

Governance and institutional reform

Eradication of violence against women and human trafficking in the state of Tlaxcala, Mexico

Our campaign, through intensive collaboration with NGOs and community groups, raised public awareness about human trafficking and generated public pressures that culminated in its criminalization in the state of Tlaxcala.

Federico Luis Pohls, Director of Centro Fray Julián Garcés



EC Partner

Centro Fray Julián Garcés, Derechos Humanos y Desarrollo Local, A.C.

Facts and Figures

- EC contribution: € 69 536 (80% of total)
- Duration: 2008–2010
- 25 700 signatures in favour of the criminalization of human trafficking in the state of Tlaxcala
- 60 workers from Tlaxcala's municipal governments were trained for handling cases of violence against women
- 700 women attended workshops where they learnt how to prevent and denounce gender violence and human trafficking



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Context

The state of Tlaxcala in Mexico has in recent years faced serious problems of trafficking and sexual exploitation of women. Until recently human trafficking was not criminalized in this state. It also lacked policies for preventing this problem and helping the victims. The EU funded a local organisation, Centro Fray Julián Garcés, to respond to this situation by mobilising civil society.

Objectives

- Promotion of a culture that demands and protects women's rights, especially the right to a life free of violence.
- Adoption of appropriate laws and public policies for eradicating human trafficking in Tlaxcala.

Impact

- Introduction of the criminalization of human trafficking in the state of Tlaxcala, which took place in September 2008. This was possible thanks to the mobilization of the citizens organized by the Centro Fray Julián Garcés and many other NGOs and community organizations. Together they collected 25,700 signatures, organized two marches and hosted an international seminar on the subject.
- Through this project 60 Tlaxcala's public officials have been trained in dealing with situations of violence against women and in providing better services for them with gender-informed public policies.
- In several workshops many community organizations have learnt how to handle these problems and report them to the appropriate authorities.

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The story of Fidelia Juárez Zepeda, trainer in women's rights

"With other seven women I participate in the "Life and Hope for a Better World Human Rights Committee" in the municipality of San Juan Huactzinco. We have participated in many workshops with other organizations, where we learnt, among many other things, to understand our rights, to demand their protection to the appropriate authorities and how to denounce cases of violence against women.

Many women have asked for our help because they were attacked by their husbands. We tell them all the things we learn at the workshops: that they have rights, that they should not be living in that situation and that there are laws and institutions to protect them. We then tell them to what authorities they can report their situation.

In the workshops we participated we received a great amount of information material to distribute among the women we help. But they always want more. This shows that we are being successful. In one of the workshops we organized we even invited a man, who participated well and gave his opinion. He was very "machista", but that is good for us because it shows that we are reaching a larger audience than we expected at the beginning.

Working for the defence of women's rights has been an experience of personal growth for me. I now understand that women and men are equal and that we have the same rights. I feel very well because I can give help to those people of my community who need it, especially women".



Fidelia Juárez Zepeda