

# Empowering Adolescent Girls

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**Our four-year, \$2 million initiative aims to strengthen grassroots organizations across Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua that meet the needs of adolescent girls and create opportunities for them to thrive.**

## THE NEED FOR LOCALIZED SOLUTIONS

Empowering Adolescent Girls responds to a scarcity of programming that meets the needs of adolescent girls as they confront numerous challenges in Central America, including gender-based violence, access to education, adolescent pregnancy, and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare and information. Though these challenges persist across the region, the risks and opportunities for girls are highly contextual, requiring place- and culture-specific programs that address the girls' unique needs.

In urban environments, girls' safety and freedom from gang exploitation are primary concerns, while in rural communities, secondary education is highly gendered, with girls frequently forced out of school and into informal work or domestic life as young mothers. The intersectionality of gender and ethnicity—particularly for diverse indigenous communities in rural Guatemala, and for Afro-descendent groups along the Caribbean coast—deepens girls' marginalization and further differentiates their needs. Huge gaps in attention to girls' health leaves them uninformed about their own bodies and ill-prepared for adulthood; Latin America holds the second highest adolescent pregnancy rate in the world, with 38% of women becoming pregnant before age 20.

Our initiative powers grassroots organizations that are tackling these challenges at their roots, using relevant, youth-centered programs to make transformational change in girls' lives.

## OUR APPROACH

To promote gender equality and advance girls' rights and opportunities, our approach **strengthens the local capacity of grassroots organizations** to act as vehicles for social change, while simultaneously **empowering girls as leaders** and agents of their own destinies.

After an extensive landscape analysis and mapping, as well as a rigorous vetting process, GFC is committed to supporting up to 20 grassroots organizations over four years. Our partners will carry out activities centered on advancing the rights and opportunities of girls within our four focus areas: education, youth empowerment, gender equity, and freedom from violence and exploitation.



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## THEORY OF CHANGE

**This initiative is grounded in our belief that effective and resilient grassroots organizations, linked with each other to foster shared learning and collective action, and informed by the experiences and voices of girls, are integral to drive transformative change in gender relations and to enhance the power of girls.**



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**With the aim of reaching 20,000 girls, GFC will power and deepen our partners' work through the following objectives and activities:**

- 01. Develop the organizational and technical capacity of grassroots organizations to effectively achieve their missions.** We will work closely with each partner to create tailored capacity development plans to address gaps and leverage strengths. We will provide face-to-face technical support, mentoring, and coaching, and opportunities for partners to convene with one another and with other technical organizations in the sector to exchange knowledge, resources, and experiences.
- 02. Support our partners to empower girls through enhanced and expanded programming.** By providing core, flexible funding, we encourage our partners to use our grants where they are needed most. Our partners are already leading interventions to address girls' needs and helping girls further advocate for their rights. We seek to enhance and expand upon their brilliant work. Examples of partner activities related to this initiative include:
  - Improving access, quality, and education outcomes
  - Increasing sexual and reproductive health awareness
  - Decreasing the impact of sexual- and gender-based violence
  - Building girls' capacity to advocate for their rights
- 03. Facilitate a supportive environment for girls to lead and engage in grassroots advocacy movements, pushing for social and political change that affirms their rights.** With an emphasis on adolescent girls' voice and leadership, we will provide advocacy training and mentoring as needed, with a small pool of mini grants for partners who propose specific advocacy actions and need small infusions of cash to make them possible.

## OUR PARTNERS

### **Guatemala**

- Asociación AMA
- Asociación Generando
- Coincidir
- GOJoven Guatemala
- Organización Sololteca por los Derechos de las Mujeres Jóvenes Indígenas
- Women's Justice Initiative

### **Honduras**

- Artemisa
- GOJoven Honduras
- Redes Juveniles de la MANORCHO
- Un Mundo
- Unidad de Desarrollo Integral de la Mujer y la Familia

*Additional partners in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras will be announced in Spring 2019.*

## GIRLS LEARN:

- **leadership and activism**
- **health and well-being, including sexual and reproductive rights**
- **gender equity and equal rights**
- **reading and storytelling**
- **entrepreneurship and job skills**

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