**Project Summary**

The Project aimed at improving the competitiveness and performance of small and medium-sized private firms (SMEs) for a strong impact on the growth and diversification of non-traditional exports. The Project built on the strong export-oriented tradition Guatemala, owing to the relatively small size of the domestic market and the excellent climate conditions, soil and natural resources. Three products have traditionally dominated exports. The promotion of other, non-traditional sectors represents an enormous opportunity for Guatemalan SMEs to grow into new markets, encouraging employment and thus creating a new political, economic and social base for necessary reforms of the traditional local society.

The Project overall concept was based on an integrated approach thus working on three distinct levels:

- on the micro level: with individual firms
- on the meso/ institutional level: with private organisations and professional associations
- on the macro level: with the public sector in order to improve economic and legal framework conditions.

The Project’s activities in phase 1 and 2 focussed on the **micro level**:

- Promotion of potential exporters through a combination of seminars
- Individual business consultancies
- Participation on international trade fairs

Priority sectors were:

- Non-traditional agricultural products, especially ecological agricultural products
- Textile and clothing
- As well as the important sector of local handicrafts.

The Project’s activities on the **meso level** focussed on:

- Advising the counterpart institution AGEXPRONT on a range of issues including organisational restructuring, optimisation of existing services, identification of new services, improvement of internal financial situation and participation at international trade fairs in order to ensure sustainability
- Qualification of local consultants
- Encouraging of networking and cooperation of institutions and projects
- Influence on the macroeconomic conditions to improve the competitiveness of the country through studies and forums on key topics

The Project’s activities on the **macro level** focussed on:

- The organisation of campaigns of the country’s image.

**Services Provided**

- Economic Studies, Market Studies
- Institutional Strengthening/ Restructuring
- IT and Office Technology, Marketing and Distribution
- Organisational and Development Studies
- Product and Production Technology
- Project Management/Administration
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation
- Technical Assistance and Advisory Services