



## Call for Capacity Statement USAID/Guatemala and OCE Impact Evaluation Scoping for a Citizen Security Activity

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) [Office of the Chief Economist](#) (OCE), USAID Guatemala, and Long-term Assistance and Services for Research, Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine ([LASER PULSE](#)<sup>1</sup>) at the Purdue Applied Research Institute, Global Development Innovation Division (PARI-GDI) seek Capacity Statements (CSs) from multidisciplinary teams of researchers and development professionals or individual experts to scope and design options for an impact evaluation using Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) or other rigorous methods for an upcoming citizen security activity in Guatemala.

### A. BACKGROUND

USAID Guatemala and OCE are seeking a team to scope and design a study for an impact evaluation using a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) design for the Smart and Secure Cities activity in Guatemala.

The goal of the Smart and Secure Cities activity is to build effective communities and optimize cities' functions that reduce crime and violence by improving the collective efficacy of key stakeholders and their ability to analyze, plan, engage, perform, respond, and interact, with each other with the explicit purpose of improving citizen security in targeted areas. The impact evaluation will focus on secondary prevention intervention(s) intended to create opportunities for at-risk populations, and/or innovative tertiary prevention activities for former and repeat offenders to facilitate their reintegration into society and prevent recidivism. The activity may look at either/both: program impact and operational considerations, such as identifying at-risk youth or means of engaging them in evidence-based prevention programs.

For details on the call for capacity statements (CSs), please see [Section B](#). Specific eligibility and team composition requirements are available in [Section B Part I](#). The applicants must use the provided [CS template](#), and complete the application in English, with narrative portions prepared in MS Word or Open Office format, using Calibri font, size 11, or similar typeset in single line spacing.

### B. RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION

#### I. Design and Scoping Phase:

The primary objective of this scoping activity is to identify and assess the feasibility of two to three

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<sup>1</sup> LASER (Long-term Assistance and Services for Research) PULSE (Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine) is a ten-year, program funded through USAID's Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub, that supports the research-to-translation value chain through a global network of universities, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector for research-driven, practical solutions to critical development challenges in USAID partner countries (UPC). LASER PULSE supports the discovery and uptake of research-sourced, evidence-based solutions to development challenges spanning all USAID technical sectors and global geographic regions.

options for a rigorous impact evaluation, of which at least one must be an RCT. To meet this objective, The Principal Investigator (PI) will engage in a series of consultations with the USAID Implementing Partner (IP), USAID stakeholders (The USAID Guatemala Mission, LAC Bureau, and OCE, among others), and other stakeholders or subject matter experts. This will allow the PI to understand the violence-prevention components of the Smart and Secure Cities activity in detail, identify potential research questions for an impact evaluation based on stakeholder learning/implementation objectives, and assess the feasibility of experimental and quasi-experimental impact evaluation approaches.

During these consultations, the PI will be expected to share relevant lessons from existing evidence and theory with USAID Guatemala and the IP and discuss options to evaluate the impact of promising participant selection and/or operational approaches, or of the overall impact of an intervention on key outcomes. Illustrative approaches could include methods for participant recruitment, eligibility determination, and retention and completion. They could also include examining the relative efficacy of using self-assessed risk/protective factors to identify at-risk youth versus assessments conducted by external parties.

The PI is expected to prepare and present an evaluation options memo that includes a literature review of relevant evidence and describes up to three impact evaluation options. If no opportunity to conduct a rigorous impact evaluation exists, PI should state that and may propose another evaluation or assessment (e.g. formative or performance evaluation) that does not aim to address issues of impact attribution. For each evaluation option, the PI will

- 1) **Propose research question(s) and provide a high-level description of the evaluation methodology to answer them.** These research questions should address stakeholder interests, e.g. operational and/or impact concerns. The associated evaluation should be designed to provide actionable information to stakeholders (e.g. to inform decisions around design adaptations, scale-up of the intervention, or adoption of the approach by other stakeholders).
- 2) **Describe the feasibility of the option.** Including the benefits and limitations of the proposed design with respect to the evaluation’s ability to credibly measure the intervention’s impact, potential risks to the integrity of the evaluation (both programmatic and contextual/political), and any other issues that stakeholders should consider when selecting an evaluation option (e.g. contribution to the state of evidence on an approach/theory in the Latin American context).

