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NEXOS LOCALES PROJECT

QUARTERLY REPORT #03

January – March 2015

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NEXOS LOCALES PROJECT

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directive System
APS	Annual Program Statement
AIDAR	Agency for International Development Acquisition Regulations
BMP	Best Management Practice
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	Contracting Officer
CBO	Community-Based Organization
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)
COP	Chief of Party
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DAAFIM	Dirección de Asistencia a la Administración Financiera Municipal
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
E.O	Executive Order
EOI	Expressions of Interest
ETD	Environmental Threshold Decision
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulations
FOG	Fixed Obligation Grant
FtF	Feed the Future
GEC	Grant Evaluation Committee
GOG	Government of Guatemala
GIS	Geographical Information System
GM	Grants and Subcontracts Manager
GUC	Grants under Contract
HCA	Head of the Contracting Activity
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
INAP	Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública
INFOM	Instituto de Fomento Municipal
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
LED	Local Economic Development
LGU	Local Government Unit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
OCI	Organizational Conflict of Interest
OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OSR	Own Source Revenue
PFM	Public Financial Management
PVO	Private Volunteer Organization
QR2	Quarterly Report Two
QR3	Quarterly Report Three

RFA	Request for Assistance
RFP	Request for Proposals
RRFP	Rapid Response Fund Plan
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SEGEPLAN	Secretaría de Planificación y Programación
SGP	Small Grant Program
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Scope of Work
TAMIS	Technical and Administrative Management Information System
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USG	United States Government

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID's Nexos Locales Project (Contract No. AID-520-C-14-00002), formerly known as the Local Governance Project, is a three year program with two option years that began in June 2014. Implemented by DAI, the project is based in Quezaltenango, Guatemala with a regional office located in Huehuetenango. USAID's Nexos Locales Project (hereinafter Nexos Locales) has as its primary goal to strengthen municipalities in the Western Highlands of the country so they foster more responsive, inclusive, and effective socio-economic development while reducing local vulnerabilities such as food insecurity and natural disasters. In order to achieve this goal and the objectives of both USAID and other development partners, local governments must be able to better manage public resources and deliver services in an efficient and transparent manner. Strong and inclusive municipal governments are crucial for local development and are key to the sustainability of interventions supported by the United States Government (USG) in Guatemala.

Pursuant to the terms of the contract, each quarterly report will present progress against the project's six results:

- **Result #01** – Sound public financial systems in place in order to promote transparency and permit participation by citizens in decision-making.
- **Result #02** – Strengthen civil society participation in social accountability processes.
- **Result #03** – Increased quality of potable water in thirty (30) Feed-the-Future (FtF) municipalities.
- **Result #04** – Local Development Plans established and implemented in order to improve food security and economic development.
- **Result #05** – Municipal Plans established to reduce climate change vulnerability and technical assistance provided for implementation of plans.
- **Result #06** – Capacity increased for the National Association of Municipalities (ANAM) and/or the Guatemalan Association of Indigenous Mayors and Authorities (AGAAI) to support municipal development and replicate successful models nationwide, including municipal crime prevention plans

This quarterly report presents key information covering the third quarter (QR3) period between January and March 2015. QR3 outlines Nexos Locales' key achievements in each of its six results, delineates significant operations and project milestones, advises on key challenges with project implementation, and provides an update on financial information per funding source.

QR3 is divided into the following sections:

- Section I – Summary of Key Achievements (project wide)
- Section II – Obstacles Faced in the Quarter
- Section III – Quarterly Progress Results
- Section IV – Rapid Response & Grants Reporting
- Section V – Cross Cutting Considerations
- Section VI – Training Events
- Section VII – Meetings Held
- Section VIII – Project Management

- Section IX – Financial Information
- Section X – Personnel
- Section XI – Success Stories

I. SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Highlights for the quarter are listed below:

Technical Activities Performed

- Revision of strategy for Public Financial Management and Single Study (IR3, IR4, IR5) Diagnostics
- Completion of assessments of Pre-diagnostic Gap Assessment
- Completion of initial rapid assessments of local COMUDEs
- Completion of selection and mapping of Mancomunidades
- Completion of Entry Point Mapping (standardized and consolidated)
- Criteria established for selection of CSOs and COCODES
- Concept note developed for CSO Advocacy Training
- Completion of Water Sector Stakeholder Mapping by Climate Change & Water Expert (STTA)
- Development of concept note to support ANAM in the execution of a diploma program on “Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety”
- Completed initial rapid assessments of previous donor assistance to the Municipal Women’s Offices (OMMs)
- Completed initial rapid assessments of the municipalities’ Food Security Situation Rooms (SAN)
- Completion of Climate Change Stakeholder Mapping by STTA Rachael Shenyo
- Completed final concept note Climate Change Public Awareness Campaign
- Statement of Work developed for consultant to conduct organizational diagnostics for ANAM and AGAAI
- Initial rapid gender and youth assessment, and input on youth strategy completed by Iris Group
- Youth Integration and Strategy Plan concept note drafted
- Coordination and assistance with six visiting USAID Delegations
- Initiated technical evaluation process as part of Chief of Party transition, including updating and making initial revisions to the Year I workplan for eventual modification
- Held meetings with ANAM, AGAI and INFOM to discuss technical assistance

Quarterly Results

- MOU Signings with the Municipality of Cunen and Santo Tomás Chichicastenango, bringing the total number of MOUs signed with municipalities to 28 of the 30¹
- MOU Signing with AGEXPORT
- Completed revisions to the Grants Manual, which was submitted to USAID on Friday, March 20 for final approval
- Area Advisory Committees established in each cluster
- Successful launch of the regional office in Huehuetenango

• ¹ Twenty-eight out of thirty (28 out of 30) municipalities of the Nexos Locales contract have duly signed MoUs. Barillas and Zacualpa are the two outstanding municipalities yet to sign a MoU with Nexos Locales.

Project Management

- Effectively managed the Chief of Party transition (March-April 2015), including fielding DAI Project Director Jennifer Lewis as Acting Chief of Party and having Deputy Chief of Party Vince Broady serve as Acting Chief of Party. Advised all project partners, counterparts, and municipalities of the change in Nexos Locales leadership, and engaged in targeted outreach and communication around the transition.
- Requested and received USAID Key Personnel approval for long-term Chief of Party, Connie Paraskeva.
- Requested and received USAID approval for long-term technical staff, including: Technical Director, Carlos Aquino; Public Financial Management Specialist, Karla Milián; Local Economic Development Specialist, Otoniel Mora, and Grants Manager, Ursula Castillo.
- Completed internal staff training sessions for financial systems, M&E, grants, ethics, and gender equity and social inclusion.
- Initiated recruitment for Climate Change and Water Specialist, Grants Assistant, Procurement Assistant, and a GIS Specialist. In addition, the project is searching for an Outreach Coordinator for RC3 with the intent of promoting the current Outreach Coordinator, Alma Lopez, as Cluster Manager over both RC2 and RC3.
- Project website design and development has been established and will be presented for USAID approval April.
- Received IT equipment and installation of servers in Huehuetenango office and VOIP telephone systems.
- Fielded 16 STTAs for various technical and operational scopes of work

II. OBSTACLES FACED

Nexos Locales has been in constant communication with USAID concerning the need to strengthen the human resource capacity of the project team. Based on these discussions, during the third quarter Nexos Locales requested and received USAID approval for the following long-term technical positions: Technical Director, Carlos Aquino; Public Financial Management Specialist, Karla Milián; Local Economic Development Specialist, Otoniel Mora; M&E Specialist Pamela Garrido; and, Grants Manager, Ursula Castillo. In addition, the project has identified candidates for the following long-term technical positions: Climate Change and Water Specialist, Grants Assistant, and Procurement Assistant.

Although Nexos Locales strengthened its long-term human resource capacity during QR3, leadership changes in the project mildly decelerated project activities during the transition period between Chiefs of Party.

- Change in Chief of Party – On March 4, DAI accepted the resignation of Chief of Party, Dr. Edgar Balsells. This came as a result of DAI’s senior management team’s effort to address – in close coordination with USAID - ongoing field management and implementation challenges under Dr. Balsells’ direction. This process involved multiple feedback and performance conversations with both the DAI Project Director Jennifer Lewis and with USAID, as well as a senior DAI management visit to the field to attempt to address concerns with work plan implementation, management of field staff, and the quality of technical deliverables. While DAI always hoped the situation would improve, unfortunately it did not, and after discussions with DAI, Dr. Balsells left the project of mutual accord. On March 5, DAI proposed and requested approval for Connie Paraskeva to serve as Chief of Party (approval received March 19). In the interim, DAI presented a leadership transition plan to ensure leadership coverage and continuity involving having first DAI Project Director, Jennifer Lewis, and then Deputy Chief of Party, Vince Broady serve as Acting Chief of Party until Connie’s arrival on April 7. During Ms. Lewis’ tenure, the technical staff conducted an in-depth assessment of the status of pending technical activities and workplan deliverables, and used the in-depth assessment to develop an interim workplan for technical and administrative priorities and activities to be conducted during the one-month leadership transition period. The technical team also worked with the communications specialist to deliver a “Carta de Transición”, detailing the change in management on the Nexos Locales Project, to Mayors in their respective municipalities, WHIP partners, key civil society organizations, local government actors, and national institutions that make up Nexos Locales coverage area.
- Orientation and Fielding of New Chief of Party – Connie Paraskeva was approved as Chief of Party by USAID on March 19, and traveled to Bethesda, Maryland on April 5 for a one-day Home Office orientation. As an experienced DAI Chief of Party, Ms. Paraskeva focused these meetings primarily on key project implementation issues (Ethics, Internal Audit, Human Resources, and Contract review), and on technical priorities (workplan progress and updating, first technical priorities, status of project). Ms. Paraskeva fielded to Guatemala on April 7.

