

STORIES OF CHANGE

THE RIGHT TO **SAFE ABORTION**: ONE STORY, **A COLLECTIVE STRUGGLE**

 Jalisco, Mexico

Denuncias de violación simple y violación equiparada en Jalisco (2019 -2023)

AÑO	ABUSO SEXUAL	VIOLACIÓN SIMPLE	VIOLACIÓN EQUIPARADA
2019	2,423	446	0
2020	2,137	369	0
2021	2,378	517	0
2022	3,296	485	41
2023	2,344	959	455

JALISCO

Fuente: Información obtenida del Instrumento para el Registro, Clasificación y Reporte de Delitos y las Víctimas CNSP/38/15 Incidencia delictiva del fuero común.



Helen is part of a collective called YOCOYANI [DDESER](#) Jalisco, which leads the work on sexual and reproductive rights, and is part of an alliance with OCNF (Mexico).

Access to abortion in Mexico has been controversial. Its decriminalization in Jalisco took place in 2009 among historical moments of feminist resistance facing the conservative position and attacks led by Catholic and religious groups who stands for “protect life from conception to natural death”.

The Feminist Futures Free from Violence (FFFV) has contributed to raise awareness about sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and the importance of access to abortion for SGBV survivors through workshops on SRHR for women and young people. The impacts of SGBV have also been demonstrated through communication campaigns and demonstrations during emblematic days such as March 8th (International Women Day), and September 28th (Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion)

Over the years, Helen and many other young feminist activists have monitored the supply and distribution of contraceptive methods in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area, and obtained evidence on how supplies have been denied to young people meaning that their rights were violated. These investigation results have been presented to the Ministry of Health and the media to pressure the modification of these practices.

We began by providing accompaniment to women in situations of abortion, a service that quickly spread by word of mouth and to which, even now, dozens of women continue to arrive monthly. We specialized in the subject and gave workshops on gender, violence, sexual and reproductive rights, the right to decide, contraceptive methods, sexually transmitted infections, families, sexuality or healthy motherhood, in all the spaces that allowed us to do so. We also visited deputies, health and education officials, trying to get them to open up to issues of sexuality, abortion, contraceptive methods, etc. That led us to meet and coordinate with other women's and feminist organizations working on issues of violence, femicide, lesbophobia, comprehensive sexuality education, etc.

After the Covid 19 pandemic, the publication of the [Technical Guideline for Safe Abortion Care](#) of the Federal Ministry of Health overruled the historic rulings of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, which basically establishes that it is unconstitutional to criminalize abortion. Both the Official Mexican Norm 046 (NOM 046) and article 229 of the [Penal Code of the State of Jalisco](#) establish parameters and protocols for the termination of a pregnancy resulting from rape.

A journalist once approached me and asked me why the decriminalization of abortion is demanded only by adult women? It had become clear to us in 2009 that the majority of young women were being victims of the manipulation of the Catholic Church and we defined as a strategic line that, before presenting ourselves again in Congress to demand the decriminalization of abortion, we would have to build a broad social base that would accompany us.

Throughout the FFFV project joint advocacy actions have led to transform laws, policies, and social norms. Early 2024, cases such as a 12-year-old indigenous girl who went to the state's specialized health services to request an abortion due to rape perpetrated by her father. One of the 2,344 documented cases of girls who experienced sexual abuse in Jalisco during 2023. After 11 requesting the abortion service not only her physical health was violated, but also her psychological health. Helen's network denounced that the hospital medical staff approached the girl “to ask her if she wanted to listen to the baby's heart” and if she had considered carrying the pregnancy to term and then giving it up for adoption.

Due to the refusal of the Jalisco health personnel, the minor had to be transferred to Mexico City to interrupt the pregnancy. Nevertheless, as result of the advocacy processes developed, it has been achieved that the Office of the Attorney General for the Protection of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents approved the [Plan for the Restitution of Rights](#) as part of a public policy to protect the rights of girls who are sexual violence survivors to access public health services to terminate pregnancies as result of sexual violence.

This situation has led to the implementation of a sophisticated, but effective mechanism in which so far we have been able to count more than three hundred people, including collectives, journalists and the media, teachers and their students, civil servants from very different areas, deputies, women who have had abortions and men who listen, who managed to secure access to a safe abortion for the girl in question. When that girl (from the case above) was denied service, we might have thought that 14 years of work had been of no avail, but all the wishes that have been expressed around her indicate otherwise
We are everywhere and we can be sure: motherhood will be desired, or it will not be!

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