

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

FriendshipBridge

Empowered Women Eliminating Poverty

Dear Friends,

2015 marked our 25th year as an organization, a milestone we have arrived at in partnership with each of you. We are humbled to look back on our 25 years of work and remember all of the individuals who have brought us to where we are today – our founders Ted and Connie Ning, current and former members of our Board of Directors, staff throughout the years, countless volunteers, and our remarkable clients. The impact of our *Microcredit Plus* program hinges on all of the people who are passionate about, and supportive of, the critical work of empowering women.

2015 marked the second year of a three-year Strategic Plan. Because of our commitment to remain client-driven and provide the most relevant tools for clients whatever their level of development, we piloted several new programs in 2015 including women's preventive health, artisan, agriculture, and mentorship programs. We continued strengthening our credit and education programs, ensuring they met the unique needs of our clients in rural Guatemala.

In 2015 we also made exciting progress with our definition and understanding of women's empowerment. Since we began operations in Guatemala in 1998, we have deepened our understanding of the complexity of poverty in the country, the varied solutions our clients need to become more empowered, and how our *Microcredit Plus* program supports women on their individual paths to empowerment.

Our data shows that the longer a client is in our program the better off she becomes in terms of her level of poverty, children's education, leadership abilities, savings, and nutrition for her family. We also know that clients who access our numerous *Plus* services and loan products beyond Non-Formal Education and group loans see positive outcomes related to their business development and poverty alleviation. These results have led to a strong focus on client retention and loyalty as a key part of our mission to empower women.

We thank you for partnering with us in celebrating 25 years. Together with you, we celebrate the exciting progress being made toward empowering women in Guatemala. We look forward to the coming years with great anticipation.



KAREN LARSON › President & CEO



DAN THOMAS › Chair, Board of Directors

MISSION

To empower impoverished Guatemalan women to create a better future for themselves, their children, and their communities through microfinance and education.

VISION

A world in which empowered women eliminate poverty.

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

29,566
WOMEN SERVED

$14.1M
IN NEW LOANS DISBURSED

189,948
HOURS OF CLIENT TRAINING

98.6%
REPAYMENT RATE

★★★★
CHARITY NAVIGATOR RATING

Gold Star Rating
GUIDESTAR



THOUSANDS MORE WOMEN EMPOWERED EACH YEAR... ›

CELEBRATING 25 years

OUR START ›

1990 Having laid down the groundwork in Vietnam in 1988-89, Ted and Connie Ning incorporate Friendship Bridge as a 501(c)(3) and continue their focus on medical training and distributing medical supplies.

1994 Focus shifts to microcredit. Program grows to 5,000 borrowers in Vietnam.

1996 Civil War in Guatemala ends after 36 years.

1998 Operations in Vietnam are unsustainable due to unfavorable political climate. Operations move to Guatemala where there is great need for women's empowerment and poverty alleviation after the Civil War.

Friendship Bridge's first Circle is founded in Evergreen, CO.

2002 Mimi Schlumberger leads Friendship Bridge as Board President. Friendship Bridge begins its *Microcredit Plus* program, adding education services.

2005 7,357 clients

2008 Friendship Bridge offers first private placement to socially conscious investors.

2010 13,348 clients

2011 Friendship Bridge invests in Social Performance Management department.

Friendship University created for employee education and growth.

2012 Advanced Training program begins with 300 clients attending these trainings.

2013 Loan programs launched for clean stoves and school enrollment.

2014 Client Advisory Committee formed.

2015 Friendship Bridge expands to offer additional programs to clients: women's preventive health, artisan, agriculture, and mentorship.



OUR CLIENTS

100% WOMEN

A typical Friendship Bridge client is an indigenous Guatemalan woman who has less than three years of formal education. Many do not read, write, or speak Spanish, the official language of Guatemala, but instead speaks one of Guatemala's 24 indigenous languages. Most of our clients work in the artisan, agriculture, or commerce sectors and earn between $1.11 and $4.49 per day.

