



USAID | **MEXICO**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

USAID PROVOCES

FINAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2017 - FEBRUARY 2021



FEBRUARY 2021

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Tetra Tech DPK for the USAID ProVoces Activity.

USAID PROVOCES

FINAL REPORT SEPTEMBER 2017 – FEBRUARY 2021

Contract Number: AID-OAA-I-13-00036, Task Order AID-523-TO-17-00001
Total Estimated Cost: US\$ 7,110,000
COR Name: Bárbara Pérez-Martinez

Submitted by: Ana Maria Cuenca, Acting Regional Technical Director
Tetra Tech DPK
150 California Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111
Tel: +1 (703) 253-3843
Email: anamaria.cuenca@tetrattech.com

Date: January 30, 2021

Reporting Period: September 2017 to February 2021

ACRONYMS

AMARC	Association of Community Radio Broadcasters
AMLO	Andrés Manuel López Obrador
BMA	Mexican Bar of Attorneys
CASEDE	Collective Analysis of Security with Democracy, A.C
CDHCDMX	Human Rights Commission of Mexico City
CDMX	Mexico City
CEAVE	Executive Victim Assistance Commission Chihuahua State Executive Commission of Attention to Victims
CEMDA	Mexican Center for Environmental Law, A.C
CNDH	National Human Rights Commission
CENCOS	National Center for Social Communications, a Civil Association
CIDE	Economic Research or Teaching Center
CIDH	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
CIMAC	Women's Communication and Information
CIRT	National Chamber of the Radio and Television Industry
CMDPDH	Mexican Commission on the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights
COLMEX	College of Mexico
CONOCER	National Council for Standardization and Certification of Labor Skills
COPARMEX	Employers Confederation of the Mexican Republic
CPJ	The Committee to Protect Journalists
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
EC 1103	Standard
ELAW	World Environmental Law Alliance
FBM	Mexican Bar Foundation
FGE	Attorney General of Justice
FGJ	General Prosecutor of the Republic
FGR	State Attorney General
FEADLE	Special Prosecutor for Crimes against the Freedom of Expression
FEIVD HDF	Special Prosecutor for Investigation of Human Rights Violations and Forced Disappearances Offices
HAAPA	Self-Assessment Tool for Protection and Self-Care Actions
HADI	Institutional Performance Self-Assessment Tool
HAI	Institutional Self-Evaluation Tool
IAHCR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
IBERO	Ibero-American University
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IJNET	International Journalist Network
IMDHD	Mexican Institute of Human Rights and Democracy
IMER	Mexican Radio Institute
INACIPE	National Institute for Criminal Sciences
INAI	National Institute of Access to Information
ITESM	Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education

LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and Intersex
LPPDDHP	Law on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists
MC	Citizen Movement
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Public Ministry
NPM	The National Mechanism to Protect Human Rights Defenders and Journalists
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OPI	Popular Independent Organization
OPIOCA	Self-assessment Tool to Measure CSO Capacities
PGR	Attorney General of the Republic
PPP	Criminal Prosecution Plan
SCJN	Court of Justice of the Nation
SEGOB	Ministry of the Interior
SERAPAZ	Services and Advisory for Peace
SHCP	Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit
SIGIAR	Information Management System for Risk Analysis
SLAPP	Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation
R3D	Network in Defense of Digital Rights
RED TDT	National Network of Civil Human Rights Organizations All Rights for Everyone
RFKHR	The Robert F. Kennedy Center for Human Rights
RSF	Reporters without Borders
SPU	State Protection Unit
UAC	Context Analysis Unit
U-ERRE	Regiomontana University
UAC	Analysis and Context Unit
UACH	Autonomous University of Chihuahua
UAdeC	Autonomous University of Coahuila
UANL	Autonomous University of Nuevo León
UDLAP	University of the Americas of Puebla
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UN	United Nations

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	3
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
2. CONTEXT ANALYSIS.....	7
3. PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS.....	13
1.1 Improve the accountability, effectiveness, and transparency of GOM protection systems	13
1.2 Support for greater interagency collaboration and coordination.....	20
1.3 Collaborate with GOM partners to secure greater political will and commitment to NPM goals.....	23
1.4 Strengthen CSOs capacity to support protection and security measures	28
1.5. Legislative or policy updates in support of prosecution, prevention and prosecution efforts in favor of Human rights defenders and journalists	34
2. Improved prevention of human rights abuses against human rights defenders and journalists	36
2.1 Support GOM and CSOs to improve prevention assistance	37
2.2 Collaborate with practitioner networks to strengthen self-protection practices.....	44
3. Improved investigation and prosecution of crimes committed against human rights defenders and journalists	46
3.1. Improve counterparts' ability to investigate, respond to, and investigate crimes against journalists and human rights defenders.....	47
3.2 Improve collaboration with civil society to provide oversight, accountability and victims' services	58
4. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT STRATEGY	62
4.1 Sustainability Strategy	62
4.2 Exit Strategy.....	63
5. PROBLEMS AND DELAYS.....	66
6. UPDATES ON EVALUATION AND LEARNING PLANS OR ACTIVITIES.....	68
7. FINANCIAL REPORT	69
8. PARTICIPANT TRAINING	70
9. ANNEXES.....	81

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Activity Name	USAID ProVoces
Activity Start and End Date	Base period: September 18, 2017 – September 17, 2019 Option periods: September 18, 2019 – February 17, 2021
Activity Purpose	The USAID Mexico ProVoces project is working to strengthen the institutional capacity and commitment of government and civil society counterparts to improve the security and protection conditions of journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico.
Activity Description	<p>ProVoces consists of three main objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protection: Increased Commitment to Operate and Sustain Systems of Protection of Human Rights and Prevent Violations Against Human Rights Defenders and Journalists; 2. Prevention: Improved Prevention of Human Rights Abuses Against Human Rights Defenders and Journalists; and 3. Prosecution: Improved Investigation and Prosecution of Crimes Committed Against Human Rights Defenders and Journalists. <p>To achieve ProVoces’ objectives, the project works with relevant government and civil society counterparts at two levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Federal/National: Supporting the strengthening of the National Mechanism to Protect Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (NPM) and the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Freedom of Expression (FEADLE). ProVoces also collaborates with civil society organizations and non-governmental initiatives that share the Project’s objective of promoting public policy improvements and transfer support, accompaniment, monitoring and advocacy capacities to local organizations. 2. State/Local: Supporting local efforts to protect and prosecute crimes and ensure inter-institutional coordination. Pilot projects in these states to help identify best practices that contribute to the reduction of aggressions against journalists and human rights defenders. With the networks of local professionals and civil society organizations, the development and use of preventive and self-protection measures for the reduction of risk exposure of both populations will be promoted.
Geographic Areas	ProVoces works in four Mexican states: Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Mexico City.

2. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

“Human rights and freedom of expression expand the horizons of hope, enlarge the boundaries of the possible, and unleash the best of our world”

*António Guterres
United Nations Secretary-General*

Over the course of the ProVoces project, violence against journalists and human rights defenders continued as the administration of President Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador confronted economic problems, organized crime, corruption, and crises arising from serious human rights violations, all of which required an urgent response and immediate action.

The executive branch responded by prioritizing political rhetoric, giving press conferences every morning that defined the president’s stance and the national agenda and casting anyone who contradicts or opposes the government, including the press and civil society organizations, as a political or ideological opponent. This rhetorical clash has polarized the population and encouraged the stigmatization of any person or media outlet that questions the political and administrative decisions of the new government. Meanwhile, the persistent threats, attacks, murders and generalized violence against communication professionals and defenders, have by and large been met with impunity.

Likewise, the policy of austerity under which most government agencies now operate has restricted their ability to operate due to a shortage of funds, excessive workloads, and a severe lack of inter-institutional coordination. The uncertainty and changes within the federal government have led state governments to act with caution and restraint. The institutional conditions have also led state authorities to create alliances to demand further cooperation between the Federation and the states, in the form of different economic and social policies, and it has also pushed them to take a more proactive approach to addressing different issues.

The COVID-19 health crisis has further complicated matters, and its immediate, medium-term, and long-term impact on people, especially vulnerable groups, include the inability of many of them to enjoy the full guarantee of human rights. Isolation has reduced opportunities and spaces for interaction and coordination among defenders to react appropriately to crisis, homicides, or GOM decisions that deter human rights protection and has delayed commitments and scheduled activities. At the project level the health emergency forced the ProVoces to redesign the work schedule and move all in-person activities online, including its institutional strengthening activities.

Any human rights action focused on prevention, protection, and access to justice requires a broad and multidisciplinary approach based on strengthening cooperation mechanisms. ProVoces, therefore, executed differentiated strategies to meet federal and state needs, focusing its efforts on strengthening both government and civil society organizations to achieve a long-term impact. ProVoces demonstrated that implementing differentiated strategies to address federal and state needs require innovation and institutional commitment. The project’s technical assistance was based on the needs, context, and existing capacities of each agency and its activities led to:

- Stronger government agencies more specialized in the areas of protection and prosecution and technical development;
- The introduction of legislative reforms needed to strengthen the freedom of expression and human rights legal framework;
- Civil society actors with new self-protection capabilities and the necessary skills to provide support during adversarial proceedings;

- Greater awareness among different sectors of society of the importance of protecting and respecting those who exercise freedom of expression; and
- The involvement of the private sector, academia, and artists in issues related to guaranteeing and exercising human rights.

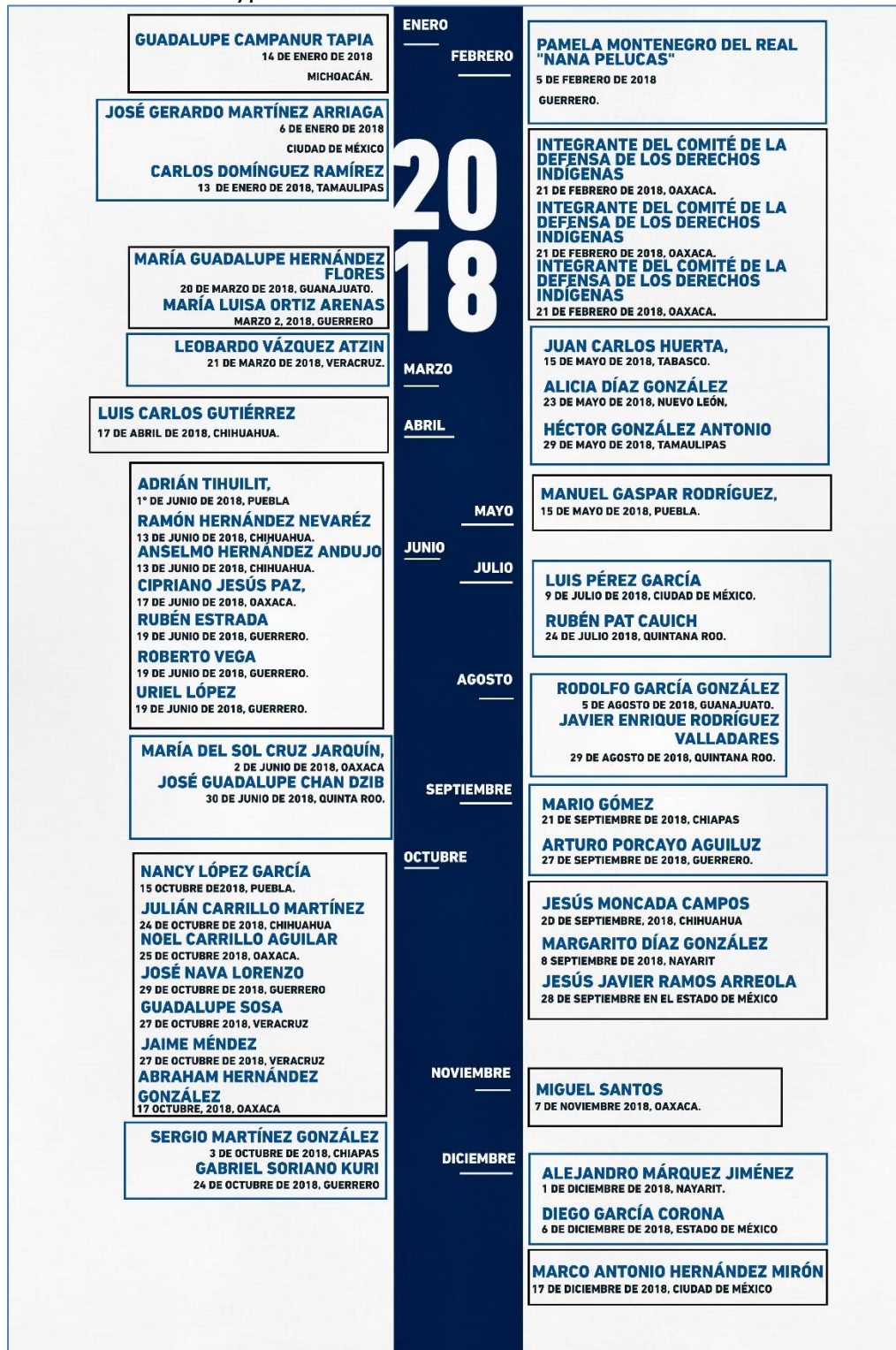
ProVoces understands that a central part of its responsibilities was to generate innovative actions and that continuous improvement was central to fulfilling that role. As such, the Project's main activities and successes were:

- Collaboration with government counterparts to help them comply with 15 international recommendations on the freedom of expression and the defense of human rights.
- A 50% increase in the institutional capacities of our government and CSO counterparts, as measured by the Government and Organizational Performance Index.
- Involvement of the private sector, the arts sector and universities to support journalism and the freedom of expression.
- Participation in dialogue with the government to build a common agenda concerning the freedom of expression, and to communicate the need to protect human rights defenders and journalists, prevent assaults and prosecute crimes of that type.
- Strengthening the capacities of over 800 journalists and human rights defenders to increase their capabilities in self-protection and self-care. Over 100 organizations adopted prevention and security practices for their members.
- 2,000,000 people reached through awareness campaigns on the importance of the work performed by human rights defenders and journalists.
- Technical assistance in drafting the legislative bill concerning the creation of the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, a pending topic for building a solid criminal justice system in Mexico.
- Innovation through the Competency Standards for certification of Federal and State Prosecutors.
- Technical support of FEADLE and state prosecutors' offices to initiate over 370 investigations and the prosecution of at least 65 cases for crimes against the freedom of expression.
- Participation in legislative reforms concerning the freedom of expression and the defense of human rights.
- Technical assistance to the Federal Mechanism, the Integrated Mechanism and State Protection Units to generate specialized instruments on protection and risk assessment, follow up on protection measures and the prevention of threats and incidents.
- Sustainability of the tools developed throughout the project (manuals, methodologies, information systems, communication platforms, models and assessments) since these were created based on the specific needs, contexts and capacities of each agency. All instruments were validated by the respective agency, and the Project provided training and guides to enable the agencies to implement the tools on their own. The processes conducted do not require additional expenses by the government agencies; they were created with their needs and resources in mind.

- Substantive improvements to tools and instruments, such as the Institutional Self-Management Tool applied at the Federal Mechanism, the Integrated Mechanism for Mexico City, and the Chihuahua Prosecutor's Office. The tools were fine-tuned to allow for the automatic display of results and improving the time required for application.
- Improvements to the system housing the risk assessment methodology (SIGIAR) created for the Federal Mechanism. The improvements included the development of instruments that assist decision makers at the Integrated Mechanism and the State Protection Units to systematize information and generate necessary statistics.
- Improvements to OPIOCA adaptations to assess the existence and use of security protocols, risk assessment and training on security measures for staff of media outlets.

Register of Attacks and Murders

ProVoces recorded attacks on and murders of human rights defenders and journalists from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020. As the following infographic shows, during this period the Project registered 610 cases (123 murders and 487 attacks of other type).



2019

SINAR CORSO ESQUINCA
3 ENERO DE 2019, CHIAPAS

NOÉ JIMÉNEZ PABLO
18 DE ENERO DE 2019, CHIAPAS.

JOSÉ SANTIAGO GÓMEZ
18 DE ENERO DE 2019, CHIAPAS.

GUSTAVO CRUZ MENDOZA
20 DE ENERO DE 2019, OAXACA.

BERNARDINO GARCÍA HERNÁNDEZ
21 DE ENERO DE 2019, OAXACA.

ESTELINA LÓPEZ GÓMEZ
23 DE ENERO DE 2019, CHIAPAS

RAFAEL MURÚA MANRÍQUEZ
20 DE ENERO DE 2019, BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR

JOSÉ LUIS ÁLVAREZ FLORES
10 DE JUNIO DE 2019, TABASCO

NORMA SARABIA GARDUZA
11 DE JUNIO DE 2019, TABASCO

JUAN ESCAMILLA BAUTISTA
23 DE JUNIO DE 2019, TAMAULIPAS

ROGELIO BARRAGÁN PÉREZ
30 DE JULIO DE 2019, GUERRERO.

ZENAIDA PULIDO LOMBERA
19 DE JULIO DE 2019, MICHOACÁN

PAUL HUMBERTO VIZCARRA RUÍZ
15 DE OCTUBRE DE 2019, MORELOS

CRUZ SOTO CARAVEO
20 DE OCTUBRE DE 2019, CHIHUAHUA

ENERO

FEBRERO

ABRIL

JUNIO

JULIO

OCTUBRE

DICIEMBRE

JESÚS EUGENIO RAMOS RODRÍGUEZ
9 DE FEBRERO DE 2019, TABASCO

REYNALDO LÓPEZ SALAS
16 DE FEBRERO DE 2019, SONORA

OSCAR CAZORLA LÓPEZ
9 DE FEBRERO DE 2019, OAXACA.

SAMIR FLORES SOBERANES
20 DE FEBRERO DE 2019, MORELOS

EULOLIA LILIA DÍAZ ORTIZ
25 DE MARZO DE 2019, ESTADO DE MÉXICO

ABIRAM HERNÁNDEZ FERNÁNDEZ
29 DE MARZO DE 2019, VERACRUZ.

SANTIAGO BARROSO ALFARO
15 DE MARZO DE 2019, SONORA

OMAR IVÁN CAMACHO MASCAREÑO
25 DE MARZO DE 2019, SINALOA

TELÉSFORO SANTIAGO ENRÍQUEZ
2 DE MAYO DE 2019, OAXACA

FRANCISCO ROMERO DÍAZ
16 DE MAYO DE 2019, QUINTANA ROO

OTILIA MARTÍNEZ CRUZ
2 DE MAYO DE 2019, CHIHUAHUA

GREGORIO CHAPARRO CRUZ
2 DE MAYO DE 2019, CHIHUAHUA

JOSÉ LUCIO BARTOLO FAUSTINO
4 DE MAYO DE 2019, GUERRERO

MODESTO VERALES SEBASTIÁN
4 DE MAYO DE 2019, GUERRERO

LEONEL DÍAZ URBANO
9 DE MAYO DE 2019, PUEBLA

NORA PATRICIA LÓPEZ LEÓN
20 DE AGOSTO DE 2019, CHIAPAS

EDGAR ALBERTO NAVA LÓPEZ
2 DE AGOSTO DE 2019, GUERRERO

JORGE CELESTINO RUÍZ
2 DE AGOSTO DE 2019, VERACRUZ

NEVITH CONDÉS JARAMILLO
24 DE AGOSTO DE 2019, ESTADO DE MÉXICO.

ARNULFO CERÓN SORIANO
20 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2019, GUERRERO.

AGOSTO

SEPTIEMBRE

NOVIEMBRE

<p>ISABEL CABANILLAS TORRES 19 DE ENERO DE 2020, CHIHUAHUA</p> <p>HOMERO GÓMEZ GONZÁLEZ 29 DE ENERO DE 2020, MICHOACÁN</p>	<p>ENERO FEBRERO</p>	<p>TERESA ARACELY ALCOCER (BARBARA GRECO), 18 DE FEBRERO DE 2020, CHIHUAHUA</p> <p>ROSENDO ARROYO DELGADO 28 DE FEBRERO DE 2020, GUERRERO</p>
<p>FIDEL ÁVILA GÓMEZ 7 DE ENERO DE 2020, MICHOACÁN</p>	<p>20 20</p>	<p>RAÚL HERNÁNDEZ ROMERO 1° DE FEBRERO DE 2020, MICHOACÁN</p>
<p>ISAAC MEDARDO HERRERA AVILÉS 23 DE MARZO DE 2020, MORELOS</p> <p>PAULINA GÓMEZ PALACIO ESCUDERO 22 DE MARZO DE 2020, SAN LUIS POTOSÍ</p> <p>KARLA VALENTINA CAMARENA DEL CASTILLO 29 DE MARZO DE 2020, GUANAJUATO</p>	<p>MARZO ABRIL</p>	<p>VÍCTOR FERNANDO ÁLVAREZ CHÁVEZ 11 DE ABRIL DE 2020, GUERRERO.</p>
<p>GITLER OSEGUERA BARRERA 1° DE MARZO DE 2020, MICHOACÁN.</p> <p>MARÍA ELENA FERJRAL HERNÁNDEZ 30 DE MARZO DE 2020, VERACRUZ</p>	<p>MAYO JUNIO</p>	<p>ADÁN VEZ LIRA 8 DE ABRIL DE 2020, VERACRUZ.</p> <p>GABRIEL REYES BEGINES 8 DE ABRIL DE 2020, OAXACA</p> <p>JUAN ZAMARRIPA TORRES 11 DE ABRIL DE 2020, CHIHUAHUA</p> <p>JESÚS MEMIJE MARTÍNEZ 24 DE ABRIL DE 2020, GUERRERO.</p>
<p>EUGUI ROY MARTÍNEZ PÉREZ 7 DE MAYO DE 2020, OAXACA</p>	<p>MAYO JUNIO</p>	<p>JOSÉ LUIS CASTILLO OSUNA 11 DE JUNIO DE 2020, SONORA</p> <p>ÁLVARO ARMANDO N 18 DE JUNIO DE 2020, QUINTANA ROO.</p>
<p>JORGE MIGUEL ARMENTA ÁVALOS 16 DE MAYO DE 2020, SONORA.</p> <p>ÁLVARO RUÍZ 1 DE MAYO DE 2020, CHIAPAS</p>	<p>MAYO JUNIO</p>	<p>ANTONIO MONTES ENRÍQUEZ 6 DE JUNIO DE 2020, CHIHUAHUA</p> <p>MARÍA ELIZABETH MONTAÑO FERNÁNDEZ 18 DE JUNIO DE 2020, CIUDAD DE MÉXICO.</p>
<p>TOMÁS MARTÍNEZ PINACHO 24 DE AGOSTO DE 2020, OAXACA</p> <p>JEANINE HUERTA LÓPEZ 28 DE AGOSTO DE 2020, BAJA CALIFORNIA</p>	<p>AGOSTO SEPTIEMBRE</p>	<p>JULIO VALDIVIA RODRÍGUEZ 9 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2020, VERACRUZ</p>
<p>PABLO MORRUGARES PARRAGUIRRE 2 DE AGOSTO DE 2020, GUERRERO</p> <p>LUIS EDUARDO OCHOA AGUILAR 2 DE AGOSTO DE 2020, MICHOACÁN</p>	<p>OCTUBRE</p>	<p>MIREYA RODRÍGUEZ LEMUS 2 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2020, CHIHUAHUA</p> <p>YESSICA ESTRELLA SILVA ZAMARRIPA 8 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2020, CHIHUAHUA</p> <p>OSCAR EUGENIO EYRAUD ADAMS 24 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2020, BAJA CALIFORNIA</p>
<p>EPIFANIO DE JESÚS MARTÍNEZ 15 DE OCTUBRE DE 2020, OAXACA</p> <p>JUAN AQUINO GONZÁLEZ 29 DE OCTUBRE DE 2020, GUERRERO</p>	<p>NOVIEMBRE</p>	<p>ALFONSO PIÑUELAS MONTES 2 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2020, SONORA</p> <p>ISRAEL VÁZQUEZ RANGEL 9 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2020, GUANAJUATO.</p>
<p>MARIANO SOTO CORTEZ 4 DE OCTUBRE DE 2020, BAJA CALIFORNIA</p> <p>ARTURO ALBA MEDINA 29 DE OCTUBRE DE 2020, CHIHUAHUA</p>	<p>DICIEMBRE</p>	<p>RODOLFO DÍAZ JIMÉNEZ 2 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2020, OAXACA</p>
<p>MARÍA AGUSTÍ CHINO 19 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2020, GUERRERO</p> <p>AMALIA MORALES GUAPANGO 19 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2020, GUERRERO</p> <p>JOSÉ BENITO MIGUELEÑO 19 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2020, GUERRERO</p> <p>MIGUEL MIGUELEÑO 19 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2020, GUERRERO</p>		
<p>JAIME DANIEL CASTAÑO ZACARÍAS 9 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2020, ZACATECAS</p>		

3. PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. INCREASED COMMITMENT TO OPERATE AND SUSTAIN HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTIONS SYSTEMS AND TO PREVENT VIOLATIONS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND JOURNALISTS

The right to freedom of expression and the defense of human rights are basic conditions in all free and democratic societies, and the State has an obligation to prevent threats; provide protection from risks; and investigate, try, and punish the perpetrators of attacks on human rights defenders and journalists. ProVoces worked directly with the government agencies in charge of protecting these groups, coordinating actions at the federal and local level to strengthen them. ProVoces helped improve specialized tools that allow agencies to perform well and fulfill their legal mandate. It also supported processes for enhancing the professionalism of government officials and focused on ensuring that new processes to improve the quality of services were institutionalized. Additionally, the project created spaces for partnering to promote prevention and comprehensive support aimed at forming a national protection system. Although violence against human rights defenders and journalists continues to rise, ProVoces' work has strengthened agencies' capacities to confront this violence and has ensured that their staff are trained to provide comprehensive support with an approach that is fully centered on human rights.

1.1 Improve the accountability, effectiveness, and transparency of GOM protection systems

Institutional Strengthening of the Federal Mechanism (NPM)

After significant advocacy by Mexican civil society organizations, the Mexican federal government established the NPM in November 2012 as the agency with the legal mandate to guarantee the life, physical safety, and security of at-risk human rights defenders and journalists through the provision of such protection measures as bodyguards, security cameras in residences or offices, bullet-proof vests, armored vehicles, among others. From the beginning the NPM has been underfunded and unable to hire sufficient human resources and has lacked appropriate technical tools to perform differentiated risk analysis and assign appropriate measures. Previous USAID technical assistance improved the NPM's organizational structure. ProVoces built on this experience and strengthened the NPM's institutional capacity to serve its beneficiaries and a more targeted manner while updating key protection processes, protocols, and instruments to comply with human rights recommendations and training staff to deploy them more efficiently to serve its target population.

