Women's Justice Initiative



2025 Annual Report

A Just Future for Women

Our vision in motion

Violence against women and girls is one of the most pervasive human rights violations worldwide, and Central America continues to face some of the highest rates of violence globally.

Our Mission

The Women's Justice Initiative (WJI) improves the lives of Indigenous women and girls through education, access to legal services, and gender-based violence prevention.

Letter from Our Leadership







Dear Friends,

2025 was a year of meaningful growth and momentum for the Women's Justice Initiative. At the midpoint of our five-year strategic plan, *A Just Future for Women*, we are proud of how far we have come and energized by what lies ahead.

Our strategic plan set an ambitious vision to replicate our programs, scale our legal empowerment methodology, and strengthen our organizational capacity. In 2025, we made significant progress toward these goals. We expanded into the department of Sololá, bringing critical services to new communities across the Maya Kaqchikel region. We also shared our methodology with organizations across Guatemala, multiplying our impact through collaboration. At the same time, we continued investing in our team and internal systems to strengthen WJI for the future.

In November, we celebrated these achievements with our community of supporters at our New York City Gala. The evening reminded us that WJI's success is possible because of the collective commitment of our partners, who believe in a future where women and girls can live free from violence.

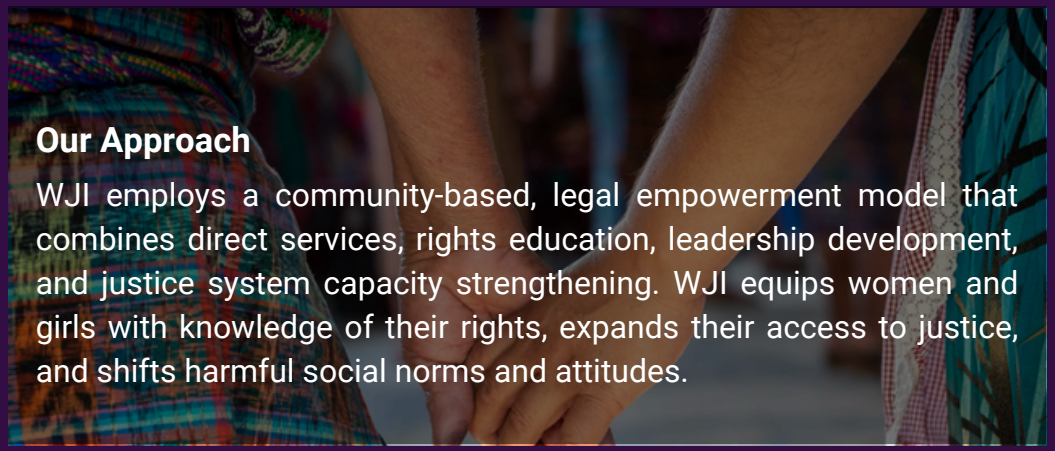
This progress comes amid growing uncertainty across the global development landscape, with resources for grassroots organizations becoming increasingly constrained even as the need for community-driven solutions grows. For WJI, this moment reinforces the importance of our mission.

As our team carries this work into the year ahead, we do so with gratitude for all we have accomplished together and with renewed determination. With your continued partnership, we will continue expanding access to justice, strengthening women's leadership, and building a just future for women and girls.

