

COMPREHENSIVE FEMINIST PROTECTION (PIF)

PRESENTATION BY:
MESOAMERICAN INITIATIVE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
OF WOMEN DEFENDERS

OAXACA CONSORTIUM
WORKING FOR A LIFE IN FREEDOM FOR
WOMEN

GenDER ROLES, VIOLENCES AGAINST WOMEN
DEFENDERS ARE USUALLY DIFFERENT FROM
THOSE FACED BY MALE DEFENDERS AS ARE
THEIR IMPACTS

Therefore, analyzing risks and building
protection plans for women defenders
requires a differentiated look.

A long history of discrimination, coupled with the long struggle for equality, means that defenders and women journalists (WHRDs) have different protection needs than male defenders and journalists. Patriarchal structures, institutions and practices make the advocacy work undertaken by WHRDs more difficult and, in some cases, very dangerous. Defenders and women journalists are more at risk of suffering certain forms of violence and have more restrictions to carry out their work because they are women and because they fight openly or tactically against cultural beliefs about the role of women ”.

Alda Facio

Principles of comprehensive Feminist Protection

Addresses the structural causes and impacts of violence from an intersectional feminist perspective

- Patriarchy and racism are constitutive elements of capitalism. Its mechanisms of social control and repression must ensure that these structures of domination are perpetuated.
- Policies of repression and criminalization use gender violence to impose fear, weaken the social fabric, and maintain a structure that limits women's political participation.

- This violence, naturalized and socially legitimized, is characterized by: blaming, shaming and isolating the victims; justifying the aggressors, ignoring the word of women, legitimizing roles and favoring misogyny.
- Women who defend human rights challenge social norms about the role of women in patriarchal society. That fact alone puts the interests of power at risk.

- Violence against women defenders turns into stigma and rejection, they become threatening bodies. But they also become an inspiration, example and support for other women and discriminated subjects.
- It is exercised in a patriarchal environment: high rates of violence against women (from harassment to femicide), sexist stereotypes that place less value on the lives and contributions of women, an overload of care responsibilities, androcentric institutions and movements.
- This determines the level and perception of risk, the impact on their bodies and their lives, as well as their rebellion, resilience and ability to face violence and discrimination.

Build protection for the strengthening of territories, movements and social transformation

- Protection as a collective act, which recognizes the collective impact of violence
- It prioritizes the “territorial” area as strategic protection spaces. It recognizes and strengthens the knowledge that communities have to protect themselves.
- Principle of political action for the continuity and coherence of our struggles. It is not a "service" or "support", but a commitment to us, our comrades in struggle and social movements.
- Protection from the feminist ethic of putting the care of life at the center of social action. That recognizes women as political subjects and strengthens sisterhood.

- Protection that recognizes interdependence and the need for networks.
"Networks save"
- Protection that recognizes the vital link of the territory-body, which encompasses all subjects and beings affected by violence and their links. That he understands questions and deconstructs the public-private divide.
- A means to transform our organizations, practices and ways of exercising activism.
- Protection as a means to change imaginaries and narratives.

- It cultivates autonomy, the defenders actively participate in the design of measures as protagonists and subjects of the process.
- It articulates urgent responses to situations of imminent risk with processes of organizational and community strengthening.
- It goes beyond responding to individual cases and reactive interventions. Each strategy has a dimension of direct protection of defenders and objectives that try to contribute to transforming the context.
- It recognizes the centrality and impact for defenders and movements of specific violence such as: sexual violence, the burden of domestic work and care, violence and discrimination within movements.
- It recognizes the protective and transformative power of self-care, collective care, and healing.

Fundamental aspects of Comprehensive Feminist Protection

Fundamentals of PIF

- **Physical security:** protection of the physical integrity of defenders and their physical information: in their offices, homes, during their travels and in the physical spaces in which they operate
- **Digital security:** protection of personal and work information that they protect in digital devices, and protection of their communications
- **Self-care and well-being:** protection of emotional integrity and attention to physical and psychological impacts, product of the risks they face
- **Ability to cope with psychosocial impacts.**

The 5 dimensions that PIF addresses

Dimensions

- **Physical.** Attention to our body and increasing the connection with what we feel, listening to its signs and symptoms - trying to meet its needs. This includes: food, sleep, rest, medical care, various healing therapies, etc.
- **Emotional.** Attention to our feelings and emotions. Expressing and handling them so as not to accumulate pain, anger, sadness and prevent them from remaining in the body and becoming illnesses.
- **Energetics.** The difficult realities we work with can block our bodily and environmental energy. Healing and clearing these blockages to improve the state of hope, the work environment and lighten our burdens.
- **Mental.** Patriarchal violence damages our minds. This causes wear, suffering and damage, which we must make conscious to regain our power and worth.
- **Spiritual.** It involves recognizing the practices, symbols and rituals that we perform to feel connected with the life, nature and greatness of a transforming collective power.

Strategies to implement PIF

Fundamental Pillars of the PIF model: **security** (including digital security) and **self care**



Promotes and supports the creation of state and regional protection networks between and for women defenders.

It has rapid response funds and spaces for reception and self-care.

Develops communication actions to recognize the contributions of WHRDs and denounce the risks they face due to their work.

