

## Partner Profile: Friendship Bridge



In Guatemala, an estimated 58 percent of adult women and 70 percent of low-income adults do not have access to formal financial services. 45 percent of the population lacks access to essential health services,<sup>1</sup> and low-income women are disproportionately excluded.<sup>2</sup>

**Friendship Bridge** is a Guatemalan microfinance institution within Global Partnerships' Women-Centered Finance with Education and Health initiatives.<sup>3</sup>

### WHO IS SERVED:

Friendship Bridge serves approximately 27,500 clients, with a focus on underserved female microentrepreneurs, many of whom identify as indigenous. Approximately 35 percent of Friendship Bridge's clients live below the \$5.50 per person per day international poverty line,<sup>4</sup> 68 percent live in rural areas, and 100 percent are female.<sup>5</sup>

### WHAT IS DELIVERED:

Friendship Bridge provides working capital loans to clients, primarily through the village bank group lending methodology, alongside financial, business, and health education. Friendship Bridge also organizes health brigades to offer clients preventive health services such as cervical exams and diabetes and hypertension screening.

### WHY IT IS IMPACTFUL:

Gender-informed financial and educational services, alongside access to basic health services, empower women and enhance the economic resilience and health of households living in poverty. In a 2021 survey of 203 Friendship Bridge clients, 97 percent said their quality of life had improved, 94 percent reported increased ability to plan their finances, 84 percent reported increased savings, and 94 percent said they earn more money since becoming a client of Friendship Bridge.<sup>4</sup>

1. Source: "The Global Index Database," The World Bank, 2017, <https://globalexindex.worldbank.org/>.

2. Source: "Primary Health Care on the Road to Universal Health Coverage: 2019 Monitoring Report," World Health Organization, [https://www.who.int/healthinfo/universal\\_health\\_coverage/report/uhc\\_report\\_2019.pdf?ua=1](https://www.who.int/healthinfo/universal_health_coverage/report/uhc_report_2019.pdf?ua=1).

3. Friendship Bridge was a current borrower of Global Partnerships Social Investment Fund 5.0, LLC and Global Partnerships Social Investment Fund 6.0, LLC as of September 30, 2021.

4. Source: "Friendship Bridge Client Insights," 60 Decibels, June 2021, <https://www.friendshipbridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/60dB-@-Friendship-Bridge-Results-081021.pdf>.

5. Friendship Bridge client data as of September 30, 2021.