Community – based Security Measures and Territory:

Methodological Notes from an Integral Defense Perspective

ProDESC

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We would like to express our gratitude to the **Open Society Foundations** for their financial support in developing this material. This methodological guide was made possible thanks to the work of many women and men who walk the path of human rights. We are particularly grateful to the human rights defenders community, both women and men, who participated in the security workshops, as well as the civil society and community organizations that participated in the Latin American Meetings on Community-based Security Strategies held in Mexico City in 2017 and 2018.

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Presentation

The material in the following pages is the result of several years of ProDESC's work (ProDESC is the acronym in Spanish for the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Project). Throughout our trajectory in the defense of human rights, and in particular in defense of land, territory and natural resources, we have observed and thought carefully about the realities and challenges faced by community defenders in their everyday tasks. We have thus advocated for the construction of considerations, pedagogies, and organizing forms that supports collectives and communities in the construction of their own options in defense of their rights. Within this framework, community security has become a core aspect of our methodologies of organizing supports in search of favoring the construction of conditions to demand and exercise human rights.

The methodological guide which follows is the result of these thoughts. It was made possible thanks to long hours of experience-sharing between different civic and social organizations, representatives of agrarian and indigenous communities, women and men community defenders, who met in 2017 and 2018 to debate community security strategies in Latin America. During these meetings, we constructed collective reflections about the structural violence we currently face, as well as different coercion and control mechanisms resulting from socio–political violence in Latin America aimed at the dispossession of natural resources and territories.

This guide attempts to be a window through which to think about community security, geared to not only community defenders, collectives, and communities working for the defense of land and territory, but also any person who resists and struggles to demand justice, transform his/her reality, and reconstruct the social fabric through his/her own reflections and practices.

Our aim is to think creatively about organizing, political, and pedagogical alternatives and proposals that may contribute to practices and strategies already in use by numerous defenders in their fights for land and territory. We seek to collectively strengthen our efforts, establishing a common front to face the current human rights crisis, in search of constructing spaces to safeguard community life.

Mexico City, April, 2019

ProDESC's Work: The Importance of Community-based Security Measures

ProDESC, the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Project, is a non-governmental organization that began its work in 2005. Our main goal is to defend and promote Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR, or DESC by its acronym in Spanish) in order to contribute to their relevance, justiciability and enforceability. Our mission is for communities and collectives to enjoy a decent life based on collective organization and the exercise of their human rights.

The integral defense methodology that has been sustained and proven throughout ProDESC's trajectory is comprised of strategic litigation, corporate research, advocacy, strategic communication, and strengthening organizing processes. These components are the institutional foundation of our work to support communities and collectives in the defense of their rights.

Within the Coordination of Organizing Processes we use a methodology to potentiate the strategic actions of communities and collectives. This method envisions education, strengthening collective structures, strategic linking and community security for the protection of defenders. This method guides our reflections about Community Security, understood as an essential aspect of the strengthening of organizing processes, which foresees strategies and actions to generate prevention and containment in scenarios of risk. These strategies are constructed collectively through lengthy processes of reflection and dialogue.

Based on our experience of advising indigenous communities, particularly in cases of land and territory rights defense, we have reflected upon the traditional legal mechanisms regarding security using our experience in litigation. Through documenting the violation of collective rights, it became evident that traditional precautionary measures do not succeed in addressing the risk patterns and scenarios in which community defenders have been harassed, threatened and criminalized for their defense work.

Based on these scenarios, in 2011 we promoted that precautionary measures be issued to community defenders within the framework of the land and territory defense process that we support in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Oaxaca State. However, due to the scope of the organizing processes promoting the demand for their collective rights, as well as increasing conditions of risk and insecurity within the framework of their defense activities, it was necessary to extend precautionary measures to the community as a whole. These were granted by the Human Rights Defense Council of the Oaxacan People (Defensoría de los Derechos Humanos del Pueblo de Oaxaca). The precautionary measures for the community implied,

on the one hand, ensuring the community's right to defend their land and territory, and, on the other hand, setting a precedent for recognition and visibility of defenders which should have a significant impact on the community's recognition of the defense of their rights.

However, so far precautionary measures have hardly had any effect on the root problem, focusing on commonplace actions, such as police rounds, recharging telephones, and security cameras, among other measures. The monthly workgroup on precautionary measures has demonstrated that the government agencies have a superficial commitment to safeguarding the community defenders who have been granted precautionary status. The scope of the workgroup we are attempting to promote comprises recognition of the legitimacy of the land and territory defense carried out by community defenders. The fact that the work of community defenders is not sufficiently visible, recognized, and valued by the authorities and society in general, places community defenders in a situation of vulnerability. Their protection is therefore extremely challenging.

In the face of this scenario, at ProDESC we have concluded, through extensive dialogue together with the communities that we support, that there is a need to construct community security mechanisms to go hand in hand with strengthening collective structures that will enable new actions of spaces that are not considered by the official precautionary measures.

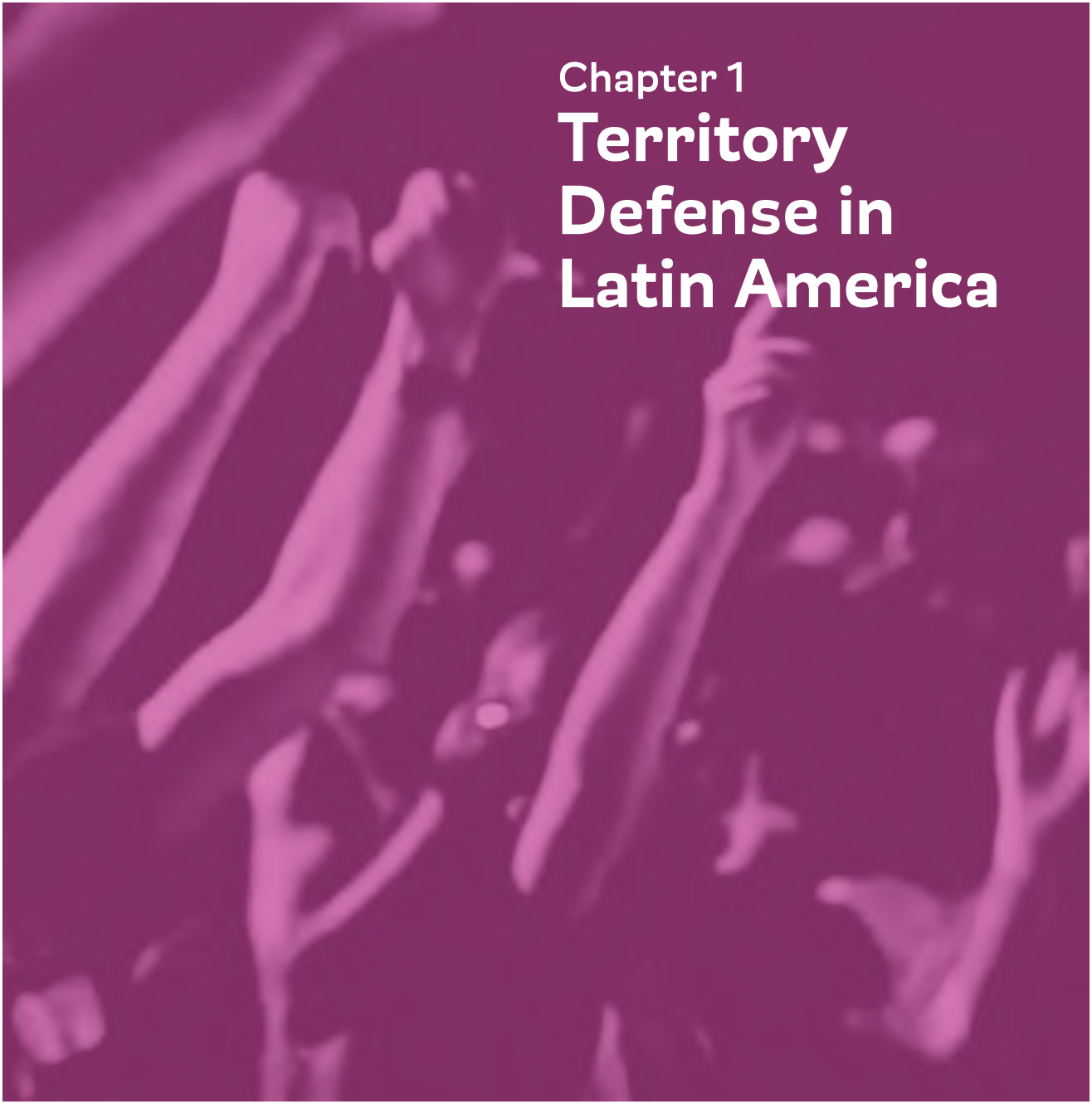
Civil society organizations have found the need to construct protection mechanisms to more effectively safeguard the human rights defenders, generating methods to analyze risks in the search of reducing vulnerabilities and constructing capabilities, as well as calling upon the State to be responsible for guaranteeing their security. On this basis, a diversity of reaction strategies has been formulated to respond to eventual risk and threat scenarios. However, the current context makes it necessary to diversify forms of care by using a spectrum of strategies that can go beyond the official protection mechanism since it does not ensure effective protection for community defenders owing to its very weak and destructured mechanisms.

From ProDESC's perspective, we consider it necessary to emphasize a preventive approach to community defenders' security, based on a participatory and intercultural analysis that seeks to face the context of community violence caused by the violation of the collective rights of peoples and communities. Within this scenario, we have documented alarming indexes of violence that particularly place community defenders' physical and psychological integrity at risk.

Using this context as a starting point, we see the need to concentrate on the local sphere, focusing on community security and its strategies through actions that are constructed and made operational by being specific to the concrete context in which communities and peoples face risks and threats. These actions take into consideration the care for defenders, for the groups they belong to and for their territories, using their own historic safeguarding practices that are anchored in the collective memory and their experience of their territorial spaces.

From this perspective, community security seeks to make visible forms of collective organization and action that have enabled the cultural and territorial reproduction of peoples and communities. This involves them not only as holders of legal rights, but also as collective bodies with a specific culture, institutions of representation based on collective decision–making and specific forms of community rule, as well as inhabiting their territories, which give shape to their own way of living the world. We therefore consider it essential to address the importance of community security strategies as a priority linchpin not only for the protection of defenders, but also for the strengthening of collective structures that form an integral part of the reconstruction of the social fabric.

We consider this guide as a series of methodological notes inasmuch as they are the outcome of our considerations in the organizing support of communities and collectives. These notes seek to contribute tools to analyze, construct and retrieve community security strategies that have been historically reproduced by the indigenous communities, enabling their survival and safeguard. They are not sequential techniques or infallible methods, but contributions to continue understanding and delving more deeply into the context of dispossession, violence, and criminalization that community defenders face. We thus seek to continue to open up spaces for reflection that may help us understand the complexities of risks, dispute scenarios, stakeholders and the politics implied in the processes of territorial dispossession carried out by transnational capitalism.



Chapter 1

Territory Defense in Latin America

Territorial Dispossession and Neo–Extractivism

Territorial dispossession has been ongoing throughout the history of Latin America since its conquest and colonization through the pillage of natural resources, as well as the destruction of cultures and forms of social and political organization. It was accompanied by the genocide and slavery of the peoples originally inhabiting these territories. Whereas during the conquest and colonization, the pillage of the Latin American continent responded to the creation and consolidation of the capitalist system by means of the original accumulation of raw materials, goods, and services, we currently experience dispossession based on "accumulation by dispossession".[1] This consists of updating and modernizing the pillage of natural resources and territorial dispossession in order to maintain the capitalist system.

The defense of the land, territory, and natural resources is currently one of the main spheres of geo–economic conflict on a worldwide scale, thus converting biodiverse regions into scenarios of dispute in which development policies are promoted. These development policies are based on the natural resource extraction and exploitation model, essentially located in territories of indigenous and agrarian communities. Historically, Latin America has been a region used as a source of raw materials for the Global North, and has currently been shaped for the accumulation, expansion, and control by the world elite within the framework of their neoliberal policies, which have violated Human Rights of indigenous and agrarian communities of that rpart of the world.

According to Carlos Walter Porto Gonçalves (2002), studies regarding territory emerged in social, theoretical and political debates in Latin America during the late eighties and early nineties. In South America, mainly Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia, social movements began to use the slogan "We don't want land. We want territory" (Aichino, et al. 2015: 45). Struggles for territory defense are thus struggles against Western modernity. They are organized struggles defending a way of living and understanding the world based on territory as a local, social, cultural, and historical realm, at one and the same time. For this reason, they are anti–systemic struggles against the capitalist model and above all struggles that confront the Euro–centric, neoliberal and corporate project.

In Mexico, since the seventies, and more intensely since 1994 with the enforcement of the North Ameri-

1 "Accumulation by dispossession" is a term coined by David Harvey, who makes reference to the commodification of natural resources in order to sustain the mechanisms of current capitalist accumulation. This implies not only the depredation of natural communitarian resources (land, territory, and biodiversity), but also a vast series of new mechanisms of accumulation by dispossession that intensify capitalist control, constituting a "new wave of 'enclosing the commons'" (2004:115). The reconfiguration of the world economy makes territorial dispossession more aggressive "through the privatization of public and communitarian goods, as well as a greater exploitation of natural resources, which provides companies with exceptional conditions of profitability. This is what David Harvey (2003) has characterized as accumulation by dispossession..." (Rodríguez Wallenius, 2015: 46).

can Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), colonialism became modernized through extractivism, which in the words of Eduardo Gudynas means:

> "the exportation of unprocessed or minimally processed natural resources (...) including foodstuffs and livestock, beverages and tobacco, inedible raw materials, fuels, lubricants, minerals and related products, non–ferrous minerals, animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes (...) extractivism must always meet the following three conditions simultaneously: high volume and/or intense extraction, be unprocessed or minimally processed resources, and be largely export–oriented. It is not sufficient for these resources to qualify on one or two of these conditions. They must meet the three conditions at the same time" (Gudynas, 2013: 5).

