

Alliance for Rural Inclusion (ARI)

Project Brief | February 2017



Ixcán,
Guatemala

The Alliance for Rural Inclusion (ARI) launched in September 2015 across 37 communities in the municipality of Ixcán. ARI provided the following economic, social, health, and education services to 100 caregivers of children with disabilities:

- Necessary health and education social services to improve the lives and self-sufficiency of children with disabilities.
- Increased participation of children with disabilities in their families, schools, and community activities.
- Increased households' income and savings, reinforcing the economic capacity of families affected by a disability.
- Resource mobilization to empower participant families to continue investing in their children's futures.

About Our Participants

35% have a physical disability.

23% have a sensory disability (auditory or visual).

14% have an intellectual disability.

13% have multiple disabilities.

15% have other types of disabilities.

Trickle Up combats extreme poverty by tapping into the power and resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable people to improve their lives. We invest in people and bolster communities. We champion power over poverty.

Context

Guatemala has experienced a succession of political crises related to long histories of poverty, conflict, and structural exclusion. A 36-year civil war left the country devastated and incurred a legacy of human rights violations, including gender-based violence targeting women of indigenous backgrounds. Even though peace was established in 1996, effective initiatives to bring economic and social justice to Guatemalans never materialized. Today, 59.3% of people live below the national poverty line in Guatemala and approximately 23.4% live in extreme poverty. Women, people with disabilities, and indigenous people are overrepresented among the extreme poor.

Our Impact on Children with Disabilities and their Caregivers

Our Expertise

Trickle Up utilizes best practices developed from our global projects supporting various vulnerable populations. This fosters continuous improvement in how we serve our participants. Expertise applied to the ARI project included:

- Expert regional staff with 4 years of knowledge and experience with the Graduation Approach and 6 years working with people with disabilities.
- Disability manual co-published by Trickle Up and USAID in 2013 entitled Disability, Poverty & Livelihoods: Guidance from Trickle Up.
- Recent projects focused on people with disabilities, including Economic Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Chontales in Nicaragua, Inclusive Livelihood Development in Tamahú, Guatemala.
- Key partnerships with disability-focused organizations including CBM, USAID's Advancing Disability-inclusive Development initiative, and Todos Con Voz in Nicaragua.

Project Data*


99% of participant families now have household gardens, increasing food security.

\$250 participants' average working capital for their productive activities.

95% of households cultivate at least 5 different types of crops today, increasing diet diversity.

18 local partners, municipalities, government institutions, and teachers trained on the inclusion of people with disabilities through the project.

*Note: Data collected in January 2017, six months after participants received seed capital grants and began their productive activities, and 2 months before the end of the program. Endline data will be collected in May 2017.

A photograph showing a woman in a light blue shirt and a young boy in a red Superman t-shirt standing in a small convenience store. The woman is holding a small green packet, and the boy is looking at it. The store shelves are stocked with various goods, including bags of snacks and boxes of instant noodles.

Before their involvement in ARI, Teodora Coc Reyes and her son, Alberto Raul Tiul Coc, lived in extreme poverty. Through the project, the family invested their \$158 seed capital grant from Trickle Up to buy materials to build a convenience store. Alberto, who has a auditory disability, helps run the family store by keeping watch over inventory to be sure no goods go missing. After just seven months, the family already has \$440 in working capital and \$74 in savings.

Project Adaptations

1 Connected families to food assistance to address child malnutrition noted at the start of project.

Project staff were surprised to find that 60% of children with disabilities in participant households were malnourished at the start of the project. Trickle Up adapted project design to include addressing the needs of these families by hiring a facilitator to connect households to relevant government offices for nutritional supplements and short-term food assistance.

2 Worked with families of children with a wide range of disabilities.

The project included children with physical, intellectual, auditory, and visual disabilities, who require unique approaches to facilitate their inclusion in the family and community. This made the project more complex and spread resources more thinly. To address these concerns, Trickle Up utilized multiple methods, including community-based rehabilitation, to ensure we took into account the unique needs of each individual in trainings and communication.

3 Encouraged neighbors and relatives to join project participants in savings groups.

In ARI, the geographic dispersion of project participants made it difficult to create viable, convenient savings groups for participants. Encouraging other members of the community to join their savings groups brought myriad benefits to participants, including increasing participants' confidence and trust in the project, reducing barriers caused by geography or social isolation, helping them create support networks close to home, and increasing positive spillover effects in the wider community.

4 Built key partnerships with local and municipal governments.

Trickle Up has found in many of our projects that partnering with local and municipal governments can amplify and multiply the results. With the involvement of other institutions and political will, we can change the systems that care for vulnerable groups. For example, many municipalities have recently created an Office for People with Disabilities, which connect them with vital services.



Carlos Geovani Ichich Coy and his mother, Candelaria Coy, received a \$158 seed capital grant, which they used to open a convenience store to sell goods to the community. Through careful management of resources and the involvement of Carlos' parents and siblings, the store has flourished. Carlos, who has a physical disability, happily works in the shop every day, tracking sales and profits using a registry. His mother and primary caregiver, Candelaria, has become the president of their community's savings group and has \$125 in savings, the highest in the group. In addition, her store has \$526 in working capital. Candelaria tells us she plans to continue striving to improve her business, because she recognizes how much support it gives to her family.

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