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# USAID MUNICIPAL COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT

## Annual Performance Report October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014



A group of participants at the 2013 MCI presentation forum held on February 13, 2014 in San Salvador

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# USAID Municipal Competitiveness Project (MCP)

Annual Performance Report

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

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# Acronyms

ADEPRO	<i>Aplicación y Desarrollo de Servicios Profesionales, S.A. de C.V. /</i> Application and Development of Professional Services, S.A. de C.V.
ALN	<i>Asociación de Municipios de los Nonualcos</i>
AMUVASAN	<i>Asociación de Municipios del Valle San Andrés</i>
ASITECHI	<i>Asociación Intermunicipal Sierra Tecapa Chinameca</i>
DF4D	Domestic Finance for Development
EMPRE	<i>Unidad Municipal para el Desarrollo Empresarial/Municipal Unit for</i> Enterprise Development
EPCI	<i>Evaluación Participativa de Capacidades/Participatory Local</i> Organization Capacity Assessment
ESEN	<i>Escuela Superior de Economía y Negocios/Economy and Business</i> Superior School
FUNDE	<i>Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo/National Foundation for</i> Development
FUNDES	<i>Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible</i>
FY	fiscal year
ISP	Institutional Strengthening Plan
LAIP	<i>Ley de Acceso a la Información Pública/Access to Public Information</i> Law
MCC	Municipal Competitiveness Committee
MCI	Municipal Competitiveness Index
MCP	Municipal Competitiveness Project
MREB	<i>Micro-región El Bálsamo</i>
OSW	One-Stop Windows
PfG	Partnership for Growth
PPD	public-private dialogue
Q	fiscal quarter
SACDEL	<i>Sistema de Asesoría y Capacitación para el Desarrollo Local/Assistance</i> and Training for Local Development System
SIMTRA	<i>Programa de Simplificación de Trámites/Administrative Process</i> Simplification
UCA	<i>Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas</i>
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## Executive Summary

The original period of the Municipal Competitiveness Project (MCP) covered a time span of 42 months, from September 2010 to March 2014, and provided technical assistance to 50 municipalities. The project received a no-cost extension through June 6, 2014 and a costed extension through March 28, 2015.

The MCP contributed to enhancing municipal effectiveness and efficiency by introducing the Administrative Process Simplification (SIMTRA) and One-Stop Windows (OSWs) as tools to promote local growth and economic development for each municipality. During this reporting year, MCP assisted 27 municipalities to open OSWs. By the end of the project's original period, 37 municipalities opened 49 OSWs, simplifying the business process registration and promoting the creation of businesses and the generation of job opportunities.

Throughout fiscal year (FY) 2014, improved licensing procedures led to a total of 1,110 business registrations and 5,273 new jobs, 2,643 for women and 2,630 for men. To date, the MCP has surpassed life-of-project goals for company registrations and new employment opportunities generated.

The Municipal Competitive Index (MCI) has become a local tool for measuring municipal performance in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. During FY2014, several outreach events were organized and MCI reports were distributed to higher education institutions and government entities as a reference for setting a benchmark for assessment of municipalities.

The establishment of Municipal Competitive Committees (MCCs) provided the private sector with a single, organized structure for promoting business plans generated from within each community and the resources to channel ideas to the different economic entities associated with financing, promoting, and supporting private sector initiatives.

One of the most successful initiatives within the original period was the creation of six Municipal Units for Enterprise Development (EMPREs) as a new model to link private entrepreneurs from each municipality with national level service providers.

Domestic Finance for Development (DF4D) grants supported 29 initiatives in 20 municipalities. Projects included the construction of vocational training centers, as well as sport and cultural facilities. Unused budget balances for this component are expected to be reinvested in grants for transparency strengthening and revenue mobilization during the extension period.

# I. Introduction

## A. Background

The USAID-funded MCP was designed to improve the competitiveness of municipalities by building their capacity to facilitate dialogue with the private sector, supporting economic development, and promoting the investment climate while integrating joint efforts to prevent violence.

The original MCP period was implemented by RTI International in collaboration with four Salvadoran organizations: (1) *Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo* (FUNDE), (2) *Sistema de Asesoría y Capacitación para el Desarrollo Local* (SACDEL), (3) *Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible* (FUNDES), and (4) *Escuela Superior de Economía y Negocios* (ESEN).

The extension period commenced on June 7, 2014. RTI subcontracted three organizations to implement it: (1) *Aplicación y Desarrollo de Servicios Profesionales, S.A. de C.V.* (ADEPRO), FUNDE, and SACDEL.

During its original period, the project featured four major components: (1) enhancing municipal effectiveness and efficiency, (2) the MCI, (3) private sector and inter-jurisdictional engagement, and (4) DF4D, which was aimed at preventing violence. During the extension period, three new components (derived from the original ones), were added to continue leveraging the MCP's achievements. These include improving effective and efficient local government administration, developing alliances between public and private sectors to continue improving the municipal business environment, and developing local institutional capacity building.

## B. Overall Project Performance

FY2014 witnessed the completion of the original MCP period, which surpassed the initial goals outlined at the beginning of the project. The creation of new firms and jobs exceeded targets by 187% and 168%, respectively, thanks to the continued creation of OSWs for business service, which facilitates registration procedures. Section I describes in greater detail the main project achievements by component.

MCP has continued to contribute to overcoming two growth constraints in El Salvador identified by Partnership for Growth (PfG): (1) crime and security, and (2) low productivity in the tradable sector. Specifically, through DF4D funding MCP has targeted PfG goals

- 1.7. Dialogue on actions to improve citizen security;
- 1.11. Crime and violence prevention; and
- 2.4. Improvement in local tax revenue.

MCP has continued to progress towards PfG goals 2.1– Improving relationships between government and the private sector, and 2.5 – Attracting and promoting foreign direct investment by building dialogue and cooperation between public and private sectors at the local level, which in turn creates better business environments for attracting investments.

### C. Selected municipalities for MCP extension

On July 9, 2014, RTI hosted the launch event for the MCP extension period. During the launch, the MCP project team facilitated a presentation on the activities expected to be implemented by the project and explained the additional responsibilities and commitments the municipalities would need to adhere to in order to receive assistance during the extension.

