Overview

The communities of Guatemala and El Salvador are exposed to a wide range of natural hazards including droughts, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, and landslides, among others. Communities affected by disasters face enormous financial costs that severely limit long-term prospects for social and economic progress. Women and girls are especially vulnerable in disaster situations. They play a critical role in providing for their families, as many of them are the leading provider of household incomes. They are also often the primary care provider for children and the elderly and typically oversee efforts to protect their homes and obtain drinking water, food, and fuel for cooking and heating. When disaster strikes and the activities of women are disrupted, this can have devastating economic effects for entire communities.

With support from Taiwan, PADF will mobilize women in marginalized communities in El Salvador and Guatemala to harness the power of financial literacy, household contingency and business continuity planning, community assessment tools, and technology to identify critical challenges facing their communities, as well as emerging opportunities to achieve lasting prosperity. The project aims to equip women from vulnerable and marginalized communities to become catalysts for achieving economic growth and lasting prosperity.

Objectives

- Strengthen financial literacy, business administration, and business opportunities among women household leaders and entrepreneurs;
- Increase the ability of women participants to use assessment tools and technology to identify household and community mitigation needs and influence development strategies;
- Facilitate exchanges between women, members of vulnerable communities, universities, and government authorities.
Expected Results

- 1,000 households and businesses will become better equipped with resources, skills, and information to prepare for, withstand, and recover from disaster events;
- 60 women receive financial support to strengthen income generation opportunities and household economic resilience (30 in El Salvador, 30 in Guatemala).

Activities

- Train women in four communities on business and household financial management, disaster preparedness and mitigation plans;
- Provide technical assistance to assist women to develop 60 business continuity and household contingency plans;
- Distribute small grants to assist up to 60 women to strengthen business continuity and household resilience;
- Deliver training on using technology and data collection tools to assess local development challenges, economic conditions, and market information, and to inform decision-making in four communities;
- Mobilize women leaders to carry out community-wide vulnerability, risk, and capacity assessments;
- Women create four business and community-wide development strategies to strengthen economic opportunities and reduce identified socioeconomic vulnerabilities;
- Organize two public events (one in El Salvador and another in Guatemala) for women to increase networking, knowledge sharing on economic opportunities and community resilience, and to exchange experiences with local stakeholders (i.e. municipal authorities, universities, and other community members).

Partners

The “Women’s Empowerment for Economic Development and Resilience” project, part of PADF’s broader Regional Disaster Assistance and Reconstruction Program, is made possible through the support of Taiwan. PADF is carrying out this project in collaboration with the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and RAND Corporation.

About PADF

The Pan American Development Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, brings together many stakeholders to improve livelihoods, empower communities, strengthen civil society, support human rights, protect the environment and respond to natural disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean. Established by the Organization of American States in 1962, PADF has worked in every country in the region. In the last decade, PADF has reached more than 92 million people, investing more than $600 million in development resources throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

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