

Oaxaca Region

THE
HUNGER
PROJECT
México

*San José Tenango
Oaxaca - México*



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Meet María...

My name is María García García, I am 52 years old and I belong to the community of Rancho Pineda. I am mother, and I recognize myself as one of the women founders of the work with THP in 2010; since that year I have been community partner as well as catalyst. The process has not been easy; at first I was a really quiet woman, I didn't express what I felt or what I wanted for myself, my family and my community.; only men were the ones making agreements.

Don Benito Pineda made me an invitation to assist to one of the first meetings that THP was organizing there, they presented the VCA; it was an enormous change not only for me as woman, but also for my family and my community. We created our vision, and that has made me very happy because I have been part of the achievements we've had such as our community house (I am member of the housing committee). In this experience I thought that I was not going to be able to lead the construction process, but no! I was wrong! Thanks to the support of my fellow partners, we were able to finish it and now we have a new room that is the kitchen. Now I feel a committed woman!

I also attended and am one of the women from the first generation of graduates of the Municipal School for community-led development; this experience reinforced my knowledge.

I celebrate and thank THP for walking with me in the actions that bring us closer to our vision of ending hunger and poverty!



María showing her Diploma in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November, 2018.

1. Welcome to Mexico: our unequal reality

Mexico is located just south of the USA and also has borders with Guatemala and Belize. The official name of the country is "Mexican United States". It has an extensive dimension, covering 1,959,248 km², which corresponds to 32 states.

We are pretty sure you've heard this, and you know some of the information in this booklet before. Some of it is going to be new for you. We are making you an invitation: we'll give you some facts because that's always a good start. But our main goal is that you understand the base, the origin of some of our biggest strengths, but also, our biggest challenge as a society and as a country.

According to the National Institute of Geography and Statistics (INEGI in Spanish), in 2015 Mexican population was of 119,938,473 persons in the country; about 62 million are women outnumbering 57 million men.

We'll go further on this, but according to the World Bank, Mexico's economy is number 15 in the world; according to the United Nations Development Program, our Human Development Index is 0.744 and we're in number 72 in HDI rank. If we look further, some regions have an HDI similar to Norway, and some others are similar to Madagascar or Benin.

Cultural and socially speaking, Mexican population is mostly a conservative country 82.7% of the population is Catholic, with 47% of them attending church services weekly. Mexico is the largest Spanish speaking country in the world with approximately 92% Mexicans speaking it as their first language. Nevertheless, from the total population, 11.5 million people are indigenous with 69 indigenous languages recognized as "national languages".

This diversity is a great heritage, but also, is based on inequalities, since indigenous population suffers from discrimination, poverty, and hunger. There are also differences between the rural and urban population, men and women, young and adult persons. We are a society full of contradictions, but also full of hope and convinced that we have the power to transform these conditions for our country. **That's the spirit we want to share with you!!!**

1.1. A general view of our historical context

Mexico in 2019 is dealing with a particular context, which explains part of the approach THP-Mexico is using to transform realities. There are structures we need to visualize, to create a breakthrough and transform them, to achieve our vision as an organization.

We want to show you how is our social, political and economic conditions, as a brief description you will see during our days together.

1.1.1. Social conditions

In this section we will talk specifically about 3 main subjects: inequality and its immediate relation with poverty/extreme poverty as well as with the multiethnicity of the country; violence and violence against women.

According to the Development Policy National Evaluation Council (CONEVAL) in its *Social Development Policy Evaluation 2018*, between 2008 and 2016, there is an increase in poverty by 3.9 million people, however at the same time, 2.9 million people stopped being in extreme poverty (taking into consideration the multidimensional poverty measurement which includes, not only income but also the lack of social rights). We have a particular situation, where we can see a reduction in the access to social rights but at the same time, it remains a lack of access to social security and food while the income of households remains aimless. We'll go back to this numbers in a moment.

Inequality is one of the main issues in the country and the region. According to Oxfam's 2015 report *Extreme inequality in Mexico*, is among the 25% of the countries with the highest levels of inequality in the world. The contrast is so evident that the richest man in Latin America lives in the same country in which nearly 50 million people live in poverty situation. Wealth is concentrated in very few hands, while the minimum salary is insufficient to cover the most basic needs for the majority of the country.

The 11.5 million indigenous people are living in the most critical conditions: with less income, education, access to social security, housing, and food security. In addition, their land rights and their self-determination are systematically violated. According to CONEVAL, 71.9% of the indigenous population (8.3 million people), were living in poverty by 2016. Additionally, 3.2 million (28.0%) had three or more social deprivations and did not have the economic capacity

to acquire the basic food basket, which placed them in a situation of extreme poverty.¹ Of course, these are not just numbers. They are people: women, men, and child who cannot achieve their rights, dignity and even happiness.

The acknowledgment of Mexico's multi-ethnicity needs to go beyond signing international agreements, and creating "beautiful and perfect" laws. It must be expressed in the respect and harmonious coexistence of different cultures, in which diverse cosmogonies (symbolic universes) and knowledge are recognized.

Another important characteristic of this context is the State's failure to guarantee citizens' security and protection. Mexico is among the eight most violent countries in Latin America, where one of every four murders worldwide is committed (Amnesty International, 2016: 28). The outlook of the country, attached to the past two administrations, is full of extrajudicial executions, torture and poor treatment, forced disappearances, among others.

Moreover, there is an important gender component in naturalized violence. According to the National Citizen Observatory of Femicide, between 2014 and 2017, at least 8,904 women were killed in Mexico. In the first half of 2018 at least 402 were killed simply because they were women.² As in many other countries, gender exclusion is internalized. Women are considered inferior; their biological characteristics are turned into social discrimination. Women are the object of power relations, and in many cases, they turn fatally violent. As it is socially practiced, gender discrimination is internalized and is perceived as natural in our mental structures. As reported in "Femicide Violence", violent practices and women control is exercised to demonstrate manhood and impose men's desires (INMUJERES, 2012: 11).

Many activists and human rights defenders have been fighting against the growing frequency and intensity of violence against women. They have achieved to position it on the public agenda. As a result, there is a National System to Prevent, Sanction and Eradicate Violence against Women that has turned on the "gender alert" in some states and municipalities. The gender alert is supposed to ignite State's protocols to secure women's protection and in Mexico, starting 2019, the National Citizen Observatory of Femicide announced that 18 States have formally declared the Gender Violence Alert against Women; this is 56% of Mexican territory.³

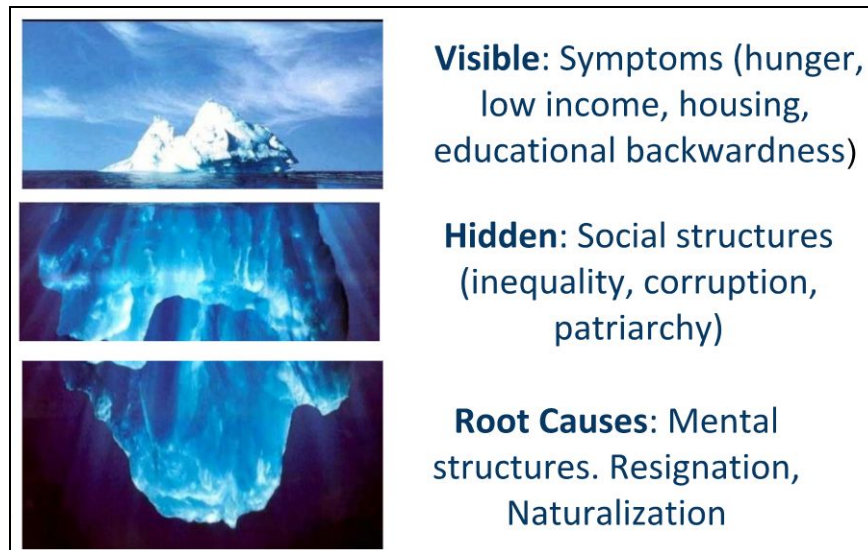
¹ CONEVAL, *Población indígena con carencias en todos sus derechos sociales*. Available in: <https://www.coneval.org.mx/SalaPrensa/Comunicadosprensa/Documents/Comunicado-Dia-Pueblos-Indigenas.pdf> [February 15th, 2019].

² ONU Noticias, *En Mexico, las mujeres no se sienten seguras*. Available in: <http://www.onunoticias.mx/Mexico-mujeres-feminicidio/>, [February 15th, 2019].

³ Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional del Femicidio, *Exige OCNF una #CONAVIMQueSirva*. Available in: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/ba8440_cf5a93a7625245329ba43c19e9044259.pdf, [February 15th, 2019].

Particularly in this section, we want to show you our iceberg, which is base for the construction of our particular approach.

Illustration 1. The iceberg of hunger and poverty



Source: THP-Mexico, 2019.

