

Guatemala Microloan Project



DECEMBER 2015

A joint project of Presbyterian Women from the Presbytery of Western North Carolina and Suchitepequez and Sur Occidente Presbyteries

October was an exciting month for the Guatemala Microloan Project, as it marked the end of the first six month cycle of loans. Ellen Dozier and Judy Nebrig traveled to Guatemala in October and had the opportunity to visit each microloan group, observe their meetings, and receive feedback. Adehgua staff, who are helping administer the project, worked with the women to close out the first loan cycle, complete evaluations, and begin preparations for cycle two.

RETURNS ON YOUR INVESTMENT



Lidia, whose project is selling fire wood, had been very timid and self-effacing. However, as treasurer of her group and with skills carefully taught by Adehgua she now smiles openly, takes charge of her responsibilities, and claims her legitimate authority.

Marcia has a store in her home that sells basic supplies. Her teenage daughter has become her "right arm" in her business. They started with a shelf containing two or three items, and now have a store stocked with many more products. Not only did her business go well, but she feels greatly strengthened because of her increased economic independence.





Maria increased her sales of propane and was very creative in thinking of ways to attract more customers to grow her business. She was open to even more ideas from her microloan group.

Cristina and Sabina ran into difficulties with their projects. Cristina lost most of her chickens to disease, while Sabina had one of her pigs stolen a few days before she had planned to sell them. Despite the loss, Cristina maintains a good attitude and wants to continue investing. She plans to expand her pens and vaccinate her next group of chickens.



Amelia's business venture was raising and fattening pigs. A young mother, Amelia walked a half hour in the pouring rain carrying her toddler on her back to get to the meeting, where she expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to talk with other women about her dreams.

RESULTS OF CYCLE ONE

- In a short time this project has provided opportunities for new experiences. Solidarity among the groups is being developed, women are becoming leaders or being strengthened in their natural leadership, and women who had never cashed a check or saved are learning financial and business skills.
- Of the five original groups, the group of four women from La Junta never really took off. The members did not live near each other and the group was too small. They returned all the money rather than continue.
- Every woman in all four remaining groups was able to repay all of her loan plus interest. The positive pressure that comes with being a part of a group encourages each woman to do what it takes to be successful, for the good of the team.
- Women are learning the importance of administering money, keeping accounts, and being responsible.
- A part of the project is designed to teach the importance of saving; most women were successful in saving a quetzal (about 13 cents) a day.
- Though at first the women were reluctant to work with an outside group, they came to see the value of working with Adegua and found great benefit in it.
- The women have established good relationships with Mildre from Adegua and

have been open in talking with her about their concerns and problems.

- Loan participants are seeing the fruits of the project and express great appreciation for the financial and prayer support.

WHAT'S AHEAD FOR CYCLE TWO

- Of the thirty-two women who completed the first cycle, all but two or three plan to continue.
- In addition, many others want to join! There will be a total of about 65 women participating in cycle two.
- In Las Animas, the microloan group will grow from 8 to 25 members. The founding members have already begun instructing the new participants.
- As in cycle one, each participant will be eligible for a Q1,000 (\$125) loan which will be repaid in six months. Those participants who completed cycle one and desire a larger loan can, with group approval, receive up to Q1,500 (\$200.)
- Having identified areas where the women can benefit from further instruction, Adehqua will add additional training in subsequent cycles.

The Guatemala Microloan Task Force is very grateful for the results of this first effort and gives thanks to God and to ALL who have supported this project with financial gifts and prayers.

CAN YOU MAKE A DONATION TO FUND THIS SUCCESSFUL AND GROWING PROJECT?

*Make checks payable to PW PWNC and designate for Guatemala Microloan Fund:
Becky Lineberger, PW Treasurer
1738 Charles Raper Jonas Hwy
Mt Holly, NC 28120*

Members of the Microloan Task Force are available to provide a program for your group:

Jamie Beasley, Patricia Clark, Ellen Dozier, Buzz Durham, Ben Hill, Margarette Kennerly, Susan Maveety, Barbara McLean, Mimi Michael, and Ginnie Stevens.

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