At the beginning of the twenty–first century, the conventional extractivist model intensified as neo–extractivism. The exploitation of nature and territorial pillage differs from conventional extractivism due to the protagonist role that the State plays in this process, either through direct participation via state–owned companies or indirectly by means of introducing legislation favorable to companies.[2]

Neo–extractivism responds to the modernization of the capitalist system through megadevelopment projects, such as mining and megamining, energy generation via dams or wind parks, hydrocarbon extraction, GMO monocropping, the construction of large–scale highways, tourist and shopping centers, housing developments, and large–scale works usually promoted by private companies and/or the State in rural or urban areas, which imply "purchasing, leasing, or occupying land and territory thus impacting the lives of the people or communities inhabiting or depending on those areas, and possibly impinging on their human rights" (Servicios para una Educación Alternativa AC, 2016: 14).

Thus, in the last two decades, the Latin American continent has experienced recolonization based on its integration into the dynamics of global capitalism —from a position of subordination— in such a way that the defense of land, territory, and natural resources has become the main arena of struggle for the defense of Human Rights and Nature. In different regions of the Global South,[3] communities and Human Rights defenders are organizing in order to avoid environmental devastation promoted by large–scale companies with the State's consent. This struggle to defend land and territory goes beyond the struggle against the current development model, and is embedded in the defense of a way of living, thinking, and understanding the world that does not bear the imprint of modern capitalism, but rather is based on territory understood as a local, social, cultural and historical realm.

2 According to Eduardo Gudynas "in neo–extractivism (...) the State plays a more protagonist role therefore increasing control over access to those resources. In almost all cases, these resources are claimed to be State–owned. (...) Under neo–extractivism, the control over the resources to be extracted is in the hands of a variety of stakeholders, including the State, cooperative, mixed or private sectors" (2009: 203).

3 Following the reflection by Ancheita and Terwindt (2015) who posit that the classification between Global North and Global South refers "appropriately to the different roles these regions play in the globalization processes and the impact caused by globalization," for the purpose of this work, we understand the Global South as a political conceptualization that names and situates the countries dominated by the world hegemonies in asymmetrical power relations that result from colonization.

Within this framework, companies are a stakeholder that steps in with force, implementing projects which have a negative impact on local peoples through an understanding of development that aggravates not only the destruction and expropriation of natural resources, but also exacerbates poverty and violence. Besides, companies influence legislators and justice officials in order to facilitate their entry and permanence in territories and to guarantee impunity with regard to the violations they commit. We are here referring to a corporate capture of the State where various strategies are used in order to intervene in territories.

Neo–extractivism entails environmental devastation and promotes precarious conditions of living for the native populations, thus violating their right to life, health, decent housing, food, work, and a healthy environment. Besides, it violates a series of collective rights of the native peoples, such as the right to territory and self–determination. Underlying neo–extractivism is structural racism, which manifests in the dispossession of ancestral territories, the denial of cultural practices and forms of environmental stewardship by the native peoples.

The militarization of the territories where extractive projects are located is part of the national security policies set up in various countries in the region. The social and political control of indigenous peoples and their territories based on military occupation is indispensable in order to ensure heavy economic investment by transnational corporations. It is a complex strategy based on the establishment of military forces which on numerous occasions act hand in hand with paramilitary groups. They function as guarantors of territorial control and dispossession. This strategy involves serious violations of human rights, particularly those of indigenous and agrarian women.

One of these strategies is the use of warfare, which adopts different forms depending on the socio–political context. In Latin America, particularly in Mexico, the war logic has been aimed at internalizing and normalizing violence and terror among the communities. It is carried out through a combination of various economic, informational, social, cultural, and military means used to control people, communities, and territories. In this extractivist scenario, wars also respond to transnational capital's geo–strategic objectives.

The organization and struggle for territory defense thus respond to the offensive of expropriating natural resources by means of violence, which is one of the most serious conflicts today in different countries of the Global South, inasmuch as it brings a systematic and increasingly aggressive violation of the native peoples' human rights. In this scenario, land and territory human rights defenders become the main target of persecution, criminalization, and murder, since their organizing work confronts them with an economic and political system that violates their human rights and the continuation of their forms of life.

One of the most widely used forms to denigrate the work carried out by a community human rights defender has been public campaigns to discredit, defame, and criminalize. A diversity of documents and reports denounce that thousands of land and territory human rights defenders "have been subject to detention, false accusations, long, costly and unjust legal processes, and in some cases, have been sentenced to lengthy imprisonment" (Front Line Defenders, 2017:

6), and have even been assassinated. Women land and territory human rights defenders, whose role is hardly recognized or valued, are the most vulnerable group in this struggle. Besides facing violence from companies and the State, they encounter obstacles within their families, communities and organizations, which due to patriarchy, sexism, and misogyny, are not sufficiently visible.

Context of Risks Faced by Community Defenders

In Mexico, the war strategy initiated against organized crime during the Felipe Calderón administration (2006–2012), "increased insecurity and violence, placing citizens in a situation of unprotectedness and risk (...) the assassination of civilians worsened and the problem of forced disappearance (...) and the situation of human rights defenders experienced serious setbacks" (Red Nacional de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en México, 2017: 23–24). This war intensified under the Enrique Peña Nieto administration, which provided continuity to the militarist policy of the previous six years, further aggravating the widespread human Rrights crisis.

The context of impunity, criminalization and authoritarianism that experienced in Latin American countries in general and Mexico in particular, implies that the risks faced for defending land and territory are serious and may even lead to death. Front Line Defenders denounced that for the year 2017 "80% of the assassinations took place in only four countries: Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and the Philippines. An analysis of the work carried out by those who were assassinated is very revealing: 67% were defending land, the rights of indigenous communities, and the environment, almost always within the context of megaprojects, extractivist industries, and large–scale companies" (2017: 6). Within this context, the places where territory defense implies a greater risk are Oaxaca, Mexico City and Chihuahua, followed by Guerrero, Sonora, Veracruz, Puebla, and Tamaulipas—all of which are States immersed in contexts of intense violence, militarization, and of course, megadevelopment projects, such as mining, dams, wind parks, and monocropping; as well as the presence of organized crime.

This data reveals that the defense of land and territory, the strategies facing dispossession, as well as the complaints against private companies and the State turn community defenders into the group which is most threatened and at risk: "indigenous communities, as well as ethnic and racial minorities are particularly vulnerable. They are the most affected inasmuch as their lands tend to contain valuable exploitable natural resources; they lack legal protection, even when they exercise firm and determined opposition; many indigenous communities do not possess a formal property deed to the land they inhabit; and their access to justice is limited" (Forst, n.d.: 17).

In this context, it is the members of private companies and government authorities at a local, state, and federal level who mainly attack community defenders. In the case of women defenders, "members of social organizations or movements, as well as community members" have also been identified as perpetrators of violence. This "demonstrates that we as women defenders also experience violence in our closer circles, generating greater emotional burnout

which has a direct impact on our defense work (...). Other agents perpetrating aggression and violence towards defenders are members of organized crime and paramilitary groups" (Red Nacional de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en México, 2017: 38–39).

From 2012 to 2014, Mexico held "second place in the region in the number of aggressions perpetrated against women defenders, a total of 615, i.e., an average of four per week. Guatemala occupied the first place with 633 cases. Mexico was followed by Honduras and El Salvador, with 318 and 122 cases, respectively" (Ibid: 31). According to the Mesoamerican Register of Aggressions Against Women Human Rights Defenders, pertaining to the Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders (IM–Defensoras) (data for Mexico: 2012–2014), the most recurring aggressions against women defenders are attacks against their integrity and reputation, intimidation and psychological harassment; slandering, targeting, and smear campaigns; threats, warnings and ultimatums, limitations to freedom of expression, illegal detention, and arrest (Ibid: 32).

In this context, the State not only neglects its obligation to promote and protect human rights and ensure a safe environment for defenders and the work they carry out, but has also become one of the main perpetrators of violence and criminalization of protest. The high levels of corruption and impunity make it increasingly more difficulty for community defenders to challenge private companies and the State itself in processes of territory defense.

In addition, the existing protection mechanisms for human rights defenders are inefficient not only because of a lack of resources, personnel sensitivity, and training, "but also because of a lack of political willingness on the part of government institutions and officials. The very fact that democratic societies require protection mechanisms in itself is expressive of the State's institutional deterioration and its lack of compliance with its obligations regarding human rights" (JASS, 2017: 11).

Risks and Violence Faced by Women Community Defenders of Land and Territory Made Invisible

Environmental human rights defenders are those individuals who "peacefully and either personally or professionally strive to protect and promote environmental human rights, in particular, water, air, earth and flora and fauna" (Front Line Defenders, 2016: 8).

Given the interdependence between the environment, land, and territory, "the two big categories of defenders of environmental and land rights tend to be defined as 'defenders of environmental and land rights,' 'environmental rights defenders,' or simply 'environmental activists" (Ibid). These individuals do not belong to a homogeneous group. On the contrary, they have not only different experiences, but also different personal and collective identities, which range from small–scale farmers, collaborators with social organizations, collective groups, journalists, students, and lawyers.

Given that investment megaprojects occur in territories with great biodiversity, the indigenous and agrarian communities have been at the forefront of the struggle for land and territory defense, becoming their

main defenders. In order to face projects of neoliberal development in their territories, men and women in indigenous and agrarian communities have organized according to their local cultural practices in such a way that they have become the primary social fighters for territory and life. They are historically marginalized groups, without access to information and they seldom have access to formal training, capabilities and knowledge with which to contest the official system of justice, but who nevertheless have accumulated expertise, as well as experiential and historical practices of caring, managing, and defending their land and territory.

In this context, the role played by indigenous women as community territory defenders has particular relevance. In recent years, reprisals, persecutions, detentions, forced disappearances, and assassinations of indigenous women defenders have increased alarmingly in the face of megadevelopment projects promoted by national and international companies in conjunction with the State and international financial institutions.

According to the Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Defenders, "between 2012 and 2016, no less than 42 women human rights defenders were assassinated in Mexico and Central America; the majority of them for defending their territories, and for fighting gender violence and impunity" (JAss, 2017: 5). Front Line Defenders, in turn, denounce that

> Defamation, intimidation, and threats were more commonly used against women human rights defenders than their male counterparts and often contained a gendered dimension; 23% of the Urgent Appeals issued by Front Line Defenders in 2017 on women human rights defenders related to threats or intimidation because of their work, compared to 10% for their male counterparts. Some of these were threats of sexual violence... Furthermore, women human rights defenders met discrimination within the human rights movement itself as they challenge cultural and social norms in the course of their public engagement in the defense of human rights" (2017: 7).

Feminist organizations defending human rights have denounced that the violence against women land and territory defenders requires an in–depth analysis of the power dynamics, as well as sexual and gender inequalities prevailing in all social spheres, including human rights organizations. Violence against women defenders has followed the same pattern of violence against all women: it is normalized and made invisible "even though it is present in all spheres of women's lives, from the family and intimate relationships, to the public spheres of community, institutions and the State" (JAss, 2017: 9).

Development projects and programs not only exclude agrarian communities and indigenous peoples but are also indifferent to the protection of ancestral territory and the forms in which this territory is inhabited. Given the gender division of labor, and their role in caring for and reproducing life, indigenous women are at the core of territory defense. Development projects such as megamining, dams, wind parks, highways, construction, monocropping, and tourism, among others, in conjunction with government institutions in charge of ensuring compliance with the law, have systematically violated the rights of indigenous women defenders. The multiple forms of aggression and

violence they suffer include institutionalized racism, and stigmatization that reinforces their historic oppression and mechanisms of inequality that reproduce it. Thus, women community land and territory defenders, at the same time that they are the group of defenders under conditions of greater risk and vulnerability, also challenge patriarchy, racism and class discrimination at all political, economic, social, and cultural levels.

Women community defenders have evidenced that processes of consultation, for example, reveal power inequalities within the communities, where in few instances women are able to participate because they are not seen as subjects of rights to land and territory and due to the fact that final decisions tend to be taken by men, thus infringing upon a series of rights that range from women's and citizen's political participation to the free, prior, informed, and culturally appropriate consent to which indigenous peoples have a right.

1) Strive to obtain spaces
2) in the decision-making structures

It is important to admit that power relations based on inequality due to conditions of class, ethnicity and gender converge in the dynamic of violence towards women community defenders to such an extent that in order to understand the difficulties, problems, and risks that women defenders experience, it is necessary to conduct an intersectional analysis, i.e., an analysis that questions the oppressions experienced by women which are not homogeneous and take on specificities depending on their context and experiences. This analysis helps us to visualize how different types and forms of discrimination converge, producing substantially different experiences for women who are marked by gender, ethnicity, racialization and class conditions.

An intersectional analysis allows for the understanding of the effects and impacts of megaprojects, as well as the specific and additional risks faced by women community territory defenders. In this sense, "the International Human Rights System has not yet systemically incorporated an intersectional perspective. This tends to favor a compartmentalized approach regarding different sources of discrimination. The solutions, therefore, do not enable an understanding of the set of discriminations and vulnerabilities experienced by these women and men defenders" (Forst, n.d.: 31).

Women community defenders experience the same threats as male defenders; however, due to their condition as women, many indigenous or racially profiled women run greater risk than the men of of gendered violence, such as threats to their daughters and sons. Besides, their leadership is hardly recognized. They tend to be insulted, belittled, and emotionally harassed in the community for departing from the traditionalyl prescribed gender roles and stereotypes, which makes them particularly vulnerable to different forms of violence, including intrafamily violence.

The situation faced by women community land and territory defenders is where the link between neoliberal policies and their articulation with racism and contemporary colonialism can be observed more clearly. The geo–economically disputed territories where the extractivist model is established, accompanied by military expansionism, are exactly those territories where more indigenous and Afro–descendant women are raped and assassinated. The bodies of these women defenders are racialized and made dispensable for the system.

Thus, in addition to the specific challenges faced by women community defenders in the process of defending their land and territory, there are a series of historic forms of violence determined by structural inequalities that place indigenous and agrarian women under specific conditions of vulnerability. In other words, we are referring to a continuum of violences that imply reiterated and ongoing violations of women's human rights that accumulate and intensify with the passing of time. Understanding violence against women as a continuum helps us to envision that there is continuity between the mechanisms that favor historic forms of violence against women and the specific violence and aggression women experience in neo–extractivist processes of territorial dispossession. Existing violence and discrimination become exacerbated and tied to specific forms of violence that take place in scenarios in which territories are in dispute, where women put their bodies to the defense of their territory.

