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**GUATEMALA**

## SNAPSHOT

# One-Stop-Shop for Imports will Increase Commerce in Guatemala



*Photo: USAID PRS Project  
DERCAS of the One-Stop-Shop for Imports  
delivered to MINECO, AGEXPORT, and  
Chamber of Industry*

The One-Stop-Shop for Imports, (Ventanilla Ágil de Importaciones in Spanish), will make the use of current Free Trade Agreements more efficient; will improve competitiveness, and will be an important tool for the application of DR-CAFTA commitments. Its design and development is a product of joint work between the Government of Guatemala, the private sector, with the technical support of USAID.

### Telling Our Story

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Guatemala, like many other developing countries, faces many challenges while working to foster sustainable development. Improving Guatemala's competitiveness and facilitating foreign trade are important milestones to achieve when working towards this goal. However, to import goods required numerous steps and procedures spread across more than ten government institutions.

To improve the foreign trade administration's internal processes, USAID's Policy Regulatory Support for Economic Growth (PRS) Project, working with Guatemala's Ministry of Economy (MINECO, Spanish acronym), developed the One-Stop-Shop for Imports. With this One-Stop-Shop, the current complex import procedures will be decentralized and automated to consist of only one procedure.

The PRS Project provided specialized technical assistance for the development of the conceptual design's acceptance criteria, specifications document, requirements, and software acceptance criteria (DERCAS, Spanish acronym) as well as the Bill Proposal which includes the creation of this One-Stop-Shop (Initiative 4647, Framework for the National System of Competitiveness and Productivity Law). These results were the outcome of joint work between the PRS Project and the Government of Guatemala together with the private sector, namely the Guatemala Exporter's Association (AGEXPORT, Spanish acronym), and the Chambers of Industry and Commerce.

In January 2013, the Framework Law for the National System for Competitiveness and Productivity, formulated in alliance with AGEXPORT, was delivered by the President to the Congress of Guatemala as Bill Initiative 4647. With the participation of all corresponding institutions, the Chamber of Industry presented DERCAS to all actors and gave this important tool to MINECO in April 2013.

The continuous and coordinated work of the public and private sectors shows their commitment to continue the work supported by USAID in order to reach the operational phase of the One-Stop-Shop for Imports. This entity will improve the competitiveness of productive sectors, contribute to the efficient use of current Free Trade Agreements, and have a positive impact in both the Doing Business cross-border trade indicator and the application of Dominican Republic – Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) commitments.