



Human Rights Program Evaluation for USAID Mexico

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HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM EVALUATION USAID MEXICO

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM, FOCUSED ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USAID/MEXICO'S INTERVENTIONS IN THE AREAS OF TORTURE PREVENTION, PROTECTION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, AND CONSTITUTIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICE.

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DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
FY	Fiscal Year
SOW	Statement of Work
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
ITAM	Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GOM	Government of Mexico
CDCS	Country Development cooperation Strategy
DO	Development Objective

EVALUATION PURPOSE & EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of technical assistance, approaches and tools developed to support journalists, human rights defenders, civil society organizations (CSOs) and local and federal Government of Mexico (GOM), and to identify best practices to inform USAID/Mexico and other stakeholders' future programming in the area of human rights.

Specifically, the focus of this evaluation will be on the effectiveness of USAID/Mexico's interventions in the improvement of Mexico's human rights (namely, in the areas of torture prevention, protection of freedom of expression through support to journalists and human rights defenders and constitutional human rights practice).

Evaluation Questions

Note: The term "beneficiary" refers to participants in USAID-funded human rights activities between 2011-2015, and includes GOM officials, human rights defenders, journalists and human rights CSOs.

1. Have beneficiaries applied the knowledge, skills and/or tools they have acquired from USAID/Mexico's human rights activities to improve the protection of human rights? If yes, please elaborate how and in what setting. If the response is negative, please explain why.
2. In general, are CSO beneficiaries (journalists and human rights defenders) satisfied with the assistance that USAID provided? What aspects of these approaches and tools were particularly effective? Which could be improved?
3. In general, are GOM beneficiaries satisfied with the assistance that USAID provided? What aspects of these approaches and tools were particularly effective? Which could be improved?

PROJECT BACKGROUND

USAID/Mexico's portfolio is designed to support the GOM efforts to address key challenges to improving citizen security, justice, human rights and environmental sustainability, with program approaches specifically tailored to the unique U.S.-Mexico relationship. USAID/Mexico's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) FY 2014-2018 was approved in April 2014 and addresses four Development Objectives (DO's) that are priorities for both the U.S. Government and GOM:

1. Crime and violence prevention models replicated by local stakeholders;
2. Constitutional criminal justice reforms of 2008 are operational in Mexican states;
3. Enabling environment to protect human rights and prevent abuses improved; and,
4. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduced in Target Key Sectors.

Programs under the Merida Initiative¹ focus on the first three DOs listed above. Under DO 3, USAID seeks to improve Mexico's enabling environment to protect human rights and prevent abuses. An enabling environment that provides the foundation for the protection of human rights is characterized by specific laws and policies consistent with international standards, mechanisms that help, enforce, safeguard and protect these rights and an informed citizenry that can advocate for rights and access public protection, when needed.

¹ The Merida Initiative is an unprecedented partnership between the United States and Mexico to fight organized crime and associated violence while furthering respect for human rights and the rule of law. From <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/merida/>

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

This document systematizes the results of the evaluation of three projects funded by the USAID Human Rights Program, and makes some recommendations to strengthen it.

The document is structured in two sections.

The first section is divided into three parts, each one relating to the specific project in question, where for each project an evaluation is presented, first giving a brief description of the project and its expected scope, followed by a list of positive aspects, a list of areas for improvement and finally recommendations for the project.

The second section, meanwhile, outlines some general recommendations for the consideration of USAID, for the purpose of strengthening its allocation of resources for the implementation of projects in the country.

This document was prepared taking into account the documents provided on each of the projects, as well as through field research, focused on interviews of people involved in the projects or directly benefiting from them and the use of questionnaires designed to collect relevant information.

For each of the projects, the institutional capacities and difficulties faced by the implementing organizations in their respective projects are analyzed.

For the three implementing organizations, the following components are analyzed:

- a) The internal institutional conditions and limitations, human resources, planning, execution and the quality of the implementation reports submitted to USAID.
- b) The partners' capacity to establish a productive work agenda with the relevant civil society actors and government institutions in the states implementing their respective programs.
- c) The level and quality of implementation of each project activity, as well as strategies and timelines in the case of inconveniences or problems in their implementation.

SECTION I. EVALUATION BY ACTIVITY

I. IMDHD A.C. PROJECT "CONSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS"

I.1 Activity Overview

The objective of this activity is to provide guidance on the implementation of the 2011 Human Rights Constitutional Reform and ensure that civil society organizations (CSOs), lawyers and the general public are aware of how the Reform can be used to protect human rights.

For which it focuses on:

1. Promotion of the implementation of Constitutional Reform at federal and state level, through the analysis of legislative proposals for regulation, especially of Article I, as well as reforms to state Constitutions in the field of human rights.
2. Raising awareness to promote better understanding of the Reform and its consequences by the authorities, civil society organizations and the general public, including a publicity campaign in the states of Chihuahua and Oaxaca, as well as in Mexico City.
3. Promoting the understanding of the implications of the Reform of Article I through the organization of training workshops for university students and political actors in the states of Baja California, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Jalisco, Nuevo Leon and Oaxaca, as well as in Mexico City.

To meet the above objectives, the following 6 goals were proposed:

1. Carry out an analysis of the draft of the Regulatory Law of Article I of the Constitution regarding
2. Conventionality control and formulate proposals in this respect.
3. Follow up on the legislative changes in the various states that are the focus of this project, using a gender perspective.
4. Develop promotional materials and carry out awareness raising activities in the priority states, with the local actors associated with the project, as well as assist in the organization of publicity campaigns at state level.
5. Ensure that social organizations and state authorities are aware of the consequences of the Human Rights Constitutional Reform and learn how to use this Reform to promote human rights.
6. Prepare an educational package for civil society organizations, as well as for the authorities, that will enable them to use the Reform, in particular the use of the human rights approach in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies.
7. Conduct an analysis of the impact of the Reform on institutions that protect human rights.

Scope:

Given the ambiguity in the presentation of the information in the periodic reports of IMDHD A.C., it was difficult to ascertain the real scope of the project.

The use of qualifiers such as "several", "many" does not provide sufficient content to allow quantitative evidence regarding beneficiaries.

According to the information analyzed, the training component of the project covered seven states² in which the IMDHD A.C. was accompanied by local CSOs for project implementation.

The information provided by the periodic reports complicated the understanding of the scope of the project, except for the number of seminars and events. That is, the numbers of participants were not recorded comprehensively and in some cases were not accessible. Nor were actors involved disaggregated in a clear way.

According to the 2015 activities report, the results were:

- 8 training workshops on Article I.
- 20 people from the institutions that participated in the project participated in training workshops on the Reform of Article I of the Constitution in Mexico City and the 7 states previously established (three in the north, three in the center and two in the south of Mexico).
- At least 159 people from civil society organizations working for human rights; 59 civil organizations, the majority involved in human rights; 11 public human rights commissions (Baja California, Nuevo Leon, Chihuahua and Oaxaca); and 15 higher education institutions. Their professional profiles included: public servants, public prosecutors, public defenders, private lawyers, personnel from Human Rights Commissions, students, researchers and law scholars, and members of civil human rights organizations.
- A booklet (250 copies) was drafted and distributed to the facilitator and a notebook to participants (1,000 copies) intended to encourage the multiplication of workshops.³

In legislative terms, the reported scope is:

- Virtual meetings were held with the organizations participating in the project to agree on the criteria for the analysis and preparation of materials published in two state newspapers and which included reflections on the progress of harmonization of state legislation with federal human rights reform.
- An analysis was carried out of the two existing regulatory laws regarding Article I, as well as of the resolution of the Supreme Court regarding the discussion of contradictory arguments. A book was published regarding the standardization of antecedents of the Reform.
- The seminar "International Experiences of Human Rights Constitutional Reform: Challenges and Obstacles for Mexico" was held on 7 and 8 March 2013. This seminar was attended by 22 people and 8 specialists, including two international experts Gaston Chillier, of the Center for Legal and Social Studies of Argentina, and Colombian researcher Gustavo Gallon, both with extensive experience in the defense of human rights and constitutional reform.⁴

The campaign has had no measurable scope.

² Regarding training activities it seems that there were no activities in Mexico City, but in the states within the country to which the project refers. The states and CSOs companions /beneficiaries in each state are: CEPAD (Jalisco); Maria Morelos (Guerrero); Victoria Diez (Guanajuato); COSYDDHAC (Chihuahua); UANL (Academy; Nuevo Leon); CódigoDH (Oaxaca); CCDH Northwest (Baja California).

³ Document IMDHD A.C., CONSTITUTIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICE. FINAL REPORT 2012-2015., pp. 12-13.

⁴ Document IMDHD A.C., CONSTITUTIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICE. FINAL REPORT 2012-2015., p.3.

I.2 General Evaluation

In general terms, IMDHD A.C.'s state counterparts in the execution of this project perceive positively the results of the work developed, although this perception is based mainly on the benefits of the intervention, to the detriment of benefits for third parties (general public), the identification of elements that account for the impact on the implementation process of the Reform, or the identification of increased awareness about the implications that the Reform has for government and the public service.

From this perspective, the quality of the products and activities that were developed by the IMDHD A.C. for the campaign stands out as positive areas. The main positive aspects observed were the quality of the workshops in their content and exhibition, as well as the materials generated from the analysis carried out during the first stage of the project. In second place were some of the products of mass distribution, particularly in the state of Oaxaca. In third place, the establishment of interstate and inter-institutional linkages appeared as a circumstantial result, as a product of the strategy of the work proposed.

Notwithstanding the above, it is possible to identify important technical errors in the formulation of the project, as well as some management and administrative failings in its implementation. Among the first of these, it is worth mentioning design errors such as (a) poor definition of the problem to be addressed (considering in this aspect the identification of the reference population and selection of the target population), (b) logical discontinuity between the proposed objectives and activities, and (c) the erroneous definition of objectives and goals that make it impossible to effectively evaluate the results and impact of the intervention carried out. In terms of implementation, the non-execution of planned activities, as well as the apparent inability to consolidate a campaign that was visible to the general population, are negative aspects that stand out.