III. QUARTERLY PROGRESS RESULTS

RESULT 1: SOUND PUBLIC FINANCIAL SYSTEMS IN PLACE IN ORDER TO PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY AND PERMIT PARTICIPATION BY CITIZENS IN DECISION MAKING

Background: NEXOS LOCALES will provide technical assistance, training, and equipment to strengthen municipal governments' public financial management (PFM) and procurement systems, which will encompass the systems and mechanisms through which municipalities mobilize revenues (e.g., taxes, fees, royalties, etc.) and subsequently plan, budget, execute and monitor the expenditure of those revenues. NEXOS LOCALES will support the implementation of municipal code reforms, regulations, and policies that contribute to improving capacity and accountability.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

- Revision of strategy for Public Financial Management Diagnostics
- Recruitment of long-term (LTTA) Public Financial Management Specialist, Karla Milián, to oversee PFM activities
- MOU Signings with Municipality of Cunen and Santo Tomás Chichicastenango
- MOU Signing with AGEXPORT
- Completion of assessments of Pre-diagnostic Gap Assessment
- Completion of initial rapid assessments of local COMUDEs
- Completion of selection and mapping of Macomunidades

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities implemented during the third quarter for Result 1.

- During Q2, the project recruited a long-term (LTTA) Public Financial Management Specialist, Karla Milián, to oversee PFM activities and serve as part of a team of technical specialists in support of the regional engagement units. Karla will begin work with the project on April 20th.

Activity 1.1 Assess capacity of target municipalities, particularly in the areas of revenue generation, purchasing and procurement, administration and planning, and compliance with the Public Access to Information Law.

Sub-activity 1.1.1. Development of MOUs with municipalities:

MOUs were signed with the Municipality of Cunen (Sub/RCI) and the Municipality of Santo Tomás Chichicastenango (RC2). Santa Cruz Barillas (RCI) and Zacualpa (RC2) are the two remaining unsigned MOUs. In regards to Zacualpa, the mayor has resigned and will not be running for reelection in 2015. He has recommended that Nexos Locales sign with the councilor, who will take his place. The regional engagement team continues to follow up with the staff of the municipality.



Figure 1: MOU signed with the Municipality of Cunen (Sub/RCI), Sr. Alcalde Leonardo Sarat Oxlej, Andrew Lucas USAID COR, Vince Broady, Acting Chief of Party (March 17, 2015).

The MOU with the mayor of Barillas has not been signed due to difficulties in meeting with the mayor, who is faced with political and social tension with the community over the construction of a hydroelectric plant. The project is seeking to work with civil society organizations and WHIP partners in order to leverage additional support in coming to terms on mutually benefitting agreements for the signing of the outstanding MoU with the municipality of Barillas.

Sub-activity 1.1.2. Development, presentation, and validation of PFM assessments:

PFM Scope of Work – In January, as part of its two pronged approach methodology, Nexos Locales developed a scope of work for the execution of the PFM diagnostics and released a Request for Proposal (RFP) to prequalified subcontractors (see Section V – partnership pool). Proposals were initially due in February; however, after careful consideration of preliminary feedback received from bidders, the RFP was put on hold. Currently DAI is revising the scope of work to include the involvement of Nexos Locales’ PFM Specialist and regional engagement teams. An amendment to the RFP will be released in late April. The diagnostic is part of the project’s two pronged approach, which will serve as the driving document for identifying technical assistance and formulating unique local economic development plans for each the thirty municipalities.

Pre-diagnostic Gap Assessment – In February, Senior Governance Consultant (STTA) Connie Paraskeva conducted an assessment of the pre-diagnostic findings and materials. As a result of her assignment, final mapping of key stakeholders in each cluster was completed. Next steps will be to finalize the gap analysis, ranking of municipalities based on initial capacity assessments, list of existing studies, CSO Entry Point Map, and a draft scope of work for the implementation of Community Scorecards. Information from the assignment will be used by Nexos Locales staff and researchers when conducting the diagnostics (both for the PFM study and the single study for Results 2, 3, and 5).



Figure 2: MOU signing with AGEXPORT with Iván Buitrón, Gerente de la División de Desarrollo and Dr. Edgar Balsells, Former COP (Quetzaltenango January 21, 2015).

MoU Signings with Institutional Actors and Partners –

On January 21, the project signed an MOU with AGEXPORT. AGEXPORT will play a critical role in sharing information on value chain analysis in support of LED planning.

In January, former COP Edgar Balsells met with the DEVTECH project to discuss collaboration and the possible signing of an MOU. DEVTECH has conducted a baseline study on household information and GIS mapping as part of USAID's WHIP strategy. According to the work plan the coordination and harmonization of practices between Nexos Locales and DEVTECH will be critical in developing future technical assistance plans. It was decided, however, that since DEVTECH is also funded by USAID, that an MOU is not necessary. DEVTECH has requested a formal letter from Nexos Locales and recommended that a GIS Specialist be recruited and selection before information is shared.

Several important MOU signings are pending and will be finalized in the next quarter. They include:

- Secretaría de Planificación y Programación (SEGEPLAN)
- Dirección de Asistencia a la Administración Financiera Municipal (DAAFIM)
- Instituto de Fomento Municipal (INFOM).

These partnerships will play key roles in terms of information sharing, technical assistance, and cooperation in achieving shared results and interests. Each institution and their main representatives described above have showed great interest in working with Nexos Locales in support of Activity 2.2.

Activity 1.2 Deliver technical assistance that meets the specific needs of the target municipalities.

Delivery of technical assistance is pending the results of the PFM diagnostics.

Activity 1.3 Strengthen the role of COMUDES to engage citizens in government decision making.

Sub-Activity 1.3.1. Rapid assessments of COMUDE functioning and capacity to carry out their mandates:

Activities in Q3 focused on identifying processes for the project's active participation in COMUDE meetings working in the WHIP area. Each regional cluster has completed initial rapid assessments of local COMUDES in their respective municipalities. The assessments will elaborate on how COMUDES function against their legal mandates and how work is currently being executed with regard to public participation. The rapid assessment will enable the project to identify capacity-building needs for its stakeholders, and will disaggregate findings, opportunities and constraints for greater participation by youth, females, LGBTI and indigenous groups. The inputs will be consolidated into a report that will be available and presented to USAID in April.

Activity 1.4 Build the capacity of the mancomunidades to develop and implement regional strategies.

Sub-Activity 1.4.1. Select mancomunidades & Sub-Activity 1.4.2. Mapping of selected mancomunidades:

The Nexos Locales regional engagement team has completed their initial recommendations for the identification, selection and mapping of mancomunidades, which the project will work with going forward. The recommended mancomunidades are:

- Mancomunidad de Municipios MAMSOHUE

- Mancomunidad de Municipios Huista
- Mancomunidad de Municipios Metrópoli de los Altos
- Mancomunidad de Municipios Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de Municipalidades del Altiplano Marquense ADIMAM

The inputs will be consolidated into a report that will be available in April.

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES's principal activities for this Result will include:

- Finalize revised SOW for the PFM diagnostics and amend the RFP; select and subcontract a local firm to work with PFM Specialist and regional engagement team.
- Commence PFM Diagnostic.
- Present rapid assessment of COMUDE report to USAID.
- Develop technical assistance plans for each COMUDE.
- Develop MOUs with selected Mancomunidades.

RESULT 2: STRENGTHEN CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESSES

Background: NEXOS LOCALES will work with CSOs, community organizations (including, but not limited to, Community Development Councils - COCODEs), and citizens to strengthen their capability to engage actively and independently in municipal social accountability and citizen participation mechanisms. NEXOS LOCALES will include a specific focus on facilitating the effective participation of vulnerable and underrepresented groups (women, youth, the very poor, and other people with disabilities), who face unique obstacles limiting their involvement in participatory processes. NEXOS LOCALES will focus on civil society participation in the COMUDE, but will also promote other innovative social accountability mechanisms (including the Public Access to Information Law).

NEXOS LOCALES will follow a two-pronged approach to strengthening civil society participation in social accountability processes, including participatory planning and budgeting (described under Result 1), community scorecards, and grievance redress mechanisms. First, NEXOS LOCALES will implement activities that raise civil society awareness of their rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis good governance (Activities 2.1, 2.2, and, to a certain degree, 2.4). Second, once citizen groups better understand their responsibilities and rights, NEXOS LOCALES will help them take action by building their capacity to influence decision making and hold government accountable (Activities 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5). NEXOS LOCALES will strengthen the ability of CSOs to advocate their needs to public servants in the months leading up to elections, when officials are most willing to listen and act.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

- Entry point mapping standardized and consolidated
- Criteria established for selection of CSOs and COCODES
- Concept note developed for CSO Advocacy training

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities implemented during the second quarter for Result 2.

Activity 2.1 Conduct an entry point map.

Sub-activity 2.1.1. Develop entry points for all 30 municipalities:

Four entry point mapping documents were completed in Q2 by the regional engagement team. These documents were standardized by the short term senior governance expert, Connie Paraskeva, in February. The mapping exercise identifies key government, civil society, and WHIP partners as a reference for project activity planning and coordination. This significant exercise will achieve a clearer understanding of how government and civil society interact and encourage dialogue in the Western Highlands.