Challenges to Community Defenders' Security

Mexico is one of the Latin American countries whose Constitution demonstrates significant advances regarding human rights and social inclusion. It is also one of the countries that has signed and ratified more international instruments, conventions, and declarations regarding human rights. How can it thus be that one of the more advanced countries in ensuring individual and collective rights holds second place on the continent, after Brazil, in the criminalization and assassination of community defenders?

In 2012, Mexico promulgated the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists Law. After the passing of this Law, a public institution called Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists was created. Nevertheless, in practice, it has not worked due to the lack of qualified personnel (with a gender perspective and intercultural sensitivity), as well as a series of situations that hinder its operation and therefore its effectiveness, including:

> "the lack of financial resources to implement the protection measures that have been granted; the lack of coordination between the different agencies responsible for ensuring protection; the lack of compliance with deadlines for the filing of cases and implementation of protection measures; the lack of clarity between federal, state and local authorities in defining protection–related responsibilities; and the lack of gender perspective in the risk analyses and implementation of protection measures" (Red Nacional de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en México, 2017: 64)

In the face of these challenges, we question the effectiveness of protection measures for defenders within a context of generalized violence, impunity, and criminalization in which the State repeatedly fails to follow the recommendations of national and international mechanisms:

> "The registry that we created reveals that attacks against women defenders who had been granted protection measures (whether from national or international bodies) increased with respect to 2013. Before 2013, the percentage was 19. By 2013, it had increased to 43%, and by 2014 it was 30%. These statistics, particularly those regarding 2013 and 2014, suggest that protection measures are not a hindrance for aggressors, or are not effective, which is actually the same thing" (Ibid: 42)

This situation becomes more complex when we confirm that numerous land and territory community defenders live in isolated regions that are highly militarized, with conditions of marginalization in territories disputed by multiple capital interests, in which the protection mechanisms have not been created in relation to the local context, nor do they respond to specific protection needs.

Facing increasing scenarios of persecution, criminalization and assassination of community defenders, it becomes evident that States are failing to provide protection for defenders at risk. States have the obligation to ensure that defenders can actually defend their Human Rights with safety, ensuring protection mechanisms that safeguard their lives.[4] For the aforementioned reasons, this situation acquires specific nuances in the cases of land, territory and environmental defenders. However, in addition, because they challenge the interests of transnational corporations by having a concrete impact on their profits, they face a double risk since the companies and the State may be colluded.

Protection mechanisms must be implemented by the State as the primary guarantor of human rights. Nevertheless, several of the factors favoring situations of insecurity for human rights defenders, evidence that the State is in many cases the direct or indirect aggressor since its political and economic interests are linked to non–State stakeholders. In that sense, the Global Witness Report documented that: "government forces were behind at least 43 assassinations (33 perpetrated by the police and 10 by the army), and that private actors, such as security guards and hired assassins, were linked to 52 deaths" (2016: 11). Besides, the levels of impunity favor the attacks and assassination of defenders, and therefore do not ensure effective mechanisms to protect the lives of those who defend land and territory rights.

4 The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders adopted in 1998 is one of the main international instruments regarding defenders. This document recognizes the legitimacy of the activity of the defense of human rights, as well as the need to protect defenders and their activities. It also stipulates the responsibilities held by States regarding their protection

Mexico is currently the fourth riskiest country for land and territory defenders. This situation is critical in that Mexico moved from fourteenth place in 2016, to fourth place in 2017.[5] In spite of the fact that Mexico has a legislative framework for the protection of defenders, attacks continue to take place and the protection schemes are limited and inadequate to prevent attacks in a community context. Besides, they have been insufficient for the protection of collectives working for human rights defense in rural contexts.

1) observatory on Feminicide
2) "Women territory defenders at risk of aggression"

The construction of a comprehensive protection approach is thus required. It must coordinate and combine "urgent responses to situations of imminent risk with sustained processes of organizing strengthening... go beyond reactive responses and build the necessary conditions for organizations and communities to prevent attacks, as well as develop sustainable strategies and practices" (JASS, 2017: 5). It is thus important to recognize the limitations of an individual protection approach and expand it into a community protection modality in which organized communities actively participate in the implementation of protection measures for their most threatened leaders, but also generate and reproduce conditions for collective safeguarding that can be extended to the community itself.

These are some of the elements considered at PRODESC in order to concentrate more energy on community security from a preventive perspective in order to thus favor the creation of indispensable conditions to exercise the defense of human rights. We consider that one of the challenges in this field is to contribute to strengthening individuals, collectives, and communities so that they adopt differentiated security measures that respond to the complexity of the community context in which they work, as well as to any critical juncture that may potentiate the risks. Community–based security measures must be constructed step by step in a territory and must be anchored in the community's cultural historic practices. Ultimately, we seek to consolidate community–based security mechanisms that enable land and territory defense, taking a stand for the continuity of life, as well as for the reconstruction of the social fabric.

5 "Asesinan a cerca de 200 defensores del medio ambiente en 2017: Global Witness," ("Close to 200 Environmental Defenders Were assassinated in 2017: Global Witness)", La Jornada, February 2, 2018.

1) There is no certainty about the future: We construct our future like we construct territory
2) Territory defense is intertwined with community security

Chapter 2

Community Security and Integral Defense

The Methodology of Integral Defense

At ProDESC, we consider important to construct methodologies to support the community processes in which we work. These methodologies are usually geared to agrarian and indigenous communities, as well as worker collectives that commonly share specific contexts of structural marginalization. This, in turn, places them in conditions of defenselessness for the exercise and enforceability of their human rights, including the right to enjoy a decent life.

This situation makes it necessary for us to work with groups of women and men through reflection and analysis, with the objective of articulating actions aimed at social change that may lead to the improvement of their surrounding community and territory, as well as their work environment, based on a logic of communal organized work, using self–governance and autonomy as a way for a full exercise of their rights.

We see community members as subjects of change, rather than as objects of our work. We refer to collective life projects, rather than individual or specific projects. We refer to subjects with a clear and congruent political praxis. We therefore refer to women and men whose participation gradually leads them to assume their own responsibility for change.

Stemming from the difficulties in responding to this context, ProDESC began to search for its own methodology to promote more efficient community and social participation processes, so that communities can exercise and demand ways of constructing change–related projects. Based on the consideration that people are subjects who through the historic journey of their lives and communities have constructed forms of knowledge, practices, collectives, and political projects of their own, we take on support from the departure point of a critical and participatory vision that considers peoples, communities and collectives to be agents of transformation of their own reality.

Throughout over twelve years of work, ProDESC has consolidated its Integral Defense methodology in order to strategically address violations of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, incorporating different components that ultimately strengthen organized collective processes as a vehicle for change. The point of departure of this methodology is the confirmation that human rights violations take on different forms, in different moments and intensities. Besides, given their interdependence and indivisibility, the violation of a specific human right implies the violation of other rights.

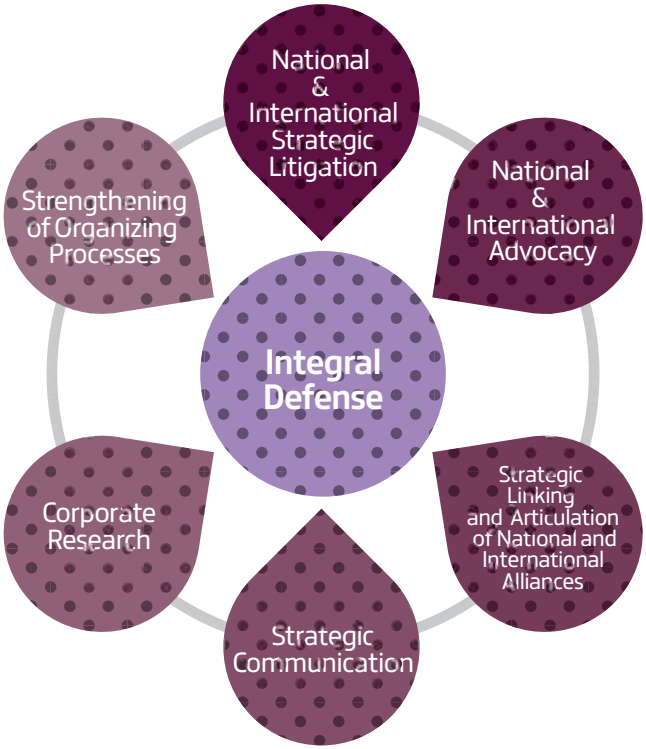
An important element to recognize is that the legal tools for the defense of human rights, despite being indispensable in order for the enforceability of human rights, do not solve the structural causes that actually originate human rights violations. Thus, the need to develop an integral defense methodology that supplements, articulates, and strengthens the construction of collective and community political agency, as well as their collective power.

From ProDESC's perspective, integral human rights defense has the following qualities:

- It is based on an interdisciplinary approach that favors intervention and attention to cases using different disciplines.
- It is strategic and proactive, i.e., it must set forth a specific contribution not only to find a solution to the case, but also to deal with the root causes that generated the human rights violation in the first place.
- It implies a diversity–based perspective, being respectful of human identities and conditions from an intercultural stance.
- It contains a pedagogical element, being an educational model for defenders and others.

Integral defense entails the following interrelated components:

- Strengthening organizing processes.
- Strategic national and international litigation.
- Corporate research.
- National and international advocacy.
- National and international alliance networking.
- Strategic Communication



Strengthening of Organizing Processes

The strengthening of collective and community organizing processes is essential in order to access full enjoyment of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Given that human rights enforcement requires a strategic work, it becomes necessary to promote the construction and strengthening of collective stakeholders, who in an organized and strategic way may orient their action toward rights enforcement in their own struggles.

Therefore, the goal of strengthening organizing processes is to promote and support the construction and strengthening of collective structures in the exercise, relevance, access and enforceability of their human rights. This is achieved by promoting the consolidation of collective subjects with political and critical agency, with a clear human rights approach in the construction of their collective projects.

Using **Information–Reflection–Action**

The methodology of strengthening organizing processes is oriented by two guiding linchpins:

a) **ESCR Defense and Enforceability:**
It focuses on the generation of skills, capabilities, and tools for communities and collectives to achieve the consolidation of social subjects who are democratic and citizen–oriented with an ethical–political conviction about the importance of defending, enforcing and promoting human rights.

b) **Organizing Assessment:**
It is mainly based on the analysis and reflection about the identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the full exercise of rights together with the collectives within their own community context.

It also has three core methodological components: **popular education, participatory research–action, and interculturality.**

1. Popular Education:

To educate and organize are two dimensions of a same strategy aimed at peoples, collectives and communities taking charge of their own reality in order to orient their organized actions in response to their own interests. In that sense, organizing actions must respond to the needs of a specific group and structure its actions in the face of specific problems.

Educational actions seek to generate and develop critical awareness in order to make organizing processes more dynamic and enable them to respond to the action, needs and problems of peoples, communities and collectives. They are constructed and articulated in relation to the organizing processes. This implies the relationship between the juncture that they are experiencing (the immediate problem), the structure (the causes potentiating the problem), and the political–collective project under construction (resistances and alternatives).

The construction of popular education is based on at least **two main methodologies:**

a) **Practice as a point of departure, which is then theorized, only to later return to practice in order to transform it.**

Practice

- We understand practice as **acting upon reality,** i.e., the actions that we carry out in order to constantly create, modify, maintain, or transform the reality we experience.

- Practice as a primary source of knowledge, i.e., the forms of knowledge that have been accumulated historically through which reality may be confronted via **reflection and criticism.**

Theorization

- The intention of theorizing is for **people to challenge their reality, to ask questions, and analyze the reasons** that give rise to problems affecting them in order to delve more deeply into the structural causes.

- The theorization process cannot be carried out without the different forms of knowledge that peoples hold. **Peoples theorize:** they have a host of ideas, concepts, and different forms of thinking that respond to their experience.

- Theorization implies **a back and forth movement between our practice –i.e., reality– and our thinking, between acting and reflecting.** Its importance lies in that it gives us practical guidelines that enable us to be creative regarding our options and powers for collective transformation.

The Return to Practice: A Path to Organization

- The return to practice does not imply returning to the initial point of departure, but rather implies proposing **organized actions in order to fight the problems** that have been identified and analyzed in their full complexity.

- It provides guidelines for the organizing process itself through actions aimed at solving the more immediate problems and the issues identified by the collective, framed within the structural causes generating them.

- Actions can be: a) Actions that face immediate problems, which can be achieved in the short or medium term; b) Actions that face structural causes, which assume a long–term **strategy, as well as strategic and comprehensive actions.**

b) Collective construction of contextualized knowledge.

- It is a process that, through collective participation based on the group's different forms of knowledge and experience, constructs new knowledge about their reality and its possibilities for transformation. We use the term contextualized knowledge since these forms of knowledge are held in the body, and in a community's history, geography, and structure.

- It is important to potentiate critical thinking; to develop methodological skepticism that turns each theme into a debate, a challenge, and a question, in which each fact can be posed as a problem to be solved, questioned, and evaluated.

- It is important to make use of accumulated experience and knowledge. This can be done by taking into consideration the product of other knowledge processes and other practices, seeing them through a critical lens in order to produce our own knowledge.

- To construct collectively does not imply nullifying individual contributions, but rather to capture and potentiate them.

2. Participatory Research–Action:

A crucial part of our support to organizing processes is to identify problems and needs in order to propose scenarios of strategic action. For this reason, our

methodology implies an initial diagnosis of collective structures aimed at positing a prognosis and medium and long–term strategic actions. Participatory Research–Action (PRA) is the tool that supports the phases of diagnosis, planning, and assessment within the methodology to strengthen organizing processes.

Research–Participatory Action is a research and learning method to see reality, based on a critical analysis together with the active participation of collectives and communities in order to favor a transformational practice. In this process, collective subjects play a central role as they actively contribute in the research process.

Its basic characteristics come from the three terms it is comprised of:

Research: Understood as a reflective, systematic, and critical procedure to understand the contextualized realities of the communities and collectives we approach.

Action: It is the specific way of conducting research which is already a form of intervention. Its purpose is geared towards action, considering the subjects' experience as a source of knowledge.

Participation: It implies a process engaging both the researchers as well as the actual members of the communities and collectives, considering them as active subjects who know their reality and that transform it step by step.

The organizing strengthening methodology is geared toward processes that have the possibility of becoming collective processes, which implies communities, collectives, and groups of individuals affected by the violation of their rights. PRODESC strengthens community and collective organization of rights holders in order to create conditions for integral defense and avoid both burnout as well as repression mechanisms against the communities and collectives we are working with.

