



## **Interim Report for Dining for Women**

### **1. Please provide the following information:**

**Organization Name:** Women's Justice Initiative (WJI)

**Project Title:** Community Advocates: Training Women Leaders to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls and Increase Access to Justice in Rural Guatemala

**Grant Amount:** \$45,000.00

#### **Contact Person:**

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### **2. Recap briefly what outcomes the project was designed to achieve.**

This project aims to increase access to justice for Maya women living in 24 rural communities in Patzún, Chimaltenango by developing a network of Community Advocates who promote women's rights at the local level.

Through this project, Maya women and girls who have received training, information, and accompaniment from Community Advocates will have greater knowledge of their rights, will be committed to ending VAWG in their communities, and will have increased access to legal services to protect their rights, including their right to live free from violence. Ensuring that indigenous women understand their legal rights and have access to free, bilingual services is critical to preventing VAWG, supporting survivors, and promoting greater gender equality in rural communities. Moreover, this project will create a more supportive environment for indigenous women and girls to assert their rights by transforming community attitudes about the right of women and girls to live free from violence and improving the institutional response to



cases of VAWG. Specifically, community leaders will have a better understanding of their responsibility in violence prevention and will collaborate with the Community Advocates to develop action plans. Police and judicial officials will improve their response to cases of violence following capacity-building workshops and will demonstrate increased understanding and application of national legislation to protect survivors.

**3. Has funding changed for this project? For example, have you received unexpected funding from another source?**

Funding has not changed for this project. WJI is looking to secure funding for continued implementation of the project after the DfW grant execution period.

**4. Is your organization or project situation different than presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant project staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding, or other significant changes?**

The organization and project situation remain the same as in the approved proposal.

**5. Have the number of beneficiaries changed? To report this please refer to the original numbers in your grant proposal under Number of women and girls Directly Impacted and population Indirectly Impacted.**

WJI is still on path to directly impact 2,383 Maya-Kaqchikel women, girls, and men in Patzún as well as indirectly benefit 8,381 Maya-Kaqchikel women, girls, and male community members.

**6. What challenges are you facing as you move forward with this project? How are you approaching these challenges?**

One challenge that we faced while implementing the project is in regards to the facilitation skills of the Community Advocates. From regular monitoring, WJI found that some Advocates' ability to facilitate workshops is not at the level it needs to be to ensure that participants in the Adolescent Girls Program and Women's Rights Education Program are adequately learning the material. WJI is providing additional training and one-on-one meetings with Advocates who need extra support in their facilitation. We also made the decision that some Advocates will be responsible for the facilitation while others, who do not have strong facilitation skills, will focus on provide logistical support for the workshops.

**7. Have you revised your original objectives since the project began? If so, why? What are your new objectives?**



The original objectives remain the same as those in the approved proposal.

**8. What progress have you made toward achieving your objectives? Please address each stated objective.**

WJI has made significant progress towards achieving our project objectives.

*Train 29 Community Advocates in human rights, VAWG prevention, and leadership development.*

To date, WJI has trained 29 women between ages 18 and 50 to become Community Advocates. Since the start of project implementation in May 2018, the Advocates participated in 7 intensive leadership and human rights trainings. The Advocates' work at the community level is critical to increasing access to justice in the communities because they provide a vital link to vulnerable girls and women in their communities, support them in accessing legal services, and offer strategies based on their experiences as rural, indigenous women to achieve a broader transformation in attitudes and practices regarding VAWG. Advocates work in pairs, meet every month with WJI to define their work plans, and receive weekly check-ins from our team.

*To increase knowledge among 455 women and girls about their rights, including the right to live free from violence.*

The Community Advocates are supporting workshop facilitation and program implementation of both WJI's Adolescent Girls Program workshop as well as our Women's Rights Education Program workshop. Twelve Community Advocates have been leading Adolescent Girl workshops in six communities, educating 320 girls on their rights and the importance of delaying marriage during the reporting period. The Adolescent Girl workshops teach girls to assert their rights, delay early marriage, and achieve their personal goals through a yearlong empowerment, rights, and leadership course, while also engaging their mothers and community leaders in child marriage prevention.