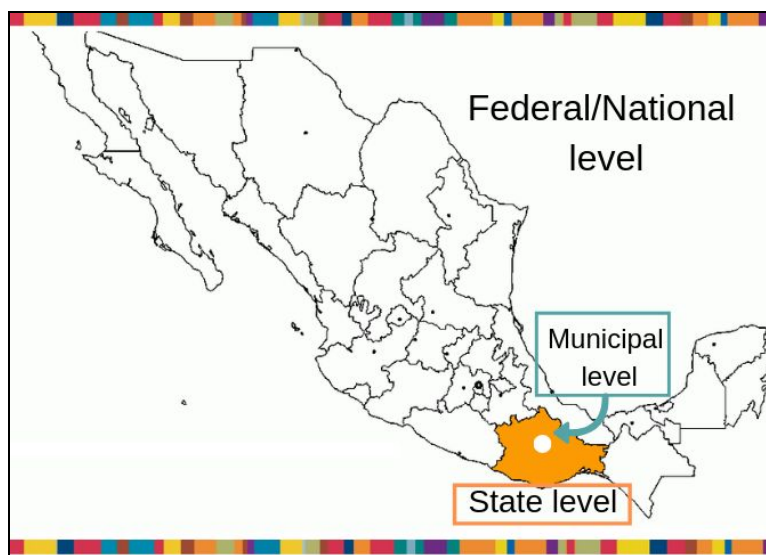
The most visible problematics are the symptoms, not the root cause of power relations which define social structures. That's why don't focus on the tip of the iceberg, but go deeper, to the root causes, as you will see below.

1.1.2. Political Context

This section is aimed to describe, on one hand, the main characteristics of the political system and its relation with the focus on which public policies are created. On the other hand, we will talk about the main events that dictated the course of the administration of former President Enrique Peña Nieto and how those facts gave way to the first leftist government in Mexico.

Mexico has a complex political system. Our system is a Federal Republic, and we have three powers: executive, legislative and judiciary. This structure is repeated in the three administrative levels: federal, state and municipal. You can see it in the next illustration.

Illustration 2. Administrative system in Mexico



Source: THP-Mexico, 2019.

This way of administrating Mexican political system is on the root causes of disparities in the country. We have three different levels, not always working in a coordinated way or for common objectives, due to a different political views and rivalries. They have also different timing in power: National President is on duty for six years, just as the governors in states, without a reelection possibility. Municipal authorities stay in charge for three years, having no long term vision planning and action, being this issue the biggest challenge for ending hunger. After a recent reform, for the first time ever, it was approved that municipal presidents can be reelected for one more term.

Corruption, political patronage, inefficiency and economic elite control over government, are embedded in the system. Despite Mexico has solid institutions, there is an overwhelming level of corruption and impunity at the local, state and national level, and among the three government orders. Corruption of top-level politicians has been publicly exposed without so far any punishment. And Transparency International puts Mexico in place 138 of 180... and we've been falling in recent years.⁴ And talking about the public budget, policies tend to favor the economic and political elites, in detriment of the rest of the society.

One of the biggest challenges in Mexican politics is the embedded clientelism. A big proportion of development programs are focused on delivering subsidies, services and conditional cash transfers. These transferences are used by the government and the political parties to "buy" votes (to ensure clients) for the next elections. This has been a major obstacle for the exercise of citizen rights and for real democracy in every level. Moreover, clientelism has more intensive

⁴ Transparency International, *México*. Available in: <https://www.transparency.org/country/MEX> [January 30th, 2019]

effects at a local level, since it exacerbates the political rivalries between citizens. The political parties take advantage of these rivalries to advance their own interests. *Clientelistic* structures have been formed, hindering real participation and fostering dependency, mostly among excluded social groups and women in particular.

If we talk about development policies, these tend to have a sectoral focus (housing, water, food). There are no integral policies taking into account the administrative structure, and also, solving the complexity of public issues like poverty, malnutrition, and inequality.

Right now, we just finished a period led by Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-2018), and it was characterized by the corruption, censorship, repression, murders as well as for the human rights violations. Here are some relevant facts:

1. According to data from the INEGI, 2018 was the most violent year at least since 1990.⁵ Among the most emblematic cases, are the extrajudicial executions in Tlatlaya, the disappearance, and killing of 43 students from Ayotzinapa, both cases in Guerrero, and also, the murder of a large number of journalists.
2. The administration was surrounded by corruption scandals involving directly the President and some of his closest collaborators, including his wife. As a result, Mexico ranks in place 138 of 180 countries, according to Transparency International.
3. An espionage system for mobiles (Pegasus) was used to monitor journalists, activists, politicians, investigators and lawyers, all of them critical of the Government.
4. There was an increase in the price of gasoline of 77%.⁶
5. Failure of the Crusade against Hunger (CNCH): “a social, comprehensive and participatory policy strategy. It seeks a structural and permanent solution to a serious problem that exists in Mexico: hunger.”⁷

In the opinion of the Superior Audit of the Federation, in 2015, the persistence of deficiencies in the design of the CNCH; in the implementation of the National System for the CNCH; in the coordination of the programs included in the strategy, and in its follow-up and evaluation, they limited guaranteeing access to food and other social rights to the population that was found in extreme food poverty, as well as the eradication of these condition (ASF, 2015).

⁵ El Universal, 2018: *el año más violento, reporta el Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública*. Available in: <https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/seguridad/inegi-homicidios-en-Mexico-registran-record-en-2017>. [February 15th, 2019].

⁶ El Financiero, *El litro de gasolina subió más de 8 pesos en el gobierno de Peña Nieto*. Available in: <http://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/economia/el-litro-de-gasolina-subio-8-4-pesos-en-gobierno-de-pena-nieto-shcp>. [February 15th, 2019].

⁷ National System for the Integral Development of the Family, 2013 available in <https://www.gob.mx/difnacional/documentos/cruzada-nacional-contra-el-hambre-54138>

These facts from the Peña Nieto's administration increased the tiredness of citizenship. As shown by surveys at the end of his period: 78% of the population perceived that the president delivered a worse country than he received.⁸ These events gave way to the arrival of the first left-wing government in Mexico as an opportunity to "rescue the country" bringing as a proposal the **2018-2024 Nation Project** based on a *"new vision of the country that presents projects and proposals in economic, political, social and educational that aim to generate public policies that break the inertia of low economic growth, increase in social inequality and economic and welfare loss for Mexican families, trends that have marked Mexico in the last 35 years, and undertake a change of course"* (Morena, 2018: 3).

For many people, this new government represents a great opportunity for the country; for other sectors is a threat, especially for elites. For THP-Mexico's mission is an opportunity, since there are coincidences on approaches and interest in social justice, poverty and inequality. At the same time, there's an uncertain environment for some NGOs, particularly to the ones with a foreign origin or with leadership coming from the elites, because of manifestations of distrust to our activities, expressed by the current President, creating a polarized environment. Nonetheless, we will continue partnering with NGOs to guarantee that there is an equal participation in influencing public policy design and making.

1.1.3. Economic conditions

Last but not least, within the economic considerations we want to emphasize the national and international elements that leave us an actual defying situation that needs to be considered by the actual government and that will be part of the definition of the course of the country for the next 6 years.

Even though Mexico is the world's 15th economic power, data shows the progress of our economy towards an increasingly black picture. Citizens daily face higher inflation, fluctuating currency and low economic growth, which is expressed, among other things by an increase to the price of basic food basket products, unemployment, a minimum wage that is not sufficient to meet the needs of a family. These are negative spillover effects of structural reforms that promised historically, and particularly during the past administration to generate profits for our country. The scenario envisaged by the past administration projected annual growth of 6%, but the average annual rate was of 2.5%. Despite having been superior to the previous two

⁸ Parametría, *La administración peñista*. Available in: http://www.parametria.com.mx/carta_parametrica.php?cp=5061. [February 15th, 2019].

governments, it was lower than the expectation generated with the approval of the economic reforms.

Among the list of elements, both internal and external, affecting the country's economic course we want to highlight:

1. Devaluation of Mexican peso: During the past 6 years, Mexican currency depreciated 58%, based on data published by the Bank of Mexico. One of the most apparent reasons had to do with United States elections and the political consequences including building the wall along the US-Mexico border, and the negotiations regarding NAFTA.
2. According to data from *¿Cómo Vamos, Mexico?* (a collective of researchers integrated by a plural group of academics and experts in Mexican public policy and economics), in the last 5 year, the federal public debt has grown at an average annual rate of 13.7%, which is higher than the average GDP growth of 7.5% annual.⁹
3. According to ECLAC, between 2012 and 2017, Mexican exports grew 10.2%, from 371 billion to 409 billion dollars in that period, but imports grew more: 13.2%. In the same period, it went from a trade surplus of 291 million dollars to a deficit of 10 thousand 990 million.¹⁰
4. The structural reforms presented by EPN, particularly the energy and education reform, didn't have the impact they were supposed to, largely because of the corruption scandals related to government officials as well as the whole wave of violence and human rights violations which had as a direct consequence the loss of external investment.

In the end, Mexico's big problem is not about being a *poor* country, but a very unequal one. Although there is a rhetoric that the country is growing, the truth is that the majority of the population is still facing daily multiple social challenges.

Based on our approach, we also need to consider that this economic situation is a trigger for migration from rural areas to the big cities. Global tendencies show that most of the population will live in an urban area in 2050. So, as a NGO, we have to face some quite challenges for the years to come, particularly because we will keep our bet on fostering development in rural areas.

⁹ Mexico, *¿Cómo vamos?. Semáforo económico*. Available in: <http://Mexicocomovamos.mx/coincide-inegi-con-recomendaciones-del-observatorio-economico-Mexico-como-vamos-para-reportar-el-crecimiento-economico?s=contenido&id=1167>. [February 15th, 2019].

¹⁰ Croda, Rafael. "Peña Nieto no alcanzó ni la mitad del crecimiento que prometió", *Revista Proceso*. Available in: <https://www.proceso.com.mx/549413/pena-nieto-no-alcanzo-ni-la-mitad-del-crecimiento-que-prometio>. [February 15th, 2019].

Illustration 3. THP-Mexico's challenges.