To guide its institutional strengthening actions, ProVoces created the Institutional Self-Evaluation Tool (*Herramienta de Autogestión Institucional-HAI*) basing its methodology on USAID's Government Performance Index (GPI), which measures the performance of government agencies in four key areas: 1. Efficacy, 2. Efficiency, 3. Relevance, and 4. Sustainability. At the NPM the HAI aimed to promote compliance with international human rights standards, and design actions based on institutional priorities that would allow the agency to achieve the expected results and to promote continuous improvement.

The NPM underwent three self-evaluations using this methodology. The first application of the tool established the NPM's existing strengths and areas of opportunity and was used to create a plan to prioritize the strengthening actions. As the graphic below shows, from the second to the third application, the NPM did not improve because of leadership changes at the agency. Certain areas of the Mechanism were restructured, there was high staff turnover, and the new head of the Mechanism set new priorities for the agency. Despite the lack of improvement and subsequent steps backwards ProVoces used the HAI to identify and narrow down improvement actions and focused on aspects that could be improved to optimize its technical assistance to counterparts. It also automated the HAI to make it more user-friendly tool and make obtaining results easier.

First application 2018	Second application 2018	Third application 2019
Result: 59%	Result: 75%	Result: 62%

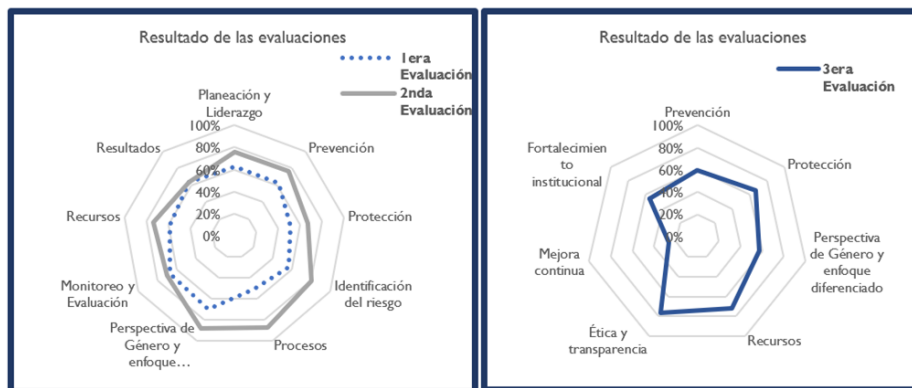


Figure 1. Results from the applications of the HAI

Based on the priorities identified during the HAI process, the Project and the NPM agreed that the following actions were the most relevant to address the NPM’s needs:

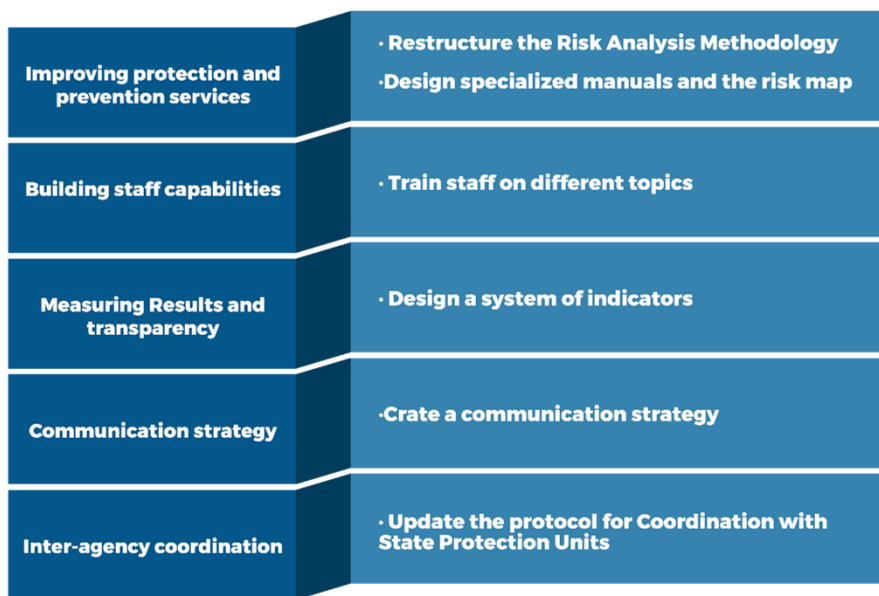


Figure 2. Priority actions for the Federal Mechanism

In close collaboration with the NPM, the project restructured and revised the *Risk Analysis Methodology* to strengthen protection measures for journalists and human rights defenders, as it has a direct impact in protection plans determination and to include a gender perspective, as recommended by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other international and national organizations. The restructured *Methodology* considers the context, capacities and vulnerable situation of human rights defenders and journalists, support network, map of actors, and the beneficiaries’ informed knowledge about their cases. It can be used to examine each case comprehensively, incorporating a gender-sensitive perspective and differentiated approach that ensures proper support for beneficiaries.

Several civil society organizations (CSO) and experts, including Enrique Eguren from *Protection International*, worked with the NPM team to restructure the methodology and incorporate:

- Contextual analysis
- Timelines and stakeholder maps
- Considerations of the threats to, capabilities of, and vulnerabilities of beneficiaries.
- Gender an intersectional approach.
- Systematized relevant information and statistics.
- Determinations of risk levels: probability and impact.
- A comprehensive protection plan with inter-agency coordination.

To manage the process, the project developed the Risk Assessment Information Management System (*Sistema de Gestión de Información para el Análisis de Riesgo-SIGIAR*), which compiles information in a database, organizes data relevant to the risk analysis, and helps users visualize the elements considered to assess each case.

The team of risk assessment analysts at the NPM also received training on gender sensitivity, risk analysis, writing and information analysis, technical interviewing using a victim-centered approach, positive masculinities, effective presentation techniques, and protection plans to enable them to apply the methodology and use the management system. The improved methodology was rolled out in August 2020, and the SIGIAR has been used to analyze the risks of approximately 120 cases.

To complement the revised *Risk Analysis Methodology*, the Project prepared the *Manual for the Use of Protective Measures* which institutes guidelines for using and assigning protective measures, establishing their scope and limits. It contains a description of the main physical protective measures provided by the NPM, such as help buttons, neighborhood alarms, temporary housing, metal detector arches, bulletproof vests, closed-circuit TV, gas extinguishers, grenades, fire extinguisher balls, GPS locaters, mobile and base station radios, portable digital radio networks or digital mobile radio, security escort services, acoustic alarm systems, vehicles with a GPS locator, and video door entry systems and all guidelines associated with them. Although, this resource is intended for those using the measures and making decisions about protection plan, the manual has also been used by NPM staff at NPM Governing Board meetings, as a reference resource for decision-makers, and to teach beneficiaries how the measures in the protection plan are used. This manual should be updated at least every year to add any new measures in the agency's catalog.



Photo 1. Meeting with members of the Board of Governors and the Advisory Council of the

Institutional strategic communication was another area of opportunity for the NPM because since its inception, the agency had been unable to communicate effectively its results, and the public viewed it as weak and ineffective. The Project, therefore, worked with the head of the NPM in the development of a strategic communication plan to better communicate improvements in its operations and performance. Described in the *Strategic Communication Manual*, the communication strategy establishes the main communication guidelines for the NPM's messaging and communication with the general public. The manual identifies key audiences and messaging for each type of audience.

ProVoces also assisted the NPM to design its organizational branding, including its logo and the infographics used to communicate its work. The strategy's deployment was suspended, however, because internal administration changes and new guidelines at the Ministry of Internal Affairs centralized all communications in the Communications Department of the Office of the President of the Republic.

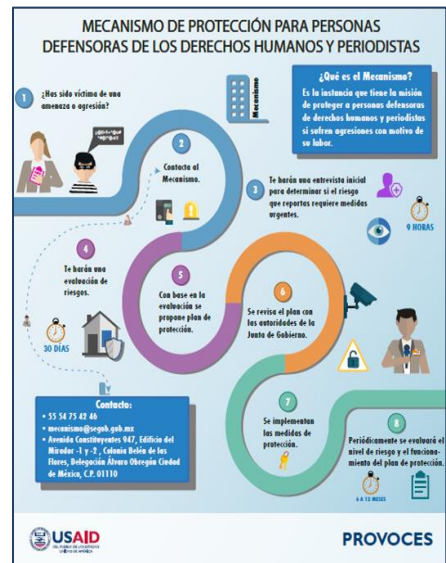


Photo2 . Infographics from the Federal Mechanism

ProVoces also supported the NPM in designing a public Risk Map that synthesizes and systematizes information on attacks on human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico after the OH. The OHCHR and other organizations had recommended the adoption of a public risk map to identify patterns of aggressions and prevent assaults. Using an online and social media news alert system, as well as classified sources and CSO reports, ProVoces worked with the NPM to enter this information into a database with variables specific to this phenomenon. Because the data that feeds the map comes from non-classified sources, the third unit of the NPM oversees maintenance and update of the system. The map is not public and the NPM uses it as an internal tool for decision-making. Because of this, the Project has been unable to verify if the NPM has updated the map regularly as required by the Protection Law.

Likewise, to encourage the measurement of results and transparency, the project worked with NPM and OHCHR staff to build and validate an *Indicator System* that analyzes, monitors, and reports on the institution's operations and communicates its progress. This system meets another of the recommendations resulting from the OHCHR assessment. The System includes 17 indicators that can be disaggregated by geographic and gender variables, as well as a differentiated approach for more nuanced decision-making and greater accountability. It also displays each indicator's results graphically, generates reports that will provide data for public policymaking for prevention and to serve the target population.



Photo 4. Federal Mechanism Indicators System

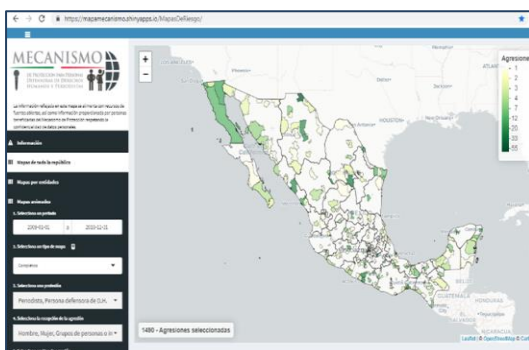


Photo 3. Risk map

reports on the institution's operations and communicates its progress. This system meets another of the recommendations resulting from the OHCHR assessment. The System includes 17 indicators that can be disaggregated by geographic and gender variables, as well as a differentiated approach for more nuanced decision-making and greater accountability. It also displays each indicator's results graphically, generates reports that will provide data for public policymaking for prevention and to serve the target population.

The NPM Governing Board has acknowledged that the System is an improvement for the agency because the indicators can be used to measure results effectively and to continue perfecting processes, manuals, protocols, and tools to benefit defenders

and journalists. The people in charge of reporting the indicators were trained on how they can be used to cross-check information and support decision-making. The indicator system was launched in December of 2020, and the indicators must be reviewed periodically to add any elements that facilitate continued measuring of progress and goal setting.

Institutional strengthening of the Integral Mechanism

The Integral Mechanism is Mexico City’s agency charged with protecting human rights and journalist in its jurisdiction. Operational since 2015, the Integral Mechanism has had many leadership changes that slowed initial achievements. Among its most immediate needs was to strengthen the risk analysis methodology. ProVoces supported the development of technical and operational capacities of the Integral Mechanism to provide better services to human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico City. The Project also contributed to the development of an institutional culture of monitoring, evaluation, and continual improvement.

As with other government institutions, ProVoces applied the HAI as the first step in its technical assistance to the Integral Mechanism and it underwent two HAI applications. The first one was done in March 2019, when the institution scored 29% on its performance, while the second one happened in January 2020, when it scored 59.37%, a 30.37% increase in baseline institutional capacities. The second application included improvements to the tool, consisting of an automated internal evaluation instrument that graphs the results of each application in real time.

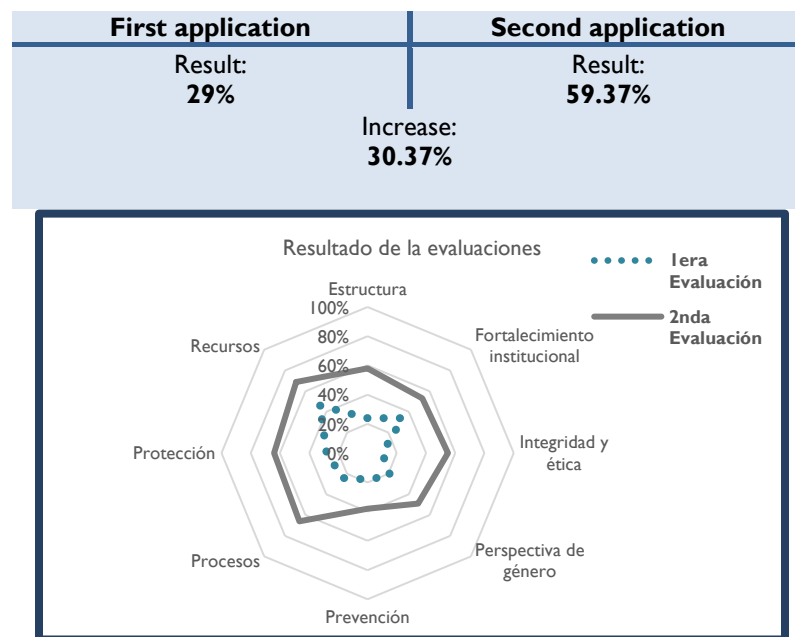


Figure 3. Results from applying the HAI

The increases in scores from one application to the other show that the improvement actions implemented with ProVoces’s support to respond to the areas of opportunities identified in the HAI application have strengthened the Integral Mechanism capacity to implement its mandate. The improvement actions implemented include strengthening the risk evaluation methodology, incorporating indicators into the 2020 work plan, and creating a

model for providing comprehensive support to people who are internally displaced as a result of exercising their freedom of expression.

Because the HAI proved to be an important element for internal decision-making, planning, and prioritizing actions within the agency, the head of the Integral Mechanism presented the tool to the Secretary-General of Internal Affairs of Mexico City and to Mayor of Mexico City, Claudia Sheinbaum, in order to recommend it as a best practice in institutional improvement processes.



Photo 5. Training on the HAI

ProVoces worked closely with Integral Mechanism staff to restructure the *Risk Analysis Methodology* to improve the process of providing comprehensive protection following the steps outlined in Figure 5 below.

The project also created a tool for individual cases and another one for group cases and trained the Integral Mechanism’s team to optimize the Methodology’s implementation and operation. As is the case with all instruments developed by the project, this Methodology came with a user guide that describes how the system is designed and how it works and incorporates the relevant concepts for applying it. The Methodology was tested and launched in December of 2020.

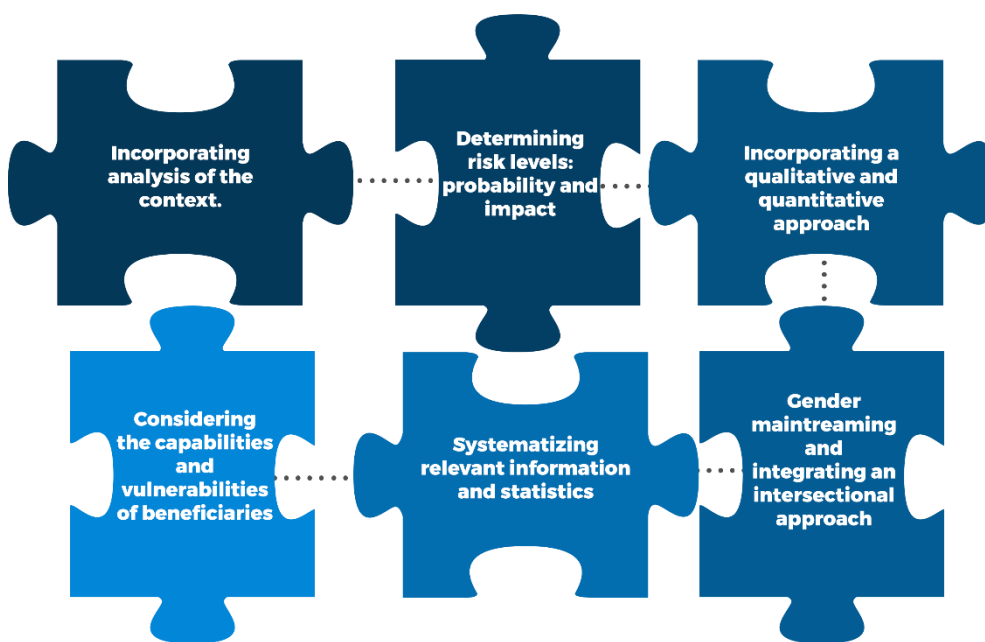


Figure 4. Elements of the Risk Analysis Methodology for the Integral Mechanism

Strengthening the State Protection Unit of Chihuahua

Chihuahua is one of the riskiest states for human rights defenders and journalists, and, over the last decade, aided by several international development programs, has invested heavily on creating protection institutions. ProVoces, took advantage of Chihuahua’s more developed installed institutional capacity and worked with the State Protection Unit (SPU) to develop more effective protection processes and tools.

The Chihuahua SPU's core function is to assess the risk of victims who request its assistance in the state. ProVoces designed a Risk Evaluation Tool for the SPU to analyze and systematize case information with an intersectional perspective, a gender-sensitive approach, and quantitative and qualitative elements. The Project team received information and feedback from Chihuahua SPU staff on the process and forms they had been using to perform risk analysis and staff ideas on how they could be improved and/or streamlined, which helped them identify the areas of improvement. The resulting *Risk Evaluation Tool* incorporates the enhancements the Project had made to the Risk Assessment Tools designed for the Federal Mechanism and the Integral Mechanism and uses web development.

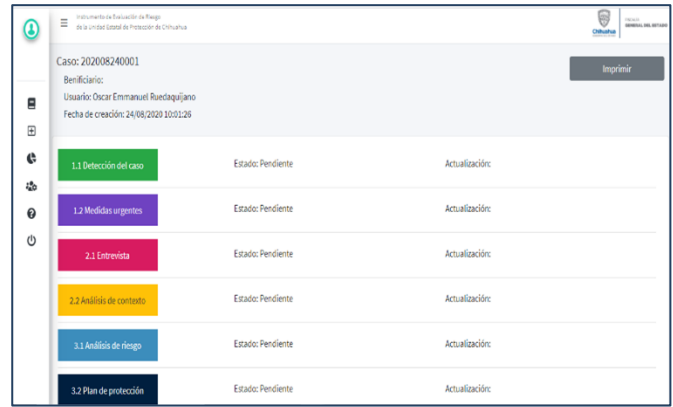


Photo 6. Web development of the SPU of Chihuahua

The web-based tool is hosted by the State Office of the Attorney General server, which guarantees data security and allows government users to obtain statistical information. It also yields relevant statistical information for the formulation of public policies on prevention and assistance. A methodological guide and all permissions for web development accompany the tool to enable staff to use it and improve it in the long run. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Investigation of Human Rights Violations and Forced Disappearance authorized its use starting in November 2020.

Through these efforts, the UEP of Chihuahua became the first protection unit in the country to have a methodology that aligns with its legal mandate and meets human rights standards. Soon and with proper follow-up, the SPU could be at the forefront of providing comprehensive support for protecting defenders and journalists.

Work in coordination with the Executive Victim Assistance Commission

ProVoces took advantage of the change in administration to help redesign the institutional structure of the CEAV. The head of the agency at the time, Mara Gómez, requested technical assistance to improve its support to victims, who include human rights defenders and journalists. ProVoces, therefore, analyzed and mapped out CEAV's functions and processes and designed a proposal for restructuring, recommending the following:

- Drafting a strategic vision of the CEAV's leadership
- Creating efficient communication processes
- Designing job profiles that match the agency's needs
- Incorporating technological enhancements into processes, such as an information system that can store data generated by each area.
- Creating opportunities for staff psychological support and care.

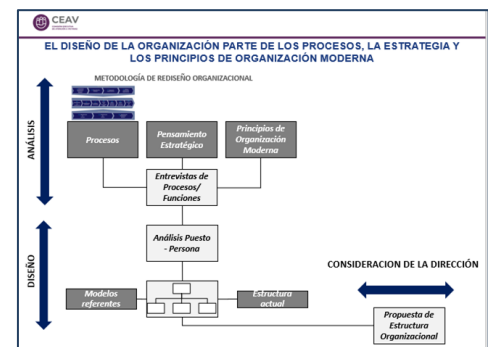


Photo 7. CEAV restructuring diagram

ProVoces' collaboration with the CEAV allowed the Program to have impact and contribute to entities that support defenders and journalists from a different perspective and to suggest creating integral spaces for this population, since the inter-institutional vision should align with these objectives. The CEAV has experienced serious political conflicts with victim advocacy organizations and victims' family members, which coupled with budget cuts have impacted its performance and its ability to fulfill its legal mandate. The head of the institution resigned a few months after taking office, and as of December 2020, the executive branch has not appointed a new representative or head of the agency.

1.2 Support for greater interagency collaboration and coordination

Collaborative activities with the Working Group for follow-up on the situation for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists in the State of Coahuila

The State of Coahuila is a border state classified as a high-risk region for human rights defense and journalistic work. After the murder of journalist, Javier Valdez, in May 2017, journalists demanded that the government take urgent measures to guarantee the life, integrity, freedom and security of human rights defenders and journalists, as well as to investigate related cases. The ProVoces team chose to work with Coahuila to begin the establishment of state-level public policy on protection because the state government that has made the promotion of a human rights agenda a priority. Its government has begun creating a long-term state public policy of protection for human rights defenders and journalists.

ProVoces began working with the State of Coahuila through the *Memorandum of Understanding between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Government of the State of Coahuila de Zaragoza, the Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila (UAdeC), and the Inter-American Academy of Human Rights (AIDH)*. The MOU fostered a strategic partnership to institutionalize actions that improve protection of human rights defenders and journalists in Coahuila. With this framework, the Coahuila State Official Journal published the Decree that mandated the creation of the Working Group to Monitor the Working Conditions of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists in the State of Coahuila. The Working Group is a multidisciplinary participatory citizen group responsible for analyzing, evaluating, and supervising the State's actions on protecting human rights defenders and journalists. The group also provides recommendations to the state Executive Branch for the design and implementation of a public policy on protection.



Photo 8. Signing the Memorandum of Understanding

ProVoces assisted the Working Group in establishing its internal guidelines, and defining its vision, mission, objectives, and strategic action plan. As part of this process, ProVoces coordinated with the AIDH and the Working Group to organize the seminar *Protecting Human Rights Defenders and Journalists in Coahuila: Current Challenges and Obstacles* to discuss the needs of this population in Coahuila and how comprehensive public policy for its protection in the state can create the conditions to meet these needs. The seminar also allowed participants to generate immediate actions for addressing specific attacks and to strengthen ties to the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Freedom of the Expression (FEADLE) and the Federal Mechanism.

ProVoces' technical assistance to the Working Group was part of the local system approach to promote actions that address specific problems at the local level. The Working Group holds monthly internal meetings and quarterly meetings with the Governor of the State and his cabinet to report on the issues in their agenda and to propose appropriate state policies. To strengthen this function ProVoces designed and implemented a theoretical and practical training on public policy making to build the capacity of Working Group members to design effective public policy proposals.

During the COVID-19 emergency ProVoces assisted the Working Group in publicizing through social media the *Governor's Decree on Mobility Restrictions During COVID-19*, emphasizing that human rights defenders were not required to abide by the mobility restrictions and that their free circulation was protected by the state government. The



Photo 9. Members of the Coahuila Task Force

working group reiterated in these communications materials that coercive actions and human rights violations are prohibited in all Coahuila municipalities.

ProVoces also collaborated with the Working Group to create an infographic called *Covid-19 and Press Coverage. Preventive Measures* aimed at informing journalists how to cover news safely during the pandemic. This resource complemented the Working Group's advisory and referral actions related to prevention and protection measures for journalists and human rights defenders, which included psychosocial support for journalists. The Working Group promoted a program developed by the Psychology Department at the Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila that provided psychological support for journalists to deal with the added psychological challenges posed by the COVID-19 emergency. The Project created infographics about the program and shared them on social media. Another part of the Working Group's advisory work was the online [Questionnaire for Journalists on Emotions and Actions in Response to COVID-19](#), which measures the level of anxiety of respondents and connects them to online or phone emotional support. The program reached and advised 162 people who responded to the questionnaire. Given the initial response, the program could be replicated in other spaces.

Promoting new actions with the Mexico City Human Rights Commission

Because of the high rates of targeted violence against human rights defenders and journalists in Mexican states, Mexico City has a high concentration of forcibly displaced journalists and human rights defenders. Until recently the Mexico City government did not offer this population comprehensive protection plans that included a blueprint for their safe return to their home states. Journalists living in this situation in Mexico City, as well as organizations like Mexico City Human Rights Commission (CDHCDM) insisted on the need to create an integrated approach and tailored policy for displaced persons. To attend this situation ProVoces developed an alliance with the CDHCDM, and in 2018, CDHCDM and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* that established joint actions to improve the security conditions human rights defenders and journalists and develop models and practices to benefit freedom of expression and the practice of journalism, focusing on activities that provide additional professional development and dialogue about freedom of expression.

The most important output of this collaboration was the *Assessment of the Conditions Experienced by Journalists in Mexico City Who are Internally Displaced due to Exercising their Freedom of Expression*, published in December of 2020, which provides precise and up-to-date qualitative and quantitative information on the status of internally displaced journalists in the city. Collaboratively designed by ProVoces with input from the Federal Mechanism, the National Human Rights Commission, the Casa Refugio Citlaltépetl, the OHCHR, the Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ), Artículo 19, Reporters without Borders, Comunicación e Información de la Mujer, A.C. (CIMAC), and the Committee for the Protection of Journalists of the Congress of Mexico City, the assessment:



Photo 10. Signing the Memorandum of Understanding between CDHCDMX and USAID

→ Describes the general landscape of policies and best practices of programs serving internally displaced journalists, as well as their areas of opportunity.

