

## **Abstract: Social Capital in Guatemala: A Mixed Methods Analysis**

Ana María Ibáñez  
FEDESARROLLO  
aibanez@fedesarrollo.org.co

Kathy Lindert  
Banco Mundial  
klindert@worldbank.org

Michael Woolcock  
Banco Mundial  
mwoolcock@worldbank.org

This paper seeks to document the role and impact of different types of social relationships, or social capital, on lives of the poor in Guatemala. The analysis combines quantitative data (from a large, representative national-level poverty study) and qualitative evidence (from villages in various parts of the country) to analyze social capital to answer three questions. First, the analysis establishes who actually has this asset called social capital, and to what extent. Second, the paper identifies the determinants of social capital to examine the barriers and opportunities to more diverse participation that different groups encounter. Third, the study determines the uses of social capital at the household and community level.

The evidence presented in this study reveals that social capital is concentrated among privileged groups of the population. Moreover, the determinants of social capital and the characteristics of better-off individuals are similar, which implies that better-off individuals are also better endowed with, and are in a stronger position to accumulate, social capital. Notably, however, social capital constitutes an important asset for improving community decision-making, for leveraging external assistance, mitigating shocks, and improving generalized trust.