From the analysis carried out it can be concluded that although the effort made by the institution in the establishment of a work network and the development of activities provided institutional visibility, it cannot be said that the intervention has been successful in the fulfillment of its objectives, mainly because of a poor design process and, probably consequently, the inability to develop the capacity to accompany the implementation process in such a wide territory. In view of the above, it seems necessary to strengthen technical capabilities regarding the tools used in project design.

I.3 Positive Aspects

Products produced, which include publications, posters and radio spots were recognized by beneficiaries as being of very high quality. It was possible to corroborate the existence of books and manuals as a product of the analysis of the constitutional reform and the reflection on its implementation process, which were identified as very good. Also, access was given to promotional products derived from a contest of posters (postcards), as reported by the people interviewed, which were exhibited in various places in Oaxaca and also in Mexico City. The radio spots were only circumstantially mentioned, although it was noted that some were translated to two indigenous languages.

The coordination work between the participants involved resulted in the strengthening of links between human rights actors from different states. The interviewees said that the project allowed links to be established between some human rights CSOs and academia, which they considered a positive result, in that it opens spaces for future joint activities

Likewise, the beneficiaries highlight in a positive way the possibility provided by the project for establishing coordinated work networks between local civil society organizations, as well as the possibility of joint work between CSOs and state government institutions. Those interviewed agree that the projects allowed them to establish work networks with other institutions with which they had not

had the opportunity to work. They identify this as a strengthening of the human rights network in their region.

In general, the subject of the project was perceived by the beneficiaries as relevant and useful. The most relevant point identified by the interviewees on the IMDHD A.C. project was related to the importance of disseminating the implications of the constitutional reform. In this sense, one of the interviewees emphasized how useful it was to have participated in the workshops developed within the framework of the project.

Regarding the workshops, these were highly valued by the project beneficiaries. One of the highlights of the project implemented by IMDHD A.C., according to the assessment made by the participants interviewed, was the quality of the workshops both in terms of content and speakers. The interviewees agreed that the selection of contents, as well as the clarity of the presentations, enabled them to understand more easily the implications of international human rights law for the State.

The choice of partners in the selected states was correct from the point of view of advocacy. In the states where campaign activities were carried out, the selection of implementing partners stands out for having established links with prominent human rights organizations in the local territory. This selection was particularly successful in the state of Baja California, where one of the members of the organization in charge of implementation had a direct link with the process of training public security institutions.

It must be highlighted that the project has involved multiple CSOs at the local level; thus recognizing and strengthening their work in terms of legitimacy, human rights knowledge and capacities for human rights advocacy and defense. However the involvement of so many different civil society organizations tends to undermine and disperse the potential positive impacts of a broad project like the one of the IMDHD A.C. That is to say, it makes it difficult to focus efforts given the heterogeneity of themes that the CSOs work on. One example of the lack of clear selection criteria for local level stakeholders' selection is the work carried out with the University of Nuevo Leon where the entry point was the Faculty of Toxicology and not the Faculty of Law or the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences.

I.4 Areas of Opportunity

About the project design:

The work proposal seems to lack an in-depth analysis of the problem presented as the reason for the intervention. The only definition of the problem that appears in the program referred to the lack of knowledge on the part of public servants regarding the Reform and its implications for the exercise of their functions. While it is possible to intuitively discern the mechanism by which it is desired to influence the implementation of the Reform, it is not stated within the text of the proposal.

The proposal omits means to construct an alternative solution, and assumes that the dissemination of information is sufficient activity to strengthen the implementation of the Reform. The document with the proposal omits the analysis of alternative solutions, which gives the impression of a solution fit for IMDHD A.C.'s capacities, as it does not justify that the proposal is the optimal approach to the problem identified, or how much it contributes to its solution. This could be considered a result in line with the previous observation.

There was a notable logical discontinuity between the definition of the problem, the proposed purpose, and the proposed activities. The problem posed by the document fails to justify the two objectives proposed. Likewise, considering that the implementation process of the Reform is the responsibility of public institutions, the project failed to justify precisely the activities offered to tackle the proposed objectives.

The project does not justify the choice of the states proposed for the implementation of activities, which may well be the result of a lack of analysis of local needs. In line with the observation about the insufficient construction of the problem, the IMDHD A.C.'s final report notes as one of the lessons learned "the poor exercise of citizenship by the general public." In effect, the interest of the general public in the subject probably should have been considered for the selection of the reference population as part of the design of the intervention proposed, as it is one of the assumptions of the project.

One of the objectives proposed was training in strategic litigation, without justifying its usefulness, nor the way in which this particular tool contributes to the dissemination of the contents of the Reform or the way in which this strengthens its implementation. Although it is possible to understand the selection of this topic intuitively, it is not an activity that stems logically and directly from the approach to the problem and the objectives. It is possible to deduce, given the previous points, that this content was selected in relation to an opportunity to employ one of IMDHD A.C.'s capabilities.

The goals and expected results were not properly drafted. The goals and expected results only inform of an action/activity in process, without giving elements that provide knowledge of the concrete impact/effect that the activities should have on the beneficiary population.

It is not possible to establish a criterion of success for the performance of the project. The lack of indicators, as well as the impossibility of creating them from the goals due to the way they were written, impedes establishing an objective success criterion for the performance of the program. It would be expected that at the end of the project it would be possible to see what has been contributed to the implementation process of the Reform and as well how much the dissemination of information about it has increased.

Finally, the ambiguity of the project is also reflected in the implementation reports, which do not have a clear logic for presenting results, making it difficult to identify relevant information on the achievement and evaluation of results.

About the implementation:

Knowledge of the Campaign by relevant human rights participants not directly involved in the project is scarce. Despite being defined as a wide dissemination campaign on the Reform and its implications, there was no knowledge of it among the interviewees who were not part of the activities developed by the IMDHD A.C., despite all being linked to human rights work in their respective regions. Interviewees were not able to identify promotional products indicated by the institution, and did not even know of their existence.

It should be noted that certain scheduled dissemination activities were not carried out due to unforeseen events or administrative failures. In the city of Oaxaca, through the interviews it was possible to identify two planned activities that were not developed. The human rights concert, which should have gathered a large part of the youth population, generated great interest (even from other states). However, it was called off due to unforeseen weather conditions that forced its suspension at the last moment. Planned mass dissemination activities, in addition to radio spots and social networks, were finally limited to the circulation of a van in the city of Oaxaca announcing the constitutional reform. The person interviewed indicated that as a product of the difficulties related to the coordination and administration of the IMDHD A.C. it was not possible to print other materials (leaflets, posters, etc.) that were expected to be placed in strategic areas of the city for the knowledge of the population in general. Meanwhile, the implementation in Baja California only amounted to paid announcements in state newspapers.

In part as a result of the above, but mainly because of the design, very little of the population benefited from the activities developed. In the case of Oaxaca, the dissemination activities identified by the respondents almost exclusively mentioned the young population as the beneficiary, without being able to identify other beneficiaries. In effect, the work was mainly developed through higher education

institutions (Mesoamerican University) and some colleges. On the other hand, the implementation in Baja California did not show activities of direct impact on the civilian population. The beneficiary population was limited to those that participated in the workshops developed by the partner in the state (two workshops in Mexicali and one in Tijuana).

Just like the beneficiary population, the activities carried out were also scarce in the light of the approach. Although the quality of the workshops was recognized as high, the people interviewed refer only to such workshops (2 in Oaxaca and 3 in Baja California) as activities developed within the framework of the project implementation. To that effect, mass dissemination activities were limited in both states to the placement of some articles in newspapers (access to these was not achieved) and, in Oaxaca alone, to dissemination by other mass media (radio, social networks and graphic media). Considering that the objective of the campaign was to promote the dissemination of the Reform and its implementation, and considering the small number of people that benefited from the dissemination activities, these activities seem insufficient in quantity and type to be considered for achieving the objective.

The activities, from the perception of the people interviewed, were not consolidated in a campaign as such, but rather were seen as isolated actions without a common thread. This assessment is consistent with others if we consider what was stated in the previous observations regarding the failure to generate the synergy necessary for the general population to gain knowledge of the Reform and its consequences for public administration.

Moreover, according to the interviewees, the activities were perceived as being concentrated in specific places to the detriment (or even absence) of work in smaller municipalities. It should be noted that training activities for CSOs took place in Mexico City, where participants had to travel. According to this, and in the strictest sense, it would seem more appropriate to speak of implementation in cities rather than in states.

Finally, the information expressed in the implementation reports and gathered in the interviews does not provide sufficient evidence to support the inclusion of the gender perspective in the development of the project.

I.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

The proposed and developed project shows a precarious technical knowledge of the factors required for the formulation of social projects. The organization reveals deficits in the understanding of the fundamental elements for the formulation of social projects, which probably had repercussions in the implementation of the campaign since the work proposal was not able to guide the expected activities effectively, nor did it provide criteria to evaluate its correct development.

As much from the document analysis as from the interview process, there was a noted absence of elements that allow for an assessment of whether the proposed and developed project in itself provoked a positive impact on the objectives proposed. Although positive elements were identified, they were not related to the objectives of the project, since neither the interviewees nor the intermediate evaluations were able to account for the degree of contribution to the implementation of the Reform, or the increase in the degree of consciousness of the target population with respect to it.

The implementing institution failed to show sufficient institutional capacity to correctly implement the proposed activities in the different geographic areas selected. The establishment of a working network proved insufficient for the development of activities outside the territory in which it usually operates, which led to criticisms of its absence during the process and discontinuity of activities of the Campaign, among others.

