



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

EL SALVADOR GOVERNANCE



GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

El Salvador continues to face challenges to furthering transparency and combatting corruption. El Salvador ranked 104 out of 180 countries in Transparency International’s 2020 Perception of Corruption Index. Prosecution and conviction of high-level officials on charges of corruption, enabled in part through past USAID support, have exposed some of this corruption. Inadequate tax collection and financial management processes, and non-transparent budgeting systems also provide opportunities for corruption and limit the ability of the government to provide its citizens with basic services, such as education, health, and water. Public debt, which has increased from 51 percent in 2011 to more than 73 percent in 2019, is also a concern. Government revenues have increased recently, in part due to USAID assistance. A strong civil society and independent government institutions can serve as anticorruption watchdogs and promote citizen participation.

Objective: DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

USAID promotes greater transparency, accountability, and more responsive governance to improve citizens’ confidence in both national and municipal level government. USAID also supports transparent elections, political party strengthening and citizen advocacy to help build and maintain confidence in these systems and the accountability of elected officials. At the national level, USAID supports transparent public financial management and anti-corruption systems to boost the government’s ability to generate and effectively utilize its own resources to support development. USAID also works with municipal governments to help create vibrant, prosperous neighborhoods by reclaiming and revitalizing public spaces and improving basic services to encourage people to remain in their community. Activities help enhance citizen oversight and advocacy to advance government accountability and transparency and expose corruption. At the same time, USAID works with the Salvadoran government to increase the transparency of all government operations to reduce corruption.

DATA AT A GLANCE



104
Out of 180 countries in Transparency International 2020 Corruption Perception Index



76
Out of 179 countries in 2020 Liberal Democracy Index



84
Out of 128 countries on 2020 Rule of Law Index



17.6 percent
of GDP net tax revenue in 2019

KEY EXPECTED RESULTS

Increase citizen satisfaction with government services by 20 percent



Improve demand for government accountability by 15 percent



Reduce perceived levels of public corruption by 15 percent



USAID DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES

Imagina: El País que Queremos (Imagine: The Country We Envision) (\$12.0 million) This project increases civil society engagement in up to 11 municipalities through citizen observatories known as “Cómo Vamos” (How Are We Doing). The Cómo Vamos observatory generates reliable and comparable indicators about the quality of life in urban areas and citizen perception. The project helps revitalize public spaces in high crime communities and offers educational and recreational activities for youth.

Civil Society and Democracy in the Eastern Region Project (\$3 million) With the support of USAID, the Universidad de Oriente (UNIVO) created the Center of Research for Democracy, a think tank that provides a voice to the population of the eastern region of the country through civic education on issues of democracy, of particular regional concern. The project also provides information and increases awareness on migration issues to help reduce irregular migration.

Domestic Resource Mobilization (\$21.5 million) The project helps increase tax revenue, generate new domestic revenue, improve budgeting and spending practices, and increase fiscal transparency through public dialogue. Through support for an efficient, transparent tax system, USAID helps El Salvador increase its own resources for security, education and social services to reduce irregular migration. The project supports the Salvadoran government to improve public financial management practices and increase oversight and accountability of public institutions.

Electoral Integrity and Political Party Strengthening Activity (\$6 million) USAID enhances electoral integrity by building long term capacities within the electoral system and civil society and media. It helps political parties become more competitive, open, and inclusive instruments of representation and to manage transparent financial systems. The project improves civil society oversight in elections monitoring.

Government Integrity (\$20.3 million) USAID works in partnership with key Salvadoran government institutions and civil society organizations to improve government transparency and accountability. The project is also working with 30 municipalities to improve integrity and accountability at the local level and increase access to public information.

Promoting Citizen Participation in Public Policy in El Salvador (\$5 million) The project helps improve democratic governance by promoting more participatory and inclusive public policies and electoral processes. Activities include supporting citizen forums for discussion with candidates; monitoring and evaluating electoral processes; formulating electoral reform proposals; and developing courses in government and public policies for new political party and civil society leaders.

Strengthening Local Governance for Security and Development (\$36.6 million) USAID works together with 30 municipalities to improve administrative planning and provide better public services to enhance living conditions and increase opportunities for social development to help reduce irregular migration. Activities help municipalities develop plans to improve public services while also working with national government institutions to promote greater coordination and decentralization of government functions to municipalities. The project helps reduce crime and violence and improve municipal services and economic opportunities so that Salvadorans can envision a better life in their own community.

For more information on USAID El Salvador and USAID Central America Regional Programs, please call: (503) 2501-3411; 3344; 3432 or visit www.usaid.gov/el-salvador



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