

## SUCCESS STORY

### Project Launch Draws over 280 Participants

**USAID's Nexos Locales officially opens its doors on November 20, 2014 in a highly visible, successful launch event, drawing over 280 participants from local governments in the Western Highlands, Civil Society, Government of Guatemala, USAID, and indigenous leaders.**



Photo: Nexos Locales

*Invitados especiales durante el Acto Protocolario de Lanzamiento, autoridades de USAID y funcionarios Locales del Gobierno de Guatemala.*

*"This is a very special day for me ... we are inaugurating a program to push our resources more directly toward the municipalities of the Western Highlands"*

*Mr. William Brands, USAID  
Guatemala Mission Director*

#### Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development  
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<http://stories.usaid.gov>

USAID's Nexos Locales Project was officially launched on November 20, 2014 at its headquarter office in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. The launch event drew over 280 participants from civil society, local government, Guatemalan institutions, USAID implementing partners, and the USAID Mission. Members of the press were out in full force as the mayors of Quetzaltenango, San Marcos, Huehuetenango, Quiche, Totonicapan and Southern Quiche, were in attendance to show their commitment in strengthening municipal capacity and civil society to 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. The interest shown by the public and USAID partners and key institutions of Guatemala in the Western Highlands was a true testament to the importance placed on local governance and their capacity to tackle some of the region's greatest needs.

#### Speakers at the launch event included

- Mayan Indigenous Princess, Fernanda Gomez Ramirez, who explained how the project would benefit indigenous communities;
- Mayor of Quetzaltenango, Dr. Jorge Rolando Barrientos Pellecer, who spoke about the importance of government decentralization and Nexos Locales support;
- USAID Mission Director, William Brands, who explained the important role Nexos Locales plays in the Western Highlands in achieving the Mission's development objectives;
- Chief of Party, Edgar Balsells, who highlighted the project's six components and cross cutting themes;
- Professor Francisco Martín Carrillo representing civil society, who spoke about the importance of development; and