Client Advisory Committee to the Board of Directors

Our clients' needs and feedback inform our decision-making and the products and services we offer. As a mechanism for receiving regular feedback, we formed a Client Advisory Committee in 2014. This committee is comprised of 10 clients from the different regions where we operate, and the committee members represent different levels of empowerment and lengths of time in our program. Throughout 2015, the Client Advisory Committee provided feedback to our leadership team and Board of Directors, ensuring we understand our clients' needs on their paths to empowerment.

Why is client retention important?

Our data year-over-year shows clients are less poor and more empowered the longer they are in our program, which is why we prioritize client retention. Long-term clients show less vulnerability to poverty, increased savings, more children in school, and greater leadership abilities. Because of these results, we are constantly evaluating our products and services to understand how they contribute to client retention and loyalty. We ended 2015 with a 75% client retention rate, an increase from previous years and higher than the average among Latin American peers.

POVERTY LEVELS OF CLIENTS

Our target market is women who live in households that earn between $1.11 and $4.49 a day. In 2015, 85% of our clients were within this range. Our data show that Friendship Bridge clients living in the "Poor" category as measured by the Grameen Foundation's Progress out of Poverty Index® are experiencing the biggest positive impact from our program over a three-year period, reinforcing the importance of monitoring and serving our target market.[1]

POOR — 50% OF CLIENTS	EXTREMELY VULNERABLE — 19% OF CLIENTS	VULNERABLE — 16% OF CLIENTS
$1.11–2.35 Daily Household Income	**$2.36-3.52** Daily Household Income	**$3.53-4.49** Daily Household Income
70% Farmer/Artisan	57% Farmer/Artisan	50% Commerce
EDUCATION	**EDUCATION**	**EDUCATION**
0-3 Years	0-6 Years	0-8 Years
45% Literacy	76% Literacy	83% Literacy
FAMILY	**FAMILY**	**FAMILY**
63% Married	67% Married	70% Married
6 Children	5 Children	2 Children
86% Have dependents under age of 14	78% Have dependents under age of 14	69% Have dependents under age of 14
HOME	**HOME**	**HOME**
11% Own refrigerator	53% Own refrigerator	80% Own refrigerator
23% Own gas or electric stove	75% Own gas or electric stove	90% Own gas or electric stove
Flooring made of dirt/mud	Flooring made of mud brick	Flooring made of concrete or tile

[1] This is based upon Grameen Foundation's Progress out of Poverty Index surveys collected by Facilitators, or loan officers, and is meant to be a census. The valid number of surveys of single observation per client for 2015 is 21,688, which is 74% of clients served during 2015, 99% confidence level and confidence interval of +/-0.3% for the National Poverty Line.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

One of the goals of our 2014 - 2016 Strategic Plan is to "further our Client Continuum strategy and offer the most appropriate products and services to our clients, whatever their level of development." **Our Client Continuum reflects our theory of change, which we view through the metaphor of a tree.** The roots represent the various products and services, or inputs, we provide to our clients, which build a foundation for their path to empowerment. The leaves of the tree represent the outputs and outcomes clients experience as they grow along the Client Continuum over time – on a path to grow from ***Dreamer*** to ***Entrepreneur*** and to ***Leader***.

Loan Products AND 2015 RESULTS



TRUST BANK LOAN

29,566 clients received Trust Bank Loans

This is our entry loan product, offered to groups of women who form a Trust Bank (7 to 25 women) and co-guarantee each others' loans as a form of social collateral. The average new Trust Bank loan is $318.



CREDISALUD LOAN

341 households with clean stoves

This loan supports clients' investments in efficient, clean-burning stoves that replace open fires in their homes. These clients save an average of $37 per month by using less firewood for fuel, and they experience many health benefits from reduced smoke inhalation.



CREDIESCOLAR LOAN

2,170 *CrediEscolar* loans

This loan is for costs associated with school enrollment, such as uniforms and school fees. Eighty-six percent of clients used the loan to continue their children's education, and 14% used it to enroll a student for the first time.