Activity 2.2: Train citizens so they can analyze local authority budgets and public spending:

Sub-activity 2.2.1 Select municipalities and COCODEs for Budget Analysis Training:

In March, the regional engagement team developed criteria for selection of COCODEs and CSOs for budget analysis training. The criteria will be used to develop the concept note for the training for Sub-activity 2.2.2. In Huehuetenango, the team began to identify COCODEs and youth leaders who could potentially participate in the training sessions.

Sub-activity 2.2.2. Eight regional workshops to train CSOs and COCODEs in budget analysis:

Development of the concept note to issue a grant to conduct the workshops is under development and will be completed in early May.

Activity 2.3 Build the capacity of CSOs to engage municipalities through COMUDES.

Sub-activity 2.3.1. Eight regional workshops to train CSOs in basic advocacy techniques:

During the month of March, the regional engagement team developed criteria for the selection of CSOs for this capacity building workshop. In addition, the Technical Director, with input from STTA, Connie Paraskeva, developed a concept note for issuing a grant to conduct the eight regional workshops. The concept note will be delivered to USAID for input and approval in late April.

Activity 2.4 Support CSOs to implement social accountability mechanisms.

Sub-activity 2.4.1. Developing election transition plans:

During the month of February, STTA Connie Paraskeva conducted interviews with CSOs, which revealed that they do not find the use of transition plans with electoral candidates to be productive. At the same time, the project received an initial draft proposal from ANAM to conduct comprehensive election transition plans. After review of the initial draft proposal, the project will recruit a technical advisor to construct a concept note for this activity, which will be directed at both ANAM and AGAAI. The advisor will also conduct organizational diagnostics which will serve as the basis of the technical assistance plans to be developed with each organization. The advisor will be supported closely by the project's Technical Director and COP.

Activity 2.5 Provide technical assistance to the COCODEs through grants to CSOs

Sub-activity 2.5.1. Desktop survey of existing COCODE technical assistance needs:

During the month of March, the regional engagement team developed criteria for a statement of work for a local advisor who will conduct a rapid assessment of the technical assistance needs of the COCODEs. The assessment will be conducted in the first part of Q4. The assessment will assist the project to formulate projects for CSOs covered through grants and address principal constraints to improved functioning of the COCODEs against their mandates.

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES's principal activities for this Result will include:

- Complete and submit for approval the grant concept note for budget analysis training
- Complete the selection of COCODEs and CSOs to receive budget analysis training
- Issue a request for application for selection of grantee to implement budget analysis training
- Seek final USAID approval for training CSOs in advocacy techniques
- Issue a request for application to identify grantee for advocacy techniques
- Recruit STTA to conduct assessment of COCODE technical assistance needs and implement said assessment.

RESULT 3: INCREASED QUALITY OF POTABLE WATER IN 30 FEED THE FUTURE (FTF) MUNICIPALITIES

Background: The health, economic, and social consequences of water deficits in both quantity and quality for all users and for the environment are enormous and linked to many U.S. foreign assistance priorities in tangible and substantive ways. NEXOS LOCALES, in line with the FtF and GHI initiatives, will support municipalities to increase the quality of potable water in the 30 prioritized municipalities. Through these actions, it is anticipated that NEXOS LOCALES will contribute to achievement of nutrition and health indicators. Additionally, there is a close relationship between water resources management and good governance practices. The sustainability of water resources depends on good governance. Interventions that strengthen the capacity of water authorities and related institutions have positive repercussions, including building the specific capacity of local governments to deliver potable water.

NEXOS LOCALES's approach to achieving this result focuses on increasing access to clean water, particularly for the most disadvantaged populations, by strengthening service providers' capacity. The project will consider the bigger picture—by applying a disaster risk reduction (DRR) lens to integrated water resources management at the watershed level. Activities under this result will help municipalities assess risks, devise plans, and take actions that improve service coverage and reduce hydrological risks. By improving municipal provision of water services, citizens' confidence in their municipalities will increase, as will citizens' socioeconomic well-being.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

- Identification of a LTTA Climate Change and Water Specialist to be submitted for USAID approval

- Completion of Water Sector Stakeholder Mapping by STTA Climate Change & Water Expert, Rachael Shenyó;
- Inputs for refinement of scope of work for single study diagnostics completed by STTA Climate Change & Water Expert Rachael Shenyó;
- Development of concept note to support ANAM in the execution of a Diploma program entitled “Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety”.

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities implemented during the first quarter for Result 3.

During Q3, the project identified a long-term (LTTA) Climate Change and Water Specialist to oversee Result 3 and 5 activities and serve as part of a team of technical specialists in support of the regional engagement units. The candidacy is scheduled to be submitted to USAID in April.

Activity 3.1 Map water sector stakeholders.

Sub-Activity 3.1.1. Map water sector stakeholders:

The Climate Change and Water Expert, Rachael Shenyó, completed the deliverable to map key informants for the water stakeholder mapping and climate change awareness exercise. The data will be useful for the implementation of the single study for Results 3, 4, and 5.

Furthermore, Ms. Shenyó completed a draft design for the single study baseline to be conducted for Results 3, 4, and 5. The Nexos Locales team will review the design along with the newly hired LTTA, Climate Change and Water Specialist, in April and May. Once the design is finalized, the project will issue an amendment to an outstanding RFP for diagnostics to locate qualified organization to assist the technical staff with implementing the diagnostics.

During February, the project discovered that the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare (MSPAS) has initiated a program of monitoring, surveillance and control over water quality. The Climate Change and Water Expert, Rachael Shenyó, contacted Nite Ramirez at MSPAS to discuss the Ministry’s “Programa y Saneamiento” (PAS). The result was as follows:

- The studies they are performing are in-depth and are funded/directed by USAID (this information has not been corroborated by USAID);
- The studies for the water systems in urban areas are well underway, but they lack the resources to study rural water systems;
- Ms. Ramirez suggested that Nexos Locales coordinate the diagnostics with PAS – Nexos Locales would emphasize the cross-cutting themes, climate change and rural systems, while PAS would focus on centralized water systems in the cabeceras;
- Ms. Ramirez suggested that there are synergies between the two projects and that by coordinating our efforts, we could preclude 50-60% duplication of effort;
- Ms. Ramirez and Rachael are exchanging information on areas of study and interests and suggest that Nexos Locales and PAS meet once this has been done.

Activity 3.2 Provide technical assistance to municipalities to improve water service delivery.

In March, ANAM presented the project with a proposal to assist the organization with implementing a third session of a Diploma program entitled “Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local

Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety’. An alliance composed of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MSPAS), the Municipal Development Institute (INFOM), the National Association of Municipalities (ANAM), National Institute of Public Administration (INAP), USAID Local Governance Project, and the Swiss Organization, Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation created and tested the diploma program in 2013 and 2014. The program is intended for local authorities, officials, municipal employees and other local actors (governmental and non-governmental institutional technicians) who work in areas of water and sanitation utilities. This diploma program answers a series of educational and training needs identified in the water and sanitation sector. The course is important because it addresses three fundamental pillars of integrity: Transparency, Accountability Accounts and Participation. The disconnection between these often results in the absence or deterioration of good governance in the water and sanitation sector. The program is intended to be both theoretical and practical so that when participants face real problems, they have knowledge and the tools to resolve issues properly. The specific objectives of the diploma program are:

- Build the capacity of human capital in charge of the management and governance of municipal water and sanitation services to achieve changes that improve the quality of life of the inhabitants.
- Build the capacity of municipal governments in understanding the legal, regulatory, organizational, administrative and technical framework of governance of municipal and inter-municipal water and sanitation services, and especially the importance of compliance with the Offices of Municipal Water and Sanitation (OMAS).
- Encourage dialogue between actors and learn from local experiences developed in the municipalities related to monitoring and control of water quality.
- Help strengthen municipal management, especially in transparency and accountability.

On March 25, the project developed a grant concept note to support the activity that was submitted to USAID for approval. If approved, ANAM will identify 10 employees of Water Services Offices in municipalities specified by Nexos Locales to attend the diploma program as a pilot for Year 2 technical assistance activities. Nexos Locales will provide 20% of the funding for the program by providing catering services for five of the 10 training sessions. Support will be provided through Program Activities funds, since the project Grants Manual has not been approved. The diploma program will begin April 17.

Activity 3.3 Assist municipalities with the development of watershed management and protection plans and train them on plan implementation.

No activities completed this quarter.

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES’s principal activities for this Result will include:

- Complete recruitment of a long-term Climate Change and Water Specialist.
- Finalize revised SOW for the single study diagnostics for Results 3, 4, and 5 and amend the RFP; select and subcontract firm to work with of Climate Change and Water Specialist and regional engagement team to begin diagnostic process.
- Commence single study diagnostic for Results 3, 4 and 5.
- Implement Diploma program entitled “Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety”.
- Select consulting firm for hydro sector mapping, studies about municipal water systems and the development of watershed management and protection plans.

- Begin awareness training, review of transition plans for environmental offices, and procure technical services for carrying out the scope of work expected for the diagnostics and plans.
- Identify critical pieces of the watershed plans that can reasonably be addressed by a municipality; in themes of land access/ ownership; contamination threats; protection; quality and type of forest cover; registration with existing development and biodiversity plans; and projected demand/ supply models that account for population growth, industrialization, irrigation needs, and climate change.