Source: The Hunger Project México, 2019

In the middle of an insecurity crisis due to organized crime, a rise of violence particularly in rural areas, the displacement of indigenous and non-indigenous communities, give us the opportunity (and the challenge) to guarantee the respect of their culture and territory: the right to not migrate, through community-led development. We also face an uncertain economic panorama, with a growing national debt. Last but not least, the degradation of our ecosystem and the lack of sustainability vision is also a big issue for THP-Mexico. Of course, these are just opportunity areas for improving our work.

1.2. How we measure poverty

This part contains a little bit more technical information. In Mexico, due to all this poverty and unequal context, government, academics, CSOs, and people interested in this problematics, had worked in the development of a methodology for measuring poverty. Of course, you don't need to be an expert on this particular subject. But it's important you understand why Mexico created this methodology, and why it's not just about income, but social rights and shortages... and of course, what's the tricky part.

1.2.1. The evolution of the Mexican poverty measure

It's hard to believe. But for many decades there was no official measure of poverty in Mexico. Between 2001 and 2002, the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL in Spanish) produced the first official measurement of poverty at the national level based exclusively on income and using three levels: food, capabilities, and heritage. This measure was insufficient because only used revenue; so, the Mexican Congress proposed a different and more transparent way of measuring poverty. In 2004 all political parties approved the General Law of Social Development (LGDS), which created an independent body responsible for measuring poverty at the national, state and municipal level. That's the origin of CONEVAL.

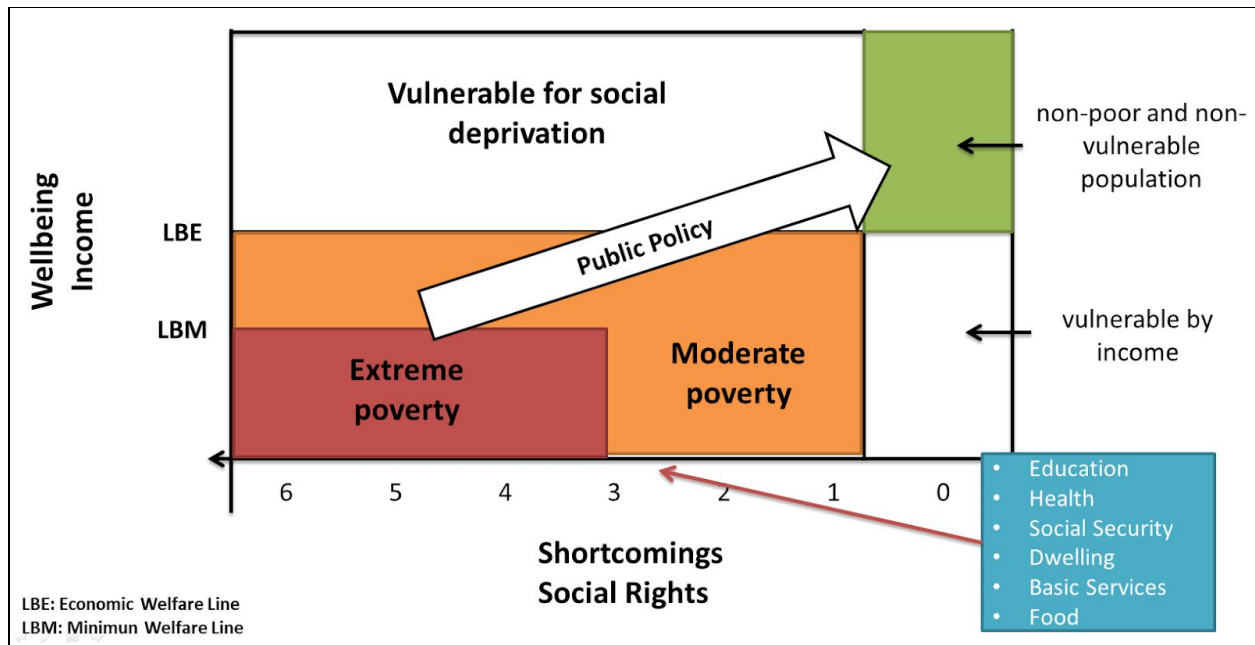
CONEVAL was established in 2006; three years later they presented a poverty measure. The development of this methodology involved extensive consultation with national and international experts, as well as decision-making bodies such as Congress and the executive branch entities. This methodology has a rights-based approach, that is, as opposed to using only the income; take into account that people have universal access to social rights.

The LGDS noted that poverty should be measured using 8 dimensions besides income: lack of education, access to health, access to social security, quality and living spaces, access to basic services in housing, access to food, the degree of social cohesion and the degree of accessibility to a paved road. This measurement was made with a multidimensional approach, different from the previous one, and is comparable 2008 onwards. Now, many countries seek to measure poverty in this way, and it was one of the main proposals made by the Mexican delegation during negotiations in the Post-2015 process and it's included in SGD and 2030 Agenda.

The multidimensional methodology incorporates three aspects of life conditions: socioeconomic wellbeing, social rights, and territorial context (See illustration below) According to this methodology, someone is considered in poverty when its income is located under the well-being line and presents insufficiencies in at least one of the following indicators:

- Average education gaps
- Access to health services
- Access to social security
- Household size and overall housing quality
- Access to basic household services
- Access to nutrition
- Current per capita income
- Social cohesion

Illustration 4. Multidimensional Poverty.



Source: CONEVAL

Besides this method for measuring poverty, CONEVAL also builds the social gap index, as well as the marginality index, by CONAPO. Although these measurements are indicative of poverty and backwardness, there are important differences between them in terms of classification, data source, and variables.

The main difference among them is that the poverty indicators of CONEVAL are based on the biannual income and expenditure survey, while the index of social gap and marginality are based on information from the quinquennial census. Another difference is that the multidimensional poverty is presented in terms of the percentage of people living in poverty or extreme poverty; the other two are presented as indexes to rank at a municipal level.

In recent years, CONEVAL started a series of diagnosis for understanding the degree of progress in guaranteeing the right to nutritious and quality food in Mexico. As well as that of contributing elements that contributes to the design of public policies with a rights approach. We considered this is a good sign for acknowledging that lack of food is a relevant dimension for measuring poverty, as an independent variable.

You can see a definition of the main indexes used in determining poverty, deprivation, hunger, inequality, in the following table.

Table. 1. Main indexes about poverty, hunger, and inequality in Mexico

Index	Definition
Multidimensional poverty	Population in multidimensional poverty situation suffers from insufficient economic resources and, at the same time, is vulnerable to the exercise of their fundamental rights due to lack of access to food, health, education, social security or decent housing. (CONEVAL)
Multidimensional poverty index	Considers income and six dimensions in the approach to social rights (Income, educational backwardness, and access to health services, access to social security, access to food, quality, and housing spaces, access to basic services in housing, the degree of social cohesion). (CONEVAL)
Marginality Index	A statistical parameter, which contributes to the identification of sectors of the country that lack of opportunities for their development and the ability to find or generate them. (CONAPO)
Social backwardness	A weighted measure that summarizes four indicators of social deprivation (education, health, basic services and spaces in housing) in a single index that has the purpose of ordering the observation units according to their social needs. (CONEVAL: 2015)
Inequality	The state of not being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities (UN, 2015)
Human Right to Adequate Food	"The right to adequate food is exercised when every man, woman or child [or girl], whether alone or in common with others, has access physical and economic, at all times, to adequate food or means to obtain it. " (General Comment 12 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)

Source: The Hunger Project México, 2019

1.2.2. Measuring multidimensional poverty

People are considered to be in extreme poverty when they face three or more social deficiencies each and their full income is located under the wellbeing parameter line.

Using the same parameters, one person is vulnerable by its social deficiencies if they have at least one insufficiency, even though their income it's located over the wellbeing parameter line. Moreover, a person is considered vulnerable by its income if he or she doesn't have social insufficiencies but their income it's located under the wellbeing parameter line. This methodology allows the study of poverty in deep due to the fact that it's not only measuring income but analyzes social insufficiencies from a social point of view, thus being able to timely monitor insufficiencies and socioeconomic wellbeing of its population.

Table 2. Evolution of poverty, Mexico 2008-2016

Poverty Measurement, Mexico

Percentage, number of individuals and average deprivations by poverty indicator

Indicators	Percentage					Millions of individuals					Average Deprivations				
	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
Poverty															
Population living in poverty	44.4	46.1	45.5	46.2	43.6	49.5	52.8	53.3	55.3	53.4	2.8	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.2
Population living in moderate poverty	33.3	34.8	35.7	36.6	35.9	37.2	39.8	41.8	43.9	44.0	2.4	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.9
Population living in extreme poverty	11.0	11.3	9.8	9.5	7.6	12.3	13.0	11.5	11.4	9.4	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.5
Population vulnerable due to social deprivations	32.3	28.1	28.6	26.3	26.8	36.0	32.1	33.5	31.5	32.9	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.7
Population vulnerable due to income	4.7	5.9	6.2	7.1	7.0	5.2	6.7	7.2	8.5	8.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Population not living in poverty and not vulnerable	18.7	19.9	19.8	20.5	22.6	20.9	22.8	23.2	24.6	27.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Deprivation															
Population with at least one social deprivation	76.6	74.2	74.1	72.4	70.4	85.5	85.0	86.9	86.8	86.3	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.0
Population with at least three social deprivations	31.7	28.2	23.9	22.1	18.7	35.4	32.4	28.1	26.5	23.0	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.4
Social Deprivation Indicators															
Educational gap	21.9	20.7	19.2	18.7	17.4	24.5	23.7	22.6	22.4	21.3	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.6
Lack of access to health services	38.4	29.2	21.5	18.2	15.5	42.8	33.5	25.3	21.8	19.1	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.7
Lack of access to social security	65.0	60.7	61.2	58.5	55.8	72.5	69.6	71.8	70.1	68.4	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.2
Lack of housing quality and space	17.7	15.2	13.6	12.3	12.0	19.7	17.4	15.9	14.8	14.8	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.1
Lack of access to basic housing services	22.9	22.9	21.2	21.2	19.3	25.5	26.3	24.9	25.4	23.7	3.6	3.3	3.2	3.1	2.9
Lack of access to food	21.7	24.8	23.3	23.4	20.1	24.3	28.4	27.4	28.0	24.6	3.3	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.6
Wellbeing															
Population whose income is less than the minimum wellbeing line	16.8	19.4	20.0	20.6	17.5	18.7	22.2	23.5	24.6	21.4	3.1	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.4
Population whose income is less than the wellbeing line	49.0	52.0	51.6	53.2	50.6	54.7	59.6	60.6	63.8	62.0	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.0	1.9