RAPIDITO LOAN

1,149 *Rapidito* loans

This loan gives our clients quick access to loan capital that has a shorter repayment period than our other loan products. Clients often use *rapidito* loans to pay for unexpected expenses or to take advantage of business opportunities in seasons of high sales.



PARALELO LOAN

287 *Paralelo* loans

This individual parallel loan is available to clients who have a good credit history and higher credit needs in order to further grow their businesses.

Plus Services AND 2015 RESULTS



NON-FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE)

189,000+ hours of Non-Formal Education delivered

NFE is the backbone of our *Microcredit Plus* program. Delivered monthly during Trust Bank meetings, NFE sessions cover topics related to health, women's rights, family, and business. *(see p. 7)*



ADVANCED TRAINING

1,138 clients attended Advanced Training

Clients learn technical or advanced business skills at these trainings to help them diversify their income. *(see p. 8)*



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

30 clients participated in business mentoring

Clients who participate in this pilot have been identified as *Leaders* on our Client Continuum. The mentorship program cultivates their high potential for leadership, growth, entrepreneurship, and impact on their communities. *(see p. 8)*



ARTISAN MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM

More than $14,000 of client-made products exported to the U.S. market

This pilot provides artisan clients with technical and business skills to access new markets. Artisans participate in trainings designed to prepare them to enter new local, national, and export markets. *(see p.10)*



WOMEN'S PREVENTIVE HEALTH PROGRAM

1,121 clients accessed preventive health services
2,745 clients accessed health education

Salud para la Vida (Health for Life) combines health education with women's preventive health services. It was successfully launched in our Sololá branch in 2015. *(see p. 17-19)*



WOMEN'S AGRICULTURE CREDIT & TRAINING PROGRAM

This pilot is being designed to give our agriculture clients access to new markets through technical training and credit products that meet the unique needs in the agriculture sector.

EDUCATION

Non-Formal Education

Every month, our 57 Facilitators, or loan officers, travel by foot, bus, boat, or motorbike throughout the Western Highlands of Guatemala to lead monthly Trust Bank meetings. Monthly meetings feature a Non-Formal Education (NFE) session centered around one of four pillars: women, family, health, and business. Our clients say the NFE sessions are critical for personal development – improving self-esteem, valuing themselves and their health, supporting families, and improving business outcomes.

On average, each Facilitator works with **372 clients** each month.

2015 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION TOPICS

JANUARY	Empowerment through Friendship Bridge
FEBRUARY	Cultivating a vision for the future
MARCH	Building self-esteem
APRIL	*Mi Negocio Hoy* (My Business Today) survey
MAY	Mothers' roles and contributions to development and society
JUNE	Women's rights
JULY	Creating a budget
AUGUST	Prioritizing savings
SEPTEMBER	Sexual and reproductive health
OCTOBER	The impact of chronic illness
NOVEMBER	Preventing breast cancer
DECEMBER	Personal development and a positive community identity



"It has helped me as a person to have knowledge and mentorship in my business. It has improved my family's economic well-being and the education of my children."

-JACINTA
Mentorship Program participant

Cada Mes Club

Cada Mes means "each month" in Spanish. Our *Cada Mes Club* is a group of monthly donors who support our clients on their monthly journeys through NFE sessions. Visit our website to join our *Cada Mes Club*.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE ADVISORS

Anna de la Cruz
Research and Evaluation Consultant

Cara Forster
Standards Revision Manager & Director of Latin American Outreach and Training for Social Performance Task Force

Maria Maltide Olazabal
Director of Alcance, Freedom from Hunger, Mexico

Julie Peachey
Director, Progress out of Poverty Index at Innovations for Poverty Action

Claire Simon
Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation Consultant

Carmen Velasco
Co-Founder of Pro Mujer and Co-Chair, Truelift Steering Committee

Advanced Training

In 2015, 1,138 women participated in Advanced Training and learned skills such as baking, piñata making, flower arranging, candle making, basket weaving, canning, and sewing. Learning a new skill gives clients an immediate opportunity to diversify their income. In addition to learning something new, clients are able to network with other women in this learning environment, helping to build confidence and empowerment.

