed by persons under 25 and by adolescents under 18 respectively. The number of accusations of domestic violence, sexual abuse, etc. has increased and many of the victims are women and children.

Within the circumstances that social risks such as domestic violence, drug addiction, child labor, and pregnancy in adolescents severely threaten the livelihoods of the people, the Project to Strengthen of Civil Security Network for Youth and His Family developed guidelines on a model of preventive activities through collaboration among government institutions, local communities, and families to prevent issues in the communities. Under the Project for Enhancing Integrated Service Delivery for Social Risk Prevention and Attention for Families and Communities, capacity development and operational improvement are implemented toward establishment of integrated service delivery with emphasis on "care" activities to deal with issues that have already happened within households as well as communities in addition to "preventive" activities.

2. Violence against Women and the Situation in Latin America

One of the social risks particular to women is violence against women which takes various forms: physical, sexual, psychological, and economical. It is considered one of the most widespread structural human rights violations based on social structure. Patriarchal disparities of power, discriminatory cultural norms, and economic inequalities serve to deny women's human rights and perpetuate violence. One of the characteristics of violence against women is that it originates from intimate partners including spouses.

Latin America is based on a culture of machismo, the assumption that masculinity is superior to femininity. There is a persistent public perception that women are inferior and are thus dependent on their husbands. Because of this situation, the domestic violence incidence rate in Latin America is higher than in other areas and it is said that many women suffer continuous violence.

3. Gender-responsive Activities

Gender perspective is necessary to prevent and tackle social risks. However, at the beginning of the Project, the needs of women were not considered properly. There was a counseling case that forced victims to be patient further based on the traditional gender norms of the society. One of the reasons was that the officer him/herself was influenced by the culture of machismo.

The following activities are undertaken to improve the situation as well as to tackle violence against women, and the social risks peculiar to women.

(1) Promotion of gender mainstreaming

a. Operational guidelines on integrated service delivery for social risk prevention and attention:

The guidelines include descriptions based on gender perspectives, i.e. the reasons to be gender responsive, definitions of gender mainstreaming, and specific examples.

b. Development of IEC materials on gender equality: IEC materials in a form of a picture-card show for parent school are developed to be understandable by the people, i.e. actual activities for gender equality that could be practiced by the people.

c. Activities at the public service point: Seminars on gender issues among staffs, gender-based data collection, promotion of gender registration of service users and training on gender issues for the community workforce are conducted.

(2) Attention to violence against women

The situation of violence against women is investigated through a community survey and simple questionnaire by the Project and the following activities are conducted.

a. Training on prevention of violence: The topic of violence against women is included in a three-day training for violence targeting officers. The training raises awareness of violence against women and helps to change the behavior of officers toward quality counseling activities.

b. Workshop on violence cases: Workshops on analyzing violence cases and countermeasures among officers are organized.

The capacity of the officers is improved to prevent social risks peculiar to women as well as to tackle them appropriately through gender-responsive activities. This might lead to a reduction in social risks including violence against women in the society.