The 14 municipalities (*Table 1*) participating in the MCP extension are those that met the following selection criteria approved by USAID on July 10, 2014:

- Commitment by the municipality to reform and improve the business environment through the development of EMPREs. This will be gauged by a letter of commitment from the municipality that must be signed before MCP begins work.
- Interest by the active MCCs to work with the private sector. This will be evidenced by the level of integration of public and private efforts at the local level and a letter from the MCC stating its commitment to continue closely working with the local private sector.
- Degree of economic potential to achieve the expected results of the project. This will be measured by the number of businesses in the municipality (data obtained from *Directorios de Establecimientos/Unidades Económicas 2011/2012*).
- Commitment by the municipality to provide cash or in-kind counterpart contributions. This will be measured by a signed letter of commitment from the municipality to hire or assign a full-time EMPRE manager (who will be screened and recruited according to a predetermined job description) and provision and disclosure of resources available for both MCP activities and planned follow-up.
- Ranking “average” or above in the MCI 2013.

**Table 1: Municipalities Selected in Compliance with USAID Approved Criteria**

No.	Municipality	Letter from Mayor Regarding Commitment by the Municipality to Reform and Improve the Business Environment through the Development of EMPRES	Interest by the MCC to work with the private sector	Number of Businesses (2011–2012) that have a Degree of Economic Potential to Achieve the Expected Results of the Project	Letter from Mayor Regarding the Commitment by the Municipality to Provide Cash or In-kind counterpart contributions	Ranking “Average” or above in the MCI 2013	
						Position	Performance
1	San Salvador	Yes	Full compliance	30,338	Yes	8	High
2	Santa Tecla	Yes	Very satisfactory compliance	5,196	Yes	64	Average
3	Zacatecoluca	Yes	Full compliance	2,595	Yes	25	Average
4	San Martín	Yes	Full compliance	1,968	Yes	83	Average
5	Tonacatepeque	Yes	Full compliance	1,945	Yes	50	Average
6	Ciudad Arce	Yes	Full compliance	1,625	Yes	13	High
7	Sensuntepeque	Yes	Full compliance	1,262	Yes	54	Average
8	Chalatenango	Yes	Very satisfactory compliance	1,216	Yes	57	Average
9	Nahuizalco	Yes	Full compliance	885	Yes	78	Average
10	Santiago Nonualco	Yes	Full compliance	586	Yes	18	High
11	Ciudad Barrios	Yes	Full compliance	389	Yes	21	High
12	Suchitoto	Yes	Full compliance	389	Yes	29	Average
13	Candelaria de la Frontera	Yes	Full compliance	339	Yes	60	Average
14	Tecoluca	Yes	Above average compliance	337	Yes	53	Average

## II: Highlights of Key Activities

### Component 1: Enhancing Municipal Effectiveness and Efficiency

Under Component 1, MCP sought to improve municipal management efficiency by eliminating the barriers that obstruct investment initiatives, generating immediate impact in reducing corruption, and increasing business and job opportunities.

#### **A. Administrative Process Simplification**

SIMTRA has proven to be an important tool for helping municipalities improve the efficiency of administrative procedures in processing business permits and generating a better business climate. By implementing SIMTRA, faster firm registration and job creation have been clearly enhanced.

OSW services required active MCP assistance in terms of providing detailed work plans and close supervision to achieve the expected results. Equally important was the communication strategy that disseminates the new service and requirement from entrepreneurs. Finally, staff training for employees, and their potential backups, was essential to maintain efficient operations.

Through SIMTRA, 30 OSWs were inaugurated in 27 municipalities in FY14 for a total of 49 OSWs in 37 municipalities during the project's original period. This result exceeded the MCP goal of 33 municipalities operating OSWs. Municipalities have managed to simplify processes and reduce time to register businesses by 95%, thereby improving the business enabling environment.

#### **New Businesses and New Jobs**

MCP sought to improve municipal management efficiency by eliminating barriers that block investment plans, generating immediate benefits in reducing corruption, and increasing economic activity. Throughout FY2014, MCP-supported improvements across municipalities led to a total of 1,110 business registrations which in turn have resulted in the creation of 5,273 new jobs, 2,643 for women and 2,630 for men.

At the end of the project's original period, MCP goals were surpassed. New businesses and jobs exceeded targets by 187% and 168% respectively. Cumulative results recorded the creation of 3,294 new businesses and 10,145 new jobs, one in every two resulting in opportunities for women, which is outstanding in term of gender equality.

#### **B. Municipal Competitiveness Committees and Plans**

A full analysis was conducted of the 50 MCCs created by the project with the purpose of determining their status at the end of the project's original period. 35 MCCs continued working normally and regularly after three years of MCP implementation.

The analysis examined a municipality’s commitment to project goals. For ranking purposes, the criteria were equally weighted. The municipality was ranked “high level” when it complied with the following criteria:

- a. Public–private representative balanced structure.
- b. Member turnover.
- c. Well-defined organizational structure.
- d. Meeting management.
- e. Legally created MCC operation.
- f. Explicit rules and regulation for MCC operation.
- g. Clear communications strategy.

It was determined that the MCCs most likely to fail were those that ranked low on “member turnover” and “clear communications strategy”.

Eighteen MCCs maintain a high level of commitment, 17 a medium level, and 15 a low level. Overall, 70% of the MCCs ranked between “medium” and “high”, which is considered a successful result and promises sustainability in the future.

Technical assistance from FUNDE and SACDEL was fundamental in revising the Municipal Competitiveness Plans in 40 municipalities. The revision allowed for the establishment of MCC’s operating regulations and enhancement of the delegation of responsibilities among members, which has improved public-private dialogue (PPD) and the ability to follow up on agreements.

### ***C. Transparency and Competitiveness Pacts***

The signing of these pacts set the stage for promoting diverse actions aimed at strengthening municipal transparency and increasing the citizens’ trust in local governments.

MCP offered technical assistance to 24 municipalities during FY2014 to design and improve transparency portals that contain updated information required by the Access to Public Information Law (LAIP). The portals were technically well designed and are available on the municipalities’ web pages. In addition, municipal officials were trained on the use and administration of the municipal transparency portal, structure of the portal, physical implementation process of the website, and specific online portal.

The MCP team advised the municipalities that they must work on updating and enhancing the information presented in these portals as this is essential for improving the quality of information presented. Further, the MCP team noted that the municipalities should consider hiring, or allocating current staff, to perform these duties.