With gratitude,

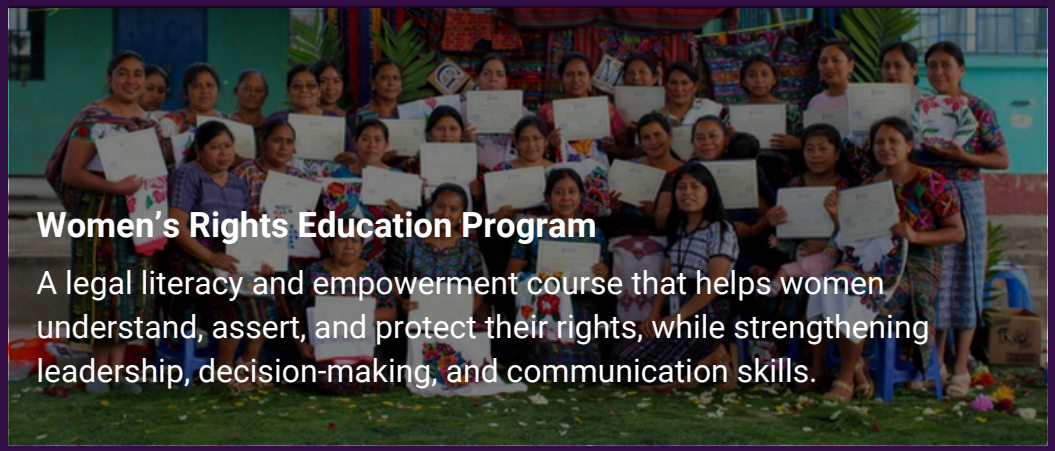
Kate Flatley
Executive Director

Katie Newman
Board President



Our Approach

WJI employs a community-based, legal empowerment model that combines direct services, rights education, leadership development, and justice system capacity strengthening. WJI equips women and girls with knowledge of their rights, expands their access to justice, and shifts harmful social norms and attitudes.



Women's Rights Education Program

A legal literacy and empowerment course that helps women understand, assert, and protect their rights, while strengthening leadership, decision-making, and communication skills.



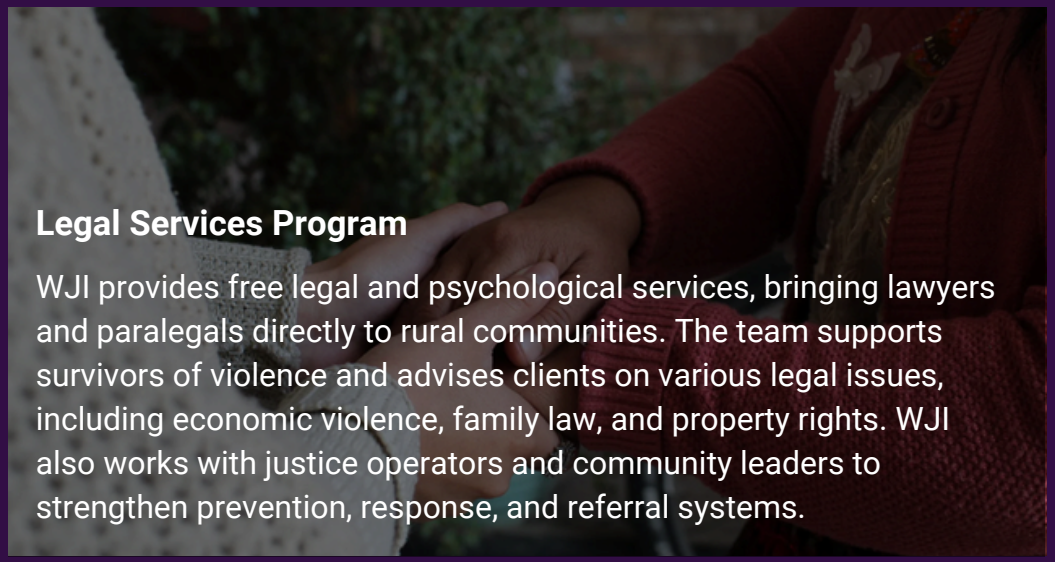
Community Advocates Program

A two-year leadership course that prepares women to serve as grassroots paralegals and advocates through training in women's rights, violence prevention, leadership, and community advocacy.