→ Identifies the main challenges and obstacles faced by internally displaced journalists and their families in Mexico City.

→ Emphasizes that for programs and services to provide comprehensive support, they need to have a differentiated and gender-sensitive approach.

→ Underscores the need for a model for supporting internally displaced journalists, which would simplify processes and allow authorities to coordinate to handle cases.

Figure 6. Relevant findings of the Assessment of the Conditions Experienced by Journalists in Mexico City Who are Internally Displaced due to Exercising their Freedom of Expression

Based on the Assessment, ProVoces created an *Assistance Model for individuals in Forced Displacement*, which explains the support processes and mechanisms available to government agencies to support displaced journalists and human right defenders in accordance with their mandates. ProVoces distributed 1000 copies of the Assessment to different entities that defend human rights throughout Mexico.

Strengthening Coordination between the NPM and the SPUs

The NPM plays an important role coordinating with SPUs in case assistance and implementing protection measures at the local level. In the past, the NPM has received recommendations to strengthen coordination among the federal and local authorities. Although a coordination protocol exists, it does not identify essential processes, competence and authority lines among jurisdictions and does not define effective case management procedures.

An important part of ProVoces' technical assistance to the NPM was, therefore, supporting the agency in strengthening its coordination with its state-level liaisons and its partnership with the UEP. The project thus worked to restructure the *Protocol for Coordination between the Mechanism and the State Protection Units*. The update clarifies the collaboration processes and the effective handling of cases and sets out protection and prevention actions even in extreme circumstances like the COVID-19 pandemic. The Protocol also helps the GOM comply with national and international protection recommendations.

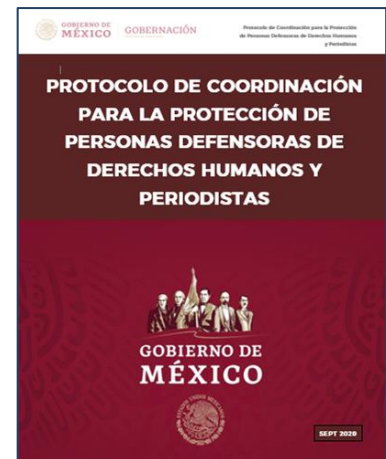


Photo 11. Protocol for Coordination between the Federal Mechanism and the UEP

The project established the following elements to be included in the coordination protocol:

- Institutionalize the processes of collaboration between the Federal Mechanism and the UEP.
- Standardize the procedures for supporting beneficiaries.
- Create efficient channels of communication between the UEP and the Federal Mechanism, and
- Provided the necessary guidelines for how to act in the event of contingencies.

In November 2020, ProVoces presented the protocol to the General Director of NPM who decided to present it to the NPM Governing Board, as well as to the SPU for its further implementation. The NPM has shown special interest in implementing the Protocol nation-wide and has begun conversations with the States of Oaxaca, Veracruz, Chiapas, Tamaulipas and Guerrero to begin using it.

Promoting actions with the Executive Victim Assistance Commission of Nuevo Leon (CEAV of Nuevo León)

The State of Nuevo León has an active civil society and is the center of journalists support networks for the Northern region. The state's institutional capacity (Attorney General Office, Victim's Services, the executive branch) is stronger than other states' and there are several important academic institutions and CSOs located in the state. Given these characteristics, ProVoces selected Nuevo Leon as a target state for activities.

At the beginning of the project, the collaboration with the state government focused on the agency that provides comprehensive support to victims, including human rights defenders and journalists. Using feedback from human rights defenders and journalists, ProVoces garnered interest at the agency in establishing procedures to provide psychological support to at-risk human rights defenders and journalists.

ProVoces teamed up with the CEAV to create a telephone helpline model to give victims of crimes and human rights violations immediate access to their right to assistance, protection, support, an emotional containment. The helpline was designed using the general method for handling cases currently used by the State Victim Assistance Commissions and would provide:

- Psychological counseling and care based on brief and strategic therapy;
- Crisis intervention;
- Legal advice;
- Referral to different institutions if requested by the user, and
- Follow-up on cases.

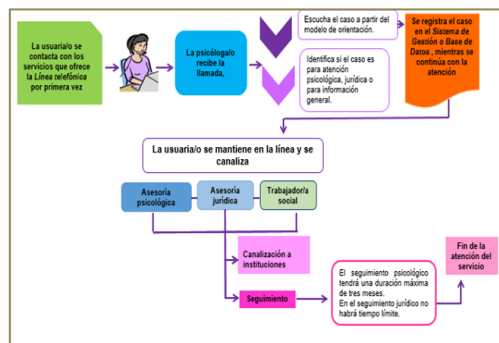


Figure 5. Flowchart for comprehensive support

The procedures followed varied according to the needs and potential risks identified in the call with the person requesting advice. The hotline, however, was never put in place because the state government changed the institutional framework for supporting victims, cut the budget, and appointed a new head of the agency. Although the initiative never materialized, the helpline can be implemented in another state where there is a State Protection Unit; where effective coordination with the local CEAV is possible and where other government agencies exist to provide psychological assistance, legal advice, support, and any necessary referrals. Similar efforts in Coahuila to provide psychological care by telephone showed very promising results and were well received by the target group. The model allows different stakeholders to coordinate at the local level, including private enterprises, which could provide equipment for the helpline; local authorities, which could fill their protection and prevention responsibilities using an innovative model; and CSOs, which could help refer cases.

1.3 Collaborate with GOM partners to secure greater political will and commitment to NPM goals

ProVoces developed a series of activities focused on raising public awareness on the importance of protecting and respecting human rights defenders and journalists and on the social value of journalism and the defense of human rights. The activities aimed to reach a broad and diverse audience not usually engaged in the defense of human rights and freedom of expression. ProVoces, therefore, worked collaboratively with different organizations to generate complementary messages, actions and materials. The different activities carried out throughout the project are detailed below.

Joint work with the Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social A.C. (CENCOS) and the impact of the Voces Libres Campaign

As noted earlier, providing safe and just conditions for exercising freedom of expression in Mexico has not been a priority issue on the national agenda. To highlight the importance of freedom of expression and those who promote it, ProVoces developed the Voces Libres (Free Voices) campaign in collaboration with CENCOS. In its three years of implementation Voces Libres targeted young people primarily, and CENCOS continually adapted its messages and materials to maximize its reach.

During the campaign’s first year, CENCOS achieved 94,388 impressions, a figure which rose to 712,679 during the second year, and in the third year the campaign closed with a total of 208,630 impressions on social media. Part of the success of Voces Libres lies in CENCOS’s ability to react to current events and maintain the materials fresh and timely when new challenges and opportunities arose.

For example, on World Press Day, 2019, Voces Libres posted a video message featuring 26 male and female opinion leaders, and national, local, and displaced journalists talking about the importance of protecting and respecting journalists. The video was meant to respond to recent statements by the federal government criticizing and discrediting of journalists. The variety of voices featured reflected the profession's diversity, highlighting that although journalists are different in terms of their gender, background and place where they report, they all face the same level of violence and threats. According to CENCOS statistics, the video reached 113,090 people on social media. This was an innovative action given the history of limited solidarity and lack of collective actions among journalists in Mexico. Effort such as this should be encouraged in future programs to increase the cohesiveness of journalists as a group and create a greater perception of strength and unity.



Photo 12. Journalist Carlos Loret de Mola in the video made by CENCOS for World Freedom of the Press Day.

During the COVID-19 pandemic journalists and human rights defenders became more vulnerable and increased their level of risk because they were more likely to become infected while on the job, because little to no attention was paid to the increase in violence, and because they were disproportionately affected by the economic crisis as media outlets cut their newsrooms significantly or reduced their journalists’ pay and forced journalists to buy their own personal protective equipment with their reduced salaries. In response to this, CENCOS developed audiovisual resources highlighting the specific problems that journalists and human rights defenders faced during the pandemic. One of these products is the micro-documentary *Derechos y pandemia: voces interrumpidas* (Rights and the Pandemic: Interrupted Voices) aimed at raising awareness of the importance of defending human rights and exercising freedom of expression during humanitarian crises such as a pandemic. It showed that although CSOs and journalists were able to leverage technology to do some their work, some of their tasks could not be performed remotely and put them at risk of infection.



Photos 13 and 14. Trailers for the documentary “Rights and Pandemic: Interrupted voices.”

In addition to the results mentioned above, the campaign also helped strengthen CENCOS and enhanced cooperation with other stakeholders. CENCOS regained its communicational sphere of influence within the freedom of expression and human rights defense CSOs system. For example, during the

final phase of the project, CENCOS partnered with a variety of CSOs and journalists to develop and share materials.¹

A blog against silence: *Tenemos que Hablar* (We Need to Talk)

With a ProVoces grant, CSO Horizontal implemented *Tenemos que Hablar*, an analytical, narrative, and investigative journalism project that aimed to generate ongoing dialogue from different perspectives on the importance of recognizing journalists' labor rights, the power and influence of the media, and the safety concerns and risks that communications professionals face when providing coverage. It also addressed the value of collaborative journalism and shared advice and techniques for improving narratives and avoiding misinformation.



Photo 15. Image from the article “Colleagues, Here’s Where We’ve Gone Wrong” from the blog *Tenemos que Hablar*

Tenemos que Hablar became a space for reflection and an essential source for learning firsthand about the obstacles that journalists face. It also functioned as a site where journalists shared their advice and recommendations for how to do safe and professional journalism. The variety of voices that participated in *Tenemos que Hablar* and the diverse formats of the posts and events that were held engaged the interest and people of all ages and secured their participation. More than 2,800,000 people were impacted by this campaign.

Although Horizontal has ceased to exist for reasons unrelated to the project the blog posts continue to be available on its website.

Setting the scene: *Voces contra el Poder* (Voices against Power)

With a grant from ProVoces, the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (RFKHR), in collaboration with El Día Después, and the Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro-Juárez (Centro Prodh) produced the play *Voces contra el Poder*. Based on the book *Speak Truth to Power: Human Rights Defenders Who Are Changing Our World*, by writer, activist, and director of the RFKHR, Kerry Kennedy, the play draws on accounts from human rights defenders in different countries to educate the audience on what human rights defenders do and the challenges they face.



Photo 16. *Voces contra el Poder* play in Mexico City.

This activity was innovative in several ways:

- It involved artists in promoting the defense of human rights. This decision made it possible to attract a difficult-to-reach audience and raise awareness among actors to continue promoting initiatives that support freedom of expression and the defense of human rights.
- The script was adapted to include Mexican cases, which gave audience members a more familiar perspective on the complex circumstances of human rights defenders in Mexico and the impact of their work on ordinary Mexicans' lives.

¹ These organizations included: Propuesta Cívica, CPJ, RSF, El Caracol A.C, Casa de las Muñecas Tiresias A.C, Artículo 19, Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles de Derechos Humanos Todos los Derechos para Todas y Todos (Red TDT), Centro Mexicano de Derecho Ambiental, A.C. (CEMDA), and the Colectivo de Análisis de la Seguridad con Democracia, A.C. (CASEDE), as well as journalists who helped conduct interviews.

- The inclusion of the case *Valentina Rosendo Cantú vs México*², an emblematic human rights case tried before the Inter-American Court, underscored the issues that continue to affect the country and the importance of addressing them.

More than 800 people attended the play. This pilot initiative explored the impact that art and culture can have on sharing social messages with diverse audiences. As part of its sustainability strategy, the project invited some university theater troupes to participate in the experience and take the play and adapt it to their contexts to replicate the exercise in their communities. This initiative was a novel way of encouraging citizens to participate in actions to protect human rights defenders and journalists and left audiences with the message that while protection is the state's responsibility, society also has a responsibility to defend human rights defenders and promote human rights.

Network of youth for freedom of expression: Voces en Red (Network of Voices)

Efforts to generate a collective consciousness of the value of journalism and of defending human rights find fertile ground among young people. ProVoces therefore sought to establish ties to universities to carry out different actions. *Voces en Red* was an initiative that brought together academic communities at the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, Monterrey Campus (ITESM), the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Nuevo León (UANL) and the Universidad Regiomontana (UERRE) to build the skills of journalism and communications students to strengthen the ethical component of their professional education as well as to form networks that bolster the practice of journalism and the exercise of freedom of expression.

Voces en Red aimed to:

- Motivate students to recognize, support, and get involved in journalism.
- Create a space for communication between students to develop actions and strategies to help strengthen journalism.
- Promote appreciation of and standards for doing high-quality journalism.
- Create ties between universities in a region or city, between journalism and communications majors, and between key champions of freedom of expression.



Photo 17. Dialogue with youth from the UANL

² In this case, the Mexican State was brought to the InterAmerican Court for the rape and torture of Valentina Rosendo Cantú, and indigenous woman from the State of Guerrero, as well as the lack of due diligence in the investigation and punishment of those responsible for these acts.

This activity used a participatory process in which students are active participants in the knowledge-building process. To generate ownership of the initiative, ProVoces engaged different key stakeholders such as the board of directors, professors, student groups, journalism and communications majors, and all students of social sciences. The participatory method made the process fun, created interactive mechanisms, encouraged teamwork, connected theory and practice, and allowed for the exchange of knowledge between peers and experts.

Voces en Red also included other stakeholders such as the media, CSO, international organizations, experts, and others, which was essential for expanding the network and achieving a broader impact and better results.

The alliance between universities centered on the following activities:

Colloquiums: A Day Without Journalists

Each participating university held a colloquium entitled A Day Without Journalists. During the event, the students engaged with practitioners and journalists in roundtable conversations, shared ideas as well as concerns and identified potential actions within their power to support freedom of expression and freedom of press.



Photo 18. Universities model

Independent Voices Contest

ProVoces supported the "Independent Voices" contest to select the best investigative journalism projects of participant universities (ITESM, U-ERRE, and UANL). Through this activity, the project aimed to incentivize the involvement of younger generations in ethical, data-driven, professional journalism through an opportunity to learn by practice.

The Independent Voices contest was conducted remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions. The following prizes were provided:

- Three weeks of coaching from renowned journalists: Nayeli Roldán, Manuel Ureste and Francisco Sandoval.
- Publication of an article on the *Animal Político* and *Verificado* websites, developed with the support of the coach
- Internship at *Animal Político*.



Photo 19. Publication in Animal Político

The winning articles were:

- First place: [The Last Mile: How the Pandemic Is Experienced in Rural Areas](#) (ITESM)
- Second place: [The Scope of Gender Violence Protocols of Universities in the Monterrey Metropolitan Area](#) (ITESM)
- Third place: [The digital gap in journalism in Nuevo León: a self-censored State without effective mechanisms to protect the right to freedom of the press](#) (UANL)

The winning project published in *Animal Político* was an investigation carried out by ITESM students, that explores the challenges that rural populations face in terms of care and access to health services and the local government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second place went to an article about the protocols of violence and harassment against women implemented in the universities of Nuevo León and the third place project dealt with transparency in the official advertisement of the Government of Nuevo León

ProVoces also created the *University Model for Forming Networks for Journalism and Freedom of Expression* to ensure the sustainability of the *Voces en Red* initiative. The model makes it easier to replicate the strategic alliance at other academic institutions because it contains a description of the processes and actions needed to carry out the initiative and replicate it in upcoming semesters. With the correct follow-up, this activity has the potential to impact the university community of Mexico and Latin America.

The importance of links with the governments of Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Nuevo León

Interactions between the different levels of state government in Mexico are supposed to be dynamic. State governments are supposed to coordinate, horizontally and vertically in the delivery of services to the population. However, the state government legal and institutional framework that allows them to do this has not been updated as quickly or as pertinently as needed and administrative capacity is low, which has resulted in coordination challenges on human rights. ProVoces, therefore, worked closely with the governments of Coahuila, Chihuahua, and Nuevo León to promote the development of institutional capabilities and management models that benefit human rights defenders and journalists.

In Chihuahua, ProVoces worked with Governor Javier Corral Jurado and Secretary-General of Internal Affairs César Jáuregui Robles to strengthen the state's coordination with the Federal Mechanism by properly aligning the state's Early Warning and the Contingency Plan with the support systems offered by the Federal Mechanism. State and federal authorities must collaborate effectively to implement the Early Warning and Contingency Plan to take into account the types of attacks that are perpetrated and the specificities of each beneficiary so that it can be effectively applied in response to the range of risks that defenders and journalists often face.



Photo 20. Work meeting with the Government of Chihuahua and the Federal Mechanism

Unfortunately, these coordination efforts between the Government of Chihuahua and the Federal Mechanism were suspended when the new head of the Federal Mechanism came onboard as his agenda did not prioritize these efforts. However, ProVoces continued collaborating with the Government of Chihuahua on the recently created UEP to establish instruments that enable it to fulfill its responsibilities and increase the professionalism of the staff to better protect human rights defenders and journalists.

1.4 Strengthen CSOs capacity to support protection and security measures

Public policy recommendations to ensure the practice of journalism and the defense of human rights.

Although various CSOs have performed assessments of the security conditions, protection alternatives, and agencies that provide assistance available to human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico, ProVoces found that there is a persistent lack of information about specific programs and policies focused on improving the security conditions of these two groups. To address this gap, ProVoces financed the writing of a series of policy papers analyzing the various protection mechanisms available and recommending public policies that make these protection mechanisms wider and more comprehensive. The primary audience of the policy papers are stakeholders who provide input and advice to decision makers to enable decision makers to adapt and develop policies and programs to address the high rates of violence against journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico.

The policy papers were published in the ten-chapter compendium entitled [*Algo debe cambiar: Recomendaciones de política pública para garantizar el ejercicio de la labor periodística y la defensa de los derechos humanos*](#) (Something Must Change. Public Policy Recommendations to Ensure the Practice of Journalism and the Defense of Human Rights) and were

written by government officials, academics, and well-known Mexican and foreign researchers. Each policy paper outlines a problem and suggests a solution based on a comparative analysis of best practices at the national and international level. The compendium is publicly available on the digital platform that houses ITESM’s Diploma Course on Freedom of Expression and Defending Human Rights, and the Project sent copies to the authorities responsible for protection, security, and justice for human rights defenders and journalists at the local level in the project’s target states, as well as to national authorities. While *Algo Debe Cambiar* provided useful input for designing evidence-based public policy, continued support is needed to ensure that these policies actually materialize, and institutions and protection mechanisms are strengthened.

To complement this work, ProVoces funded grants to CSOs to generate objective information and analysis to help agencies decide how to ensure the safety of the most vulnerable populations. Thus, in addition to strengthening organizations’ analysis and advocacy capabilities, it generated public discussion on the need to rethink how national and local authorities are addressing and should address the problem of violence against journalists and defenders. Data Cívica, CEMDA and CASEDE were those organizations that developed knowledge and policy recommendation based on data analysis and evaluation. More details on these grants can be found in further sections.



Photo 21. Part of the cover of “Algo Debe Cambiar”

Developing proposals for prevention and security during election seasons

Violence against journalists generally intensifies during elections in Mexico. Through the organization Data Cívica, therefore, the project supported the Red Rompe el Miedo to document the different acts of aggression, harassment, and intimidation to which journalists were subjected in the 2018 election. With ProVoces’ support, Data Cívica created a digital map that tracks attacks on journalists and members of the network and actions intended to limit freedom of expression. Although this map was developed for the 2018 elections³, it is currently publicly available and is activated at times when violence is expected to increase, as is the case when there are marches or demonstrations. A [report](#) analyzing the patterns of violence identified using the digital map concluded that during the 2018 elections, 37% of the attacks recorded were perpetrated by government officials, and 38% by political parties. It also contains a series of recommendations to authorities for reducing violence and impunity in crimes against journalists.

Since statistics and detailed information about attacks on journalists and their perpetrators are scarce in Mexico, supporting initiatives that generate this information is relevant and should be continued in future USAID funded programs.



Photo 22. Image promoting the presentation of the #RompeElMiedo Network’s report

³ The 2018 elections were the largest in history of the country. More than 3400 officials were elected at the local and federal levels, including nine governors and the current president of the Republic.

Developing a comprehensive protection policy for land and territory defenders

While elections are recognized as periods of widespread violence against journalists in Mexico, there is no one specific period or occurrence that triggers increased violence against human rights defenders, and defenders of environmental and land and territory rights are particularly vulnerable among human rights defenders. According Front Line Defenders, Latin America is the region with the highest number of murders of human rights defenders. The countries with the highest numbers of murdered human rights defenders in 2019 were Colombia (106); Honduras (31); Brazil (23) y Mexico (23); and Guatemala (15). The report found that 13% of the victims were women, and 40% were people who defended the rights of indigenous peoples, land, territory, and the environment.

ProVoces, therefore, awarded a grant to Mexican Center for Environmental Law, A.C (CEMDA) to generate information on the security and protection conditions of defenders of land, the environment, and territory and to demand that the Mexican government create effective policies to protect them. CEMDA was chosen for this activity because it has a history of successfully pushing through legislative and institutional changes. As a result of this grant, CEMDA developed a comprehensive protection policy built on the principle of protection for all people and on creating a favorable atmosphere where defending the environment does not become a death sentence. To complete this task, CEMDA, together with the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (ELAW), organized the “National Forum on Comprehensive Protection for Environmental and Land Defenders.” Defenders from different Mexican states participated in the event to identify their main security needs. CEMDA also organized a discussion with CSOs, authorities, and defenders where different participants recognized the urgent need for structural changes to improve the conditions for defending the environment in Mexico.



Photo 23. Infographic on a comprehensive protection policy for

Institutional strengthening strategy with CSO and other entities

The OPIOCA is a tool that aims to identify the existing capacity of the civil society organizations and other entities with which ProVoces has partnered. This tool was built based on the following instruments developed by USAID to evaluate organizations’ effectiveness:

- The Organizational Performance Index (OPI) and its four categories (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability).
- The Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) with its 188 variables.

In addition to categories already built into these instruments, ProVoces incorporated the category of institutional integrity, which considers the variables of transparency and accountability, and the culture of lawfulness for a more complete analysis of organizations. The OPIOCA has two stages: self-assessment and validation. At the self-assessment stage, the tool is shared by email for the organization to answer a series of questions in order to evaluate its organizational status. The answers are then validated with documentation, and this yields the final score. ProVoces implemented this tool as part of the sustainability strategy to expand partner organizations’ existing capacities to continue their long-term mission and implement larger, more complex projects. Throughout the period of implementation, ProVoces used the OPIOCA to assess the institutional capacities of partners CENCOS, Colectivo de Análisis de la Seguridad con Democracia, A.C. (CASEDE), la Fundación Barra Mexicana (FBM), and the Instituto Mexicano de la Radio (IMER).

CENCOS, Colectivo de Análisis de la Seguridad con Democracia, A.C. (CASEDE)

The Colectivo de Análisis de la Seguridad con Democracia A. C. (CASEDE) is made up of researchers, academics, government and nongovernment experts, and members of CSO and different research centers. The organization

carries out different activities related to security, freedom of expression, and human rights. Tt DPK had originally selected CASEDE as its prime partner in the implementation of the ProVoces contract and strengthening this organization institutionally was key to ensuring that there were strong local organizations advocating for freedom of expression, generating knowledge and analyzing information to have an evidence-based impact on public policies and government decisions.

The first assessment of CASEDE’s institutional capacities yielded a baseline of 22% which meant that the organization lacked critical procedures in almost every area relevant to organization management (financial, project management, operations, business strategy). The project then used this as the basis for designing an institutional strengthening plan tailored to the organization’s specific needs at different stages. The action plan to strengthen the institution included the development of organizational management, job descriptions, strategic planning, data collection, monitoring and evaluation processes, among others.

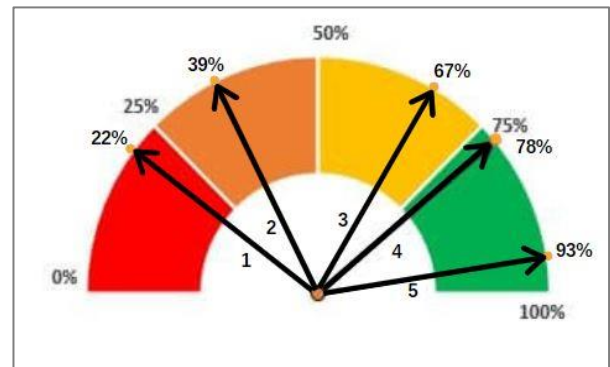


Figure 6. Results from the five applications of the OPIOCA to CASEDE

Following ProVoces’ focused and strategic technical assistance, CASEDE scored 39% on institutional capacity on a second assessment and the Project continued its technical assistance with an emphasis on developing processes for strategic planning, operational planning, transparency, accountability, management, and continuous improvement. The organization achieved a progressive 93% of institutional capacity over the different phases of OPIOCA’s measurement and capacity strengthening. CASEDE now has strictly defined financial, programmatic and operational processes and an internal structure that allows it to be more accountable to its board of directors and donors.

Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social A.C. (CENCOS)

The Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social, A.C. (CENCOS)’s mission is to promote the rights to freedom of expression and access to information, and to disseminate information about the regulations and legal frameworks needed to exercise these rights. CENCOS was a key partner organization in the implementation of ProVoces, as it performed joint actions with the Project that allowed ProVoces to meet its objectives for prevention and strategic communication. In the initial application of the OPIOCA, the organization received an overall score of 80% for its initial capacities. This means that CENCOS was able to operate based on its mission and internal organization, but it needed to improve its internal processes, to train personnel, and to conduct long-term planning for sustainability.

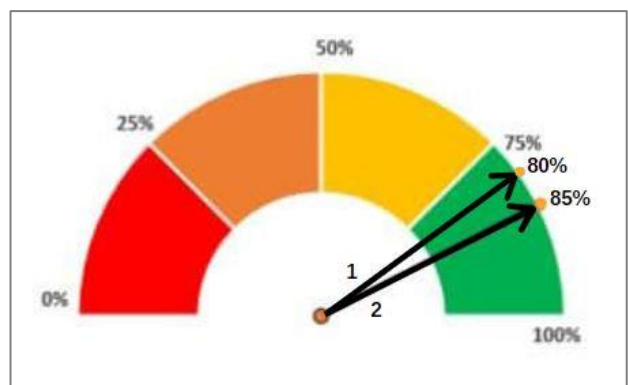


Figure 7. Results from the two applications of the OPIOCA to CENCOS

Since it earned relatively high scores, ProVoces worked with CENCOS to fine-tune its internal processes and develop a sustainable medium- and long-term funding strategy. Two master documents resulted from this technical assistance: a proposal for improving how direct responsibilities are distributed, and recommendations for developing a critical path to implementing a sustainability strategy. After this technical assistance, CENCOS underwent a second OPIOCA evaluation and its score improved from 80% to 85% which means that it improved its internal processes and strengthened its long-term sustainability strategies. This represented a significant added value for the organization to consolidate its processes and move towards financial independence.