The MCP held a **Transparency in Public Administration Management Progress and Challenges** forum on December 4, 2013 in San Salvador. It aimed to ensure the strengthening of transparency in municipal public management and to generate trust between the citizens, private sector, and local government, which translates into a favorable investment climate and generation of jobs in the municipalities. 165 people participated, including mayors, council

members, information access officials, entrepreneurs, media, and members of MCCs from the 50 MCP municipalities.

#### ***D. Training for Capacity Building***

Capacity building continued during FY14, training members from the municipalities and the MCCs on several topics including transparency and municipal competitiveness, managing the transparency website and portal, methodological design in preparing business plans, women as leaders and entrepreneurs in local economic development, progress and experience of the EMPREs, and coordination of EMPRE-business association-tourism initiatives.

Seventy-two participants (41 from the public sector and 31 from private enterprises), from 19 municipalities, successfully completed a diploma in Local Economic Development, implemented by the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA), and graduated on January 29, 2014. The course provided them with tools to better plan and direct economic development and competitiveness actions at the local level.

During FY2014, a total of 680 people (413 women and 267 men) were trained for a cumulative total of 5,467 people (2,845 women and 2,622 men) through September 30, 2014.

### **Component 2: Municipal Competitiveness Index**

The MCI has become a tool used as a reference by local governments to build a favorable business climate. Fourteen events were held during FY2014 to disseminate MCI results and reach individuals and institutions that use this information as a fundamental reference in their interventions at the local level. Important presentations were held in San Salvador and La Libertad before an audience of 120 guests from 23 municipalities. Key speakers including the mayors of San Salvador and El Paisnal shared their success stories in using the MCI to improve municipal administration.

The MCI 2013 is the third application of this methodology in El Salvador, following the 2009 and 2011 rounds. It evaluates the business climate in 108 municipalities, as done in 2011. One hundred of these municipalities participated in the 2009 MCI.

The MCI 2013 results, as well as each of the sub-indices shown in **Table 2**, were calculated based on data collected from a sample of 8,818 businesses owners and local officials from 108 municipalities. The latter, based on their performance, were classified into five groups: (1) Excellent, (2) High, (3) Average, (4) Low, and (5) Very Low. Six municipalities ranked “Excellent”, with Atiquizaya obtaining the highest score.

It is expected that the MCI will also become a valuable instrument for business owners, unions, investors, and donors, and will promote friendly competition among municipalities which will contribute to improving economic performance in El Salvador.

Five hundred MCI reports corresponding to 2011 and 2013 were distributed to selected academic institutions such as *Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas* (UCA), ESEN and

*Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo Municipal* in order to disseminate the results and position the index as a tool for decision making.

**Table 2: Municipal Competitiveness Index Subindices**

Subindex	Description
Transparency	Degree of openness to provide access to information
Municipal Services	Quality of services
Proactivity	Level of dynamism of municipal governments to attract investments and improve the business climate
Illegal Payments	Incidence on illegal payments to start a business
Public Safety	Impact of crime and delinquency on businesses and municipality’s ability to prevent them
Time to Comply with Regulations	Frequency of inspections and number of regulations imposed to operate a business
Rates and Taxes	Rate of municipal taxes and fees
Entry Cost	Time, cost, and easiness of registering and initiating a business

### **Component 3: Private Sector and Inter-Jurisdictional Engagement**

Two important initiatives are intensively promoting a competitiveness dialogue between municipalities and the private sector. The first initiative was the creation of six EMPREs in municipalities. A second initiative was focused on promoting more participation by women in economic activities in each municipality. Women have been trained in the 50 MCP participating municipalities, making a total of 465 women trained during the life of the project.

During the extension period, the MCP team has worked on consolidating the lessons learned during the implementation of the six original EMPREs and extending the success to 14 new municipalities, which were selected to replicate the experience.

#### **A. Public-Private Dialogue and Alliances**

The MCP has prepared a draft document titled “Manual on Good Practices and Basic Techniques for Strengthening Public-Private Dialogue”. This manual is intended to contribute to the sustainability of PPD processes introduced by the MCP and to generate common and sustainable benefits. The manual presents good organizational, administrative, and operating practices to the MCCs that strengthen PPD and presents ways to adapt these practices to the experiences of each municipality. The final version is scheduled to be released to MCCs in November 2014.

**B. Municipal Associations, Micro-Regional Competitiveness Plans**

The MCP has provided technical assistance to strengthen the micro-regions focusing on developing initiatives that will favor micro-regional business associations (**Table 3**). The participating MCP micro-regions are *Asociación Intermunicipal Sierra Tecapa Chinameca* (ASITECHI), *Asociación de Municipios de los Nonualcos* (ALN), *Asociación de Municipios del Valle San Andrés* (AMUVASAN), and *Micro-región El Bálsamo* (MREB). In total, the micro-regions represent 37 municipalities.

The dialogue and action initiatives on economic development promoted by the micro-regions continued to receive MCP support on projects such as tourism initiatives and youth access to employment. Special efforts were made to support the tourism development strategy in nine municipalities.

**Table 3: Micro-Regional Activities and Achievements**

Micro-Region		Strengthening Activities October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014	Achievements
AMUVASAN	Five municipalities: <b>Department of La Libertad</b> Colon, Armenia, Sacacoyo, San Juan Opico, and Ciudad Arce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMUVASAN’s Micro-Regional Competitiveness Committee operating manual was developed and approved.</li> <li>• Service assistance providers and possible allies were visited to promote economic development in the region.</li> <li>• Coordinated with José Matías Delgado University to support the reorganization of the Quezaltepeque Market activity</li> <li>• Support was given for the development of AMUVASAN’s website to strengthen its potential to support municipalities of the micro-region and to advance in the area of transparency.</li> <li>• Actions were initiated to eliminate graffiti along the Santa Ana highway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro-regional competitiveness plans developed and committee formed.</li> <li>• Website developed. <a href="http://www.amuvasan.org">www.amuvasan.org</a>.</li> </ul>
MREB	Four municipalities: <b>Department of La Libertad</b> Jayaque, Sacacoyo, Talnique, and Tepecoyo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Regional Tourism Fairs was held in Jayaque and Sacacoyo.</li> <li>• Equipment was delivered to support the work of the tourism sector (e.g., (canopies, demonstration tables, and chairs)</li> <li>• Two career guidance days were held, replacing Employment Fairs, because the municipalities did not have sufficient response from companies for the fairs. One-hundred-thirty young people and 59 women participated during the two guidance days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro-regional competitiveness plans developed and committee formed.</li> <li>• The MREB is growing increasingly autonomous. It is developing its work plan and making important efforts to increase economic growth.</li> </ul>
ASITECHI	12 municipalities: <b>Department of Usulután</b> Alegría, Berlín, California, El Triunfo, Estanzuelas, Jucuapa, Mercedes Umaña, Nueva Granda, Santa Elena, Santiago de María,  <b>Department of San Miguel</b>  Chinameca, and Nueva Guadalupe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee has worked in coordination with UNIVO in support of ASITECHI regarding: 1) Historic Cultural heritage for Nueva Guadalupe, Chinameca, Jucuapa, Santiago de Maria y Alegria, 2) Mapping and characterizing the production of Sierra Tecapa municipalities.</li> <li>• ASITECHI Tourism Promotion Fair held; over 200 tourists visited the fair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro-regional competitiveness plans developed and committee formed.</li> <li>• Competitiveness committees have been established in the municipalities of El Triunfo and Estanzuelas</li> </ul>