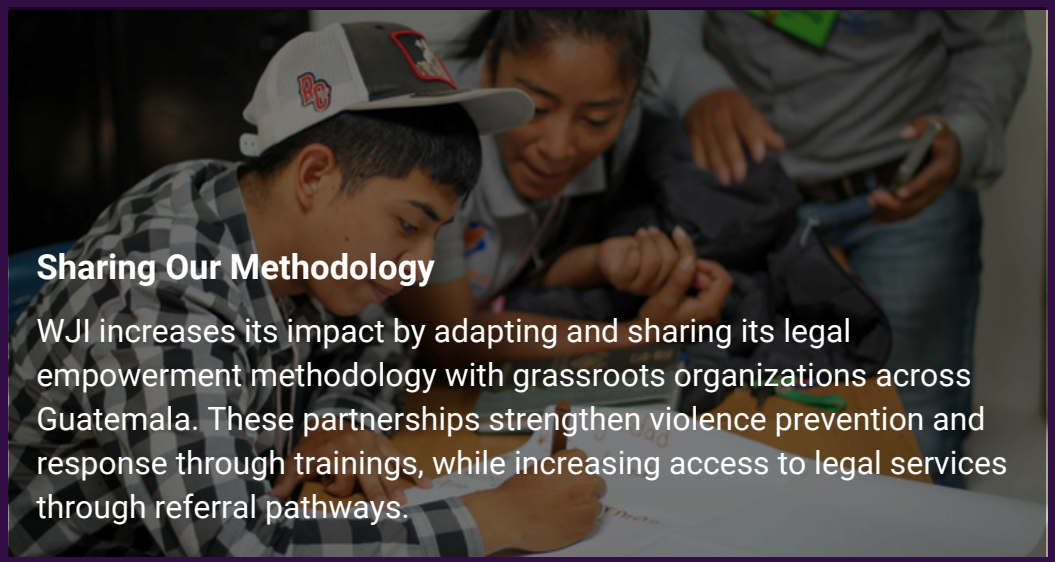
Adolescent Girls Program

An empowerment, rights, and leadership course that helps girls assert their rights, delay marriage, and pursue their goals. Workshops with parents and key stakeholders strengthen community-based protection mechanisms.



Legal Services Program

WJI provides free legal and psychological services, bringing lawyers and paralegals directly to rural communities. The team supports survivors of violence and advises clients on various legal issues, including economic violence, family law, and property rights. WJI also works with justice operators and community leaders to strengthen prevention, response, and referral systems.



Sharing Our Methodology

WJI increases its impact by adapting and sharing its legal empowerment methodology with grassroots organizations across Guatemala. These partnerships strengthen violence prevention and response through trainings, while increasing access to legal services through referral pathways.

2025 Highlights and Achievements



Sharing Our Methodology

WJI partnered with 13 organizations in Alta and Baja Verapaz to share its legal empowerment methodology and strengthen local capacity to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

Expanding to Sololá

WJI expanded into the department of Sololá, bringing its Women's Rights Education, Legal Services, and Community Advocates Programs to 24 new communities.

Integrating Psychological Services

WJI integrated psychological support into its services for survivors of violence, providing resources in the Maya Kaqchikel language. In its first year, the program reached 98 women and girls.

Investing in our Team

WJI provided 39 team members with professional development opportunities in areas including leadership and restorative justice.



Celebrating our Impact

WJI hosted its second Gala in New York City. The event marked the midpoint of our strategic plan and honored Julie H. Jones, Chair of Ropes & Gray LLP, and Clara Ferraro, outgoing WJI Board Chair.

Growing our Team

WJI welcomed 13 new team members, growing to a team of 52, and strengthened our onboarding processes and systems to support new staff and organizational growth.

Strengthening Organizational Security

WJI developed and implemented a new security protocol to help protect staff, Community Advocates, and the women and girls we serve.

Community Voices:
Hearing from Partners and Participants









2025 Impact Statistics

3,684
individuals participated in WJI's programs

343
adolescent girls and their mothers gained knowledge and skills to prevent child marriage and gender-based violence

673
women graduated from the Women's Rights Education Program

744
women received free legal services, 86% of whom are survivors of violence

86
Community Advocates participated in a two-year leadership course

523
police officers, justice operators, parents, and community leaders received training to improve their responses to violence

WJI's Strategic Plan: Replicate

Local Women Leading WJI's Expansion

Before entering a new community, WJI takes time to listen, understand local priorities, and build relationships with women who can help support our initiatives.

In 2025, WJI's team and Community Advocates mapped 51 new communities, going door to door, meeting families and community leaders, and identifying women interested in becoming Advocates.

For Maria, WJI's arrival was an opportunity to create something she had long envisioned for her community.



WJI's Strategic Plan: Replicate

A Vision for Her Community

When WJI arrived, María was already working with women in her village. When she learned WJI was looking for Community Advocates, she got involved immediately. She wanted to create opportunities for women to learn about their rights and support one another.

"I have always wanted people to come into the communities and share these topics with women. There are women who are homemakers who do not know about their rights or about violence."

Through WJI's training, Maria gained tools to strengthen her leadership and help other women access information and support.



WJI's Strategic Plan: Replicate

Becoming a Trusted Resource

As a Community Advocate, María has become a trusted bridge between women in her community and WJI.