Fundación Barra Mexicana (FBM)

The Fundación Barra Mexicana (FBM) promotes and coordinates the provision of free legal services by Mexican Bar Association members and non-member attorneys, applying the law as a tool for social change and access to justice, in adherence to ideals and ethical codes that inspire excellence in an effective, transparent, and responsible way. ProVoces collaborated with FBM to promote pro bono assistance in cases involving human rights defenders and journalists. The project also supported the adoption of standard operational processes for planning and management to improve its effectiveness and sustainability.

The FBM scored 35% in the first application of the OPIOCA. The organization lacked procurement policies, a staff performance evaluation process, strategic planning, and cost-control policies. This result was used to create a strategic plan for improving institutional effectiveness by updating and developing processes and policies for properly managing internal processes, generating strategic planning capacities and a results-oriented approach, and strengthening its financial mechanisms and transparency and accountability practices. After five months of Project supported technical assistance the FBM received a total score of 79% in its second OPIOCA evaluation. The FBM developed operational manuals for travel, procurement, and budget control, staff performance evaluation policies, timesheets, the FBM also improved its Pro-Bono case management system and the development of strategic planning for sustainability.

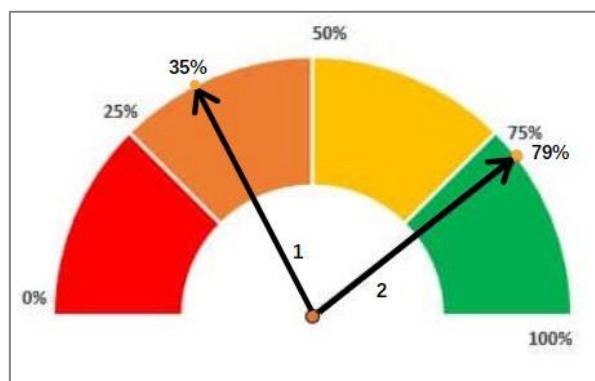


Figure 8. Results from the two applications of the OPIOCA to the FBM

The Project presented the results of the institutional strengthening to the FBM's staff and Board of Directors, and recommended that it:

- Choose high-priority and viable strategies to design actions for the following year.
- Create a strategy for becoming better known and more accessible to people who can receive pro bono services.
- Actively involve the Board of Directors and Board of Trustees in creating ways to implement the strategies, alliances, and mobilization of resources, in addition to helping them become familiar with results-based management and human rights approaches.
- Select two or three strategic indicators to begin making the tools and mechanisms for evaluating FBM's results and impacts more professional.
- Use all its management tools on a routine basis, and update its web page, institutional presentations, and official documents.
- Adopt a gender-sensitive approach and mainstreaming in all its processes.

Mexican Radio Institute (Instituto Mexicano de la Radio-IMER)

The Mexican Radio Institute is a decentralized, independent public entity that produces and broadcasts radio content that enriches communities' knowledge, understanding, and analysis to achieve inclusive, participatory, and diverse public communication. Currently more than one million people tune in to one of IMER's 18 radio stations or 39 digital channels. In 2019, IMER and USAID signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that established a framework for cooperation on actions to strengthen the institutional capacities of public radio and the capabilities of its communication professionals. As part of this collaboration, ProVoces used the OPIOCA to determine IMER's institutional capacities and designed a series of activities to strengthen its institutional capacities, professionalism, sustainability, and effectiveness in its strategic role in guaranteeing freedom of expression.

In its initial OPIOCA assessment the IMER scored 50%. IMER lacked a process to evaluate staff performance, strategic planning, security protocols, and its existing internal processes (staff management, operations, program production) were inadequate, among other issues.

Based on these results, ProVoces designed strengthening plan based on the dimensions of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, institutional integrity, sustainability, and a culture of security. In this process IMER gained management knowledge, skills, and tools that will allow the institute to gradually improve its mechanisms for planning, designing, and controlling internal processes (staff management, operations, program production), such as production, such as the systematized identification of audiences which would allow a better tailoring of programs content, as well as security protocols and a stronger operational management. This includes distributing responsibilities based on competences, job descriptions and profiles.

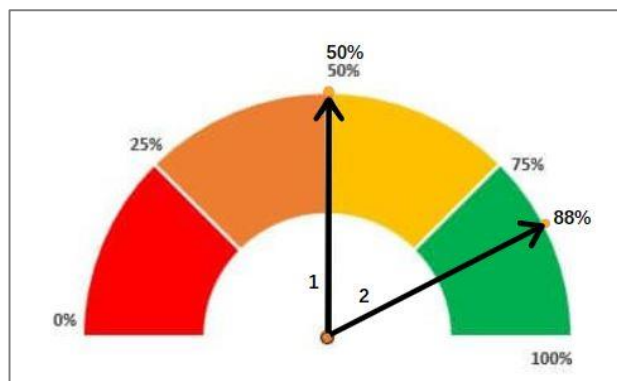


Figure 9. Results from the two applications of the OPIOCA to the IMER

Advisory Council of the Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists

The Consultative Council is a citizen participation body with the legal mandate of observing and strengthening the NPM’s decision-making process to benefit its users. The Council’s capabilities to participate and perform their duties are crucial for improving NPM’s performance and results. ProVoces build on the Council’s efforts to strengthen processes in strategic planning, communication, measuring the satisfaction of NPM beneficiaries, and the Consultative Council’s decision-making. ProVoces also created a tool to measure the level of satisfaction of human rights defenders and journalists with the protection measures put in place by the Federal Mechanism. The tool can be applied at NPM Governing Board sessions and used to collect statistics to monitor and measure the effectiveness of protection measures. The Blog del Consejo Consultivo (Advisory Council Blog) was also created to put Council members in direct contact with defenders and journalists and promote actions to improve conditions for them.

As a result of this targeted technical assistance, the Consultative Council has participated in specific actions to strengthen the NPM, such as providing feedback for the development and approval of risk assessment methodology and Manual on the Use of Protection Measures. Despite these advances several challenges remain for the Advisory Council which should be considered in future collaborations. Members of the Council are honorarium appointees, they do not receive paid compensation for the tasks they perform for the Council and often have little time to dedicate to Council functions. Future interventions with the Advisory Council should, concentrate on helping the Council acquire assertive and constructive communication skills that will enhance a better understanding and productive relationship with the Mechanism and the Advisory Council

1.5. Legislative or policy updates in support of prosecution, prevention and prosecution efforts in favor of Human rights defenders and journalists

Participating in the legislative agenda on freedom of expression

Another weapon often yielded against human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico to silence them are wrongful accusations in criminal or civil courts. Defamation and slander laws, for example, are often used to harass journalists, allowing plaintiffs to claim emotional distress resulting from unfavorable news coverage to seek damages against journalists. The situation has become so severe that in 2017, the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Opinion and Expression and the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) warned about the improper use of the legal system in Mexico to attack freedom of expression and journalists.

ProVoces, therefore, brokered partnerships and dialogue among various government and non-government actors to review laws on freedom of expression and on the defense of human rights, and in many cases adjust them or rewrite it so that they could better protect human rights defenders and journalists and so that they could be applied more fairly to them. ProVoces partnered with the Governmental Affairs and Population Committee of the Chamber of Deputies (Governmental Affairs Committee) through its chair, Rocío Barrera Badillo, to review protection laws and recommend improvements. In 2019, ProVoces hosted a series of roundtables with CSOs, journalists and human rights defenders, (some of whom were under the protection of the Protection Mechanism), CEAV representatives and prosecutors specializing in freedom of expression to make recommendations on how protection laws could be improved and streamlined. They concluded that:

1. The Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (*Protección de Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas—LPPDDHP*) should not be rewritten as it contains important protections that should not be deleted. It should be adjusted in accordance to the recommendations provided in the Assessment of the Federal Mechanism conducted by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.
2. A National Protection System for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists that coordinates the different institutions involved should be established.
3. Protection should go beyond merely providing physical security and protection measures and should include actions that guarantee the right to practice journalism, freedom of expression, and the defense and promotion of human rights.
4. There should be mechanisms for collaborating with the Federal Mechanism and the Executive Victim Assistance Commission to ensure more efficiency in criminal proceedings involving the prosecutorial offices.
5. Legislation at minimum should establish shared guidelines at the federal and state levels regarding sufficiently funded budgets, inter-institutional cooperation, creating shared databases, coordinating services, and other aspects.
6. Strengthen coordination at the national level and ensure cooperation between the Federal Mechanism and the State Protection Units or the liaison units.



Photo 24. Discussion roundtables 2019

Given the attention generated by the case of Sergio Aguayo,⁴ ProVoces collaborated with Artículo 19 to create a working document that argued for the need to change different provisions of the Federal Civil Code and the Federal Code of Civil Procedure on damages for emotional distress. This document incorporates international standards and recommendations from international bodies for protecting the work of journalists, as well as Mexican case law that sets standards of proof that government officials must meet before bringing lawsuits against journalists. ProVoces, Artículo 19, Propuesta Cívica, and the Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D) also presented a broad Legislative Agenda on Freedom of Expression to the Governmental Affairs Committee that included proposals to reform 20 laws that contain rules that pose legal obstacles that impact human rights defense and journalism. The reforms included the document prepared by ProVoces on damages for emotional distress. In January 2020, the legislative route to approving that agenda was defined and shared through a conclusion's roundtable organized by the Parliamentary Governmental Affairs Committee and supported by ProVoces. During this meeting, the Committee summarized the legislative process, presented the previously agreed-upon route, and presented a draft of adjustments to the Law for the Protection of Defenders and Journalists that should have been approved during the second ordinary period of sessions of the Mexican legislature. However, due to COVID-19, all legislative work was suspended, and the ordinary period of sessions ended without approval for that package.

Despite this delay, the Governmental Affairs Committee honored its commitments and formed a technical committee composed of ProVoces, CSO, experts, and representatives from the Federal Mechanism to review draft opinions on the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (LPPDDHP) and on repealing the Law on Crimes by the Press. The draft opinions were finalized with the consensus of the Committee and unanimously approved by the Governmental Affairs Committee on September 22, 2020. As part of the package of the legislative agenda, on November 26, 2020, the Plenary Body of the Chamber of Deputies repealed the Law on Crimes by the Press, an obsolete legal framework that restricted freedom of expression.

The passage of the laws mentioned above are crucial steps to avoid criminalizing the exercise of freedom of expression and prevent judicial harassment of defenders and journalists. They also represent partial compliance with the recommendations given by different international bodies, especially the repeal of the Law on Crimes by the Press of 1917. However, a set of complementary reforms have yet to be passed, and without them, many of the legal obstacles to exercising freedom of expression remain. It is, therefore, essential for the CSOs involved in the process to continue doing follow-up work and advocacy in 2021.

Participating in advocacy to prevent the disappearance of the Trust Fund for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists

In May 2020, the political party Movimiento Regeneración Nacional (MORENA) introduced an initiative to do away with public trusts, including the Fund for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists. Although the fund itself would not disappear, its resources would be transferred to the general budget of the Secretariat of Internal Affairs, which would make processes more bureaucratic and block access to the resources needed to implement the measures specified by the NPM. Additionally, abolishing its status as a "trust" would make it hard to obtain resources beyond those allocated in the Expenditure Budget.

In response to this situation, the Governmental Affairs and Population Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, in collaboration with other committees, called an open parliament session in June 2020, in which ProVoces participated alongside other CSO. In preparing the session, ProVoces facilitated working sessions with CSOs, including Artículo 19, CIMAC, Serapaz, Propuesta Cívica, among others, to formulate the technical arguments in favor of maintaining the Trust Fund. After hearing those present, the deputies at the session unanimously agreed that abolishing this trust was unadvisable.

⁴ In October 2019, following a three-year-long civil proceeding, a Mexico City court ordered Sergio Aguayo to pay 10 million pesos in damages to the former governor of Coahuila, Humberto Moreira, for emotional distress. This case is currently before the Mexican Supreme Court.

Despite this, during the first period of sessions of the Congress of the Union (September-December 2020) the abolition of 109 public trusts for different activities was confirmed as part of the miscellaneous fiscal items. This unquestionably exacerbates the uncertainty that characterizes the lives of defenders and journalists, who are routinely at risk.

Proposed law supporting human rights defenders and journalists in Nuevo León

ProVoces provided technical assistance to strengthen the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists of the State of Nuevo León, introduced by the state deputy of the Movimiento Ciudadano party, Luis Donaldo Colosio Riojas. The Project worked directly with Deputy Colosio's technical team to improve the institutional engineering for the future State Protection Unit, as established in the bill. As part of this support, the Project performed the budget impact analysis for the initiative which indicated that the cost of protecting human rights defenders and journalists in the state did not require the creation of an extensive bureaucratic apparatus. The Project, therefore, advised against creating a local protection mechanism and instead recommended the creation of a special services unit within the office of the State Attorney General. The project's collaboration with Deputy Colosio's team provided an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss, at a local level, which model would be best for creating a mechanism that would effectively and efficiently assign responsibility for prevention, protection, and prosecution for defenders and journalists.



Photo 26. Work meeting with defenders, journalists, and authorities. Monterrey.

At the beginning of 2020, the deputy introduced the initiative at the State Congress. However, the process was delayed by the COVID-19 emergency, and as a result, the initiative lapsed. The hope is that work on the law will resume once new state lawmakers are elected in 2021.

2. IMPROVED PREVENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND JOURNALISTS

Preventing abuses against human rights defenders and journalists is largely the responsibility of the state, but human rights defenders and journalists can also take personal preventive measures that reduce their chances of becoming a victim. ProVoces, therefore, designed its prevention activities around two pillars:

1. Support GOM and CSOs to improve prevention assistance.
2. Collaborate with practitioner networks to strengthen self-protection practices.

Activities under the first pillar aimed promoting a culture of prevention and protection of journalists to reduce the risks inherent to their coverage and investigations. The activities were aimed at invigorating free, independent and pluralist media outlets, where journalists can work safely and independently, without fear of being threatened or murdered.

The second pillar activities centered on providing human rights defenders and journalists with tools and knowledge to perform ethical, high quality journalism and to enable them to take action in the event of a threat and reduce their exposure to risk factors and strengthened the support networks that allow these groups to take collective action to protect individuals. The Project originally had allocated resources for training on digital security, but, after having received feedback from human rights defenders and journalists that this type of training

was unnecessary because too much previous training had focused on this subject, the Project pivoted to customizing the trainings to the needs expressed by each group.

In the case of human rights defenders, ProVoces focused its efforts on strengthening and supporting organizations that work to defend human rights, and on helping the organizations implement actions to increase their risk reduction capacity. The Project initially carried out activities with organizations in the state of Chihuahua, and the results were shared with defense organizations in other states. For journalists, the project decided to help reinforce independent journalism to keep exercising the right to freedom of expression in Mexico's context of violence. But it also worked with the media, as key players responsible for the security of those working for them.

2.1 Support GOM and CSOs to improve prevention assistance

Increasing professionalism as a mechanism for preventing exposure to risk

Performing ethical and high-quality journalism lowers journalists' exposure to lawsuits or criminal prosecution and provides them with the tools necessary to prove their innocence in the event of a frivolous lawsuit or criminal investigation. ProVoces, therefore, partnered with the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM) and the Universidad Iberoamericana (IBERO) create two diploma courses aimed at increasing journalists' investigation skills to enable them to do better quality journalism.

To ensure the sustainability of these two certificate programs, ProVoces partnered with ITESM and IBERO as these universities have committed to maintaining the certificate through their regular continual studies programs. Other organizations well known for their work to defend and protect human rights, such as the CDHCDMX, contributed in the design of the certificate courses. These partnerships allowed ProVoces to develop training programs that expand the educational options and enhance the professionalism of defenders and journalists in Mexico.

The capacity-building activities and their results are detailed below:



Photo 27. Giving recognition certificates to journalists in the Diploma Course on Freedom of the Expression and Defense of Human Rights

Diploma Course on Human Rights, Freedom of Expression, and Journalism

As part of its constant push to increase professionalism, ProVoces partnered with CDHCDMX and IBERO to offer the *Diploma Course on Human Rights, Freedom of Expression, and Journalism*. This course included theoretical sessions and practical workshops where students gained security and protection skills. It was divided into twenty-five sessions and five workshops, covering such relevant topics as the right to information, democratic participation and freedom of expression, prior censorship, state violence against journalists, forced displacement and other extreme forms of violence, risk analysis, and selfcare as a political tool, among others. Twenty-four journalists participated in the diploma course, with 19 successfully completing their studies and graduating. Of the 19 graduates, seven were persons displaced by the violence in their states.

An important aspect of the course was the interaction between journalists who were not facing risk and at-risk journalists. This interaction fostered collaborative work and a network for protection and support in emergency situations.

Diploma Course on Freedom of Expression and the Defense of Human Rights

ProVoces and ITESM designed the *Diploma Course on Freedom of Expression and Defense of Human Rights* to build journalists' theoretical and practical skills in risk evaluation, security measures and self-protection, collaboration mechanisms for human rights defenders and journalists, and basic concepts of entrepreneurship.

This Diploma Course was designed for journalists who, because of limited time and/or financial resources, have few opportunities for training and was offered three times during the period of ProVoces implementation. Courses were offered online, which allowed journalists from all regions in Mexico to participate. Although ITESM offered the Diploma Course at a cost, for the first cohort ProVoces and ITESM awarded 80 full scholarships to encourage participation. For the second cohort, ProVoces and ITESM covered 40% of the costs for 18 participants. Eleven of these 18 scholarships went to beneficiaries of the Integral Mechanism, which, in turn, paid the remaining 60% of the cost of the course for these participants. Unlike in the first cohort, where the scholarships covered the full cost, this cohort had a lower dropout rate, and 78% of those who received aid completed the course. The first cohort had 89 people, 51% of whom satisfactorily completed the course. Given the Diploma Course's success ITESM decided to offer it a third time. ITESM has begun to include the diploma into its regular academic offerings to Latin American journalists, which has guaranteed the sustainability of this activity.

The Diploma Course is one of the activities that resulted from the signature of an MOU between ITESM and USAID in June of 2018, which outlines broad framework for collaborating to support freedom of expression. As part of this agreement, ProVoces and ITESM worked on a broad range of activities that in addition to the Diploma Course included incorporating a gender-sensitive perspective and differentiated approach into the educational content developed by ITESM for its distance learning courses. This joint work materialized as a handbook for professors and administrators of the School of Government and Public Transformation.



Photo 28. Signing of the MOU between USAID and ITESM

Peer-to-peer training program for independent media

Editorial decisions in Mexico are often guided by a media outlet's source of funding, and most media organizations receive public funding, which limits their independence in terms of the depth of their investigations and the content they can publish. Independent media outlets, therefore, provide journalists in Mexico the opportunity to do a broader array of investigations and reports without the fear of being censored by funders. However, independent media often lack funding sources, lack the administrative capabilities to sustain operations and journalists require additional training to produce high quality pieces. ProVoces, therefore, designed a peer support program to strengthen independent media outlets' operational and technical capacities and thus ensure their sustainability. Participating media outlets gained new digital tools and skills for improving their content, organizing information in a more attractive way to reach a broader audience, and becoming more appealing to different sources of funding. The project focused on building the skills of specialized staff in six independent media outlets⁵ in Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Chihuahua to generate

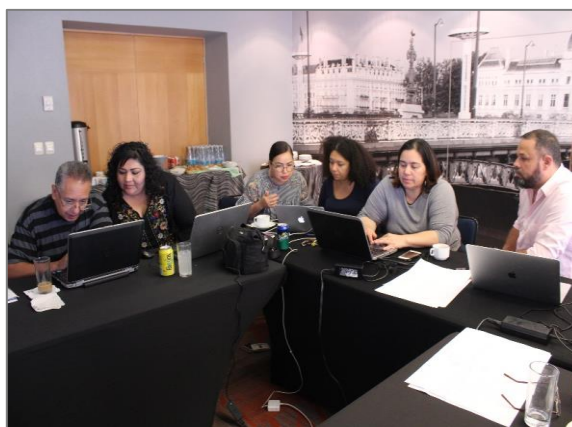


Photo 29. Team from the La Verdad de Juárez media outlet at the workshop on multimedia tools and resources.

⁵ La Verdad de Ciudad Juárez, Verificado de Monterrey, Voces Irritilas de Torreón, Raichali de Chihuahua, the Red de Periodistas del Noroeste de Monterrey, and La Talacha, which is run by displaced journalists from Tamaulipas in Monterrey

multimedia content. The workshops taught by infographics expert Juan Carlos Hernández introduced journalists to free digital tools for incorporating visual content into their coverage.

Two pieces published by the online newspaper La Verdad, feature resources and techniques generated in the workshops: [Sin justiciar más de 2 mil 300 víctimas de violación](#) and [Encienden 10 colonias alerta por violación sexual](#).

The importance of collaborating with national media

Most journalists in Mexico work at traditional media outlets, newspapers, and information channels. To reach this target population ProVoces worked to build their capacities to incorporate a gender-sensitive perspective and a differentiated approach in their daily work, and to recognize the risks associated with doing journalism and react appropriately to avoid those risks. The project trained the Diario Milenio and Universal staff on digital security, legal risks, violence against women in the media, and how to react in emergency situations.

In the case of Diario Milenio because this activity involved the paper's executives, it resulted in more coverage about violence against women and the role of women in journalism. On March 8, 2020 (International Women's Day), for example, the paper joined the national women's strike, expanding their coverage about women and women in journalism and kept all the regular opinion pieces written by women blank in solidarity with the strike. Using the hashtag #SinEllasNuncaMás, the paper sought to highlight the violence and sexism that women routinely face in Mexico. From this activity, ProVoces learned that it is crucial to involve senior leadership in these types of initiatives to effect a change in a newspaper's editorial line. In future program iterations, media executives must be involved in these types of activities to improve the quality of journalism in Mexico.



Photo 30. Workshops at Universal



Photo 31. Workshops at Milenio

A sisterhood: La Voz de las Mujeres Periodistas (The Voice of Women Journalists)

La Voz de las Mujeres Periodistas is a network of women journalists, which began as a series of informal meetings of leading women journalists promoted by ProVoces, that seeks to bring attention to the causes of violence against women and underscore the importance of women's exercise of the right to freedom of expression through journalism. Through periodic meetings and peer to peer mentoring, women exchanged self-care and self-protection recommendations, and offered mentoring partnerships between senior and junior journalists. ProVoces helped bolster this initiative by creating a communications platform that offered a variety of specialized documents, a job board, and other relevant resources.

The network could not continue to meet as originally envisioned because of members' scheduling conflicts and competing priorities, and the communication platform was transferred to the organization CIMAC, which renamed it [Mujeres periodistas](#) (Women Journalists). The webpage has become a space for CSOs to share their platforms on the issue of violence against women in Mexico. Participating organizations include the Asociación y Periódico Feminista “La cuerda”, the Red Internacional de Periodistas con Visión de Género, Artículo 19, IM-Defensoras, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), and Frente por la Libertad.



Similarly, to promote professional networking among women journalists, the Project funded the [Women Index](#), a digital catalogue of information about individual female journalists' specialties, ongoing projects, and past work. The Women Index aims to become a space where women journalists can promote their work and find other women with whom to partner on various projects. In the long-term the Women Index plans to offer specialized courses, webinars and online conferences, and continuing education.



Photos 32 and 33. Meetings of la Voz de las Mujeres Periodistas

Creating spaces for learning and reflection: Let's Talk about Journalism (*Hablemos de Periodismo*)

Because journalists often lack time for professional development, ProVoces developed a series of 15 short videos entitled “Let's Talk about Journalism” that could be easily shared and accessed from anywhere with an internet connection. The videos featured experts on topics related to work-related risks:

- Safely covering social movements.
- Crisis, stress, and trauma.
- Recommendations and strengthening for adverse situations.
- Journalism and gender sensitivity.
- Checking data.
- Requesting public information.
- Depression and grief.
- How to emerge after violent acts: a personal lesson in resilience.
- Digital tools: *Umbrella y Salama*.
- How the Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists works.
- Digital security and networks for journalists.
- Legal protection against campaigns to criminalize journalists.
- Using social media.
- The adversarial criminal justice system.

The “Let's Talk about Journalism” videos were shared with the *Asociación de Periodistas Desplazados México* (Mexican Displaced Journalists Association), which incorporated them into a free online training on how local journalists can do their work more securely. These materials were also shared with ITESM as part of the content for the third cohort of the Diploma Course on Freedom of Expression and Defending Human Rights.

Additionally, ProVoces formed an alliance with the International Journalists Network (IJNET), a project of the International Center of Journalists, to make the videos available through IJNET's digital platform. IJNET's digital platform allows journalists from different parts of the world to access informative articles, training opportunities, and funding, as well as tools that will allow them to do journalism in a more secure and professional way. Through

this collaboration, ProVoces ensured that the videos reach a wider audience and that they were available through a medium that would be available after the end of the Project.

Remote Communication: The challenges of the pandemic

Through the COVID-19 pandemic ProVoces maintained its commitment to keeping journalists informed about continuing education opportunities, trainings, webinars, funding opportunities, scholarships, contests, and articles intended for journalists. These resources were shared weekly and gave journalists continued access to content to build their skills and inform them of funding opportunities, which, in the context of the pandemic, became an urgent need. The project also created infographics on relevant topics and gave advice about doing journalism in a more effective and secure way. This ongoing communication provided a space for journalists to share activities they were organizing at their media organizations, thus helping them publicize their work.

Collaboration with IMER

As noted, earlier IMER and USAID signed a MOU that created a framework for cooperation to better position public radio in Mexico as a space for doing high quality journalism and promoting freedom of expression. Under this agreement, ProVoces and IMER organized the International Public Media Forum to provide a space to exchange ideas and experiences, identify common problems, and explore successes and best practices of public media outlets in Europe, North America, and Latin America.

