

United Kingdom supports the implementation of protocols against COVID-19 in municipal markets

The Guatemalan Exporters Association (AGEXPORT), with the support of the British Embassy in Guatemala, will implement the project "Business and Municipal Leadership for COVID-19 Emergency and Economic Reactivation". It aims to develop and implement a strategy to prevent the spread of the virus and mitigate the risk of infection of COVID-19 by ensuring people's health and allowing the continuity or reactivation of economic activities in the municipalities, but in a safe and responsible way.

The municipalities and businesses in each community will participate under a collaborative scheme. The Ministry of Economy (MINECO), through the Directorate for Consumer Protection (DIACO), will donate masks for the sellers in the markets. With funding of Q300,000 from the UK and Q245,000 from members of Agexport, the project will be implemented in at least 10 municipalities around the country and in partnership with the export chain companies operating in those areas.

During the next six months, several activities will take place, including:

1. Communicating relevant information about COVID-19, including ways to prevent it and government's regulations for the reopening of economic activities.
2. Disseminating the "Guidance of recommendations for Municipal Markets and Public Squares and prevention of COVID-19".
3. Training staff from the municipalities on how to apply the Guidance. These will include people responsible for management, cleaning, garbage collection and security in the markets and public squares.
4. Donation of personal protection equipment and marking materials for the market infrastructure (sanitation gel, thermometers, social distance marking, etc.).

The President of AGEXPORT, Connie de Paiz, expressed:

In the current context of social distancing, it is vital to support productive and commercial activities, since thousands of small producers and traders economically depend on these, in order to continue with their operations but complying with the health and safety protocols.

The British Ambassador in Guatemala, Nick Whittingham, said:

At a local level, it is important to have clear procedures to communicate the methods for prevention and handling of infected

cases, complying with the government measures. The reopening of the economy is fundamental to guarantee people's livelihoods.

This project joins the activities that AGEXPORT has been developing in partnership with the National Mayors Association (ANAM) and the Ministry of Economy, with the support of the Presidential Commission for Municipal Affairs (COPRESAM).

The British Government contributes to lead the global efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, from mitigation projects to proposals to access a potential vaccine against the virus. Recently, Guatemala joined these discussions. More information [here](#).