



Maya Educational Foundation

IMPACT REPORT 2025



Universidad
Rafael Landívar



Universidad Rafael Landívar
Guatemala

Por cuanto

Esteban Jerónimo Jimenez

llenó los requisitos académicos necesarios,

la Universidad Rafael Landívar

le otorga el título de

Médico y Cirujano

en el grado académico de Licenciado

y le expide el presente diploma que le acredita como miembro de la

Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud

y le autoriza para el ejercicio de la profesión correspondiente
con los honores y preeminencias debidas.

Dado en la Ciudad de Guatemala de la Asunción, a los veintidós
días del mes de octubre del año dos mil veinticinco.

Rectoría

Secretaría General

INTRODUCTION

AMY HOLLY

Executive Director



In 2025, so much shifted for MEF, yet we are so thankful for all of you who continued to be an anchor for the organization. New board members, new staff and new students filled us with excitement and hope and we asked questions about how far we have come and what might be possible as we move into the next chapter.

Reflecting on MEF's roots and the wise words of all of our stakeholders helped us achieve MEF's first ever 3-year Strategic Plan which will help keep our focus on priority areas such as our role in supporting **Maya culture and identity**, supporting the development of a **graduate network** and eventually **reaching more underserved Maya communities**.

This year, our annual report focuses on impact to help you understand the positive changes that we have made with your help. We are excited to be able to present you student demographics and statistics for the first time (on page 3) and of course, no MEF report would be complete without the powerful and inspiring words and photos from our graduates (page 6).

Thank you to all of our donors – some of you have been giving for decades, some just started and we also see those of you who have yet to carve out your place in the MEF story. We are excited to talk to you all in 2026.

With gratitude,



Above: MEF board and staff during our strategic planning week in November in Guatemala.

Left to Right: Hector Concohá, Sterling Crockett, Mitchell Denburg, Amy Holly, Jacquelyn Sincal, Diane Carazas, Guadalupe Sic and Norma Subuyuj

FINANCES – FY 2025

Figures are taken from MEF's 2025 financial year (July 2024-June 2025).

Detailed financials (MEF's annual form 990) can be found on the MEF website.

Grants and contributions received - \$673,998

Grants to partners and direct contributions made - \$595,415

Thank you to all of our donors for making this possible!

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025

24 BACHELOR'S DEGREE

BACHELOR'S DEGREE GRADUATES

14 girls • 10 boys

4 ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE

ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE GRADUATES

3 girls • 1 boys

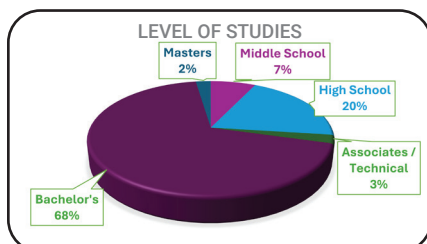
16 HIGH SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

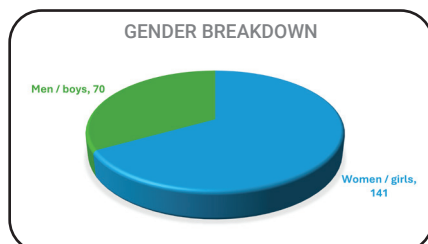
13 girls • 3 boys

THE WORK BEHIND THE NUMBERS

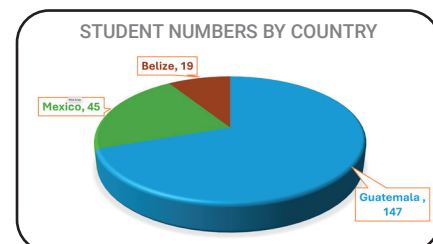
- Our board and staff got together in person to create MEF's first ever 3-year Strategic Plan, after a process of consultation with students, graduates, partners, board, staff and donors.
- MEF carried out site visits to seven of MEF's 12 partners.
- We created our first student and graduate database.
- MEF organized several events; our 12 partner organizations met on zoom; 43 students from the Maya Scholarship Program met in Antigua Guatemala for an intensive weekend; and 26 students, graduates and board members met in CIRMA for the 'World Café' activity, reflecting on challenges for Maya youth and potential solutions.