Representatives of public media outlets in Germany, Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Spain, United States, France, United Kingdom, and Uruguay participated in this event, including *BBC World News*, *Radio Nacional Argentina*, *Radio Internacional Canadá*, *Deutsche Welle*, *Radio y TV Española*, *Public Broadcasting Service*, and *Radio Televisión Nacional de Colombia*. Because the event was held online, it reached a wider audience with 1255 people participating on Zoom and 6641 people on Facebook.



Photo 34. Infographic shared with journalists



Photo 35. Signing of the MOU between USAID and IMER



Photo 36. Jesús Ramírez Cuevas, General Coordinator of Social Communication and Spokesperson for the Federal Government during the Opening Session of the International Public Media Forum.

The event led to IMER’s signature of an agreement with other public media outlets in the Americas to establish an alliance to strengthen journalism through public radio stations, as well as to give public communication professionals a sense of identity and belonging. This collaboration will create spaces for exchanging best practices, training, and internships.

In addition to the forum, ProVoces funded additional activities to strengthen the technical capabilities of IMER’s communications professionals. These included workshops on verifying data, podcasting, and ethics in journalism.

Strengthening local media: *Zócalo* and *Vanguardia*

Despite having more technical, financial, and human resources than independent media outlets, some traditional media outlets in Mexico lack security protocols for their journalists and do not offer continuing education to enhance the skills of their employees or security training to ensure their journalists know how to react in risky situations. Two of these media outlets are state newspapers *Vanguardia* and *Zócalo* in Coahuila. ProVoces worked with both newspapers to create media safety protocols, and a series of workshops on covering news with a gender-sensitive perspective to ensure the information is handled properly. Participants were encouraged to analyze how to publish information that does not promote violence or discrimination against women or further gender stereotypes.

The Project worked with *Vanguardia* to create *Guidelines for Preventing and Addressing Sexual Harassment* which outlined clear steps in handling accusations of sexual harassment and guidelines for preventing it. ProVoces also trained editors and reporters on how to avoid being targeted by lawsuits and how to handle judicial harassment. The workshop included theoretical and practical content on legal concepts related to civil lawsuits or criminal proceedings, including Mexico's New Criminal Justice System, the presumption of innocence, legal restrictions on using images of children, the risks of using gender stereotypes that can incite violence, covering vulnerable groups appropriately and ethically, protecting sources, policies for corrections, and updating information or eliminating articles. *Vanguardia* staff requested these trainings because they identified them as their primary risks. ProVoces also offered a workshop on verifying data and analyzing public discourse and digital security.

ProVoces did initial work to raise awareness among the *Vanguardia* and *Zocalo* owners on the company's responsibility to ensure the security and protection of its journalists and staff. In the next iteration of the program, the next steps should be to support them in adopting security protocols and providing training on them to their staff.



Photo 37. Closing event of the International Public Media Form.



Photo 38. Staff from *Zócalo* and Daniela Mendoza at the workshop on verifying data.

Strengthening Community and Indigenous Radio Stations

In Mexico, community radio is one of the most important communication channels for indigenous populations, allowing them to disseminate information in local languages. In many cases, community media is the only source of information for indigenous people and the only channel for denouncing abuse and violence. Because of their remote locations, the lack of state presence in them, and the causes for which they advocate this group of journalists and human rights defenders are extremely vulnerable. ProVoces, therefore, funded a grant to the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) to improve the protection and prevention skills of indigenous journalists. The trainings funded with this grant provided them information on self-care and self-protection and tools for effective risk management.

As part of this grant, AMARC organized the National Meeting for Security and Protection of Community and Indigenous Radio Stations in Mexico City where 58 community and indigenous journalists from 16 Mexican states acquired tools to build their own security protocols according to their specific needs. Additionally, as part of the grant, AMARC developed a *Security and Protection Manual* that was shared with its network of community and indigenous radio stations. This document lays out the main risks indigenous journalists face and proposes general steps to take in the event of threats, harassment, attacks, and surveillance.

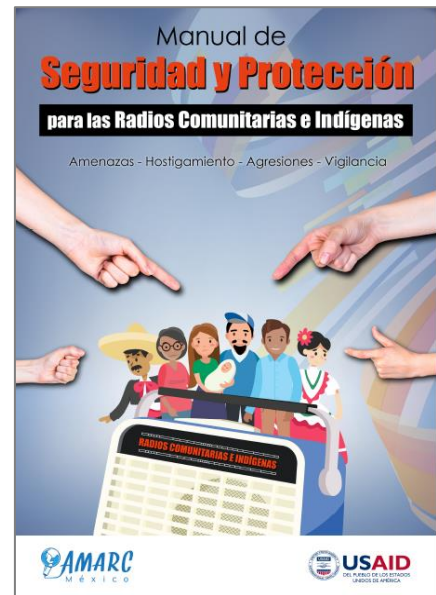


Photo 39. Security and Protection Manual for Community and Indigenous Radio Stations, AMARC

New models for fostering quality independent journalism

One of the remaining challenges for the human rights agenda is generating ties with the private business sector to promote and protect human rights. The private sector is often seen in Mexico as a perpetrator of human rights violations rather than a guarantor of these rights. However, businesses are key actors in advocating for public and social priorities, such as the protection of human rights. To strengthen democracy, the participation and cooperation of all actors in society is needed, and the involvement of the private sector in the agenda is essential to achieving this aim.

With the support of grantee, the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Human Rights (RFKHR), ProVoces therefore, achieved a commitment by the Confederación Patronal de la República Mexicana (COPARMEX) to create the Fundación Mexicana para el Periodismo Libre (Mexican Foundation for Free Press) to promote and support independent journalism in Mexico. This commitment was achieved through a series of meetings in Mexico City and Monterrey in which ProVoces and RFKHR introduced business leaders to the importance of independent journalism in Mexico and the need to financially supported.



Photo 40. Meeting with Mexico City's business sector.

ProVoces provided technical assistance to COPARMEX on the design of the Foundation and produced key operational documents such as the bylaws, the code of ethics, and the organizational chart. While the pandemic and internal issues at COPARMEX delayed the formation of the Foundation, COPARMEX officially launched it on November 25, 2020.

One of ProVoces' most important legacies will undoubtedly be the creation of this Foundation. On the one hand, the Foundation will strengthen independent journalism by providing it the financial backing it needs, and on the other, it involves the Mexican business community in defending and promoting human rights.

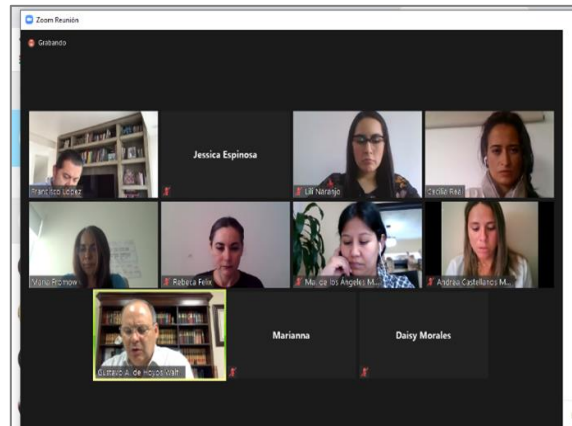


Photo 41. Virtual work meeting with the COPARMEX team

2.2 Collaborate with practitioner networks to strengthen self-protection practices

Strengthening the Red de Periodistas de a Pie

To further bolster independent journalism in Mexico, ProVoces provided technical assistance to the Red de Periodistas de a Pie (the Journalists on Foot Network), a group of 11⁶ local media outlets that seeks to encourage high-quality independent journalism and is one of the most robust and widespread independent journalism networks in Mexico. ProVoces advised them during their strategic planning phase, and as a result, the Network defined its mission, vision, and code of conduct; its internal and external communication mechanisms; and its eligibility and continued membership processes. Through this intervention, ProVoces sought to strengthen the structure and internal organization of the network to ensure its continued operation and sustainability.

Latin American Forum on Independent Journalism

ProVoces hosted the Latin American Forum on Independent Journalism (*Encuentro Latinoamericano de Periodismo Independiente*) in November of 2018 to provide a space for independent journalists to meet and receive information about financing their projects, the latest technology to implement them and techniques to protect themselves from risks. Journalists from a wide range of local independent media outlets in Mexico,



Photo 42. Attendees of the Latin American Forum on Independent Journalism

Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, and Guatemala attended this event, which also offered sessions on the importance of physical activity, self-awareness, and self-care. Patricia Mayorga, a Mexican journalist known for her work to denounce human rights violations and corruption helped organize many of the sessions.

⁶ These outlets are: Amapola, Chiapas Paralelo, Inndaga, La Verdad, Lado B, Página 3, Pie de Página, Perimetral, Raichali, Trinchera, Voz Alternativa, and Zona Docs

ProVoces hosted a second iteration of the forum in December of 2018 focused on building independent journalists' project and financial management and proposal writing skills. Journalists received additional training on designing business models, and an overview of the different funding options available.

2019 Northeastern Journalists Forum

At the request of USAID and the US Consulate in Monterrey, ProVoces assisted the Network of Northeastern Journalists in organizing and hosting the third Northeastern Journalists Forum.⁷ The objective of the forum was to strengthen the capabilities of journalists in northeastern Mexico to use technology to collaborate in journalistic projects in the region. The Network had identified the need to consolidate and begin to do collaborative journalism projects and the forum was a medium to gather journalists in the region and provide them with the information on how to achieve this collaboration.



Photo 43. Independent Journalism Workshop

The importance of self-protection and self-care for human rights defenders

In Chihuahua, ProVoces worked with the Comisión Ejecutiva de Atención a Víctimas del Estado de Chihuahua (CEAVE) [Chihuahua State Executive Commission of Attention to Victims] to identify a group of local human rights CSOs that could benefit from ProVoces' assistance in building their internal prevention, and risk management capabilities. ProVoces jointly built with these CSOs the Protection and Self-Care Self-Assessment Tool (HAAPA) which enables these organizations to assess their strengths and weaknesses in the areas of prevention and risk assessment and to create customized solutions.

Alongside the development the HAAPA, ProVoces gave a series of protection and self-care workshops to reinforce defenders' knowledge on safety and security measures.

Although the first activities were carried out in person, the pandemic forced the collaboration to continue remotely. Working together, the organizations completed the design of the HAAPA, wrote the User Guide, and held workshops to present the final product and explain how it should be applied.



Photo 44. Invitation to the Northeastern Journalists Forum

⁷ Formed in the wake of violent attacks on the press by drug cartels in 2014 the Network of Northeastern Journalists is a group of journalists from the states of Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas to create mechanisms to protect journalists and minimize their risks in the region. The Network is key to connecting with journalists in northern Mexico, especially to strengthen the risk prevention capabilities of its members.

As part of its sustainability strategy, ProVoces shared the HAAPA and the resources created to use it with national-level organizations that work with human rights organizations in different Mexican states to ensure that the tool benefits other organizations in the future. The Mexican Institute of Human Rights and Democracy (IMDHD) showed interest in applying the tool and using it to benefit the organization.

Developing the HAAPA is merely a first step in strengthening prevention strategies and reducing risks for CSO. Continued support is needed to develop an action plan based on the results of the assessment and to put the plan into practice. Likewise, ProVoces identified the need for funders to support CSOs in institutional strengthening, sustainability and results oriented implementation.

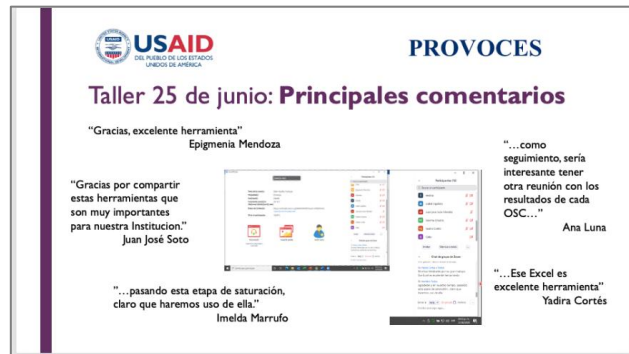


Photo 45. Presentation of the HAAPA to human rights organizations in Chihuahua

3. IMPROVED INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND JOURNALISTS

When organized civil society through the initiative #Fiscalíaquesirva drove the transition from an Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic (PGR) to an Office of an Attorney General of the Republic (FGR), one of the main reforms they sought was the creation of a special prosecutor for crimes against freedom of expression, which had been a best practice recommended by international organizations. This was achieved with the creation of the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Freedom of Expression (FEADLE) on 2010, which specialized in the prosecution of crimes against journalists. Until the current Attorney General, Alejandro Getz Manero, came to lead the FGR, FEADLE had progressively shifted its operations to better achieve its mandate. Under Getz Manero's tenure, however, FEADLE has abstained from actively assuming jurisdiction over the investigation of many crimes against journalists committed at the state level. Although a constitutional amendment in 2013 gave FEADLE the power to take over investigations and prosecutions of these crimes from the state prosecutors, according to the new leadership at the FGR, no investigations must be initiated by special federal prosecutors unless its legal competency to carry prosecutions is not previously proven by local investigations. The state attorney general authorities must, therefore, be better prepared to prosecute crimes against journalists and be able to prove that the primary criminal motivation was to silence a journalist or to curtail his or her freedom of expression.

Despite these ongoing shortcomings, FEADLE's technical capacities have improved significantly as a result of ProVoces's technical assistance. The unit has improved its ability to prosecute cases and has significantly reduced its case backlog. Under Ricardo Sanchez's leadership FEADLE has improved its case disposition rates and increased the number of cases presented at different criminal procedure hearings and performed better in oral judicial hearings. Because Mr. Sanchez understands well the accusatorial justice system and has ensured that this knowledge is transmitted down the chain of command, FEADLE prosecutors are now better equipped to argue cases in oral judicial proceedings. ProVoces has ensured through its technical assistance that all prosecutors and investigators assigned to FEADLE are certified in the specialized investigation of crimes against freedom of expression and contextual analysis. ProVoces has also actively participated in the drafting of the proposed Organizational Law on the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic. Representatives from civil society organizations, including Artículo 19, have recognized that FEADLE has adopted better investigation and prosecution practices, including better presentation of the contextual analysis, which is presented as evidence in judicial hearings. However, as noted earlier, FEADLE must be willing exercise all its powers fully and to assume legal jurisdiction over new crimes committed against journalists at the state level to ensure that the impunity rates in these types of cases is reduced significantly.

Meanwhile, at the local level prosecutor’s offices followed the trend of greater autonomy and of creating specialized areas for investigating and prosecuting crimes against freedom of expression and other human rights. Such was the case of the Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Investigation of Human Rights Violations and Forced Disappearances (FEIVDHF) of the Chihuahua State Office the Attorney General and the Special Investigations Bureau of the Coahuila State Office of the Attorney General. Similarly, CDMX created a specialized unit and later followed the example of the prosecutors’ offices in Puebla and Michoacán. The Project, therefore, focused its efforts on bolstering the investigation and litigation capabilities of special prosecutors’ offices in Coahuila, Chihuahua, CDMX, and Michoacán. As the social and institutional context of each prosecutor’s office was different, this process considered specific needs, types of crimes handled, and the resources available within each office, among other considerations.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected this institutional strengthening at the federal and local level because the number of complaints and cases increased, and proceedings were delayed. The health crisis led to tighter restrictions on journalists’ access to press conferences, and campaigns to stigmatize journalists began to emerge. Also, criminal charges were repeatedly brought against journalists to punish them for disseminating ideas and information that the government claimed induced a public health panic. This increase in case load and backlog evidenced a need to modernize prosecutors’ offices as many investigations were adversely impacted by a lack of technological resources for communicating remotely with victims and their legal counsel.

3.1. Improve counterparts’ ability to investigate, respond to, and investigate crimes against journalists and human rights defenders

To strengthen FEADLE’s institutional capacity to address structural impunity in crimes against journalists, the IACHR special rapporteurs recommended that all FEADLE investigators and government officials be properly equipped and receive specialized training on all aspects of investigating crimes against freedom of expression. Additionally, there should be clear and objective criteria regarding FEADLE’s authority to investigate crimes against journalists that may not fall under its “original jurisdiction” to keep unjustified delays and jurisdictional confusion from hindering criminal investigations. The special rapporteurs also recommended the adoption of a protocol that sets out the principles and legal obligations of those in charge of investigating crimes against the freedom of expression and a shared standard for how to conduct a timely, diligent, independent, and transparent investigation of these cases, in accordance with international human rights standards and best practices, and in consultation with civil society.

These recommendations were the basis for the technical assistance that ProVoces provided FEADLE. As with other government entities with which ProVoces has worked, the Project used the HAI to assess the institution’s performance and develop institutional strengthening actions. The tool provided an initial comprehensive picture of areas of opportunity in order to create a plan with prioritized actions. In addition to assessing the minimum competences for appropriate in management of an institution responsible for investigating crimes and administering justice, the tool also measures the specific competencies an office requires for prosecuting a specific type of crimes, in this case crimes against journalists.

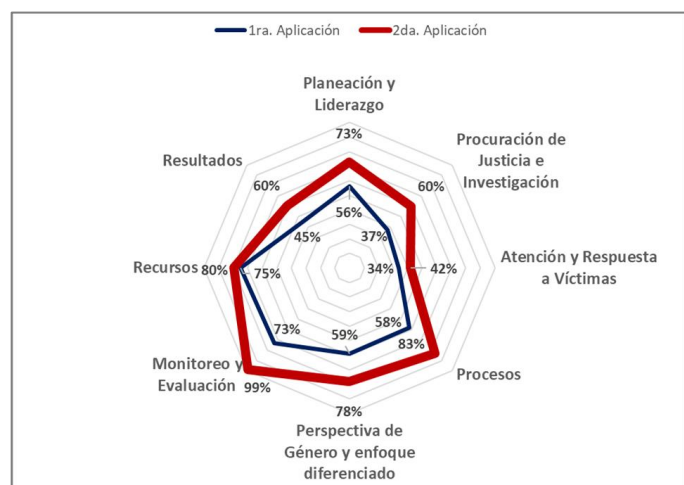


Figure 10. Results from a HAI application at FEADLE

The HAI was applied at FEADLE twice. In May 2018 when FEADLE was first evaluated, it scored 52% on institutional performance which meant that the institution had to make internal processes more

agile and create a criminal prosecution plan and a case management model, among other tools. At the second assessment in January 2019 FEADLE scored 67% which meant that it had made significant advances in prosecution and investigation, monitoring and evaluation, and processes. ProVoces recommended the strengthening actions shown in the figure below and provided direct support for some of them between April 2018 and January 2019.

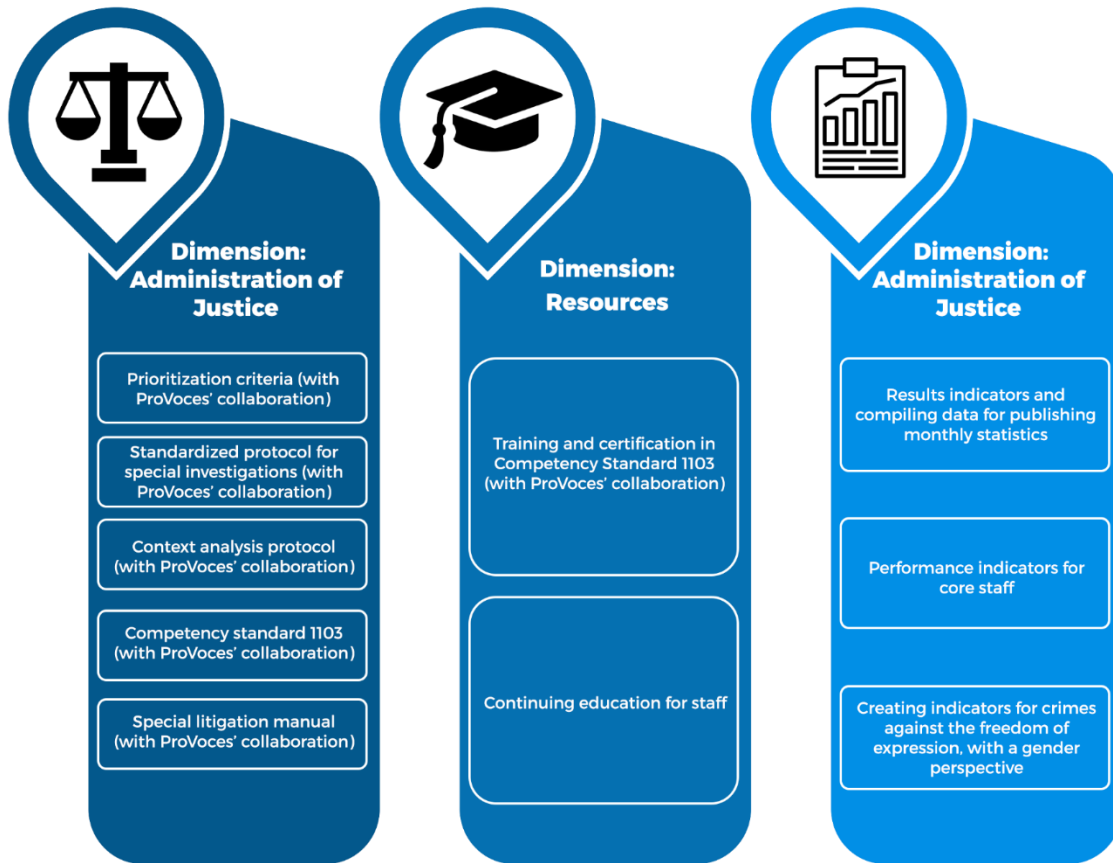


Figure 11. Dimensions that make up the HAI and strengthening actions within FEADLE

Prioritization criteria, a guide to managing FEADLE cases

Based on the results of the first application of the HAI, ProVoces worked closely with FEADLE staff to develop the Criminal Prosecution Policy and Prioritization Criteria, conducting research and several work sessions with the heads of FEADLE and the Office of the Assistant Attorney General for Human Rights, Crime Prevention, and Community Services, under the FGR.

The Criminal Prosecution Policy was completed in November 2018, after which the prioritization criteria were drafted. These guidelines for decision-making include:

- Objective criteria which determine the seriousness of the crime or incident;
- Subjective criteria: Placing the victims at the center of the process
- Complementary criteria that may strengthen the evidence or the identification of criminal patterns, among others.

These guidelines, which were completed in June of 2019, were designed to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of FEADLE's actions. The criteria were adopted by FEADLE and are now used to decide if FEADLE will take over the investigation of a case.

Analyzing context as a central pillar at prosecutors' offices

When prosecuting a crime against freedom of expression prosecutors must prove that the intention or motivation of the crime was to silence a person. While in a regular homicide case, prosecutors must prove who, how and when the crime was committed to get a conviction, in homicides related to freedom of expression prosecutors must also prove the motivation for the crime. To exercise jurisdiction, attract a case and successfully convict, FEADLE must prove that a journalist was murdered because of his or her work. To this end, Context Analysis has proven to be a useful methodology to investigate complex criminal phenomena.

Between April and July 2019, ProVoces helped strengthen FEADLE's Context Analysis Unit, which is charged with reviewing contextual information to help establish the lines of investigation and collect evidence that establishes the motive of the crime. Through a training program called Methodology and Tools for Investigation for FEADLE's Context Analysis Unit, ProVoces expand the knowledge and capabilities of the staff in charge of designing and creating investigation documents at the unit. The training program included five modules: "Media Outlets and the Freedom of Expression," "Methodology for the Social Sciences," "Data Mining and Social Network Analysis," and "Context Analysis from a Gender Perspective".

While there is still significant work to do, ProVoces' technical assistance had a positive impact on FEADLE's performance as evidenced by in the IACHR 2019 Annual Report. The number of investigations of crimes against human rights defenders and journalists opened in 2018 and 2019 rose significantly. As shown in the graphs below, according FEADLE between January and May 2018 twelve cases were brought to trial, which represented a 200% increase over the previous year, when only 4 cases were brought before the court.

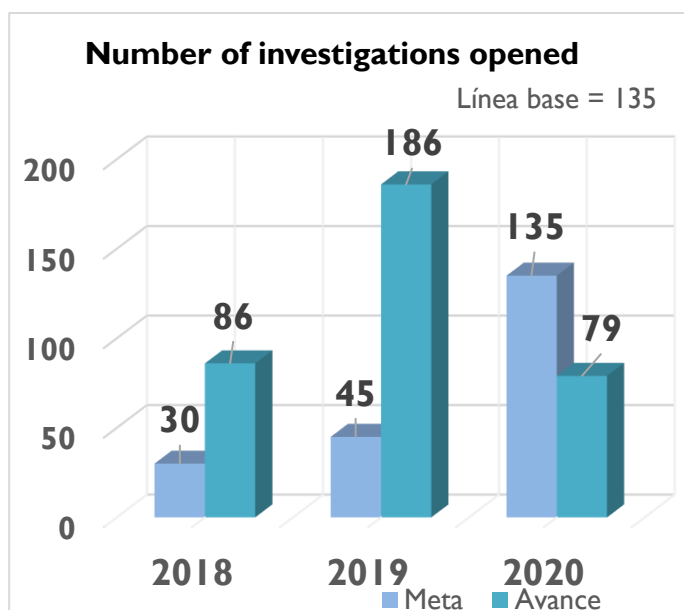


Figure 12. Number of investigations opened for crimes against human rights defenders and journalists.