1) Community security as part of ongoing political education
2) Popular education as a tool to reach communities

3. Interculturality:

Interculturality most commonly refers to forms of interactive dialogue between peoples and groups with specific cultural identities that have been constructed under conditions of equal relationships.

The organizing strengthening methodology is comprised of five core strategies:

For ProDESC, interculturality refers to forms of interaction, dialogue, communication and agreement–reaching between the different cultural groups and/or communities we work with, taking into account cultural differences represented as ways of seeing the world, interpreting problems, solving conflicts, and even defining their defense strategies regarding rights' violations. It implies the intention of constructing conditions of respect, co–responsibility, egalitarian social relationships between the groups we work with, as well as their own organization with these groups.

Constructing organizing support from an intercultural perspective also implies the recognition that we are not the center of everything, and to set aside our ethnocentric perspective in order to favor intercultural dialogue in strategy construction, making visible the groups that we support, and even transforming the hegemonic narratives that have historically been racist and seen through the lens of the domination of one culture over the other. The substantial part of intercultural dialogue is the exchange of reflections and forms of knowledge for the construction of collective learning, which, from a human rights perspective, favors the construction of subjects with critical practices that are culturally adequate.

1) Support with respect to cultural, social, and community identities
2) What is wrong with that?

The organizing strengthening methodology is comprised of **five core strategies:**

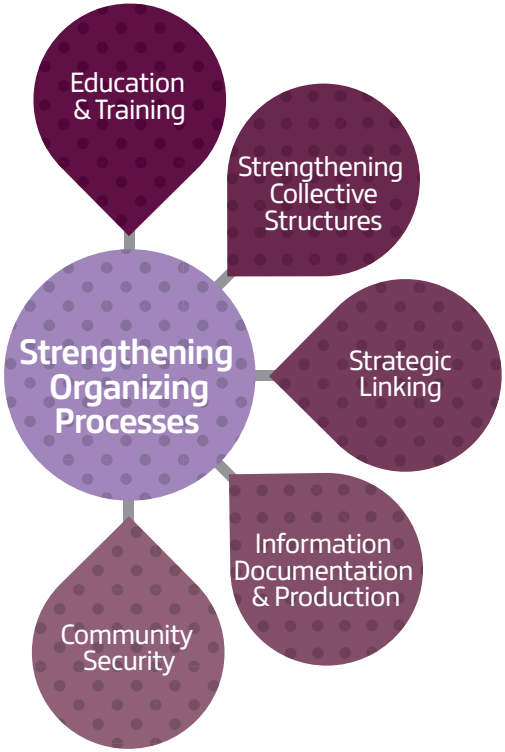
1. **Education** for the construction of collective skills and organizing strategies for ESCR defense and demandability.

2. **Strengthening of collective structures** for the creation of new forms of power and social action. The promotion of the organizing work also fosters new community structures that generate a social base.

3. **Strategic linking** in order to approach collectives, organizations, and experiences defending ESCR, to favor organizing strategies. We assume that collective and extensive spaces for analysis and reflection potentiate the processes' experience and organizing work.

4. **Information documentation and production,** referring to documentary research regarding both the national and international context in the economic and political spheres in order to update the organizing strategy. It also documents ESCR violations that take place within the communities and collectives that we support.

5. **Community security** for the construction of protection, prevention, and containment mechanisms in three spheres of collective defense: individual–collective–community.



Community security is, therefore, one of the components of the methodology for strengthening organizing processes. ProDESC's work using the integral defense methodology, and particularly the strengthening of organizing processes, facilitates the creation of collective security mechanisms and practices in a community, through identifying risk factors, the stakeholders causing them, as well as exchanging territory defense experiences with others. As part of our methodology, community security is ultimately about strengthening the political agency of the collective human rights defenders.

Community Security and Territory Defense

As aforementioned, the thoughts that ProDESC has built regarding the need to construct community security mechanisms are above all based on the support that we carry out with collectives and communities. In particular, we have identified that in contexts of territory defense in the face of extractivist projects, risk situations are not isolated facts, but rather evidence patterns of concrete and reiterated violence towards community defenders.

In the guide's first section, we have set forth some reflections about the neo–extractivist model. We wish to emphasize here what we considered some of the main strategies of neo–extractivism related to land and territory defense and its impact in the security of community defenders.

Neo–Extractivism

- Practices of dispossession and occupation of the lands and territories of agrarian, indigenous and Afrodescendent communities, as well as intensification of natural resources exploitation.
- The global economy generates tension between national and international companies and the State, promoting a corporate capture of the State in order to ensure legal stability for investments.
- The State privileges economic growth to the detriment of not only national sovereignty and human rights, but also of the recognition of the population and the self–determination of peoples and communities.
- Militarization processes intensify territory control for the extraction of natural resources, fracturing social fabrics. Repression strategies are used against social movements, peoples and communities.
- It makes invisible the existence of cultural diversity, forms of knowledge, and ancestral wisdom which are held by the peoples, as well as their own land and territory management and conservation practices, based on their historical experience with natural resources.
- It criminalizes the peoples' alternatives to the neo–extractivist model, condemning, persecuting, and prosecuting those who demand and fight for the defense of their human rights.

Mexico is an example that demonstrates that systematic strategies control and dispossession are becoming more violent, particularly for those who defend their territories and who show the injustices of the State and the transnational corporations, seeking to wrest the natural resources that sustain the life of communities, peoples, and collectives.

The scenario that community defenders face is overwhelming. The structural elements of socio–political violence that the neo–extractivist model deploys, such as land and territory dispossession, displacement of peoples and communities, damage to ecosystems and the resulting precariousness of health, is joined by militarization and pressure due to the dependence imposed by the industrialized countries of the Global North.

Extractivist megaprojects (such as mining, oil, hydroelectric power plants, gas ducts and fracking), infrastructure projects (dams, aqueducts, highways, thermoelectric plants, airports, coastal ports), urbanization projects (garbage dumps, industrial complexes, hotel zones, and housing developments), as well as privatization and biomarketing projects, among others, are the effects of a globalized economy project oriented toward raw material exploitation and intensification; and those raw materials are the natural resources of peoples and communities.

This model reveals multiple causes that explain why territory defense in Latin American is so risky for indigenous and agrarian communities, Afrodescendant peoples, and community defenders. The risks are expressed through multiple forms of violence, framed in intense disputes over territories and natural resources in areas of significant geo–strategic wealth. These forms of violence are directed most harshly toward people who defend their local territories and who are also on the first line of defense: they are harassed, delegitimized, forcefully disappeared, criminalized, threatened, and even assassinated, making communities and collectives vulnerable, producing devastating and permanent effects that tear the social fabric.

What do we Understand as Community Security?

Community security has been addressed in Latin America and other regions from a specific public policy approach focused on the construction of crime prevention strategies implemented through local security programs aimed at reducing crime. This approach has been developed in countries like Chile, Panama, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, for whom community security "bases actions on new paradigms that are actively committed to the community. From both the community and its authorities, it is possible to obtain advice, cooperation, information, and an understanding of the problems implied for those who are responsible for public security (...)".[6]

Another example is the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC) in Ottawa, Canada, that works on crime prevention. For the ICPC, community security is defined as, "those strategies, initiatives, practices, and tools developed for and with indigenous peoples in order to improve community well–being, that are taken on by public policies for the prevention of delinquency, crime, and violence."[7]

On the other hand, there are researchs that have deeply studied the theme of crime prevention, seeking to delve into programs that have achieved crime and violence reduction, with the objective of building a

6 "Seguridad. Diferencia entre Seguridad Pública y Seguridad Comunitaria. Características". Apuntes de la Cátedra Relaciones Comunitarias del Instituto de Seguridad Pública. Available at: https://www.santafe.gov.ar/index.php/ web/content/download/71284/345881/

7 Community Safety and Indigenous Peoples: Sharing Knowledge, Insights, and Action. International Centre for the Prevention of Crime. Reference documents for two ICPC workshops. Aboriginal Policy and Research Conference. Ottawa, Canada. March 9–12, 2009

model using a community approach. For example, Jorge Atilano González–Candía posits that community security "has as goal to protect those people who belong to a certain territory against dangers of different forms, and not only of those actions that are classified as criminal. This implies addressing the relationship patterns that harm a community's identity, bonds, and agreements that according to rule of law are not necessarily considered a crime (...)" (2014: 147). Community security has also been address as a structure of cohesion and reproduction of the social fabric with three basic components that are useful to analyze the transformation process of local contexts and the reconstruction of the social fabric. These basic components are identity, links, and agreements (Ibid: 33).

At ProDESC, we understand Community Security as **an ongoing process that ensures collective conditions to exercise the defense of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** through a series of strategies and capabilities that make it possible to safeguard the defenders' physical, psychological, collective, and community integrity within the territory they inhabit.

This series of mechanisms and capabilities are strategies constructed through dialogue, collective agreements, and the participation of women and men in the critical reflection about the factors that increase the levels of risk and insecurity, creating actions to respond to these scenarios, but above all to safeguard and strengthen the internal cohesion which allows for the continuation of community life.

ProDESC has a vision of Community Security that is not limited to community defenders, but includes collectives, i.e., organized structures that replicate security strategies in larger scenarios. Our methodology propounds a field of action that strengthens organizing processes and recognizes the existence of gender–differentiated risks and impacts, but also between defenders in urban areas and agrarian and/or community contexts.

1) Sharing methodologies for action
2) Implemented at different levels
3) Individual, Collective, & Community level

We consider it essential to focus on the field of the local territory in order to construct protection strategies and community security in a preventive manner. From a human rights approach, we seek to construct reflections regarding community security, emphasizing access to justice in contexts of permanent violence and dispossession. We think it is of primary importance to understand the forms in which communities and collectives implement security mechanisms that have been sustained and reproduced historically in order to safeguard their individual and collective integrity.

The organizing processes that we support, as with other human rights defense contexts, demonstrate that capabilities are constructed upon a specific history of peoples and communities, the configuration of which is based on the experiences of the members who hold the collective memory of their experience, of conflicts they have faced, as well as the resistance, i.e., a continuum of grievances, but also of resilience. These capabilities are also constructed, but above all are activated in the context of systematic violence in which community defenders face threats and risks for defending their human rights. Body, territory, and collective memory are fundamental elements through which history unfolds, grievances are embedded, and resistance is built.

The experiences shared between different civic associations and community organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, demonstrate similar realities that allow the elaboration of supplementary community security measures, generating methodologies such as self–care, risk analysis, psycho–social support, and a wide range of protection mechanisms for defenders. In this way, we adhere to the need for "thinking about how psycho–social, political, legal, digital, and other tools considered relevant and necessary depending on their specific context, are comprehensive and supplement each other" (CENSAT, CAJAR, et. al. 2015: 8).

Based on our experience, we have constructed a series of considerations about community security. Besides reflecting on sociopolitical violence, we focus on an analysis of context and risk based on an intercultural interpretation from an intersectional perspective of gender, ethnic and social class condition. It is a vision that seeks to promote a comprehensive approach aimed at contributing input for the reconstruction of the social and community fabrics.

Community Security Spheres

Community security, as an ongoing process of action in which strategies and capabilities are constructed for the identification of risks and the collective protection, involves three different spheres. Community security thus implies individual security and protection, but also that of the collective that individuals form, and the defended territory itself.

Community security strategies can be constructed from the following three spheres, thus enabling a comprehensive security:

- The individual sphere
- The collective sphere
- The community sphere

The Individual Sphere

Individual security is based on the body of community defenders that holds the positive and negative imprint of experiences through a range of emotions and constrictions. Over time, these experiences generate a spectrum of possibilities with which to face the world.

The body is a socially constructed space which reflects the situations we face. It is the first territory defined as a place to talk to the world. Recognizing the body as a place, as a territory, implies becoming aware that we experience life in its full complexity in and from the body. It is a space in which our feelings and emotions take place, in which the situations of risk and violence that community defenders face are somatized, becoming a process of tension, powerlessness, despair, fear, insecurity, and crisis.

Some people's bodies are more oppressed than others, more vulnerable than others. Today, as in the past, they have been the "object" of racism and different forms of violence. Their bodies have been deprived of their rights and life. They are racialized bodies that are expendable for the system, as they were enslaved in the past. Therefore, we consider the body to be a site of constant struggle, and at the same time, a place for alliances, rebellion, and resistance. Struggles for a more dignified and just world are experienced there. Rights are defended are defended from a contextualized body.

1) What does body-territory mean for women?

The individual sphere of security is thus sustained through the body, in which emotions, experiences, and pain are imprinted and respond to a construction of identity, different forms of spirituality, and personal memory.

Personal memory implies a retrieval of community defenders' life histories, rooted in a political claim for the right to defense. Through life histories, spaces are constructed in which different forms of knowledge, experience, silence, and trajectories are recognized as ways of coping with conflicts and risks, but also provide meaning to their personal power. Histories that tell facts, express feelings and emotions specific to their own lived situations, consolidate meaning in the face of these experiences. They can thus raise awareness of coping strategies in the present.

Women's ancestral knowledge for territory defense
Healing – Protection

Remembered life histories that are narrated in the first person, recapture the meaning of the lived experience, favoring self-recognition and self-worth. Life histories, compiled from an "active listening" perspective, make it possible for the narrative of peoples, communities, and women to be heard and made visible, despite the efforts of the dominant discourse and narratives to hide and silence them.

The individual sphere is sustained by the following components:

The Collective Sphere

The collective sphere refers to the **organization** among community defenders, in which members of the collective assume **co-responsibility** for the group's strategy, as well as for its **agreements and commitments** to action. These are dynamic elements based on contextualized pressures and power relationships that respond to political, social, cultural, and economic factors, as well as gender and ethnic conditions.

We understand organization as a process that contains some basic elements for its strengthening and consolidation. One of the most important elements is that the organization's point of departure is the **problems and needs** originating in the living conditions of individuals, communities or peoples, which vary depending on their specific context and cultural conditions.

Another element to highlight is the **participation of individuals who are part of the process.** This participation takes place at different levels that are determined by a variety of factors, such as the availability of time, their interest in the need and/or problem that the process addresses, and even different degrees of reflection and knowledge about the causes and consequences of the issues. Another element is **the historical character of the process**, which is understood as the baggage of previous experiences which will mark the discourse, the political statements, and actions of the community, collective and/or individuals participating in the process.