It is expected that, during discussions to identify these options, PI may also provide evidence-based recommendations to USAID Guatemala and the Smart and Secure Cities activity’s IP on the design of one or more interventions that comprise the secondary- and/or tertiary violence prevention components to be evaluated. However, no deliverables associated with these potential recommendations will be required and the IP will not be required to incorporate them.

	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Prospective Deadline (to be adjusted once the research team is identified)</b>
1	Literature review ( <b>5-page limit</b> )	Approx. timeline: Feb/March 2024 - June/July 2024
2	A memo proposing one to three evaluation design options, of which at least one should be an RCT. The write-up should include the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Proposed research question</li> <li>b. High-level description of the methodology to answer the research question</li> </ol>	Approx. timeline: Feb/March 2024 - June/July 2024

	c. Feasibility discussions (including advantages/benefits and limitations) of each	
3	LASER PULSE and USAID review	Two weeks after the completion of the memo
4	Memo presentation/webinar	Approx. Timeline: July/August 2024

**Estimated Funding and Timeline for the Design and Scoping Phase:** 40-50 person days over 3-5 months. The estimated Funding and Timeline for the Impact Evaluation Phase will be determined after the close of the Design and Scoping Phase.

**II. Impact Evaluation Phase (Potential)**

It is anticipated that upon completion of the Design and Scoping phase, USAID will select an option from the memo, (listed as Deliverable 2 in the previous phase), for the PI to develop into a full impact evaluation Scope Of Work (SOW), pending availability of funds and feasibility of an impact evaluation. If USAID decides to move forward with the Impact Evaluation phase, below is the description of the phase.

This phase will include the implementation of an impact evaluation of the USAID Safe and Secure Cities Activity:

- 1) Evaluation activities will include the design and testing of data collection instruments; data collection (including but not limited to specifying the sample frame, surveys, collection of any monitoring data not collected by the IP, and any relevant administrative data); coordination with USAID, the IP, and local stakeholders; all data analysis; and drafting, submission, and revision of evaluation reports, presentations, summaries, and other knowledge products. These activities will be further refined in the evaluation SOW for this phase.
- 2) The PI, in coordination with USAID/Guatemala and the selected IP, will propose an evaluation workshop, launch event, or other in-person gathering to ensure stakeholder alignment with the evaluation goals and implementation.

**C. OVERVIEW OF CAPACITY STATEMENT (CSs) AND SELECTION PROCESS**

USAID and LASER PULSE seek capacity statements (CSs) to identify and assess the feasibility of up to three options for a rigorous impact evaluation, of which at least one must be a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT), of an upcoming USAID citizen security activity in Guatemala.

The applicants should meet the qualifications, expertise, and experience in areas and roles identified in the eligibility and qualifications section below. We require all applicants to register on the LASER PULSE Network at <https://laserpulse.org/network/>.

**I. Qualifications**

The impact evaluation team is expected to include at least one Principal investigator (PI), with a preference for the involvement of a team. Collectively the team must have the following qualifications:

- Ph.D. in political science, economics, or related field
- Experience conducting rigorous empirical research, including evaluations utilizing randomization, in citizen security and/or youth-oriented crime and violence prevention programs

- At least five articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals, including at least one presenting results of a randomized controlled trial
- Expertise in measurement and survey work related to crime and violence prevention
- Demonstrated ability to work and coordinate closely with the implementing partner, USAID, and local stakeholders to find a workable design that meets both the needs of the evaluation and matches the operating environment and implementation realities
- Professional fluency in Spanish and English

## II. Eligibility

Every applying team or individual is encouraged to include researchers from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the US and/or Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs), especially from Latin America and/or Guatemala. The CS will be assessed according to the strength and experience of the whole team when applying as a team.

