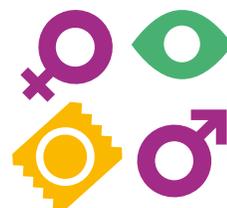




ILSB

GÉNERO • INNOVACIÓN
LIDERAZGO



LO PÚBLICO
ES NUESTRO

Lo Público es Nuestro:

Social Audits and Citizen
Participation in Favor
of Sexual and
Reproductive Rights

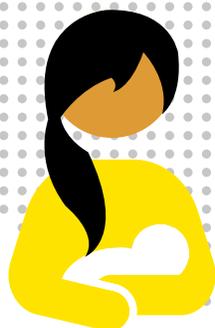
1. UNWANTED ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY IS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM



997
births per day
among women
whose age is
between **10 and 19**.



63
pregnancies
per 1,000 women in
Mexico, this is the
highest rate within the
OECD members.¹



383
thousand
pregnancies
in 2016

of which 12 thousand
occurred in girls between
9 and 12 years of age.



The adolescent pregnancy rate is even higher in indigenous communities due to the fact that the health services available to indigenous communities are neither intercultural nor adapted to the diversity that exists in Mexico, despite the fact that more than **21% of the population is indigenous**.



THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY INCLUDE:

- Increased health risks and maternal mortality risk
- Increased drop-out rates and lower levels of education
- Persistent poverty and limited economic opportunities
- Truncated life plans and potential



CONTRIBUTORS TO ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY INCLUDE:

- Limited access to information and comprehensive, youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services
- Limited supplies of contraceptive methods
- Limited access to safe and legal abortion services
- Limited access to youth-friendly health services
- Stigmatization of sexuality and discrimination

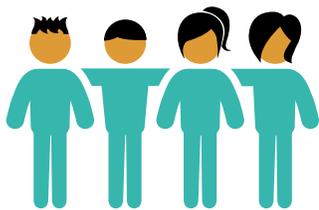
¹Data from the World Bank global adolescent pregnancy indicators. Available from: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SP.ADO.TFRT&country=>

2. ACTION-BASED SOLUTIONS: Lo Público es Nuestro

Solving this public health issue requires actively involving the affected populations in an effort to encourage human rights and citizen participation.



LO PÚBLICO
ES NUESTRO



Lo Público es Nuestro [Public Information is Ours] is a social audit initiative implemented by the ILSB.²

The initiative seeks to:

- **Strengthen** the citizen participation of young people, indigenous and Afro-Mexican women on issues of sexual and reproductive health to implement advocacy efforts that are informed by transparency and access to information tools and field research instruments
- **Improve** the sexual and reproductive health services available to young people and indigenous women in 14 states through informed advocacy
- **Monitor** the development of and compliance with the National Strategy to Prevent Adolescent Pregnancy (ENAPEA)³
- **Strengthen** the transparency and access to information mechanisms of the Mexican government through capacities transfer, the implementation of these skills, and the detection of opportunities for their improvement
- **Position the ILSB** as a relevant actor that brings an intersectional perspective (gender, human rights, and interculturality) to the transparency community on a domestic, regional, and international level

OUR STRATEGY



Since 2011, the ILSB has collaborated with the REDefine state networks and with the networks from the Indigenous Women Program (PROMUI) to strengthen their leadership and defend their rights.^{4,5}

As part of the **Lo Público es Nuestro** initiative, the ILSB works with participants from networks in 13 Mexican states, offering training and support on the use of transparency and access to information tools, as well as support for the implementation of field research (interviews, simulated users, and questionnaires) to monitor and verify the provision of sexual and reproductive health services in urban and rural health clinics in their states.

The networks use the results of this research to develop advocacy plans focused on establishing dialogues and providing decision-makers with recommendations of ways to improve the provision of health services in their home States.

The ILSB team develops action-research methodologies and supports the researchers during the process. It also monitors the ENAPEA programs and resources and the proper functioning of transparency and access to information mechanisms, advocating advocates on the federal level.