RESULT 4: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS ESTABLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED IN ORDER TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Background: When municipal governments cooperate with communities to address local challenges and provide services that lead to increased income and improved health outcomes, the population is more likely to view their municipal governments as legitimate and responsive. To this end, NEXOS LOCALES will support targeted municipalities' development planning efforts to respond to communities' food security and economic development needs in support to USAID/Guatemala Feed the Future Agriculture (DO2, IR 2.1). In addition, NEXOS LOCALES will promote municipal leadership in facilitating and coordinating social investments with community stakeholders. Because women are often in charge of nutrition for their families, the Municipal Women's Office will play a critical role in promoting women's participation in decision making in food security and nutrition. Activities under this result will be funded by the Global Health earmark.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

- Recruitment of long-term (LTTA) Local Economic Development Specialist, Otoniel Mora, to oversee LED activities;
- Completed initial rapid assessments of previous donor assistance to the Municipal Women's Offices (OMMs);
- Completed initial rapid assessments of the municipalities' Food Security Situation Rooms (SAN).
- Signed an MOU with AGEXPORT.

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities implemented during the second quarter for Result 4.

During Q2, the project recruited a long-term (LTTA) Local Economic Development Specialist, Otoniel Mora, to oversee LED activities and serve as part of a team of technical specialists in support of the regional engagement units. Mr. Mora will begin work with the project on April 15th.

Activity 4.1: Build the capacity of the Municipal Women's Office to support the design and implementation of municipal plans to address food security and nutrition.

Sub-Activity 4.1.1. Rapid assessment of previous donor assistance to the 30 OMMs:

All four clusters have completed their initial rapid assessments of previous donor assistance to the Municipal Women's Offices (OMMs) in the 30 municipalities supported by Nexos Locales. The

assessments will identify remaining needs to help these groups play their essential role in food security and economic development. The inputs will be consolidated into a report that will be finalized the fourth week in April.

Activity 4.2 Coordinate with municipalities to establish and operate food security situation rooms.

Sub-Activity 4.2.1 Rapid assessments of the SAN Situation Rooms:

All four clusters have completed their initial rapid assessments of the municipalities' Food Security Situation Rooms (SAN). The assessment will determine whether or not these are functioning and to what level of effectiveness against their intended functions in order to inform the type of technical assistance that is needed by Nexos Locales. The inputs will be consolidated into a report that will be available the fourth week in April.

Activity 4.3: Help municipalities develop LED plans.

Delivery of technical assistance is pending the results of the single study diagnostics.

Activity 4.4: Coordinate with other USAID implementing partners to support access to basic municipal services for small-scale producers and their associations.

On January 21, the project signed an MOU with AGEXPORT. AGEXPORT will play a critical role in sharing information on value chain analysis in support of LED planning.

Sub-Activity 4.4.1. Identification of public policies adverse to agricultural production:

In March, the project finalized a scope of work for a short term expert to identify public policies adverse to agricultural production. A consultant will be recruited in Q4.

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES's principal activities for this Result will include:

- Finalize revised SOW for the single study diagnostics for Results 3, 4, and 5 and amend the RFP; select and subcontract firm to work with Local Economic Development Specialist and regional engagement team to begin diagnostic process.
- Commence single study diagnostics for Results 3, 4, and 5.
- Recruit consultant for public policies study and begin implementation
- Support activities of the Steering Committee of the National Policy for Inclusive Development and Territorial Competitiveness, to engage with the organizations involved, including but not limited to: AGAAI, Universidad Rafael Landivar, Helvetas, Cementos Progreso, Grupos Gestores, Universidad de San Carlos, Confederación de Cooperativas de Guatemala, Ministerio de Economía, PRONACOM
- Finalize agreement with ADAM to implement the above mentioned Consortium of development organizations, and undertaking the tasks of result 4
- Finalize agreement with SEGEPLAN, including the participation of Francisco Leal within the local experts of the project, guiding the result 4 and engaging the main institutions and organizations linked to the regional policy containing LED concerns, and joining the efforts of the relationship of LED to women empowerment and food security.
- Select the CSO to implement FNS through the OMMs
- Select CSOs to implement food security rooms
- Coordinate with SESAN and other FtF USAID initiatives (MFEWS)
- Select implementing partner to develop LED plans

- Facilitate planning sessions with small scale coffee, vegetable and handicraft producers
- Prioritize municipal services to increase productivity
- Conduct study to identify public policies that negatively affect agricultural production
- Evaluate FNS actions taken by OMM to date through SEPREM-Helvetas
- Identify the development strategy that will be adopted, used and can be integrated with climate change adaptation. Include methods for researching, promotion, innovation, incentives, and reducing barriers to market access for best practices as part of the strategy for LED plans centered in agriculture. Include considerations for water usage, current rates of crop loss and their causes, diversification, valuation of goods that are sustainably produced, standards for evaluation of practices, and reduction of existing barriers to market access.

RESULT 5: MUNICIPAL PLANS ESTABLISHED TO REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE VULNERABILITY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANS.

Background: NEXOS LOCALES will employ an awareness-capacity-action framework to reduce climate change vulnerability. At the municipal level, NEXOS LOCALES will: 1) build municipalities’ knowledge of climate stressors and of adaptation measures (*awareness*); 2) improve municipalities’ ability to select and prioritize adaptation measures, mobilize resources—OSR, donor, national, or otherwise—to implement adaptation measures, and manage disaster risk (*capacity*); and 3) help municipalities develop and implement adaptation plans—whether standalone or integrated into municipal development plans (*action*). At the community level, NEXOS LOCALES will: 1) improve citizen knowledge of climate stressors (*awareness*); and 2) increase community groups’ ability to contribute in a collaborative fashion to municipal planning processes on the topic of climate change (*capacity*). Because there is a direct and significant link between this result and Result 4, Result 5 activities will support, either directly or indirectly, the achievement of Result 4.

NEXOS LOCALES Cluster Managers will oversee implementation of the following activities within their respective municipalities, with technical guidance and support from short-term DRR and climate change experts, and they will team with local partners to implement activities. NEXOS LOCALES will coordinate closely with Rainforest Alliance staff at the municipal level to ensure that the activities of NEXOS LOCALES and Rainforest Alliance’s Climate, Nature, and Communities Program are mutually reinforcing rather than working at cross-purposes. Activities under this result will be funded by the Global Climate Change Adaptation earmark.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

- Identification of final candidate for the LTTA Climate Change and Water Specialist;
- Completion of Climate Change Stakeholder Mapping by STTA Rachael Shenyo
- Inputs for refinement of scope of work for single study diagnostics completed by STTA Rachael Shenyo
- Completed final draft concept note for the Climate Change Public Awareness Campaign

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities implemented during the second quarter for Result 5.

During Q3, the project identified a long-term (LTTA) Climate Change and Water Specialist to oversee Result 3 and 5 activities and serve as part of a team of technical specialists in support of the regional engagement units. His candidacy will be submitted to USAID in April.

Activity 5.1: Improve municipalities' awareness of climate stressors and of adaptation measures

Sub-Activity 5.1.1. Evaluation of knowledge levels of climate stressors and adaptation measures:

See Sub-Activity 3.1.1.

Activity 5.2: Build the capacity of municipalities to assess vulnerabilities to climate change, prioritize climate adaptation measures, mobilize resources, and respond to emergencies

Delivery of technical assistance is pending the results of the single study diagnostics.

Activity 5.3: Assist municipalities with developing adaptation plans and implementing joint watershed management plans aimed at reducing vulnerability to hydro-meteorological events.

Delivery of technical assistance is pending the results of the single study diagnostics.

Activity 5.4 Build citizen knowledge of climate stressors so they are better able to participate in the municipal planning.

Sub-Activity 5.4.1 Climate Change Public Awareness Campaign:

The Climate Change and Water Expert submitted a draft concept note for the Climate Change Public Awareness Campaign. The design was discussed and considered at a technical team meeting on March 26. The Technical Director developed a final concept note, which will be submitted to USAID for consideration and approval in April.

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES's principal activities for this Result will include:

- Submit for USAID approval the selection of the project's long-term Climate Change and Water Specialist.
- Finalize revised SOW for the single study diagnostics for Results 3, 4, and 5 and amend the RFP; select and subcontract a local firm to work with the project's Climate Change and Water Specialist and regional engagement team to implement the single study.
- Commence single study diagnostics for Results 3, 4, and 5.
- Seek USAID approval to administer grant for the Climate Change Public Awareness Campaign

RESULT 6: CAPACITY INCREASED FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES (ANAM) AND/OR THE GUATEMALAN ASSOCIATION OF INDIGENOUS MAYORS AND AUTHORITIES (AGAAI) TO SUPPORT MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AND REPLICATE SUCCESSFUL MODELS

NATIONWIDE, INCLUDING MUNICIPAL CRIME PREVENTION PLANS

Background: Providing technical assistance to ANAM and/or AGAAI is a key intervention to ensure sustainability of municipal interventions and to build upon USAID's investments. A strong municipal association will be well positioned to continue supporting targeted municipalities and replicate successful models beyond the life of the project. NEXOS LOCALES's approach to Result 6 involves 1) implementing interventions that address each association's unique needs and development status, and 2) building upon the technical and financial assistance that the associations have received to date from a range of international donors, including USAID under the prior Local Governance Project.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

- Advanced meetings held with ANAM and AGAAI to discuss technical assistance and organizational diagnostics.
- Statement of Work developed for consultant to conduct organizational diagnostics for AGAAI and ANAM.
- Development of concept note to support ANAM in the execution of a Diploma program entitled "Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety".

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities implemented during the third quarter for Result 6.

Activity 6.1: Deliver technical assistance and training to ANAM and AGAAI to improve their service provision and ability to advocate on the topics of crime prevention, food security, health, DRR, and climate change vulnerability reduction.