Source: Estimates by CONEVAL based on the MCS-ENIGH

According to CONEVAL, between 2008 and 2017, there is an increase in poverty by 3.9 million people, however, at the same time, 2.9 million people stopped being in extreme poverty. This shows that public policy in Mexico is reducing some shortcomings in social rights, but these efforts are not enough for changing situations in a sustainable way. So, we have a very unequal society, as you can see in the next illustration.

Illustration 5. Poverty and inequality in Mexico



Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2018.

There's also another thing to take into account. This multidimensional poverty is based on deficiencies. **Not rights.** So, there are cases where a community can access a specific government program for getting toilets, or maybe for improving dirt floors, or health services once a week. Statistically, they stop having one deprivation... but they still don't live outside a poverty situation; they are not fulfilling their human rights. So, there's no transformation at all, but those communities stop being considered as in poverty. That's the tricky part of this methodology, and that's why our duty is to show that not everything is about numbers, and that measuring poverty in a better way needs to be the first step to eradicate it. And that's one of our main goals.

2. Why The Hunger Project is making a difference in Mexico



From the very beginning, The Hunger Project has been a disruptive force, addressing our duty against hunger. The organization was founded in Mexico in 1983 and we have passed through different stages in our work. We show you our experiences in a timeline, but we also want to go deeper in some particular chapter.

From 1983 to 1997, the main activities were based

on awareness campaigns and local fundraising, where we ran campaigns to spread the recognition of hunger and poverty as a reality in Mexico and the world. We raised the voice towards the end of hunger and poverty as a possibility for our generation. We reached more than 60,000 people who committed to the end of hunger.

From 1998 to 2014 we focused our activities on training around 2,500 catalysts in 13 states to lead the end of hunger in their communities. So, our main focus was on grassroots leadership for self-reliant action.



From the period of 2000 to 2003 we facilitated 758 Vision Commitment and Action Workshops in 8 states (Querétaro, Zacatecas, Estado de Mexico, Coahuila, Guerrero, Michoacán, Durango, and Oaxaca), unleashing the leadership of thousands of catalysts who head self-reliant changes in their communities including: backyard gardens, infrastructure for their

municipalities, health workshops, reforestation, productive projects and literacy workshops.

During this period we also promoted the creation of Integral Expansion Centers in Zacatecas, Coahuila, Oaxaca, Michoacán, and Estado de Mexico.

In 2002 we trained in our methodology partners from Bolivia and we reinforced our presence in national forums to influence the change in the paradigm of



social development in Mexico, traditionally based on paternalism and cash transfer programs. In the same year, we celebrated our global 25th anniversary.

Since 2005 we lived an important change towards the professionalization of our organization in Mexico. We emphasized our job in a strong decentralized gender focus strategy first in 6 states to mobilize people and meet the MDGs and now in 4 states.

We designed our community mobilization program and focus our efforts in geographic areas with low-development indexes and since 2008 specifically in rural regions with indigenous population because they live in the most vulnerable conditions country-wise.

Since 2012, The Hunger Project Mexico started defining a new and more accurate approach to face hunger and poverty. Particularly, besides our Programs activities, we started doing Advocacy activities, for building a favorable environment for our model. You can see the evolution of our job, in the next Table.

Table. 3. THP-Mexico from 2013-2018

Year	Programs	Alliances and advocacy
2013	Visions and catalysts participation is strengthened. A participative process was generated for understanding the project cycle. Self-managed conversations with Investors (HSBC)	Participation in C20. Creating advocacy alliances (CAIDMEX and Family Farming Network). Close relation with the entering government (proposals for the National Development Plan and Participating in the National Council for the National Crusade Against Hunger).
2014	Focused on strengthening women's participation, reflections about what being a rural woman means. Implementation of vision-based projects. Technical allies were an important element in these years. A reflection on human rights started. Promoters were trained in different eco-technologies regarding rain-water harvesting systems, ecological bathrooms, ecological stoves. Encounters with local governments were held.	Commemoration of the International Year of Family Farming. THP-Mexico engaged in an independent evaluation of the government strategy and presented it to the Monitoring and Evaluation Intersecretarial Group. Publication of the analysis "One Year of the National Crusade Against Hunger". Participating in the Creation Of Action 2015 campaign in Mexico.
2015		Building the agenda "Rural women and climate change" to reflect and advocate for the important role of rural and indigenous in fighting against and mitigating the effects of climate change. Positioning the paradigm of community-led development and citizen participation in the construction of the 2030 Agenda. Highlighting the importance of family farming.

2016		Participation in the 4th Women Deliver Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. Most of the work was focused (both national and internationally) the follow-up of the SDG agenda in high-level dialogues highlighting the importance of the role of civil society in the subject.
2017	Strengthening knowledge such as gender, climate change, citizen participation, political rights. The Municipal School for community-led development was an opportunity to seek for regional allies that could spread CLD vision. First steps for the design of a local advocacy strategy were held.	Participation in Latin American multilateral events. Placing community-led development, climate change, and gender as core focus areas in several of the networks in which we work. The launch of the Movement for CLD and the manifesto of community-led reconstruction after the earthquakes of September.
2018		Reconstruction. Fair and Sustainable Food System. CSW 2018, Shadow Report on Mexico's progress of Social, Economic and Cultural Rights. Third Civil Summit. Presenting CLD in ECLAC.

Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019.

This is a very general account of our story and our learnings. And as you know, all of this work and experiences are based on (and also nourished) from our **principles**. They reflect what we need to consider when working towards the end of hunger; they lead each of our actions not only as part of The Hunger Project but as individuals committed to creating new relationship dynamics with other people based on dignity, rights, respect, and possibility. For further information, see Annex 1 about THP Principles and our Leadership role.

Illustration 6- The Hunger Project's principles



Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

We are sure that you recognize this information because we're aligned with the global strategy. But as expected, we have to adapt it to the national context and experience. So, we'll show you a bit more of our strategy and our approach.

Our strategy

In order for each woman and men to have a fulfilling life of self-reliance and dignity, regardless their age or origin, The Hunger Project has created and implemented an innovative development methodology that transforms the structural roots that give persistence to hunger and poverty. This methodology places dignity and leadership of human beings at the center. Therefore, it is the rural women and men living in conditions of poverty, who are the main authors and actors for the development of their communities.

For this, in Mexico we promote gender-focused community-led development for unleashing the leadership of rural women, men, and youth and strengthen their knowledge and skills; that is why we must promote the transformation of mindsets of resignation and dependence to mindsets of possibility and self-reliance. At the individual and collective level, we accompany the process of empowerment of people and their communities so that they become the drivers of their own development and shift the conditions and power dynamics that deny them the opportunities and resources.

Our strategies for the sustainable end of hunger and poverty are based on three key elements:

- **Mobilizing entire communities into self-reliant action:** through Vision, Commitment, Action methodology, we ensure that people create their own vision of the future, and outline the actions that are needed to succeed. They develop individual skills and outline collective actions that can help them organize to accomplish their own vision.
- **Empowering women as key change agents:** they bear almost all responsibility of meeting the basic needs of the family, yet are systematically denied the resources, information, and freedom of action they need to fulfill this responsibility.
- **Fostering effective partnerships between people and their local governments:** local government is closest to the people; they have the access to resources, the necessary reach and the mission of working with people to meet their basic needs. We must develop and/or strengthen mechanisms for local participatory democracy that allows government resources to be directed to the true priorities of people.

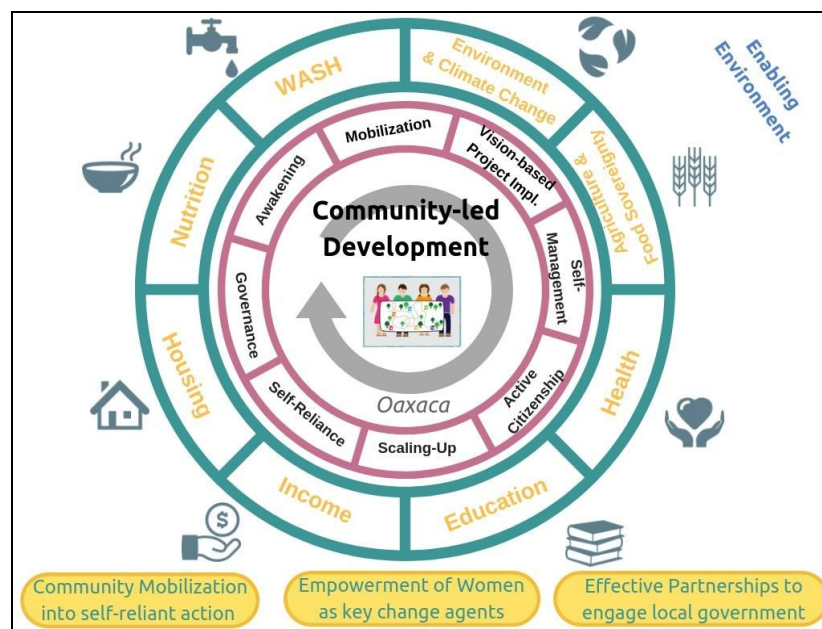
As we mentioned before, in THP-Mexico, we understand poverty as a multidimensional system with interacting dimensions, from the tangible -as is the lack of resources-, to the intangible -as is the disempowerment of human beings.