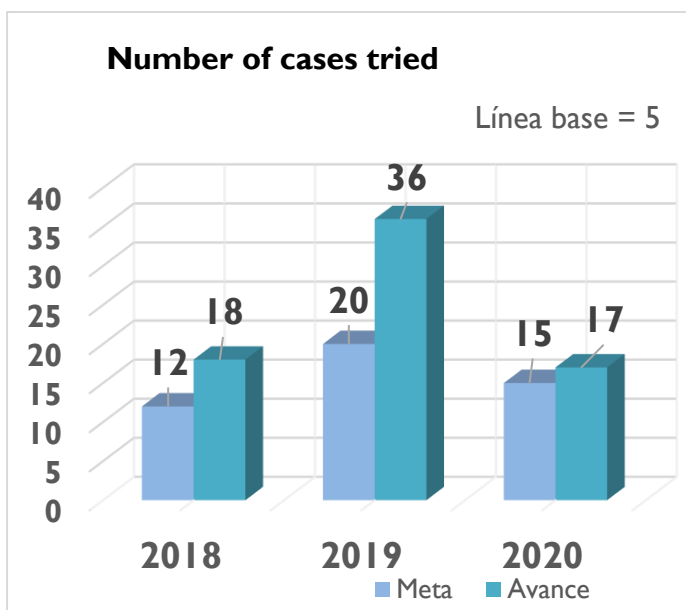


Figure 13. Number of court judgments issued in cases for assaults on human rights defenders and journalists

As shown in the graphs for 2019, the numbers increased significantly. In 2020, the number of investigations dropped considerably because FEADLE adopted a more passive approach to assuming state-level cases. However, the positive trend in prosecuting cases continued.

As noted earlier, the context of collaboration with FEADLE changed after Attorney General Gertz Manero was appointed. As decisions from the FGR began to impose limits on the head of FEADLE, some strengthening activities that were pending could not be carried out. These included creating a protocol for coordinating with local prosecutors' offices, adopting a model for handling crisis situations, and preparing a strategic communications handbook. Nevertheless, FEADLE continued to have a proactive and enthusiastic attitude that made it possible to complete and launch the *Manual on Special Litigation in Crimes against the Freedom of Expression*; to draft and apply the prioritization criteria and the Protocol for Context Analysis, which is incorporated into the Standardized Protocol.

Specialized civil society organizations recognized these advances. In 2019, Article 19 praised FEADLE's efforts to create a standardized protocol with the participation of civil society, to form a Context Unit, and to certify its personnel. Although they stated that FEADLE continues to have significant shortcomings, "there seems to be greater willingness and ability to move forward with investigating certain cases, and the current prosecutor is achieving better results compared to his predecessors in terms of bringing cases to trial and conviction."⁸ The biggest challenges that FEADLE will face in the near future will include combating the high rate of impunity that is still the norm for high-impact crimes; reversing the internal policy that has kept it from calling up the most serious cases over the last year; and overcoming the prevailing sense of distrust among journalists.

Collaborating with FEADLE to create specialized instruments

FEADLE began to draft the *Standardized Protocol for Special Investigation of Crimes against the Freedom of Expression* (the Protocol) in 2017. The protocol established policies for action and procedures that ensure that investigations conducted by federal and state authorities are in line with national and international human rights standards for investigating crimes against the freedom of expression. It also includes operational policies, principles for action, the process flow for investigating crimes against the freedom of expression, the sequence of the sub-process for journalists follow procedural steps, and a protocol for context analysis. Context analysis is a tool for identifying a set of facts, behaviors, or discussions that constitute a frame of reference for a certain phenomenon at a specific time and place. It is thus intended to be a useful method for studying and identifying the underlying causes or structural patterns of certain social events, as it exposes relevant factors that cast those events in a different light. In the case of FEADLE, context analysis can be used for two basic purposes. The first is to identify complex patterns of crimes and attacks against journalists. The second is to provide a tool to investigate these types of crimes better when the tool is deemed necessary. This document was prepared based on a review of the literature in this specialty, as well as interviews with staff from the FEADLE Context Analysis Unit. It was developed in order to systematize the activities already under way in the unit but to some extent lacking organization, process creation, and distribution of activities for people who were to participate in preparing this type of report.

The protocol and its appendix were published in the [Federal Official Daily Register \(DOF\)](#) on November 12, 2018 which made them part of the Mexican legal system and compulsory nationwide. With this step the Mexican government became compliant with recommendations 44, 46, and 48 of the joint IACHR and United Nations report on freedom of expression. In March 2019, ProVoces, FEADLE and INACIPE, organized a training for 54 staff at 27 state justice institutions and prosecutors' offices on the *Standardized Protocol for Special Investigations of Crimes against the Freedom of Expression* to build theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for effective and efficient investigations of crimes against the freedom of expression. It covered topics such as basic concepts of freedom of expression, context analysis, and case theory. The training also included practical exercises for interviewing witnesses and guidance for victims. This initiative gave rise to a group for exchanging information and best practices between prosecutors' offices that handle freedom of expression cases.

The Protocol itself also promoted a series of strengthening actions in aspects such as gender perspectives, mechanisms for collaborating with local prosecutors' offices, and others. The protocol was also adopted by several local special prosecutors' offices.

⁸ Article 19 (2019), *Protocol on impunity in crimes against journalists. Analysis of investigations in crimes committed against journalists*. Mexico. Pages 10-11. Retrieved from: https://articulo19.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/A19-2019-InfomImpunidad_final_v3.pdf

Evaluation and certification of federal and local prosecutors

At the end of 2018, ProVoces joined with the National Criminal Sciences Institute (INACIPE), the Innovation for Peace Laboratory, A.C., Civic Proposa, CNDH and FEADLE to develop the Competency Standard for Investigating Crimes against the Freedom of Expression with a Differentiated and Specialized Focus (EC1103). INACIPE was designated as the certifying body through an agreement with the National Council for Standardization and Certification of Labor Competencies (CONOCER). That standard is intended to be used as a reference to evaluate and certify individuals involved in special investigations. It was published in the [Official Daily Register of the Federation](#) at the end of November 2018 and is part of the set of legal instruments available for capacity strengthening in special investigations.

ProVoces focused on promoting the evaluation and certification of special prosecutors at the federal and local levels. Once INACIPE issued the invitation to become certified in the Competency Standards, ProVoces arranged a meeting between the Academic Secretary of INACIPE and the chief of FEADLE, which led to an agreement on the certification process for federal prosecutors, at a reduced evaluation price. Under these agreements, between December 2019 and January 2020, twenty federal prosecutors and one state prosecutor from Zacatecas were evaluated and certified.

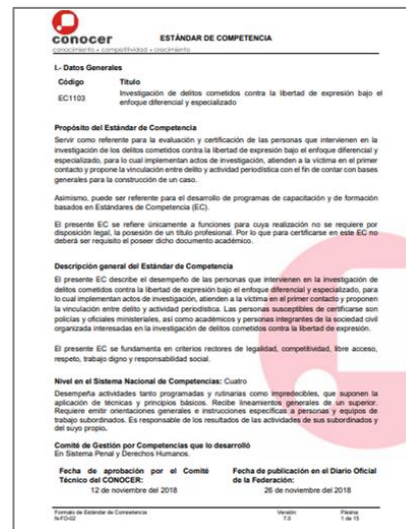


Photo 46. Competency Standard 1103

In March 2020, under an agreement with ProVoces, FEADLE sent invitations to state prosecutors' offices that participated in the training, asking them to support certification for their prosecutors. As a result, the first group of ten state prosecutors, from Sinaloa, Querétaro, Tlaxcala, Puebla and Chiapas, were evaluated and certified during the first week of July. During the third week of November 2020, a second group of ten local prosecutors from Chiapas, Chihuahua, Coahuila and Michoacán were certified. Certification is relevant because it involves evaluating a prosecutor's competencies in conducting investigations; providing integrated assistance to victims; a differentiated focus considering the victims' work as a journalist; and determining the nexus between the crime and a journalist's work to build the case.

Police officers, prosecutors, members of CSOs and academics interested in the investigation of crimes against the freedom of expression are eligible for certification. Certification also helps the government comply with several recommendations from international organizations that have highlighted that in order for Mexico to guarantee access to justice to those exercising their freedom of expression, it must conduct effective prosecutions. An example of the successes of this process is the appointment of one of the individuals certified in July 2020 as the new chief of the Special Prosecutor's Office in Puebla.

Best practices for Case-based coaching

During 2018 and 2019, ProVoces conducted a series of visits in different parts of the country to identify areas of opportunity for FEADLE to file cases before the courts. As part of the visits, ProVoces staff observed hearings in the states of San Luis Potosí, Tabasco and Quintana Roo. In Quintana Roo, the Project helped draft an indictment for the intermediate phase of a case involving a journalist who had sent threatening messages to another journalist who had published articles against them. During the intermediate phase, most of the evidence offered in the indictment was admitted, and in March 2019 FEADLE got its first conviction at trial.

Strengthening special prosecutors' offices

Despite the reforms to Mexico's criminal justice system, several academic studies and reports by CSOs have documented that the high rate of impunity for crimes committed against human rights defenders and journalists is in part attributable to the ineffectiveness of the traditional investigation models still being used by prosecutors' offices. ProVoces, therefore, worked with state prosecutors' offices by introducing innovative work models that

increase the number of resolved cases. This is achieved by making strategic decisions and supporting the design of criminal prosecution plans that strategically allocate available resources to improve results.

To facilitate coordination between FEADLE and local special prosecutors' offices, ProVoces created a map to determine which states had special units or prosecutor's offices for crimes against the freedom of expression and human rights. Based on this map ProVoces opted to provide technical support to strengthen the Special Prosecutor's Office for the Investigation of Human Rights Violations and Forced Disappearances (FEIVDHDF), under the State Attorney's Office in Chihuahua, the special unit in the Coahuila Special Investigations Bureau and to provide remote support for the analogous units in Chiapas and Michoacán. Additionally, using activities that encouraged dialogue between government authorities and civil society, the project was able to promote a few topics of interest to special prosecutors' offices. This led to a feedback process and sharing of best practices among those offices on topics such as context analysis, prioritization criteria, and best practices in the context of the COVID-19 health crisis.

Although ProVoces had reached out to the Mexico City Attorney General's Office (FGCDMX) through the office's Human Rights Bureau, and planned a series of activities with them, these activities were cancelled due to the pandemic. The dates scheduled for the activity also coincided with a previously scheduled institutional redesign period led by the new administration of Mexico City Mayor, Claudia Sheinbaum.

The following sections describe ProVoces' technical support to each of these state entities.

Cooperation with the Chihuahua Prosecutors' Office

In the state of Chihuahua, FEIVDHDF is the office with jurisdiction to conduct investigations into crimes against human rights defenders and journalists. Although the prosecutor's office was created in 2017, its chief was appointed in 2018. The recent creation of the office and new appointment of its head allowed ProVoces to build the office's institutional capacities from the ground up and identify areas of opportunity and priority actions over the short- and mid-term to assist in its consolidation and sustainability. As with other government agencies, ProVoces used the HAI methodology to assess the institutional capacities of the FEIVDHDF and recommend institutional strengthening actions.

The FEIVDHDF chief initiated a six-month work plan beginning in January 2020 and requested ProVoces' assistance in creating a Criminal Prosecution Plan, a plan for strengthening for the Context Analysis Unit, and other protection activities. The following sections describe ProVoces interventions in these areas and the results achieved.

FEIVDHDF conducted a second application of the HAI in the first week of December 2020. FEIVDHDF scored 71% which means that it was able to implement effectively the Criminal Prosecution Plan, had increased and improved investigation processes, adopted national protocols on gender approach and prioritization tools.

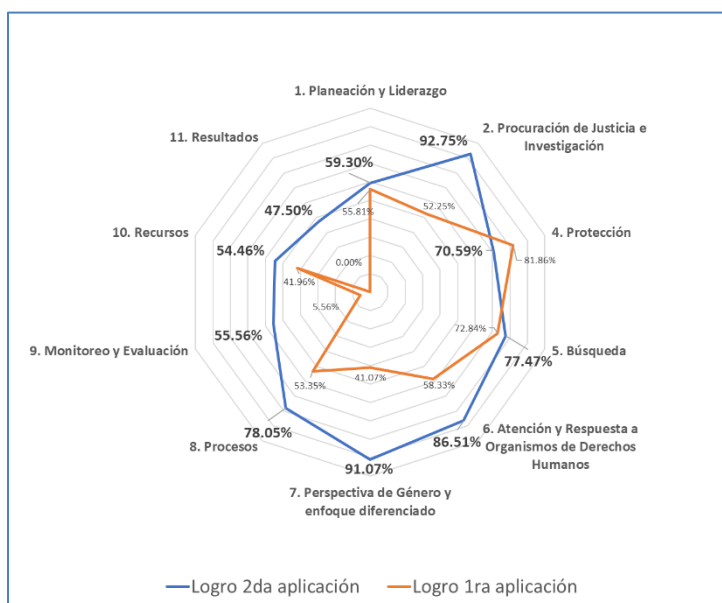


Figure 14. FEIVDHDF's institutional capacities

Criminal Prosecution Policy

Attacks on human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico are generally severe crimes that occur in complicated criminal contexts that demand strategic and more sophisticated investigations by state prosecutors. In Mexico, the discussion about strategic

criminal prosecutions is relatively new and state governments have only recently begun to create public policies within the prosecutors' offices to allocate transparently available resources to investigations according to the severity of the crimes. This strategic allocation includes an analysis of workloads to make rational decisions about how to allocate resources, commonly called "prioritization criteria." In Mexico Chihuahua is one of the first states to incorporate these innovations and, in January 2020, the Attorney General issued an agreement that established the prioritization criteria for FEIVDHDF, in accordance with the legal obligation set forth in the law⁹.

To improve application of these criteria, ProVoces' technical assistance focused on the design of a Criminal Prosecution Plan based on an analysis of FEIVDHDF's legislative framework, reports and assessments by CSOs, government statistics on local crime patterns and victimization, and semi-structured interviews with the Special Prosecutor, leaders of the different units that comprise FEIVDHDF, and its operational staff. The plan considered and was organized according to the types of crimes to be prioritized, available resources, responsibilities, performance indicators and workload, and analysis and context. The resulting FEIVDHDF Criminal Prosecution Plan states that one of its five strategic objectives is the resolution of cases involving crimes that affect human rights defenders and journalists, in the following terms:

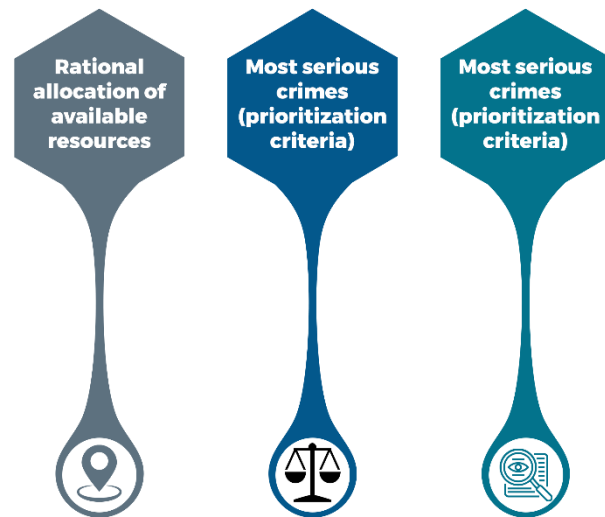


Figure 15. Criminal prosecution policy

“The Special Prosecutor’s Office establishes that a priority objective for 2021 is the Resolution of all priority cases for crimes committed against Journalists and Human Rights Defenders, with the understanding that Resolution means an exhaustive, rigorous and effective investigation of the reported events to generate quality information that the prosecutor can use to resolve the case through prosecution, *nolle prosequi*, temporarily suspending the case, or application of the statute of limitations, always ensuring that when there is evidence that a completed crime could be a crime against the freedom of expression, the investigation shall progress under the presumption that it is that category of offense until demonstrated otherwise, and authorities shall exhaust all relevant channels of investigation related to the victim’s exercise of the right to freedom of expression.”

The Special Prosecutor’s Office then formed a task force to handle the priority cases.

FEIVDHDF has a Context Analysis Unit (UAC) with an interdisciplinary staff, a public policy that systematizes data and creates statistics and another unit for investigative analysis that uncovers patterns among cases and produces a context report on criminal events. This Unit has been essential for drafting the Criminal Prosecution Plan (PPP) and for its execution because the PPP’s strategic objects were determined based on its reports and research. This means that the UAC is focused on investigative analysis to be supplied for case resolutions and prosecutions. In this regard, the PPP defined an Analysis Policy with ProVoces’ technical assistance, which included the following activities:

- *Analytic estimate of workload* - finding innovative ways to carry the UAC workload and having the ability to associate and accumulate processes that have common characteristics. This has implications for prioritization decisions, case assignment and the formation of task forces.

⁹ Article 35(II), Internal Regulations on the Office of the Attorney General, states that the FEIVDHDF shall “Design and implement strategies for applying prioritization criteria to the investigation of crimes under its jurisdiction, so it can create an order to address cases in order to guarantee, for cases of the same type, the effective enjoyment of human rights in access to justice.”

- *Analytical and contextual investigations* - determining the types of analyses that should be prioritized and at what level taking into consideration the UAC's limited resources.
- *Prioritization test* - The UAC must strengthen the prioritization criteria for prosecution. A criminal prosecution policy establishes criteria to prioritize investigations of crimes, promotes consistency in decision making.

To help implement this analysis policy, ProVoces provided technical assistance through discussion groups held in August 2020 with all FEIVDHDF staff, primarily focused on the formation of task forces and the creation of a multidisciplinary investigation plan. Likewise, the Project provided support in adjusting the prioritization criteria; in defining the job descriptions for UAC personnel; in determining the analysis products; in consolidating the task forces; and in raising awareness of both the PPP and the Analysis Policy.

ProVoces then presented for FEIVDHDF's validation an assessment document and guidelines for multidisciplinary task forces, as part of the Context Analysis Unit's methodology. This document was validated during the second week of September 2020 and was included in the Criminal Prosecution Plan as one of FEIVDHDF's strategic actions. This revised FEIVDHDF investigation methodology was first used in the case of a murdered LGBTQ human rights defender in September 2020. The special prosecutor's office applied prioritization criteria and called up the case as a femicide against a human rights defender. Once that step was taken, they formed a multidisciplinary task force to create an investigation plan, which led to the arrest and arraignment of a suspect implicated in the case. Similarly, in the case of the murder of a journalist in Ciudad Juarez in October 2020 the FEIVDHDF conducted the proceedings, called up the case and initiated the investigation using the task force model.

FEIVDHDF's willingness and openness to internal institutional strengthening led to its adoption of the ProVoces designed *Protocol on Assisting Victims of Crimes against the Freedom of Expression*, which contains guidelines on strategic communications, and the *Protocol on Investigating Crimes against Human Rights Defenders* which provides prosecutors' offices and investigation units with guidelines to provide integrated services to victims of crimes against the freedom of expression. The *Protocol on Assisting Victims of Crimes against the Freedom of Expression* defines different types of victims, the principles underlying the provision of services and protection, a description of the steps that victims should take and the standards applicable to interviews, among other pertinent topics. The instrument also includes a mechanism for coordination among federal and state jurisdictions, as well as within the justice system, protection for journalists and human rights defenders, victim assistance, and searches for disappeared persons. FEIVDHDF and the state CEAV used this protocol as a source document to create a manual on joint services for victim assistance that includes a section on assisting journalists and human right defenders who have been victims of violence. ProVoces assistance was key to incorporating a differentiated focus into both agencies' processes for assisting victims of crimes against the freedom of expression.

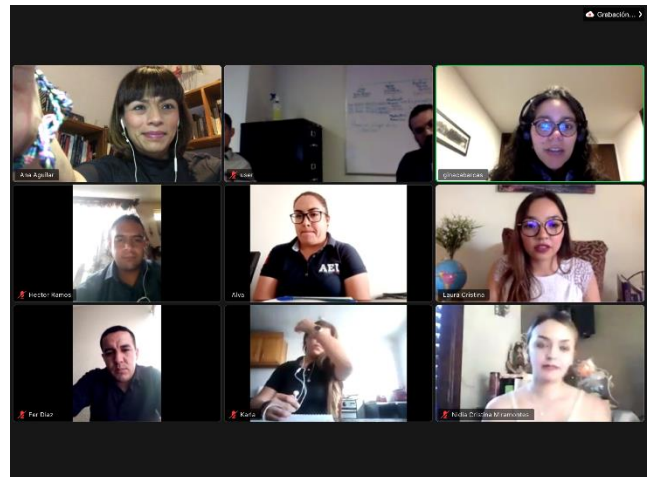


Photo 47. Discussion group with FEIVDHDF personnel.

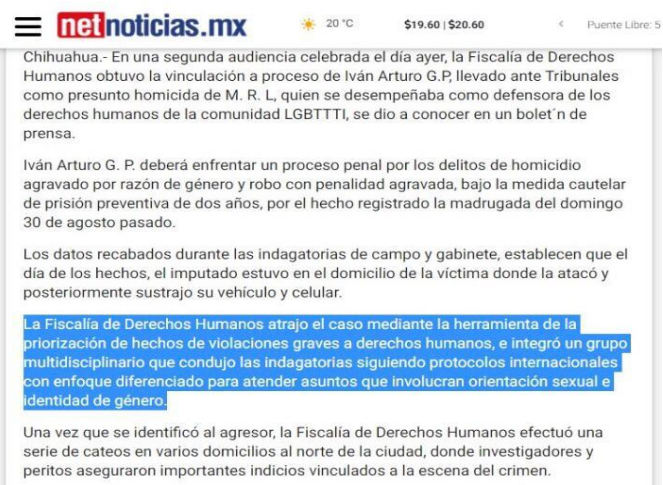


Photo 48. Chihuahua State News Registry

ProVoces drafted the *Protocol on Effective Investigation and Prosecution of Crimes Against Human Rights Defenders* to enable the FGR have a clearly laid out process for investigating crimes against human rights defenders and clear the prosecution backlog of this type of case. The Project worked alongside government authorities, experts and human rights defenders with experience in the subject, to analyze the current status of investigations of crimes against human rights defenders and the measures that should be adopted to facilitate coordination between the investigating authorities assigned to this type of crime, and those responsible for providing protection measures and assistance and identified the main challenges faced by the FGR and the State Prosecutors' Offices in prosecuting this type of crime. Although the FGR was unable to adopt this protocol, it was considered by the Chihuahua Special Prosecutor's Office as a starting point for standardizing the investigation process once a case involving human rights defenders had been called up. The 2021 Criminal Prosecution Plan mentions it specifically as part of the structural projects that will help the office meet its strategic objectives planned for next year.

FEIVDHDF also included in its PPP an action item for defining guidelines on strategic communication using a communications protocol developed by ProVoces. The communications protocol has three main sections: *Spokesperson Manual*; *Key Messaging by Audience*; and *Crisis Management Manual*. The *Spokesperson Manual* provides those who serve as FEIVDHDF spokespersons the necessary tools to communicate more effectively and accurately the office's work, results, responsibilities and authorizations. The *Key Messaging by Audience* section is focused on developing coherent and consistent messaging for the prosecutor's office that clearly outlines to the public the office's responsibilities, duties and authorities. The *Crisis Management Manual* provides the office a management strategy to deal with media crises in an organized and well-planned fashion that avoids improvisation and leads to efficient conflict resolution.

Taken together these activities enabled FEIVDHDF to become the first prosecutor's office to operate under a criminal prosecution plan and may enable it to become the first prosecutor's office in Mexico to obtain tangible results in resolving cases that involve serious human rights violations. Future iterations of the project should ensure that this effort is institutionalized in many prosecutors' offices across Mexico.

Actions that help reduce impunity in cases involving human rights defenders and journalists in Coahuila

According to Article 19, during the first half of 2020, 13 assaults were reported against members of the press in the state of Coahuila.¹⁰ The Prosecutor's Office for Special Investigations, Victim and Witness Assistance and Protection, under the State of Coahuila's Office of the Attorney General of Justice (FGJ), is the office responsible for cases concerning crimes against human rights defenders and journalists. At the time of the writing of this report, that office had only one prosecutor. In our initial assessment, ProVoces identified a need to strengthen capacities in special investigations and litigation. The Project used an integrated case-based coaching which enabled the project to strengthen the FGJ's investigating capacities using individual, real life cases, alongside more traditional capacity building technical assistance.

Throughout 2018, ProVoces developed a database and completed an analysis of 21 cases of crimes committed against human rights defenders and journalists in Coahuila, which at the time were under special prosecutorial unit. The results, as well as the case-based litigation strategies and other techniques, were presented and discussed with the heads of the Prosecutor's Office to achieve effective case resolutions. As a direct result of the project's assistance, the Prosecutor's Office prioritized five cases to move forward in the investigation and prosecution processes. ProVoces' technical assistance contributed to the resolution of at least eight cases in 2020, which represents approximately 20% of the entire workload. One of the cases that best represents this effort is the case of human rights defender Cristina Auerbach, who was the victim of a smear campaign by a municipal council member across social media and local news outlets in the municipality of Sabinas. With ProVoces' technical assistance, in November 2018, the case was prosecuted, and the defendant was required to provide reparations, including financial compensation and a public apology using the same media outlets and social

¹⁰ Article 19. *First half of 2020: exponential increase in attacks on the press; murders continue*. Available at: <https://articulo19.org/primer- semestre-de-2020-crecen-exponencialmente-las-agresiones-contr-la-prensa-y-continuan-los-asesinatos/>

media networks that had been used to attack her. The success of this case led to the prosecutor's office to investigate a second case of discrimination against the same human rights defender. That trial is now suspended because of the health crisis.

ProVoces also provided technical assistance to the Special Prosecutor in the case for assault of Don Gelacio, a journalist from Piedras Negras. With technical assistance from the ProVoces team, the Special Prosecutor was able to bring the investigation to trial. As a result of the planned strategy, in February 2020, that office reached a reparations agreement with the defendant that satisfied the victims. The Prosecutor's Office's actions were publicly recognized by the journalist on his radio program. Despite the delays and remote working conditions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prosecutor's Office investigated and brought to trial another case in June 2020 related to threats made over social media against a human rights defender in Piedras Negras. The suspect was implicated in the case and was given a restraining order to keep him from coming near the victim as a precautionary measure.

In addition to providing support to define investigation and litigation strategies, ProVoces identified a need to modify the criminal investigations model being used within the Special Prosecutor's office. Using a task force model in July 2020, ProVoces developed the *Guidelines for Implementation of the Task Force Work Model at the Coahuila Special Prosecutor's Office*. Guidelines facilitate the coordination among special prosecutors, investigating police, and experts, by defining their respective roles in the task force and conduct coordinated, preplanned and dynamic investigations. This model allows for a more creative use of resources. Despite social distancing requirements during the pandemic, the task force model was used effectively in October and November 2020 in an assault case against a journalist. The lead prosecutor called a coordination meeting with experts and investigating police at the beginning of November to draft an investigation plan. The case was tried on November 2020 with the technical assistance of ProVoces.