Sub-Activity 6.1.2. Develop technical assistance plans with ANAM and AGAAI:

The project met with ANAM and AGAAI on three separate occasions to discuss technical assistance to their organizations. The associations have agreed to allow the project to conduct initial organizational assessments in order to determine the nature of future technical assistance. A statement of work was drafted and finalized by the Technical Director and STTA, Connie Paraskeva. Recruitment for a consultant will take place in April.

In addition, the Technical team received a request to fund a diploma program entitled, "Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety" from ANAM on March 18. The concept note for a small grant was submitted to USAID on March 25. If approved the diploma program will begin April 17 and will last through the end of August. (See Activity 3.2 for more information).

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES's principal activities for this Result will include:

- Recruit consultant to conduct organizational diagnostics and implement the study;

- Implement Diploma program entitled “Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety”;
- Formulate a long term plan of technical assistance to ANAM and AGAAI.

AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Background: Nexos Locales will establish AACs within each cluster to encourage collaboration. AACs will be composed of representatives from CSOs (COCODES, community organizations, private sector, universities, and church organizations, which are especially strong in San Marcos and Huehuetenango) and government (municipal corporations, committees, COMUDES, and municipal associations). They will provide the Nexos Locales team with guidance during the design of project activities and assist in the activity implementation, helping to ensure the project’s activities are inclusive, are relevant to the context within each cluster, and have community and government buy-in. When municipalities elect new mayors to office, the project will prioritize introducing them to and integrating them in their respective AAC.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

During the quarter the regional engagement teams worked to identify and select members for the AAC in each cluster. The criteria for selection were based on the following:

- Representative members must come from either community organizations, private sector, universities, religious organizations, government, or municipal committees and associations;
- Representatives must possess a level of expertise in addressing the issues addressed by the project;
- Representatives who are recognized as leaders and have a reputation of integrity within the development community;
- Representatives who have a high level of visibility within the community and are well known.

Once suggested candidates were short-listed by the regional engagement team, an official letter of invitation was submitted to each candidate by former COP, Dr. Edgar Balsells. Following their acceptance to participate, each cluster held preliminary meetings in order to define the objective of the AAC within the context of Nexos Locales objectives and explain the main functions of the committee members. The date of each meeting is provided below:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| • RC1 - Huehuetenango | January 27, 2015 |
| • Sub RC1- Quiche | February 13, 2015 |
| • RC2- Quetzaltenango/Totonicapán/ Sur del Quiche | February 17, 2015 |
| • RC3 - San Marcos | March 11, 2015 |

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES’s principal activities for this Result will include:

- The project will continue to formalize the functions of the AACs and define the roles and terms for the committee members.
- Monthly ACC meetings will be held within each cluster.

GENDER & YOUTH

Background: Nexos Locales understands the very critical role that youth will play in the project's success. Considerations for youth issues can be divided into two major areas: impact on youth by existing conditions (malnutrition, violence, lack of access to education), and places where youth involvement is especially relevant to consider. Activity by activity considerations are included in the workplan activities, below. The project will strengthen youth participation and integrate youth considerations into programming. The project will seek grant applications from qualified NGOs to train youth in the four regions in basic local governance participation and in project development and design. Youth training may cover civic participation, budget review, watershed management, economic development, sustainable resource development, waste management, gender equity and climate change. These trainings will generate interest in civic participation among youth, and provide hands-on assistance at the community level in all stages of diagnosis, planning and implementation. It will also provide an excellent in-community platform for promotion, outreach, and public relations.

Throughout the Year I workplan, Nexos Locales has planned activities to address issues recognized to traditionally and recently have a disproportionate effect on, or relation to, women. These include access to water/ water quality; family income generation and loss and other detrimental impacts related to climate change (direct and indirect effects on education, mental and physical health, nutrition, domestic tension, etc.); generation of income through local economic development strategies; civic participation; and adaptive capacity (knowledge, resource access, and incentive) for change and development. In order for development projects to be effective, all of these factors, including the provision of agricultural extension services for climate change adaptation (pest control, improved plant resistance, reduction of resource consumption in production, soil nutrition) and addressing barriers to valuation of women's work and fair market prices; must be considered in diagnostics and action design.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

Key accomplishments during the third quarter include:

- Initial rapid gender and youth assessment, and input on youth strategy completed by Iris Group;
- Draft Youth Integration and Strategy Plan concept note.

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities implemented during the third quarter for Gender and Youth.

- Throughout the quarter, the project held several technical meetings with representatives from Centro de Paz Barbara Ford to discuss their initial grant proposal to hold a Youth Congress in May. An initial concept note was submitted to USAID on January 22 and



Figure 3: Inauguration of the Youth Office in Cunen. On the microphone is the OMM Coordinator, seated is former COP, Dr. Edgar Balsells and Sister Virginia of Centro de Paz Barbara Ford. (February 25, 2015)

approval was received to move forward with the grant activity design on the condition that the Youth Congress be integrated into a larger youth strategy. On March 3 Centro de Paz Barbara Ford submitted a second proposal taking into account feedback from USAID and the Nexos Local technical team. On March 30 Nexos Locales submitted an official letter to the organization stating that their proposal is being considered and is awaiting final approval of a project-level youth strategy and the outstanding approval of the Grants Manual.

- In January, the RC2 Outreach specialist met with youth leaders from Totonicapán, La Esperanza, Salcá, Concepción and San Juan Chiquirichapa to understand the experiences of young people in the region and solicit their opinion, perspective and vision for a better Guatemala. Moreover, the idea of the Youth Congress was discussed to gather ideas on the following topics: 1) Mayan perspectives; 2) Icebreakers that encourage the participation of youth; 3) the issue of DEL and its impact on youth; 4) promoting partnerships between youth organizations; and 5) the importance of art and music as means for reaching youth. Two of these municipalities fall outside of the project's mandate, but were selected as informative sources for a USAID/Washington delegation that was to consult these groups on issues that impact youth.
- In February, the project procured the services of Iris Group, Inc., a US-Based small woman owned company to undertake the Gender and Youth Assessments. Throughout February and March, Iris group completed the following deliverables:
 - Responded to and finalized Gender and Social Inclusion plan based on feedback from USAID;
 - Conducted a rapid on the ground assessment of gender and youth considerations. The assessment will help inform activity design and implementation, indicator development, and data collection and analysis;
 - Contributed to the development of a project-level youth strategy and integration plan to ensure priority programming across the project, taking into account proposals received from Centro de Paz Barbara Ford to convene a Youth Congress;
 - Trained Nexos Locales staff to understand gender equity and social inclusion concepts.

Taking into consideration the results of the rapid assessment and input on the project-level youth strategy and integration plan, the Technical Director and the regional engagement team developed a Youth Integration and Strategy Plan that will be presented to USAID, along with Iris Groups final deliverables in April.

- In February, the RC2 team held a meeting with the International Republican Institute (IRI) to obtain information on the proposed Youth Democracy Project Lab. The Youth Laboratory is an initiative of IRI, which aims to involve the Guatemalan and Salvadoran youth in development, evaluation and communication of policies that emphasize solutions to the lack of public safety in regard to elections. The project headquarters is the city of Quetzaltenango. The democratic youth laboratory will be developed in 5 phases with bimonthly planning sessions scheduled for two days each and shall include:

Phase 1: Presentation of Democratic Youth Laboratory

Phase 2: Techniques for efficient communication and group management

Phase 3: Management and use of social networks

Phase 4: Low Cost Prevention Campaigns

Phase 5: Socialization prevention campaigns of violence

The total number of estimated participants in the Youth Laboratory is 40.

- In February, the mayor of Cunen authorized and inaugurated office space for a municipal Youth Office. Nexos Locales views this as a window of opportunity to step in and provide in-kind support and technical assistance to the municipality that can serve as a model to replicate in other departments and municipalities. Support to Youth Offices is part of the overall Youth Integration Plan and Strategy that will be presented to USAID in April.

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES's principal activities for this cross-cutting theme will include:

- Finalize and submit for approval the project's Gender and Social Inclusion Plan and Gender and Youth Assessment and Integration Plan to USAID;
- Finalize concept note for Youth Integration and Strategy Plan and submit to USAID for approval; issue a request for application to locate grantees, select grantees and begin implementation.

USAID DELEGATIONS

Below are brief descriptions of specific activities supported by Nexos Locales during the third quarter.

- On January 14, the RC 2 Outreach Specialist accompanied the USAID delegation to Momostenango. The field visit included a presentation by the mayor on the Municipal Public Policy for Food and Nutrition Security and Action plans through 2020 and visit to Cooperative Coanepa RL, producers of green beans, snow peas and corn. The latter activity was accompanied by AGEXPORT Value Chains project.
- On January 13 the RC3 Outreach Specialist accompanied the USAID delegation to San Lorenzo and San Miguel de Ixtahuacan.
- On January 26-30 – The Sub RCI team accompanied US Ambassador, Mr. Todd Robinson, to meet with representatives of WHIP and mayors of Nebaj, Quiché Sacapulas and Santa Cruz. The topic discussed was child migration.
- On March 16, 17, and 18 the Nexos Locales team coordinated and accompanied a delegation visit by USAID/CEPPS that included meetings with the Mayor of Quetzaltenango (Dr. Jorge Rolando Barrientos Pellecer), delegates from the Electoral Supreme Courts of Quetzaltenango, and representatives from the following organizations: CEDFOG (Concepcion Saenz), Asociacion Gente Joven, Defensoria de la Mujer Ix (Juana Baca), and the Subdelegación del TSE en Nebaj (Jaime Wosbely Villatoro Alegria). The meetings took place in Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, and Quiché.