"Now, women I know have that trust to come to me and ask their questions, [express] their doubts, and to be a source of guidance for them. "

She has seen how important it is for women to have a space where they feel heard and supported.

"For a woman, being listened to makes a big difference."



WJI’s Strategic Plan: Replicate

Local Leadership, Lasting Change

María began with a desire to create more opportunities for women. Today, she is helping make those opportunities possible.

Her story reflects the role of WJI’s Community Advocates. These women develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to support others, becoming changemakers within their communities.

To date, 183 women have graduated from WJI’s Community Advocates Program, building a growing network of local women leading change from within.





WJI's Strategic Plan: Scale

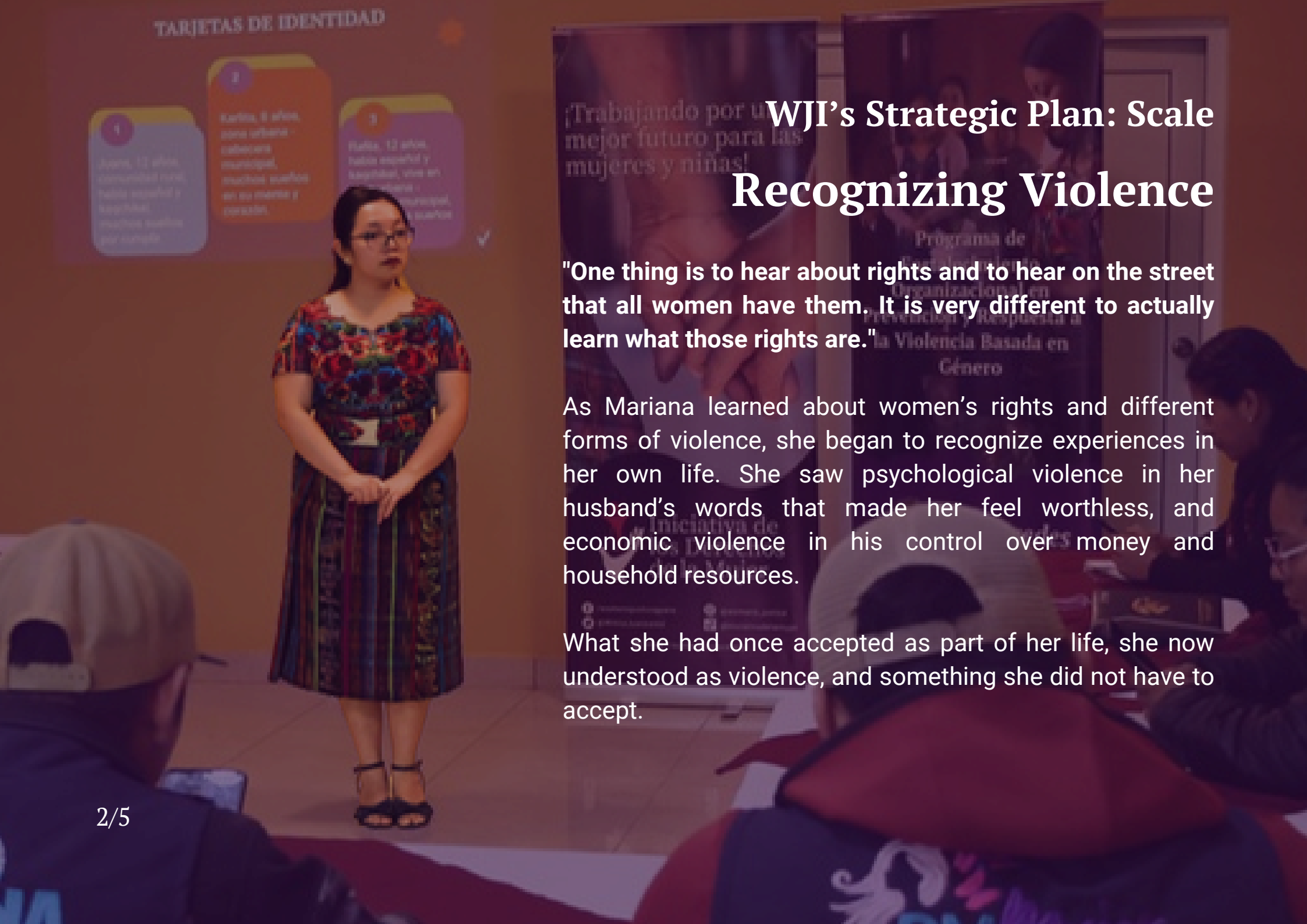
Mariana's Journey from Awareness to Agency