Micro-Region		Strengthening Activities October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014	Achievements
ALN	16 municipalities: <b>Department of La Paz</b> Cuyultitán, El Rosario, Olocuilta, San Antonio Masahuat, San Juan Nonualco, San Juan Talpa, San Luis Talpa, San Pedro Masahuat, San Pedro Nonualco, San Rafael Obrajuelo, Santa María Ostuma, Santiago Nonualco, Tapalhuaca, Zacatecoluca, San Luis la Herradura, <b>Department of San Vicente</b> Tecoluca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance to producers of five municipalities to compete for MINECs non-refundable funds.</li> <li>• Support the development of the roundtable for fruit producers at Los Nonualcos.</li> <li>• Participation in the second evaluation of tourist sites, a contest promoted by ALN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro regional Competitiveness plans and micro regional development strategy generated.</li> </ul>

**C. EMPRES**

Six EMPRES were created in the municipalities of Atiquizaya, Izalco, La Libertad, Nueva Concepcion, Olocuilta and Panchimalco. Activities performed by these units include technical assistance, trainings and links to access financial services. All of these activities have incorporated the MCP gender approach. In fact, EMPRES at Atiquizaya and Nueva Concepcion are led by women.

Some EMPRES have worked on establishing alliances with academic and NGO institutions to promote local development. Izalco, for instance, created an alliance with *Universidad Dr. Jose Matias Delgado* (UJMD) to jointly develop a tourism strategy. On the other hand, Atiquizaya has associated with *Asociacion de Desarrollo de la Mujer de Atiquizaya* (ADESMA) in order to support women entrepreneurs in developing solid business plans.

The success of the six original EMPRES prompted USAID to commence preparations on extending this initiative to 14 selected municipalities. The MCP extension has been designed in such a way to replicate ADEPROs methodology for EMPRE creation through the work of FUNDE and SACDEL under close guidance from the former.

**D. Business Plan Challenge**

MCP held an award ceremony in San Salvador on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013 for the 40 winners of the business plan challenge. 22 women and 18 men had winning business ideas, 24 of which corresponded to new business ideas and 16 to expansion proposals.

The winners of the competition received technical assistance from MCP for the development of their business plan, which were finalized by December 2013.

The MCP held an event in December 2013 to link the winners of the competition with entrepreneurial and financial service providers in order to move the initiatives forward.

### E. Building Business Associations

Business associations are fundamental for stimulating local economies. On the one hand, they link the business sector to the municipalities, and on the other hand, they facilitate communication with the business sector helping to deal with common economic issues at the local level.

During FY 2014 a total of 16 business groups were assisted, focusing on the development of new businesses opportunities. These groups can be divided into three different components: (1) Business Women Associations, (2) Regional Entrepreneur Associations, and (3) Business Associations (at the local level). **Table 4** lists the business associations and assistance provided by the MCP during FY2014.

**Table 4: Business Associations Created or Strengthened by the MCP**

Name of the Association (Region or Municipality)	Members			Nonprofit Trade Associations	Sectoral-Benefits and Profitability for the Members	MCP Assistance in Business Association
	Total	Men	Women			
<b>Two Business Women's Associations</b>						
1) Women's Association of Atiquizaya	24	-	24		x	<b>Strengthening.</b> De facto existence. By-laws publication is pending.
2) Women's Association of Santa María Ostuma	36	-	36		x	<b>Strengthening.</b> Registered with the municipality
<b>Two regional entrepreneur associations</b>						
1) Business Owners' Association of the El Balsamo Micro-Region (four municipalities)	25	13	12		x	<b>Creating.</b> Organization of four tourism development associations at the local level.
2) Business Owners' Association of the Sierra Tecapa - Chinameca Micro-Region (12 municipalities)	16	9	7		x	<b>Creating.</b> Started with two municipalities; the remaining 10 will join later.
<b>12 business associations (at the local level)</b>						
1) Tourism Development Association of Panchimalco	38	14	24		x	<b>Restructuring and Strengthening</b>
2) Economic and Commercial Development Association of Ciudad Arce	20	4	16	x		<b>Creating.</b> Requested by MCC.
3) Tourism Development Committee of Apastepeque (will change to Coop. Assoc.)	16	10	6		x	<b>Creating.</b> Requested by MCC.

Name of the Association (Region or Municipality)	Members			Nonprofit Trade Associations	Sectoral-Benefits and Profitability for the Members	MCP Assistance in Business Association
	Total	Men	Women			
4) Tourism Development Committee of Olocuilta (will change to Tourism Consortium)	16	10	6		x	<b>Creating.</b> Requested by MCC.
5) Business Owners and Traders Association of Chalatenango	7	6	1	x		<b>Restructuring and Strengthening</b>
6) Business Development Association of Atiquizaya	12	10	2	x		<b>Creating</b>
7) La Libertad (name pending)	9	2	7	x		<b>Creating.</b> Requested by MCC.
8) Business Development Association of Sensuntepeque	19	11	8	x		<b>Reactivating and Strengthening.</b> Requested by municipality.
9) Shoemaker Cooperative - Marketing Association of Candelaria de la Frontera	12	12	-		x	<b>Creating.</b> Requested by MCC.
10) Miscellaneous Traders Association of Nueva Concepción	15	5	10	x		<b>Restructuring and Strengthening.</b> Requested by MCC
11) Latin American Micro and Small and Medium Enterprise Association Santa Tecla	20	6	14	x		<b>Creating.</b> Requested by MCC
12) Business Owners and Professionals Association of Zacatecoluca	10	7	3	x		<b>Creating.</b> Requested by MCC
<b>16 Business Associations</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	
	<b>100%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>60%</b>			

The Business Women Associations consist of 60 female members from 2 municipalities: Atiquizaya and Santa Maria Ostuma, which are being strengthened in terms of generating a profit for their members.

