



GIVE GIRLS A CHANCE

Name: **Maria**
Age: **18 years**
Country: **Guatemala**
Goal: "My goal in the future is to study and learn lots of things so that I can be a good teacher in three years when I graduate from this school."
Hobbies: "I like to sing and cook different types of food."
Support: Approx. \$ 860.00 per year.

"I speak Spanish and my native Mayan language of K'iche. I can read and write in

*my native language. In my family there are five people including my father. I don't have a mother because she died of an illness when we were all really small. I have two brothers and one sister. My oldest brother is 21 years old and is studying in 9th grade. My sister who is 19 years old is also in 9th grade. My other brother who is 15 years old is studying in 8th grade. Thanks to our Lord, my brothers and sisters are all studying including myself. **For me, education is the most important thing in our lives.***

My house is made of wood with an aluminium roof. We cultivate and eat the food that we plant.

In my village, we plant many herbs, malanga (a type of squash), and yucca. The people also plant cardamom and coffee. There are about 200 families that live in my community which would mean about 1,600 people. In order to reach the next biggest town, it takes us one day of walking. There is no transportation.

It takes me two days to come to the boarding school for Mayan girls. I am studying to become a primary teacher. I like to sing and cook different types of food. I am in a group of young people in the Catholic Church in my community. There are no roads into my village so cars and buses do not come and we have to walk out. We also do not have electricity but the people are trying to get it. I think that having electricity is very important for studying.

***I think that education is especially important for women.** I want to thank you very much for the big help you are giving me to study here at the boarding school. May God give you many blessings in your work."*

Maria

Maria lives in a community of CPR (Communities of the Population in Resistance-Sierra). This group of people survived in the mountains for 14 years during the 36 year old civil war in Guatemala. The major violence would have been over by the time she was born. The very poor community where she lives was given as compensation from the government.