In the same way, the implementing institution ended up seeing its effort diluted in less consolidated activities. The effort made by IMDHD A.C. throughout the campaign did not have the expected results in relation to the dissemination of the reform probably due to the dispersion with which it was carried out. Even though it seemed like an innovative and interesting prospect for the participants, it would probably have operated more efficiently if it had been carried out solely in Mexico City.

The idea to track the implementation of the Reform was confused with a tacit problem, not an intervention, which was the CSO's lack of legal defense capacities to deal with the eventual negative results arising from erroneous implementation of the Reform. It is expected that the follow-up carried out for the project results in a correct implementation; therefore it is a contradiction to focus an important part of the training efforts on results that derive from an eventual failure of the project.

It is recommended to strengthen project formulation skills of the IMDHD A.C. As noted earlier, a significant part of implementation difficulties come from the design stage. Increasing technical knowledge in relation to the formulation of social projects would help the development of the institutional capacity for the organization in this matter, increasing its effectiveness.

An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) is recommended prior to the drafting of the final project. Another of the difficulties observed arises from the challenging task of engaging in work in geographical areas in which the IMDHD A.C. does not have direct presence yet rather relies on partners. In this sense it is important to identify the critical points of the intervention that put the fulfillment of the objectives at risk. The SWOT analysis could contribute to awareness of these issues and improve the implementation process of these types of programs.

It is recommended to accompany and collaborate with partners more closely during implementation. In response to one of the criticisms made by project collaborators, it is essential to maintain a constant dialogue, as much remotely as in person, in order to ensure correct understanding of the objectives of the project to be developed, as well as to provide support in moments when situations arise in which partners require assistance.

1.6 Recommendations for USAID

- It is worth reviewing the project in the light of the project formulation tools used. In general terms, a significant part of the program's failures could have been avoided through a correctly executed formulation process. In this sense, the assessment of the pertinence of the project should have considered in its justification a problem and solution tree, and in the development of the activity plan the inclusion of a pertinent logical framework matrix.
- In particular, when formulating the problem, it is appropriate to identify the reference, potential, target and intervention population. Reviewing the proposal considering the identification of these elements can better guarantee the accomplishment of a previous analysis of the beneficiaries of the intervention that anticipates difficulties generated by the non-consideration of characteristics of the population.
- Request the construction of the corresponding logframe matrix (LFA) in the presentation of proposals. The LFA favors coherence between its elements, as well as prior reflection on the implementation process, which in the case of this program would have substantially improved its impact.
- Request the inclusion of indicators to allow the assessment of the success of the program. Under the conditions in which the evaluated project is formulated, it is not possible to evaluate objectively whether it was successful or not, a situation that would be different if pre-established quantifiable goals by means of variables, continuous or discrete, had been considered, that were able to account for the results of the intervention.

- Establish a technical support mechanism prior to or during the application process. Generating technical support alternatives, such as project templates that consider the elements previously mentioned or offer training in project design to the applicant organizations, could benefit both the institution and the organizations, optimizing the quality of the implemented projects.
- Carry out accompaniment to the implementation processes. Eventually, the institution could consider follow-up meetings with the implementers within its financing policies with the aim of providing collaboration during the implementation of the projects, so that there is a mechanism to improve aspects of the programs along the way.

2. INSYDE A.C.

2.1 Activity Overview

The objective of this activity is to To generate a national campaign that "improves the dialogue between civil society and public security and justice prosecutorial authorities, in order to effectively implement the international standards recommended by the UN in the prevention, investigation, sanction and reparation of acts of torture and evaluate the results."

This Campaign is understood to be the first stage of a broad civil society strategy that aims to:

1. Publicly establish the recognition of torture as a real existing practice in the agenda of public security and prosecution of justice.
2. Recognize the need to undertake coordinated actions, with a broad spectrum at many levels, to confront torture in a complex context of violence, insecurity and characterized by a severe mistrust of institutions.
3. Recognize that the existence of practices such as torture challenges the enforcement of human rights, the viability of the criminal justice reform and, in many ways, impedes access to justice for all.

From the above, a series of activities are outlined focused on training/awareness-raising and advocacy.

Scope:

Based on the information that was accessed, the scope of the actions that make up the campaign is listed below:

- The Campaign reached 15 states,⁵ in 13 of which the desired results were achieved. By locality, 24 cities were reached, in 22 of which the desired results were achieved.
- Five basic books were generated on which the Campaign based both its strategy of promotion and agreement with the participating authorities and institutions.
- A 45-hour distance training platform was designed and produced by the Campaign. Student enrollments totaled 2,572 registered persons,⁶ of whom 45% were female (1,157) and 55% (1,415) were male.

⁵ Baja California, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, Sinaloa, Jalisco, Michoacan, Queretaro, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Campeche, Chiapas, Yucatan, Mexico City, Zacatecas. The 15th State (Zacatecas) joined during the last year of the Campaign as a replacement of Tabasco

⁶ Up to INSYDE A.C. final report (January 2016)

- Additional materials were created such as:
 - A DVD with the electronic version of printed books.
 - Three interactive DVDs with three interactive courses on the topics: How to investigate Torture in Mexico; Use of Force; and Victims' Rights Guide.
 - A promotional brochure of the Campaign.
 - A Campaign website at www.sintortura.mx.
 - Campaign Poster.
- II agreements for incorporation to the Campaign (out of a total of 15 scheduled) were also formalized with institutions from 7 states, including a framework agreement for collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission.
- A network of civil society organizations was strengthened in 9 states,⁷ becoming the social base of the Campaign.
- The estimated number of people who attended various training and promotion activities is estimated at 1,620 people.

Furthermore, with respect to advocacy (legislative, legal) the actions covered include:

- A proposal for a Special Law to prevent torture, which was called "Mexico without Torture. Towards A New Grammar of Justice. Proposals for legislative design" which served as input for the preparation of the proposal currently under discussion in the Congress.
- This Special Law proposal was presented in 10 states, with approximately 80 people in attendance per event, and was made available to the state legislatures as input for the design of state legislation on the subject.
- The number of people who attended the presentation events of this Special Law Initiative was approximately 790 people during the Campaign: Mexico City (70); Monterrey (60); Mexicali (80); Guadalajara (100); Querétaro (120); Morelia (twice 180); Oaxaca (50); Saltillo (40); Campeche (40); Ciudad Juárez (50).
- In Michoacán, it was decided to debate it in the state Congress because of a lack of legislation on the matter, and the full text of the proposal was published in its Official Gazette, in the second quarter of 2015. LXXII Legislature Michoacán. H. Congress of the State of Michoacán de Ocampo. Gazette Parliamentary. Second Season. Volume V 155 H. June 3, 2015
- Parallel to the legislative initiative, INSYDE A.C. participated in the design of the Standardized Protocol for the Investigation of Torture, which would be approved by all Attorney Offices and published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on 09/23/2015.
- In addition, a "Unit for Torture Case Investigation" model was worked. This is conceived as the institution where not only knowledge, methodologies and action procedures in the matter will be placed, but where measures will be organized to prevent, investigate and punish torture

⁷ Baja California, Chihuahua, Sinaloa, Michoacan, Mexico City, Coahuila, Oaxaca, Yucatan and Campeche. Baja California, Zacatecas, Oaxaca, Yucatan, Chiapas and Coahuila are 6 states where the best overall results were obtained promoting the tool "How to Investigate Torture?" In the states of Veracruz (150), Chihuahua (110) and DF (10) in table format work, promotional events with an average attendance of about 270 public servants were made. 162 were recorded on the platform.

cases and, where appropriate, to send victims to specialized units who deal with post-traumatic care.

- Regarding the guide "How to Investigate Torture in Mexico" the number of public servants instructed reached 830 (estimated) in 5 states of the country.⁸
- Regarding Human Rights Commissions staff the estimated number of people instructed was 609 people, with 335 civil servants enrolled in the Platform.
- Furthermore, 462 people of Federal and State Detention Centers registered with the platform, and the profile of the students was mainly prison guards, psychologists and lawyers.
- The guide "How to investigate torture in Mexico" was also promoted through two training exercises applying the gender approach, in two states (Sinaloa and Campeche).
- Two tools were also designed to gather information; one, for torture cases, for civil society organizations, in order to build databases of torture cases by state, and the second to contribute to the control of detainees.
- Also, a guide was designed for the legitimate use of police force, simple and understandable for all police.
- In terms of quantitative data, the project worked with 12 civil society organizations with 1,620 direct beneficiaries, 609 people, and officials from state human rights commissions and the National Human Rights Commission. In total, an estimated 2,229 people benefited from the promotion and training of the victims component and the training package separately. The total number of beneficiaries of this project is approximately 8040 people.⁹

2.2 General Evaluation

This project is well coordinated and has been implemented efficiently and timely. Additionally all project activities and impacts are well documented.

It is a civil society project that managed to position a complex issue on the agenda of public institutions, thus becoming the only civil society actor that achieved recognition by government agencies of the existence of the use and practice of torture, therefore permitting the implementation of actions for its prevention.

The project sought to exercise influence different states, both in relation to governmental institutions and at the level of their civil society peers, establishing capabilities for the combat of torture.

It is also a project that strove to be transparent at all times for all the people involved.

2.3 Positive Aspects

Regarding project design:

⁸ According to INSYDE A.C. the calculation basis is an average of 70 people in each of the five states (350), plus the extraordinary record of the state of Coahuila (480). Naturally not all beneficiaries were registered in the distance training platform

⁹ INSYDE A.C. Final Report, p. 69.

The excellent relationship that INSYDE A.C. had with beneficiary partners and those associated with the project, favored that state-level institutions received the project openly. INSYDE A.C. has a wide range of influence and thus the ability to penetrate in all the states with all the relevant institutions.

This was achieved through careful planning and clear strategy, in addition to the professionalism of team members.

