



## WINGS GUATEMALA 2021 UPDATE REPORT

### OVERVIEW

In 2021, WINGS celebrated our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Over two decades, we have provided reproductive health services and education to vulnerable Guatemalan youth, women, and men. Since our inception, we have prevented an estimated 329,347 unintended pregnancies, 1,825 child deaths & 115 maternal deaths. In the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we not only survived but thrived during 2021, albeit with a vastly different array of services than what we had originally projected. Leading up to 2020, tubal ligations had become one of our most sought-after services. But because the risk of contamination is high, coupled with our limited access to hospitals where we provide tubal ligations, we could not offer the number of clinics originally intended. We provided 466 out of a projected 1,609 tubal ligations. Fortunately, vasectomies do not carry the same contagion risk and we can perform them in almost any clinical setting. As a result, we aimed to provide 580 and provided 945 vasectomies. This is a true success story of 2021.

In addition to this clinical highlight, we also launched our first Community Advisory Board, established a legacy giving program, and grew our social media engagement of our Youth Peer Education Program. We did all of this while acting as a national leader in pandemic precaution adherence, as well as welcoming a new Executive Director.

### MEETING NEEDS

WINGS works to not only fill in the gaps left by national resources, but also to take services directly to our patients at the community level. We ensure access to quality, affordable reproductive health services through a network of volunteer health promoters, mobile medical units, and stationary clinics, providing educational talks, private counseling, short and long-acting reversible contraception, cervical cancer screening with Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid/cryotherapy, and permanent sterilization procedures.

Providing reproductive health services is fundamental to breaking the cycles of poverty and inequality. Without the ability to plan and space pregnancies, families are vulnerable to destitution, unable to meet the basic needs of all dependents. The ramifications of poverty disproportionately impact girls who are more likely to be denied food and education when household resources are limited. This in turn perpetuates gender inequality as women lack the education necessary for economic independence. Additionally, increased access to family planning has been linked to decreased migration and decreased environmental implications.

## BENEFICIARIES

| WINGS Service Provision              |                           | Projections 2021 | Results 2021  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Cervical Cancer Screening            |                           | 3,243            | 2,870         |
| Voluntary Surgical Contraception     | Tubal Ligations           | 1,609            | 466           |
|                                      | Vasectomies               | 580              | 945           |
|                                      | <b>VSC Total</b>          | <b>2,189</b>     | <b>1,411</b>  |
| Long-Acting Reversible Contraception | IUDs                      | 1,713            | 1,718         |
|                                      | Hormonal Implants         | 5,610            | 5,272         |
|                                      | <b>LARC Total</b>         | <b>7,323</b>     | <b>6,990</b>  |
| Short-Acting Contraceptive Methods*  | Quarterly Injections      | 5,444            | 4,584         |
|                                      | Monthly Injections        | 1,789            | 1,784         |
|                                      | Contraceptive Pills       | 940              | 1,945         |
|                                      | Condoms                   | 18,000           | 58,122        |
|                                      | Emergency Contraception   | 520              | 315           |
|                                      | <b>Short-Acting Total</b> | <b>26,693</b>    | <b>66,750</b> |

\*Final results will not be fully available until February 2022.

With the above results, WINGS prevented an estimated 21,503 unintended pregnancies, 106 child deaths & 6 maternal deaths, using the Marie Stopes Impact2 demographic model.

## LESSONS LEARNED

One of WINGS' longest-standing programs is our network of 30 Volunteer Health Promoters: community leaders identified within underserved rural areas to be a local point of service. Through their intimate linguistic and cultural knowledge of the communities they serve, they are able to provide quality contraceptive counseling, low-cost short-acting methods, and referrals to WINGS medical clinics for additional services. The contraceptive methods they provide are both comparatively expensive and by definition short-acting. Furthermore, the Ministry of Health had gradually increased their own provision of short-acting methods across the country in the year prior to the pandemic. For these reasons, WINGS' leadership had considered eventually and gradually reducing the network. But the implications of the pandemic meant that we came to rely even more upon these community-level points of service and upon their ability to distribute contraceptive methods while maintaining all infection-reduction precautions. We also saw availability of these methods through the Ministry of Health come to a halt in many communities, meaning more and more patients were relying on us to be able to continue with their contraceptive method of choice. This lesson learned has given us the opportunity to reflect on future service delivery decisions with an eye toward the unexpected.

## FUTURE PLANS

In light of 2021's success with vasectomies, we hope to build on this growing willingness on men's part to opt for a procedure that is easier in every aspect when compared to a more invasive tubal ligation. Increasing our number of vasectomies has long been our goal and we are excited to see how much we can grow this service.

As we are able to undertake more reliable plans within our current coverage area, we are now returning to our previously planned strategic expansion into the very rural Guatemalan departments (like US states) of Baja Verapaz, Izabal, and northern Quiché. We are preparing for this expansion with the purchase of our fourth mobile unit vehicle and have brought on new team members to cover these new regions. We are also increasing our staff capacity in the department of Guatemala, allowing us to reach more individuals in the communities most affected by urban poverty.

| Contraceptive Methods                 |                           | Projections 2022 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| VSC                                   | Tubal Ligations           | 1,480            |
|                                       | Vasectomies               | 760              |
|                                       | <b>VSC Total</b>          | <b>2,240</b>     |
| LARC                                  | IUDs                      | 1,924            |
|                                       | Hormonal Implants         | 6,859            |
|                                       | <b>LARC Total</b>         | <b>8,783</b>     |
| Short-Acting                          | Quarterly Injections      | 5,444            |
|                                       | Monthly Injections        | 1,789            |
|                                       | Contraceptive Pills       | 940              |
|                                       | Condoms                   | 64,559           |
|                                       | Emergency Contraception   | 450              |
|                                       | <b>Short-Acting Total</b> | <b>73,182</b>    |
| <b>Unintended Pregnancies Averted</b> |                           | <b>29,447</b>    |
| <b>Maternal Deaths Prevented</b>      |                           | <b>7</b>         |
| <b>Child Deaths Prevented</b>         |                           | <b>145</b>       |

# WINGS 2022

