

El Hormiguero

BULLETIN FOR LAS HORMIGAS COMUNIDAD EN DESARROLLO A.C.



WORKSHOP CYCLE

Thanks to the support and financing of CRS (Catholic Relief Services), we held a series of Education and Growth Workshops from January through June, on which this Bulletin will report.



Workshop for women working in the maquiladora industry held in March.

“Working Women, Strong Women”

The goal of this Workshop was for women to be able to reflect on their life and the impact their work has on their personal life; also, to create a support network made up by them, to be informed about some of their labor rights and to know who to contact in the event they are in need of advise.

We worked in two workshops; each for two days, to allow for women from different shifts to attend. So we held one workshop in the morning and another in the evening. A total of 8 hours and 11 participants. It was very interesting to be able to record, thanks to the systematization work by Doctor Rosalba Robles, women’s perceptions and experiences with respect to their maquila work, especially the impact on their physical health.

Finally, some of the conclusions reached are as follows:

THIRD ANALYTICAL MATRIX: CHOICES

CONCEPTS-IDEAS	SITUATION IDENTIFICATION	OBSERVATION
PERSONAL CHOICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start or continue to state my words and believe in my strength. - "I want to get rid of the fear of uncertainty, to the need to find my own way. - To seek therapeutic or group support to get some oxygen. 	GROUP 1
LABOR CHOICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Negotiate" solutions with my partner or family. - Seek therapeutic support. - Socialize, not to remain alone or isolated. - Seek choices, not to sink. 	GROUP 2
PERSONAL CHOICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider change when an operation is causing problems to the operator. - Authorization to drink water. - Authorization to go to the WC as often as needed. - Allow for help to be provided to co-workers when they have an accident or health problems due to illness. - A respectful environment for women, where we are not harassed, mocked, or humiliated. - Leave the maquila and start up a small family business. 	GROUPS: 1 Y 2



Workshop: How i learned to be the man i am

The following workshop was held in April, from the 19th to the 21st. The big news is that it was a workshop for men, the goal of which was to reflect about how they learned to be the men they are. The goal was for them to approach their gender learning, their childhood and adult experiences in building their masculinity. This workshop was facilitated by Prof. Abelardo Palma Molina, social anthropologist specialized in the subject of masculinity, who has designed and worked in workshops for groups of men in Chiapas. The goal of this workshop was broadly fulfilled, and further issues to be worked in other workshops were generated. Thus was stated by the men in their final evaluation.



A good 15-men group was gathered. Some of their final comments to the question "what did I like about the workshop?" were:
 - "Learning how to han-

dle things with my wife and children, especially what I learned, to be able to put it into practice with my children and wife. I liked the body and movement exercise".

- "The exercises where everybody's desire to learn something good to transmit to our family and feel good could be perceived. I liked teamwork".

- "Everything was fun and I was able to meet other friends. The trust created by Lalo among us".

- "Getting to know people who want to change their everyday life".

- "The simplicity in approaching issues. The exercises, what each of us said, the trust and good vibes, and meeting other friends. The workshop is good, I hope there are more courses to be able to be better with my family. It is very good because there are a lot of people or couples in trouble and who don't realize so: that's what workshops are for".

DONORS:

We thank Martha Fernandez for her decision to be a counterparty in this exciting work through her generous monthly donation.

We would also like to show our gratitude to Tere Carter, for supporting with her pro bono translation of the Bulletin.

And once again, thanks to the support provided by CRS, through the professionalism of Lynnette Asselin, and Marla Conrad, as well as the whole team, which enabled us to hold these Workshops which have benefited so much this North-West area of Ciudad Juarez. We look forward to be allies again in building a new, harmonious and pacific society through this exciting work of human growth.

Workshop for mothers and girls:

“My daughter: the mirror of my life”.



By late April and early May we held a Workshop aimed at mothers and their 7 to 10 year-old daughters.

The goal of this workshop, besides for mothers and girls to experience closeness and knowing each other, was for them to approach their gender programming, and for girls to learn in their early childhood how to stop repeating patterns of suffering if they are able to know and express their feelings and emotions, their worth as girls, as women, and to discern the inequalities and abuses towards them, to be able to stop them.

In one of the Workshop exercises, girls and mothers modeled a doll with playdough representing themselves. On a piece of paper they wrote the lies they were told about themselves, and which they have experienced as a brand on themselves, as a wound. Some of the phrases-lies which the mothers said they had been told when they were girls: “you fool, stupid, you are such a fool, you are a bore! You have come to make this world darker, everything you do is wrong, you won’t be able to, you ignorant!, you can’t. You useless, prostitute, you keep going out,



just like a whore! You are very stupid, you can’t, you are getting fat, you fool. You should be like..., if only you were like..., you stupid, worthless, I told you, useless, you are an asshole, you can’t”.

One major realization mothers were able to experience was that they were hurting their daughters, just like they had been hurt. Girls experienced difficulties to express the phrases-lies they have heard. They were able to say, crying: “They call me bad words, they tell me you are a pain in the ass, they hit me, they scold me saying I don’t take care of my brothers, they scold me if my brothers fight. They spank me, they hit me hard and say ugly things to me, they yell at me. They call me fool, stupid, and



they insult me. It really hurts me to be treated badly and called names; mi mother calls me stupid, asshole, envious: you don’t lend your things to anyone. Clumsy, dumb, stupid, fat, they scold me, they insult me. Stupid, ass, they pinch me, they hit me, they tell me: “move, get out of here”. It was quite an impact for moth-

ers to listen to their daughters’ pain, which in the end is their own. They talked to their daughters, hugged them, and promised them things would change. On the last day, the mothers made a rebirthing exercise which was very helpful, as they stated, “to feel and realize I have a new chance”.

“Health and family well-being” workshop

June 18 to 22 was a very intense working week. We had the gift of having among us Doctor Guadalupe Gonzalez, who came, as one of the women who attended the workshops said, “to teach us to heal the body... and the soul”.

This woman, holder of ancestral wisdom, with deep knowledge of the human being, as well as of plants and their healing properties, threw the question to one of the groups she worked with: “what do you want to know the properties of plants for, if you don’t even know yourselves?” And this is how the workshop began.

Despite the depth and amount of her knowledge, she very simply and full of love introduced herself to the girls and boys as “the Grandmother”. She explained that our ancestors gave this name to people of knowledge, and that it was an honor to have that name. The

children listened attentively to her and understood her words so well that in the end one of them would tell his parents “the Grandmother came to meet us, to say hello to us because she is a good soul and wants us to be well...”

The women expressed how they felt her touching their souls, and how they felt as if she knew them before they had met.

The fruit of this course, besides the inner personal work for women, is that they learned how to prepare several alcoholates for female hygiene, to relax, to reduce inflammation, and to improve digestion, and a guava with toasted sesame seeds smoothie to fix calcium.

These were days of intense work which continue to bear fruit since we still gather with these women every week to finish some work the Grandmother entrusted to us.



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