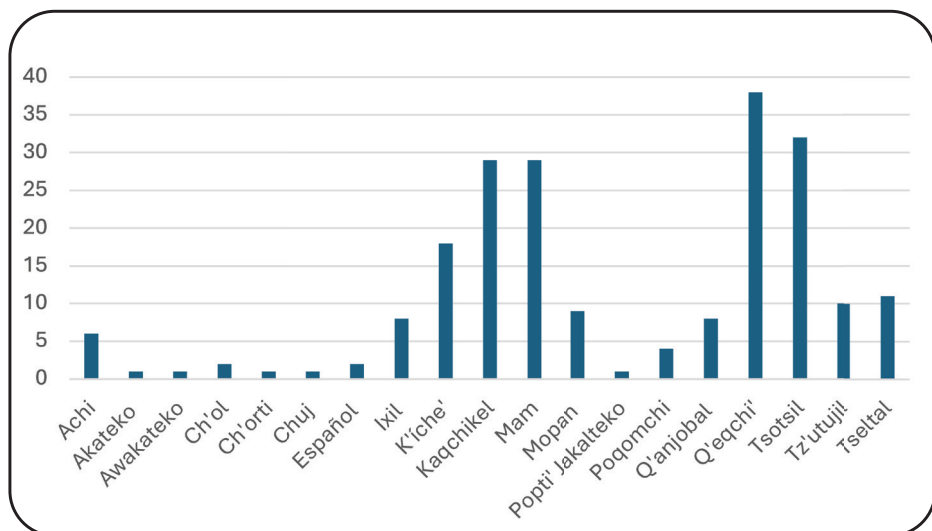
211 students were supported; the vast majority at Bachelor's degree level (144)



67% of our students were women / girls



211 students were supported our three countries of operation, with 70% of our students based in Guatemala, 21% in Mexico and 9% in Belize.



MEF's students were from 19 different linguistic communities.

BY COUNTRY

MEF supports Maya students across this entire region

BELIZE

Belize has a total population of less than half a million people, of which approximately 11% are Maya, living principally in the southern rural areas. Only 8.6% of indigenous women in Belize attain education beyond high school, and an alarming 45.9% of rural indigenous women have no formal education at all¹.

MEF has been working in Belize since 2006 and currently supports 44 students through partners:

- Julian Cho Society
- Tumul K'in

GUATEMALA

There are 22 Maya linguistic groups recognized within Guatemala², and nearly half of Guatemala's population of 18 million identifies as indigenous. Shockingly, less than 1% of Guatemala's indigenous girls reach university, a statistic that MEF has been working to change since 1992³. Whilst more Maya men graduate from university, access is still extremely low.

MEF has 9 partner programs in Guatemala, helping us to work within Maya communities spread across the country. MEF's Programa de Becas Mayas (Maya Scholarship Program) is managed directly by MEF and supports university scholars across the country. Students must meet our academic requirements, have a commitment to social change in their communities, and would otherwise not have the means to continue at university level.

In addition to challenges in accessing education, the Maya in Guatemala face higher levels of poverty, geographic isolation, and structural barriers that all act as barriers to their success.

MEF's partners in Guatemala are:

- Amigos de Santa Cruz
- CIRMA
- Grupo Cajolá
- DARE
- Esperanza Juvenil
- Mayan Hands
- Natik
- Maya Scholarship Program MEF with CIRMA
- Rafael Landivar University with CIRMA



¹ Source: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Indigenous Population Situation Analysis – Belize, January 2026.

² Source: Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala (ALMG), <https://almg.org.gt/>

³ Source: UNESCO, "Paving the way for women's education in indigenous communities of Guatemala," Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education project (2018–2023).

BY COUNTRY

MEXICO

MEF's work is currently focused in Chiapas, which according to the World Bank and INEGI has the highest rates of poverty in Mexico, with 75% of the population living in poverty and where average incomes are less than half the national level. 40% of the Chiapas population identifies as indigenous and there are twelve Maya languages spoken in this large Mexican state bordering Guatemala.

Concerns about the loss of Chiapas' indigenous languages are strong, and MEF supports one language preservation program as well as providing 45 educational scholarships. MEF currently works principally with Tzeltal, Tsotsil and Chuj populations through three partner organizations.



MEF's partners in Mexico are:

- Amigos de San Cristobal
- Chenalhó
- Sna Jtz'ibajom (House of the Writer)

STRATEGIC PLAN

In November 2025, we created a three-year strategic plan to serve as a roadmap for MEF's forthcoming work.

What does it contain?

Strategic Themes

- Preservation of Maya culture and identity
- Technology
- English
- Graduate Networks
- Geographic growth



Above: In preparation for strategic planning, Board members Diane and Hector listen to a focus group of MEF students and graduates discussing the greatest needs in education for Maya youth.

The involvement of stakeholder perspectives was an important factor in determining MEF's future path.

⁴ Source: INEGI, Census of Population and Housing 2020.

