

#### **Josefa Ixpata Chen, 33**

Josefa was born and raised in La Laguna near the village of Chisacap in Alta Verapaz. She was seven years old when her village was burned and her family fled to the mountains in 1981. Her father was already in hiding in the mountains and she and her mother moved in with family in Río Negro before the massacres. "We relived everything that had happened before." When she fled from Río Negro, the family resettled to a house with other relatives in San Cristobal, Alta Verapaz who did not want them. They lived in a bamboo shack without food or water and were treated as though they were guerrilleros. In 1984, Josefa arrived in Pacux with her uncle. Her parents arrived separately in Pacux later that year.

Since 1984, Josefa has become increasingly active in her community. She began to weave when she was nearly twelve and has been making huipils and belts ever since. Her main contributions are related to health. "I am leading my community in the fight against disease." Josefa is currently a health promoter in Pacux and in charge of five health workers and one midwife. She receives training through a government program every two weeks and then gives capacity building workshops to her staff. As part of job, she is in charge of vaccination campaigns and conducts an annual census in Pacux. She also updates the community maps every few months to follow people as they are born, marry, migrate, move or die.

Josefa wove two textiles in memory of her great grandparents, and her husband's twenty-one year-old sister, Narcisa, and his six year-old sister, Juana, who were tortured and strangled in Pak'oxom and Los Encuentros, respectively.

