

## TRICKLE UP WINS GRANT FROM USAID TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES LIVING IN EXTREME POVERTY

***Funds will be used to empower extremely poor people with disabilities in Guatemala to create small businesses***

(New York, NY), November 5, 2010 – Trickle Up (<http://www.trickleup.org>), an international poverty alleviation organization that empowers people living on less than \$1.25 a day to take the first steps out of poverty, is the recipient of a grant of \$266,340 from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support people with disabilities living in extreme poverty through a project titled *Microenterprise Opportunities for People with Different Abilities*.

Trickle Up was chosen for its exclusive focus on the extreme poor and for its expertise and commitment to serving people with disabilities, an important area of focus for USAID. According to Handicap International's estimates, fewer than .5 percent of microfinance institutions that also capture data regarding disability have microfinance clients that are people living with disabilities. Of the people Trickle Up serves, upwards of 8 percent are people with disabilities. Since 2002, Trickle Up has made it an organizational priority to promote development programs that are inclusive of people with disabilities via its local partners in Asia, Africa, and Central America.

Through this two-year project, Trickle Up will promote inclusive development in Guatemala's Alta Verapaz and surrounding regions, where an estimated 85% percent of the population live below the national poverty line. The project will target women with disabilities, who consistently rank among the poorest of the poor yet continue to be overlooked. The exclusion of women with disabilities in development hinders the process of achieving poverty alleviation and addressing basic human rights.

Trickle Up will apply the funds to expand outreach to people with disabilities for participation in microenterprise development programs; help them increase food security and income; and train local organizations in inclusive development. For the duration of the program, Trickle Up will employ its rigorous assessment tools to measure outcomes and impact, and share best practices with the development community in Guatemala and the United States.

Given that one out of five people living under \$1.25 a day is a person with a disability, innovation is vital to reducing poverty for this population. Including people with disabilities in microenterprise development allows them to be more visible, capable members of their communities—nurturing greater acceptance of disability. Collaboration can also help to eliminate stigma, raise self-esteem, and promote economic and social inclusion.

Trickle Up takes a comprehensive approach to addressing extreme poverty. The organization provides small seed capital grants, resources and job training to the poorest of the poor to help kick-start or expand microenterprises. The grants buy sewing machines, fertilizer, basic grains and goats—assets that build income and stability. The women in our program also create local Trickle Up savings groups that work like community banks: the members save money, make loans to each other, and pay one another interest that grows the group fund. In 2009 alone, Trickle Up served over 10,000 new participants. Estimates show that each new or expanded enterprise impacts five lives, which means over 55,000 lives have been positively impacted.

### **About Trickle Up**

Trickle Up ([www.trickleup.org](http://www.trickleup.org)) empowers people living on less than \$1.25 a day to take the first steps out of poverty, providing them with resources to build microenterprises for a better quality of life. In partnership with local agencies, Trickle Up provides business training and seed capital grants to launch or expand a microenterprise and savings support to build assets. Trickle Up works in five countries throughout Asia, Africa and Central America.

### **About USAID**

USAID was established as an independent federal agency by President John F. Kennedy in 1961. Since then USAID has partnered with developing countries to fight hunger, poverty and disease and provide opportunities for their peoples. Its foreign assistance programs have made significant contributions to promote democratic governance, foster economic growth, mitigate and manage conflict, and provide humanitarian aid in over 200 countries worldwide as well as collaborate on transnational issues that affect all inhabitants of the planet such as climate change and HIV/AIDs. Please visit [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) and [www.usaid.gov/gt](http://www.usaid.gov/gt).