Lastly, an important question to consider is the **impact produced by the organizing process,** which is ultimately where action is aimed. Impact implies a change in the original conditions of a situation, need and/or problem, towards a transformation of these conditions in an organized, collective manner, and, in our case, geared to generating mechanisms and strategies for land and territory protection and defense.

Do not lose the capacity to continue to learn with communities and among organizations

Collective security is constructed among defenders who promote an organized structure and pertain to spaces in which a series of rights are (or should be) in effect: a factory, a work place, a territory, in essence, a space in which ways can be constructed to demand a decent life. In the collective sphere, critical reflections about the context can be generated in order to analyze risk situations and levels of insecurity, revealing the group's capabilities and vulnerabilities, as

well as reflecting upon the possibilities for action. In this way, specific tasks and strategies can be constructed that will be taken on as a collective commitment to security that builds bonds of identity as a collective.

The collective sphere is sustained by the following components:

The Community Sphere

The community sphere is constituted by a series of activities aimed at shaping, grasping, and appropriating space for ensuring the continuation of community life. The space in which people are mobilized and act is an essential element to understand the community sphere. In this way, the territory is a space that enables cultural, political, ecological, economic, and spiritual reproduction.

We understand territory as a material, symbolic, and relational space. A place for interaction, for the production of collective subjects, for the construction and transformation of social relationships. Its meaning lies in the construction of forms of knowledge regarding natural resources that imply valuing the territories that are defined, demarcated, and managed by the community, producing knowledge and representations that construct collective memory. This accumulation of experiences is a foundation for the construction of political projects as alternatives to territorial dispossession processes caused by transnational capital.

Territories are not merely material or geographical spaces. They are socio–cultural constructions, i.e., spaces that are gradually appropriated and transformed. Territorial demarcation is an important aspect of the identity process of the community inhabiting it, differentiating it from other communities. These community identity processes are expressed in intra–ethnic relationships within the community and inter–ethnic relationships that the community maintains with other groups. Besides, the existence of a demarcated territory contributes to creating cultural and symbolic indicators that constitute a differentiated identity. The importance that territory has for a community cannot be reduced only to economic or material aspects. A territory's symbolic weight lies in the fact that it is the land that a community inhabits, which constitutes a horizon in which identities and cultures are created, defined, and reaffirmed. It is therefore a territory of identification, a territory held in common.

1) Memory as a way of recognizing and protecting territory
2) Validating the peoples' knowledge

From the perspective of the human rights of indigenous peoples, land and territory have multidimensional qualities and entail an intertwining with other rights. In other words, "the right to land is a fundamental aspect of human rights. It is the foundation for access to food, housing, and development. Without access to land, many peoples find themselves in a situation of great economic insecurity" (Gilbert 2013: 123).

Furthermore, the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169, in its Article 13 stipulates that "governments shall respect the special importance for the cultures and spiritual values of the peoples concerned of their relationship with the lands or territories, or both as applicable, which they occupy or otherwise use, and in particular the collective aspects of this relationship."

> Territory is thus also a space in which a set of collective rights of the peoples is in effect, which enable their development, existence and reproduction. For the peoples and communities, territorial management implies the possibility of materially implementing a political project, exercising free determination for the construction of community development alternatives that respond to their social and cultural reality.

Collective memory is an additional element that we consider indispensable for a community's security. It implies an ongoing socio–cultural construction of representations and experiences anchored in the history of both the body and the community. This history recaptures facts or events experienced by individuals, collectives, communities, peoples, and societies circumscribed to a specific space and time. The general frameworks that enable the collective memory to be defined are the time in which collective events and actions emerge, as memories have social content since they were collectively formulated; the space that enables the location of an action's points of departure, i.e., the places where action unfolds, in this case, the territory; and the language or structure shared by a collective that serves as the building blocks of their narratives (Manero Brito and Soto Martínez, 2005). Collective memory is not homogeneous. Memories are many and diverse. They provide meaning to the group's memory and its reconstruction is an alternative to silence and forgetting.

1) Methodologies for Action
Retrieving the genealogy of community resistance
2) Breaking with the silences

Collective memory implies remembering, naming, giving body and words to the historic and contextualized view of peoples, communities and women. Acts to reconstruct memory imply retrieving and giving new meaning to experiences and forms of knowledge anchored in the peoples' history and ancestry.

Collective memory therefore "constitutes the peoples' view, being a way of constructing a legacy that grants

the possibility to re-create the past and understand the present as ongoing transformation in search of strategies that strengthen collective interests."[8]

The collective memory through piritual and ancestral knowledge

Collective memory contains the individuals' ordinary actions that have been transformed over the course of time and have had an impact on the entire community or society and can be collectively transformed into a coping mechanism. It is a required tool to reconstruct the social fabric and resilience for coping with psychosocial wounds caused by threats, delegitimization, discredit, prosecution, forced disappearance, unjustified detention, and territorial dispossession.

We consider that collective memory and territory are indispensable to ensure the continuity of life and a community's security. Both collective memory and territory are spaces that carry history, forms of everyday and cultural knowledge that hegemonies have silenced, expropriated, delegitimized, and criminalized. To retrieve collective memory and territory, to give them new meaning, and to use them as a bastion for the collective defense of rights is a mechanism to recover the collective power from which the peoples have been historically dispossessed.

The community sphere considered within this methodology is sustained by the following components:

The importance of taking these three spheres into consideration for the construction of community security methodologies and plans is due to the comprehensive nature of the approaches we use.

8 "La Memoria Colectiva a través de la reconstrucción de historias de vida", Available at: http://virtual.funlam.edu.co/repositorio/sites/default/files/ LaMemoriaColectivaatravesdelaReconstruccíondeHistoriasdeVida.pdf

Our point of departure is that the different spheres related to community defense are intertwined and it is not possible to separate the individual, collective, and community spheres.

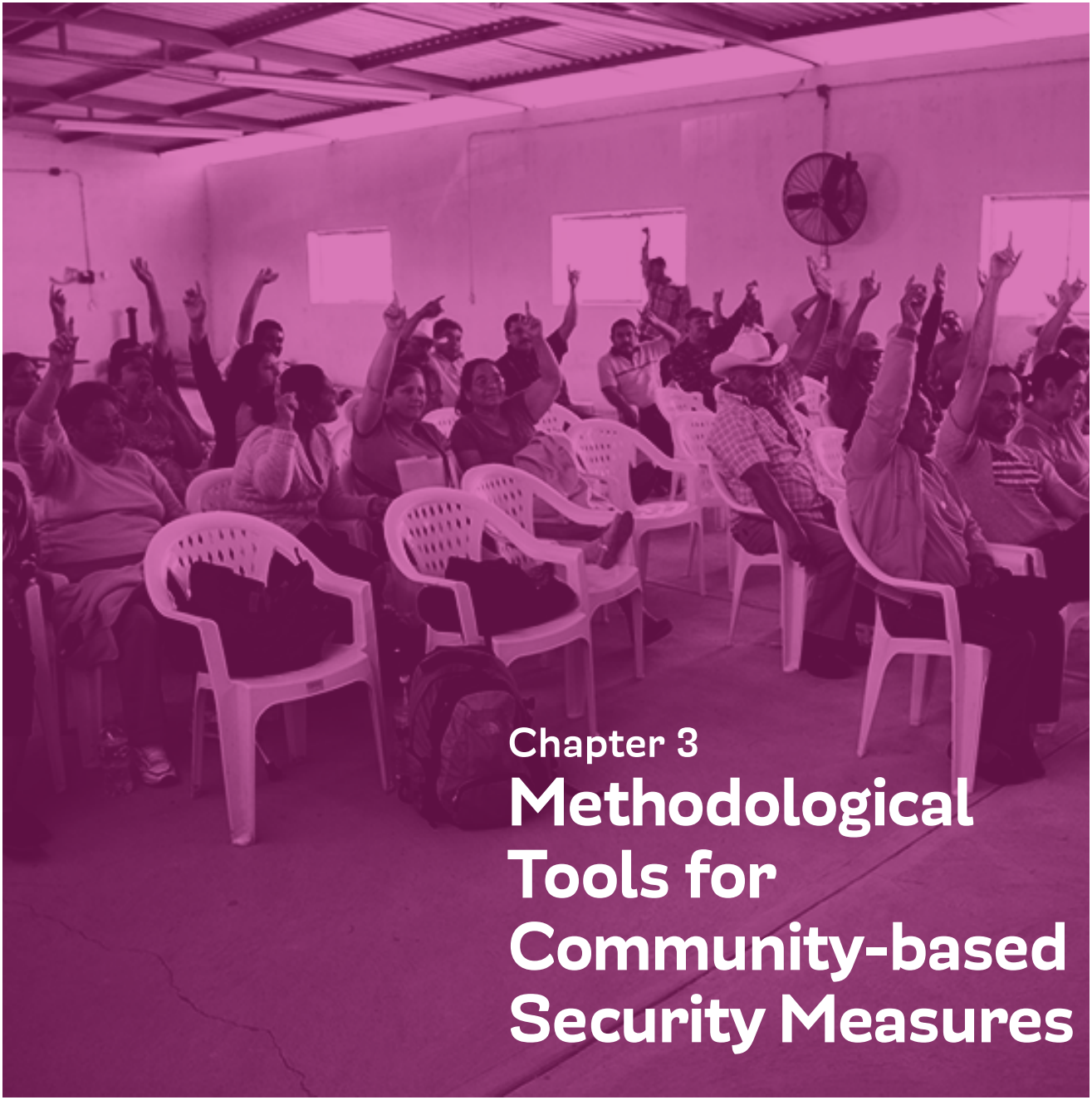
These three spheres have a strong impact on each other, but at the same time are differentiated when facing risk and threat scenarios. For example, defenders in urban contexts do not experience them in the same way since they have access to swift response protection mechanisms; defenders in community contexts, on the other hand, may have protection mechanisms that in many cases infringe upon a community's dynamic and may even entail risks and collateral damage.

With regard to the risk contexts faced by women community defenders, it is evident that existing security mechanisms do not respond to their need for protection. Besides, since they face other forms of risk and threat that attempt against their personal integrity, such as sexual attacks, security mechanisms are insufficient to prevent such situations, but above all to contain and repair the effects they have on women's lives and bodies.

We consider that community protection measures must take into consideration safeguarding and caring for community defenders, collective organizations, and community territory. We consider that the construction of comprehensive protection and security mechanisms represents a great challenge, but nonetheless is a pressing need within the current context that community defenders face.

This guide seeks to contribute with a perspective regarding the structural violence that constrains the defenders' field of action. This perspective envisions safeguarding defenders' physical and psychological integrity, the establishment of relationships for community security, as well as the construction of more extensive and even regional networks. These are mechanisms that enable community security to be comprehensive and may mitigate contexts of risk and vulnerability.

Memory is transgenerational, personal, and collective. It is a repository of the history of struggles



Chapter 3

Methodological Tools for Community-based Security Measures

Methodological Approaches

At ProDESC, we understand methodologies as systematic processes producing collective knowledge, comprised of a series of techniques intended to construct learning based on specific contexts and issues affecting communities and, above all, seeking critical alternatives for the transformation of reality.

The construction of methodological tools for community security are supported by three approaches which we here present: **popular education, intercultural dialogue, and intersectional gender perspective.**

Popular education is understood as a political–pedagogical proposal aimed at a critical education of subjects, collectives, and communities seeking to transform their life conditions. It is ultimately the construction of collective political actions that provide evidence of the structural conditions of the issues affecting them, make inequalities visible, and defend communities, particularly women, as producers of transformative knowledge.

Based on **intercultural dialogue,** our methodological tools are rooted in contextual situational action, i.e., they not only involve time and space, but also all context–related political, social, economic, and geographical aspects, including subjects and their relationships.

According to this approach, technique construction must be based on the exchange of knowledge from non–hegemonic perspectives. This means that collective learning construction should consider the practices and experiences of non–dominant groups that enable the transmission of their cultural values, cosmovisions, and forms of reproducing life.

An important aspect is the construction of methodologies from an intersectional perspective that identifies women's issues, needs, and action proposals in a differentiated and systematic way, taking into account not only the gender condition, but also ethnic and social class conditions.

An **intersectional gender perspective** specifically addresses the way in which racism, patriarchy, and capitalism create inequalities that structure the relative position of women, ethnic groups or social classes. An analysis of intersectionality[9] does not refer to an understanding of overlapping identities as the cause that explains why one social group is more

9 Some texts, such as those developed by AWID (2004) consider the analytical proposal of intersectionality as "an analytic tool for studying, understanding, and responding to the ways in which gender intersects with other identities and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of oppression and privilege." Other authors like Kimberlé Crenshaw highlight the intersectionality perspective using inequality–producing structures of oppression as a tool that enables a more accurate description of what racialized women experience (2002).

victimized or privileged than another, but rather considers the intersection of different oppression structures, such as racism, patriarchy and capitalism, that permanently interact and produce a variety of expressions and gradients of the issues, forms of violence, and inequalities that women experience.

This approach helps us to identify the specific forms that discrimination takes in women's lives and to unveil the wide spectrum of human rights violations that remain hidden when the specific situation of women under conditions of greater precariousness and vulnerability is ignored. It also identifies the different ways in which women are impacted by structural conflictivity, as well as the specific forms adopted by their resistance and coping mechanisms.

In this section, we will mention some of the methodological tools that have helped us outline the community security elements contained in the proposal we are here presenting. It should be noted that the tools are not presented as steps to be followed or as linear methodological sequences since their development and implementation depend on the concrete circumstances of each context and community defenders' needs.

In addition, given that popular education, as a methodology and an approach, is a collective construction of knowledge, the tools that we are sharing here are influenced by other methodological constructions, that constitute an important heritage in Mexico and Latin America.

1) Exchange of Community Security methodologies and experience
2) Attention to intersectional methodologies in practice

1.–Mapping of the Territory for Context Analysis.

Approximate time: 2 hours
Material: maps, symbols, markers

Objetive:
To construct collective territorial perspectives in order to reflect upon the structural and contextual elements that influence the risk scenarios faced by community defenders.

Explanation of the technique:

Hegemony constructs cartographic representations that privilege a vision of the territories mentally and physically represented by the dominant powers. The territorial representations that we have are very important to be able to define a critical reflective stance in relation to the territory. It is essential to reflect about a territory and construct new visions of it in order to position ourselves with regard to the issues it faces.