The Regional Entrepreneur Associations have 41 members, 19 of whom are women, from the El Balsamo micro-region and the Sierra Tecapa-Chinameca micro-region.

Finally, the Local Business Associations group is comprised of 194 members. It is the largest sector and group both for both profit and non-profit oriented organizations.

#### ***F. Regional Tourism Fairs***

The MCP held regional fairs as a mechanism for linking employment supply and demand opportunities while emphasizing youth employment. Three fairs have been organized under the program; two in Jayaque and Sacacoyo by the MREB and another one in Alegria by ASITECHI.

The MREB region is comprised of four municipalities and 51 entrepreneurs. The ASITECHI region consists of 12 municipalities and 47 entrepreneurs. Both have tourist traffic of 600 to 700 persons per week.

#### ***G. Tourism Development Strategy***

Under the Tourism Development Strategy, implemented during the project's original period, MCP tried to reinforce the dynamics of PPD and the MCCs with tourism as a sector that could provide clear economic results in the short-term.

Nine municipalities have received support in promoting activities aimed at boosting tourism. MCP has facilitated the cohesion among the different entrepreneurs raising expectations that could be translated in more public and private investment. The tourism and cultural offering in each municipality include tourism circuits such as the "Historic Artisanal Tour of Izalco City", visits to coffee farms at Berlin, the development of tourist guides at La Libertad, and sightseeing tours in Comasagua and Panchimalco.

MCP held a core event for presenting the achievements in San Salvador on December 17, 2013, with the participation of more than 240 people, including representatives of the MCP municipalities, government agencies responsible for tourism and local development, and other El Salvador-based international organizations. A video with a summary of the main activities and achievements of the technical assistance was prepared, including images of the participating municipalities and activities in progress as well as testimonials from MCP beneficiaries. During the event, a panel discussion was held on the importance of tourism development for local growth.

The development of the city trademarks (see below) for the municipalities of Caluco, Comasagua, Nahuizalco, and Zaragoza, was fundamental for tourism promotion and the creation of a recognizable image, by tourists, for each project. The promotional strategy included a video promoting tourism, the design of sightseeing tours, and the creation of promotional materials.

Public events were held in each municipality with the participation of local authorities, tourism entrepreneurs, and representatives of the MCC. The event at Comasagua also had the participation of USAID representatives.



The MCC of La Libertad implemented the website [www.golalibertad.com](http://www.golalibertad.com). This webpage contains information about 80 establishments, including restaurants, hotels, and other tourist services, organized by location on the eight beaches of the department. Further, a tourist map was designed to be distributed, especially in strategic beach lodging locations where surfing is attracting international tourism. This strategy is expected to become a benchmark of local tourism support and, therefore, of economic growth.

#### **Component 4: Domestic Finance for Development**

The main objective for this Component was to support municipalities in developing solutions for preventing crime and violence while, at the same time, improving local tax revenues and optimizing budget execution in partnership with the private sector.

Fifty-three municipalities were invited to participate in the selection process, by demonstrating their capacity to generate a positive environment for improving local tax collection. The best proposals were awarded grants to implement projects aimed at supporting the prevention of crime and violence.

The MCP successfully finalized the crime and violence prevention initiatives under this component. A total of \$1.5 million was disbursed in grants to 11 national nongovernmental organizations to carry out 29 projects in 20 municipalities (*Table 5*), including nine infrastructure and 13 capacity building/vocational training projects.

In addition to the above accomplishments, inaugurations of sport facilities in Tecoluca and Apastepeque and vocational training centers in Nahuizalco, Izalco, and El Paisnal, have all had a positive impact on the lives of young people in the surrounding areas. It is estimated that during FY2014, these centers and sports facilities trained 1,293 youths; 689 of them were female.

**Table 5: DF4D Initiatives**

Project	Quantity
Construction/Equipment of Training Centers	11
Vocational training	10
Youth Entrepreneurship initiatives	4
Recreational and sport facilities initiatives	4

### **Component 5: Improving Effective and Efficient Municipal Government Administration in 14 Municipalities**

The MCP commenced activities for creating 14 new EMPREs in selected municipalities approved by USAID. The MCP team and ADEPRO conducted a training program for FUNDE and SACDEL in order to support them in their role in creating new EMPREs.

The MCP has successfully leveraged the EMPRE development experience in six municipalities in order to extend the methodology developed to 14 qualifying municipalities in partnership with ADEPRO, FUNDE, and SACDEL. The extension period has allocated the effort in such a way that ADEPRO will roll out two new EMPREs and FUNDE and SACDEL will each roll out six new EMPREs.

EMPRE staffing has been completed and training and resources allocated among the 14 participating municipalities. The first two EMPREs are scheduled to be fully operational by the end of October 2014 while the remaining 12 are scheduled to be operational by the end of November 2014.

#### **A. Create, Equip, and Reinforce EMPREs**

The MCP continued to support and strengthening of the six operating EMPREs, to boost the local economy through linking local businesses with business development services providers. One such effort has been Nueva Concepcion's linking 35 women entrepreneurs to financing offers from local development bank BANDESAL and its program *Banca Mujer*. This will be undertaken as a pilot program and once all program mechanisms have been thoroughly investigated by the MCP, a further 300 women will be invited into the program.

All existing EMPRE managers were at one point part of the MCC, acting as Technical Secretary for the Committees. Atiquizaya's EMPRE manager was removed from her position and the unit eliminated in July 2014. However, it was reinstated in September 2014. Confirmation of its reincorporation into the MCC is still pending and expected for October 2014. Izalco's MCC has been reorganized and new members will be elected in October 2014. A confirmation of EMPRE's inclusion in the MCC will be obtained then.