The activities implemented in the Coahuila Special Prosecutor's office led to higher quality criminal investigations and prosecution, and, therefore, an increase in the percentage of resolved cases and a reduction in the rate of impunity for crimes against journalists and human rights defenders in the state of Coahuila. Nevertheless, in implementing these actions the Project found that although the new criminal justice system in Mexico facilitates the investigation and litigation of cases, prosecutors' offices often revert to bureaucratic work dynamics if no one monitors and evaluates the performance of those responsible for the investigations. Institutionalizing the working models and guidelines that ProVoces developed will be crucial for the Coahuila Prosecutor's Office to remain agile. The Prosecutor's Office must also create mechanisms for continuing education for personnel at the Special Investigation Bureau to ensure continued use of the methodology after the current staff turnover.

Coordination of responsibilities with the Chiapas Prosecutor's Office to share knowledge about assistance for human rights defenders and journalists

In March 2019, the project delivered a specialized training program on the Approved Protocol and Competency Standard on Investigation of Crimes Committed against Freedom of Expression at the Institute of Ministerial, Police and Expert Training of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic ("La Muralla"), located in San Juan del Río, Querétaro. Fifty-four prosecutors from 27 states attended the training. By convening prosecutors from several states, at the end of this activity ProVoces aimed to have at least one specialized criminal prosecutor per participating state with the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure an effective and efficient investigation of crimes committed against freedom of expression. An exit survey found that the most useful training topics were: Concepts of the Freedom of Expression, the Standardized Protocol for Investigating Crimes against the Freedom of Expression, and Context Analysis.

The usefulness of the training program caught the attention of the state prosecutors' offices. At the invitation of the Chiapas' Prosecutor Officer, ProVoces participated in the "Training Program: Investigations of Crimes against the Freedom of Expression" to share specific topics addressed in the "La Muralla" course with over 200 members of the Office of the State Prosecutor. Topics included freedom of expression, applicable legislative framework,

mechanisms and policies on protection, and a standardized protocol for criminal investigations and victim services, among other subjects.

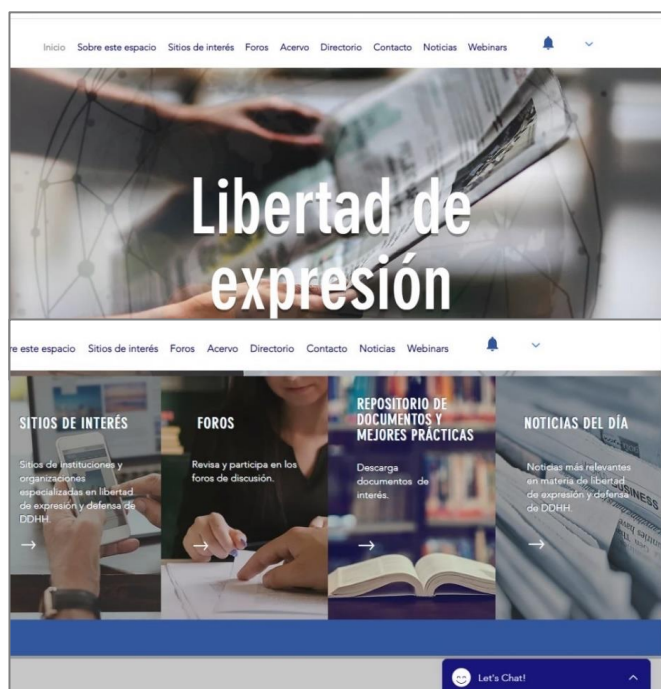
Towards certification for Michoacán prosecutors

ProVoces held a series of discussion groups with the Special Unit for Freedom of Expression and Human Rights, under the Michoacán Attorney General's Office to strengthen the knowledge and capacities of the office's personnel so they could be evaluated and certified in Standard 1103. The certification, endorsed by CONOCER aims to incentivize and institutionalize the specialization of competencies needed for investigations; providing integrated assistance to victims; instituting differentiated approaches considering the victims' work as a journalist or HRD; determining the motivation for crimes; and tailoring litigation for complex crimes.

During the discussion groups, the participants reflected on and talked about the legislative framework and general concepts for the freedom of expression; victim assistance; case theories and investigation plans; a standardized protocol for handling crimes against the freedom of expression; and context analysis. This activity led to a third group of 10 prosecutors from different states who were certified in Standard 1103 in November 2020.

Collaboration among the FGR and state prosecutors' offices

The institutional transition from the former PGR to the current FGR has given the FGR the ability to call up cases from state attorney general offices and has required FEADLE to collaborate with state prosecutors' offices. To facilitate this collaboration ProVoces provided spaces and materials to enable the FGR, FEADLE to exchange information with the state prosecutors' offices in securely and collaboratively. ProVoces launched an ambitious [platform for communications](#) among the various prosecutor's offices to facilitate the exchange of information related to the administration of justice, freedom of expression and the defense of human rights among these offices. The platform includes discussions forums; daily updates on relevant news; a repository of cases and documents of interest to human rights, the freedom of expression and the administration of justice; a directory of organizations and institutes involved in the protection of human rights defenders and journalists, as well as the promotion of and compliance with human rights; and theses and case law published by the Judicial Branch of the Federation. The site also has a section available only to special prosecutors that provides access to secure spaces where special prosecutors can exchange sensitive information.



Photos 50 and 51. Website: Freedom of Expression

To increase traffic to the site, ProVoces launched a monthly bulletin with content customized to specialists in the subject, such as prosecutors and individuals interested in the topics of the administration of justice, freedom of expression and the defense of human rights. The information shared during this period has included CSO reports, judicial policy documents that affected access to and the administration of justice during the health crisis, as well as guidelines issued by a variety of international human rights organizations to confront the pandemic without curtailing access to justice.

ProVoces also facilitated an exchange of best practices among special prosecutors' offices by publishing a compendium of the best practices used in the institutional strengthening exercises the Project did with the

Coahuila and Chihuahua prosecutors' offices. Based on the interest generated by the dialogues promoted through virtual seminars organized by ProVoces, the Project held an inter-agency meeting with the special prosecutors' offices from various states in the republic. The goal of this virtual session was to promote communication and feedback on innovative initiatives used to improve the performance of prosecutors' offices in Mexico. The participating prosecutors agreed to adopt the *Standard Protocol on Investigating Crimes against the Freedom of Expression* as their guide for conducting investigations into crimes committed against journalists. Prosecutors also discussed common obstacles they face in their investigations, including lack of police, expert and context analysis personnel to conduct the investigations; distrust in the justice system on the part of journalists and human rights defenders; lack of coordination of responsibilities with the Federal Mechanism; and lack of knowledge about mechanisms to coordinate with FEADLE.

3.2 Improve collaboration with civil society to provide oversight, accountability and victims' services

Strengthening CSO institutional capacities on legal defense questions

Throughout its implementation, ProVoces worked with a variety of CSOs to familiarize them with Mexico's new criminal justice system. During its first year of operations, ProVoces collaborated with the Tlachinollan Mountain Human Rights Center and with human rights defenders from the State of Guerrero to analyze a case of police and military violence against community representatives to help the organization improve its ability to assist victims throughout the judicial process. The Project provided the Center and human rights defenders information on how the new criminal justice system works and how it protects both the rights of the victim and the accused.

Further, ProVoces organized a training program on strategic litigation for CSOs that assist human rights defenders and journalists, as well as for members of the Protection Mechanism. This training was organized jointly with CENCOS in response to the drafting of Standard 1103. Representatives from seven organizations¹¹ participated in the training, which aimed to increase the capacity of organizations assisting victims of crimes against the freedom of expression to effect positive changes and to improve their understanding of Mexico's new criminal justice system.

Additionally, in 2019, ProVoces continued to provide workshops on criminal analysis to CSOs and journalists. This activity was part of the actions related to inter-agency dialogue among government agencies and civil society and aimed to raise the awareness of human rights defenders and journalists on the limits of criminal prosecutions. The workshop generated tools for human rights defenders and journalists to enable them to identify different litigation strategies, and also to better understand the limits of a criminal prosecution based on the type of crime, the evidence available, and other factors relevant for successful prosecution. The topics addressed included criminal and public policies, criminal incidents, concepts and functions of criminal analysis, objective factors in criminal policy, and strategic criminal prosecution.

¹¹ Article 19, Reporters without Borders; the National Protection Mechanism, IDHEAS, the Economic, Cultural and Social Rights Project, and the Institute of Alternative Law and Justice

Pro-bono representation for human rights defenders and journalists

ProVoces promoted the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding among USAID, the FBM of the Mexican Bar Association (BMA), Article 19, Civic Proposal, and the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH) to provide free legal assistance to journalists and human rights defenders who have been accused of a crime. This collaboration was an important step in building a united front to defend against the misuse of the judicial system against journalists and human rights defenders.

As part of this collaboration ProVoces ensured that the BMA had clear guidelines for accepting only cases of wrongfully accused human rights defenders and journalists, for transferring sufficient information about the cases, and for maintaining trust with the defendants with whom they worked.



Photo 52. Execution of the MOU for pro-bono legal assistance

To strengthen the BMA's *pro-bono* assistance, in December 2020 the Project organized a discussion between the BMA and the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Foundation to talk about other successful experiences in providing *pro-bono* assistance to human rights defenders and journalists, and the use of strategic litigation as a tool to protect the public space and fundamental freedoms. The event led internal discussions in the BMA about a possible commitment by its members to provide a certain number of volunteer hours to provide legal assistance or participation in high-impact litigations. ProVoces also jointly organized with INACIPE and the Free Law School a series of workshops for BMA attorneys about special investigations and litigation on freedom of expression cases. The workshops aimed to strengthen attorneys' capacities to provide *pro-bono* legal assistance to human rights defenders and journalists. These activities have resulted in the BMA's provision of *pro-bono* legal assistance to journalists and human rights defenders in three cases at the beginning of 2020. One case involved a journalist in Coahuila who received threats. Another was the case of a journalist who was brought to trial for a pain and suffering suit. The third case was that of a journalist who was threatened over social media.

These activities have been critical to strengthening the commitment of private attorneys to defending the freedom of expression and human rights defenders. Future iterations of the program should consider expanding judicial assistance networks and free legal aid for journalists and human rights defenders.

Dialogue between government authorities and civil society

ProVoces hosted a series of conversations between government authorities and CSO on topics related to the performance of prosecutors' offices in cases involving crimes against journalists and human rights defenders.

The Seminar on Criminal Investigation and Prosecution of Crimes against the Freedom of Expression and the Defense of Human Rights in the COVID-19 Era gathered CSO representatives from Article 19, Civic Proposal, the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Center, and Serapaz in a conversation with the Prosecutor's Office for Journalists under the Chiapas State Attorney General's Office and with the Director General of Special Investigations under the Coahuila State Attorney General's Office to discuss how prosecutors' offices and CSOs have investigated and prosecuted cases during the initial days of the health crisis.

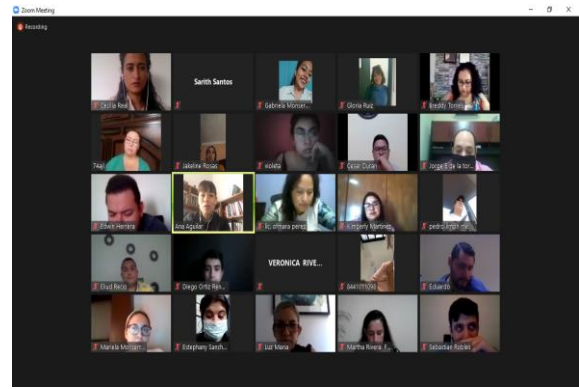


Photo 53. Seminar on Criminal Investigation and Prosecution of Crimes against the Freedom of Expression and the Defense of Human Rights in the COVID-19 era.

Participants concluded that the dangers of pandemic require that the prosecutor's offices put in place measures to communicate with victims effectively in the absence of in person interactions. Participants also stated that the Standard Protocol on Special Investigations must be implemented effectively within prosecutors' offices and highlighted that all efforts should be focused on the victim. Prosecutors' offices must improve their access to technologies that allow them to perform investigations remotely and that allow them to coordinate and communicate internally and with the protection mechanisms without the need of in person meetings.

The second seminar was entitled *Criminal Prosecution Policies and Plans, and Prioritization of Criminal Incidents related to the Freedom of Expression and the Defense of Human Rights* and was aimed at understanding the theoretical and practical aspects of criminal prosecution policies and plans, and reflecting on the importance of prioritizing crimes that affect the freedom of expression and the defense of human rights. The virtual panel included Miguel La Rota, a Colombian expert and pioneer in the implementation of criminal prosecution policies, as well as the head of the Chihuahua FEIVDHF and representatives from Civic Proposal, Article 19, Serapaz, and the Center for Women's Rights (CEDEHM). The audience included personnel from state prosecutors' offices and CSOs. Participants highlighted the importance of being transparent in the preparation and application of strategic criminal prosecution policies and of including context analysis in investigations and insisted on the need to raise the awareness among other actors in the judicial system, such as federal judges.

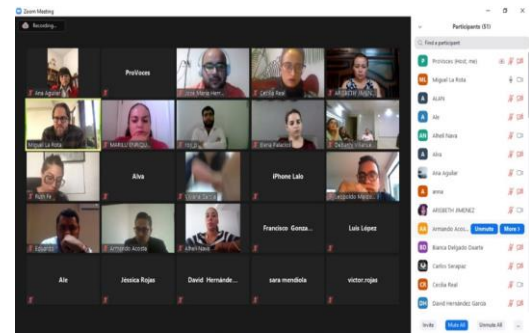


Photo 54. Seminar on Criminal Prosecution Policies and Plans, and Prioritization of Criminal Incidents related to the Freedom of Expression and the Defense of Human Rights

The third seminar ProVoces hosted was entitled *Context Analysis in Crimes against the Freedom of Expression and the Defense of Human Rights* and dealt specifically with the topic of context analysis which has been introduced in Mexico as a necessary tool to strengthen criminal investigations but is still not well understood. Speakers shared general context analysis concepts; lessons learned; areas of opportunity; and the usefulness of this methodology for their respective prosecutors' offices. They agreed that the main challenges to incorporating context analysis in their work have been in creating multidisciplinary task forces within the prosecutor's offices; inter-agency coordination to obtain information beyond the contents of the case files; and judges' poor understanding of the topic. They concluded that context analysis will be widely used once its utility has been demonstrated in trials.

Strengthening CSO capacities to incorporate protection systems

Mexican authorities have little experience with monitoring and evaluating the status of the agencies responsible for the protection and safety of human rights defenders and journalists or of the conditions under which individuals exercise their freedom of expression at the national and local levels. This information is necessary to understand the obstacles these groups face and to generate government policies and effective measures to protect and guarantee their rights and safety.

ProVoces awarded a grant to CASEDE to bridge these information gaps through the development of a methodology to monitor and evaluate these indicators and to prepare the Annual Report on the Freedom of Expression in Mexico, which CASEDE has already prepared for three years. The reports evaluate the obstacles and problems experienced by human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico and provide recommendations for government policies at the national and state levels to protect these groups based on these findings.

The monitoring and evaluation methodology that CASEDE developed as part of the grant activities was disseminated widely and allowed other academic institutions and organizations to develop similar reports and evaluations independently. CASEDE also collaborated effectively with other institutions to develop parts of the methodology to produce the report. For example, the report's methodology for information analysis was developed in collaboration with the Chihuahua Autonomous University, the Economics Research and Instruction Center (CIDE), the College of Mexico (COLMEX) and the University of the Americas at Puebla (UDLAP).

Sometimes, the partnership went beyond just creating the report. This was the case with UDLAP, with which CASEDE built a strategic partnership for knowledge generation concerning the security situation of journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico. The results of this partnership have resulted in the joint drafting of annual reports and the development of a strategy to raise public awareness, particularly for youth, on the main themes of the report. The latter activity resulted in the creation of an Instagram account, CASEDE_org, and a podcast with information and audiovisual products on the report's results and findings. Further, when creating the materials, they included alumni from UDLAP who had worked on the research and interviews that were used to create the report's content.



Photo 55. 2018 CASEDE Report on the Freedom of Expression



Photo 56. 2020 CASEDE Report on the Freedom of Expression

4. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT STRATEGY

4.1 Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability has been a guiding principle in the design of all ProVoces program activities, and from the onset, all project interventions were intended to empower local partners and stakeholders to take ownership of reform processes and strengthen existing country systems in a cost-effective manner, emphasizing their ability to finance and maintain impacts beyond the life of the project. At the proposal stage, Tt DPK committed to designing program activities to be sustainable beyond the life of the project. Sustainability would be achieved by:

- Placing Mexican counterparts in leadership roles from the outset;
- Building on Government of Mexico (GOM) priorities;
- Empowering local partners and stakeholders to take ownership of reform processes;
- Strengthening existing country systems in a cost-effective manner, emphasizing their ability to finance and maintain impacts beyond the life of the project; and
- Leaving behind key tools such as SOPs, training materials, best practice documents and case studies, analysis techniques, and sustainable capacity building strategies

This strategy has led to tangible results that have impacted positively and directly the lives of journalists and human rights defenders and that have highlighted the importance of freedom of expression and protection of human rights in a democratic society. The Project has supported more than 600 journalists and human rights defenders to increase their self-protection and self-care practices and has helped more than 100 organizations adopt prevention practices for its members. Moreover because of the Project's technical assistance, more than 370 investigations the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against the Freedom of Expression (FEADLE) and targeted state attorney general offices initiated and at least 65 judicial hearings of cases into crimes against freedom of expression. Finally, the Project has reached more than 2,000,000 people with awareness raising campaigns on the importance of the work of journalists and human rights defenders. The activities and results presented below are representative of how these principles were used to build sustainability into ProVoces's work plans and create lasting impact.

Mexican Counterparts in the Driver's Seat & Setting Their Priorities

ProVoces' followed a three-phased approach to designing interventions with and for GOM counterparts. It identified the most salient institutional needs each institution had to respond to its legal mandate effectively. The Project then met with the leader of each counterpart agency and defined the institutional priorities each leader had set for his or her institution. Using this information, the Project followed a participatory process to fulfill these needs and priorities and validated the results during the entire intervention.

The Project has provided technical assistance in the operation of at least 9 interagency protection coordination mechanisms at the national and local levels, which have been pivotal in helping various agencies in charge of protecting journalists and human rights defenders exchange valuable information and data to improve service delivery. This along with assistance in adopting twelve international recommendations to fulfill its state responsibilities to protect freedom of expression and defend human rights had been priorities for the GOM at the outset of this activity.

Empowering Local Partners to Take Ownership of Reform Processes

The Project adapted several institutional assessment tools developed by USAID or with USAID funding, including the Institutional Self-Evaluation Tool (HAI) derived from the Government Performance Index and the Self-Assessment Tool to Measure CSO Capacities (OPIOCA) adapted from Pact's Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool, to help more than seven government counterparts, including federal and local authorities from targeted states and 6 non-government partners measure their institutional capacities and determine the most appropriate actions to strengthen their service delivery. These tools were chosen because they are designed to

be implemented with the active participation and leadership of the institution being strengthened, thus allowing for the institution itself to set its own priorities and lead the process after the project ends. These efforts resulted in average of 50% increase in GOM counterparts' institutional capacity and partner CSOs measured by the Government and Organizational Performance Indexes.

Strengthened Existing Country Systems

ProVoces also brokered key partnerships within the existing country systems to finance or maintain aspects of the project beyond the life of the project. In 2020, the Project and its partner, the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, obtained the agreement of the Employers Confederation of the Mexican Republic (COPARMEX) to finance the creation of the Mexican Foundation for Free Press to promote and support independent journalism in Mexico. The Project recognized that the involvement and financial support of the private sector was key to supporting free press in Mexico. Similarly, through agreements with leading universities in Mexico, the Project designed certificate programs for journalists and human rights defenders that have become part of the university curricula. Among these is the Diploma on Freedom of Expression and Human Rights Defense offered by the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM) and the Diploma on Freedom of Expression and Human Rights offered by the Ibero University and the High Commission for Human Rights in Mexico City.

Key Materials and Tools Produced

The Project also designed and co-created at least 20 instruments that support institutional and organizational efforts to improve protection of journalists and human rights defenders; preventive measures; institutional performance, and accountability; as well as the investigation and prosecution of crimes against freedom of expression that have been adopted or are in the process of being adopted by counterparts.

4.2 Exit Strategy

To build on the positive and productive working relations that ProVoces built with partners over the period of project implementation, the Project proposes several key actions to ensure the transfer of information and resources to GOM counterparts, civil society allies, stakeholders, and champions that will allow them to continue with the activities highlighted in the Sustainability Strategy.

To achieve this goal, ProVoces used a strategy strategy comprised of three elements:

1. Accountability to GOM Counterparts
2. Transparency with Stakeholders
3. Identifying Local Initiatives

Accountability to GOM Counterparts

ProVoces' intervention with GOM counterparts was characterized by three premises:

1. Identification of mayor institutional needs to respond to their legal mandate effectively;
2. Definition of institutional priorities by the leader of each counterpart;
3. Participatory and validation processes.

At the beginning of the collaboration, USAID and the Project held high-level meetings to introduce the staff, the scope of work, and set expectations. Several follow-up, working, and progress report meetings were carried out during the term of implementation. During Project closeout, ProVoces held meetings with USAID and counterparts to present the results achieved during the collaboration. During the meetings ProVoces staff presented a comparison of the before and after the collaboration between the Project and the institution; highlights of the capacities that the institution acquired during this period; and formally delivered¹² every instrument developed with the institution to improve operational processes; and a presentation of lessons learned, opportunities for additional results, and pending priorities.

¹² The Project will prepare a hard-copy and electronic folder with all the deliverables and instruments developed for each institution.

These meetings served as the formal closing to this phase of collaboration between USAID and the institutions and were held with the same openness and respectful context as the initial meeting. The accountability meetings were held with the following counterparts:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Protection Mechanism • The Integral Protection Mechanism of Mexico City • The Ministry of Interior in Chihuahua • The Governor’s office in Coahuila 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Special Attorney General for Human Rights at the FGR • The Attorney General of Coahuila • The Attorney General of Chihuahua • The Commission of Government and Population of the Chamber of Deputies at the Federal Congress
---	---

Transparency with Stakeholders

The local system in charge of the protection of journalists and human rights defenders is composed of several specialized organizations, networks of journalists, individual champions, and academia. Although these stakeholders are protective of its system, they were eager to listen to recommendations from outside actors, such as ProVoces.

During the implementation phase, the Project developed collaborative, open-ended, and respectful relationships with most of the relevant stakeholders which must be maintained in future iterations of the project. As part of its Exit Strategy, ProVoces held a public presentation to all program stakeholders of all the work performed during project implementation, project results, achievements, and key lessons learned. By giving this information, the Project aimed to be accountable for its activities and to provide formal evidence of the institutional advances that GOM counterparts have made during this time. The presentation included ProVoces’ grantees, allies, and observer organizations who were invited to provide recommendations for further action and included information about the models, strengthening, and instruments developed for civil society organizations, media outlets, and academia. By presenting this information, ProVoces hopes that the stakeholders become allies in maintaining those results by demanding accountability over them to the GOM institutions, long-after the Project has gone.

Identifying Local Initiatives

Support for local-led initiatives was a key element of the Project implementation. Recognizing that appropriation is necessary for the sustainability of initiatives, ProVoces aimed to develop activities in close coordination with local organizations and well-recognized champions. Most of the initiatives supported by the Project are now included in the operational planning of the implementing organizations and can be sustained in the medium and long term. Some of these initiatives have become a source of funding from other donors to these organizations.

All ProVoces’ partner organizations received organizational strengthening and capacity development support to prepare them for larger projects and be more competitive for future donor assistance. The models jointly developed with our partners and allies allow them to participate in future funding opportunities, relying on proven and results-oriented practice.

As part of the exit strategy, ProVoces held meetings with recipient organizations aimed at formally handing over to the organization the property rights over the model developed. Because these meetings were held with USAID representatives’ organizations were able to interact directly with the donor and USAID was able to understand how the model intends to be operated and implemented after ProVoces ends. ProVoces acknowledged the collaboration, and trust, during activity implementation and encouraged their continuation.

The initiatives that were hand over were:

- ITESM Diploma on Freedom of Expression and Protection of Journalists and Human Rights Defenders

- Voces en Red
- Voces contra el Poder
- Pro-bono alliance
- Foundation for independent journalism' project.

5. PROBLEMS AND DELAYS

The main obstacles the project faced in the implementation period tested the ProVoces team's ability to adapt to new circumstances and to develop strategic contingency plans to allow them to meet the objectives despite the obstacles.

In the case of the government agencies, especially the Federal Mechanism, there were changes in agency leadership and staff, which delayed some of the institutional strengthening activities. The Project, therefore monitored counterparts continuously and became familiar with their internal processes to ensure that new members understood the work that was being done and adopted the new tools, protocols and instruments that were later implemented. Likewise, the budgetary austerity measures that affected government agencies, particularly the Federal and Integrated Mechanisms, prevented them from acquiring the technology needed to incorporate more innovative systems to adopt many of ProVoces' recommendations. ProVoces, however, sought viable lower cost alternatives for each agency so they could implement the tools with equally useful but simpler technological designs. In the federated entities ProVoces found protection systems in their infancy because many State Protection Units had just been recently created and because many states did not have them. This represented an obstacle for implementing integrated protection strategies and an opportunity to help shape those agencies and support them in creating new, useful instruments to perform their duties.

At the judicial level, the transition from a Prosecutor General's Office (PGR) to an Attorney General's Office (FGR) entailed structural changes within the agency, and this changed the rationale behind the proactive steps that FEADLE had been taking. Therefore, they halted some actions that had been considered priorities. This transition to a FGR also entailed a reformulation of internal policies that affected the office's ability to call up cases and FEADLE's ability to cooperate with state prosecutors' offices which resulted in a lack of immediate attention to several cases. This made it very complicated to create spaces for communication and coordination as initially conceived. Nevertheless, ProVoces kept the lines of communication open between the special prosecutors' offices and provided them with several spaces and materials to communicate with each other. The Project also redirected the strategy towards local levels and, even though it has not been possible to set up the strategy completely in those offices due to the health crisis, the results indicate that it was right path. Despite the many contextual differences among local prosecutors' offices, the spaces for feedback and communication provided by ProVoces have always had appropriate levels of participation and involvement.