The themes of the project were discussed and defined in collaboration with partners in accordance with their needs, without imposing views, and with the flexibility to include or delve into necessary issues as the case may be.¹⁰

INSYDE A.C.'s commitment that the information collected through the performance of its activities with the institutions was confidential, allowed confidence to be generated between the parties. It was understood that the objective of the organization was not to expose or criticize institutional weaknesses but to strengthen them and offer mechanisms to improve their performance and reduce the practice of torture.

What is more, INSYDE A.C. has databases on all the people who participated in the activities and excellent records management.

The organization also took special care in the selection process of the consultants/trainers. For each position, profiles and terms of reference were defined in tight communication between all the staff and technical tests, of knowledge, presentation and teaching capacity, were applied to all the candidates.

Once the consultants were selected, they were trained in INSYDE A.C. and given all necessary support throughout the process of their work development in the organization, with their doubts and concerns taken care of. There was continuous investment in human resources.

The project also demonstrated a close collaboration between the substantive and administrative areas of the organization, which represents a great institutional strength that is accompanied by horizontal organization in which each topic is discussed and agreed upon by everyone. The handling of projects was carried out jointly between consultants, staff and the director of INSYDE A.C.

About the implementation:

Training / awareness:

The quality of the speakers who gave the workshops stands out, for their mastery of the contents and the use of methodologies that facilitated the transmission of knowledge. Teachers were also described as accessible and adaptable to the level of knowledge of a diverse public, as well as imparting useful knowledge.

Interviewees described the usefulness of the training received, as it offered them valuable alternatives to better understand the actions that constitute torture, while reinforcing the use of alternate practices.

Another positive aspect was the possibility of establishing coordinated work networks between local actors and other states, as well as the possibility of CSOs and state institutions working together. The people interviewed agree that the project allowed them to establish work networks with other

¹⁰ Example of Oaxaca: The training of staff of the local Ministry of Public Security, Attorney General and Human Rights Commission are coordinated by the State Government Human Rights Office. However INSYDE A.C. detected deep gaps in the basic knowledge of human rights in local Ministry of Public Security, Attorney General and so extended its training program to include teaching about basic concepts before proceeding with the topic of torture. That is, it managed to adapt its program to the needs of actors in the field.

institutions with whom they had not had the opportunity to work. They identify this as a strengthening of the human rights network in different areas.¹¹

The materials developed in the Campaign as a basis for training were of high quality.

For the implementation of the project in general, it is worth mentioning the impeccable relationship and collaboration that the organization had with the sub-implementing partners in the states. These were selected through a careful exercise of identification of suitable sub-implementers: context-aware partners, who have a human rights profile, who have no conflicting relationship with the government, who seek to strengthen institutions and not discredit them. So in this way, INSYDE A.C. favors the installation and replication of local capabilities, and thus increases the leverage possibilities of the organizations.¹² All sub-implementers complied a timely manner with the activities established in the agreements with INSYDE A.C.

Implementer networks are currently being implemented by the USAID-funded Protect project at a state level. This reflects the fact that capacities were established in local organizations.

There is evidence that INSYDE A.C.'s intervention has been extremely favorable in the prevention of acts of torture.

Increase in the capacity of public prosecutors to avoid torture practices and abuse of force.

In Coahuila, mechanisms for investigating torture cases were installed in the state Attorney General's office. At the beginning of the campaign, officials had no basic human rights or torture knowledge. Some of the torture acts and use of force practices could be attributed to the profound lack of knowledge. This reality has changed positively.

Reduction in the practice of torture perpetrated by officials of the Attorney General's office in Coahuila that were trained.

In Baja California, after the interventions of INSYDE A.C. torture acts perpetrated by the military decreased by 95% (testimonies from interviewed civil society participants).

¹¹ A particularly relevant example is the case of the Observatory of social and gender violence in Campeche. Due to the collaboration with INSYDE A.C., the Observatory managed to improve significantly in terms of case documentation, linking with other institutions (Clinique against Trafficking of the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM for its Spanish acronym)) and even achieved that authorities apply the Istanbul Protocol in Campeche for the first time. Before this collaboration was established, no civil society organization in Campeche had been monitoring cases of torture and sexual torture. It is noteworthy that the issue of torture began to be investigated from a gender perspective in the state and the observatory has documented the normalization of torture and abuse of force by the authorities on women. Observatory networks extend across the states of Yucatan, Michoacan and Chiapas, and include several governmental actors. Also, according to the opinion of the Observatory, INSYDE A.C. achieved that this was more visible to other actors dedicated to defending human rights like the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (which recognizes the Observatory as a defense and support for victims of torture organization), the World Organization Against Torture or the State Commission for Human Rights, an institution in which, after the intervention of INSYDE A.C., they have achieved higher incidence; while it is recognized as a positive recommendation issued by the paradigmatic case of Bolonchén Rejon in that it had significant impact.

¹² Even field sub-implementers managed to increase the scope of training activities: In Chihuahua the distance learning platform was attracted more than 400 members of the federal police. In Campeche, the Observatory of social and gender violence, after training its members, replicated training on torture to women's organizations in Yucatan and Quintana Roo and established the network of women's organizations that accompany, monitor and litigate cases of torture. The Observatory also began to litigate cases, even getting acquittals in two of them. Organizations not previously involved in the matter now have more than 50% of its activities devoted to torture. In Baja California the sub-implementer conducted training for trainers and has replicated INSYDE A.C.'s training exponentially. The sub-implementer organization is being funded for a project of UN-OPCAT for research and monitoring of cases of torture using INSYDE A.C.'s methodology.

In Campeche there is an installed capacity for litigation of cases of torture and litigation with gender perspective. A network of organizations of human rights defense with gender perspective was established in Campeche, Yucatan, Quintana Roo and Chiapas.

2.4 Areas of Opportunity

Work with states, and especially on issues that generate resistance in the government departments/institutions such as torture, requires very intense lobbying and scenarios should be considered where despite the will of the organization, agreements are not concluded; or even, in spite of agreements, the implementation of these are not carried out.

For example, the project was focusing on states where the engagement is much more complex than in the rest: Puebla, Guanajuato, Tabasco, where both the Ministry of Public Security and the Attorney General refused to collaborate although there was recorded evidence of torture there.

Another example of this occurred in Oaxaca where, despite INSYDE A.C. proposing to the Attorney General to work with the staff of the Prosecutor's office for High Impact Crimes, the prosecutor, without explanation, decided not to involve them in training and diverted INSYDE A.C. to other areas: e.g. other crimes, homicides, with less training and abilities to work on these issues. The random decisions of government departments, although not under the control of the organization, should be analyzed according to possible impact scenarios.

In this context, making a larger and deeper analysis of the real opportunities in the different states could be considered, including maps of actors that favor the implementation of actions proposed. In this sense, it would fit to consider a better relationship with high-ranking officials in order to seek institutional arrangements that do not depend on staff turnover.

Furthermore, based on the interviews in the case of Oaxaca, one negative aspect that stands out is in relation to the concentration of activities in Oaxaca capital, to the detriment (or even absence) of work in other municipalities. The people interviewed agreed that the project was mainly (or exclusively) developed in the city of Oaxaca, leaving aside work in municipalities, which may have eventually had the same needs in the subjects addressed.

The guide for the legitimate use of the police force has been well received by partners; however its level of implementation is unknown. INSYDE A.C. does not provide evidence of having achieved an implementation of this at institutional level except as an element of training.

Regarding training, it is important to mention that the application of knowledge tests before and after training was not contemplated, which makes it difficult to evaluate the final impact. Nor were measures contemplated that could demonstrate that training courses have a bearing on the reduction of torture.

In the same sense, the Public Human Rights Commission office is perceived as one of the actors in which the lowest engagement has been achieved (especially those at the federal level) considering its reluctance to collaborate.¹³

Although it is not attributable to INSYDE A.C., it should be mentioned that at the time of the evaluation many of the trained people could no longer be located as they have changed workplaces or contact data. Also the vast majority of institutional directors with whom the initial contact was established to implement the project have also changed. This hinders a permanent and detailed impact assessment.

¹³ Perception recorded during an interview in the state of Campeche.

The failings in the on-line training platform stand out as a negative aspect, as well as its poor accessibility for the people to whom it was directed. This platform suffered a failure that delayed its initial use for a period of approximately four months which led to the loss of interest in a percentage of civil servants who were going to use it. On the other hand, it should be mentioned that the platform was not intuitive for the officials (possibly due to a lack of digital literacy), and that the language used in the contents was not adjusted to be understood more easily.

Furthermore, it is necessary to mention that some of the projected activities could not be implemented. For example, the Proposal to Increase Transparency and respect for human rights in detention centers or the creation of systems of information and indicators on torture.

Although formulated as part of the proposed torture law, it seems that no political arena was found to discuss the implementation of this project objective. There is no evidence that other possible arenas were sought in order to achieve this objective (e.g., approaching the penitentiary system).

In this sense, the design of a database on torture cases, which had pertinent variables, has not managed to engage the authorities. Thus there is a valuable theoretical input but the database does not count with recorded information. This makes it impossible to assess whether there is greater protection of the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty, as an element of this project.

On the other hand, since the beginning no work with the Judicial Branches was projected; nevertheless the need to strengthen the capacities of judicial operators was detected. Therefore at the moment there exists a USAID financed project that deals with this sector. It is considered a gap in the project not to have approached the judiciary considering that the practice of torture should be brought to trial at some point.

In the Cooperation Agreement, INSYDE A.C. was committed to developing "additional monitoring and evaluation techniques to measure the impact of the project ... through focus groups, surveys, and other evaluation instruments and indicators." However, there is no evidence that this took place. Input was received on participant perception of their activities through working groups whose methodology was not explicit in the reported information. INSYDE A.C. did not develop surveys or other measuring instruments.

