Gender-Based Violence

Bolivia

Welcome

To **'Noviazgos Violentos'** – A campaign for the prevention of violence in dating *'Love with fear is not love', in the Vida sin Violencia Project.*

What is the Project about?

Background

'Nozviazgos Violentes' (Love without violence) is a campaign which was launched as part of the SDC project *Vida sin Violencia*, implemented by Solidar Swiss. **"Love with fear is not love" #vestigateviolence** is the name of the communication campaign for the prevention of violence during courtship or in dating. The campaign, which ran between March and September 2019, targeted young people, across 80 municipalities in urban, peri-urban, and rural areas. National studies on violence in courtships have shown the persistence of "romantic love myths" that justify and normalize the idea that "control" and "jealousy" are an expression of love rather than violence. These misconceptions and attitudes inspired the project idea.

Context

Gender-based violence is a significant problem in the lives of Bolivian women. Although there are regulations that contribute to the prevention, protection and care of survivors, the mechanisms to counteract it are still insufficient. The country has the highest figures for physical violence in the region and is second in terms of sexual violence. In Bolivia, 7 out of 10 women experience violence. 75 out of 100 married or cohabiting women report some type of violence from their partner; 87 out of 100 separated or divorced women report some type of violence from their ex-partner; and 51 out of 100 young women indicate experiencing violence from boyfriends or ex-boyfriends. For this reason, Swiss development cooperation projects include measures to improve access to justice for broad sectors of the population, especially in rural areas. The programmes designed to improve the rule of law also focus on reducing violence towards women.

Summary

Theory of change

Engaging young people, through communications and media in line with their interests and needs, can help raise awareness about violence and love. This in combination with organizing and facilitating processes of reflection on romantic love, questioning of dating violence and how to have healthier relationships, can help address dating violence and misconceptions of romantic love, helping to promote new perspectives on dating and relationships based on equality and respect.

Overall goal

Contribute to the improvement of individual, social and framework conditions for women to exercise their rights to a life free of violence.

Specific objective(s)

Violence against women is prevented and reduced through protective and other services at municipal and national level.

Expected results

- Young people awareness of their rights and access to services improved.
- Young people can act without fear, take the lead, and promote behavioral and attitudinal change in building relationships of trust.
- Municipal Integral Legal Services (SLIM) and other related local authorities and service providers are more sensitized and support the campaign's outreach.

Key activities

- Audio-visual, online and media campaigns.
- Public and interactive events involving academia, local authorities and more.
- Networking and mobilization of young people.

Stakeholders

Partners

The main project partner was Solidar Suisse. https://solidar.ch/en/ Solidar Suisse works towards the fair global distribution of wealth, income, and opportunities. With their projects, Solidar Suisse promotes decent work and a democratic development.

Primary stakeholders (priority target group(s))

Young people between 13 and 24 years of age, in the nine departments of Bolivia, with emphasis on 80 municipalities in urban, peri-urban, and rural areas of La Paz, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca and Potosi.

Secondary and boundary stakeholders (system actors, duty bearers, service providers etc.)

- Municipalities and related local authorities
- Schools and universities, deans, and professors
- ICT and media services

Signs of violence in dating:

- Asking for passwords to social network accounts,
- Requiring the handing over of mobile phones, tablets,
- Reading personal emails, sms, other messages,
- Requiring wearing or not wearing certain clothing,
- Restricting contact with certain people,
- Controlling schedules,
- GPS control,
- Blackmail, jealousy, manipulation
- Online/digital stalking, harassment,
- Posting photos or other information without consent.

What did the project do and learn?

Design and Implementation

Key design and implementation features of the campaign, included:

- The active from the outset role of young people in the design and implementation of the strategy, starting with the identification of information needs, myths to be addressed, the elaboration of key messages, the selection of tools/formats and channels to disseminate these messages, has been essential for the development of the campaign with great commitment and a high potential for appropriation by young people and other local actors.
- The supporting and dissemination role of ICTs in demystifying romantic love, which, despite the digital divide and the limitations regarding the depth of the messages, contributed to the outreach of the campaign, the sharing of knowledge and access to information. The combination of tools made it possible to reach young people, reinforce messages and multiply their dissemination through a larger number of institutions and networks that promoted open dialogue as a non-traditional form of learning.

Young people can demystify romantic love, identify violence, avoid its propagation, and construct new and more realistic ideas about dating and relationships.

Key Achievements and Good Practices

- The campaign reached three million people between the ages of 13 and 24 in Bolivia and other countries through social networks.
- 13,738 fans (surpassing the goal of 10,245 fans) triggering 150,000 interactions through social networks (likes and comments), and 1,900 students committing to the campaign and sharing it with their peers.
- 80 municipalities were mobilized to broadcast the information (fairs and other public events).
- University students and professors organized and engaged in prevention actions.
- The young people saw and accepted themselves as agents of change in their municipalities.
- The campaign contributed to generating a critical mass of rejection of violent attitudes and behaviors, including in the content of music, movies, books, etc. that promoted or supported violence in relationships or toward women.
- Young women's awareness of their rights as women and their enforceability was strengthened.
- The perspective of the Municipal Integral Legal Services (SLIM) was broadened regarding their responsibilities in prevention, protection, and response of violence.
- Opportunities were generated to interact with other young people, learn about different realities and participate in a network of shared interests among youth.

For more on the project, and SDC Gender in LAC experiences

- https://www.shareweb.ch/site/PGE/Gender/Pages/Toolbox/Knowledge%20sharing/Gender-experiences-from-Latin-America.aspx

Key Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

- Understanding the magnitude of the problem implies recognizing which actions, considered normal or not very harmful to people's wellbeing (bullying, jokes, hurtful words, etc.), generate harm. This helps to identify violence (to understand all its manifestations beyond physical aggression) and not to be afraid to call it by its name.
- Young people should be able to identify, analyze and question the ways in which romantic love myths circulate (in music, movies, or other spheres) and not contribute to their dissemination.
- Starting from the needs of young people, from their ways of constructing messages and how they use technology guarantees the relevance of the campaign, its accessibility and future appropriation, therefore greater dissemination of messages, ownership, and institutionalization.
- Being aware of youth networks and trends and keeping up to date is essential to maintain contact with this population, their needs, and trends.
- Technology helps to reach young people; if the characteristics and potential of the platforms, the segments of the population to which they are directed and the algorithms that favor dissemination are known.
- Technology cannot solve everything. Limitations of connectivity, limitations of social networks to address issues of violence in greater depth, as well as to meet the demand for information or attention to cases of violence.
- Technology alone cannot solve engrained cultural and social norms, rules, and practices.