91% of clients attending Advanced Training report their income stabilized or increased.

7% higher client retention among clients participating in Advanced Training.

Mentorship Program

We designed this pilot for clients who have been identified as *Leaders* on our Client Continuum, with the goal of improving clients' personal and business development. The pilot stage of the mentorship program included creating parameters for selecting clients, defining goals, and identifying partner organizations to carry out the mentoring process.

In 2015, 30 clients were chosen to participate in the mentorship pilot with two in-country partners. These clients participated in both group and one-on-one mentoring sessions over several months, designed to expand their business capabilities and leadership skills.



"I am proud to be an indigenous woman and thankful to Friendship Bridge for giving me opportunities through training and exporting my products."

-VICENTA
Artisan Market Access Program Participant

Artisan Market ACCESS PROGRAM

FRIENDSHIP BRIDGE CURRENTLY SERVES OVER 4,000 ARTISAN CLIENTS.

Through our surveys and research, clients have expressed that their primary need is access to new markets to sell their products and bolster their income. However, many of our artisan clients are isolated by language and geography, and many lack the business skills to thrive in the modern marketplace.

Friendship Bridge's Artisan Market Access Program provides artisans with trainings designed to ready them to access new local, national, and export markets. Trainings focus on topics such as product quality, buyer expectations, export requirements, and tastes and preferences of the North American market. Artisans also receive training on costs and product pricing to ensure they receive a fair wage for their work. The artisan clients in this program employ on average four additional women, multiplying the program's impact.

Shop our artisan clients' products online! We have created a new online store where you can purchase a sampling of their beautiful handmade items and read more about their stories.

friendshipbridge.org/shop

Vicenta's Story

Vicenta grew up during Guatemala's 36-year Civil War, and she lost her father in this conflict that devastated the country – particularly its indigenous communities. Similar to many indigenous Guatemalan women, weaving has been a tradition in Vicenta's family for generations. Vicenta started working with artisan groups at age 10 to help support her family economically, and when she got married and had children, Vicenta decided to form her own artisan cooperative to help provide women in her community much-needed income.

Most artisans in Guatemala sell their products only in local markets near their home villages. Vicenta, with her trainings from Friendship Bridge's artisan program, has been able to reach a larger national clientele in the tourist markets in Antigua, Guatemala, and she is also producing products for export to U.S. wholesalers, including for Friendship Bridge's own online store. Vicenta credits the artisan trainings with increasing her confidence as an artisan and businesswoman. Through her increased income she has been able to keep all seven of her children in school, as well as hire four women employees.

FINANCIALS 2015

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

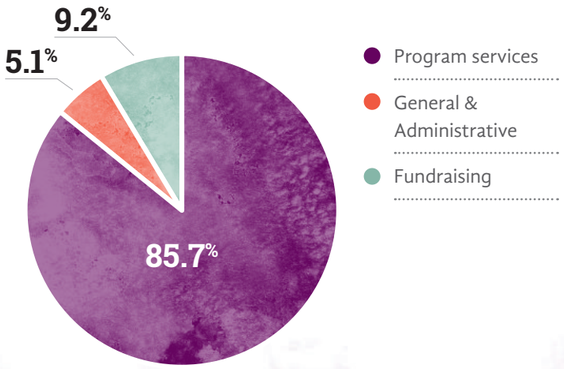
DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND 2014

