



"I recognize my
rights and my
value as a
woman"

Impact Evaluation
Adolescent Girls Program
Analysis of Results, 2015-2021

Patzun, Chimaltenango

WJI's Adolescent Girls Program works to prevent child, early, and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU) by implementing community-based interventions and protection mechanisms. The program improves adolescent girls' knowledge of their rights, transforms local norms, and encourages parents and community leaders to take action to delay CEFMU.

In 2012, WJI began working in the municipality of Patzún providing rights education and legal services to women. WJI launched the Adolescent Girls Program in 2015 in response to requests from participants to provide programming for adolescent girls. Between 2015 and 2021, 838 adolescent girls from 17 communities graduated from the program.



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A Comprehensive Evaluation

In 2022, WJI conducted a comprehensive evaluation to measure the program's impact and effectiveness and to identify areas for improvement. Some of the questions that guided the evaluation include:

- Does the program delay CEFMU?
- Do participants value their experience?
- What learnings do participants still apply from the program?



The program made me stronger. It taught me about my rights and how to defend them. After the program, I think it's better to wait to get married ."

*Alicia, 15
San Lorenzo*

The Methodology:

Qualitative Evaluation

WJI conducted two summits with 54 graduates from 15 communities. Staff facilitated dynamic, participatory activities with the graduates to better understand their experiences and the program's impact on their lives.

Quantitative Evaluation

700 program graduates and family members responded to surveys which collected data regarding the marital status, educational attainment, employment, and parental status of the graduates.



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Results:

The program successfully contributed to delaying CEFMU among adolescent girls under 18.

Less than 3% of program participants under 18 years of age are or have been married or in unions, compared to the national average of 30%.¹

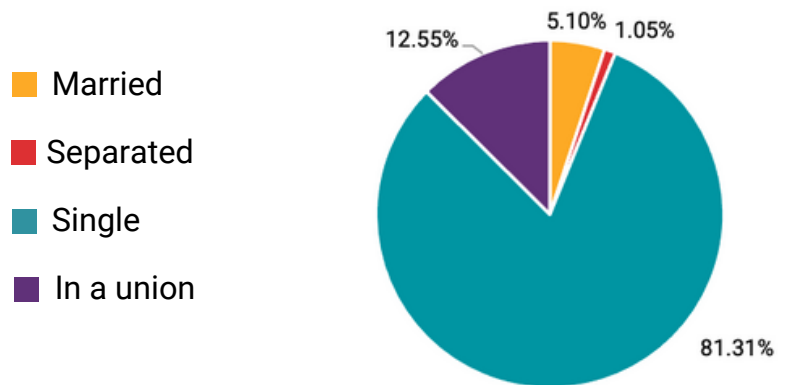
The average age of the participants at the time of the survey was 17.9 years old. **The rate of singleness in the population surveyed is 81%,** which is a strong indicator of success.

Participants continue to apply key learnings from the program: Adolescent girls identified delaying marriages and unions, personal empowerment, and the importance of education as positive lessons from the program.

Income generation: The embroidery and cross stitch skills acquired during the program provided income-generating opportunities for the adolescent girls.

¹ Source: Girls Not Brides (2022). Child, Early and Forced Marriage and Unions in Guatemala. https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/documents/1776/CEFMU_in_Guatemala.pdf

Marital Status of Graduates by Percentage



My life plan that I created in the program motivated me to continue studying for my degree in education. I planned something and challenged myself to fulfill it.”

Gela, 18
Chipiacul



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Lessons Learned

Beyond Delaying Marriage, Developing Life Skills and Cultivating Resilience: The results underscore the importance of developing the tools and resources to help young women realize their potential and more confidently navigate the challenges they commonly experience. Future programming will place greater focus on strengthening adolescent girls' life skills to help them achieve their goals and improve outcomes beyond delaying child marriage. When a girl is supported and knows her value, she has greater resilience in the face of social pressures that can cause CEFMU.

The need for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights education: 70% of the graduated participants who are married, in a union, or separated also have children, showing a strong link between reproduction and marriage. This could indicate social pressure to legitimize a pregnancy through a marriage or union and underscores the need for comprehensive sexual education and youth-friendly reproductive health services in rural Guatemala. WJI will incorporate comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights education into future programming.

“[The program] has helped me know my rights, and I have become a leader in my community. As women we must defend ourselves and overcome our fears, be strong and brave.”

*Evelin, 16
Chipiacul*



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