Figure 4: Meeting with Alcalde Municipal de San Juan Ostuncalco and Representatives from the USAID Delegation researching organized crime. (March 23, 2015)

- On March 23 and 24, the RC2 Outreach Specialist assisted in the coordination and execution of a USAID PFM delegation to the Municipality of Momostenango and to the Departmental Delegation of the Office Municipal Administration of Finance (DAAFIM). The delegation is conducting a rapid diagnosis of their financial management systems. As a result of the meetings held by the USAID PFM delegation, it was noted that the technical assistance that DAAFIM provides to municipalities in PFM is critical, though the agency lacks adequate resources to conduct its work. The project recognizes this issue as an opportunity to find ways to partner with DAAFIM to deliver services to project beneficiaries.
- On March 23 and 24, the San Marcos Coordinator and the Huehuetenango team coordinated meetings and assisted with interviews conducted by a delegation of USAID consultants studying the linkages among organized crime, conflict and fragility in Guatemala in order to inform USAID programming. The delegation visited with Unidad de Prevención de la Violencia , the Mayor of San Juan Ostuncalco, Sr. Arturo Alonzo Escobar, Asociación Gente Joven, representatives of Municipalidad de Chiantla, representatives of CEDFOG, and representatives of Comisión de Auditoria Social del CODEDEH, among others.

IV. RAPID RESPONSE FUND & GRANTS

RAPID RESPONSE FUND PLAN (RRFP)

During QR2 Nexos Locales developed, and submitted to USAID for review, a Rapid Response Fund Plan (RRFP) with the aim of enabling a swift mechanism to: a) quickly and efficiently respond to local governance issues not identified in the workplan; b) address unforeseen events, such as natural and/or man-made disasters; c) move on windows of opportunity that advance objectives of the Nexos Locales contract; and, d) support requests made at the direction of USAID Guatemala. DAI will implement the Rapid Response mechanism in close collaboration with USAID's Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). During QR3, the project was asked to review the RRFP again to ensure consistency with the revised Grants Manual that was submitted to USAID for final approval on March 20. An updated RRFP will be turned into USAID in April.

GRANTS

DAI's Grants Manual, submitted in Q1, was returned to the project by USAID in February 2015 with comments and requests for changes. Specifically, the project was asked to update the manual to account for all revisions of ADS 303 that were finalized and published December 26, 2014. Based on discussions between Acting Chief of Party Jennifer Lewis and COR Andrew Lucas, the project also included a proposed system for micro grants. Acting Grants Manager, Melanie Bittle, and Grants Assistant, Ursula Castillo, completed revisions to the Grants Manual, which were submitted to USAID for final approval on Friday, March 20. Along with the grants manual, the grants team worked to develop quick reference guides and templates for budgets, concept notes, and minimum eligibility checklists, both in Spanish and English, to assist the technical team with developing, reviewing, and submitting proposals.

On March 12, Acting Grants Manager, Melanie Bittle, and Grants Assistant, Ursula Castillo, led a grants capacity building training for the regional engagement teams and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist

In addition, Acting Grants Manager, Melanie Bittle worked with Tamis Specialist, Neil Enet, to further customize the grants modules and process flow in Tamis. The team piloted these tools and the process in Tamis with the submission of the concept note to fund ANAM's diploma in "Governance of Water and Sanitation Services for Local Development and its Contribution to Health and Food Safety".

On March 19 Grants Assistant Ursula Castillo was approved by USAID as the new long-term Grants Manager for Nexos Locales.

PORTFOLIO OF GRANTS & PARTNERSHIP POOL (TECHNICAL BULLPEN)

Since September 2014, the Grants team has received over 100 unsolicited proposals for grants, rapid response funds and subcontracts. In Q3, the grants team developed a process for rapid initial assessment of these proposals while the project awaits the final USAID approval of the Grants Manual

and Rapid Response Plan. A final list of potential/viable grants and partners will be available in mid-April. This list will also include names of organizations identified in Q2 as result of Solicitation #LGP-SOL-001, Request for Expression of Interest to conduct diagnostics.

NEXT STEPS

During the fourth quarter NEXOS LOCALES’s principal activities for Grants and Rapid Response Funds will include:

- Complete revision of all grant and rapid response fund proposals and create master list.
- Submit letters to applicants indicating that they have been short-listed as a result of their proposals and to be aware of
- Once approval for grants manual has been received, issue an official Annual Program Statement (APS) via public announcement detailing the objectives of the project for year one. The APS will be accompanied by specific Requests for Applications (RFAs) for concept notes identified by the technical team.
- The grants team and members of the technical team will then host an applicant’s conference to explain and answer questions regarding the APS and the RFAs.
- Identify potential micro grants, particularly those that would allow Nexos Locales to continue the prior LGP’s work in Quiche, ensure “quick wins”, and address timely issues/windows of opportunity, including during the electoral season.

SHORT TERM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The table below represents a summary of short-term technical assistance performed during the quarter.

USAID Request No.	Activity Title	Objective	Consultant Name	Period of Performance
No. LGP--08	M&E Specialists	Conducted a capacity building and informational training on the project’s M&E requirements.	Jiny Moreno	January 5 – 9
No. LGP--10	DAI Finance and Administration Specialist	Kick off the first phase of a four week long training to the Finance & Administration team on the use of DAI’s FAS system and financial reporting requirements.	Ed Crowley	January 13 - 28
No. LGP--10	Security Assessment	Assist the DCOP and COP in developing the project security plan, provide situational awareness and preparedness training to project drivers, and conducting security reconnaissance in the regional departments, particularly the Huehuetenango region	John Reid	January 13 - 28
No. LGP-10	TAMIS Specialist	Work with the DCOP, Procurement Specialist, and Grants Assistant to customize DAI’s TAMIS for project implementation	Neil Enet	January 21 – February 3
No. LGP-10	DAI FAS Implementer	Shadow role in the use of DAI’S FAS system for field expense recording	Adam Comar	January 25 – February 7

Workplan Action Memo #10	DAI Project Manager	Provide operations support to the DCOP and COP in the recruitment of seven open positions, completion of the project's field operations manual, and undertaking a start-up compliance review to ensure systems and workflow processes meet DAI and USAID requirements.	Adrian Carroll	February 2 – February 27
No. LGP-11	DAI Project Director	Provide technical management support to former COP, Edgar Balsells, and DCOP, Vince Broady.	Jennifer Lewis	February 9-13
Workplan Action Memo #09	DAI Senior Governance Specialist	Finalize the pre-diagnostic report and develop the methodology for citizen score cards.	Connie Paraskeva	February 15 – March 1
No. LGP-04	Climate Change & Water Technical Expert	Finalize the water sector mapping, participate in the review of technical proposals for Results #03, #04, & #05 diagnostics, and to begin designing and developing the public awareness campaign for climate change.	Rachael Shenyo	February 16 – March 31
PO-Quetzaltenango-008	Gender Expert, Iris Group	Conduct youth and gender rapid assessment, revise Gender and Social Inclusion Plan, develop gender and youth integration plan	Hannah Fortune-Greeley	February 16-27
PO-Quetzaltenango-008	Youth Expert, Iris Group	Conduct youth and gender rapid assessment, revise Gender and Social Inclusion Plan, develop gender and youth integration plan	Mary Beth Hastings	February 16-27
No. LGP-13	Acting Grants Manager	Revise and submit Grants Manual for approval, set up grants processes and Tamis database, guide and train staff in grants procedures, review initial grant proposals.	Melanie Bittle	February 16-March 21
Workplan Action Memo #15	Acting Chief of Party	Serve as Acting Chief of Party for the program, including supervising and providing technical and management leadership, guidance, and approval of project activities Work with technical staff and DCOP Vince Broady to conduct an in-depth assessment of the status of pending technical activities and workplan deliverables and develop an interim workplan for technical and administrative priorities and activities to be conducted during the one-month leadership transition period.	Jennifer Lewis	March 9 – March 13
No. LGP-15	Project Associate	Assist with finalizing inventory	Adam Fivenson	March 16-27

Workplan Action Memo #16	Acting Technical Director	and conduct internal procurement audit Provide interim technical coordination and direction to the regional engagement teams to ensure work plan deliverables continues to progress.	Melanie Bittle	March 22 – April 13
Workplan Action Memo #07	IT Specialist	Install main and backup server in Huehuetenango office and install IP Telephonic System in both Huehue and Quetzaltenango offices.	Colter Bell	March 23 – April 7

V. TRAINING EVENTS

The project did not provide any formal training events during this quarter.

