Horizons OF FRIENDSHIP

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO END POVERTY IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO

Dear

Fall 2026

Thanks to your financial support, the last fiscal year was transformative for Horizons of Friendship. Together with our dedicated partners, we brought hope and critical services to women, girls, families, communities and Indigenous Peoples in Central America and Mexico.

Your contributions have allowed us to deliver consistent care in difficult situations and respond rapidly to emergencies. This is exemplified by our Safe Haven project in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala.

What Safe Haven offers young survivors

Since 2021, Horizons and our partner PIES have supported this government-run shelter for young survivors of sexual violence, including pregnant girls and those with babies. Over 2,335 girls (ages 14-17) have passed through its doors, reclaiming their sense of safety and gaining the tools to build a brighter future.

The shelter constantly operates above capacity. However, with your unwavering support, PIES and shelter staff have been able to provide these girls with opportunities to increase their livelihoods and build autonomy.

Girls receive psychological support through group and individual therapy, access to education, and participate in entrepreneurship classes – such as candle and jewellery-making and baking – to support their futures.

Staff also provide sexual and reproductive health services, family planning, and parenting education. Parenting workshops cover infant nutrition, breastfeeding, swaddling, early stimulation techniques, and childhood development milestones. “I liked learning about self-esteem and how to care for my child,” notes one young mother at the shelter.” When my baby girl grows up, she will also be able to learn, because now I can teach her.”

For the young girls who have survived sexual violence and abuse, the support, education, and skills received through our partner PIES and the shelter staff is life-changing.

Responding to health crises

2026 brought health-related challenges to Guatemala and Safe Haven. Outbreaks of measles, COVID-19, chickenpox, gastrointestinal issues, and other transmissible viruses spread rapidly in the shelter’s overcrowded conditions. Thanks to your donations, PIES was able to turn the shelter’s medical bay into an isolation unit.

This intervention ensured that not a single life was lost and structurally prepared the shelter to treat patients in any future health emergency.

Pregnant as a result of sexual violence, these young women at Safe Haven are increasing their autonomy, education, and life skills, thanks to our partner PIES.

Shelter Director Emilia Avila discusses government changes to shelter demographics, and how it will affect the Safe Haven project.

YES!

I want to help Horizons empower people in Central America and Mexico.

Gift Payment Options

I’d like to make monthly gifts

☐ $50 ☐ $75 ☐ $100 ☐ $ _____

I’d prefer to make a one-time gift

☐ $50 ☐ $75 ☐ $100 ☐ $ _____

☐ I’ve enclosed a void cheque to start direct withdrawal for monthly giving

☐ I’ve enclosed a cheque made out to Horizons of Friendship for a one-time gift

To make an online donation, go to www.horizons.ca

Visa / MasterCard / AMEX

account number _____ expiry _____

NAME ON CARD _____

SIGNATURE _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

☐ Help the environment. Please reach me via email only at:

_____

To Donate

Horizons of Friendship, 50 Covert Street, Box 402, Cobourg, ON K9A 4L1
905 372-5483 • • info@horizons.ca

All donations are tax deductable. Charitable Registration Number 11896 3461 RR0001

More young mothers coming to shelter

In recognition of the significant improvements in healthcare and medical access that Safe Haven provides, the Guatemalan government is transferring pregnant teens and babies from other shelters to this facility. Concurrently, non-pregnant survivors at Safe Haven will be relocated to other shelters.

In addition, there has been a 10% increase in young girls filing police reports about sexual violence, according to Shelter Director Emilia Avila. This rise is attributed to PIES' awareness campaigns focusing on sexual violence, proper reporting methods and human rights. "Authorities are removing the girls from their living situations and immediately placing them in the shelter, creating additional pressure on our capacity," says Emilia.

While Safe Haven is ready to deliver trauma-informed, specialized care to all the new residents, the influx of young mothers and babies means operational expenses will rise exponentially. For example, an increase in newborns and toddlers requires additional resources, including cribs, changing tables, medical supplies, food, clothing, diapers and dedicated care.

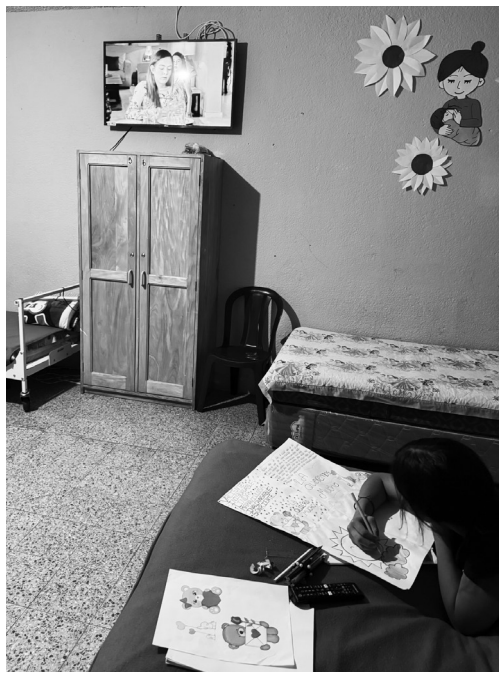
How you can help

Your donations have been instrumental in creating Safe Haven's current capabilities. By enhancing your gift, you will help us cover the critical extra expenses at the shelter. Together, we can provide more young survivors with the skills and support they need for a successful life.

Your increased gift will also ensure the success of all Horizons of Friendship's vital projects throughout Central America and Mexico. Thank you for your generosity.

In friendship and solidarity,

Rodrigo Konigs, Executive Director
Horizons of Friendship



With the increase in viral out-breaks, a quarantine space has been created in the medical bay to treat mothers and newborns who fall sick.

Young survivors of sexual violence participate in workshops on sexual and reproductive health and rights, reporting protocols, family planning, and caring for their babies.

PIES Comes to Canada October 22–23

Join Horizons of Friendship in welcoming our partner PIES de Occidente from Guatemala for two days of engaging dialogue.

- **Oct 22, Donor Appreciation Event.** Free. Enjoy meaningful conversation with PIES on the projects sustained by your donations; refreshments included. 50 Covert Street, Cobourg, ON, 6 - 8 pm. **For more information:** horizons.ca/events | ewilliams@horizons.ca, 905-372-5483, ext. 22.
- **Oct 23, Speaker Event.** ***Decolonizing Health Systems: The Utz K'aslemal Project and Indigenous Health Equity***. Engage in discussion with PIES and guest speakers exploring the challenges Indigenous communities face within Western medical systems. Canadian Canoe Museum (11 am - 3 pm). Paid registration required. Includes lunch and full museum access. **For more information:** horizons.ca/events | Irania Ledesma, iledesma@horizons.ca, 905-396-0368.

HORIZONS
of friendship • d'amitié • de amistad

50 Covert Street, P.O. Box 402
Cobourg, Ontario Canada K9A 4L1
Tel: 905.372.5483
info@horizons.ca • www.horizons.ca