ASSETS	2015	2014
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,156,439	599,658
Investments	1,737,982	1,458,091
Loans receivable, net*	7,132,977	6,305,859
Loan interest receivable	167,438	145,017
Grants and pledges receivable	27,700	64,000
Prepaid expenses and other assets	119,112	69,451
Total current assets	**10,341,648**	**8,642,076**
Property and Equipment		
Furniture and equipment	101,822	99,712
Computers and related equipment	231,396	219,073
Vehicles	73,312	87,079
Leasehold improvements	23,331	4,131
Less: accumulated depreciation and amortization	-359,789	-354,059
Net Property and Equipment	**70,072**	**55,936**
Noncurrent Assets		
Security deposits	16,212	15,512
Total noncurrent assets	16,212	15,512
TOTAL ASSETS	**10,427,932**	**8,713,524**

** Loans receivable amount is reduced by the loan loss reserve of $145,572 and $128,691 for 2015 and 2014, respectively.*

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	2015	2014
Current Liabilities		
Loans payable	1,427,492	463,674
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,296,779	1,031,380
Total current liabilities	**2,724,271**	**1,495,054**
Noncurrent Liabilities		
Loans payable	3,140,000	2,965,000
Total liabilities	**5,864,271**	**4,460,054**
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	4,307,049	3,958,465
Temporarily restricted	155,612	194,005
Permanently restricted	101,000	101,000
Total net assets	**4,563,661**	**4,253,470**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	**10,427,932**	**8,713,524**

Use of Funds



CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES & CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND 2014

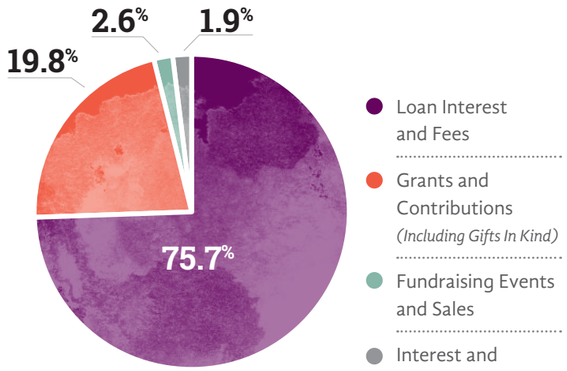
	2015	2014
Sources of Revenue		
Loan interest and fees	3,406,250	2,800,216
Grants and contributions (including gifts in kind)	890,561	812,749
Fundraising events and sales	116,612	75,752
Interest and investment income	85,514	69,965
Total revenue	**4,498,937**	**3,758,682**
Expenses		
PROGRAM SERVICES		
Loans and women's education program	3,566,175	2,902,353
Nurses' education program*	976	25,469
Total program services	**3,567,151**	**2,927,822**
SUPPORT SERVICES		
General and administrative	210,957	188,244
Fundraising	382,149	289,892
Total support services	**592,746**	**478,136**
Total expenses	**4,159,897**	**3,405,958**
Changes in net assets before other items	339,040	352,724
Other Items		
Currency gain (loss)	-28,849	194,473
Changes in net assets	310,191	547,197
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	**4,253,470**	**3,706,273**
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	**4,563,661**	**4,253,470**

** The Nurses Education Program is a continuation of Friendship Bridge's initial development activities in Vietnam, providing faculty support and training for a graduate level nurses education program. The program has been independently managed by volunteers and is no longer a program of Friendship Bridge. We serve as its fiscal sponsor.*



Client Advisory Committee with the Board of Directors

Sources of Revenue



*Friendship Bridge is committed not only to our clients, but also to our **131 staff members** in Guatemala and the U.S. Our **57 Facilitators** are truly the foundation of our Microcredit Plus program, forming trusted relationships with clients so that Friendship Bridge can offer them the most appropriate solutions to become more empowered.*



Facilitator Feature

BACILIA CHAY POS

"A very powerful word used at Friendship Bridge is empowerment. If we as employees are empowered, we can empower the clients."

-BACILIA CHAY POS

Bacilia has been a Facilitator with Friendship Bridge for 12 years, demonstrating her commitment to empowering women in her country. For the past three years Bacilia has won the "Friendship Bridge Award," an annual award presented to one employee in each branch office who applies and exemplifies our organizational values: empowerment, respect, solidarity, participation, quality, integrity, and transparency.