Our approach

Based on gender-focused, community-led development as our approach, we've discovered what works to enable individuals to successfully take charge of their own development. Our model considers that within 12 years of work directly in communities self-reliance can be achieved considering 8 phases: awakening, mobilization, implementation of vision-based projects, self-management, active citizenship, scaling-up, self-reliance, and governance. This model is under constant evolution since it is directly linked to social processes and it makes it non-linear.

These **8 phases** aim to break the traditional service-delivery paradigm and move through the four major stages of the complex, intentional and human process of gender-focused community-led development: mindset, capacity, impact, and sustainability. There is indeed a "science" for catalyzing communities to move through these stages, and that's the driver of our work.

Illustration 7. The Hunger Project's approach



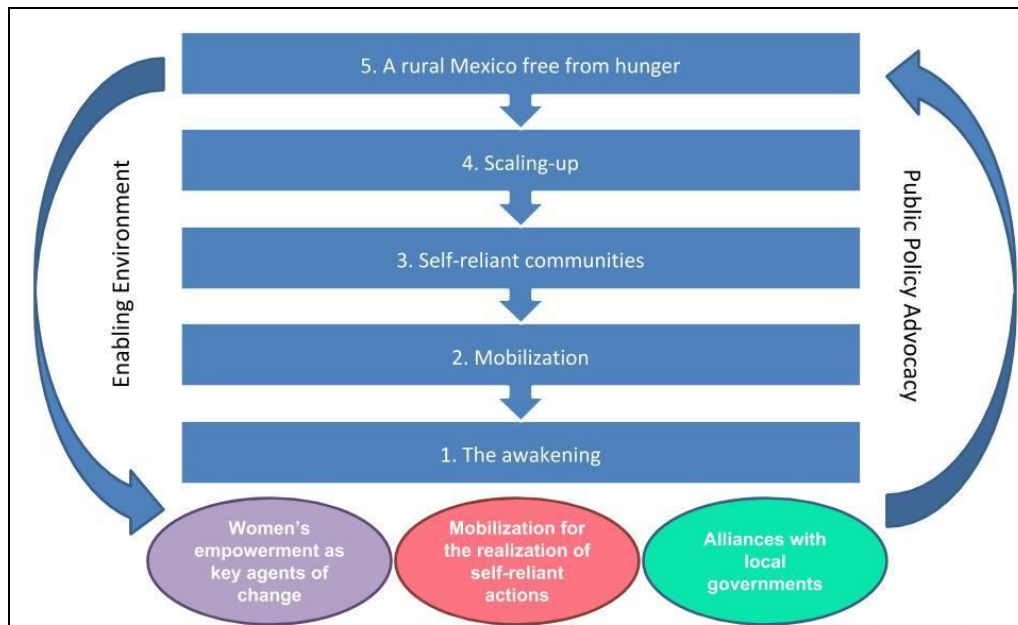
Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

According to our approach, the communities will prioritize activities, projects; reflections that will help them fulfill their needs based on the different dimensions of development (WASH, nutrition, housing, income, education, health, agriculture and food sovereignty, environment and climate change). So, even though it might look as eco-stoves, or agro-ecological gardens, or

ecological bathrooms, those eco-technics are parts of a bigger transformation, because it's not just a service, but a process of fulfilling human rights and exercising their citizenship.

Another key reference for our work is the **theory of change** because it is the theoretical basis on which our methodology is established. It consists of **5 stages** where our **3 essential pillars** are interwoven and lead to the creation of a different Mexico, free from hunger and poverty.

Illustration 8. Our Theory of Change



Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

Phase 1. The awakening

In this phase, people living in poverty conditions transform their mental structure breaking with resignation and starting to imagine the possibility of a new future for them and their families.

Phase 2: Mobilization

At this stage, community partners are strengthening their abilities of agency and organization for the implementation of gender-focused community-led development.

Phase 3: Self-reliant communities

At this moment, communities are exercising their rights with a strong participatory local democracy.

Phase 4: Scaling-up

In this phase, there is enough evidence due to the past stages to show that gender-focused community-led development is a way to end hunger in rural communities. As a result, the model starts being replicated at the municipal and state levels.

Phase 5: A rural Mexico free from hunger

Throughout the past four phases, THP has projected the progress of this methodology in government policies and in Phase 5 would contribute to the full and effective implementation of national social programs and budgets directed to solve the real necessities of women, men, youth and children in rural areas.

In order to achieve Phase 5 of our theory of change, the main transformation we need to accomplish is to have self-reliant communities, defined in the next image. We will go back to this definition later in the document.

Self-reliant communities are defined as
resilient communities, that are **organized**,
have a **shared vision**, **transformative**
leadership and **equality**, manifested in **life**
quality, **active citizenship**, **vibrant solidarity**
economy and **governance**.

2.1. Mexican particularities in the THP universe

As you can read, we share lots of perspectives, principles, and approaches from our global strategy. But we also have important differences. And we think this will help you put into perspective the differences inside THP: different continents and national realities. In order to do that, we want you to reflect about the next table:

Table. 4. Comparison between continents and countries.

	Asia	Africa		Mexico			
	Bangladesh	Benin	Uganda	Mexico (country)	Oaxaca	San José Tenango, Oaxaca	San Pedro Garza García, Nuevo León
Extension km2	148.460	112.622	241.038	1.959.248	93.757	258,69	69.4
Population (million)	166,4	11,5	44,3	130,8	3,9	18.478 (thousand)	122.659 (thousand)
Population density (people per km)	1.265,04	99,11	213,76	66,44	42	71,43	1.777
Human development index	0,608	0,515	0,516	0,774	0,681	0,512	0,968
Administrative Structure	8 divisions (districts and sub-districts)	12 departments (communes)	121 districts and 1 capital city (counties, sub-counties, parishes, and towns)	32 states and 2,473 Municipios	570 Municipios	Municipio	Municipio

We're taking some examples from Asia and Africa and sharing information about Mexico and his three administrative levels: national, state and municipal. If you analyze national HDI, Mexico has an average level; we also have two examples: San José Tenango in Oaxaca, which HDI is similar to Benin, and we also have a Municipio with and HDI similar to Norway. The same country, the same public policy, the same government structure and the same system. Why do we have such an unbelievable inequality?

This is the result of the structure we talked about before, but it's is also the reason why we cannot talk about Mexico as a rich or poor country. This is why sometimes looks like we're about to jump in economics, but we are always at the bottom of OECD rankings. This is why

THP-Mexico believes in the possibility of a rural Mexico free from hunger, because we are betting for transforming a reality that practically, nobody is watching.

2.2. Standing from the possibility: our outcomes in Chiapas, Oaxaca, San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas

THP-Mexico works in four states: Chiapas, Oaxaca, San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas, as you can see in the following map.

Illustration 9. The Hunger Project in Mexico



Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

Specifically, we are in seven municipalities, having activities in 29 communities with a total population of 20,364 people as reported by INEGI. We reach a total of 1,955 people as it follows:

Table. 5. The scope of THP-Mexico, 2019

State	Municipalities	Total Population in Municipalities (INEGI, 2015)	People working with THP-Mexico
Chiapas	Aldama, San Juan Chamula, San Andrés Larráinzar, Santiago el Pinar	17,804	530
Oaxaca	San José Tenango	699	660
San Luis Potosí	Tampamolón Corona	980	670
Zacatecas	Jiménez del Teúl	881	95
Total		20,364	1,955

Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

These numbers reflect the direct and indirect community partners.

Our first contact with communities goes through the National Direction of Programs. Here, we develop strategies for moving our model including what we have learned throughout the years from the communities. We do this along five programs, as key in our approach. Next, you can see each one with their respective objectives.

