



# ICITAP'S FORENSICS EXPERTISE

## LAW ENFORCEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FACT SHEET

ICITAP is a leader in the delivery of forensics development assistance worldwide. ICITAP's forensic experts design and guide assistance to foreign laboratories that advance their ability to support critical investigations by providing reliable forensic evidence in a timely manner that in turn promotes public confidence in the criminal justice system.

ICITAP's efforts play a critical role in facilitating information sharing and interoperability between foreign counterparts and U.S. law enforcement. For this reason, ICITAP focuses its support on accreditation under standards from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) which ensures the reliability of forensic evidence, and its usefulness in prosecuting cases in other jurisdictions, including the United States.

### Countries with ICITAP-assisted Accredited Laboratories

Algeria	Indonesia
Brazil	Kosovo
Bulgaria	Mexico
Colombia	Panama
Costa Rica	Uzbekistan
Egypt	Ukraine

### Comprehensive Approach

ICITAP's comprehensive approach to its forensic assistance is sustainable and

outcomes driven. Program areas include: laboratory management; process improvement; technology enhancement; professional development of forensic personnel; and facility design and improvement. ICITAP programs also aim to support and integrate with broader justice sector reform initiatives in the host nation.

### Laboratory Management

Achieving accreditation is a long process that requires planning and development of a quality assurance program. ICITAP's senior forensic advisors are experienced managers. They mentor host country forensic managers in all aspects of laboratory management and guide them through the change management tactics required in the accreditation process.

To support leadership development, ICITAP partnered with the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD) to provide the first international delivery of their Leadership Academy in Mexico where ICITAP is supporting the effort to accredit all Mexican state forensic laboratories. With strong Mexican leadership, accredited laboratories will soon be the norm rather than the exception. In addition, ICITAP has developed a cadre of Latin American accreditation auditors to ensure sustainability long

### Current Programs

Central Am. (regional)	Indonesia
Colombia	Iraq
East Africa (regional)	Mexico
	Somalia

after U.S. assistance ends.

### Process Improvement

While accreditation supports the production of reliable results, forensic laboratories need to provide those results in a timely manner to provide maximum impact on criminal investigations.

To support timely results, ICITAP provides support in implementing lean six sigma practices in forensic laboratories. With ICITAP support, the forensic laboratory in Costa Rica implemented a lean six sigma program with significant impact. Following the training, the laboratory reduced the number of cases backlogged more than three months by 97% and their average turnaround time from four months to one month.

### Technology Enhancement

Modern instrumentation and forensic databases are essential tools for extracting information from physical evidence. ICITAP begins every new forensic program with an assessment of the country's current capabilities

and develops a technology enhancement plan that can be sustained by the host country. The plan often includes support for instrumentation upgrades including proper validation, in line with ISO standards, necessary to demonstrate that the new techniques and methodologies being implemented are reliable.

ICITAP provides assistance establishing fingerprint, DNA, and ballistics databases, and ensures that databases are compatible with internationally accepted formats. ICITAP frequently supports the FBI's donation of their CODIS DNA database software by providing mentoring on managing the database and quality assurance measures to ensure its integrity. ICITAP also supports the launch of laboratory information management systems (LIMS) to ensure the integrity of the chain of custody required for admission of evidence in criminal trials.

### **Personnel Development**

ICITAP provides forensic training and technical assistance both through formal courses on scientific theory and through hands-on instruction in the host country labs. When possible, ICITAP utilizes federal forensic experts to encourage long-lasting peer to peer relationships. For example, in Algeria, a visiting federal handwriting expert not only delivered training, but learned further about the intricacies of Arabic handwriting, which allowed her to be more effective on future U.S. investigations.

ICITAP also integrates host country personnel into the international forensics community by sponsoring their attendance at conferences and encouraging participation in technical working groups. This is critical to establishing centers of excellence in the host country and long-term sustainability of forensic capabilities.

### **Facilities Enhancement**

To meet international standards, laboratory facilities must be secure, support sophisticated instrumentation, and be designed to prevent the contamination of evidence. The facility should also provide a safe work environment for personnel. ICITAP provides advice on designing new or renovating existing laboratories.

In Kosovo, ICITAP worked with the U.S. Department of State to design and build an entirely new forensic laboratory. In Costa Rica, ICITAP provided guidance on an expansion of the DNA section which can allow for future creation of a convicted offender database.

### **Justice Sector Reform**

ICITAP's forensics assistance programs are designed to support the broader justice sector reform goals and are integrated into existing justice sector development programs.

In Colombia, ICITAP supports efforts to prosecute those responsible for forced disappearances and killings fueled by decades of conflict. ICITAP has trained

### **ICITAP Forensics Expertise**

ICITAP's headquarters forensics professionals possess decades of experience working in state and federal laboratories.

ICITAP partners with forensic experts from federal law enforcement agencies and from state and private labs to deliver the full range of forensic development services.

investigators and forensic professionals in the exhumation of remains from mass graves and DNA analysis of bone samples.

In Kenya, ICITAP implemented a sexual assault forensic examiner program, which resulted in the largest hospital in the country implementing a 24/7 on-call schedule for nurses and clinical officers to respond to patients reporting sexual violence.

### **About ICITAP**

ICITAP works with foreign governments to develop professional and transparent law enforcement institutions that protect human rights, combat corruption, and reduce the threat of transnational crime and terrorism. ICITAP supports both national security and foreign policy objectives.

ICITAP is funded by and works in partnership with the Department of State, USAID, Department of Defense, and the Department of Homeland Security.