VI. MEETINGS HELD DURING QUARTER

The following table summarizes major meetings held by the technical staff with Mayors / WHIP Project / Other Donors outside of WHIP:

Date	Meeting Title / Organization	Objective / Results	Location
January 12	WHIP Coordination Meeting	Including representatives from USAID Guatemala and visitors from USAID Washington representing the Bureau of Food for Peace, Office of Food Security, and Public Health	Quetzaltenango
January 12	Association for the Study of Cooperation in the West - ECO and with the Association of Community Partners for Water, Environment, Integral Development and Infrastructure Naranjo River Basin -CADISNA.	To introduce and share information to identify shared areas of engagement, cooperation and collaboration in addressing issues of water and sanitation, local economic development and citizen participation.	RC3
January 21	WHIP Coordination Meeting - Xela-Toto	1. Share information from workshop held on December 2 and 3 with USAID to strengthen WHIP committees. 2. Evaluation of the USAID delegation visit to Momostenango. 3. Update joint action plan and commission plan for WHIP Xela-Toto Regional Committee. 4. Conversation with researchers at Harvard University on the axis of Gender with WHIP Xela / Toto partner projects. 5. Presentation by WHIP Committee to COMUDE Santa Lucia la Reforma.	RC2
January 22	Presentación de Proyecto ante Concejo Municipal de Concepción Chiquirichapa	Objective: That the municipal corporation knows the project coordinators from different offices (OMM, youth, environment, DAFIM, DMP, Councillors) Result: Mayor asks Nexos Locales to form part of the municipal institutional network, which is a space where organizations and/or projects involved in the municipality involved, it is also a space where activities are coordinated to avoid duplication among women's groups and COCODES.	RC2
January 26	Reunión con Sebastian Charchalac de TNC (Socio USAID)	Sebastian presented proposals for partnerships with Local Nexos in order to optimize resources and efforts in the intervention municipalities. On Monday, January 26 a first draft of proposals was shared which proposed specific actions to coordinate.	RC2
January 22	Reunión con Asociación de Mujeres del Altiplano	AMA is a nonprofit organization made up of Quetzaltenango women working on entrepreneurial projects, crafts, food and nutrition security, and training on issues of self-esteem, women's rights. They're based in the Valley of San Juan Palajunoj and Ostuncalco. They came to the office to present and discuss their work experience and were given access to project information through the Local Nexos informational supplement that was distributed from the launch.	RC2
January 23	Visita a municipalidad de Santa Lucia La Reforma	Meeting with Mayor Francisco Chivalán, who mentions that the main need to address at this time is the empowerment of women in areas of participation. He reiterates that the lack of communication with the OMM coordinator has hampered the participation of women. Consequently the Mayor asks Nexos Locales to coordinate with USAID partners to propose a meeting with the City Council, coordinator offices and organizations to improve the flow of communication. Clearly the work of municipal administration needs to be strengthened starting with the Mayor, who also shows will and consent to participate in processes of municipal strengthening.	RC2
January 29	The INL hosted regional conference	The COP and COR attended the INL hosted regional conference in Quetzaltenango with municipal governments, attended by municipal authorities, indigenous authorities and the US ambassador. Chief of Party, Edgar Balsells, gave a presentation on Nexos Locales.	Quetzaltenango

January 30	National Assembly of mayors	Nexos Locales attended the National Assembly of mayors in Guatemala hosted by ANAM where Chief of Party, Edgar Balsells, presented on the Nexos Locales Project. The event was used to build political support for the project.	Guatemala City
January 26	WHIP Coordination Meeting – Sub RCI	Objectives of meeting were: 1) Know the progress in coordinating the WHIP and set a date for the workshop planning for 2015; 2) Know the organizational structure of COMUDE and 3) Perform other visits for the formation of Area Advisory Committee.	Sub RCI
February 2-6	Municipalidad de Cuilco	In Cuilco the Nexos Locales team and COR met with the mayor and members of the municipal council, including the Director of Planning, and the OMM. Observations were shared on the importance of local economic development, citing the example of the —industrialization of honey, soy and coffeell project as a good indicator for local economic growth. The cooperative in Cuilco is certified to export to Switzerland and Germany. The Cuilco mayor discussed the risk in lack of water quality to the villages located in the lower part of the river in Cuilco as an important need, since many of them use this significant water source which is being contaminated by solid waste and feces flowing down from upriver communities. It was found that OMM has a strategic in Nutrition, Food Security and Local Economic Development to work with community organizations of women. This experience in OMM Cuilco could be replicated in other municipalities covered by the project, to strengthen OMM capacity and service delivery in regions.	RCI
February 13	“Petite Comite” WHIP Meeting	COP, Edgar Balsells, attended the “Petite Comite” WHIP meeting on Friday, February 13. The meeting took place at AGEXPORT, led by Ivan Buitron, Chief of Party of the Value Chains project USAID-AGEXPORT. The meeting began with a deep evaluation of the last two years of WHIP activities. A big emphasis was placed in the last USAID-WHIP meeting celebrated in December 2014, specially in relation to: i) the need of having a clearinghouse with all the data of the projects and DEVTECH; ii) the need to concretize and process the inputs provided by WHIP committees from the four clusters; iii) the need to harmonize the relation between the partners and USAID towards a new strategy and focus on youth, migrants and aid effectiveness. Additional information is provided at the end of this document.	Guatemala City
February 12	WHIP Coordination Meeting- Sub RCI	Key points defining the vision of WHIP-Quiche include: Local Economic Development, Food Security and Nutrition, Citizen Security, Gender, Climate Change, Strengthening COMUDE capacity and OMM, and Youth. Prioritized areas of intervention include: Nebaj, Uspantán, Chajul, Cunen and Chichicastenango. There are opportunities to work in CUNEN primarily from the work done by TNC with the municipal government.	Sub RCI
February 13	Municipal Council of Nebaj	To address the topics of health and education was held, where the “municipalizando” of health is occurring, meaning the municipality is assuming a greater level of responsibility for administering care due to the lack of national assistance. Some communities have no teachers lined up in 2015. There are about 75 teachers for approximately 3500 students. Attention on the issue of education means reducing the issue of youth suicide.	Sub RCI
February 13	International Republican Institute (IRI)	Meeting was held with IRI to obtain information on the proposed Youth Democracy Project Lab. The Youth Laboratory is an initiative of the International Republican Institute (IRI) which aims to involve the Guatemalan and Salvadoran youth in development, evaluation and communication of policies that emphasize solutions to the lack of public safety. The project site is the city of Quetzaltenango. The democratic youth laboratory will be developed in 5 phases with bimonthly planning sessions, scheduled for two days each, shall include: Phase 1: Presentation of Youth Democracy Laboratory Phase 2: Techniques for efficient communication and group management Phase 3: Management and use of social networks Phase 4: Low Cost Prevention Campaigns Phase 5: Socialization prevention campaigns of violence The total number of estimated participants in the Youth Laboratory is 40.	RC 2
February 18	“Mujeres Camino a la Prosperidad” Project Launch	Held by HEIFER International, an organization that works toward empowering women in various municipalities of Huehuetenango. HEIFER works in four municipalities of Nexos Locales Coverage: 1) Jacaltenango; 2) San Antonio Huista; 3) San Sebastian Huehuetenango; and 4) Todos Santos Cuchumatanes.	RCI

February 23	WHIP Coordination Meeting- RC1	Held with 17 participants attending. Topics discussed included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reelection of the Junta Coordinadora del WHIP de Huehuetenango. 2. Adjustments to annual Work Plan 2015, based on the recommendations by national-level WHIP leadership. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sent out information regarding each program's youth components. ✓ Worked on proposals relating to key messages which will be finalized at the next meeting. ✓ Planned participation of Rolando Gomez from FUNDAECO at the USAID meeting scheduled for April 13th. ✓ Next meeting scheduled for April 24th at 9:00. ✓ Reviewed the indicators of the municipality by communities. By unanimous consensus, decided to work in Aldea el Rancho, Chiantla.	RC1
February 23	WHIP Coordination Meeting- RC2	The Mayor of Momostenango was in attendance. The meeting centered around the following topics: 1) Following up with the water 2020 plan for Momostenango 2) Municipality of Momostenango recommended to PLANFAM to conduct a training in the municipality on Family Planning	RC2
February 27	WHIP Coordination Meeting- RC3	WHIP meeting was held to establish the POA for the communities of Toache of the San Pablo municipality and Santa Rosa of the San Lorenzo municipality, to establish action plans of USAID WHIP partners.	RC3
March 13	ANAM, AGAAI, INFOM	Acting COP, Jennifer Lewis, and DCOP, Vince Broady, met with the heads of ANAM, AGAAI, and INFOM on Friday, March 13, to re-confirm Nexos Locales' commitment to supporting these institutions as they relate to key objectives of the USAID contract, particularly Result #06.	Guatemala City
March 2-13	USAID and CATIE Roundtable on Adaptation	Nexos Locales Climate Change Expert, Rachael Shenyo (STTA), attended a roundtable adaptation seminar in Guatemala City, organized by USAID and CATIE. Most adaptation work presented was being done in low-lying areas, and/or was cash crop oriented. Nothing on smallholder production, or the necessary extension of adaptation strategies. Guatemalan government agencies have thankfully settled on a vulnerability reduction (as opposed to environment-only or risk management/ disaster response) approach to adaptation.	Guatemala City
March 11	Municipality of Zacualpa	The regional engagement team visited the governor of Zacualpa to present on Nexos Locales and establish a new partnership with the replacement Mayor, Sr. Victor Yat (the former mayor stepped down).	RC2
March 17	JICA-supported Proyecto para el Desarrollo de las Capacidades de los Gobiernos Locales en la República de Guatemala	The Huehuetenango team met with representatives from the JICA-supported Proyecto para el Desarrollo de las Capacidades de los Gobiernos Locales en la República de Guatemala to look for opportunities for synergies and coordination.	RC 1
March 19	SEPREM - "Clasificador Presupuestario con Enfoque de Género"	In this workshop, it was evident that most of OMMs have no assigned budget, lack knowledge of the legal framework that supports the appropriation of funds for their offices, and lack the technical capacity to plan and manage said budgets. In addition, Nexos Locales noted the very poor attendance by OMM coordinators due to lack of funds for traveling from their municipalities. The project recognizes these issues as opportunities to provide support to the OMMs.	RC3
March 16 - 18	USAID/CEPPS Delegation	The Nexos Locales team coordinated a visit by USAID/CEPPS that included meetings with the Mayor of Quetzaltenango (Dr. Jorge Rolando Barrientos Pellecer), delegates from the Electoral Supreme Courts of Quetzaltenango, and representatives from the following organizations: CEDFOG (Concepcion Saenz), Asociacion Gente Joven, Defensoria de la Mujer Ix (Juana Baca), and the Subdelegación del TSE en Nebaj (Jaime Wosbely Villatoro Alegria). The meetings took place in Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, and Quiché.	Quetzaltenango, RC1, Sub RC1
March 20	WHIP Coordination Meeting- Sub RC1	In our capacity as WHIP coordinators for Quiche, three areas were focused on: 1) organizing working committees within the WHIP; 2) gain clarity on actions according to key points for coordination and according to the annual work plan; and 3) strengthen communication strategy.	Sub RC1

