

PROJECT PROFILE

# Guatemala Justice and Transparency Project: Private Sector Engagement to Strengthen Guatemala's Justice Sector



**PROJECT NAME**

Guatemala Justice and Transparency Project: Private Sector Engagement to Strengthen Guatemala's Justice Sector

**CLIENT**

USAID

**PRIME CONTRACTOR**

Checchi and Company Consulting (now Dexis Consulting)

**PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Resonance

**COUNTRY**

Guatemala

**TIME PERIOD**

July 2020-July 2022

## Challenge

Guatemala suffers from weak rule of law and high levels of crime, ranking 101 out of the 128 countries in the World Justice Project's 2020 Rule of Law Index. The country's justice and security sectors are working to expand, improve, and specialize their services and capacity; yet, they are hampered by limited and unbalanced institutional budgets, as well as corruption and the permeation of organized crime. In a context of weakened rule of law, companies face high costs and added risks in conducting business operations in Guatemala, including direct theft of products, demands for bribes or ransom for goods and employees, and smuggling. These are particularly burdensome for small- and medium-size enterprises and startups.

For related reasons, there is also a deep lack of trust between the private sector and the Government of Guatemala (GoG). Crime and corruption make it more difficult for companies to attract and retain talent, companies pay high costs to combat and deter criminality, and they tend to underutilize the justice sector due to lack of confidence in its effectiveness. This prevents the private sector and GoG from working together to implement best practices for governance and transparency in the country's justice sector.

## Solution

The USAID Guatemala Justice and Transparency Project — led by Checchi and Company Consulting (now Dexis Consulting) — is focused on strengthening Guatemalan justice system institutions to more effectively and efficiently investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate crime to reduce corruption and impunity. Through this work, the project seeks to improve conditions for marginalized populations in Guatemala, and by extension, reduce pressures that prompt illegal immigration to the U.S.

As a subcontractor to Checchi and Company Consulting for Year 1 and 2, Resonance is helping guide private sector engagement (PSE) and partnership development to advance the project's goals.

Through this work, we are helping the project team gain a greater understanding of the current private sector landscape in Guatemala, as well as the main challenges and opportunities for the private sector related to justice, transparency, and rule of law issues in Guatemala. We will also help shape a project PSE strategy, outline concrete opportunities for shared-value collaboration, and establish an initial set of private sector partnerships.

## Key Results

Resonance led two Rapid Partnership Appraisals (RPAs) mapping over 90 companies and interviewing 37 companies, universities, foundations, and other potential partners to understand their goals, commercial or operational challenges, their perspective on justice and rule of law issues in Guatemala, and relevant corporate social responsibility programs and activities. After the first round of interviews, Resonance outlined four possible private sector partnership approaches:

1. Create a collective platform for the 'emerging' private sector to diversify private sector voices on justice and transparency issues.
2. Leverage technology and data companies' platforms to improve transparency within justice system institutions.
3. Leverage private sector resources to more effectively share, teach, or support citizen access to the justice system.
4. Harness private sector expertise in institutional transparency for information exchange and capacity building for the justice system.

Resonance facilitated a two-part PSE 101 workshop to help build project staff capacity to integrate

PSE into their own activities. We also led internal strategy sessions with project staff to select high potential partners.

As part of Year 2, Resonance is currently developing an overall PSE strategy, to embed PSE across project activities and leverage it effectively to advance long-term project objectives. Resonance will also help establish at least two private sector partnerships, likely linked to the project's work on communication campaigns highlighting vulnerable populations and/or training of government officials to improve governance and transparency best practices.