

# British Embassy strengthens health response efforts to tackle COVID-19 in Sololá

World news story

Families in San Juan and San Pedro La Laguna will receive health services, medication and food to face the impact of COVID-19.



COVID-19 has had a negative impact in communities surrounding Lake Atitlán, as livelihoods such as tourism and local commerce have stopped abruptly, leaving many families struggling to survive.

The British Embassy, together with the Organization for the Development of the Indigenous Maya (ODIM), is currently supporting around 24,585 people in San Juan and San Pablo la Laguna.

The project, which began in June, aims to increase COVID-19 resilience in vulnerable communities, identifying families with lack of water supply and providing them water filters. They received education on the importance of using clean drinking water, and how to properly maintain the filters.

ODIM also provides food baskets to 307 families including 42 vulnerable community members that have health issues. The food baskets contain products that are nutritious and last for at least 2 weeks.

The project also ensures that ODIM's clinics can give medical attention to pregnant women, their babies, and people with diabetes; this has allowed a better communication and coordination with local public health authorities.

The project has allowed a group of children in the communities to become young entrepreneurs, working on their leisure time on the production of handcrafted hand sanitizers, providing a new income for their families. Over 1,000 bottles of this sanitizer have been sold and more than 50% of the families living in San Juan and San Pablo La Laguna had access to hand sanitizer in 2020.

The British Ambassador to Guatemala, Nick Whittingham, said during the visit to the project:

The UK continues to be committed to support vulnerable communities in Guatemala that have been impacted by COVID-19. This project will give resilience to hundreds of families during these challenging times, who are facing unemployment, and are struggling to support their families.

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