

## Stories Of Change: *Ana Gabriela, Mexico*

My name is Ana Gabriela Candela-Garzón. I am an Afro-Indigenous woman from Guerrero, a beautiful state on the Pacific coast of Mexico. I'm a member of the Feminist Network of Acapulco, also known as "Revolución Violeta" or Violet Revolution. I would like to tell you the story of how I became involved in the Feminist Futures Free from Violence project.

My journey began with my commitment to advocate for the rights of women and girls, a cause that I've been fighting for over many years. Along the way, I have met other women who share the same passion and have formed alliances at the local level to address the most important issues in our communities. With Revolución Violeta, we have found ourselves fighting against the continuum of violence, specifically sexual violence, that plagues our daily lives as women.

Acapulco, my city, used to be a paradise where many tourists from around the world would come to enjoy the beach, the sights, and the local food. Now it is one of the most dangerous cities in the world due to gang violence and the rampant "machista" violence that still exists in our society.

In 2022, the National Citizens' Observatory on Femicide (OCNF) invited us to be part of the Feminist Futures Free from Violence project and I knew that we would have the opportunity to contribute and make a greater impact on the lives of others. Through our active participation in the monitoring of the Gender Violence Alert (AVGM), we have been able to connect with women and girls from different territories, including Indigenous and Afro-descendant women and girls who are affected by violence.





Before joining this project, many of us were unaware that some of the women we accompanied had no notion of what sexual violence was. For many of them violence was considered normal due to their family relationships or contexts. The patriarchal system that stereotypes women and romanticizes our affective relationships has caused so much damage in our lives. However, since joining the project, we have developed common objectives, strengthened bonds with allies from other states, and confirmed that local networks are essential if we want to achieve real change in our societies.

One of the most significant changes I've noticed is that having a community with shared objectives and experiences allows us to more effectively accompany victims, provide tools for political and media advocacy, and develop strategies to hold authorities

accountable to their responsibilities for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. Despite the challenges we face, together we are doing the impossible!

Everything that I do, both individually and collectively, allows me to continue being creative while advocating for the human rights of diverse women, girls, and young people living in Guerrero and other states. We are finding ways to own our lives and decide our destinies.. Although difficult events of violence can occur, women deserve to continue their life projects and make their own decisions.

In conclusion, I am proud to be part of the Revolución Violeta Feminist Network of Acapulco "Revolución Violeta" and part of the Feminist Futures project. It is crucial to know where we stand and face what is coming, as we walk together towards a better tomorrow.