As an indigenous woman, Bacilia has a deep understanding of the lives of the women she serves. Similar to many Friendship Bridge clients, Bacilia's parents were only able to support her through a portion of her education. From the sixth grade on, Bacilia worked on coffee farms and cleaned homes to pay for her high school education. She prioritizes the education of her own five children so that they will have the tools to invest in their futures.

In 2004, Bacilia heard about a job opening at Friendship Bridge for a Facilitator in the Mazatenango Branch office. She accepted the position and says that her favorite part of being a Facilitator is interacting with clients and understanding their needs so she can best support them with the appropriate products and services. To her, the most rewarding part of her job is seeing entire Trust Banks of women become empowered.

Most days, Bacilia leaves her home early, traveling on public transportation to conduct Non-Formal Education sessions and oversee loan payments for her Trust Banks. Every month, she meets with over 500 clients in 46 Trust Banks. Bacilia oversees a loan portfolio of 1.7 million Quetzales, over $225,000, and her clients have a repayment rate of over 99%.

"Working at Friendship Bridge has changed my life."

SOCIAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Social Performance Management is a commitment to and measurement of progress toward our social mission, which includes efforts to empower both our clients and employees. Here are some activities we undertook in Social Performance Management in 2015:

CLIENT COMMITMENT

- Conducted approximately 55,000 surveys, while also conducting regular data audits, improving the quality of information for decision-making.
- Partnered with Accion International to improve compliance with the Client Protection Principles of the Smart Campaign.
- Piloted a Client Complaint Mechanism.
- Partnered with Freedom from Hunger to update monitoring and evaluation systems to be implemented in 2016.
- Participated as an active member of Social Performance Task Force (SPTF) Gender and Outcomes Working Groups.
- Ensured balanced performance between financial and social objectives organization-wide.

EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

We remain committed to offering competitive employment opportunities and benefits for our 131 staff throughout rural Guatemala and the United States.

- Employee satisfaction survey – This annual survey guides our understanding of how to best support employees' growth and satisfaction. Satisfaction remained high in 2015, with an average satisfaction survey score of 5.4/6.
- *Líderes en Acción* (Leaders in Action) – In 2015, seven employees were selected to participate in this annual program designed to grow leadership skills organically within the organization.
- *Universidad Amistad* (Friendship University) – Strategically designed internal and external trainings are offered to all employees to support their professional growth.
- Tuition Reimbursement Program – Twenty-five employees took advantage of this program to continue their education, some completing advanced degrees.
- Women and indigenous leaders – We work hard to empower women and indigenous populations through employment in Friendship Bridge, also ensuring our staff composition reflects our clients' identities.

67% female staff

52% indigenous staff

87% of promotions were women

61% of leadership team are women

8% of staff are former clients



POVERTY PENETRATION
& Guatemalan Context

Poverty Penetration Rates

Friendship Bridge monitors the poverty levels of clients entering our program using the Progress out of Poverty Index, a poverty measurement tool. This measurement guides our operations, ensuring we serve our target market. We compare, by region, the percentage of Friendship Bridge clients living under the National Poverty Line (NPL) versus the percentage of each region's population living under the NPL. This comparison allows us to grow in the areas where we have opportunities to deepen our poverty penetration and impact.

We have generally stayed consistent in our poverty outreach and reach a higher portion of the poorest populations as compared to other microfinance institutions in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Eighty-five percent of new clients fall into our target market, likely earning between $1.11 and $4.49 per day.

THE GUATEMALAN CONTEXT

Although Guatemala's economy has grown consistently since 2000, that growth has not resulted in economic improvements for the majority of Guatemalans, particularly women like our clients. Many Guatemalans actually find themselves in worse circumstances due to shocks such as natural disasters, increases in food prices, and political upheaval, while also lacking social support services. These vulnerabilities are worse for people living in poverty and remote communities, for indigenous populations, and particularly for women. In the current context of increasing poverty, Friendship Bridge's target market is struggling to find stability, let alone get ahead.