Individual applicants and teams must apply under an umbrella institution that can receive U.S. federal funds, i.e., an institution registered on <https://sam.gov/content/home> with a UEI number provided by the U.S. government, or an institution in the process of registration on <https://sam.gov/content/home> to acquire UEI (please read the requirements in the call).

Applicants with an active SAM.gov registration will be given priority, though applicants with a SAM.gov application in process will also be considered.

## III. Data collection capabilities

The PI's recipient institution should have the ability to subcontract for data collection through an affiliated University or other institution in Guatemala.

## IV. Required Documents for Submission

Use the [Capacity Statement Template](#) provided. The CSs must be in English, with narrative portions prepared in MS Word or Open Office format, using Calibri font, size 11, or similar typeset in single line spacing. They must include the following sections:

### 1. CS Information:

- Title: USAID/Guatemala and OCE Impact Evaluation Scoping for a Citizen Security Activity**
- Team or Individual Submission:** *(Please state if it is an individual or team application)*
- Contact details (Team/Individual):** Full name, position, affiliation, role on the project, and contact information. If applying as a team, include the PI and all other collaborators on the team and their roles and responsibilities (For example, Co-PI, sector technical expert, etc).
- High-Level Workplan and Budget:** Applicants must provide a high-level work plan for accomplishing the proposed design and scoping phase activities and budget. **(1-page limit).**
- Overview of relevant expertise in impact evaluation methodology, crime and violence research and practice, and in Guatemala and/or Latin America:** Please describe how the team's collective experience conducting impact evaluations; designing, implementing, or evaluating crime and violence interventions and research; and in Guatemala or Latin America; will allow it to conduct a high-quality, policy-relevant impact evaluation of the Smart and Secure Cities activity. **(1-page limit).**
- Individual Capacity Statement:** A brief description of each individual's relevant prior work; a list of publications is sufficient. **(1/2-page limit per individual).**

- g. Team Roles and Responsibilities:** Please explain the management structure for the research team as well as the roles and responsibilities of each team member (**1-page limit**).
- h. Availability and partnerships for impact evaluation phase:** *Upon the completion of the design and scoping phase and at the approval by USAID, will you and your team be available to conduct the impact evaluation using the selected research design for the Impact Evaluation phase? Please list additional partners that you may include for the Impact Evaluation Implementation Phase (this is not binding and may change to reflect the selected evaluation design).*

**2. Curriculum Vitae (CV):** A CV of each individual, including academic record and a list of publications relevant to the research (**4-page limit**).

**3. Supporting Documents (optional):** Please attach 1-2 examples of evaluation options memo/evaluation feasibility assessments or relevant reports of scoping design options.

#### V. Capacity Statement submission Information and deadline

- **Applicants should submit their CSs and optional documents through Qualtrics at [this link](#) (or go to [https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_7P3STZSQImHbd5k](https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7P3STZSQImHbd5k)) on January 16, 2024 by 5:00 pm EST. Items to submit**
  - 1) Capacity statement and CVs, under section IV ‘Required Documents for Submission’, should be combined into one (1) PDF.**
  - 2) Supporting Documents (optional):** Please attach 1-2 examples of evaluation options memo/evaluation feasibility assessments or relevant reports of scoping design options in one (1) PDF.
- Prospective applicants can submit any questions concerning the call for capacity statements. Questions should be sent to Leulsegged Kasa ([lmekonen@purdue.edu](mailto:lmekonen@purdue.edu)) with the Subject Line: “Questions for LASER PULSE OCE Guatemala Impact Evaluation Application”. Questions should be received no later than **January 10, 2024, at 5:00 pm EST.**

#### VI. Capacity Statement Review

LASER PULSE and the USAID team will review all capacity statements. The submitted CSs will be evaluated by a committee of peer reviewers, jointly selected by USAID and LASER PULSE. The CS review will be conducted based on the following criteria:

- **Research Study Expertise:** based on the demonstrated past experiences in designing and implementing rigorous empirical research, including evaluations utilizing RCT, in citizen security and/or youth-oriented crime and violence prevention programs.
- **In-country Experience:** based on demonstrated experience of similar work conducted in Guatemala and/or Latin America, an understanding of country/region context, and existing or proposed connections to in-country organizations/ stakeholders for primary data collection purposes.
- **PI (and Co-PI) Leadership Capacity:** demonstrated capacity to co-design and lead the impact evaluation work and capacity to engage with various stakeholders (i.e. USAID OCE, LAC Bureau, Guatemala, and the Implementing Partner).