When the project refers to indirect beneficiaries, it is not clear how the number was calculated, so it is advisable to provide a better explanation of this issue.

The project does not implement the objective on trans-border work.

Finally, the project contemplated the delivery of "Annual Community Reports" and "360 Annual program Evaluation", neither of which was carried out. In the first case, although success stories were made available to USAID, the results of the project were not communicated to the community. In the second case there was no budget and USAID excluded it. In "The Expanding Phase" (p. 14 of the cooperation agreement) an impact assessment was contemplated but it was not carried out.

2.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the strengths identified in the design and implementation of the project, and the areas for improvement referred to, the following recommendations can be considered:

- Strengthen the inclusion of the gender perspective in the project, from its design through specific intervention strategies or by means of explicit incorporation thereof. According to the evidence presented, it would seem that measures related to women's rights were done randomly.

- Design mechanisms for evaluating the impact of the project, including long-term impact measurement, and include in the reports the evaluation instruments adopted.
- Strengthen the explanations of the criteria and selection processes of sub-operators, consultancies, staff participating in the training courses/workshops and of the so-called "strategic" alliances. With regard to the latter, it is suggested to make explicit the results of the work with these strategic alliances.
- Substantiate all that is reported in the project and avoid the use of qualifiers (e.g. "important magistrates", "excellent reception") It is necessary to explain under what criteria these qualifications are made.
- Justify the theoretical basis of the project: explain the reasons for torture and justify why only one aspect, communication, is addressed.

2.6 Recommendations for USAID

- Discuss and agree, before the approval of the project, the reports and evaluations to be carried out. Consider their relevance and then assign the necessary resources to achieve them.
- In the case of the INSYDE A.C.'s project, the approach was to prevent torture acts perpetrated by agents of the state: during training a lot of information on torture practices perpetrated by agents was communicated to INSYDE A.C. and in order to open the spaces for dialogue with the agents it was necessary to treat all information as confidential. This in itself does not allow for detailed reports for the community.
- When projects involve work with institutions that are difficult to engage with or where an opening is unlikely, as mentioned above, it is necessary to define the objectives and scope of the project to ensure implementation. Alternatively, look for flexible implementation alternatives throughout the first year (or first 6 months of the project) and assess whether or not this will be achievable in order to modify the project.
- Carry out a context and stakeholder analysis as profoundly as possible before the approval of a project in order not to approve those components that in advance are unrealistic to implement.

3. Freedom House activity “PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN MEXICO”

3.1 Activity Overview

This activity has three Strategic Objectives as shown below:

Strategic Objective 1: Journalists are more effective at self-protection. This objective is envisaged to achieve through four specific activities:

- Establishment of a Protection Coordination Network amongst Journalists
- Training of journalists on cyber-security
- Civil society emergency support for at-risk journalists
- Professional capacity building of journalists

Strategic Objective 2: Effective involvement of civil society on Freedom of Expression issues is increased.

This would be achieved through:

- Mobilizing support for changes to public policy in Mexico
- Monitoring of cases
- Monitoring of Attacks
- Mobilizing support for changes to public policy outside Mexico

Strategic Objective 3: Institutional framework for prevention and protection of Freedom of Expression violations is strengthened. Proposed actions to achieve this objective include:

- Institutional Strengthening of the National Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists
- Capacity building of authorities on protection mechanisms
- Institutional Strengthening of Federal Prosecution
- Capacity building for federal prosecution authorities

Scope:

According to the information gathered from the reports and as reported by Freedom House in its final report, the institution:

- Improved journalists' resilience through the consolidation of the Journalists' Linking Platform (Plataforma de Vinculación de Periodistas), a solidarity network covering 13 states with 30 active members promoting professionalization and access to justice for journalists.
- Strengthened the capacity of 580 journalists through workshops, seminars and e-learning courses on protection protocols, cybersecurity, risk assessment and other tools to make them more effective in self-protection.
- Carried out extensive promotion efforts at national and international levels to raise awareness of the worsening situation of freedom of expression in Mexico. This included promotion in the Capitol to raise the visibility of violence against journalists in Mexico, the organization of extensive public, academic and cultural events and debates on freedom of expression, and participation in the on-site visit of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to Mexico.
- Carried out a second phase of direct technical assistance to the National Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists, creating more than 15 new technical and methodological tools, including a risk assessment methodology with a gender perspective, self-protection methodology and a set of indicators to monitor the implementation of protection measures, as well as training more than 50 government officials in the use of these instruments to enable the institution to meet its mandate.

On the mechanism of protection for defenders and journalists:

In April 2014, with the appointment of a new National Executive Coordinator of the National Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists,¹⁴ Freedom House initiated a support process for its strengthening through accompaniment from a group of experts.

After forming a team with officials from other governmental agencies, they were trained in tools and suitable methods to carry out risk assessments. At the same time, work has been done on outlining the processes and procedures that the Mechanism should carry out in order to be efficient. There is now a precise description of what needs to be done to protect people at risk and exactly which Mechanism official has the obligation to act.

Likewise, risk assessment was made more efficient, and methodologies were provided for: a) analyzing the risk of a journalist or individual cases; b) for women defenders and journalists; and, c) for determining the risk faced by a group, community or organization.

After a complicated administrative process, the Trust - where resources allocated to the Mechanism are received each year - commenced working and covered the cost of protection measures for journalists and human rights defenders.

Concrete results are highlighted as:

- Creation of Protocols and Procedures: Glossary and Conceptual Framework, Process and Procedures Manual, Methodological document, Format analysis for actors and relationships, Risk scenarios format, Risk hypothesis format, Timeline format, Territorial Dynamics Map format, Risk Map format, Contingency plan protocol format, Risk assessment matrix, Wall of variables, among others.
- The Prevention, Monitoring and Analysis Unit was able to appropriate itself with basic working documents: Conceptual framework; Functions and profiles of the Unit's staff; Prevention Manual, Monitoring and Risk Analysis model; Prevention Measures Catalog and minimum methodologies for this approach; Early Warnings model and contingency plans; Evaluation and information indicators; and training program, among others.
- Application of the prevention methodologies gave rise to the Early Warning mechanisms in Chihuahua and Veracruz.

3.2 General Evaluation

The evaluation is divided into two parts relating to each of the elements of the project.

On the component of freedom of expression and protection of journalists, despite the multiple activities carried out in the project, the general perception is that it managed to initiate a process of linking (through the formation of journalists networks) and strengthening of personal security measures, but didn't succeed in consolidating knowledge, networks, or in improving relationships with local governments.

However, it was successful in visualizing the risk situation that journalists face in those locations where the project had an impact.

¹⁴ In June 2012 the Law for the protection of human rights defenders and journalists was enacted. It establishes the obligation to create a mechanism to protect these groups, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior. It began operating in late October of 2012.

It is noteworthy that both in Veracruz and in the region of La Laguna County it is observed that the journalists who work in the police information section were not considered as strategic beneficiaries of the training.

In some spaces, it would seem that widely recognized journalists who might have benefited from the project seem to have been left out.

On the component of the protection mechanism, an evaluation is made in the conclusions and recommendations section.

3.3 Positive Aspects

On the freedom of expression component:

- The FH project has helped to make the topic of journalists' security more visible.
- The activities of FH encouraged journalists to have a greater awareness about the need to procure their own integrity.
- There is a general perception of the usefulness of training courses and workshops among participants, especially regarding the use of security protocols. According to the interviewees between 70% and 80% of the information/knowledge/tools acquired in the courses have been used in their everyday work.
- The preparation of the risk maps provides substantive information for journalistic practice, although they should be continuously updated. The risk analyses in Guerrero and Veracruz were carried out despite not being included in the original work plan.
- The formation and strengthening of journalist networks is an achievement in itself. The very idea of the network improves the perception of security for its members. The construction of the network has provided support and relationship possibilities for members of the network.
- It is considered an achievement also to have “grounded” this project with local realities. A substantial part of the courses was to recognize what kind of threat journalists faced.
- Both mainstream journalists, as well as dissenting ones have recognized each other and work together as a group.
- Certain level of improvement of the relationship between journalists and local authorities can be observed (e.g. in the state of Veracruz).

On the component of the Protection Mechanisms for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists:

- A team that carries out risk assessment studies to determine the type of risk faced by applicants and to propose measures that correspond to the situation, has been formed.
- The processes and procedures for the functioning of the Mechanism are clearly established; as such discretion has been left behind.
- Specialized methodologies for evaluating women defenders, journalists, groups and organizations collectively are defined.
- Protection measures were put into operation within reasonable times and there are sufficient economic resources to maintain them (although their sustainability is not assured in the future).
- A minimal team has been formed to make up the third unit of the Mechanism: Prevention, Monitoring and Analysis Unit, and its methodology of work was established in a relatively short

time. Work was done to make an assessment about the situation of journalists and the establishment of respective contingency plan in Chihuahua and Veracruz.

- A culture of openness to external technical assistance was developed within Mexican government representatives.
- Freedom House made the structure and mandate of the Mechanism operational by Law. It was also able to identify areas of opportunity in the work of the Mechanism and how to resolve them without having to reform the Regulations or the Law.
- Freedom House played an important mediation role in times of distrust and tension between the Mechanism and civil society.
- Freedom House managed to build trust with all the actors, and avoided being seen as a tool in the service of only one of the parties.

3.4 Areas of Opportunity

On the component of freedom of expression:

- Despite a wide offer of training courses and workshops for journalists, the invitation to participate in those that were of interest was not extended widely; rather private invitations were made without making transparent the method of course-person selection.
- The need for a stress management workshop was identified but the course was never carried out.
- It is also important to note that training of civil society organizations at a state level has not been achieved.
- It is evident that the monitoring of the project implementation was not enough, and no measures were taken that could have strengthened the participation of journalists, of networks, or achieving better communication with local stakeholders.
- There was a lack of articulation of the objectives of the journalist network.
- It is considered that - with some minor exceptions - there has been no substantial improvement in the relationship between journalists and government actors.
- It would have been necessary to include aspects such as cybernetic and psychological risk in the development of risk maps.
- There has been no improvement in the relationship between journalists and government actors; at the municipal and state level violence against journalists continues.