March 18	Electoral Observation Consortium and the Red de Defensoras de Mujeres Ix en Nebaj	They expressed concern about the levels of violence via harassment, on the eve of the political campaign that officially begins in May of this year.	Sub RC1
March 16	Proyecto de Elección Menos Violencia Más Inclusión	The technical teams of RC2 and RC3 attended a meeting with Proyecto de Elección Menos Violencia Más Inclusión, which is managed by a consortium of IRI, IFES, NDI, and Acción Ciudadana. This consortium intends to strengthen civil society organizations in preparation for the 2015 elections. The consortium will be working in 20 municipalities, three of which overlap with Nexos Locales.	RC2 and RC3
March 23	WHIP Coordination Meeting- RC I	Included 11 representatives from partner USAID projects. The representatives developed strategies of communication and participation of youth, women and indigenous people within the WHIP projects. They identified El Rancho, Chiantla Huehuetenango as a pilot community.	RC I
March 25	Inter-Agency Network in Concepción Chiquirichapa, supported by the Dirección Municipal de Planificación (DMP)	The objective of these monthly meetings is to coordinate actions that strengthen intervention projects, exchange information and/or experiences as an effort to avoid duplicating efforts with the same target population. Some organizations involved are: Asociación IDEI, Save the Children, AMUTED, World Visión por los Niños, Movimiento Tzuk kim-pop, Pies de Occidente, ANGUADE, Fundasistemas, Asoderam, El Refugio, CEDEPEM, CEIPA, and Serjus. As part of the coordination, some organizations are already strengthening and training the COMUDE in the municipality. In addition, Red de Mujeres Indígenas (REDMISAR), a network supported by USAID partner HEPP presented their strategy for advocacy events for the elections.	RC2

VII. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PROJECT LAUNCH EVENT

On Thursday, February 5 the regional office of Huehuetenango officially opened its doors to the public, announcing the launch of USAID's Nexos Locales Program. Key statistics from the launch:

- Total No. of Participants: 92, excluding Nexos Locales staff (63 males and 29 females)
- Total No. of Mancomunidades Represented: 2
 - MAMSOHUE Mancomunidad HUISTA (Huehuetenango)
 - ASDECOHUE (Huehuetenango)
- Total No. of Municipalities Represented: 10
 - Municipalidad Concepción Huista. Secretario Municipal
 - Municipalidad Unión Cantinil. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad Todos Santos C. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad Santa Ana Huista. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad de Jacaltenango. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad de Cuilco. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad de Chiantla. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad de Huehuetenango. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad de la Libertad. Alcalde.
 - Municipalidad de Quetzaltenango. Director de Comunicación Social.
- Total No. of Mayors in attendance: 9
- Other Groups worth mentioning in attendance:
Representante del Gobernador de Huehuetenango, NUTRISALUD, Grupo Élite, FUNDAECO, ASOCUCH, ANAM, MINFIM, SESAN, Asociación Maya AMOYEB, TNC/GNCG, ACODIHUE, Red de Apoyo a la CAS, Oficina Municipal de la Mujer de Huehuetenango, ADESJU (Asociación de jóvenes), USAID, Comisión de Auditoria Social, SEPREM, CEDFOG, MSPAS – Área de Salud H., ASOCUCH, CALMECAC, ASDECOHUE, Coordinadora del Comité WHIP Huehue, Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales – MARN-, Asociación Hoifer Guatemala, Comisión de Auditoria Social CAS.
- Press in attendance:
Cristal Stereo, Comunicación Social Municipalidad de Huehuetenango, Astro Satellite. Canal 4, Mi Región Huehue y el Quetzalteco, Canal 5. CUC Galaxy, Al Día – Telediario, T13 Noticias y Súper 99.3, Nuestro Diario, Sonora – Canal Antigua



Figure 5: Huehuetenango Office Regional Soft Launch (February 5, 2015)

INTERNAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- Short-term M&E consultant, Jiny Moreno, who authored the initial Nexos Locales M&E Plan, joined the Nexos Locales team in Xela and Huehuetenango, January 5-9, and conducted a capacity building and informational training on the project's M&E requirements.
- January 13, DAI Finance and Administration Specialist (STTA-Expat), Ed Crowley, arrived to Quetzaltenango from Bethesda, MD to kick off the first phase of a four week long training to the Finance & Administration team on the use of DAI's FAS system and financial reporting requirements.
- February 24, DAI's Ethics for Supervisors Training was completed, led by DCOP Vince Broady and Project Manager Adrian Carroll.
- February 26, an all-staff Gender Equity & Social Inclusion Workshop was facilitated and completed by Iris Group, Inc.
- February 23 and 24, M&E Specialist, Pamela Garrido, conducted 2-day M&E training for the regional engagement teams.
- March 12, Acting Grants Manager, Melanie Bittle, and Grants Assistant, Ursula Castillo, led a grants capacity building training for the regional engagement teams and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
- Interviews took place for the following positions: Grants Assistant, Procurement Assistant, and PFM Specialist, LED Specialist, Water and Climate Change Specialist. The team interviewed two of USAID's interns.



Figure 6: Completion of FAS Training with the Finance & Administration Team, Ed Crowley (left) and Adam Comar (Right). (January 2015)

SOCIAL MEDIA AND IT EQUIPMENT INSTALLATION

- The project contracted Xela Web to construct the project website. Revisions and information continue to be added and it is expected that there will be a public launch of the site in April. The website can be viewed at www.nexoslocales.com
- On March 24, STTA Colter Bell began installation of main and back-up server in Huehuetenango Office and IP Telephonic system in both the Huehuetenango and Quetzaltenango offices.

X. PERSONNEL

In close consultation with the USAID COR, Nexos Locales is currently undergoing a staff reorganization. The project will present a more developed organigram in the next quarter.

XI. SUCCESS STORIES

See next page.

Nexos Locales Launches its Regional Office in Huehuetenango

Nine mayors from the department of Huehuetenango, including USAID WHIP partners and the Mancomunidades of the Huistas, attend USAID Nexos Locales regional office launch.



Journalists interview speakers at the regional launch. Pictured from left to right: Professor Carillo of Huehuetenango, Mayor of Huehuetenango, COP & DCOP of Nexos Locales, USAID COR, and Executive Secretary of ANAM. Representante de USAID y Secretario Ejecutivo de ANAM.

“It is a huge benefit to the department of Huehuetenango to be able to welcome the opening of the Nexos Locales regional project office. This will facilitate efficacious communication and coordination with the municipalities, leading to action that will benefit more closely the communities in which Nexos Locales will serve. Overall, the regional office will help bring development to Huehuetenango and its municipalities.

- Expresó José Mario Silvestre Camposeco, Alcalde del Municipio de Jacaltenango, Huehuetenango.

USAID’s Nexos Locales officially launched its Huehuetenango regional office on Thursday, February 5, 2015. The launch was attended by over 102 participants, including nine mayors from the department of Huehuetenango. The regional launch drew together key civil society organizations (Asociación Maya AMOYEB, FUNDAECO), government institutions (MINFIM, SESAN, SEPREM), university leaders, partners of the USAID Western Highlands Integrated Program (WHIP), including NUTRISALUD, and TNC/GNCG, representatives of the Huehuetenango Governor’s office, and representatives from regional MANCOMUNIDADES as a show of commitment to improving local governance and citizen participation processes at the municipal level. The event provided a propitious opportunity for healthy dialogue around local government issues, municipality needs, and strengthened capacity for better coordination and cooperation between mayors, indigenous authorities, and key associations, such as ANAM and AGAAI.

The Huehuetenango regional office, located at Sector 4, OO-38, Zone 11, Cambote Huehuetenango, will cover 10 municipalities in the department of Huehuetenango, including: Chiantla, Jacaltenango, San Sebastián Huehuetenango, Todos Santos, Cuilco Huista Concepción, San Antonio Huista, Freedom, Democracy and Santa Cruz Barillas. The office will also provide technical coverage to the area of Quiche: Santa Maria Nebaj, Cunén, San Juan Cotzal, Sacapulas, Chajul and Uspantán. This important footprint in the country’s region of greatest need strategically positions Nexos Locales to provide technical assistance and rapid response mechanisms that lead toward the strengthening of municipalities’ capacity to foster more responsive, inclusive, and effective socio-economic development while reducing local vulnerabilities such as food insecurity and natural disasters. Nexos Locales will achieve this end by ensuring that local governments are better able to manage public resources and deliver services in an efficient and transparent manner, a commitment recognized by those in attendance at the regional launch. The Director of the Mancomunidad, MAMSOHUE, reaffirmed this by stating the establishment of the Nexos Locales office in Huehuetenango will create a degree of trust with the project and the municipalities in which it serves.

The Nexos Locales Project, with its principal office located in Quetzaltenango, began in June 2014. The project will work in the areas of public financial management, citizen participation, water, local economic development, climate change, institutional strengthening for AGAAI and ANAM. The project will emphasize and incorporate key cross cutting issues—Gender, Youth, Feed-the-Future initiatives, and Indigenous Communities— into all of its program activities. The Nexos Locales base period will run through June 2017 with the option of two one-year extensions through June 2019.