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Microfinance nonprofit shows evidence of generational change among impoverished clients

A new report reveals positive trends for Friendship Bridge microfinance clients and their children.

LAKEWOOD, COLORADO—A new report from [60 Decibels](#) offers evidence that the microfinance institution, Friendship Bridge, is creating positive change for the next generation among its clients. Friendship Bridge, a nonprofit with offices in Colorado and Guatemala, is one of many organizations that's part of the growing worldwide microfinance industry. It offers small loans to impoverished women in Guatemala who would not be approved for loans at traditional banks, in order to help them grow their small businesses, keep their children in school, and create change for the next generation.

“We care deeply about breaking the cycle of generational poverty, and we have so many stories of clients who have experienced intergenerational impact because of Friendship Bridge,” said Caitlin Scott, Chief Strategy Officer at Friendship Bridge. “But we wanted more concrete evidence to show this.”

It's important, because [not all microfinance organizations' services yield positive results](#), instead they may cause a cycle of indebtedness. Friendship Bridge guards against this in many ways, with tools like credit bureau checks and financial education. Empowerment and generational change are the goals to which the organization strives.


[The 60 Decibels report](#) found that:

94% of Friendship Bridge clients strongly agree that their children are more engaged in their education than they were at the same age. The vast majority of these clients attribute this change to their involvement with Friendship Bridge, either in whole or in part. Clients report participating in more decision-making about their kids' schooling and feeling more optimistic about their children's futures.

89% of Friendship Bridge clients say they have learned skills that allow them to support their children's education and personal development. This includes having an increased sense of responsibility to guide children's actions, and being more able to help with their kids' personal development, such as learning to read.

"Consistently, we see our clients putting their children's needs ahead of their own, in hopes of setting them on a path to a better future," Scott said. "It's exciting to see that they feel they learned how to better support children in school through their participation in our programs, so that their children have higher educational attainment and greater opportunities than they had."

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About Friendship Bridge: Friendship Bridge is a nonprofit social enterprise creating opportunities that empower women in Guatemala to build a better life. It combines the tools of microfinance, education, and preventive health services to achieve this goal.
www.friendshipbridge.org.

About 60 Decibels: 60 Decibels is a global impact measurement company that quantifies social impact as well as provides benchmarks of impact performance. It is the producer of the world's first microfinance social performance index, based directly on client interviews and customer outcomes. www.60decibels.com.