On the component of the Protection Mechanisms for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists:

- The project failed to institutionalize the capabilities and tools developed for and within the Mechanism. In addition to the financial cuts that are looming, this puts their sustainability at risk, and the members of the Governing Committee (Junta de Gobierno) are beginning to raise alerts about the incorrect application of the methodologies elaborated.
- In the same way, the project did not construct an exit route from the mechanism process that would permit partners to generate follow-up commitments relating to action taken (with the necessary quality).

- The technical instrument of risk analysis is an Excel format, and despite its simplicity, there are still limitations therein of the personnel that apply them.
- Although there are approved methodologies, the technical skills required to implement them have not been fully introduced. A concrete example is that to be an analyst one should have good interviewing techniques, but that skill was not a capacity that formed part of the training.
- At the beginning, Freedom House did not know how to relate with civil society groups. The lack of communication and transparency about the objective/content of the project sowed a seed of suspicion in various civil organizations that took time to overcome, this only being achieved almost to the end of the project.
- Supervision mechanisms were only considered for the risk analysis stage, but areas in the overall process remained without more regular monitoring (admission, closure, etc.)
- The full inclusion of gender perspective was not achieved, and although ad hoc methodologies were created, it was somewhat isolated as to refer to "women's cases".

3.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

On the freedom of expression component:

- Greater continuity in courses is required given the changing security needs of journalists.
- Emphasize less obvious aspects of security, such as information handling.
- The possibility of repetition of the project will be largely determined by the authority of the replicator: empowerment is required, and also strengthening the credibility of the replicators within the field.
- The risk map could have a more complete perspective: considering the cybernetic and psychological security of journalists is imperative.
- In order to attract more journalists, networks should consider going beyond security issues only and focus on other issues of interest to information professionals.
- Consider a training course for the actors that have an impact on the decision-making of information companies; traditional media reporters are not backed by their companies.
- Consider training aimed at civil servants that have a daily relationship with the media.
- Clarify the selection criteria of local partners
- Given the working conditions of the journalists, an area of opportunity to be addressed in the project would be to encourage the presence of links in the area where they perform their function: a promotion or a new job opportunity in another region is attractive for many journalists belonging to the network. Thus seeking to influence this scenario would increase the chances of replication that this project aims at.

On the component of the Protection Mechanisms for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists:

There is a very positive general perception about the work and the results of the contribution of Freedom House. This project showed that learning from other countries' practices can be acquired in less time thanks to the transfer of knowledge and experience. It was also demonstrated that shared criteria could be built between civil society and government actors to provide effective protection.

Outside of the reach of Freedom House (and therefore of USAID) is the complexity of the Mechanism's functioning in that it is a temporary response to a emergency situations and the same institutions that do not usually respond are those who are being asked to react in extraordinary situations. Although the path outlined by Freedom House was encouraging, the profile of the assigned officials, administrative bureaucracy and the lack of external oversight could be an obstacle to the correct application of the methodologies developed during the Freedom House's project.

The presence of Freedom House was perceived as a counterweight and a supervising agent. Now this function remains in the hands of the Consultative Council and its members do not have all the information, capacities and time to be accompanying or evaluating the daily work of the Mechanism.

The project merited a greater institutional and political analysis with the purpose of understanding the limitations that its implementation and sustainability would have.¹⁵

In this context it is recommended to:

- Compare the reported results with the initial assessment of the panorama at the beginning of the project and from there identify the objective contributions.
- Continue providing technical advice, in a variety of ways.
- Make greater efforts to integrate the gender perspective, and elaborate the work on “collective measures”. This means not just confining to risk analysis or segregating information when it comes to “women” or “communities”, but keeping that perspective at all times.
- Increase civil society's participation that allows a fluid dialogue to be maintained, primarily with those organizations specialized in the subject. It is understood that the project was aimed mainly at civil servants, but it would have been necessary to communicate it from the outset with civil society to generate greater confidence in the Mechanism.

3.6 Recommendations to USAID

- Verify that projects effectively consider capacity building, especially in institutional strengthening processes (e.g. in the case of the Protection Mechanism), in such a way as to permit the sustainability of actions in favor of human rights.
- USAID cannot become an actor of political advocacy, despite the “demand” from beneficiaries in this regard.
- Coordinate the selection of sub-implementer together with the implementing partner in order to assure their pertinence and maintain close cooperation and accountability during the project implementation.

¹⁵ In the case of a project that needs clear political support for it to take place; it would have been necessary to perform an analysis of local and national actors (governments) because it required greater political commitment from the states. Including an analysis of the administrative operation of the Interior Ministry in order to make proposals in line with internal guidelines (labor and incentives situations, operation of trust) would also have been beneficial. There were some organizations that looked suspiciously at funding by USAID, and ignorance of the content of the project, allowed prejudice to be maintained.

SECTION 2. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO USAID MEXICO HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM

The following suggestions and observations are obtained through the analysis of the documents of the three projects (cooperation agreements, previously made periodic/annual/final/milestones/evaluations reports) and the collection of information from beneficiaries, members of the organizations financed and sub-implementers:

- Before approval of projects to be evaluated by USAID for funding it is suggested that:
 - Monitoring, follow-up and impact evaluation mechanisms are discussed in detail with institutions/organizations requesting funds. It is evident from the documentation provided that, although these components are contemplated in the cooperation agreements, the funded organizations have not actually done this. Apparently this is a problem of planning because the lack of time and budget was part of the explanation that was shared by the funded organizations. This results in there being virtually no impact measurement of the projects.
 - In this regard, it is important to review USAID requirements, or to provide funds/time for implementation, or to agree on clear results measurement mechanisms with the funded institutions.
- Discuss with the applicants in detail the political and institutional context in which the project is to be developed in order to identify in a timely manner the objectives of the projects that cannot be implemented (see for example INSYDE A.C. project).¹⁶
- In this context, it is important that USAID carries out a thorough evaluation of the feasibility of implementing the objectives set by the projects.
- In cases where projects with unreachable objectives are approved, it is recommendable to dedicate a period at the beginning of the project to identify obstacles to implementation, to consider the reformulation or elimination of objectives, to consider replacing them with other objectives or to consider the reduction of funds if it is essential to eliminate objectives.
- Discuss and agree as widely as possible how the applicants will implement projects with a gender perspective and a focus on vulnerable groups. It is noted that the projects propose work with this focus (the evaluation team was informed that this is a requirement of USAID). However work is not carried out with a gender approach and focus on groups in situations of discrimination/vulnerability. There is no planning for this work; in cases where it has happened it has been done ad hoc or when the contextual opportunity has been presented. For example, in the case of Freedom House, there is strong criticism from all the interviewed actors that the gender perspective protocols only focused on the female population, and the community

¹⁶ Example of monitoring system in torture cases: the indicators and monitoring systems provide information only if they are adopted and implemented by the responsible institutions. This requires human, financial, technical and computer resources; and if institutions do not have these contemplated and budgeted it is impossible to achieve results. The installation of human rights indicators in public institutions is a process that takes at least two years and the result is not even certain. To produce quantitative data institutions requires at least two more years.

focused protocols only focused on the indigenous population. It is advisable to either define the implementation of gender/groups focus, or once the first implementation reports have been obtained and gaps in the work detected, exert more pressure.

- Discuss and clarify, prior to the approval of the projects, their theoretical bases and the cause-effect relationships being stipulated. For example, in the IMDHD A.C. project there is the assumption that a campaign to spread the content of the constitutional reform among young people will reduce potential violations of their human rights. The bill stipulates that knowledge of their rights will allow them to demand and enforce them (which in itself is correct) but does not focus on the fact that it is the State institutions that are obliged to prevent violations and guarantee compliance. Paradoxically, the burden of greater enjoyment of human rights is placed in the hands of the youth. Also in the case of IMDHD A.C., very good quality visual and informative material had been produced; however there is no practical evidence that the dissemination and exposure of this material is the means to increase the level of compliance with human rights in Mexico.
- In all projects consider expanding their implementation in spaces outside the capitals or the larger cities. There is a repeated claim by the beneficiaries of the Freedom House project and the IMDHD A.C. that the projects did not reach the population outside the capitals where, on many occasions, the needs and risks for people are higher.
- Define in advance criteria and formats in which information should be kept, especially of the beneficiaries of the projects. In the case of IMDHD A.C., registration is extremely limited (it consists of handwritten, scanned and difficult to read lists). Moreover, this is only in cases where the IMDHD A.C. has provided training. In cases of working with partners there are no registration lists and there is no way to retrieve them. This has not only hindered the identification of people who could be interviewed, but also prevents a reliable evaluation of project results and also verify that the information presented in the organization's reports is true.
- Asking for more information about the strategies and the logic of project implementation should be considered: for example, one of the criticisms made to Freedom House is that they focused on strengthening and training reporters but did not involve the media owners or the publishers, whose role in strengthening work without risk to reporters is paramount. It is not known if an attempt was made to approach owners/publishers.
- The vast majority of people interviewed believe that USAID's cooperation should continue focusing on projects with Mexican implementers, exercising greater control over implementation. The decision to channel the investment through large implementers like MSI or Chemonix, who are unaware of the reality in the country has been criticized: "When financing protection mechanisms, the international cooperation should assure that all calls for applications count with criteria for evaluating if potential implementers count with the necessary expertise and knowledge for carrying out the projects and for achieving both the international cooperation objectives and the proper project objectives." (citing Juan Carlos Botero). The fact that these implementers hire local personnel who in many cases do not know the problem on which they are going to work and are forced to hire consultancies, is criticized: this is perceived as an unnecessary expenditure of funds.
- Exercise greater control over the processes in the government that are financed with USAID funds. For example, the following is unanimously communicated: "If USAID funds are used to create job profiles, USAID can intervene in cases where people with an appropriate profile are not hired"; "If USAID funds are used to improve risk assessment, USAID can monitor whether the evaluation is appropriate and, if it is not, to exert pressure to improve quality ... or withdraw

funds.” Counselors and beneficiaries of the Protection Mechanism consider that the Government is “using” USAID without achieving better results and without focusing on the sustainability and quality of its work, knowing that USAID will not withdraw its support. Juan Carlos Botero stresses that “USAID must count with criteria for the follow-up and evaluation of its projects; criteria that permit to determine the degree to which implementers have achieved established goals and the degree to which target institutions have been strengthened.”

