

STORIES OF CHANGE

STRENGTHENING SGBV INTERVENTIONS WITH INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES

Oaxaca, Mexico



Kuxtal is 34 years old and defines herself as spiraling, incendiary, and sometimes silent. Kuxtal is a trans woman of Ñuu Savi ethnic origin, from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, Mexico.

She is a lawyer dedicated to the defense of human rights, specifically for people living with HIV, women, and sexually diverse people in her community. Her community leadership is well recognized in Tehuantepec.

The Isthmus of Tehuantepec is a Zapotec area where there is a diversity of ethnicities, cultural identities, and languages. It is an area with high rates of extreme poverty, where access to education, housing, and health are complex.

It's even a transit and reception region for migrants. Currently, the development of megaprojects by the Federal Government is causing deforestation and damage to the environment. In this context, the rates of violence are high, due to the presence of organized crime, the existence of forced disappearances, and violence against those who practice sex work, who are mainly trans women. Kuxtal describes the Isthmus as a beautiful place, but also violent.

In 2023, Kuxtal joined the Training of Trainers process led by CDD (Mexico), in which she participated and invited more community leaders to join this activity. Her motivations were to be updated on different topics and the desire to have more tools to advance intersectionality and mitigate gender-based violence, since – as an indigenous trans woman – she recognizes that she has experienced different forms of violence.

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Kuxtal has highlighted how seeing the forms of violence experienced by other people with identities different from hers, as well as reflecting on her privileges and vulnerabilities, have been unique experiences that this process has given her, which have allowed her to change her perspective and strengthen her commitment to the work she does in her community. For example, she was able to reflect on the lived experience of her trans friend who cannot read or write and generate alternatives that allowed her to be included in the communication between

friends, such as agreeing to communicate through voice notes and not text messages, for example.

The training process also allowed Kuxtal to identify how gender-based violence specifically affects people of sexual and gender diversity, as well as to access tools that allow her to improve her work accompanying women in her community.

As a result of this process, Kuxtal has managed to generate networks with other women and people and begin to articulate actions that allow more women and people in the Isthmus to access this knowledge and be part of the fight to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence.

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For Kuxtal, it is important to include indigenous communities in the transformation of harmful gender norms and the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence. Kuxtal recognizes that all people are trainers at some point, and even more so mothers and grandmothers, so it is relevant that everyone can access the necessary knowledge to be part of this change.

**Name and personal details have been changed to protect privacy and confidentiality of the person.*