All 29 Advocates are helping their peers and supporting logistics of the Women's Rights Education Program workshops. The Women's Rights Education Program is a 6-month legal literacy course that empowers women to assert their rights and links them to WJI's legal services so that they can protect their rights. During the reporting period, 329 women participated in Women's Rights Education workshops and are increasing their knowledge of their rights and improving their ability to access justice.

As Flory, one of WJI's Community Advocates stated, "When the women [in the course] learn about their rights they begin to live better lives. They learn that they do not deserve to have their husband hit them or mistreat them. I want other women to learn their rights because all women deserve to live dignified lives."

*To increase the proportion of leaders who can identify at least two key tasks to respond to cases*



*of violence, according to the legal framework, to 20%.*

In the coming months, WJI will conduct end line surveys with the group of leaders it has worked with to measure their changes in knowledge and understanding of the role they play in addressing VAWG in their communities.

*To improve the institutional response to cases of VAWG through 150 case referrals from the JP, PNC, and OMM*

In June, WJI implemented a training for fourteen municipal service providers, including senior police officers, staff from the municipal health centers, the Municipal Women's Office (OMM), and staff from a local public health NGO. All of these institutions provide services to women and respond to cases of VAWG.

In early July, WJI held trainings for police (PNC) officers on improving their responses to victims of violence and avoiding revictimization. Eleven police officers attended the training. After participating in the training, police officers demonstrated a 22% increase in their knowledge. Additionally, 91% of officers listed a good practice that they learned from the training that they will begin to implement when responding to cases of VAWG.

WJI has received 46 referrals during the reporting period and continues to receive referrals from the Justice of the Peace (JP), National Civilian Police (PNC), Municipal Health Center, Municipal Maternal Health Center, the Municipal Women's Office (OMM), and community leaders.

*To develop 9 action plans to prevent VAWG in 9 communities*

129 community leaders from ten communities have participated in the development of Community Action Plans during the reporting period. Through the community action planning process, community leaders significantly increased their knowledge of VAWG and their understanding of the role they can play in preventing and addressing VAWG and child marriage in their communities. Of the ten Community Action Plans developed, all are in the implementation stage and leaders and Community Advocates have conducted a number of activities related to raising awareness about VAWG in their communities. Additionally, leaders and Advocates have begun receiving cases of survivors of violence and referring them to WJI, as part of the referral plan they developed through the Community Action Plan.

*To sensitize 1,500 women to VAWG through the presentation of action plans*

2,225 individuals have been sensitized to VAWG and child marriage in 2018 to date through the presentation of action plans at community-wide assemblies.

*To increase access to justice for 705 women and girls, including those participating in Advocate led workshops and 250 who receive legal services*



To date, 649 women and girls have increased access to justice because of their participation in workshops. Women's Rights Education Program and Adolescent Girls Program participants are experiencing greater access to legal services due to the interventions provided by WJI's Legal Services Program and Community Advocates. WJI's lawyer and paralegals visited communities on a monthly basis during the Women's Rights Education Program workshops to provide services to course participants directly. WJI's mobile legal outreach represents the first time that these women had access to legal counseling in their communities and for many the first time they had access to affordable legal services. WJI's legal team also provides legal services to women and girls at its central Patzun office. Between May and October 2018, 259 women and girls received legal services.

*To secure economic rights for 150 women*

Through monthly mobile outreach in each community and legal services provided at the WJI office, WJI's lawyer and paralegals have provided legal services to 95 women and girls related to economic rights, including property and inheritance rights, child support, alimony, and paternity.

*To secure land titling for 25 women*

Since May 2018, 7 women have secured a land title through WJI's legal services.

**9. Do you anticipate any difficulties in completing your project in the timeframe outlined in your proposal?**

WJI does not anticipate any difficulties in completing the project in the timeframe outlined in its proposal.