



YOUR 2017 GRATITUDE REPORT

You helped make 2017 a BIG year for One Equal Heart and our partners in Chiapas.

We're excited to share this report, which highlights some of the ways your generosity catalyzed change and improved wellbeing for Tselal communities.

Thank you for partnering with us on this work. Together, we're connecting indigenous communities in Mexico with tools to thrive.



Growing food ecologically:
128 students trained in agroecology



Advancing rights of women & children:
90 human rights promoters trained



Strengthening language & culture:
2 fotohistoria books published and distributed and 5 capacity building workshops completed



**Local Leaders, Sustainable Communities:
Development from the Ground Up!**

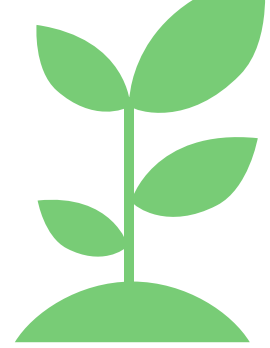
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GROWING FOOD & BUILDING ECONOMIES

Foundations for Growth

(formerly Together We Grow Stronger)



Indigenous families in Chiapas are hungry. Many Tzeltal children are malnourished and families face regular food shortages. What's more, the land where families grow their food is depleted from overuse and agrochemicals, forcing many to leave their homes in search of work.

Your support equips women and families with skills to:

- Grow and raise more food ecologically
- Earn income by selling crop surpluses in local markets
- Manage earnings through savings and credit cooperatives

IN 2017 your donations directly supported training for 128 students in five agroecology centers throughout the region. Indigenous teacher-facilitators helped students learn everything from building composting worm bins to keeping their barnyard animals healthy with natural remedies. Many community members – especially women and youth – have already indicated their desire to enroll in the next course, beginning in 2019.

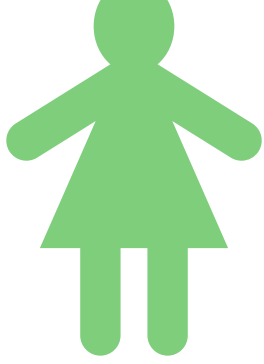
IN 2018-2019 we're building on this success by:

- Developing more teacher-facilitators to meet the growing demand for training
- Facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges for indigenous leaders
- Improving village-based training centers by building permanent learning spaces

Over time, village-based training centers will generate income from selling surplus crops and other products to support agroecology training costs.

*"I started out auditing the certificate program, but I'm curious about everything so I enrolled. **I fell in love with agroecology!** I want to practice it. I want to live it! Everything I learn, I share with my family and community so everyone can benefit. **Going through the program convinced me to continue studying for my college degree.**"*

- Bernabé López Vázquez
(Centro Bahtzel)



ADVANCING RIGHTS OF WOMEN & CHILDREN

MILPA
(formerly DEFEMI)

MILPA (formerly DEFEMI) confronts high rates of domestic violence in Chiapas by training and empowering indigenous women as advocates in their communities.

IN 2017 your generosity set BIG things in motion:

- Sebastiana Aguilar, a Tseltal woman and lawyer, joined our local partners to provide legal representation and local program oversight
- 90 women and men began training as human rights promoters and coordinators, spreading information about how to prevent violence against women and providing critical outreach and program coordination
- Sebastiana and her team represented indigenous women and children in 30 domestic violence cases

2018-2019 will bring exciting changes:

Drawing on the momentum generated in 2017 because of your generous support, and lessons learned from the DEFEMI pilot, we are excited to roll out the newly restructured MILPA program in 2018-2019.

Launched in April, **MILPA bolsters a growing indigenous women's movement** by educating women on their rights, increasing women's participation and representation in community decision-making, creating linkages with sister women's organizations throughout the region, and offering healing to survivors of violence.

"Tseltal women are changing their mindset thanks to the education we receive from the promoters. It is they who have taught us about our rights and have shown us how to do important and useful work for our community."

- Angélica Pérez
(San Pedro C'aqu'emte'el)





STRENGTHENING LANGUAGE & CULTURE

SIET

Strengthening language and traditional knowledge and culture is critical to sustainable development in indigenous communities.

In collaboration with University of Washington's Information School, SIET increases access to information in the Tsel'tal language through the community library and radio station, and develops participatory evaluation tools so indigenous leaders can measure the success of their work over time.

These strategies help keep traditional knowledge alive and encourage fuller participation in the development process, particularly for women and families.



IN 2017 your support made some great things happen:

- Training for radio staff and volunteers on news-gathering and program development
- Exchanges with nearby indigenous radio stations to share best practices
- Training and consultations for the developing library on topics such as equipment, cataloging and reducing humidity
- Production of 7 radio programs and 4 dramatizations
- Collection, publication and distribution of two books of fotohistorias in English, Spanish and Tsel'tal

"For me it is magical that the library has been created right in front of the radio station because this has a lot to do with how we are going to relate, since all of the information in the library will be converted to audio, and what we produce on radio will be in the library for those who want to listen."

-David Pérez Oleta, radio staff

What will your support do in **2018-2019?**

- Support a strategic communications planning process to make the radio an even more effective tool for social change
- Collect and publish our fourth fotohistorias collection, focused on agroecology promoters
- Increase local capacity through targeted training for the radio and library, collaborate on survey tools, and provide consultation on the fotohistoria methodology so Tsel'tal communities can collect their own stories