Another significant challenge to progress in joint improvements within the agencies is the dynamics of their relationships with civil society organizations, which in many cases causes frustrations to CSOs because the government agencies are unable to fulfill all the CSOs' demands. These disagreements have been most evident in the process for approving the *Protocol on the Effective Investigation and Prosecution of Crimes against Human Rights Defenders* which has been delayed by disagreements among the very organizations calling for it. The lack of such a protocol is one reason for the delayed prosecutions in cases of crimes against human rights defenders.

ProVoces spearheaded the creation of *Competency Standard EC1103*, with the goal of promoting the nationwide certification of prosecutors. To implement this activity, the Project considered the average costs of certification per prosecutor and the fact that INACIPE would be the certifying body and that it had signed a cooperation agreement with USAID to be that certifying body. However, during implementation the Project became aware that the cost of certification is not an expense that many prosecutors' offices can absorb, and this prevented many offices from sponsoring their prosecutors' certifications. ProVoces solved the problem by leveraging its excellent relationship with INACIPE and its partnerships with state prosecutors' offices to get the costs reduced and obtain the certifications as planned. The certification costs were covered by INACIPE, ProVoces and the Attorney Generals' Offices.

As for prevention efforts, the Project transformed many of the traditional self-protection and self-care actions for human rights defenders and journalists into opportunities for professional development and training previously not available to them based on the feedback the Project received from them on their real needs. During the Project's period of implementation, and particularly during the COVID-19 emergency, working conditions for journalists and human rights defenders worsened and their risks increased. ProVoces, therefore, employed a more proactive approach, providing useful, relevant information about free, online training, psychological support, and grant programs and financing, as well as recommendations and manuals on how to perform their work more safely.

ProVoces' work with national media outlets faced pushback on the incorporation of materials produced by the Project as many large national media outlets refused to commit to adopting the manuals to improve their journalists' capacity for self-protection and self-care, risk prevention, protecting colleagues and that would enable them to create work environments free of gender discrimination and harassment. Faced with this obstacle ProVoces began to use these manuals and implement them with local media outlets and CSOs.

Although the COVID-19 health emergency and subsequent lockdown eliminated the possibility for in person activities during the last year of implementation and in some cases delayed activities, particularly those that were dependent on government agencies, the virtual formats of many activities had unintended positive consequences. The virtual formats of many of the forums, trainings, workshops and presentations allowed for greater participation and dissemination. Activities such as the *International Public Media Forum* that were forced to modify their format to a virtual platform allowed international experts who would not have been able to attend an online event to attend and participate, which enriched the conference.

6. UPDATES ON EVALUATION AND LEARNING PLANS OR ACTIVITIES

Following up on activities through established indicators presented a challenge due to the number of indicators and project timeline. Some indicators, such as political will, was one of the most complicated indicators to measure because, with the government's divergent political positions, it was difficult to establish clear monitoring systems. Likewise, several indicators depended on access to and availability of information published or provided by the Federal Mechanism and FEADLE and were difficult to gather because of the limited time that agencies had available.

During the three years of project implementation, the ProVoces team has held continued meetings to update and adjust the indicator matrix and PIRS to reflect the project's results more precisely and define sources of information, disaggregation, and data collection methodologies. These updates are included in the MELQA approved by USAID.

In this regard, the primary changes to monitoring and evaluation were the following:

1. Indicator 1.3.2 was added to include the number of persons impacted through ProVoces communication campaigns and/or activities.
2. Indicator O.1.2. Percentage of change in the use of systems on human rights and prevention measures was replaced by percentage of change in the number of assaults reported against human rights defenders and journalists.
3. Indicator 2.1.1: the number of methodologies, tools, models and measures adopted by the GOM and CSOs to improve prevention was replaced by the number of organizations and media outlets that adopt prevention practices for their members.
4. Indicator 2.2.1: Number of human rights defenders and journalists who apply self-protection measures in states where ProVoces operates was replaced by the number of human rights defenders and journalists who are provided training and support.
5. Indicator O.1.3. was adjusted from the percentage of change in convictions for serious crimes against human rights defenders and journalists to the decrease in the rate of impunity in serious crimes against human rights defenders and journalists.

During this past year of implementation, ProVoces defined the goals for option years one and two in order to follow up efficiently on the activities and achieve the expected results.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

8. PARTICIPANT TRAINING

From September 2018 to December 2020, ProVoces trained 1203 people (658 journalists and 180 human rights defenders). The following tables provide details on the project's training activities.

Participant Training – All Activities							
Training Name	Start Date	End Date	Total # of Hours	Total # of Participants	# of Females	# of Males	Location
Conversatorios sobre Protocolo de investigación de Delitos contra érsonas defensoras de derchos humanos	09/03/2018	09/03/2018	7	9	5	4	Ciudad de México
Profesionalización de las y los operadores del Mecanismo para incluir la perspectiva de género	09/06/2018	09/07/2018	19	42	23	19	Ciudad de México
Introducción a la Perspectiva de Género, Enfoque diferencial e Interculturalidad	10/18/2018	10/18/2018	6	11	10	1	Nuevo León
Foro de Desafíos y Perspectivas de la Libertad de Expresión	10/30/2018	10/30/2018	2	33	20	13	Ciudad de México
Taller de sensibilizació de género	10/31/2018	10/31/2018	4	6	4	2	Ciudad de México
Taller de Periodismo y reducción de riesgos legales	11/12/2018	11/15/2018	8	36	31	5	Ciudad de México
Taller de Periodismo y Perspectiva de Género	11/20/2018	11/23/2018	8	9	8	1	Ciudad de México
Taller de seguridad digital	11/27/2018	11/30/2018	8	11	9	2	Ciudad de México
Encuentro Latinoamericano de Periodismo Independiente	11/29/2018	11/30/2018	12	43	25	18	Ciudad de México
Taller de Reacción ante Situaciones de Emergencia	12/03/2018	12/04/2018	4	10	9	1	Ciudad de México
Fortalecimiento institucional en género para el ITESM	02/20/2019	02/20/2019	6	8	7	1	Nuevo León
Fortalecimiento institucional en género para CASEDE	02/28/2019	02/28/2019	2	5	3	2	Ciudad de México

La Voz de las Mujeres Periodistas	03/07/2019	03/07/2019	3	14	14	0	Ciudad de México
Encuentro de Periodistas del Noreste 2019	03/08/2019	03/09/2019	12	82	34	48	Nuevo León
Taller de seguridad digital para Milenio	03/14/2019	03/15/2019	10	11	3	8	Ciudad de México
Incorporación de la perspectiva de género en el Índice de Libertad de Expresión a nivel estatal	03/19/2019	03/19/2019	1	10	5	5	Ciudad de México
Capacitación del Protocolo aprobado y el Estándar de competencia en delitos contra la libertad de expresión	03/25/2019	03/29/2019	29	72	18	54	Querétaro
Taller en sensibilización sobre perspectiva de género (Vanguardia)	04/03/2019	04/03/2019	4	9	2	7	Coahuila
Fortalecimiento sobre periodismo y género (Zócalo)	04/25/2019	04/25/2019	4	9	5	4	Coahuila
Sesión de fortalecimiento en periodismo y género (Vanguardia)	04/27/2019	04/27/2019	4	6	1	5	Coahuila
Taller de riesgos jurídicos (Milenio)	05/02/2019	05/03/2019	8	9	5	4	Ciudad de México
Seguridad y protección digital (Discusiones con el Grupo de Trabajo de Coahuila)	05/20/2019	05/20/2019	4	8	3	5	Coahuila
Protocolos de seguridad (conversatorio con el CIRT)	05/21/2019	05/21/2019	3	9	3	6	Coahuila
Hablemos de producción de radio	06/21/2019	06/21/2019	2	22	22	0	Ciudad de México
Encuentro Nacional de Protección Integral para Personas Defensoras del Medio Ambiente, la Tierra y el Territorio	01/07/2019	02/07/2019	12	31	22	9	Ciudad de México
Taller de periodismo independiente	07/05/2019	07/06/2019	12	35	21	14	Ciudad de México
Taller de periodismo y género (Milenio)	07/25/2019	07/26/2019	4	10	7	3	Ciudad de México
Curso de Verificado MX	08/01/2019	08/02/2019	8	40	22	18	Ciudad de México
Taller de pares (Coahuila)	08/16/2019	08/18/2019	20	11	4	7	Coahuila
Taller de pares (Nuevo León)	08/19/2019	08/20/2019	20	6	3	3	Monterrey
Taller de pares (Juarez City)	08/22/2019	08/24/2019	20	6	4	2	Chihuahua

Encuentro Nacional de Seguridad y Protección para Radios Comunitarias e Indígenas	09/07/2019	09/07/2019	13	58	22	36	Ciudad de México
Fortalecimiento de habilidades de escritura y análisis de información dirigido al Mecanismo Federal	10/09/2019	10/11/2019	16	9	6	3	Ciudad de México
La Voz de las Mujeres Periodistas. Mentoría: Verificación del discurso público	10/16/2019	10/16/2019	2.3	5	5	0	Ciudad de México
Reacción ante situaciones de emergencia (Diario Milenio)	11/14/2019	11/15/2019	8	7	1	6	Ciudad de México
Taller Verificado Mx (Zócalo)	11/28/2019	11/29/2019	6	12	5	7	Coahuila
Taller sobre aplicación de estrategias de protección y prácticas de autocuidado (DDHH)	12/05/2019	12/06/2019	16	11	9	2	Ciudad Juárez
Taller sobre aplicación de estrategias de protección y prácticas de autocuidado (DDHH)	12/17/2019	12/18/2019	16	15	13	2	Chihuahua
Técnicas de entrevista (Mecanismo Federal)	01/09/2020	01/10/2020	8	24	14	10	Ciudad de México
Taller de Análisis Político Criminal	01/13/2020	01/14/20	16	13	6	7	Ciudad de México
Taller Voces contra el poder	02/20/2020	02/21/2020	11	16	7	9	Ciudad de México
Capacitación Nuevas Masculinidades (Mecanismo Federal)	03/04/2020	03/05/2020	18	15	10	5	Ciudad de México
Diplomado Libertad de Expresión y Defensa de Derechos Humanos	09/17/2019	03/23/2020	100	23	13	10	Nuevo León
Capacitación de "Políticas Públicas al Grupo de Trabajo de Coahuila"	06/04/2020	06/05/2020	8	8	4	4	Coahuila
Capacitación en Técnicas de Presentaciones Efectivas para el personal del Mecanismo Federal	06/17/2020	06/19/2020	8	31	18	13	Ciudad de México
Taller sobre la Herramienta de Autoevaluación de Acciones de Protección y Autocuidado (HAAPA)	06/25/2020	06/25/2020	1.5	10	9	1	Chihuahua
Capacitación al Personal del Mecanismo Federal en Planes de Protección	06/26/2020	06/26/2020	2	10	6	4	Ciudad de México
Capacitación en uso de la Metodología de Evaluación de Riesgos (UEP)	08/17/2020	08/18/2020	9	10	7	3	Chihuahua
Taller de la Herramienta Autodiagnóstica de Acciones	08/21/2020	08/21/2020	1	9	6	3	Ciudad de México

de Protección y Autocuidado (HAAPA) en el IMDH								
Diplomado de Libertad de Expresión	10/08/2020	28/02/2021	100	10	5	5	Nuevo León	
Taller. Periodismo en medios públicos: oportunidades y retos para las mejores prácticas	23/10/2020	23/10/2020	1.30	145	85	60	Ciudad de México	
Taller avanzado sobre investigación y litigio en materia de libertad de expresión	29/09/2020	01/12/2020	20	74	29	45	Ciudad de México	
Sesión de trabajo con CENCOS para adecuar la Guía de seguridad	12/10/2020	12/10/2020	2	1	0	1	Ciudad de México	
Capacitación al personal del Mecanismo Federal en el Sistema de Indicadores	20/10/2020	20/10/2020	4	3	1	2	Ciudad de México	
Conversatorios Comunicación Social Coahuila	19/11/2020	20/11/2020	4	8	4	4	Coahuila	
Sesión de trabajo con Data Cívica para adecuar la Guía de seguridad.	25/11/2020	25/11/2020	1.30	4	4	0	Ciudad de México	
Manual de seguridad. Verificado Mx	26/11/2020	26/11/2020	1	1	1	0	Nuevo León	
Producción de podcast para el IMER	21/11/2020	05/12/2020	7.3	27	11	16	Ciudad de México	
Taller de análisis de contexto y evaluación de riesgo. IMER	10/12/2020	11/12/2020	5	21	10	11	Ciudad de México	
Total			672	1203	663	540		

Participant Training – Journalists							
Training Name	Start Date	End Date	Total # of Hours	Total # of Participants	# of Females	# of Males	Location
Taller de Periodismo y reducción de riesgos legales	11/12/2018	11/15/2018	8	36	31	5	Mexico City
Taller de Periodismo y Perspectiva de Género	11/20/2018	11/23/2018	8	9	8	1	Mexico City
Taller de seguridad digital	11/27/2018	11/30/2018	8	11	9	2	Mexico City
Encuentro Latinoamericano de Periodismo Independiente	11/29/2018	11/30/2018	12	43	25	18	Mexico City

Taller de Reacción ante Situaciones de Emergencia	12/03/2018	12/04/2018	4	10	9	1	Mexico City
Encuentro de Periodistas del Noreste 2019	03/08/2019	03/09/2019	12	82	34	48	Nuevo León
Taller de seguridad digital para Milenio	03/14/2019	03/15/2019	10	11	3	8	Mexico City
Taller en sensibilización sobre perspectiva de género (Vanguardia)	04/03/2019	04/03/2019	4	9	2	7	Coahuila
Fortalecimiento sobre periodismo y género (Zócalo)	04/25/2019	04/25/2019	4	9	5	4	Coahuila
Sesión de fortalecimiento en periodismo y género (Vanguardia)	04/27/2019	04/27/2019	4	6	1	5	Coahuila
Taller de riesgos jurídicos (Milenio)	05/02/2019	05/03/2019	8	9	5	4	Mexico City
Hablemos de producción de radio	06/21/2019	06/21/2019	2	22	22	0	Mexico City
Taller de periodismo independiente	07/05/2019	07/06/2019	12	35	21	14	Mexico City
Taller de periodismo y género (Milenio)	07/25/2019	07/26/2019	4	10	7	3	Mexico City
Curso de Verificado MX	08/01/2019	08/02/2019	8	40	22	18	Mexico City
Taller de pares (Coahuila)	08/16/2019	08/18/2019	20	11	4	7	Coahuila
Taller de pares (Nuevo León)	08/19/2019	08/20/2019	20	6	3	3	Monterrey
Taller de pares (Ciudad Juárez)	08/22/2019	08/24/2019	20	6	4	2	Chihuahua
Encuentro Nacional de Seguridad y Protección para Radios Comunitarias e Indígenas	09/07/2019	09/08/2019	13	58	22	36	Mexico City
La Voz de las Mujeres Periodistas. Mentoría: Verificación del discurso público	10/16/2019	10/16/2019	2.3	5	5	0	Ciudad de México
Reacción ante situaciones de emergencia (Diario Milenio)	11/14/2019	11/15/2019	8	7	1	6	Ciudad de México
Taller Verificado Mx (Zócalo)	11/28/2019	11/29/2019	6	12	5	7	Coahuila
Taller de Análisis Político Criminal	01/13/2020	01/14/20	16	9	2	7	Ciudad de México
Diplomado Libertad de Expresión y Defensa de Derechos Humanos	09/17/2019	03/23/2020	100	8	3	5	Nuevo León
Taller. Periodismo en medios públicos: oportunidades y retos para las mejores prácticas	23/10/2020	23/10/2020	1.30	145	85	60	Ciudad de México
Manual de seguridad. Verificado Mx	26/11/2020	26/11/2020	1	1	1	0	Nuevo León
Producción de podcast para el IMER	21/11/2020	05/12/2020	7.3	27	11	16	Ciudad de México

Taller de análisis de contexto y evaluación de riesgo. IMER	10/12/2020	11/12/2020	5	21	10	11	Ciudad de México
Total			328	658	360	298	

Participant Training – Human Rights Defenders							
Training Name	Start Date	End Date	Total # of Hours	Total # of Participants	# of Females	# of Males	Location
Seguridad y protección digital (Discusiones con el Grupo de Trabajo de Coahuila)	05/20/2019	05/20/2019	4	8	3	5	Coahuila
Encuentro Nacional de Protección Integral para Personas Defensoras del Medio Ambiente, la Tierra y el Territorio	01/07/2019	02/07/2019	12	31	22	9	Ciudad de México
Taller sobre aplicación de estrategias de protección y prácticas de autocuidado (DDHH)	12/05/2019	43628	16	11	9	2	Ciudad Juárez
Taller sobre aplicación de estrategias de protección y prácticas de autocuidado (DDHH)	12/17/2019	12/18/2019	16	15	13	2	Chihuahua
Taller de Análisis Político Criminal	01/13/2020	01/14/20	16	4	4	0	Ciudad de México
Diplomado Libertad de Expresión y Defensa de Derechos Humanos	09/17/2019	03/23/2020	100	5	3	2	Nuevo León
Capacitación de “Políticas Públicas al Grupo de Trabajo de Coahuila”	06/04/2020	43957	8	8	4	4	Coahuila
Taller sobre la Herramienta de Autoevaluación de Acciones de Protección y Autocuidado (HAAPA)	06/25/2020	06/25/2020	1.5	10	9	1	Chihuahua
Taller de la Herramienta Autodiagnóstica de Acciones de Protección y Autocuidado (HAAPA) en el IMDH	08/21/2020	08/21/2020	1	9	6	3	Ciudad de México
Taller avanzado sobre investigación y litigio en materia de libertad de expresión	29/09/2020	01/12/2020	20	74	29	45	Ciudad de México
Sesión de trabajo con CENCOS para adecuar la Guía de seguridad	12/10/2020	12/10/2020	2	1	0	1	Ciudad de México
Sesión de trabajo con Data Cívica para adecuar la Guía de seguridad.	25/11/2020	25/11/2020	1.30	4	4	0	Ciudad de México
Total			198	180	106	74	

Participant Training Activities - GOM Officials
--

Training Name	Start Date	End Date	Total # of Hours	Total # of Participants	# of Females	# of Males	Location
Fortalecimiento de habilidades de escritura y análisis de información dirigido al Mecanismo Federal	10/09/2019	43779	16	9	6	3	Ciudad de México
Técnicas de entrevista (Mecanismo Federal)	01/09/2020	44105	8	24	14	10	Ciudad de México
Capacitación Nuevas Masculinidades (Mecanismo Federal)	03/04/2020	43954	18	15	10	5	Ciudad de México
Capacitación en Técnicas de Presentaciones Efectivas para el personal del Mecanismo Federal	06/17/2020	06/19/2020	8	31	18	13	Ciudad de México
Capacitación al Personal del Mecanismo Federal en Planes de Protección	06/26/2020	06/26/2020	2	10	6	4	Ciudad de México
Capacitación en uso de la Metodología de Evaluación de Riesgos (JEP)	08/17/2020	08/18/2020	9	10	7	3	Chihuahua
Capacitación al personal del Mecanismo Federal en el Sistema de Indicadores	20/10/2020	20/10/2020	4	3	1	2	Ciudad de México
Conversatorios Comunicación Social Coahuila	19/11/2020	20/11/2020	4	8	4	4	Coahuila
Total			69	110	66	44	

Participant Training – Academy

Training Name	Start Date	End Date	# of Hours	Total # of Participants	# of Females	# of Males	Location
Taller Voces contra el poder	02/20/2020	02/21/2020	11	16	7	9	Ciudad de México
Diplomado de Libertad de Expresión	10/08/2020	28/02/2021	100	10	5	5	Nuevo León
Total			111	26	12	14	

Participant Training Activities - Organizations

Training Name	Start Date	End Date	Total # of Hours	Type media or organizations	Total of medium or organization
Taller de Periodismo y reducción de riesgos legales	11/12/2018	11/15/2018	8	El Universal	5 medios

Taller de Periodismo y Perspectiva de Género	11/20/2018	11/23/2018	8		
Taller de seguridad digital	11/27/2018	11/30/2018	8		
Taller de Reacción ante Situaciones de Emergencia	12/03/2018	12/04/2018	4		
Taller de seguridad digital para Milenio	03/14/2019	03/15/2019	10	Milenio	
Taller de riesgos jurídicos (Milenio)	05/02/2019	05/03/2019	8		
Taller de periodismo y género	07/25/2019	07/26/2019	4	Vanguardia	
Taller en sensibilización sobre perspectiva de género (Vanguardia)	04/03/2019	04/03/2019	4		
Sesión de fortalecimiento en periodismo y género (Vanguardia)	04/27/2019	04/27/2019	4		
Fortalecimiento sobre periodismo y género (Zócalo)	04/25/2019	04/25/2019	4	Zócalo	
Curso de Verificado MX	08/01/2019	08/02/2019	8	IMER	
Encuentro Latinoamericano de Periodismo Independiente	11/29/2018	11/30/2018	12	Medios independiente	30 Medios independientes
Encuentro de Periodistas del Noreste 2019	03/08/2019	03/09/2019	12		
Taller de periodismo independiente	07/05/2019	07/06/2019	12		
Taller de pares (Ciudad Juárez)	08/16/2019	08/18/2019	20		
Taller de pares (Nuevo León)	08/19/2019	08/20/2019	20		
Taller de pares (Coahuila)	08/22/2019	08/24/2019	20		
Encuentro Nacional de Seguridad y Protección para Radios Comunitarias e Indígenas	09/07/2019	09/08/2019	13	Radios Comunitarias	54 Radios Comunitarias
Seguridad y protección digital (Discusiones con el Grupo de Trabajo de Coahuila)	05/20/2019	05/20/2019	4	OSC	19 OSC
Encuentro Nacional de Protección Integral para Personas Defensoras del Medio Ambiente, la Tierra y el Territorio	01/07/2019	02/07/2019	12		

Fortalecimiento de habilidades de escritura y análisis de información dirigido al Mecanismo Federal	10/09/2019	10/11/2019	16	Institución	I Institución
La Voz de las Mujeres Periodistas. Mentoría: Verificación del discurso público	10/16/2019	10/16/2019	2.3	Universidad Medio público Medio independiente	I Universidad
					I Medio público
					I Medio independiente
Reacción ante situaciones de emergencia (Diario Milenio)	11/14/2019	11/15/2019	8	Medio	I Medio
Taller Verificado Mx (Zócalo)	11/28/2019	11/29/2019	6	Medio	I Medio
Taller sobre aplicación de estrategias de protección y prácticas de autocuidado (DDHH)	12/05/2019	12/06/2019	16	Institución OSC	I Institución 3 OSC
Taller sobre aplicación de estrategias de protección y prácticas de autocuidado (DDHH)	12/17/2019	12/18/2019	16	Institución OSC	I Institución 8 OSC
Técnicas de entrevista (Mecanismo Federal)	01/09/2020	01/10/2020	8	GOM	GOM
Taller de Análisis Político Criminal	01/13/2020	01/14/20	16	OSC Medios de comunicación	3 OSC 3 Medios de comunicación
Taller Voces contra el poder	02/20/2020	02/21/2020	11	Universidades	7 Universidades
Capacitación Nuevas Masculinidades (Mecanismo Federal)	03/04/2020	03/05/2020	18	GOM	GOM
Diplomado Libertad de Expresión y Defensa de Derechos Humanos	09/17/2019	03/23/2020	100	Medios de comunicación	6 Medios de comunicación
				Personas defensoras independientes	5 Personas defensoras independientes
Capacitación de "Políticas Públicas al Grupo de Trabajo de Coahuila"	06/04/2020	06/05/2020	8	OSC	I OSC

Taller sobre la Herramienta de Autoevaluación de Acciones de Protección y Autocuidado (HAAPA)	06/25/2020	06/25/2020	2	OSC	6 OSC
Capacitación en Técnicas de Presentaciones Efectivas para el personal del Mecanismo Federal	06/16/2020	06/17/2020	8	GOM	GOM
Capacitación al Personal del Mecanismo Federal en Planes de Protección	06/26/2020	06/26/2020	2		
Capacitación en uso de la Metodología de Evaluación de Riesgos (UEP)	08/17/2020	08/18/2020	9	GOM	1 GOM
Taller de la Herramienta Autodiagnóstica de Acciones de Protección y Autocuidado (HAAPA) en el IMDH	08/21/2020	08/21/2020	1	OSC	1 OSC
Diplomado de Libertad de Expresión	10/08/2020	28/02/2021	100	Universidad	1 Universidad
Taller. Periodismo en medios públicos: oportunidades y retos para las mejores prácticas	23/10/2020	23/10/2020	1.30	Medio Público	1 Medio Público
Taller avanzado sobre investigación y litigio en materia de libertad de expresión	29/09/2020	01/12/2020	20	Fundación	1 Fundación (OSC)
Sesión de trabajo con CENCOS para adecuar la Guía de seguridad	12/10/2020	12/10/2020	2	OSC	1 OSC
Capacitación al personal del Mecanismo Federal en el Sistema de Indicadores	20/10/2020	20/10/2020	4	Institución	1 Institución
Conversatorios Comunicación Social Coahuila	19/11/2020	20/11/2020	4	Institución	1 Institución
Sesión de trabajo con Data Cívica para adecuar la Guía de seguridad.	25/11/2020	25/11/2020	1.30	OSC	1 OSC
Manual de seguridad. Verificado Mx	26/11/2020	26/11/2020	1	Medio independiente	1 Medio independiente
Producción de podcast para el IMER	21/11/2020	05/12/2020	7.3	Medio Público	1 Medio público
Taller de análisis de contexto y evaluación de riesgo. IMER	10/12/2020	11/12/2020	5	Medio público	1 Medio público

Total 233
85 Medios de comunicació
31 Medios independientes
1 Medio Público
54 Radios Comunitarias
50 Organizaciones de Sociedad Civil
4 Instituciones
8 Universidades

9. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Infographic (A, B, C)

Annex 2. Indicator Summary Table

Annex 3. News Monitoring Report