1. Mobilize communities for self-reliant action

- Women & men awakened to their own power as agents in development, transforming the mental structures that perpetuate poverty.
- Strengthen community capacity to plan, negotiate, and implement projects for collective action
- Strengthen the management and leadership capacity of community committees
- Develop individual leadership abilities
- Develop the capacity to create clear, structured visions of the future

2. Catalysts for Ending Hunger

- Strengthen catalyst leadership for vision-based, community-led development initiatives
- Develop a leadership network of catalysts
- Improve project management and planning skills of catalysts

3. Women's leadership

- a. Increase knowledge of human rights, gender rights, and indigenous rights in all communities
- b. Increase recognition among men of the contributions of women as partners in development
- c. Increase the sisterhood of women to be allies partners and mentors in development

4. Integrated Sustainable Community Development

- a. Sustainable community economic empowerment
 - i. Build solidarity economies in rural communities.
 - ii. Develop skills in organization, production, administration, and marketing to develop successful and sustainable productive projects.
 - iii. Generate productive organizations that satisfy the community needs of goods and services that are part of productive solidarity chains.
 - iv. Promote income-generating projects whose goods and services are socially useful and environmentally sustainable, produced equitably, and democratically.
- b. Food security and agriculture
 - i. Promote food security and sovereignty at the community level for improved nutrition.
 - ii. Improve the understanding, knowledge, and capacity among community members regarding natural systems of agroecology.
 - iii. Develop production ecosystems of complex food that includes family gardens, gardens, and seed banks.
- c. Resilience and climate change
 - i. Promote food security and sovereignty at the local level.
 - ii. Strengthen abilities to create disaster risk reduction plans.
 - iii. Ensure that communities have permanent access to water and food in the face of climate change.
 - iv. Strengthen abilities to adapt and mitigate climate change.
- d. Access to basic services (WASH, housing, health, and education)
 - i. Guarantee the appropriation and exercise of human rights within communities.
 - ii. Guarantee the right to education by promoting and increasing educational opportunities for rural and indigenous youth.

- iii. Promote and increase informed decision-making on sexual and reproductive health.

5. Participatory Local Democracy and Governance

- a. Construction of active citizenship
 - i. Strengthen the leadership, knowledge, capacities, and abilities for the exercise of active citizenship.
 - ii. Strengthen the leadership of catalysts for participatory local democracy.
 - iii. Consolidate in the citizens the knowledge, appropriation, and use of tools for the demand and exercise of their human rights.
 - iv. Promote a favorable environment for governance and local political participation
 - v. Promote participatory local democracy mechanisms between officials and citizens
- b. Development of municipal governments impact
 - i. Generate local governance by strengthening the political environment with the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
 - ii. Promote CLD to be reflected in public policies and programs by generating alliances with municipal governments.

Illustration 10. Community Action Programs



Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

Regarding achievements in the four regions where THP-Mexico has presence, community partners and catalysts have promoted actions that improve living conditions, not only for

community partners but also for all the population of communities. You can see it in the following illustration, for further information.

In Chiapas, catalysts have promoted the participation of women in different areas of community action, favoring gender equality. They have also promoted actions regarding economic empowerment and the use of eco-technologies to improve the quality of life of people in the household and help not pollute the environment.

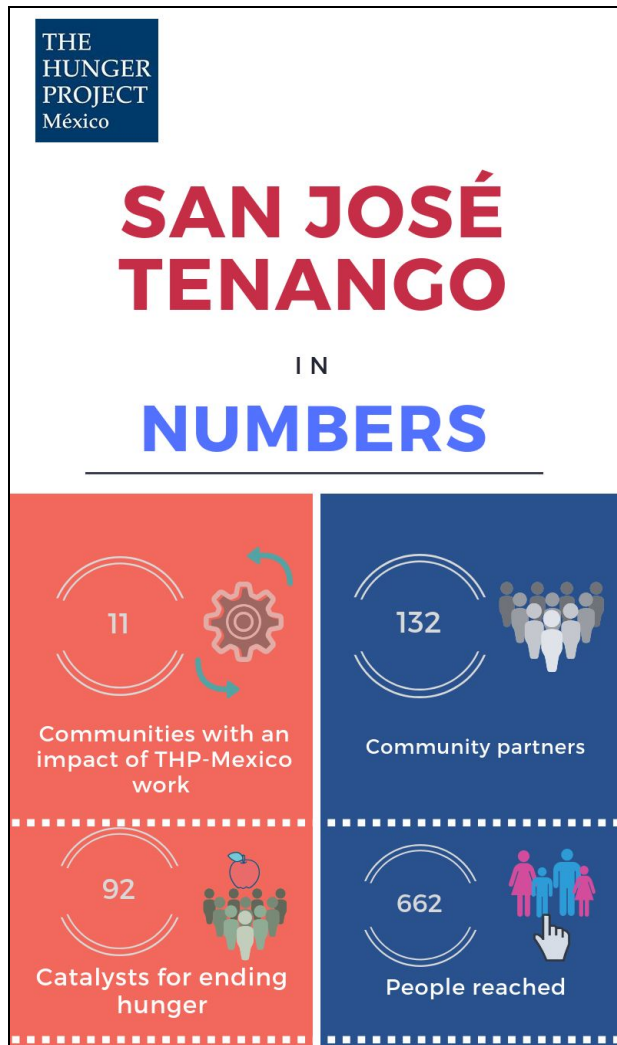
In San Luis Potosí, catalysts have promoted dialogues with municipal government officials so that community priorities are addressed, for example, road repair and habilitation; renovation and maintenance of potable water pipes, as well as the construction of a well that supplies the inhabitants of some communities.

In Zacatecas, the organization of catalysts has allowed the promotion of soil improvement projects that stop erosion and can become a healthy space for the community. They also negotiated with the local government regarding the necessity to build a bridge for the safety of the community especially for floods during rainy season.

In Oaxaca, they have promoted and led actions such as the construction of health houses, road access to their communities, rehabilitation of schools, installation of community kitchens and the repair of electrical networks. We'll go further in this information, later on.



2.2.1. Zoom in to Oaxaca. San José Tenango as our pilot experience for CLD



Due to our visit to San José Tenango, we are taking a deep look of THP-Mexico's presence in this region we called *Mazateca*, located in the mountains of Oaxaca in the south of Mexico. In San José Tenango, we're running a pilot project launched in 2010 and here, we have the most advanced experience.

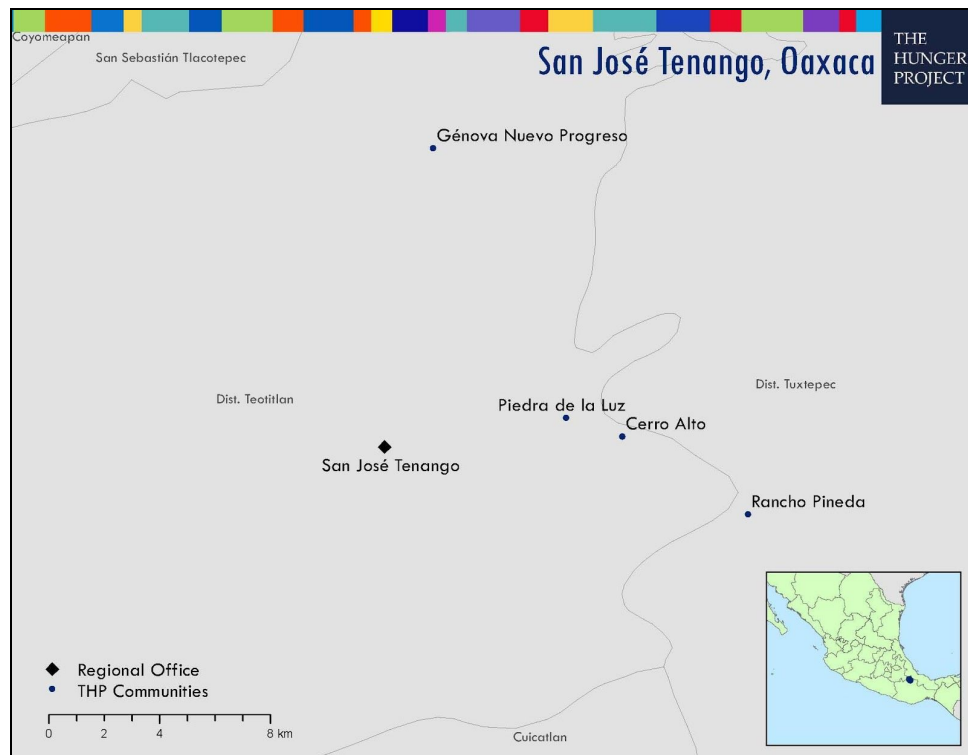
We started working there with the Social Development Ministry to generate evidence that investing in the social capital of communities yields high-impact sustainable development.

San José Tenango is one of the 570 municipalities in the state of Oaxaca. It is the 55th poorest municipality in the country, with a very high degree of marginalization in 87.41% of its localities, with 73% of the people living in extreme poverty; a high social lag index and an HDI (0.512) lower than that of Bangladesh (0.608).

Our work started with women and men of all ages of 4 central communities (Cerro Alto, Génova Nuevo Progreso, Piedra de la Luz, and Rancho Pineda). Through years of working with them, nowadays we have impacted a total of 11 communities in Tenango. This means we have reached 662 people; we also have 132 community partners and 92 catalysts for ending hunger.

These localities are isolated, scattered in the Sierra as you can see it on the map.

Illustration 11. Map of communities in San José Tenango, Oaxaca



Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

The reality of La Mazateca gives us the opportunity to prove our model. With these general characteristics, now we'll show you how we're landing our understanding of self-reliant communities.

2.2.1.1. A Path to self-reliance.

Experts have long pointed out that sustainable development must integrate three dimensions: economic, social and political sustainability (UNEP 2015). This implies that outside facilitators, local leaders, and communities themselves must be committed from the outset to communities truly taking full charge of their own development.

There must be objective measurements that demonstrate that this stage has been achieved:

- **Social Sustainability** depends on building people's organizations that can democratically elect, ensure training for its own leaders and, in some cases, maintain its legal existence.
- **Political Sustainability** depends on having an enabling policy environment that supports – rather than creates obstacles – for communities to achieve progress.

- **Economic Sustainability** requires that communities generate enough reliable revenue to maintain their own programs and facilities.

