



Nourishing the Future



Success Stories



01

Juan Romero

02

Odilia Poz

03

Margarita Gonzáles

04

CODECED

From migration to sustainable agricultural leadership

Juan Romero.

Every morning at six, Don Juan starts his day alongside his children. Among rows of green crops and boots covered in soil, he patiently inspects his fields. Potatoes are no longer the only crop—tomatoes and onions now complete the cycle, opening new opportunities for him and his family

“With the training and technical support, I have diversified my production. It is family work where we all contribute, from planting to harvest,” he says proudly, watching his daughter collect onions from the latest harvest.

More than 20 years ago, Don Juan left his community in search of better income. He spent five years in the United States, working far from his family. Eventually, he decided to return, convinced that his future was tied to the land where he was born. He restarted farming potatoes, but price fluctuations kept him in uncertainty.

In 2022, he joined a producers’ group supported by Nourishing the Future. There, he took an important step: changing the way he thought about agriculture.

“My father taught me how to plant, but now I understand that by applying agricultural technologies I can improve my harvest.”

Through training and technical guidance, he learned to diversify crops, use organic fertilizers, and manage a rainwater reservoir that ensures irrigation even during the dry season.

“With the training and technical support, I have diversified my production.”





“What motivates me most is giving my children the opportunity to study.”

“Thanks to the reservoir provided by CARE, I can now plant in cycles and make sure my crops get the water they need,” he explains while looking over his fields.

Don Juan’s commitment goes beyond his own production. He has served as president of the school’s Parent Association and as part of the community auxiliary committee, leading projects to open roads and improve community life. With the same spirit, he shares his knowledge with other farmers.

His involvement in the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) also opened doors to savings and financial education.

“Before, we didn’t know how to organize our money. Now even my children understand the importance of saving,” he notes.

At home, change is visible too: his wife Cristina participates in crop planning, and his children work by his side in the fields. With new income, he has been able to improve his house and support his children’s university education.

“What motivates me most is giving my children the opportunity to study. That is the greatest harvest of all this effort,” he says with a smile.

Today, Don Juan dreams of expanding his plots and consolidating staggered tomato and onion production. His story is one of a man who found in the land and his family not only a way to make a living, but a way to grow alongside his community.

A woman with dark hair in a braid, wearing a black headset with a microphone, is shown in profile. She is wearing a vibrant, multi-colored embroidered blouse with geometric and floral patterns. She is pointing her right index finger towards the left. The background is blurred, showing other people in a room.

We realized there are opportunities: we just need one

Odilia Poz

On the pages of a recycled notebook, Odilia used to write her name over and over. “Fifteen years ago, I used my fingerprint. Now I sign my name with pride,” she recalls.

That moment marked the beginning of a transformation that led her to run her own businesses and become a leader in her community.

Odilia lives in Cantel, Quetzaltenango. Mother of six and grandmother of three, she grew up as the eldest of eight siblings in a family where poverty kept her from attending school.

At the age of 39, she decided to learn to read and write with the support of her daughter, practicing for four years on recycled paper. That achievement became a turning point in her life.

“I am no longer the same woman I was three years ago. I have changed, and I have brought changes to my family.”

The main source of that change has been her participation in the Nourishing the Future project.

Today, she leads two businesses: selling textiles and preparing traditional foods. Through training sessions, she learned how to calculate costs, set prices, improve customer service, and strengthen her self-confidence.

After completing a course in Guatemalan gastronomy, she launched her first order: 30 plates of jocón, all of which she sold. Since then, her business has continued to grow.

Another key step was building her own brand, which gave her products greater visibility and allowed her to promote them through Facebook and WhatsApp.

“With my income, I’ve been able to contribute economically to my household.”

Training on fiscal formalization also enabled Odilia to register her business legally.

“Now I can sell to clients who require invoices, which opens new business opportunities.”

Odilia’s achievements go beyond her businesses. She has become a community leader and an active voice in advocacy processes.

She represented the women producers’ network of Quetzaltenango at the Congress of the Republic, lobbying for the approval of the Women’s Economic Development Law (Initiative 5452), which seeks to improve economic opportunities for women in Guatemala.

“I have met women who fight for their economic rights. We realized that in Guatemala there are also opportunities—we just need to be given one” she affirms, as she shares her experiences of exchange with producers from Guatemala and Honduras who are also part of Nourishing the Future

Today, Odilia defines herself as an empowered and active woman, with the goal of expanding her businesses and inspiring other women in her community.



“I am grateful for the space and support of the Nurturing the Future project. The training helps us believe in ourselves and contribute economically to our households,” she emphasizes.

Lessons always remain

Margarita González

"If you give us things, that's fine, but they don't last. Knowledge always remains."



With that conviction, Margarita González drives forward her catering and event planning business every day in the department of Chimaltenango.

What began as a small family venture in a cabin has now become a source of employment and learning for other women in her community.

Eighteen years ago, Margarita and her husband Miguel left the city in search of a more sustainable life. Unemployment forced them to start from scratch while caring for their two young children.

Margarita walked through her community organizing literacy groups, moving through different small ventures until, in 2021, she opened a small café that became the foundation of her current business.

Cheerful and persistent, Margarita starts her day with a morning walk before reviewing quotations and organizing the week's events.

She also participates in savings group meetings and serves as secretary of the cemetery committee, a role that reflects the trust her community places in her.

"I used to be very shy, and it was difficult for me to speak in groups. But by joining the different spaces promoted by the project and sharing experiences with other women, I gained the courage to make my voice heard."



Through Nourishing the Future, Margarita has taken part in training on savings, production, leadership, healthy nutrition, and business management.

These lessons allowed her to formalize her business, improve financial management, and use social media to promote her services.

The change also reached her home: her family now saves collectively, grows food in their backyard, and enjoys a healthier diet.

“The first year only I was saving, and this year both of my children are saving too. We learned to use part of the money for expenses and the rest for building.”

Margarita dreams of running her company independently, handling multiple events at once, and opening a bakery with her son. She also wants to keep creating jobs for women in her community while building a better future together with her family.

Promoting women's economic empowerment

Multisectoral Coordination – CODECED

Women entrepreneurs generated more than USD 33,500 in 15 business fairs.

Since its beginning, Nourishing the Future has worked to expand opportunities for women.

In 2022, this commitment was strengthened by bringing together key actors from government, development cooperation, and the private sector in a collective effort to improve women's economic conditions.

This collaboration was consolidated with the integration of CARE Guatemala into the Commission on Economic Development, Competitiveness, and Decent Employment (CODECED), which became a platform to connect training, markets, and spaces for advocacy.

"We seek to foster collective work, driving joint initiatives to address the complex challenges of such a rapidly changing environment in our country" explains María Elena Sucuquí, Director of the Ministry of Labor (MINTRAB) and coordinator of CODECED.

Thanks to this joint effort, specialized technical training processes were coordinated, capacity-building spaces were opened, and 15 business fairs were organized, generating more than USD 33,500 in net sales.

These results directly boosted the economy of women entrepreneurs and their families. The outcomes show that inter-institutional coordination is key for women to access markets, strengthen technical and business skills, and be recognized as drivers of development.

As emphasized by María Elena: "The achievements we have reached together reflect everyone's commitment to keep working for equality between women and men, the fight against poverty, and the strengthening of women's economic empowerment."