WORDS OF WISDOM

HEAR IT FROM THE STUDENTS

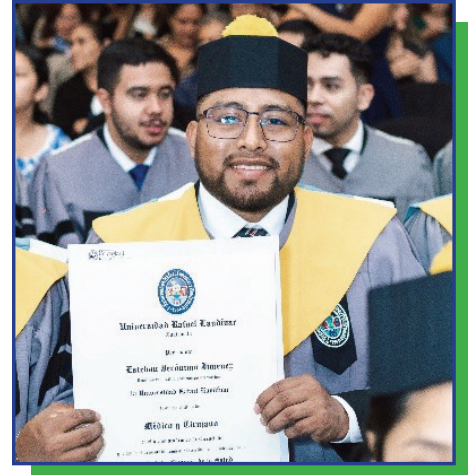


"For my community, having a healthcare professional with my roots is a huge blessing. They will have a doctor that understands their reality, speaks the same language and practices medicine with genuine empathy. I see this stage of my professional life as the starting point for me to be able to generate significant change."

Rosa Angelina Roquel Chalí, MEF Graduate. (Maya Scholarship Program with CIRMA) and Kaqchikel Family Doctor.

"Beyond the economic support, the scholarship from Maya Educational Foundation symbolized an opportunity for transformation. I learned the values of perseverance, social commitment and the importance of passing on some of my knowledge to the community. Today, as I finish this process, I feel profoundly dedicated to the ideals of service and solidarity that MEF promotes."

Esteban Jimenez, MEF Graduate (through the URL program) and Achi' Family Doctor.



"My goal is to serve my community by offering free legal advice to people in situations of vulnerability, especially women who are victims of violence and low-income families. I want to represent indigenous communities, to promote the respect of our culture, languages and dignity. I firmly believe that justice should be accessible to everyone and my greatest desire is to be able to contribute to a more just and equitable environment for future generations."

María Yesica Castro Pérez (pictured with her parents and siblings), Ixil law student and participant in MEF's Maya Scholarship Program.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Every single donation at MEF is received with gratitude. Whilst we are only able to name our biggest donors here, please know that every dollar and quetzal contributes to the academic and professional development of the students, and the critical preservation of Maya culture.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR FUNDERS IN 2025:

- The Plumsock Fund
- Daniele Agostino Derossi Foundation
- HT Ewald Foundation
- Virginia Stout (in memoriam)
- Civil Society Institute
- Anne Pyburn
- Christopher and Sally Lutz

AND THOSE WHO SERVED ON OUR BOARD IN 2025:

- Guadalupe Sic López
- Mitchell Denburg
- Ian Lutz
- Sterling Crockett
- Edward Fischer
- Pablo Chavajay
- Diane Carazas
- Hector Concohá
- Abner Cruz

2025 IN PHOTOS



MEF employees, Amy and Norma visited a remote Maya literacy class with children aged 6-12 in Chiapas, Mexico



Above Left: Tsotsil student Alfonso shares his passion for the preservation of Maya languages, and his experience translating a text by Augusto Monterroso from Spanish into Tsotsil as his graduate project. He is pictured holding a Tsotsil literacy book published by MEF's partner Sna Jtz'ibajom.



Learning and laughing. The Student Retreat in Antigua Guatemala in June 2025 gave the Maya Scholarship Program students the opportunity to build community, to discuss shared challenges, to hear inspiring words from graduate students and to work together on community projects.



Left: More graduates to celebrate. Q'eqchi' student Betty, celebrates graduating with a technical degree in nursing at Rafael Landivar University in October 2025.



Right: Our 43 student stars in the Maya Scholarship Program. Whether studying Engineering, Biology, Business Administration or Communications, this group inspired MEF to believe in the leadership potential of Guatemala's top Maya students.



Left: Students from MEF's new partner Tumul K'in in Belize represent their school at a national event.



Right: Student Alvaro at Tumul K'in plants a seedling in the agroforestry area of the school.



DID YOU KNOW THAT WE CHANGED ADDRESS?

All MEF mail should be directed to
1770 Massachusetts Ave #204, Cambridge MA 02140

CONTACT: Tel: (+1) 857 270 7940 or mef@mayaedufound.org

WAYS TO GIVE IN 2026

CHECK – made out to Maya Educational Foundation and sent to the address above

ACH TRANSFER – get in touch with amy@mayaedufound.org if you wish to donate this way

ZELLE – scan this QR code or find us via amy@mayaedufound.org

ONLINE – www.mayaedufound.org and click on DONATE NOW