At the end of 2015, the National Statistics Bureau of Guatemala presented poverty data related to the 2014 census, which helps us better understand the lives and realities of our clients.

From 2000 to 2014, the national poverty rate increased from 56.1% to 59%, meaning 9.4 million people now live on less than $3.50 per day.

Guatemala has one of the world's top 10 highest income inequality ratios. In a population of over 16 million, only 260 Guatemalans have in-country assets equivalent to 56% of the GNP.

Women continue to experience high disparity in terms of poverty rate and lower education and income.

2015 IMPACT

97%

of clients feel their income has increased or stabilized since becoming a client.

As our clients become less poor, they have more control over their own income and less dependence on their husbands' income.

One of the first things clients invest in with their increased income is better nutrition for their families. This finding has remained consistent over several years across all poverty levels.

From 2014 to 2015, enrollment of clients' school-aged children increased 10%.

Clients who have taken advantage of our products and services beyond Trust Bank loans and Non-Formal Education experience more improvements in poverty level, net income, and number of employees.

Clients living in more extreme poverty are experiencing the greatest positive change in economic well-being through our *Microcredit Plus* program, as measured by the Progress out of Poverty Index.





WOMEN'S **PREVENTIVE HEALTH** PROGRAM

Through surveys and interactions with our clients, we know health complications limit them from achieving their potential, preventing them from building a better future for themselves and their children. Some of the most common health complications in Guatemala are preventable diseases like diabetes, hypertension, cervical cancer, and sexually transmitted infections. In Guatemala, misconceptions about healthcare and lack of access to culturally appropriate services result in high rates of these preventable diseases. We designed our *Salud para la Vida* (Health for Life) program to specifically address the preventive healthcare challenges that rural, indigenous women face in Guatemala.

Our model

Salud para la Vida provides health education and services to Friendship Bridge clients, in partnership with *Wuqu' Kawoq* (Maya Health Alliance). Culturally sensitive exams and consultations are provided via mobile clinics that travel to the communities where the women we serve live. Each clinic is staffed by female nurses fluent in the indigenous languages our clients speak.

Clients participate in four health-specific education sessions during their monthly Trust Bank meetings and earn access to the preventive health services package as a benefit of being a Friendship Bridge client. The *Salud para la Vida* pilot began in 2015, with clients attending health education modules and having access to preventive health services. When complex health cases are discovered, clients are absorbed into our health partner's complex care program.

HEALTH SERVICES OFFERED

- PAP SMEARS
- PELVIC EXAMS
- HYPERTENSION SCREENINGS
- DIABETES SCREENINGS
- BREAST EXAMS
- FAMILY PLANNING CONSULTS
- VARIOUS FAMILY PLANNING METHODS

FINDINGS FROM 2015

At 56%, utilization rates for the preventive health services offered were nearly double those of similar programs worldwide. We believe this is related to three factors:

1. Clients trust the programs Friendship Bridge offers.
2. Clients earned access to the health services without additional charges, as a benefit of being a client.
3. Facilitators led four health-focused Non-Formal Education sessions preceding the mobile clinics, which helped clients become familiar and comfortable with the health services offered.

2015 RESULTS



2,745 clients received health education

1,121 clients chose to access mobile health services

10% of participating clients chose to access family planning methods

COMPLEX CASES FOUND

3 cervical cancer cases

14 hypertension cases

33 diabetes cases

6 prolapsed uterus cases

Manuela's story:

OVERCOMING **CANCER**

"When I heard the word 'cancer,' it was like having a bucket of cold water thrown over me. Thoughts raced through my mind about my family, my children, and the cost of the treatment. I calmed down when [the nurse] told me they would support me in every way they could and there would be a solution."



"It was not an easy decision to take a test like this. But thanks to the [education] trainings in the Trust Bank, I realized how important it is to my well-being and that of my family." Manuela talks candidly about her decision to prioritize her health, sharing openly about her experience being diagnosed with and treated for cervical cancer through Friendship Bridge's health program.

