



# ICITAP'S FORENSICS ASSISTANCE LAW ENFORCEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FACT SHEET

ICITAP is a leader in the delivery of U.S. forensics development assistance world-wide. The goal of ICITAP's forensics programs is to improve the capability and reliability of selected foreign forensic laboratories. This enhances international cooperation on criminal investigations by improving the ability of forensics laboratories to share reliable data and information.

ICITAP's team of forensics specialists at Washington headquarters develop and oversee programs that help foreign laboratories achieve international accreditation under standards issued by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

## Development Methods

ICITAP uses a range of development methods: mentoring forensic laboratory managers on how to implement a quality assurance program; providing training and technical assistance in all forensic disciplines to laboratory personnel; donating forensic equipment and instruments; advising on facility design and improvements; and sponsoring participation of forensic personnel from program countries at international forensic conferences.

## Laboratory Management

Achieving international accreditation is a long process that requires solid management skills such as strategic planning, budgeting, and administration of a professional quality assurance program.

ICITAP's senior forensic advisors are experienced laboratory managers. They mentor host country personnel in all aspects of laboratory management and through all phases of the accreditation process.

In Ukraine, ICITAP assisted the Ministry of Interior Forensic Center with the development of a strategic plan to achieve international accreditation. The plan includes the development of a completely new set of standard operating procedures and the creation of a quality manager position. ICITAP also arranged for Ukrainian personnel to participate in internal audits at U.S. forensic

## Applicable Standards

- ISO 17025 - Standards for Testing and Calibration Laboratories
- International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation G19 - Guidelines for Forensic Science Laboratories

## Current Programs

Colombia	Paraguay
Indonesia	Tajikistan
Kenya	Turkmenistan
Mexico	Ukraine
Moldova	Uganda
Morocco	Uzbekistan

laboratories to improve their understanding of the required standards. With ICITAP's assistance, the Ukrainian lab is on schedule to apply for accreditation in late 2009.

## Facilities Enhancement

To meet international standards, laboratory facilities must be secure and set up 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 a new forensic laboratory. In Tajikistan, ICITAP directed the renovation of the laboratory to include upgraded electrical systems and new heating and cooling units that reduce the need for open windows.

## 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 instrumentation upgrades.

ICITAP provides equipment and assistance to establish fingerprint, DNA, and ballistics databases, and ensures that databases are compatible with internationally accepted formats.

A laboratory information management system (LIMS) has also been installed by ICITAP in Bulgaria. The LIMS ensures the integrity of the evidence by tracking the chain of custody required for admission of evidence in criminal trials.

## Personnel Development

ICITAP provides training and technical assistance on how to properly and effectively use and maintain donated equipment, and on a wide range of forensic techniques and issues.

ICITAP provides formal courses on scientific theory, hands-on instruction in the host country lab, and internships for host country personnel in U.S. labs. Internships expose personnel to the proper use of modern instruments and to functioning quality assurance systems.

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.

## Justice Sector Reform

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

In Colombia, ICITAP integrated the training of sexual assault nurse examiners, equipment donations, and use of a DNA database into a broader sexual assault investigative capacity building initiative.

## Law Enforcement Information Sharing

ICITAP leverages its relationships with host country forensics personnel to facilitate the exchange of information between U.S. and host country law enforcement agencies. For example, ICITAP helped pave the way for the FBI to begin negotiating biometric data-sharing agreements with officials in selected program countries. ICITAP also facilitated the transmittal of drug samples from a police seizure in Kyrgyzstan to the Drug Enforcement Agency's lab, providing the United States with valuable insight into methamphetamine production in the Central Asia region.

## ICITAP Forensics Expertise

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

ICITAP partners with forensic experts from federal law enforcement agencies and from state and private labs to deliver the full menu of forensic development services, including:

- Crime Scene Processing
- Fingerprints
- Firearms/Tool Marks
- Questioned Documents
- Drug Chemistry
- Arson and Explosives
- Biology/DNA/Serology
- Toxicology
- Forensic Medicine
- Anthropology
- Digital Evidence
- Photography

## 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 State Department (in particular, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs), the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Defense Department, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation.