



U.S. - Mexico At a Glance

Merida Initiative - Demand Reduction in Mexico

“Drugs are a problem that concerns us all, every one of us, not just because drug trafficking generates violence in our communities, but because with every consumer we lose a child and his or her contribution towards creating a better world.”

*Margarita Zavala
First Lady of Mexico*

“We are supporting demand reduction in Mexico through treatment programs and drug courts. We work with Mexico every day to combat illegal drugs and cartel violence, and we look forward to continuing that cooperation.”

*R. Gil Kerlikowske
Director, National Drug
Control Policy*

Over the past several years, drug use inside Mexico has increased. In response, the Calderon Administration has made demand reduction an integral part of its anti-drug strategy. The U.S. has worked closely with Mexico on this effort, providing resources and expertise necessary to support Mexico's demand reduction endeavors.

How is the Merida Initiative Helping?

The Merida initiative is funding a number of initiatives, including:

- The U.S. and Mexican governments are working together to create the National Network for Technological Transfer in Addictions (RENADIC), which will extend web-based interconnectivity to more than 300 CONADIC “Nueva Vida” treatment centers, as well as to local governments and non-governmental organizations. \$6.5 million in Merida funding is being used to purchase computer hardware and software to provide a distance learning platform for the entire country to facilitate training and technical assistance on drug prevention and treatment.
- In December 2009, 24 professionals across six Mexican states kicked off a project for the training and certification of drug treatment providers in Mexico. This \$2.4 million Merida-funded project aims to improve the skills and certify front-line drug treatment counselors across Mexico, with an end-goal of training over 600 counselors.
- \$500,000 has been allocated to help the Mexican Government begin forming drug-free community coalitions. The creation of these coalitions will serve as a catalyst for increased citizen participation in efforts to reduce substance use among youth.
- With \$1.2 million in Merida Initiative support, a drug treatment/certification training program is being developed to assist Mexico in determining “best practices” to better establish substance abuse treatment policies and program development.

What's ahead?

The U.S. Government is committed to demand reduction efforts both within the United States and in Mexico. Going forward, with Merida funding, it will continue to support Mexico as it develops its demand reduction capabilities and infrastructure.



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