"I knew about violence. But I didn't realize that I was living violence myself." Mariana, community mediator, CODEMAV, Cobán, Alta Verapaz *

In 2025, WJI began partnering with community-based organizations in Alta and Baja Verapaz to share its legal empowerment methodology. Through tailored workshops, training, and technical assistance, WJI supports organizations to integrate gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response work into their programming.

Over eight months, WJI partnered with the Coordinadora de Organizaciones de Mujeres de Alta Verapaz (CODEMAV) to adapt our methodology to their local context and priorities.

For Mariana, a 28-year-old mother of three and CODEMAV community mediator, the experience would change how she understood her own life.



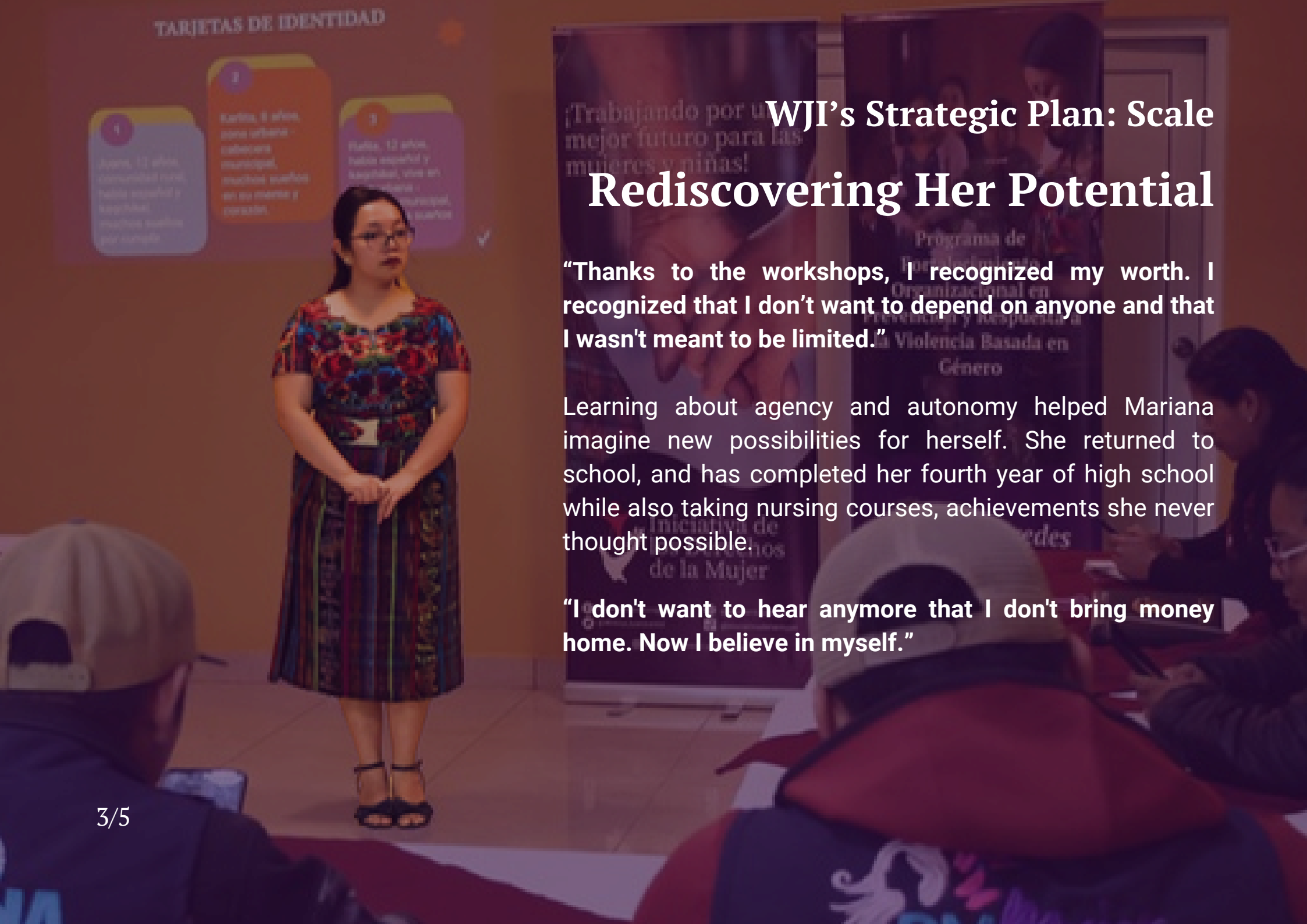
WJI's Strategic Plan: Scale

Recognizing Violence

"One thing is to hear about rights and to hear on the street that all women have them. It is very different to actually learn what those rights are."

As Mariana learned about women's rights and different forms of violence, she began to recognize experiences in her own life. She saw psychological violence in her husband's words that made her feel worthless, and economic violence in his control over money and household resources.

What she had once accepted as part of her life, she now understood as violence, and something she did not have to accept.



WJI's Strategic Plan: Scale

Rediscovering Her Potential

"Thanks to the workshops, I recognized my worth. I recognized that I don't want to depend on anyone and that I wasn't meant to be limited."

Learning about agency and autonomy helped Mariana imagine new possibilities for herself. She returned to school, and has completed her fourth year of high school while also taking nursing courses, achievements she never thought possible.

"I don't want to hear anymore that I don't bring money home. Now I believe in myself."



WJI's Strategic Plan: Scale

Supporting Other Women

"What I want is to go little by little with the women, explain things to them, and help them understand the way I understood."

Mariana now draws on her own experience to support other women in her community. Through the workshops, she learned to accompany other women with patience, empathy, and respect for their individual process.



WJI's Strategic Plan: Scale

Multiplying Impact

WJI's methodology sharing goes beyond transferring knowledge about legal rights. It equips community-based organizations with the tools, skills, and support to adapt our approach and carry the work forward.

