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**Friendship Bridge launches *Bridge to Success* program
to empower more than 1,000 women in Guatemala
*Backed by \$1 million grant from Target Foundation***

Lakewood, Colo.: Friendship Bridge today announced the launch of *Bridge to Success*, a new program that will empower more than 1,000 women entrepreneurs in rural Guatemala with intensive business development training, individual microcredit loans, technical assistance, connections to peer networks, and access to new markets.

Supported by the financial backing of a \$1 million grant from Target Foundation, *Bridge to Success* will serve Guatemalan women entrepreneurs who operate 'livelihood-sustaining enterprises' poised for growth and who have high prospects of driving economic development and new job growth in their communities. The *Bridge to Success* program will formally roll out in August.

"Friendship Bridge is unique in Guatemala in that we combine our loan program with intensive business and leadership training, tailored to the needs of each woman," said Karen Larson, Friendship Bridge President & CEO. "We will use this approach in our new program to directly serve a specific segment of clients known as the 'missing middle' who are often underserved but have high potential to create jobs."

Features and benefits of the *Bridge to Success* program:

- **Financial Services:** Individual small loans offered to women entrepreneurs for working capital and purchasing fixed assets. Loan terms are 6-36 months, with fiduciary guarantees, possession rights, and mortgages, depending on the size of the loan.
- **Business Training:** Evidence-based workshops focused on business strategy, planning, and management, as well as leadership and community development. In addition, some marketing services will be offered, such as branding, business formalization services, networking, fairs, and business competition, among others.

About Friendship Bridge: Friendship Bridge is a nonprofit social enterprise based in Lakewood, Colorado creating opportunities that empower women in Guatemala to build a better life. We use an innovative and high-impact approach to poverty alleviation by combining the tools of microfinance, education, and preventive health services. We call this *Microcredit Plus*. As a result of participating in our programs, our clients experience a combination of increased resilience, improved empowerment, and accelerated business development. Learn more at www.friendshipbridge.org

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