The deep alliance between THP-Mexico and community partners in these 8 years has left lots of learnings regarding the implementation of our model on one side, and on the other, it has shown us how powerful is their vision and how it can lead to coordinated mobilization despite differences inside the communities. Most importantly, this process has demonstrated the importance of breaking with resignation to make way to transformative leadership.

When we started working there, the level of resignation as well as the dependence to social programs was evident due to the belief that they were not capable of achieving things because they didn't have any kind of knowledge. The visible conditions in the communities deepened the dependence mentioned earlier. For example, two of the communities didn't have roads or accesses; there was a lack of infrastructure and basic services; no income sources; medical

attention only in the municipal seat; and official education imparted sporadically, in poorly equipped classrooms. Many young people have migrated to the cities. Additionally, communities have been permeated by the political struggles characteristic of the state, fracturing social cohesion.

Many conditions have changed due to the commitment of the communities to fulfill their visions. And the most visible changes are in eco-stoves, ecological bathrooms, agroecological gardens and rainwater collection systems.

With these tangible changes, we started deeper social dynamics, and other accomplishments, as you can read in the following table.



Table. 6. Accomplishments in La Mazateca

Development Dimension	Vision	Accomplishments
Right to adequate food	Our communities exercise the right to adequate food because we have the conditions and the means so that all people, regardless of their age or gender, have food on their tables every day.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Backyard orchards in each partner community Rancho Pineda, Génova, Nuevo Progreso, Piedra de la Luz, Cerro Alto, Cerro Central, Peinecillo y la Cabecera municipal. 2. Bromatological study to strengthen knowledge about edible plants that exist in the region. Revaluation of traditional Mazatec cuisine (gastronomic fairs). 3. Community Dining Room for families in the community of Cerro Alto through coordination with municipal and state authorities.
Water community management	In our municipality we have permanent access to quality water, exercising our human right to water, which allows us to improve our living conditions and gives us a guarantee of better sowing, better income, and higher levels of health and better use of time.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diagnosis about uses, availability, and access to water provided the inputs to generate a project that included piloting, evaluation and scaling, within the participating communities, of rainwater harvesting systems. 2. A network of rainwater harvesting systems installed by promoters with specialized skills for the construction, and maintenance of environmental technologies. 3. Creation of the Community Committees for the Right to Water (through these committees the installation of Eco technologies is defined, planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated).
Healthy life: Inclusive services, with quality, warmth and cultural relevance	The health we seek for our communities is a state of happiness of body and mind; however, when there is illness, all people have access to a service and attention based on respect for human dignity.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communities have ecological stoves and firewood saving that reduces the smoke inside their homes and foresees accidents related to the fire. 2. Installation of ecological toilets that reduce the impact of environmental damage, and reduce the risk of contracting diseases. This has allowed them to have adequate and dignified spaces that also provide the generation of organic materials or compost that is used for family gardens.

		3. Promotion to rescue, strengthen and exercise local and ancestral knowledge about traditional medicine. This is linked to the compliance of the right to access drinking and quality water, to reduce and prevent diseases.
Relevant and quality education for indigenous people	We have the right to continue existing as indigenous people. Education is fundamental for the teaching and learning of and in our language, which strengthens our Mazatec identity and culture.	1. Through community committees, they maintain the school classrooms and participate co-responsible in the follow-up and education of their daughters and sons, reinforcing the traditional knowledge that is part of their culture.
Adequate housing for a dignified life	All the families of our communities can access to build a safe home because the houses in which we live provide us comfort to live in peace and tranquility.	1. Development and implementation of Social Housing Production projects using local materials and bioconstruction techniques. 2. Improvement of housing: ecological stoves that contribute to improving the quality of life of families and specifically of women, who face respiratory problems due to the carbon dioxide of wood stoves; dry baths have been another alternative for saving water and caring about the ecosystem.
Right to Development: the infrastructure of roads and highways	The infrastructure projects that are carried out in our municipality seek the common good towards the exercise of Human Rights. No project is imposed. The communities are consulted before beginning any work.	1. Negotiation with the authorities to promote the construction of roads, seeking care of nature and our territories, which allow mobility as well as rapid and agile communication from our communities.
Security of Income, Decent Work and Economic Growth	We have declared that we will promote endemic crops and the recovery of traditional productive processes, such as the milpa system, which allows the fertility and conservation of our lands and provides us with a sustainable and self-sufficient source of food. We have declared that we will work closely with young people to strengthen the reflection process regarding the use and care of natural resources and local governance.	1. Generation of alliances with students who made diagnoses of the socio-economic conditions of the municipality; suggesting appropriate strategies and models that promote an economy based on the principles of solidarity, strengthening local production systems.

Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

In spite of this, there are still subjects that need to be reinforced and it includes a deeper relationship with the municipal government. But, where are we? In a path to self-reliance, where La Mazateca is?

Community-Led Development Cycle in Mexico

Communities in Oaxaca are currently going through stages 3 and 4.

Year 1	Year 1	Year 2 & 3	Year 4 & 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Phase 1: Awakening	Phase 2: Mobilization	Phase 3: Project Implementation based on Community Visions	Phase 4: Self- Management	Phase 5: Active Citizenship	Phase 6: Scaling up	Phase 7: Self-Reliance
Awareness process by which people identify the state of resignation and dependence they have been living in and "awaken" to realize their human potential to decide their destiny and appropriate their development	People design their own vision and iceberg (reflecting on the causes that perpetuate poverty). Communities are at an early stage of re-organization.	There is a strong level of social cohesion and strength, with community partners working together to achieve between 3 to 5 priorities chosen by the community to guarantee fundamental social rights.	The community has developed the abilities to develop, implement, manage, monitor and evaluate their actions locally (specific projects and/or campaigns). At this stage, the role of THP changes from supervisor and co-operator to advisor.	Community partners are fully aware and know their human rights. They also know the tools to demand accountability from the government at different levels. Community visions and plans push towards the construction of more spaces of dialogue and negotiation between governments and communities.	Community partners engage in a more active relationship with their municipality. Local participatory democracy becomes effective: the voice of civil society is stronger and has the power and influence to demand the respect for human rights and financial transparency.	Communities possess the confidence, ability and skills to act as agents of their own development and demonstrate progress in achieving the self-sufficiency goals. At this stage THP has activated its exit strategy and will no longer invest in these communities, M&E will continue for 2 to 3 years.

Illustration 12. Community-Led Development Cycle in Mexico

Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

Taking into account the previous table, we can assure we are going through phases 3 and 4. As a result of the implementation of the Municipal School for community-led development, we can identify elements from stage 4, Self-management, and stage 5: active citizenship. This is because the main outcome of the School is a communitarian development agenda, a document where community partners had worked for 18 months, and it contains elements from their vision and is going to be an important tool for having meetings with municipal authorities to try to include some priorities in the Development Municipal Plan. Being a non-linear model, it is expected to have stages, but... what is missing?

3. What is missing: from projects to long-term funding.

It is urgent to rethink the way funds for development is labeled at all levels (local to international). It is not about implementing projects that can alleviate symptoms of deeper issues related to inequalities and the full exercise of human rights.

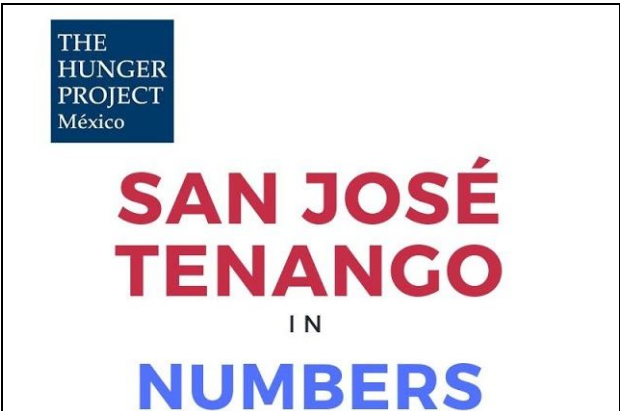


Going back to our definition of self-reliant communities, we want to set as an example, the process in the Mazateca region. All the achievements they’ve had will not be possible if it’s not because of the long-term commitment where empowerment, leadership, and development of skills and abilities is always present. Below we show some of the achievements that have been promoted and led by the communities, as a result of their agency as rights holders.

Creating a vision, setting priorities, and achieving that vision takes time; we need to consider that it is a social process and that comes with different obstacles that can make slow getting to where we want. We cannot accelerate it and try to solve it superficially.

Getting to this moment has taken the community years of questioning who they were being and who they needed to be to get their communities to where they want it. There’s still a way to go and in order to accompany what is next, funds will be

needed, not for more water-harvesting systems, or for new sanitary systems (as examples), but for strengthening social cohesion, mobilization, leadership, citizenship, and empowerment.



4. Closing gaps: Advocacy for CLD

A fundamental part of The Hunger Project's work in ending hunger is enabling the environment for it to happen. In order to do so, we need to change the development paradigm into one where people are seen as the main actors of development; therefore, public policies must place people at the center so that they participate actively in their own development. This change of paradigm must be at all levels of society including development agencies, national

governments, the private sector, and international organizations. And advocacy is crucial to do so.

The Alliances and Advocacy on Public Policy Area seek to influence the country's rural development policies (social, economic, and environmental) and promote strategies and programs addressed on the promotion of community participation and leadership, gender equality, and human rights.