A map provides us with an opportunity to decipher the connections between various issues in order to question them and develop resistance and organizing alternatives. Cartographies are a point of departure to address the complexities of a reflection regarding a concrete territory. Besides, they facilitate the construction of a collective narrative regarding a specific territory that points to an elaboration of different forms of knowledge that can be condensed into a common cartographic support. It is a collective construction and open participation dynamic that facilitates critical knowledge of different realities based on everyday memories and grassroots forms of knowledge.

The context analysis technique using the development of cartographies seeks to carry out considerations about the territories, holding a critical position regarding its constitutional elements, understanding the territories as a complex space resulting from social, cultural, and material relationships. Besides, territoriality is considered as "a set of forms of knowledge, practices, and links generated and reproduced by people or groups in contact with their surrounding physical environment" (Colectivo Geografías Críticas del Ecuador, 2016: 4).

Cartographies help to visually identify the elements related to a specific context in order to do a "reading" of the territory from the perspective of the cultural codes pertaining to those who construct the cartographies. They also help to identify and interpret the patterns that influence the level of risk faced by peoples, communities and defenders.

It is important to note that a cartography may be constructed on a map of the territory in question or carried out freely as a reinterpretation and reconstruction of the territory.

The following elements should be identified in a map:

1.– Natural Resources:
Natural reserves, zones of aquifers, seas, water springs, lakes, rivers, crop areas, agricultural resources, timber–yielding forests, rainforests, mountains, mangrove areas, as well as all other resources that can be recognized as significant.

2.– Megaprojects:
Extractive, infrastructure, and energy–related projects, mines, hydroelectric plants, dams, timber ex-

ploitation, stone quarries, wind corridors and parks, roads and highways, civil and military airports, gmo crops, hydrocarbon extraction, and/or fracking. Apart from types of industry, it is important to identify and map the companies involved.

3.– Militarization:
Military bases and camps, military industry, military governments and/or trends, migration control, armed stakeholders, armies, and paramilitary groups.

4.–Sacred Places:
Areas and elements that convey the history of the territory and provide meaning for the peoples inhabiting it: sacred caves, ceremonial spaces, mountains, rivers, lakes, and crosses.

5.– Organizing Processes:
Community defenders, committees, collectives, councils, traditional guards, agencies, cooperatives, grassroots organizations and civil society.

The dynamic is conducted with participatory group integration. The groups are provided with maps, markers, and icons with which to construct cartographies. It is important that the identification of the aforementioned elements not be limited to the use of icons, but that other iconographies that the groups consider also be used, as well as words, symbols, and colors, among other elements. It is also important to trace the relationships in the territory; in other words, to identify flows, dynamics, forms of knowledge, and practices.

Upon completing the cartographies, each group shares the reflections they made as they were working. Each group mentions the narratives correlated to the cartographies, explaining the territories through the elements identified as instruments enabling the dispossession, as well as their different forms of knowledge, practices and cosmovisions. It is also important to also identify the risk scenarios, highlighting the correlations where security incidents often happen or could happen.

The technique proposes a perspective in which security risks and incidents are interrelated with the following four elements:

It is important to systematize the information within a matrix in order to facilitate collective reflection and the elaboration of final conclusions, highlighting the points of coincidence.

Megaprojects	Militarization	Organizing Processes

2.– Risk Diagnosis

Approximate time: 3 hours
Material: flipcharts, markers, timeline

Objective:
To collectively identify the risks implied by human rights defense within the community, identifying the differentiated impacts on women and men.

Explanation of the technique:

Once a territory has been mapped and both its defense junctures and scenarios have been analyzed, it is important to identify and reflect about the risks produced in specific moments of the community's organizing processes, particularly those of territory defense.

This technique is constituted by **two key moments:**

- What rights are we defending?

This moment refers to the identification of the rights that the community or collective has been defending throughout their organizing process. The aim is to favor a historical and contextualized reflection regarding the elements that bring community defenders together in their struggles, which is what makes them an organized group. It is a moment for collective and critical reflection that allows participants to recognize themselves as community human rights defenders.

The starting point is the rights defended by the community and/or organized group that we are advising. For this purpose, we use a technique for retrieving the history of the organizing process, which will identify the more transcendental imprints and moments, the

reasons for engaging in the defense, the material and symbolic components of whatever is being defended, as well as the achievements and obstacles of the defense process.

At the same time, this moment will enable participants to recognize themselves as community defenders, identifying both the specific contexts within which they act and the specific characteristics that the human rights defense adopts from a community perspective. In general terms, we understand community defenders to be those individuals who defend the rights of the indigenous peoples, their land, territory, culture, and in general, the reproduction of the community's life. These individuals are on the first line of defense, i.e., in the territories directly threatened and disputed by hegemonic power.[10]

This moment is crucial, since it is important that people recognize themselves as human rights defenders with a clear perspective of what community defense is, its implications and specificities

- Risk Diagnosis

Upon recognizing the historic and contextual trajectory of the organizing process, we proceed to identify security risks, junctures, and incidents.

It is also important to identify how the security risks and incidents are experienced and how do they impact men and women in a differentiated way.

We suggest carrying out group work based on the following questions::

1. How do we identify the risks in the territories in which we work?
2. In what junctural moments do risks increase for both women and men community defenders?
3. Which are the most frequent security incidents that take place in your community?
4. How do women and men specifically experience these incidents?

Once the groups have reflected upon these questions, they are asked to share their reflections, identifying not only the main points of coincidence, but also the differences between the way in which women and men experience them and the differentiated impact they have, highlighting the critical aspects of the reflection regarding their different experiences.

The idea of this moment is to bring together a critical and collective reflection about the risks, the junctures in which they become present, the incidents, the stakeholders involved, and the differentiated impact on women and men. In order to systematize reflections, we suggest retrieving the information using the following matrix:

10 Our proposal is inspired by the definition set forth by EDUCA: "Community defenders are those men and women, peoples, and organizations that promote the defense of the rights of indigenous peoples, their territories and commons, culture, as well as their communal form of living and political organization systems. Defenders can be native community members and/or inhabitants of the affected locations and regions" (2015: 10).

Junctures	Incidents	Stakeholders	Differentiated Impact on Men and Women

To conclude, we present the definitions of security risk, incidents, and threats, which help to complete the reflection.

3.– Risk and Security Incident Analysis

Approximate time: 3 hours
Material: flipcharts, markers, timeline.

Objetivo:
To reflect upon the main security incidents in the defense of territory, identifying its space and time–related patterns, as well as the stakeholders acting as adversaries or allies.

Explanation of the technique:

This technique is comprised of three moments:

- Security incident timeline–map
- Analysis of stakeholders and allies
- Capabilities and vulnerabilities

Security Incident Timeline–Map

The timeline aims at conducting a collective construction of a sequence of events that upon being located chronologically enable defenders to share significant events within a common time period. For the purpose of this technique, security incidents must be located in order to identify incident patterns and relate them to context and/or juncture elements specific to the group's defense process. The group must define the timeline's periodicity in order to thus identify when the most intense incidents and threats take place. This enables them to identify whether or not these incidents and threats are related to the work they carry out, as well as specific moments in organizing processes and resistances.

This timeline should be contrasted with the historic retrieval of the organizing process, which was developed in the first cartographical moment, since iden-

tifying the process' incidents with its achievements and obstacles enables a more comprehensive analysis of the security context.

The guiding questions for this moment are as follows:

1. At what moment do the risks faced by community defenders increase?
2. What incidents repeat frequently?
3. Which of these incidents are concrete threats?
4. Do women and men suffer the same risks?

Upon completing the exercise, we will have a map of security incidents that will help us to identify the repetition of ways of acting during incidents that the risk pattern points out to consider in order to develop specific protection measures. Priority threats can thus be identified and included in a collective security plan.

Analysis of Stakeholders and Allies

Once we have a security incident map, we can proceed to identify and reflect upon the stakeholders present in the territorial conflict scenario. The aim is to identify the majority of the stakeholders that somehow influence the organizing process, collectively analyzing the role they play and their interest in the territory, considering the impact they have on the organization.

We suggest carrying out a group work based on the following matrixes:

Group 1: Political Stakeholder Matrix (government and public institutions: local, state or federal authorities, as well as autonomous bodies)					
Name of the political stakeholder	What level of power does this stakeholder have? High, medium, low?	Relationship with the group: in favor, indifferent or against?	How does this stakeholder affect or favor territory organization and defense?	How does this stakeholder put us at risk?	
				Women	Men
Example: The army and the police	*High*	*Against*	*They control our peaceful forms of protest, they threaten us, they invade our land. They impose control over our territories.*	*They sexually harass, persecute, threaten us. They threaten our family.*	*They don't respect human rights. They don't have clear action protocols*

Group 2: Matrix of Private Institutions and Companies (security, tourism, wind energy, energy, etc.					
Name of the entrepreneurial stakeholder	What level of power does this stakeholder have? High, medium, low?	Relationship with the group: in favor, indifferent or against?	How does this stakeholder affect or favor territory organization and defense?	How does this s takeholder put us at risk?	
				Women	Men
Example: Acciona Energía México	*High*	*Against*	*The company has purchased land illicitly and seeks to coopt leaders by offering them money.*	*They hire thugs to threaten us.*	*They generate conflict within the communi-ty.*

Group 3: Matrix of social, civic, community or religious organizations involved. It also includes local and national newspapers that are not owned by the government.					
Name of the social stakeholder	What level of power does this stakeholder have? High, medium, low?	Relationship with the group: in favor, indifferent or against?	How does this stakeholder affect or favor organization and territory defense?	How does this stakeholder put us at risk?	
				Women	Men
Example: Communal Assembly	*High*	*In favor*	*It promotes reflection, dialogue and collective agreements. It supports our struggle.*		

A mapping of the socio–political stakeholders helps us to understand the different interests existing in the territory, to identify the concrete risks women and men face in relation to the multiple stakeholders involved and the correlation of forces, as well as to identify opponents and allies. It also allows us to confirm how organized groups, communities, and collectives are related to these stakeholders: what needs to be learned, what needs to be improved, and what is needed in order to defend territories and face possible risks.

Capabilities and Vulnerabilities

This moment supplements the risk and security incident analysis technique, where the mapping of incidents and stakeholders is included in a critical reflection about the capabilities and vulnerabilities of the organized groups that we advise.

Using the following table, participants are asked to write out the actions they already carry out as a group on colored sheets of paper, identifying actions related to their capabilities and vulnerabilities.

It is explained to participants that capabilities are understood as the resources that the groups or defenders can access in order to increase their security, whereas vulnerabilities are the extent to which they are susceptible to harm, loss, or even death in case of an attack.[11]

The importance of this moment lies in the group's concrete possibility to recognize the actions that they already carry out, that strengthen them, and connect them to real options to safeguard their integrity in case of aggression, but also to recognize areas in which they are weak and need strengthening. The emphasis is thus on reflecting about the search for mechanisms to reduce vulnerabilities.

Aspect	Capabilities	Vulnerabilities
Organization		
Personal Relationships		
Links within the Community		
Links with Other Communities		

11 Manual de introducción. La Seguridad en las organizaciones civiles y sociales. Centro de Derechos Humanos. Fr. Francisco de Vitoria and Comité Cerezo. 2010.

4.– Community–based Security Strategies: Basic Inputs for the Defense

Approximate time: 5 hours
Material: flipcharts, markers, graphic material.

Objetive:
To construct the main elements of a community security plan for the defense of land and territory, taking into account context, risks, and historic protection practices.

Explanation of the technique:

Upon completing the risk analysis, we will have a map of security incidents and a map of stakeholders which will provide us with concrete tools to think about security plans that respond to the needs of community defenders. From our perspective, the point of departure to develop community security strategies is the concrete risk context, but also the peoples' history of experiences of resistance that have enabled the community's safeguarding. These experiences are anchored in the peoples' collective memory that is embedded in their bodies, collectives, territories, spirituality, and all creative and symbolic forms in order to face the historic disputes for their territories, which are ultimately struggles for life.

This technique is divided into five methodological moments that seek to reflect upon three elements that we consider are important for community security: territory, organization, and collective memory. The technique's conclusion implies identifying basic elements for a community security plan.

- **Actions that we carry out to safeguard our security**

The first part of this methodological tool is based on the recognition of the security actions that the community carries out based on the defenders' own experience.

We suggest carrying out group work based on the following trigger questions:

1. What security strategies do you implement in the face of the identified risks?
2. Which are the spiritual and cultural practices you use in order to cope with the risks?
3. How do women and men participate in these strategies?
4. What needs to be improved?

After group reflection, the information is retrieved in the following table, which will serve as input for the community security plan.

Community Security Strategies		
Action that we already carry out	Women's participation	Capabilities to develop

- **Territorial Space**

After the collective considerations, participants will work with the maps they have already constructed in order to analyze the context aiming at anchoring the community security strategies to the territorial space in which they act.

Participants are asked to draw on the map the elements that they consider help or affect their security, such as points of entry and exit from the community, roads of easy or difficult access, means of transport, boundaries, government offices, and churches, among other elements.

The elements that help personal and community security are marked in one color and those affecting security are marked with another color. It is also important to lead the dynamic to identifying security routes, for example, ways for quick exit and areas to be safeguarded. These are elements that can serve to draught a community security plan.

With this activity, we complete the territorial mapping, which will contain various elements that enable a collective vision of the space in which community defenders act in relation to their areas of defense, the correlation of stakeholders, as well as the elements that weaken community security, and those that favor it.

- **The Collective Memory**[12]

For this methodological moment, we suggest starting with a dynamic in which participants introduce themselves through an object they are carrying and share why it is important for them. This is an initial moment to create an appropriate atmosphere for participants to reconstruct the collective memory.

Later, participants will identify the social, cultural, and environmental changes in the community before, during, and after the establishment of a megaproject related to an extractive activity or any relational si-

12 For the construction of this methodological moment, we are significantly influenced by the conceptual and methodological experiences of reconstructing the collective and historic memory of armed conflict in Colombia and Guatemala through material produced by the National Center of Historic Memory (Centro Nacional de la Memoria Histórica) and the Center for Legal Action in Human Rights (Centro para la Acción Legal en Derechos Humanos), respectively.

tuation with the group in the defense of their land or territory.

