

November 2022

When I founded Namaste in 2004, I set out to equip smart, resourceful Guatemalan women with tools to carve pathways out of poverty. Over the past 18 years, thanks to donors like you, Namaste has empowered 4,200 women to grow profitable businesses, dramatically increase their cash flow, and gain agency over their lives.

As the world has adjusted to COVID-19, our clients have experienced increased domestic responsibilities, gender-based violence, and financial hardship. These factors made Namaste's Creating Prosperity Program (CPP) particularly valuable as women navigated new stressors in their businesses and at home. As you'll see in the following pages, even amid a pandemic, our practical model gives women the tools to transform their businesses, lives, and their families.

Below are some of the highlights from our CPP in the past 12 months:



80%

average profit increase during each cycle of the CPP



89%

of women implemented the advice received from business advisors



88%

of women learned key financial skills and to record their finances



\$164,102

in loans allocated to 337 women

We are also seeing promising results with our new

Digital Programs



115%

Profit increase for women who participated in Namaste's tablet program



136%

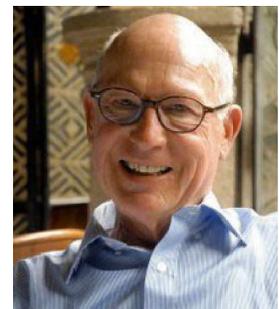
Profit increase from participants enrolled in Namaste's Digital Creating Prosperity Program

I'm proud of the results our women have achieved in our program in the past year. I'm encouraged by the progress our clients are making with tech, and I'm optimistic about the future. I'm currently working with our board and staff to develop strategic and succession plans to ensure that Namaste continues empowering Guatemalan women long after I'm gone. Your continued support for Namaste is crucial.

Please donate today.

With gratitude,

Bob Graham
Founder
Namaste Direct



Why we invest in women

With the personal business advice, financial literacy education and micro-loans women receive in Namaste's CPP, they grow their businesses and reinvest in their families. With our program women also achieve financial independence for the first time. This transforms their sense of self and their trajectory for the future.

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I feel powerful because I was able earn enough money to support my son without going back to my ex-husband."

Claudia, Namaste Client

Has increased her profits by 116% in two cycles of the CPP



During our visit to Claudia's small store in San Pablo Jocopilas last month, she affectionately greeted local children who came by to admire the colorful, hand-made pinatas that decorated her shelves stocked with snacks and various household goods. "I love kids and knew I needed to sell something different to be competitive, so I started making pinatas," she said. In addition to the extra revenue from her new products, Claudia has also been using a tablet she received from Namaste, loaded with a new business planning app, to grow her business. She told us that she was initially apprehensive about using the app, but it is helping her track her expenses and goals, and as a bonus - her son is proud of her for using technology.

Claudia explained that participating in Namaste's program has given her more confidence. She has been a single mother since she left her abusive husband when her son was an infant 18 years ago. She has worked tirelessly to give him a better life than she has had, and in the past few years with Namaste, she has seen her work pay off. Her son passed his college entrance exam and will be off to university soon. With a proud, tearful smile, Claudia told us that she and her son celebrated this monumental accomplishment by sharing a meal on the floor of her shop.

“

I am proud that I could sell different products and get ahead without depending on anyone else."

Olga, Namaste Client

Has increased her profits by 445% in eight cycles the CPP.



When Olga's husband abandoned her and her children, her eldest son migrated to the US, hoping to support his family. To get there, her son took out a loan to pay a coyote and used Olga's house as collateral. Sadly, he was detained in the US, leaving Olga with the overwhelming stress of being a single mother and paying off her son's debt.

Fortunately, Namaste's program gave Olga the resources, training, and emotional encouragement to overcome these challenges. With a loan from Namaste, Olga purchased an industrial-sized machine to process her chocolate. Soon, she was earning enough to buy another parcel of land next to her house to roast coffee. As she continued in Namaste's program, she used loan funds to purchase a car to deliver her products around the community. While participating in Namaste's program, Olga has paid off her son's debt and has even managed to hire several employees.

What we mean when we say

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is defined as the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights. Here's what our clients have found empowering about Namaste's program.



"I feel proud that I am earning enough to save and contribute to my family"

Paulina has increased her profits by 136% in the CPP

Paulina sells prepared food in San Pablo Jocopilas.

"I feel more confident because of this program. After the pandemic, I know I could run any type of business with the skills I have learned."

Francisca has increased her profits by 215% in the CPP

Francisca has a small convenience store in Cuyotenango. She is well-known in her community as a savvy businesswoman, and she has become very active in local politics.



"I don't depend on anyone anymore. I make my own money."

Maria has increased her profits by 575% in the CPP

Maria makes tortillas and has a small convenience store.



"I have learned that I have value as a woman. That is something that has helped me."

Adelaida has increased her profits by 231% in the CPP

Adelaida makes tortillas and has a small store.



"At first I was nervous to use technology but Namaste's staff has taught me how to use this tablet to track the sales of all my profit and thank goodness, it has helped me move forward."

Wendy has increased her profits by 70% in the first few months of the CPP

Wendy makes and sells chocolate and snacks.



This is how we do it

Our Staff

Namaste's success is primarily attributable to our dedicated, local Guatemalan business advisors, loan officers, and financial educators in Sacatepequez, Chimaltenango, Suchitepequez, Boca Costa of Solola, and Escuintla.

Through interviews, community references, and credit checks, our team recruits and vets participants who are well-positioned to succeed in our program. Namaste's clients have been business owners for at least one year and have less than 30% of income compromised by other debts.

The Creating Prosperity Program

Each cycle of the CPP lasts for nine months, during which women gain skills and resources to carve pathways out of poverty. Once they join the CPP, each woman meets with her Namaste business advisor to develop a business plan that serves as a guide for the nine-month cycle. They also discuss how she will invest her loan during the initial meeting. Here is a glimpse of what each cycle of the CPP entails:

3) Microloans

Each woman receives a microloan based on the goals she identifies in her business plan and her capacity for growth. Namaste offers some of the lowest interest rates in Guatemala.

2) Financial Literacy Classes

Each woman participates in five financial classes to learn essential skills such as budgeting and cash management techniques.



1) Monthly advisory visits

Each month, our Business Advisors support clients in achieving the goals identified in their business plans, maintaining financial records, and troubleshooting challenges.



Throughout the CPP, our field staff become trusted allies to the women we serve. Many clients report that the encouragement and support they receive from Namaste makes them feel more confident and motivates them to keep growing their business.

It is our focus on personal relationships that sets Namaste apart and has helped our clients increase their profits by 80% in the past year.

Savings, Networking, & Technology

In addition to the CPP, Namaste also economically empowers women by incentivizing them to save money through our Saving's Club, connecting them to other businesswomen through our annual conference, and supporting them to leverage technology through our tablet program and Digital CPP.

Value Added Chain

Together, our donors, staff, and clients all contribute to creating a more prosperous future.

