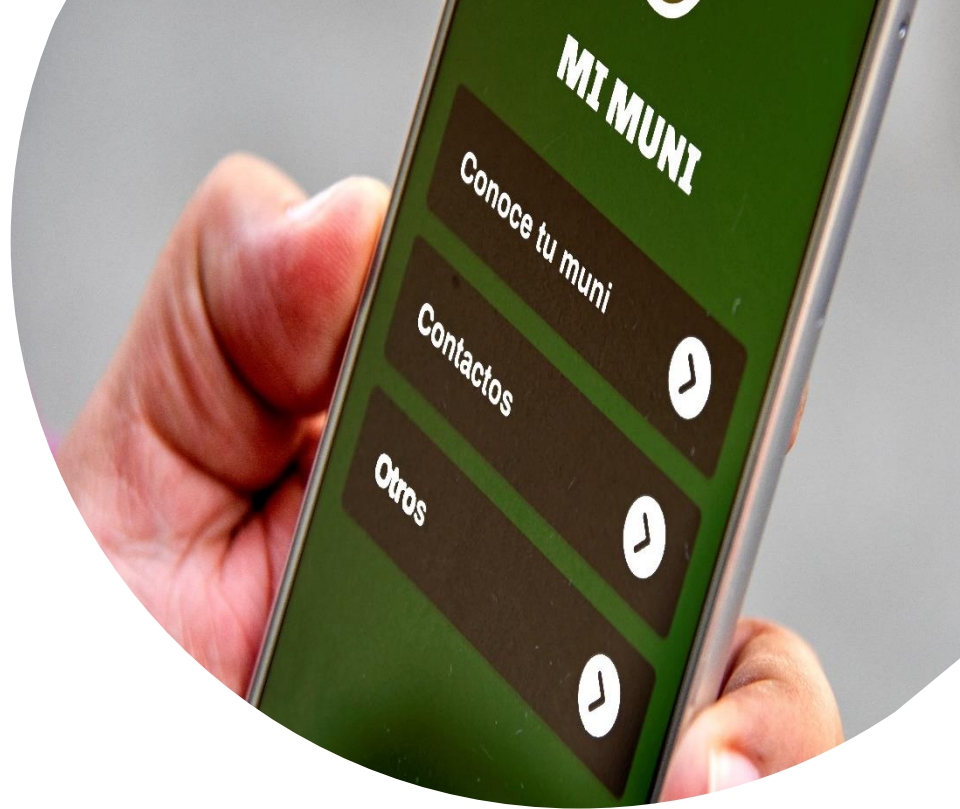




USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



GOVERNANCE IN GUATEMALA

Working closely with government institutions, USAID and its partners implement a wide range of projects to address governance and democracy issues to benefit Guatemala's progress, which include enacting and implementing legislative reforms towards transparent and participatory policy making and electoral processes, including broader civic engagement.

Projects seek to develop and strengthen independent and transparent systems to eliminate conflicts of interest, improve the government's capacity to raise and manage public resources, initiate reforms to improve fiscal and operational transparency, and provide services to all citizens. USAID participates by providing technical support to municipal and national institutions, engaging civil society to promote rule of law, free and fair elections, and supporting transparent and accountable governance and financial management, which leads to less corruption and helps reduce irregular migration.

CONTEXT & CHALLENGES

Governance challenges in Guatemala, including widespread corruption, undercut progress on economic opportunity, protection of human rights, and civilian security. Weak democratic institutions, coupled with rampant impunity, have lowered citizens' trust in their governments and the independence of judicial systems. And as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Guatemala all too often failed to provide needed services to their citizens and lack of government investment in infrastructure, education, health, and civilian security has hobbled advancement.

Poverty and economic inequality, pervasive crime and corruption, and political leaders' drift toward authoritarian rule have stunted economic growth and diverted critical resources from healthcare and education, robbing citizens of hope and spurring migration. The worsening impacts of climate change, manifesting as prolonged periods of drought and devastating storms, have exacerbated these conditions and undermined U.S. and international interests, and contributed to irregular migration.

IMPROVING GOVERNANCE

Effecting systemic change and achieving the desired end state of a democratic, prosperous, and safe country will require the government of Guatemala to govern in a transparent, professional, and inclusive manner that favors the public interest over narrow private interests. U.S. foreign assistance cannot substitute for political will, however, these tools can generate political leverage, empower champions of change, combat impunity and state capture, and catalyze improvements in governance, private investment, and human capital.

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