For this activity, three working groups will be created. Each one will make a drawing in which the following will be identified:

Group 1: The community before the project
Group 2: The community during the project
Group 3: The community in the future

Later on, using the same drawings, the groups will identify areas of resistance, local initiatives and their imprint on the surrounding environment, for example, trajectories followed by protests and symbolic acts, places in which struggles for rights have taken place, memory–related places, cultural expressions, organizing spaces, etcetera. Participants should highlight spaces of resistance and collective organization.

Collective memory has the flexibility of moving back and forth between the past, present, and future. It is important to grant a central position to women's memories, to acknowledge that due to the ways in which they have been socialized and constituted historically, they have specific ways of both remembering and remaining silent.

Historic memory as a tool used for protection mechanisms and community-based security measures

The following could be some trigger questions for this moment:

1. What do the elders say about the cultural, spiritual, and collective forms of knowledge related to the territory?
2. How does the community safeguard itself in face of external threats?
3. How are lands and territories defended?
4. How did they defend land and territory in the past? How do they defend land and territory in the present? What has changed? and Why?
5. How have these safeguarding practices changed with the project's presence?

Retrieving collective memory also implies reconstructing the life histories of community defenders.

For this moment, we suggest using the technique of visual biography,[13] which is similar to a cartography of the territory, except that it is anchored in an individual. Through this technique, we seek to identify significant events in the life of community defenders that characterize their participation, the actions they have carried out, and above all the security mechanisms practiced throughout their defense trajectories. Each defender will be given a sheet of paper on which he/she will construct the events, narratives, and actions held in his/her memory, using graphic tools that enable creative expression. He/she can draw, place words, use colors, illustrations and any other symbol that will allow memories to be recalled and depict the experiences that they consider to be significant.

Collective memory for strengthening identity

Upon concluding this personal construction, the group is invited to reflect upon the meaning of their histories in contrast with the community drawings. The intention is to strengthen the perception of the collective memory interwoven with personal experiences that give shape not only to the collective construct, but also to the forms that as a community nourish and give meaning to individual experience.

- **Organization**

Organization is an important component of community security. In general, we consider organization as a collective process for human rights defense that emerges from a critical analysis of a community's issues and needs. For the purpose of this technique, we seek to reflect about the importance of organization for the construction of community protection measures.

We thus reflect upon the main elements comprising a community's territory defense: organization, training, communication, defense, linking, and mobilization.

Organization: To organize means to join other members of the community who share the same goals and the same feeling with respect to a common issue, threat or problem. An organization's objective is the defense of collective rights in order to construct benefits within a community. For this reason, it is necessary that the community backs, supports, and acknowledges the work carried out by defenders.

Training: It is necessary to conduct a community's defense effectively since it implies acquiring skills to carry out different forms of action to face a specific

13 Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2017) Recordar y narrar el exilio. Herramientas conceptuales, metodológicas y aprendizajes. Bogota, Colombia.

problem. Training strengthens both a person and the organization of which he/she is part of.

Communication: Collective rights are positioned through communication. Besides, communication allows violations of these rights to be publicly denounced. Communication and public denunciation go hand in hand since not only are aggressions against communities and defenders communicated, but also community's defense achievements and impacts.

Defense: One of the pathways followed for territory defense is legal defense, which is extremely important to generate conditions to gain access to justice. Both lawyers and community defenders are involved in this form of defense. The latter can thus strengthen their experience and agency in this field.

Linking: This strategy creates and strengthens alliances that help to achieve defense objectives, allowing us to link up at a local, national or international level. Links and alliances help to provide visibility to cases, making it possible to share experiences, forms of organization, and at the same time to exchange defense strategies.

Mobilization: Mobilization as a form of social protest is a right related to free expression and free association. It is a very important social–political strategy that provides presence and legitimacy. However, in recent years it has become one of the strategies that has been most criminalized by authorities and increasingly by public opinion.

- **Some elements for the collective construction of a community security plan**

We understand that community security strategies are capabilities, competences, and skills implemented through plans and protocols that are based on group reflection regarding the contextual reality, constituting a repertoire of measures aimed at safeguarding individuals, the organization and the community.

In order to begin the process of constructing security protocols, it is essential to undertake an analysis of the threats and risks community defenders face individually, collectively and as a community. Considering the organizing processes that we advise, it is important to think about the protection of territories, communities, organizations and their members in a comprehensive way. Developing a security protocol allows us to know how to act before, during, and after a specific situation of risk. The purpose of a security protocol is to prevent and react appropriately in the face of a security incident.

Some considerations for the development of a community security plan:

1. To organize and talk about the issue:

It is important that the group members meet in order to debate issues and needs related to individual, collective and community security. This space of reflection in which impressions, fears, and anxieties are shared is a first step in recognizing and facing risk.

2. To identify risks and analyze threats:

Risks should be prioritized through using a Risk Matrix. People should try to agree on the probability of each risk and its likely impact on the defenders, the organization, and the community. Most community

Risk Matrix		
Risk	Likelihood (low, medium, high, very high)	Capabilities that we need to develop

groups or women collectives decide to focus on those risks that go from middle–range to high impact, and from a medium to a high probability.

3. Constructing a community security plan model

Based on a recognition of what is already being done and the capabilities that need to be developed, a community security plan can be carried out, prioritizing the risks that have already been identified in the diagnosis and incident mapping, as well as the capabilities and vulnerabilities identified by the group. Four risks will be prioritized.

Four groups are formed and each one will work on one risk. Participants will receive a flipchart formatted as a filing card, which must be filled in with the requested information. Each filing card must address one risk, so that each team presents four security plan models.

Risk 1:	
Risk Assessment:	
Capabilities: 1.- 2.- 3.-	Vulnerabilities: 1.- 2.- 3.-
Plan of Action 1.- 2.- 3.-	

Prevention Mechanisms

Based on the juncture analysis, diagnoses, and possible scenarios identified, some preventive actions can be considered:

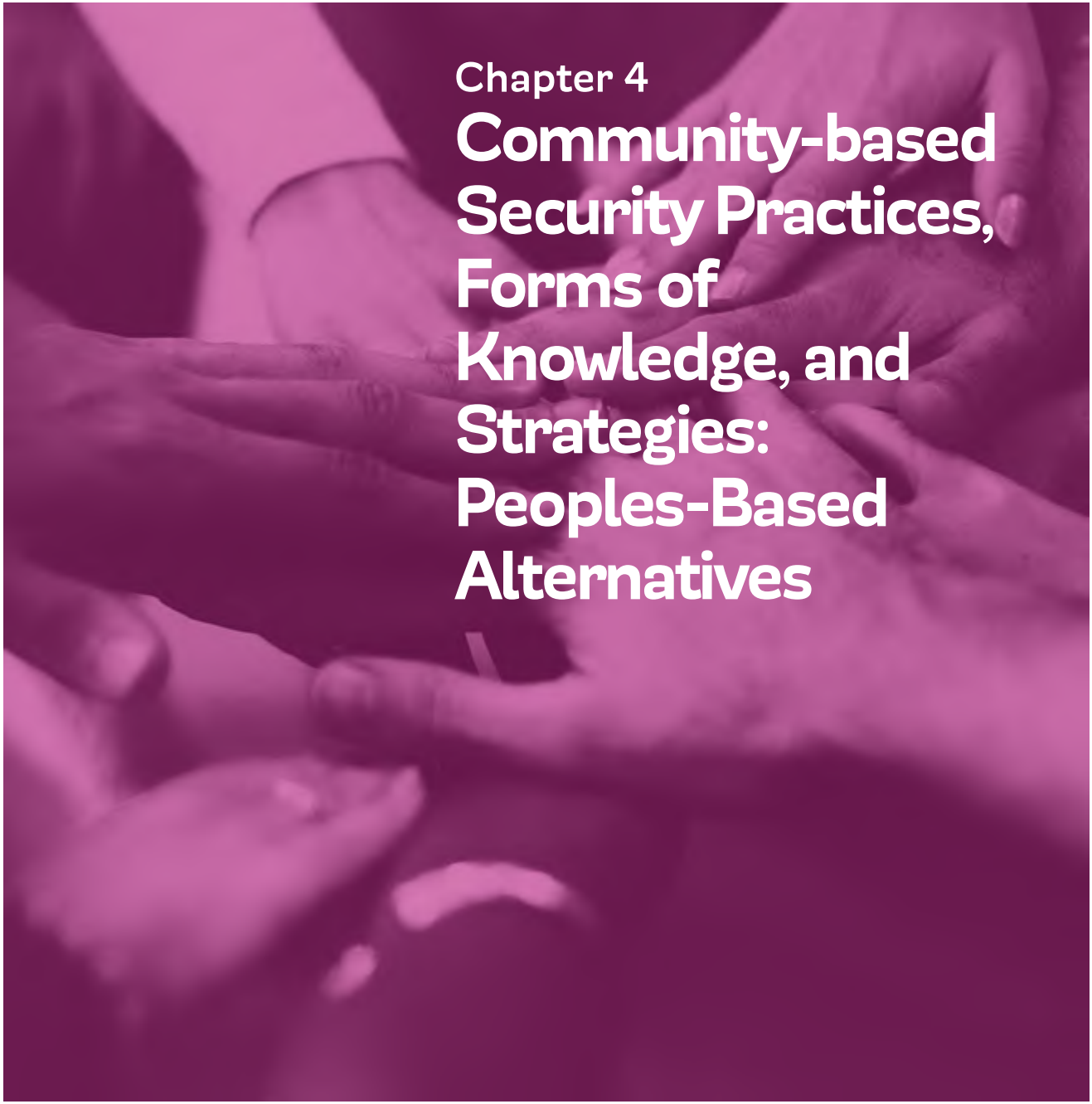
1. To legitimize the work carried out by community defenders: Disseminate activities through radio, television, the Internet, public statements, mobilizations, artistic interventions, or any other media/expression. Dissemination allows a broad public to be reached and communicates not only about the socio–political issue in question, but also about the work that is being carried out.

2. To generate a support network at a local level: To become visible and present in the community, which will facilitate the generation of a popular reaction of mobilization in the face of a criminalization case.

3. To construct a national and international support network: to do political work in order to disseminate the issue among members of the diplomatic corps (embassies and international bodies such as the United Nations), autonomous bodies (the National Human Rights Commission/CNDH, Defense Councils), and national and international human rights organizations.

4. To protect our communication and information: work carried out for the defense of territory and human and collective rights forces us to think about protection strategies regarding our forms of communication and the safe management of information.

1) To be noticed through:
2) organization
Communication
Prevention
3) Links, alliances and networks



Chapter 4

Community-based Security Practices, Forms of Knowledge, and Strategies: Peoples-Based Alternatives

Constructing Collective Forms of Knowledge about Community Security

Based on the knowledge held by community defenders and the local context, it is indispensable to construct skills in order to cope with risks and security incidents. The practices and forms of knowledge that women and men have been constructing throughout their lives, sustained over time, and anchored in actions are the core element we use as a starting point for constructing community–based security mechanisms and strategies.

Retrieve the collective memory of resistance to capital

Some constitutional elements are as follows:

- Community defenders who belong to a collective, acknowledged as protagonists of their own defense actions.
- Belonging to a collective, group, or community in which, based on their collective memory, people share an identity which is a foundation for shaping resistance and defense actions.
- The existence of dialogue and consideration mechanisms and processes between women and men that enable them to reach agreements and make decisions sustained in social–community interaction and support, i.e., guidelines for everyday linking and reciprocity.
- The social construction of territory incorporates a sense of belonging and identity related to a territory, to a certain shared space that links individuals, collectives, native peoples, and communities in order to face human rights violations and grievances.

As follows, we present a brief summary of the main points of coincidence in Latin America regarding violence, protection, and security among community defenders. As well as the coincidences, we also show

the findings regarding collective security and action strategies that civic associations and grassroots organizations construct as part of their coping with situations of risk and threat in their territories.

These findings are part of the collective considerations that took place in the Latin American Meetings on Community Security called by ProDESC and held in Mexico City in June 2017 and April 2018, which were aimed at *"sharing and dialoguing about collective actions for community security that enable the construction of efficient responses to situations of risk and criminalization."*

The following organizations from **Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru** participated (in alphabetical order):

- **Asociación de Mujeres Sindicalistas "FEBE Elizabeth Velázquez"** ("FEBE Elizabeth Velázquez" Association of Trade Union Women)
- **Aluna, Acompañamiento Psicosocial (ALUNA A.c.)** (Aluna Psychosocial Accompaniment)
- **Pensamiento y Acción Social (pAs)** (Social Thinking and Action)
- **Asamblea Popular del Pueblo Juchiteco (APPJ)** (Popular Assembly of the Juchitán People)
- **Defensoría de los Derechos Humanos del Pueblo de Oaxaca (DDHPO)** (Human Rights Defense Council of the Oaxacan People)
- **Centro para la Acción Legal en Derechos Humanos (CALDH)** (Center for Legal Action on Human Rights)
- **Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada, A.c.** (Fray Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada Human Rights Center)
- **Centro de Derechos Humanos Zeferino Ladrillero** (Zeferino Ladrillero Human Rights Center)
- **Centro de Investigación y Acción Social por la Paz** (Research and Social Action Center for Peace)
- **Consorcio Para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad Oaxaca** (Oaxaca Consortium for Parliamentary Dialogue and Equity)
- **Colectiva Matamba Acción Afrodiaspórica** (Matamba Afrodiaspora Action Collective)
- **Comité de Defensa de Derechos Humanos Chololan** (Chololan Human Rights Defense Committee)
- **Coalición de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores Migrantes Temporales Sinaloenses** (Coalition of Temporary Migrant Workers from Sinaloa)
- **Comité de Defensa Integral de Derechos Humanos Gobixha (CODIGO DH)** (Gobixha Committee for Comprehensive Human Rights Defense)

- **Comité de Resistencia al Proyecto Eólico Piedra Larga y Asamblea Comunal de Unión Hidalgo (**Resistance Committee to the Piedra Larga Wind Energy Project and the Communal Assembly of Unión Hidalgo)
- **Frente Interdisciplinario para el Desarrollo Social y Solidario (FIDSS)** (Interdisciplinary Front for Social Development and Solidarity)
- **Frente de Comunidades por la Defensa de los Derechos Colectivos en la Montaña de Guerrero.**
- **JASS, México.**
- **Grupo de Mujeres Indígenas en Defensa de la Vida, Unión Hidalgo, Oaxaca** (Group of Indigenous Women in Defense of Life from Unión Hidalgo, Oaxaca)
- **Servicios para una Educación Alternativa (EDUCA, A.C.)** (Services for Alternative Education)
- **Ejido la Sierrita de Galeana, Durango** (Communal Lands in Sierrita de Galeana, Durango)
- **Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas Andinas y Amazónicas del Perú (ONAMIAP)** (National Organization of Indigenous Women from the Andes and the Amazon)
- **PBI Mexico**
- **Proyecto sobre Organización, Desarrollo, Educación e Investigación (PODER)** (Organization, Development, Education, and Research Project)
- **Guardia Cimarrona de San Basilio de Palenque, Colombia** (Maroon Guard from San Basilio de Palenque, Colombia)
- **Grupo de Formación e Intervención para el Desarrollo Sostenible (GRUFIDES)** (Education and Intervention Group for Sustainable Development)
- **Resistencia contra la minería lagunas de Conga en Cajamarca** (Conga Lagoons Resistance Against Mining)
- **Red Feminista Antimilitarista** (Anti-militarist Feminist Network)
- **Servicios y Asesorías para la Paz (SERAPaz)** (Services and Consultation for Peace)
- **Sindicato Independiente, Nacional y Democrático de Jornaleros Agrícolas (SINDJA)** (Independent, National and Democratic Union of Agricultural Workers)
- **Tequio Jurídico, A.C.**

Coincidences and Similarities in the Latin American Context

Context identification.