The MCP team worked with existing EMPREs, with the exception of Atiquizaya's, to revise their work plans and submit them for approval to the municipal authorities and the MCC. Izalco's EMPRE plan was authorized before the MCC's restructuring.

In the last quarter of FY2014, the MCP worked on the creation of 14 more EMPREs which will be fully operational by January 2015.

Initial work started in six new municipalities in July 2014 and in a further eight municipalities in September 2014. As of September 30, 2014, the MCP had the following performance in the creation of 14 new EMPREs:

- All 14 EMPREs were created and all personnel hired during this reporting year. Eleven EMPRE managers have been assigned as Technical Secretaries to their respective MCCs. This rapid advance was possible because of the MCP team's direct involvement in meeting with mayors and MCCs in each municipality.
- All municipal authorities were keen to start work as soon as possible, expeditious in approving the creation of the units, and hired adequate personnel to run the units. Furthermore, they supported the MCP in making office space and basic equipment available for the EMPREs and authorized them to attend all project workshops and training to advance to an operational phase as quickly as possible.
- The MCP has finalized the development of seven new EMPRE work plans; two more work plans have a first draft completed. Work on the remaining five work plans is expected to be concluded in the next quarter.

Further work on making the EMPREs operational has included the development of the territorial capital matrixes in nine municipalities and a first draft in an additional two; the selection of an economic sector that will be supported by the project by 11 municipalities with new EMPREs and all six municipalities with existing EMPREs; the identification of the principal economic actors of each sector and the establishment of the business development services demand in nine of these municipalities.

To achieve the above results, FUNDE and SACDEL technical teams were trained on the principles and methodology for creation and implementation of EMPREs. They also joined the six originally created EMPREs in an experiences exchange workshop. These trainings were conducted by ADEPRO.

Officials from the 14 participating municipalities were also trained on the methodology for creation and implementation of EMPREs to facilitate their implementation.

#### ***B. Establish Simplified Procedures to Improve Services by the Municipality***

The establishment of the OSW to simplify procedures to improve service in Suchitoto began in the last quarter of FY2014. Suchitoto is the only municipality from the 20 under the MCP that does not have an OSW.

The work plan for the establishment of the OSW was approved by the municipality and presented to the other municipal units. The following 10 processes were selected for simplification:

- Land use change,
- Municipal solvency,
- Business categorization,
- Alcoholic beverages license renovation,
- Business operation license,
- Business operation license renovation,
- Business closure,
- Light posts and towers permits,
- Banners, billboards and other outside advertising permits,
- Sale and exhibition of merchandise

### ***C. Promote Coordination among Municipalities***

During the reporting period, the EMPREs and members of the MCCs of Chalatenango and Sensuntepeque visited the EMPRE and MCC of Nueva Concepcion. The objective of this visit was for the two newly created EMPREs to see how a well-established, functioning EMPRE works and to understand its dynamics in relation to the MCC and the private sector. One of the key points of the visit was to see how the EMPRE manager functions as the MCC Technical Secretary.

Nueva Concepcion's EMPRE manager discussed how she establishes links with business development service providers, client businesses from the municipality, and the inner workings of the municipality and the MCC.

A second activity under this component during the reporting period was a visit by Atiquizaya's MCC to Nahuizalco. The main objective was to learn from the municipality's tourism development during the last few years. Atiquizaya's MCC members came back from the visit quite impressed with the activity in Nahuizalco, especially the city's night market. Plans to develop Atiquizaya's tourist attractions have already begun and are driven by the municipality's MCC through a PPD.

## **Component 6: Developing Alliances between Public and Private Sector Organizations to Continue Improving the Municipal Business Environment**

### ***A. Technical Assistance and Training for Strengthening MCCs***

Work on this component started in July 2014. All 20 municipalities participated in a workshop that presented the importance and practical uses of PPD. A total of 101 people attended the workshop from the different MCCs, EMPRE offices, and municipalities. The MCP team is working on developing a 32-hour seminar to be conducted over six weeks during Q1 FY 2015

which will provide MCC members with different skills, such as project development and management, strategy, PPD, and finance.

#### **1. *Revision of Municipal Competitiveness Plans***

The MCP team conducted an evaluation of 14 participating MCCs, to determine strengths and weaknesses and to develop actions needed to continue moving the PPD forward. Currently, the last six MCC evaluations are being conducted.

Using participatory methods, the MCP reviewed and updated 17 Municipal Competitiveness Plans and produced detailed work plans currently being implemented. The objective behind these reviews was to learn about the progress of the MCCs against their original plans, as well as the obstacles encountered along the way and milestones reached.

Six MCC evaluations and three Municipal Competitiveness Plans updates are scheduled for completion in October 2014.

#### **2. *National Forum***

The PPD National Forum is scheduled for November 18 2014. Planning, logistics, content, and the participant list are currently being developed.

### **Component 7: Developing Local Institutional Capacity Building**

This Component is focused on building the institutional capacity of two local key partners, SACDEL and FUNDE. RTI's capacity building approach is based on the principle that local partners are not recipients, but rather engaged actors who partake in the capacity strengthening process from the design and implementation stages, to the end point of evaluation.

The ultimate goal is to strengthen the technical and operational capacity of both SACDEL and FUNDE so that they become eligible to receive and manage funds from USAID by the time the project has ended. It is envisioned that the training will build the capacity of each organization on financial and human resource management, strategic planning, USAID regulations, and selected technical areas.

A qualified consultant, was hired for this Component and is scheduled to begin work on October 1, 2014. One of her first tasks is to become acquainted with the staff in order to understand the unique context of each organization. Thereafter, she will embark on an in-depth capacity building process of FUNDE and SACDEL facilitating guidance to both partners to formally establish a capacity baseline, develop institutional strengthening plans, provide training and targeted technical assistance in core areas, and conduct a final assessment.

### **Cross-cutting Issues**

#### **A. *Media Activities***

During this fiscal year, the following communication materials were produced, distributed, and uploaded to the MCP webpage and Facebook page:

- Three newsletters: #5, #6, and #7
- Five success stories from Atiquizaya, EMPRE Panchimalco, Before and After from Apastepeque, and Nahuizalco, respectively. Also, with MCP support, USAID produced one success story from DF4D-La Libertad.
- Two fact sheets updated in February and August 2014.
- Two videos: One video dealt with technical assistance in tourism based on the potential of each municipality on its field and the other with gender. Both videos can be viewed at the MCP channel on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CompetitividadMpal>).
- Distribution of institutional MCP brochures, folders, pens, and notebooks.