At 56-years-old, Manuela has 9 children and 26 grandchildren. She had a Pap smear six years ago as part of a government health program, but never received the results – a typical experience for a Guatemalan woman. Manuela said that through the education sessions at her Trust Bank's monthly meetings, she realized she should have a Pap test at the mobile health clinic. "Since I have been a client for about 10 years, I knew Friendship Bridge would not lie about my results."

Just a few weeks after meeting with the *Salud para la Vida* nurse, Manuela received the results: she had cervical cancer. "When I heard the word 'cancer,' it was like having a bucket of cold water thrown over me. Thoughts raced through my mind about my family, my children, and the cost of the treatment. I calmed down when [the nurse] told me they would support me in every way they could and there would be a solution."

Manuela said the follow-up treatment process happened very quickly, and she had support from our health partner's complex care program. She underwent a hysterectomy and today is cancer-free.

"I want to continue living to enjoy my children and 26 grandchildren, with a 27th about to be born. I am so very grateful to Friendship Bridge for creating this program because it has helped me in so many ways besides receiving a loan. What good is having a super business if I don't have good health? The experience has taught me how very important it is to share information with my seven daughters who went through the process with me. I am encouraging them to visit the doctor too. I am also sharing my experience with my friends in my Trust Bank. My neighborhood is quite small, so I am sharing with my neighbors too!"

"The experience has taught me how very important it is to share information with my seven daughters who went through the process with me."

Manuela's daughter Marta has also learned to prioritize her health through watching her mother throughout this process. "Now more than ever, we understand how important it is for her to continue to participate with an organization that is innovative and not only seeks to help women economically, but also intellectually and to live healthy lives," her daughter said. "My entire family is very grateful for the support and encouragement that she experienced during the treatment process."



FRIENDSHIP **CIRCLES**

Friendship Circles are dedicated groups of volunteers across the U.S. who educate, advocate, and fundraise to help Friendship Bridge fulfill its mission to empower impoverished Guatemalan women. In 2015, Friendship Circles had a historic year, raising $220,000 to benefit our clients in Guatemala.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO HAVE HAD THE SUPPORT OF 10 CIRCLES IN 2015:

- Antelope Valley (CA)
- Boulder (CO)
- Central Coast (CA)
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SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2015 CIRCLE LEADERS:

- Jamie Alpert
- Sharon Barrett
- Sue Benishek
- Rachel Bloombaum
- Jill Brashear
- Laurie Dolian
- Paula Farrell
- Connie Goscinski-Smith
- Connie Holzmiller
- Deborah Kramer
- Constancia Leshin
- Susie Miller
- Marty Musselman
- Molly Niven
- Bonnie Pope
- Caroline Rodriguez
- Judy Snyder
- Diana Spencer
- Carolina Vasan
- Jennifer Zwief

Many Circle members travel with us to Guatemala for a weeklong Insight Trip, an experience that deepens their bond with each other and with our clients. We host Insight Trips twice a year, in February and November, so our supporters can experience our work firsthand.

"The Insight Trip was an inspiration for me... I experienced firsthand how empowering our clients can help transform their lives. They have great personal pride in knowing their achievements are a direct result of their perseverance and hard work."

-CAROLINA VASAN

Foothills Circle Leader

THANK YOU SUPPORTERS

Our deepest gratitude to in-kind donors, event attendees, and volunteers not listed here.

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Our Legacy Circle is a group of individuals who have directed a planned gift to Friendship Bridge, ensuring their impact extends beyond their lifetime.

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Judy Snyder
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** Indicates monthly donor in our Cada Mes Club*

A special thank you to our volunteers who provide translation services: Penelope Curtis, Terry Gibson, Claudia Kutz, Constancia Leshin, and Ilduara Moreno.



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Friendship Bridge has a total staff of 131 in Guatemala and the U.S.

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FriendshipBridge

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For additional information about how we empower women to create better futures, please visit our website:
FRIENDSHIPBRIDGE.ORG

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