**NOTE:** Capacity statements that demonstrate experience and evidence in the scoping and use of RCTs in impact evaluation in Guatemala will be preferred. We recommend that applicant PIs consider these criteria when forming their research teams.

**LASER PULSE Rating Definition for Capacity Statement (CS) Evaluation Criteria:**

<b>Adjectival Rating</b>	<b>Descriptive Statement: Research Study Expertise</b>
<b>Excellent (5)</b>	Proposed personnel meet all the desired technical expertise and experience described above, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated experience in designing and implementing rigorous empirical research studies, particularly impact evaluations utilizing RCT</li> <li>• demonstrated experience analyzing the impact of citizen security and/or youth-oriented crime and violence prevention programs</li> </ul>
<b>Good (3)</b>	Proposed personnel meet some of the desired expertise but fail to demonstrate expertise across both qualifications listed above, especially experience using RCT in impact evaluations.
<b>Poor (1)</b>	Proposed personnel do not meet the qualifications above.

<b>Adjectival Rating</b>	<b>Descriptive Statement: In-country Experience</b>
<b>Excellent (5)</b>	All proposed personnel have demonstrated experience conducting similar work, an understanding of the country and/or regional context, and existing or proposed connections to organizations/ stakeholders for primary data collection purposes in Guatemala.
<b>Good (3)</b>	Most proposed personnel have demonstrated experience conducting similar work, an understanding of the country context, and existing or proposed connections to organizations/ stakeholders for primary data collection purposes in Guatemala. Some personnel have similar experience in the Latin America region.
<b>Poor (1)</b>	None of the proposed personnel have demonstrated experience conducting similar work in Latin America and an understanding of the country context and existing or proposed connections to in-country organizations/ stakeholders for primary data collection purposes in Guatemala or the region.

<b>Adjectival Rating</b>	<b>Descriptive Statement: PI (and Co-PI) Leadership Capacity</b>
<b>Excellent (5)</b>	Proposed PI (and Co-PI) have the desired leadership expertise to meet the study objectives including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated Capacity to co-design and lead the impact evaluation work</li> <li>• Demonstrated capacity to engage with various stakeholders (i.e. USAID OCE/LAC Bureau/Guatemala and the Implementing Partner)</li> </ul>
<b>Good (3)</b>	Proposed PI (and Co-PI) meet some of the desired leadership expertise, especially co-design and lead impact evaluation work
<b>Poor (1)</b>	Proposed personnel do not meet the qualifications above.

Using the abovementioned criteria, the highly ranked CSs will move to the next round of co-creation<sup>2</sup>. USAID OCE will provide a final review and selection.

**D. NEXT STEPS**

<sup>2</sup> The best ranked CSs from individual applicants may be matched with other applications to form a qualified team.

Once a CS is selected, the finalist team will be invited to an orientation session hosted by LASER PULSE. The co-creation among the research team, LASER PULSE, and USAID commences after the orientation meeting to refine an in-depth program description of the Impact Evaluation Phase. As part of the full program description co-creation, the finalist team will be required to do the following:

- The Principal Investigator (PI) (and Co-PI) must (a) register on <https://laserpulse.org/network/> and (b) complete both LASER PULSE's online training [gender analysis in research](#) and [Embedded Research Translation training](#).
- All the other members of the research team are encouraged to register on the network and complete the training.

NOTES:

- LASER PULSE may contact applicants with follow-up questions on the CS submission if clarification is needed.
- LASER PULSE reserves the right to select individuals from different CSs to form a qualified research team based on experience in Guatemala and the study expertise.
- LASER PULSE reserves the right to have another call for CSs if the quality of CSs received is not satisfactory.