The MCP communications management has provided ongoing support to the various units to ensure compliance with the recommendations for the use of branding in materials published by subcontractors and project beneficiaries, as well as in the different events.

The market strategy approach in social media is not focused on the number of “likes” but on the target audience that will support the project. The main idea is that the social media platform can produce immediate tangible impact and awareness of MCP in real time, and a suitable audience committed to social media can increase the scope of a project and disseminate the message.

During this reporting period we had several communications (*Table 6*), including announcements of workshops for women entrepreneurs in association with Vital Voices; tourism videos produced through our partner SACDEL for Izalco, Zaragoza, Caluco and Nahuizalco; the closing ceremony for the MCP original period and the launch of the MCP extension period.

**Table 6: Communications Events and Workshops**

Event	Date	Place
<i>Corporación de Municipalidades de la Republica de El Salvador Congress</i>	10/27–29, 2013	Hotel Crowne Plaza, San Salvador
Business Plan Challenge	10/31/2013	Hotel Crowne Plaza, San Salvador
Press conference on tourism assistance for the Extreme Weekend (Chalatenango-Suchitoto November 23 and 24, 2013)	11/19/ 13	Mitur, San Salvador
Advisory Committee Meeting	11/20/2013	Hotel Hilton Princess, San Salvador
Financial Services Fair	11/26/2013	Hotel Crowne Plaza, San Salvador
Workshop on Evaluation of Municipal Procedures for Issuance of Construction Permits (ADEPRO).	11/27/2013	Hotel Terraza, San Salvador
Forum on Transparency and Presentation of the Competitiveness Plan to ASITECHI	12/04/2013	Hotel Crowne Plaza, San Salvador

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>
PfG-USAID Fair	12/06/2013	Metrocentro, San Salvador
Presentation of Results on Tourism Technical Assistance	12/17/ 13	Hotel Terraza, San Salvador
Inauguration Training Center Atiquizaya (DF4D)	12/ 27/13	Cantón Izcaquilio, Atiquizaya
Graduation of the Economic Development and Territorial Competitiveness Course	01/ 29/ 14	UCA, San Salvador
Presentation of the 2013 MCI at the municipalities of Sonsonate	01/13/2014	Sonsonate, Sonsonate
Presentation of the 2013 MCI at the municipalities of San Vicente	01/14/2014	San Vicente, San Vicente
Presentation of the 2013 MCI at the municipalities of La Paz	01/15/2014	Santiago Nonualco, La Paz
Presentation of the 2013 MCI at the municipalities of Santa Ana	01/16/2014	Santa Ana, Santa Ana
Presentation of the 2013 MCI at the municipalities of Usulután	01/17/2014	Usulután, Usulután
Fiscal Transparency Event	02/ 12/14	Hotel Sheraton-Presidente, San Salvador
Presentation of the 2013 MCI at the municipalities of San Salvador and La Libertad	02/13/14	Hotel Crowne Plaza, San Salvador
Inauguration of Entrepreneurial Assistance Point Sonsonate	03/18/14	Municipality of Sonsonate
Inauguration of the Entrepreneurial Assistance Point Nejapa	03/21/2014	Municipality of Nejapa
Inauguration of a Five-Side Field in Tecoluca	03/ 22/2014	Municipality of Tecoluca
Inauguration of a technical vocational training center in El Paisnal	03/26/2014	Municipality of El Paisnal
Inauguration of the Entrepreneurial Assistance Point Atiquizaya	03/27/2014	Municipality of Atiquizaya
Inauguration of the technical vocational training center in Nahuizalco	03/28/2014	Municipality of Nahuizalco
Inauguration of a technical vocational training center in Izalco	03/28/2014	Municipality of Izalco
Inauguration of a technical vocational training center in San Martín	03/31/2014	Municipality of San Martín

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>
Inauguration ceremony of the construction of a soccer field with bleachers, cafeteria, restrooms, parking, and sanitation system at Cantón San Felipe at Apastepeque, under DF4D project granted \$100,000	<b>04/10/2014</b>	<b>Apastepeque, San Vicente</b>
MCP closing ceremony and special recognitions to 19 municipalities	<b>05/20/2014</b>	<b>Hotel Sheraton-Presidente, San Salvador</b>
Creation and Implementation of EMPRE Workshop. Training local subcontractors in the development of 14 EMPREs. Module 1: Introduction to EMPRE – background, conceptual framework, purpose, characteristics, requirements, and course of action.	<b>06/25/2014</b>	<b>Fusal, Antiguo Cuscatlán; La Libertad</b>
Creation and Implementation of EMPRE Workshop. Training local subcontractors in the development of 14 municipal units for EMPREs. Module 2: EMPRE Creation – phases, technical profile, budget, functions of each of the parties, and steps for its establishment.	<b>06/30/2014</b>	<b>Fusal, Antiguo Cuscatlán; La Libertad</b>
Creation and Implementation of EMPRE Workshop. Training local subcontractors in the development of 14 municipal units for EMPREs. Module 3: EMPRE Implementation	<b>07/02/2014</b>	<b>Fusal, Antiguo Cuscatlán; La Libertad</b>
Creation and Implementation of EMPRE Workshop Training local subcontractors in the development of 14 municipal units for EMPREs. Module 4: EMPRE Management	<b>07/04/2014</b>	<b>Fusal, Antiguo Cuscatlán; La Libertad</b>
Launch of USAID MCP extension period technical assistance	<b>07/09/2014</b>	<b>Fusal, Antiguo Cuscatlán; La Libertad</b>
Workshop for the planning and coordination of technical assistance activities for the Creation and Implementation of EMPRE in 6 municipalities: San Salvador, Zacatecoluca, San Martin, Ciudad Arce, Chalatenango and Ayutuxtepeque.	<b>07/29/2014</b>	<b>Fusal, Antiguo Cuscatlán; La Libertad</b>
Workshop for the planning and coordination of technical assistance activities for the Creation and Implementation of EMPRE in eight municipalities: Tonacatepeque, Sensuntepeque, Nahuizalco, Santiago Nonualco, Ciudad Barrios, Candelaria de la Frontera, Tecoluca and Suchitoto.	<b>08/15/2014</b>	<b>Fusal, Antiguo Cuscatlán; La Libertad</b>
MCP Advisory Committee meeting to present MCP progress updates and coordinate extension project activities with participating institutions.	<b>08/26/2014</b>	<b>Hotel Crowne Plaza, San Salvador</b>
MCP Technical Committee meeting to present MCP progress update and coordinate extension project activities with participating institutions.	<b>08/28/2014</b>	<b>Hotel Crowne Plaza, San Salvador</b>