Illustration 13. Advocacy and public policy



Source: The Hunger Project Mexico, 2019

Some of our objectives are:

- To include our model or parts of it in the national development plan, and local development plans
- To participate in government advisory boards and forums to influence the agenda of development
- To change the paradigm of development from paternalism to community-led development, bottom-up strategies
- To change the paradigm of help and charity to self-reliance

- To influence the international agenda to include the voices of our community partners
- To be a bridge between global and local development agendas
- To transform the idea of poverty from a victimize perspective towards an empowerment perspective

In THP-Mexico we constantly seek to be part of strategic advisory councils and form alliances that maximize the impact of our work and allow us to encompass and give greater impetus to key issues such as human rights, Sustainable Development Goals, family farming, right to food, participatory local democracy, and especially to continue gender-focused community-led development.

We are participating with the federal government as part of the Social-Technical Council of the Mexican Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AMEXCID in Spanish), we are also members of the Civil Society Consultative Group (ConSOC) from Interamerican Bank, G-20 civil society group, UN Women Mexico Civil Society Advisory Group and Working Committee 1: Free, Healthy and Safe People of the National Council of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

For strengthening our alliances, we belong to:

- CAIDMEX, Mexican Coalition of International Action for Development is a coalition of civil society organizations, both national and international, based in Mexico which aims to advocate as a collective in international agendas and stages related to cooperation and development, and thus promote citizen participation, human rights approach, transparency, accountability and democratization of the decision-making processes. A part of this coalition, we could participate in negotiation processes around the Post-2015 process and 2030 Agenda, working with Mexican official delegations in United Nations. <https://www.caidmex.org/>
- The Alliance for Food Health. This is an initiative that we have promoted with several organizations such as OXFAM, El Poder del Consumidor, Contrapeso, and Greenpeace. The purpose of this alliance is to influence the government in nutrition and regulation for junk food. <http://alianzasalud.org.mx/>
- REDESCOM, Network for Community Development (Red para el Desarrollo Comunitario in Spanish). THP-Mexico led the Red to the creation of a vision, objectives, and a Theory of Change for the network. Commissions were created, responsibilities were taken and we all have a clear understanding of the purpose of the Red and the paths to walk in order to achieve results in advocacy to influence public policy.
- ContraPESO Coalition: is a group of 10 civil society organizations. We work to change the obesogenic environment that exists in Mexico and create a culture of prevention,

education, and treatment, transmitting a sense of urgency and raising public debate on the subject. <http://coalicioncontrapeso.org/>

- RMAFyC, Mexican Network for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Family Farming Agriculture that includes the participation of civil organizations, small scale producers, academics, international organizations, legislative and governmental instances that have united to promote family and peasant agriculture in the cycle of public policies in Mexico.

For the years to come, these agendas and activities will be aligned under the **Movement for Community-led Development frame of action**. As the base of our model, the Movement is the main key to making tendency and to widen our vision. We launched the Mexican chapter of the Movement in August 2017. Since that moment, we've been building alliances to accelerate it.

For us, the experience in the Mazateca region is an example, our pilot. So, we're learning how to build a strong model. But for this model becomes a general practice and not a special case, we need to change the current structure, and to assure the enabling environment for community-led development to become the main paradigm. And this is also a very powerful tool for achieving SDGs and our national commitment to the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, the following points, contemplate in a general way, the route to delimit the advocacy strategy that will guide our community partners' way towards the implementation of their common agenda.

Table. 7. Community partner's advocacy strategy

Internal Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and strengthen themselves as a community organization
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities of the Municipal Development Plan and assigned budget • International and national documents, linked to Human Rights and citizen agendas

Dialogue and share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between different actors and the municipal government to analyze the different problems that affect them. • Share with other communities the proposals and expand them. • Listen to the voice of other people
Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with the municipal authorities and present proposals. • Take advantage of conjuncture spaces to exchange proposals.
Establish Dialogue spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to negotiate and encourage their demands to be solved systematically.
Elaboration of Public Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote they consider Human Rights and Gender Equality perspective with proposals, concrete actions, and public resources labeled.

5. What's next

In our community programs, the critical step will be to complete our CLD Model in accordance with our cluster of communities achieving self-reliance in the next three years. In order to speed this process will focus mainly in the most advanced region: Oaxaca.

Completing CLD Model Self-Reliant Communities

Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Phase 5: Active Citizenship	Phase 6: Scaling up	Phase 7: Self-Reliance
Community partners are fully aware and know their human rights. They also know the tools to demand accountability from the government at different levels. Community visions and plans push towards the construction of more spaces of dialogue and negotiation between governments and communities.	Community partners engage in a more active relationship with their municipality. Local participatory democracy becomes effective: the voice of civil society is stronger and has the power and influence to demand the respect for human rights and financial transparency.	Communities possess the confidence, ability and skills to act as agents of their own development and demonstrate progress in achieving the self-sufficiency goals. At this stage THP has activated its exit strategy and will no longer invest in these communities, M&E will continue for 2 to 3 years.

In Alliances and Advocacy, we've been thinking about how we can go deep into the Movement in Mexico. So, we have two particular strategies for the years to come. The first one deals with local authorities, as a way to follow up our projects in Oaxaca and San Luis Potosí. We want to make commitments with local authorities for creating Municipios 2030.

Local advocacy

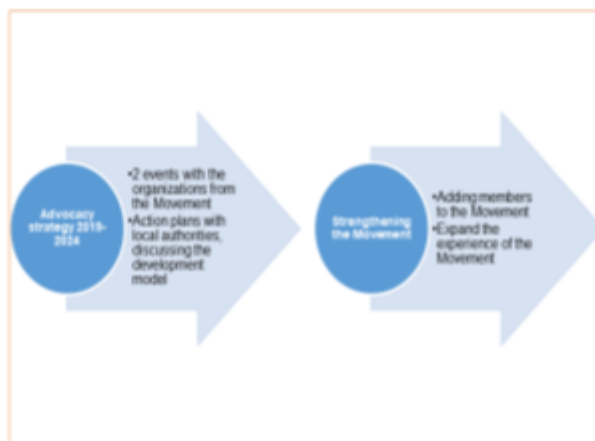


- Introducing **Municipios 2030.**

- Advocacy with local authorities from San José Tenango, Oaxaca and Tampamolón Corona, San Luis Potosí for spreading CLD, 2030 Agenda and SDGs.
 - Strengthening capacities in local authorities from Oaxaca and San Luis Potosí in the current administration
 - Strengthening capacities in community partners in 2030 Agenda, SDGs and CLD
- At the end of 2021, we are in the road of **Municipios 2030**, with community partners as local authorities and sensitive to 2030 Agenda, SDGs and CLD.

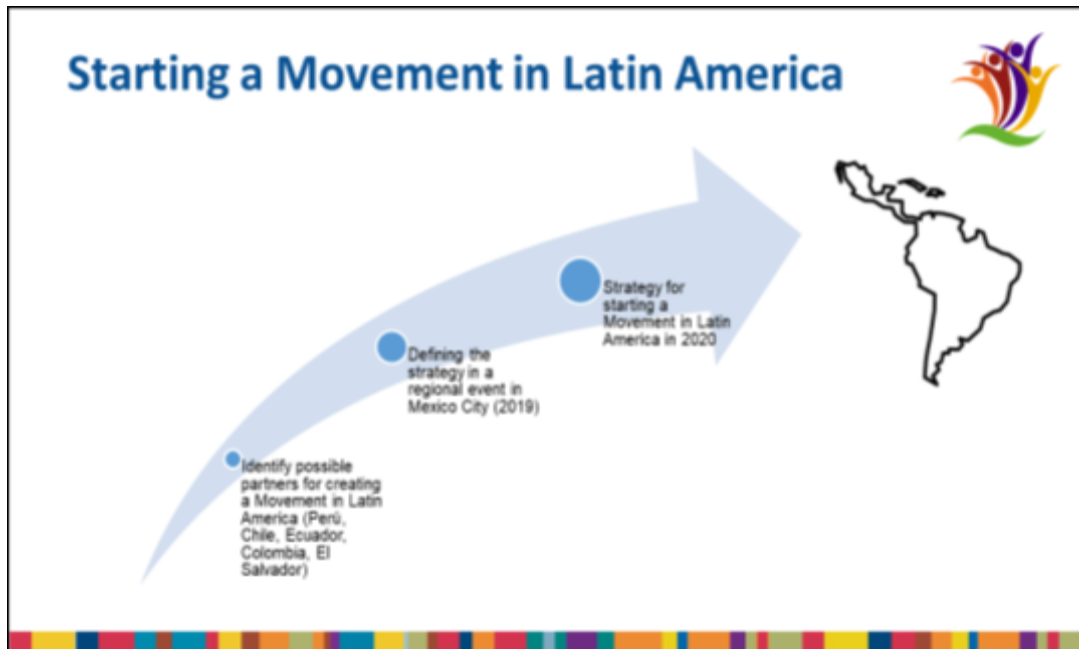
As a second strategy, we are working in accelerating the Movement. This means to have an even bigger commitment from organizations, for the Movement to become a national force in advocacy and public policy. It is urgent to have an enabling environment for 2030.

Accelerating the Movement in Mexico



- The Movement is a reference in designing and planing public policy in México
- The Movement is capable of influencing decision makers

Following this, we know that as a region, we share problematics, such as poverty and inequality. We also face regional problems like migration. That's why we know that a natural step forward accelerating the Movement is growing its scope. So, Latin America is the obvious region.



Finally, evidence is a key part for success in advocacy. For this reason, we are seeking to building a strategic platform for political communication, so the organizations from the Movement are able to share and to build knowledge. This platform is going to be useful for the different levels where we want to work around the Movement: local, national and regional level.



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7. Annexes

