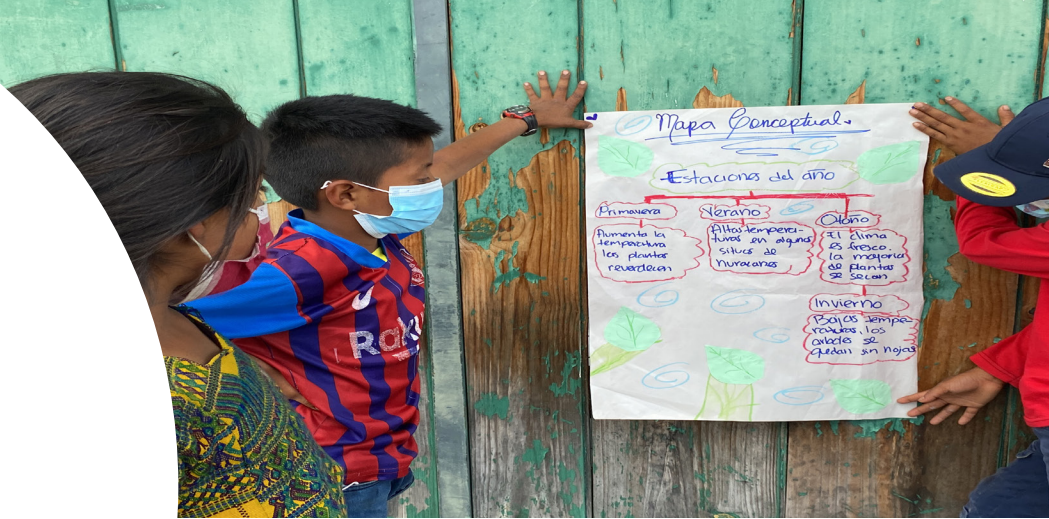




Fund for Innovation and Transformation

Fonds pour l'innovation et la transformation



CANADA STUDENTS OFFERING SUPPORT (SOS)

Lights, Camera, Action for Equality (LCAE)

Context

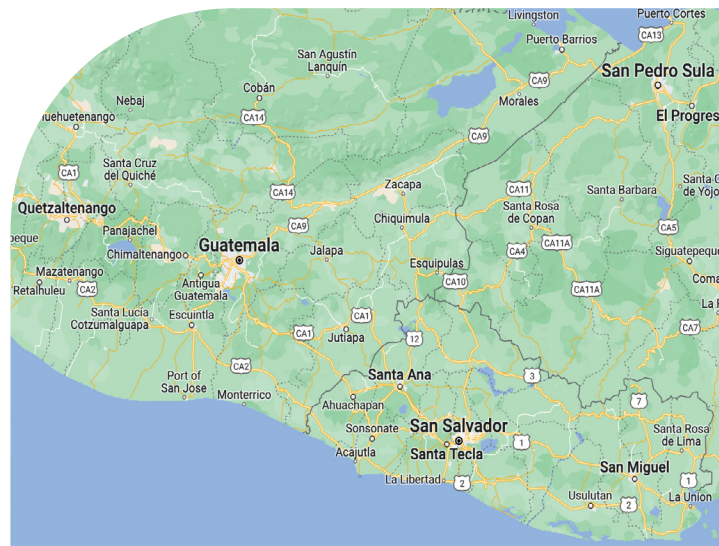
In Guatemala, the rural Indigenous communities of Alta Verapaz and Quiché experience some of the country's highest levels of poverty. Severely low levels of civic and political engagement of Mayans in these two communities, especially women, are evident across all categories of civic participation, including electoral turnout, political representation, and leadership in civic life. Political systems continue to ignore the need for measures that would promote gender and Indigenous representation in the elections and other political participation opportunities.

The Innovative Solution

Supported by FIT, Canada SOS: Students Offering Support (SOS) with local partner Semillas de Innovacion y Desarrollo Sostenible (SIDS) tested an innovative, transformative, and scalable approach to increase civic leadership and participation of Mayan communities in rural regions of Guatemala, with a focus on Indigenous girls and women. The proposed solution cultivated the leadership of young Mayan women to empower communities to produce and share digital stories such as podcasts, videos, and photo essays, that showcased locally identified, actionable insights related to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Advancing Gender Equality

The holistic Gender Equality Strategy addressed gender issues by promoting awareness, challenging stereotypes and fostering women's leadership and participation. Positive results included increased awareness, empowerment, and recognition of women's leadership, along with the promotion of equal opportunities for both genders within the communities. The innovation also contributed to increased support from men who are peers, and local authorities, successfully enabling women to increase their civic participation. Youth facilitators, together with Steering committees facilitated ongoing participants' feedback playing a key role in removing language and communication barriers, building leadership skills and empowering other women and girls to participate actively in a safe environment during the testing.



COUNTRY

Guatemala

AMOUNT

\$165,445

TESTING PERIOD

12 months

Ended May 2023



GENDER RESPONSIVE (GE2)

THEME: SOCIAL JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS

Testing Framework

The innovation test involved the Theory of Change approach, mapping the hypothesis and linkages between expected outcomes in a Logic Model, and using indicators and data collection plans to analyze results, learn and improve delivery in support of outcomes. Monitoring measures included conducting surveys after each workshop, as well as project coordinators, mentor facilitators, and the SOS coordinator making over 400 home visits.

Results and Impact

- 654 (490 F, 164M) people directly participated in the activities including workshops.
- Indigenous women's perception of a culture of gender equality in their communities increased from 73% at baseline to 97% by endline.
- 91% of women stated they are 'more likely' to take on leadership roles in their community as a result of their participation in the project.
- 4 communities implemented at least 1 strategy to advance gender equality in public participation.
- Participants created 96 formal digital artifacts over the testing period, where there were previously none. These featured essential topics related to Gender Equality, Civic Participation, Leadership, and Human Rights reaching over 8,069 people.

Key Lessons

1. Activities were designed and delivered with relevant local content and with consultation from local community stakeholders resulting in more engagement from participants and willingness to discuss sensitive issues such as discrimination and human rights violations against indigenous communities in Guatemala.
2. Having locally-based staff and using local language(s) was crucial to the success of the test as it addressed the language and communication barriers, empowered community members with knowledge and understanding, built trust and rapport, and built alliances with other organizations.
3. Engaging adolescent girls who excelled in the Guatemala Groundswell project (a previous FIT-funded innovation test) as workshop facilitators and role model was effective in promoting their leadership, building their confidence as agents of change.
4. Ensuring community participation involved building relationships, providing incentives, and tailoring activities. The program's efforts to work with community leaders, personalize the learning experience, and include diverse groups emphasized the importance of community involvement.

"The workshops have made us more aware of the importance of women's participation because they have the capacity to make decisions and have the necessary skills."

– Pedro Ramos Aviles, age 45

PARTNER ORGANIZATION

- Semilla de Innovación y Desarrollo Sostenible (SIDS)

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

654 (490 W, 164M)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ABOUT FIT

The Fund for Innovation and Transformation supports Canadian small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) testing innovative solutions that advance gender equality in the Global South.



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