Organizations like CODEMAV know their communities and the women they serve. They are uniquely positioned to build locally rooted, sustainable solutions to gender-based violence.

Mariana's journey, from recognizing violence in her own life to helping other women recognize their rights, demonstrates how WJI's work extends beyond individuals to strengthen entire communities and create an enduring impact.

WJI's Strategic Plan: Sustain

From Participant to Program Leader

Delfy's story with WJI began in 2012, when the organization arrived in her rural community. Over the past thirteen years, Delfy has grown from a participant in the Women's Rights Education Program to a Community Advocate, and now is an experienced team member and leader.

In 2025, when WJI began developing a new economic empowerment initiative, Delfy applied to lead the program. Drawing on her experience as an Indigenous woman from the communities WJI serves, as a small-business owner, and as a long-time team member, she brought a unique perspective to the role.

For the first time, she would be designing and leading a program. **"I was afraid because it was something new, and I would have more decision-making responsibilities, guiding the program and the women in it."**



WJI's Strategic Plan: Sustain

Investing in Delfy's Leadership

WJI supported Delfy's transition into her new role with professional development opportunities related to leadership, team management, and conflict resolution. She now applies what she learned directly to her work with colleagues and the women participating in the program.

"WJI has helped me a lot in my growth. I've had many opportunities to grow professionally and personally. I put into practice everything I learn!"

For Delfy, these opportunities are especially meaningful, as growing up in a rural community, she had limited access to education due to financial and geographical barriers.



WJI's Strategic Plan: Sustain

Creating Opportunities for Other Women

For Delfy, leadership means not only growing in her own role, but also creating opportunities for other women to learn, lead, and shape their futures.

"Now we are training the participants, guiding them, giving them this space to learn. What we're looking for is to improve women's lives."





WJI’s Strategic Plan: Sustain

Reflecting on her Journey

Looking back, she recognizes how far she has come.

"If the Delfy from ten years ago could see me now, she would think I've become an empowered woman, with so much knowledge and experience."

Delfy’s journey reflects WJI’s commitment to investing in women’s leadership to strengthen its programs and create opportunities for more women to lead and support others.

