

Small Monthly Donations Create Significant Changes in This Widow

Hipolita is an indigenous Mayan widow in rural northern Guatemala who is a loving mother to her eleven-year-old daughter. When first introduced to our program she was a weaver without a home of her own, and earned less than three dollars per day. Her daughter sometimes missed school to weave with her mother in order to add to the family's income.

Hipolita and her daughter struggled with food insecurity, a lack of home ownership, no beds or bedding and inadequate clothing. Without an education of her own, she was very motivated to have her daughter attend school but struggled to pay the required school fees. Hipolita had lost her home. Her daily circumstances held no hope for improvement. Without an adequate income for food and no formal and reliable income, this mother had no positive outcome for her determination to improve life for her daughter.

A solution to breaking the generational cycle of poverty and illiteracy for Hipolita was inclusion into Finding Freedom through Friendship. We added this fragile family into our program in the fall of 2017.

Our monthly donations of a small but significant income allowed Hipolita to open her first ever bank account, purchase chickens and turkeys to sell and to send her daughter to school on a reliable basis. FFF donated a concrete floor to the house that another donor had built for her. Hipolita purchased beds, mattresses, clothing and adequate monthly food through the monthly stipend of \$80/month FFF allotted to her for micro

business and nutrition. With these funds she was able to purchase a calf in 2018 and recently had her first litter of piglets from her sow. Hipolita recently purchased ducks to raise with the expectation of selling the eggs. With her FFF micro business (animal husbandry) profits she has been able to purchase traditional clothing for her family, and their health has improved with the adequate nutrition obtained through FFF funds. For the first time in her life, this motivated mother will have the funding to pay local men to plant and harvest her fields, which helps the local economy and provide work in a region that has virtually no job opportunities. She was also able to buy basic but essential household items such as dishes and a free standing sink.

The profound changes in the stability of this family have been a joy to watch. The anxiety that Hipolita experienced before inclusion into FFF has disappeared. She has advanced into an intuitive and intelligent businesswoman who plans her business to optimize the profits, manages her bank account to cover the family's needs and feels content and healthy for the first time in her life.



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