Event	Date	Place
Group 1: Workshop – Good practices and basic techniques to strengthen public-private dialogue to the municipalities: Candelaria de la Frontera, Nueva Concepción, Atiquizaya, Ciudad Arce, Izalco, and Nahuizalco.	09/23/2014	Hotel Tolteka, Santa Ana
Group 2: Workshop – Good practices and basic techniques to strengthen public-private dialogue to the municipalities: Ciudad Barrios, Sensuntepeque, Tecoluca, Santiago Nonualco, and Olocuilta.	09/29/2014	Centro de Formación Maria Auxiliadora, Zacatecoluca
Group 3: Workshop – Good practices and basic techniques to strengthen public-private dialogue to the municipalities: Zacatecoluca, Chalatenango, Suchitoto, Tonacatepeque, San Martín, San Salvador, Santa Tecla, La Libertad, and Panchimalco.	09/26/2014	Fusal, Antigua Cuscatlán

## **B. Gender Plan Implementation**

The MCP has maintained a gender integration approach to strengthen the balanced access to economic opportunities for men and women in the municipalities receiving assistance. In FY2014, it continued to implement initiatives under the five action areas of the Gender Action Plan.

### **1) Strengthen Women’s Business Associations and Networks:**

MCP strengthened two women’s business associations – Women’s Development Association of Atiquizaya (ADESMA) and Women’s Association of Santa Maria Ostuma (ASMOT). The strengthening process involved implementation of activities in their respective Association Work Plan including roles and functions of the Board of Directors, identification of and reflecting on the internal and external environments of the entrepreneurs, revision of statutes, restructuring of Board of Directors, creation of a financial arm to carry out activities, capacity development to implement resource generating activities through organizing successful events, and strategies to increase sales and effective control of the businesses.

MCP and Vital Voices (VVES) completed a Training Program for Women Leaders and Entrepreneurs in Local Economic Development, training 167 women in 19 municipalities, for a total of 464 trained women, business owners, entrepreneurs, and female representatives from the 50 municipalities assisted by the MCP. 82% were entrepreneurs from the 50 assisted municipalities, 14% were representatives from municipalities and 4% were from related institutions. The objective for this training program was motivating women entrepreneurs to overcome limitations to do business by increasing economic opportunities. Through this training, women acquired skills in self-esteem, values, role harmonization, leadership entrepreneurial capacity, business and product modeling, and business plan structuring. The program exceeded its target of 300 trained women.

Women's active participation in Municipal Competitiveness Committees remained at 40% on average in FY2014.

MCP produced a video profiling stories and economic activities of women producer groups in MCP municipalities.

## **2) Promote Gender Integration in the Business Plan Challenge:**

As a result of the promotion of women's participation in the Business Plan Challenge, the MCP proved successful in increasing women's representation in each and all of the implementation stages. 246 proposals for business ideas were received (57% were submitted by women and 43% by men) during the reporting period. A total of 40 proposals, of which 55% were by women, were awarded under the Challenge.

## **3) Develop MCP Gender Study using 2009 and 2011 MCI Results:**

MCP completed a gender study analyzing gender disparities in the business environment for micro and small entrepreneurs in El Salvador. The analysis was reinforced through interviews with women entrepreneur owners in participant MCI-selected municipalities. The principal findings were: a) Women business owners do not report significantly different challenges in registering their business, facing cumbersome government regulation procedures, or being more susceptible to negative impact of corruption, crime, or government scrutiny; b) The topic of gender differences in entrepreneurs' experiences with their local business climate in terms of registration, regulations, and other procedural aspects merits closer study in future research. As the MCI survey data collection focused on entrepreneurs' perceptions of the business environment rather than impact of the business environment on business variables, future research could build on our analysis and conduct additional investigations into gender differences in procedural and regulatory aspects of the business environment. Our conclusions argue for targeted and tailored support to women entrepreneurs to address specific business problems rather than general investment support or gender-specific reform of business regulations. The following policy recommendations follow from the study: First, there is little need to tailor content of business registration and regulation procedures and reforms to women business owners. Second, local and municipal channels present low-cost avenues to share information on local government business support with women entrepreneurs. And third, targeted interventions to female entrepreneurs should focus on alleviating barriers specific to women in starting, running, and growing their business.

## **4) Design Business-Friendly Strategies for Women Entrepreneurs at the Municipal Level:**

MCP and FUNDES implemented the Business-Friendly Municipality Certification based on the application of eight evaluation criteria, one of which was gender. The criterion assessed the existence and implementation of municipal initiatives that promote women's productive development or encourage business generation with high participation of women in order to provide equal access to economic opportunities. The evaluation of the gender criterion considered two indicators: a) existence of a gender policy during the application or specialized training programs and other types of assistance aimed to support local women business owners

and entrepreneurs; and b) support by the municipality to women entrepreneurs in the development of initiatives such as the Business Ideas Challenge, priority attention to women to register their business and in municipal services; business associativity and women's participation in MCCs. 90% of the 27 municipalities that applied for business-friendly certification complied with the gender criterion.

The EMPREs continue to prioritize assistance to business women to facilitate their access to business development, financial and non-financial services provided by public and private organizations. Over 60% of entrepreneurs assisted in FY2014 were women.

The concept of “priority assistance to women”, show signs and gender integration messages in support of businesswomen, was established at the 30 one-stop windows in 27 municipalities that were inaugurated during FY2014. The specialized signage and attention system to fill out forms, as may be needed, is aimed at expediting business formalization and other processes carried out by business women.

#### **5) Monitor Project Gender Integration results through MCP M&E Plan:**

MCP constantly monitors M&E Plan advances and disaggregates results by gender. This information is regularly reported to USAID through MCP Quarterly and Annual Reports. All M&E measurable indicators continue to show improvement in participation by the project’s women beneficiaries.