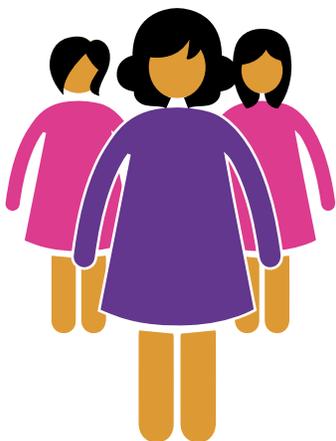
² Social auditing is defined as a set of citizen participation mechanisms for social accountability that seek to incorporate citizens in public decision making processes (Hevia, 2006, available at: <http://www.fundar.org.mx/mexico/pdf/pdfsderechoasaber/sec5%20felipe%20hevia%20.pdf>)

³ This strategy was implemented by the federal government in 2015 to reduce births in girls from 10 to 14 years old to zero and decrease the fertility rate of adolescents aged 15 to 19 (TEF15-19) by 50% by the year 2030.

⁴ Founded in 2011, REDefine is the youth leaders network of the ILSB. The purpose of the network is to promote and defend sexual and reproductive rights in 13 states in Mexico. For more information: <http://ilsb.org.mx/redefine/>

⁵ PROMUI works to reduce the inequality experienced by indigenous women through processes that strengthen and connect indigenous women leaders and consolidate their position as change agents. For more information, see: <http://ilsb.org.mx/promui/>

3. STEPS TO ACHIEVE CHANGE



- Strengthen skills in terms of the transparency and accountability system
- Strengthen field research capacities
- Implement an advocacy and accountability plan on the local level

- Access to information requests
- Monitor sexual and reproductive health services in primary care units

- Present the results and recommendations to key decision-makers



RESEARCH FOCUS

- a) Contraceptive supply:** existing options, emergency contraception protocols, budget for the purchase of contraceptive methods
- b) Interculturality:** training and materials to create health services that are culturally relevant for indigenous populations
- c) Men's shared responsibility:** training, materials, and communication campaigns on men's shared responsibility when it comes to family planning
- d) Awareness and implementation** of NOM-046 for the Prevention of and Attention to Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Against Women

During the first research process (2016-2017), the following activities were conducted:



217

access
to information
requests



41

interviews
with doctors, nurses,
social workers,
and administrative
personnel



20

simulated-user
exercises



20

direct observation
questionnaires

FINDINGS



HEALTH CARE SYSTEM:

- No public policy currently exists to encourage youth-friendly health services.
- There are no existing guidelines for the distribution of contraceptive methods in the Mexican states (quitar the y que sólo quede Mexican States)
- The budget allocated to adolescent sexual and reproductive health is scarce.
- Health care personnel do not receive sufficient training to adequately attend to the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents and indigenous and Afro-Mexican women.
- There is a lack of intercultural health care services.



TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION:

Transparency and Access to Information is a right that facilitates the demand for other rights, including health, particularly the sexual and reproductive rights of young people and indigenous and Afro-Mexican women. The process requires:

- Specialized knowledge about the reporting parties and the access request
- Access to technology and a mastery of the Spanish language, which makes the process inaccessible for people in remote communities and monolingual speakers of indigenous languages



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

At the federal level, the ILSB has managed to build a proactive transparency agenda that adapts to the needs of young people, as well as indigenous and Afro-Mexican women.

Lo Público es Nuestro has worked with young people and indigenous and Afro-Mexican women to do the following:

- Demonstrate to local decision makers that federal public policies are not yet being fully implemented.
- Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Morelos have acknowledged the proposals to improve health services and implement a youth-friendly and intercultural perspective.
- Some of the networks have also managed to incorporate themselves into the State Groups for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy (GEPEAS), which are responsible for making decisions on the course of action within the ENAPEA. This shows how the social audit process can influence public policies.



The **Lo Público es Nuestro** initiative has made it possible to identify deficiencies in the health system, ranging from federal planning to primary care clinics that have in fact hindered the goal of reducing pregnancy in adolescents. The program is also a potential agent of change that uses access to information to encourage citizen empowerment, favor good governance, and enable young people and indigenous women to contribute to the transformation of institutions and decision-making practices.

www.ilsb.org.mx/embarazoenadolescentes/