ANNEXES

1. Statement Of Work
2. Evaluation Design and Methods

Scope of Work

Performance Evaluation of USAID/Mexico's Human Rights Program

I. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

USAID/Mexico plans to fund an external evaluation of its human rights program to (1) assess the effectiveness of technical assistance, approaches and tools developed to support journalists, human rights defenders, civil society organizations (CSOs) and local and federal Government of Mexico (GOM) and (2) identify best practices to inform USAID/Mexico and other stakeholders' future programming in the area of human rights.

Specifically, the focus of this evaluation will be on the effectiveness of USAID/Mexico's interventions in the improvement of Mexico's human rights (namely, in the areas of torture prevention, protection of freedom of expression through support to journalists and human rights defenders and constitutional human rights practice).

II. BACKGROUND

USAID/Mexico's portfolio is designed to support the GOM efforts to address key challenges to improving citizen security, justice, human rights and environmental sustainability, with program approaches specifically tailored to the unique U.S.-Mexico relationship. USAID/Mexico's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) FY 2014-2018 was approved in April 2014 and addresses four Development Objectives (DO's) that are priorities for both the U.S. Government and GOM:

1. Crime and violence prevention models replicated by local stakeholders;
2. Constitutional criminal justice reforms of 2008 are operational in Mexican states;
3. Enabling environment to protect human rights and prevent abuses improved; and,
4. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduced in Target Key Sectors.

Programs under the Merida Initiative ¹ focus on the first three DOs listed above. Under DO 3, USAID seeks to improve Mexico's enabling environment to protect human rights and prevent abuses. An enabling environment that provides the foundation for the protection of human rights is characterized by specific laws and policies consistent with international standards, mechanisms that help, enforce, safeguard and protect these rights and an informed citizenry that can advocate for rights and access public protection, when needed.

¹ The Merida Initiative is an unprecedented partnership between the United States and Mexico to fight organized crime and associated violence while furthering respect for human rights and the rule of law. From <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/merida/>

III. HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANCE

a. USAID's Human Rights Overview

Since 2009, the United Nations, via its Universal Period Review, and the Organization of American States' (OAS)'s Human Rights bodies have issued numerous international human rights recommendations to Mexico on torture, disappeared persons, aggression against human rights defenders and journalists, and violence against women, among others. Problems reported by the GOM's National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) also include kidnappings, arbitrary arrest and detention; domestic violence; increased threats and violence against journalists and social media users that rely on blogs and 'tweets' to relay information about on-the-ground security developments and reports; threats and violence against human rights defenders; and trafficking in persons. The 2013 U.S. Department of State Human Rights Report for Mexico cites the persistence of violence stemming from the presence of transnational and local criminal organizations.

The GOM has worked to address these recommendations through various measures such as elevating Mexico's obligations under international treaties to a Constitutional level, developing a National Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists, and empowering federal authorities to investigate and prosecute human rights violators.

However, according to the GOM-led 2014 assessment that informed its National Human Rights Plan (NHRP), the GOM has publicly supported international human rights agreements, but has yet to incorporate the agreements' principles into its internal policies. While the GOM has taken many positive steps, civil society organizations (CSOs) in general still believe that there is a need for federal institutions to prioritize human rights through programs and policies. In particular, the GOM's 2014 assessment noted the need for an improved legislative framework at both federal and state levels, including clearly defined guidelines and procedures, as well as the implementation of effective policies to protect and promote human rights.

b. USAID's Human Rights Portfolio

USAID advances the protection of human rights and prevents abuses by providing technical assistance to the GOM and CSOs' efforts in human rights protection, public outreach and raising awareness of human rights violations at the state and national levels. USAID is currently funding the following activities and will continue to support efforts to advance the protection of human rights in line with the USAID/Mexico CDCS.

Constitutional Human Rights Practice

Implementer: Instituto Mexicano de Derechos Humanos y Democracia (IMDHD)

Period of implementation: September 2012 to September 2015

Total Estimated Cost: \$1,500,000

This activity aims to support the implementation of Mexico's 2011 Human Rights Constitutional Reform, that places international human rights treaties signed by Mexico at the level of the Constitution, by conducting an analysis of existing implementation efforts, providing training on

the reform's application to both government officials and civil society, and providing technical assistance for harmonizing legislation at the local level in eight states including Baja California, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Mexico City, Jalisco Nuevo Leon and Oaxaca. The project also undertakes a communication campaign in three of those states to raise awareness about this reform.

National Campaign to Prevent Torture and other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment

Implementer: Instituto para la Seguridad y la Democracia (INSYDE)

Period of implementation: September 2012 to September 2015

Total Estimated Cost: \$1,250,000

This activity supports efforts to prevent the use of torture through public awareness campaigns and training activities that enable civil society, public security and justice institutions and actors to effectively apply international human rights standards in fifteen different states including Baja California, Campeche, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Estado de Mexico, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Mexico City, Michoacan, Morelos, Nuevo Leon, Oaxaca, Tabasco Zacatecas, Queretaro.

The activity has the following objectives: to improve dialogue between civil society and public security and justice institutions and actors to promote the application of international standards on human rights; and develop and Launch National Campaign to Prevent Torture. The National Campaign promotes constructive dialogue between government and civil society and informs citizens, civil society and victims of their rights and the institutional mechanisms that guarantee them.

Protecting Human Rights and Freedom of Expression in Mexico

Implementer: Freedom House

Period of Implementation: September 2011 to September 2015

Total Estimated Cost: \$5,873,500

This activity supports work with the GOM and civil society to strengthen both protection and prevention efforts, putting into place the long-term mechanisms that help journalists and human rights defenders perform their functions, while minimizing their security risks. The activity also seeks to enhance civil society/government efforts to protect the freedom of expression. The project objectives include work with federal and local government and civil society to protect journalists and human rights defenders from violence, provide technical assistance to the GOM to strengthen the National Mechanism to Protect Journalists and other Human Rights Defenders, develop strategic partnerships with civil society to build its capacity to respond to threats and advocate for increased protection and apply lessons learned from international best practices in protecting freedom of expression. Activities include work at the federal level and in states such as Chihuahua, Coahuila, Guerrero, Mexico City, Michoacan Sinaloa and Veracruz. Although activities take place in these states, beneficiaries of the activities reach journalists and CSOs from more than 22 states.

c. Evaluation Questions

Note: The term “beneficiary” refers to participants in USAID-funded human rights activities between 2011-2015, and includes GOM officials, human rights defenders, journalists and human rights CSOs.

1. *Have beneficiaries applied the knowledge, skills and/or tools they have acquired from USAID/Mexico’s human rights activities to improve the protection of human rights? If yes, please elaborate how and in what setting. If the response is negative, please explain why.*

Translation: ¿Los conocimientos, destrezas o herramientas para proteger los derechos humanos adquiridas a través de la asistencia de USAID son aplicados por los beneficiarios? Favor de detallar la respuesta en cómo y en qué casos se han aplicado. En caso negativo, explicar por qué.

2. *In general, are CSO beneficiaries (journalists and human rights defenders) satisfied with the assistance that USAID provided? What aspects of these approaches and tools were particularly effective? Which could be improved?*

Translation: En general, las organizaciones de la sociedad civil (incluyendo periodistas y personas defensoras de derechos humanos) se sienten satisfechas con la asistencia provista por USAID? ¿Qué aspectos del enfoque utilizado y qué herramientas han resultado particularmente efectivas? ¿Cuáles podrían mejorarse?

3. *In general, are GOM beneficiaries satisfied with the assistance that USAID provided? What aspects of these approaches and tools were particularly effective? Which could be improved?*

Translation: En general, los beneficiarios del gobierno de México se sienten satisfechos con la asistencia provista por USAID? ¿Qué aspectos del enfoque utilizado y qué herramientas han resultado particularmente efectivas? ¿Cuáles podrían mejorarse?

d. Evaluation Design and Methodology

This evaluation will determine what type of USAID-funded technical assistance, approaches and tools to support journalists, human rights defenders, civil society organizations and local and federal GOM were effective or not and why. The evaluation findings will be used to inform USAID/Mexico and other stakeholders’ future programming in the area of human rights.

The Contractor will evaluate programming currently implemented by USAID-supported CSOs and participating journalists, human rights defenders and GOM institutions to determine the overall effectiveness of the approaches and tools implemented in the context of improving the protection of human rights, mainly that relate to strengthening of legal frameworks and the GOM

and CSOs capacity to prevent torture, protection of the right to freedom of expression, and implementation of the Constitutional Human Rights Reform.

The evaluation must comply with the terms and criteria outlined in USAID’s Evaluation Policy, particularly those included in Appendix I.² The Evaluation shall utilize both quantitative and qualitative data from a desk review, questionnaires or surveys, direct observation as well as interviews with CSOs, human rights defenders, journalists and GOM institutions (both trainers and participants) who are/were beneficiaries of USAID-funded activities. The contractor will coordinate with USAID implementers to set and conduct interviews, surveys, and others.