Our Impact to Date

65,070
direct beneficiaries

265,607
indirect beneficiaries

15,662
women and girls participated in WJI's programs

9,346
legal services provided related to economic rights and violence against women

148
Community Advocates graduated, strengthening gender-based violence prevention and response in their communities

6,745
women gained knowledge of their rights through the Women's Rights Education Program

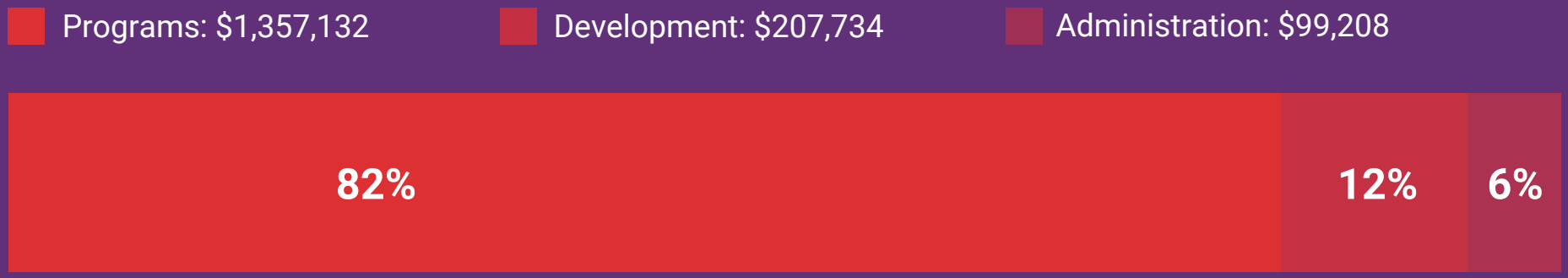
1,729
graduates from the Adolescent Girls Program

78
organizations partnered with WJI to strengthen responses to gender-based violence across Guatemala

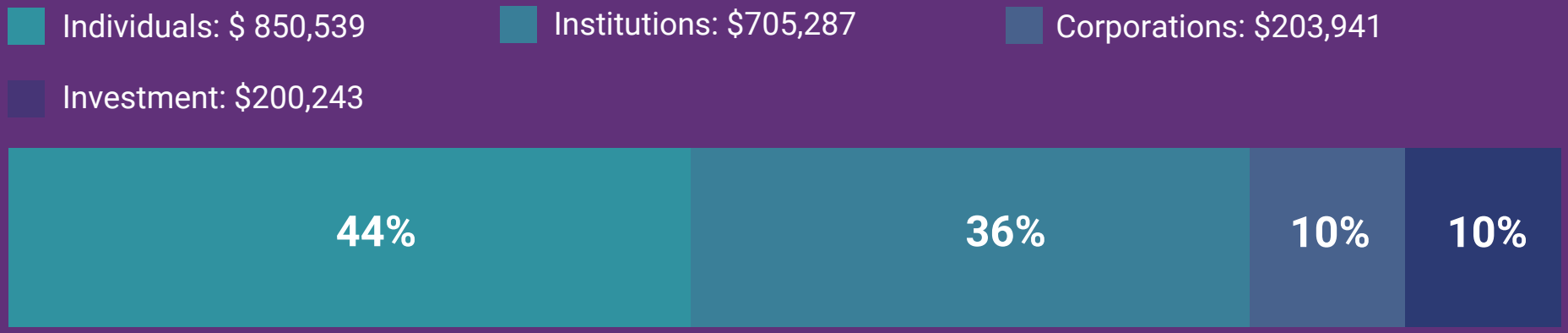
3,026
community leaders, police officers, and government officials trained

Financials

Expenses - $1,664,074



Revenue - $1,960,010



2025 Ending Net Assets: $2,562,391

The Future We're Building Together

For more than 15 years, WJI's work has been made possible by people and institutions who believe that Indigenous women and girls deserve the knowledge, opportunities, and support to shape their own futures. To every donor, partner, advocate, and friend who has stood with us, **thank you**. Your belief in this work has helped make lasting change possible in communities across Guatemala.

Today, WJI is entering an exciting new chapter. With a proven methodology, deep roots in the communities we serve, and a growing network of women leaders, **we are ready to expand our reach and deepen our impact.**

There is still much work ahead. We invite you **to continue investing in WJI and partnering with us to create a more just future for women and girls.**



Photographer Credits

Paola Almengor

Women's Justice Initiative

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