Considerations confirmed the existence of the same scenario throughout Latin America: a political and economic system structured according to a capitalist, colonialist, and patriarchal logic that has given shape to extensive processes of dispossession and domination through broad historic processes of socio–political violence expressed in hegemonic relations of power, the naturalization of violence against women, men, and intercultural groups through racism, sexism, male chauvinism, and genocide.

Dispossession was described as a process historically established in the territories of the Latin American peoples and communities. Land dispossession generated disputes over territory with underlying socio–environmental conflicts rooted in the exploitation and neo–colonial character of the territories and commons in the hands of financial capital, linked with national and local stakeholders that seek to take ownership of life, imposing a hegemonic form of human development, fully disciplining the people's bodies, territories, social relations, and behaviors.

These are the underpinnings of ongoing dispute over territory between communities and various stakeholders at a local, regional, national, and Latin American scale in which women's structural and historic exclusion from participation in collectives has prevailed.

Indigenous women and women from popular urban areas have been particularly excluded. In these territories and processes there are different ways of understanding and interpreting territory, territoriality and body–territory.

Community Security

The current context has generated the need to activate new spaces for linking, reorganizing, and reconstituting organizations and communities for the defense of human rights, community na-

tural resources, territory, and labor human rightss, which have served to counterbalance the different domination processes and forms of wealth dispossession, appropriation, and accumulation.

For this reason, defenders live in a context in which they are criminalized for their human rights defense activities. They face different forms of violence ranging from physical and psychological torture (that they suffer when detained) to the loss of their lives. In their everyday life, defenders are the target of harassment, threats, delegitimization, criminalization, defamation, prosecution, physical and psychological torture, forced disappearance, and assassination, among other attacks.

Caring Practices.

Community defenders carry out pedagogical practices to raise awareness, sensitize, and give visibility to the problems they face, from the popular education approach and the human rights doctrine, to the intervention and/or application of participatory research–action methodologies, as well as methodologies based on gender (race and social class, popular feminism) and ethnic condition.

In these practices, participants carry out context and conflict analysis, stakeholder mapping, and risk analysis, as methodological linchpins prevailing in the design of security strategies. They also resort to a comprehensive vision of defense, diversifying strategies, linking legal defense with organizing work, using cross–sectional perspectives, concretizing a common political agenda, and resorting to communication and dissemination strategies, advocacy, and interorganizational linking (thematic or work networks).

Prevention for Security

Spaces are constructed for carrying out different activities aimed at informing about the conflict that has emerged and its risks, providing facilitation for political education and the retrieval of a community's socio–cultural elements (collective memory, identity, ancestrality, spirituality, sense of belonging, and attachment to territory).

Educational spaces for human rights defenders also have a local approach to explain security mechanisms of the State. Internal, local, or community organization is based on this comprehensiveness as an effective community security and justice mechanism that resorts to both the community's own local mechanisms (community or traditional guards, as well as assemblies or organized collectives) and national–State mechanisms (precautionary measures). Various strategies are constructed which will be operated by the members of the collective

Risk–Coping

The risk–coping responses presented at both meetings can be differentiated on three levels of action:

- **Individual/personal level:** self–care, healing, spiritual ceremonies, psychosocial support, somatic education, legal and political denunciation.

- **Collective/organizing level:** communication strategies (organization directory and links between organizations), workshops (context analysis and community security), consolidation of protection and action networks, and the retrieval of memory and collective identity.

- **Community/political–territorial level:** community rituals (feasts, celebrations, etcetera), stakeholder mapping, territory mapping and diagnosis, evidencing and disseminating processes of territorial dispute, local development, and socio–cultural appropriation of space.

Knowledge Shared as Findings

Caring Practices

Some of the organizations that participated in both meetings have developed security strategies that take into account different components of human life (culture, territory's physical–geographic space, social and cultural context, ethnic and gender condition, the political and economic system, as well as labor–related relationships). This implies that the development of a security mechanism can be understood as an ongoing construction process, a construction carried out by all community members, men and women, envisioning different perceptions, approaches, and specificities of the defenders, communities, and geographic context.

Community–based security strategies are developed in view of three different spheres (the individual, the collective, and the socio–community sphere) which are comprised of different dimensions (cultural, government, psychic, moral, spiritual, social, territorial, and legal dimensions). Methodologically, the strategies were thought out in a comprehensive way, resorting to different theoretical tools and practices, such as an interdisciplinary approach, a diversity perspective, and a liberation pedagogy.

There is a need to review, re–visit, and reconstruct concepts such as security, defense, and protection.

Prevention

The development of information materials and tools (documentaries, photographs, manuals, music, and theater/dance) is a way of socializing and facilitating information in a creative, concrete, and useful way: "applying creativity to political action."

Ancestrality and spirituality enable a personal and collective introspection process in terms of communal healing.

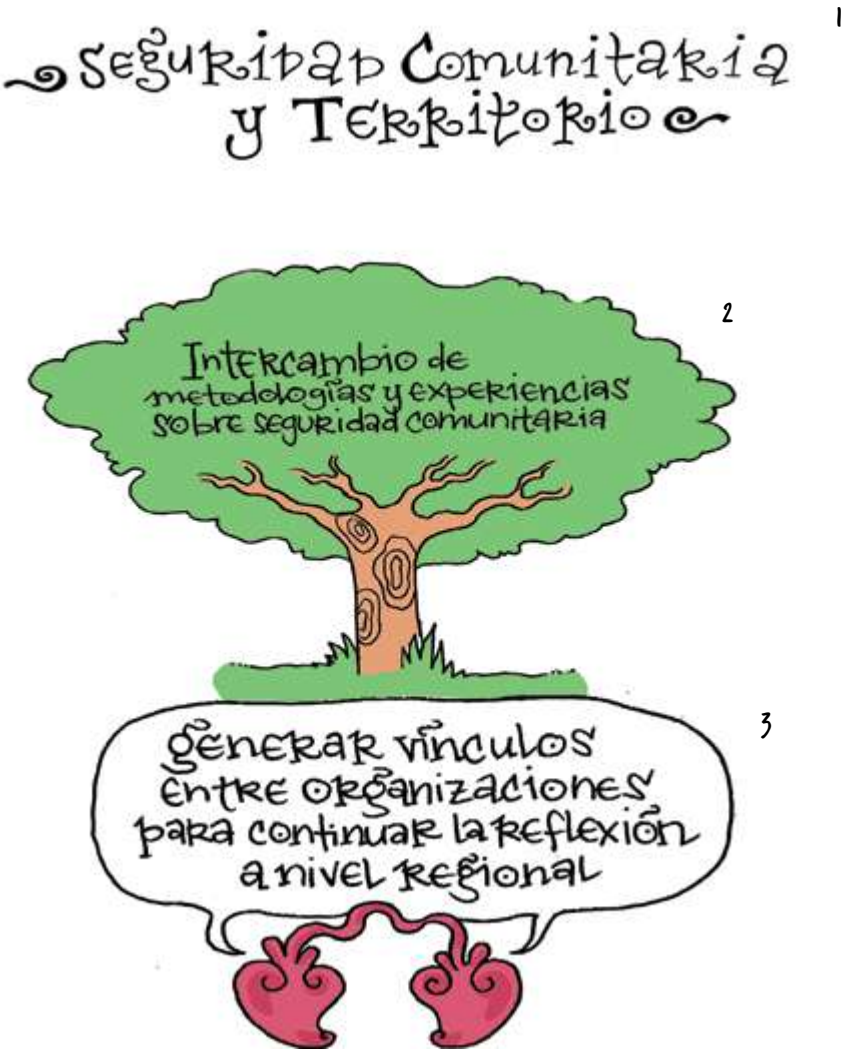
Community security mechanisms need to be thought out from a prevention perspective, rather than from reactivity in order to thus visibilize the risks faced by community defenders.

For an effective security mechanism to exist, struggles and contexts must be territorialized, collective memory must be used as a protection

and care methodology, and the prevention mechanisms granted by the State must be critically analyzed since they do not necessarily respond to a community's needs/realities.

Risk–Coping

In order to confront capital in its different forms via political and collective agreements that may lead us to the construction of community security mechanisms at a regional and transnational scale, we need to link different organizing efforts together with their nuances, their contextual and geographical specificities, as well as their components. A dialogue must be established between mechanisms that provide security based on the community itself and technologies and mechanisms emerging from the context of modernity and the State.



1) Community Security and Territory
2) Exchange of methodologies and experiences regarding community security
3) To create bonds between organizations to keep on thinking regionally

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Seguridad Comunitaria y Memoria Colectiva

Community security and collective memory

Historic memory as a tool used for protection mechanisms and community-based security measures

Collective memory for strengthening identity

Retrieve the collective memory of resistance to capital

Memory is transgenerational, personal, and collective. It is a repository of the history of struggles

Methodologies for Action
Retrieving the genealogy of community resistance
Breaking with the silences

The collective memory through spiritual and ancestral knowledge

It goes through the heart again

1) Memory as a way of recognizing and protecting territory

2) Validating the peoples' knowledge

Seguridad Comunitaria y Mujeres

Saberes ancestrales de las mujeres para la defensa del territorio

Sanación y Protección

Buscan estrategias para contrarrestar las campañas regresivas en materia de DDHH (grupos conservadores)

Vinculación · alianzas · Redes de apoyo

División comunitaria a causa de megaproyectos que afectan el territorio

Mantener la Comunicación entre ellas

Búsqueda y Creación de Oportunidades

Hacerse Visibles

...que favorezcan la autonomía económica de las mujeres.

Recursos económicos disminuyen para mujeres en situación de riesgo.

Observatorio del Feminicidio

· Mujeres defensoras del territorio en riesgo de agresión.

Trabajo desde la pedagogía

· Fortalecimiento de colectivos y estructuras comunitarias de mujeres
· Fortalecer sus agendas.

Community security and women

Community division due to megaprojects affecting the territory

links, alliances, networks

look for strategies to counteract regressive campaigns on human rights (conservative groups)

Women's ancestral knowledge for territory defense

Healing – Protection

Search and creation of opportunities …that favor the economic autonomy of women

Keep communication between them

Become visible

Economic resources decrease for women at risk

1) observatory on Feminicide
2) Women territory defenders at risk of aggression

Work from pedagogy
-Strengthening of groups and community structures of women
-Strengthen your agendas

1) Strive to obtain spaces
2) in the decision-making structures

Practice of diversity

Seguridad Comunitaria y Territorio

¿Qué significa para las mujeres Cuerpo Territorio?

Organización
Comunicación
Prevención

Acompañamiento con respeto a identidades culturales, sociales, comunitarias

¿Qué tiene de malo?

Compartir las metodologías para la acción

Puestas en prácticas en los niveles

Personal
Colectivo
Comunitario

Seguridad comunitaria como parte de un proceso de formación política constante

La educación popular como herramienta para llegar a las comunidades

No existe certeza sobre el futuro: lo construimos, como al territorio

La defensa del territorio se entrelaza con la seguridad comunitaria

Construir desde las comunidades redes que permitan actuar frente escenarios de riesgo:

- Asambleas comunitarias
- Romper con los silencios

No perder la capacidad de seguir

Aprendiendo con las comunidades y entre las organizaciones

Community security and territory

Organization
Communication
Prevention

What does body-territory mean for women?

1) Support with respect to cultural, social, and community identities
2) What is wrong with that?

1) Community security as part of ongoing political education /
2) Popular education as a tool to reach communities

1) Sharing methodologies for action
2) Implemented at different levels
3) Individual, Collective, & Community level

Do not lose the capacity to continue to learn with communities and among organizations

1) There is no certainty about the future: We construct our future like we construct territory
2) Territory defense is intertwined with community security

Building from networks that enable communities to act against risk scenarios:
- community assemblies
- break with the silences

This material looks into the context of Human Rights violations faced by communities that are caused by the effects of neo-extractivism that dispossesses them from their territories and causes violence which fragments communities and collectives. Within these contexts of impunity and criminalization we see community defenders who, from the front lines of defense, cope with the impacts and violence of transnational capitalism, facing a broad spectrum of pressures and threats that even places their own lives at risk. However, we also seek to retrieve the peoples' resilience and their historic resistance anchored in collective memory, and in the territory defense using their practices that provide continuity to community life.

The methodological notes that we present here address reflection to cope with these risks and violence, using a series of methodological tools to analyze the context, retrieve collective memory, and anchor it in resistance and defense. The strengthening of the peoples' collective structures and the construction of Community-based Security Measures is based on historic safeguarding practices rooted in their experience of inhabiting territory.

This guide is the outcome of the considerations we make while supporting organizing processes of land and territory defense. It is also nourished by a variety of exchanges and dialogues with communities and organizations that seek to construct Community Security alternatives and mechanisms. For this reason, it is a collective construction that we seek to place within reach of those who resist, struggle, and organize to defend their human rights. This material also reflects our hopes and aspirations to defend life.

ProDESC