The techniques should consider a representative the number of beneficiaries from USAID assistance to be determined in consultation with USAID.

The findings will be shared with key stakeholders in Mexico and within the USG. All indicators must be disaggregated by location (federal or state). “People-level indicators, must be disaggregated by sex, category” of participant (i.e. GOM official, CSO member, journalists), and where applicable.

The contractor will implement the evaluation considering that human rights is a sensitive issue. Contractor will perform the evaluation with the “do no harm” principle.³ Additionally, the contractor will bear in mind that while performing the evaluation they should secure the bilateral relation between the United States Government and the Mexican Government.

e. Geographic Locations and Individuals to Include in Evaluation

Geographic locations

The evaluation must cover interventions carried out by USAID’s implementing partners in a minimum of five of the project’s targeted states (Queretaro, Baja California, Campeche, Chihuahua, and Oaxaca) and Mexico City. The evaluation will include the following stakeholders (i.e. meet with them and/or have focus groups with) to collect information to be used in the evaluation:

Implementers

GOM Federal entities or units:

- Secretary of the Interior’s (SEGOB) Undersecretary for Human Rights;

² Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/USAIDEvaluationPolicy.pdf>

³ The Do No Harm principle dictates that peacebuilding interventions must not put those living in violent contexts at greater risk than they would otherwise face without the intervention. More information available at: Do No Harm Project. CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Inc. <http://www.cdainc.com> Other available resources: <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/200mbe.pdf> <http://www.principletopractice.org/from-principle-to-practice/a-brief-history-of-the-do-no-harm-project/> and http://www.donoharm.info/downloads/level000/Seven_Steps_English.pdf

- Members of the Federal Mechanism to Protect Human Rights Defenders and Journalists, including the Mechanism’s National Executive Commission, the Attorney General’s Office (PGR) Special Prosecutor for Crimes Against Freedom of Expression, the Foreign Ministry’s Undersecretary for Human Rights;
- National Security Commissioner (Federal Police); and
- National Human Rights Commission

Civil society organizations

- USAID grantee’s partners/local operators and sub-grantees

Other stakeholders or participants

- USAID-supported journalists
- USAID-supported human rights defenders

f. Intended Audiences

The primary audience for this evaluation is USAID/Mexico. Secondary audiences include the wider U.S. Embassy Mexico, USAID offices in Washington, and other implementers of efforts to address human rights issues. Evaluation findings will inform USAID/Mexico’s human rights programming and it will provide implementing partners and other human rights activists with valuable information for decision making, strategic planning and activity design.

IV. EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION

a. Period of performance

The period of performance for this SOW is expected to be approximately three months from the date of the award.

b. Budget

The applicant must submit a proposed budget that matches the proposed evaluation methodology, staffing plan, timeline, and fieldwork. Proposed budget must not exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold of \$150,000.

c. Fieldwork

The contractor will be responsible for arranging travel logistics to/from Mexico and within Mexico (e.g., plane tickets, vehicle rental and drivers, hotel accommodations, meeting spaces, etc.). USAID/Mexico will be available to the evaluation team for consultations regarding logistics related to fieldwork but will not be responsible for the team’s scheduling, hotel reservations, transportation etc.

d. Inspection and Acceptance of the Report

40% will be paid upon start of field visits. The remaining 60% will be paid upon receipt and acceptance of the final report.

e. Technical Direction

The Contractor shall work under the technical direction of the USAID/Mexico Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).

V. SCHEDULE, DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING

The evaluation will start on or about September 3, 2015. Approximately two weeks will be devoted to desk review and research. The following two – three weeks will be dedicated to field work in Mexico. The final weeks of the evaluation will be reserved for analyzing the data and writing drafts and the final report.

All deliverables (described later) must be completed by week 12 (assuming a start date of September 3rd).

Evaluation team activities will include a desk review of available, relevant reports, evaluations and documents to inform the evaluation design (see Appendix for partial list of documents).

The following is a list of required deliverables:

- a. In-briefing:** The evaluation team will have an in-briefing meeting with USAID/Mexico (this in-brief may include the Mission Director, Deputy Mission Director, Program Officer, and Justice and Citizen Security Team). The team must read and review USAID's Evaluation Policy.
- b. Briefing and Interim Meetings:** The evaluation team is expected to hold meetings with USAID every two weeks to provide an update on the status of the evaluation and discuss potential challenges and emerging opportunities. The team will also provide USAID/Mexico COR with periodic briefings and feedback on the team's findings, as agreed upon during the in-briefing. If desired or necessary, weekly briefings by phone can be arranged between USAID/Mexico COR and the evaluation team.
- c. Final Exit Briefing:** Upon completion the field visits, the evaluation team will hold a final exit briefing at USAID/Mexico to discuss the status of data collection and preliminary findings. The exit briefing will include a power point presentation in English.
- d. First Draft Evaluation Report:** The first draft evaluation report must be consistent with the guidance provided in the Final Evaluation Reports section. The draft report will answer each of the questions identified in the SOW and any other issues the team considers to have a bearing on the objectives of the evaluation. Any such issues can be included in the report only after consultation with USAID. The submission date for the first draft evaluation report will be on/or about week 7 of implementation.

- e. **Second Draft Evaluation Report:** The second draft evaluation report will incorporate feedback from USAID on the first draft report. USAID will then review the second draft version and provide additional feedback (if applicable) to incorporate into the final evaluation report. The submission date for the second draft evaluation report will be on or about week 9 of implementation.
- f. **Final Evaluation Report:** The evaluation team leader will submit the final report to the USAID/Mexico COR. The draft report must be proof-read and no more than 30 pages (not including annexes) and should adequately answer each evaluation question, with clear reference to sources and ample use of both quantitative and qualitative information to support the findings. The evaluation report must be submitted separately in English and Spanish, be in electronic form in an easily readable format, well-organized and have documented that it complies with USAID’s Evaluation Policy. The submission date for the final evaluation report will be on/or about week 12 of implementation.

The report should disaggregate data by type of beneficiary group (GOM, CSOs, human rights defenders and journalists), by location (targeted states and Mexico City), sex and other unforeseen considerations (i.e. gender considerations, social media users, etc.). The evaluation will not be based ONLY on “yes” or “no” close-ended answers, but will include an analysis of the open-ended questions. Visual aids such as maps, charts must be incorporated where relevant to better reflect results.

It is expected that the evaluation approach and methodology follow internationally-recognized evaluation standards. The evaluation methodology should be described and must include a combination of qualitative and quantitative data which form the basis of the data analysis plan to answer the evaluation questions. The findings, conclusions and recommendations must be based on evidence that has been triangulated among more than one data source (i.e. secondary data and primary data, more than one interviewee, etc.) and answer the evaluation questions.

It must contain the following sections:

- Table of contents
- Acronyms, abbreviations, and translations
- Executive summary (3-5 pages)
- Introduction and background
- Evaluation methodology, including a discussion of the identified evaluation’s limitations
- Evaluation questions
- Findings and conclusions and related evidence, data, analysis, and discussion
- Recommendations to USAID/Mexico and to other stakeholders

Annexes:

- Evaluation statement of work
- Evaluation work plan
- All evaluation tools (questionnaires, checklists, discussion or interview questions, surveys)

- All data gathered or referenced
- Sources (key informants, documents reviewed, other sources of related information, statement(s) of differences if applicable, etc.)
- Any other pertinent information

Additionally, the contractor will submit an edited version for public purposes. Criteria for this version will maintain the confidentiality of individual beneficiaries and be guided by the “do no harm principle” to protect the beneficiaries of USAID assistance and interviewees participating in this evaluation. This version will not include the annexes.

VIII. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The Evaluation Team Leader will oversee the design and implementation of the evaluation and be fluent in both English and Spanish (proven skills in reading, writing and oral) and hold a Master’s or Doctorate Degree in a relevant field. He/she will serve as the primary liaison with USAID/Mexico. The team leader will have at least five years proven experience in conducting performance evaluations relevant social science areas, ideally in human rights programming.

The Team members must be fluent in English and Spanish (proven skills in reading, writing, oral). The team must be comprised of at least a social science researcher (i.e. evaluation of social projects, design, methods, management, and implementation) with at least five years proven experience and a technical subject matter expert with at least five years proven experience in human rights.

All team members will be required to provide a signed statement of no conflict of interest (or describing an existing conflict of interest) and a statement of confidentiality with the subject matter of the evaluation or any of the implementers being evaluated.

APPENDIX

Below is a partial list of relevant reports, assessments and other documents on human rights assistance. The Contractor is encouraged to review additional, relevant reports and documents prior to carrying out the evaluation.

U.S. Government

USAID Mexico Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) -
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1869/Mexico%20CDCS%202014%202018.pdf>

State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 -
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/236914.pdf>

USAID/Mexico Assessment on the Current Situation of Human Rights in Mexico and Human Rights Strategy 2012 - Will be provided by USAID after award

USAID/Mexico Assessment on areas of opportunity to strengthen civil society organizations capacities on protection 2013 - Will be provided by USAID after award

USAID/Mexico Assessment on the National Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists 2013 - Will be provided by USAID after award

USAID/Mexico Assessment on Human Rights Public Policies 2013 - Will be provided by USAID after award

USAID/Mexico Gender Assessment May 2012 - Will be provided by USAID after award

USAID Evaluation Policy - www.usaid.gov/evaluation/USAIDEvaluationPolicy.pdf

USAID implementers' reports and evaluations

Non-USAID

Mexico's National Human Rights Plan (*Programa Nacional de Derechos Humanos 2014-2018*) - http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5343071&fecha=30/04/2014

UN human rights bodies reports and recommendations -
<http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/pages/hrcindex.aspx>

Inter-American System of Human Rights reports and recommendations -
<http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/>

Civil society organizations reports Multiple sources
(to be provided after award)