

Investing in Capacity Building

The International Relief & Development (IRD) defines capacity building as a “coordinated, participatory process that engages individuals, organizations and communities to develop and strengthen skills that increase their self-sufficiency.”

Capacity building is an essential component of TRF’s mission to empower disadvantaged communities in Latin America and the Caribbean with the skills, knowledge and opportunities they need to improve their lives. Because increasing self-sufficiency and promoting locally driven development forms the foundation of our work, capacity building touches all of the different program areas we fund. All supported projects, from improving the quality of healthcare services to strengthening education for rural populations, integrate capacity building to some degree.



Our work in this area includes both supporting local initiatives that are focused on building capacity in communities and working hand-in-hand with local organizations to strengthen their organizational capacity and impact.

Our local partner Fundacén, in Guatemala, focuses on strengthening rural communities by providing training and access to credit so that microentrepreneurs can improve their small businesses and ultimately generate their own development. Our partner Interactuar, in Colombia, takes a similar approach, helping small business owners to create or grow their enterprise to increase their earnings and create dignified employment opportunities for others, contributing to the economic development of their communities.

In our role as a facilitator, TRF has organized numerous workshops and seminars for over 600 Latin American organizations on topics such as financial sustainability, fundraising and project evaluation. Currently, we are coordinating the Regional Education and Gender Equity Program, funded by Caterpillar Foundation, to improve the quality of education, life skills and gender equity among marginalized elementary school children in 10 countries. We are strengthening a network of educators across the region and are creating opportunities for dialogue and information-sharing through activities such as interactive webinars and an intensive workshop-retreat in Panama. An integral component of the program is TRF’s online learning platform, which enables the practitioners to exchange experiences, resources and best practices.

TRF also conducts individualized training and technical assistance programs for nonprofits in the region. In 2013, we conducted a two-week, on-site training and technical assistance program for three local partners in the Commonwealth of Dominica. Through the program, supported by Beverly Foundation, TRF helped the organizations’ leaders strengthen their internal processes and programs in order to optimize their impact in the community.

TRF supported **34** projects with a strong capacity building focus in 2013 alone, benefitting approximately **215,000** low-income individuals in **15** countries, including more than **45,000** girls and women.

Countries with TRF Projects with a Strong Capacity Building Focus:

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad & Tobago and Venezuela.

Learn more about TRF’s work to empower communities in Latin America and the Caribbean through capacity building. Call us at (212) 675-6170 or **send us an email** to find out how you can partner with us to create lasting change.