



Grupo de
Información en
Reproducción
Elegida, A.C.

GIRE

Successful Strategies to Decriminalize Abortion: Mexico City Case Study

Fiapac

Eight Conference

Berlin, Germany

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GIRE Grupo de Información en Reproducción

Elegida

Information Group on Reproductive Choice

Mexico

Multiple strategies to decriminalize abortion

- ❑ State-of-the-art **information** on RR
 - ❑ Construct a **favorable public opinion**
 - ❑ Improve **access to justice**
 - ❑ Improve **health services**
 - ❑ Build a **constituency**
 - ❑ Foster **collaboration** with public agencies to improve access to legal and safe abortion services
-



Setting the Tone for Public Debate

- The **dilemma** of abortion
 - The **choices** for dealing with unwanted pregnancies:
 - Reconciliation with pregnancy
 - Abortion
 - Adoption
 - The **key question**: Who decides?
-



Tactics for Public Discourse

- **Creating a middle ground:** from the right to the bodily integrity to the right to health, life, autonomy and freedom
 - **Using innovative discourse to reach the undecided:**
 - ✓ No one is in favor of abortion but in favor of women to decide
 - ✓ We all want to reduce mortality due to unsafe abortions
 - ✓ We all want the need of abortions to end
 - ✓ We all want to prevent unwanted pregnancies
 - **Raising an alternative discourse within the Catholic Church**
 - **Developing core arguments: public health, social justice and democracy**
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Strategic Actions

- **Focusing** on stakeholders:
 - Policy and decision makers: legislators, health professionals and opinion leaders: intellectuals, journalist, political analysts, artists, the academic: schools of law and health
 - **Tailoring** specialized publications for key actors
 - **Building alliances** within and beyond the feminist movement
 - **Research** to build arguments based on scientific evidence information
 - **Opinion polls** to check the social and political context
 - **Monitoring** legislation:
 - Avoid setbacks
 - Spot and take advantage of opportunities
 - **Promoting** public policies:
 - Protect maternity
 - Promote access to contraceptives
 - Incorporate sexuality education in the school curriculae
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The critical fundamental legal arguments

- Take advantage of the Mexican law and Constitution
 - **Art. 4th.** Of the Mexican Constitution:
“Every person has the right to decide freely, with information and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children”
 - Mexico is a **Lay state**
 - Emphasizing women's fundamental rights to **health, life, autonomy, privacy, free from discrimination and freedom**
 - The **balance of rights**: no right can be absolute.
While life is protected in the Mexican Constitution,
Women's fundamental rights must be guaranteed by the state: expanding options, creating conditions
-



Legal Strategies

- Gradual and incremental
 - **Leading quietly:** Behind the scenes;
Protagonism is not always useful
 - **Varied legal approach:**
 - Access to legal and safe abortion
 - Harmonize/normalize legal abortion indications throughout the country
 - Decriminalize abortion in Mexico
-



Dealing with Adversaries

We chose to:

- Avoid burnout and confrontation
 - Show wisdom, good sense and prudence
 - Show tolerance and patience
 - Reduce moral legitimacy by exposing:
 - √ Pro-Life's misuse of public funds: US \$3 million
 - √ Catholic church hierarchy and pedophilia scandal
-

Placing abortion in the public agenda

- We positioned the most accepted legal indication: **abortion of pregnancy due to rape**
 - **Strategic litigation**: powerful tool to gain understanding and public support
 - **Public campaigns** to create awareness of legal indications
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Public Campaigns





Taking back the meaning of Life





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The meaning of Life





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The meaning of Life

VIDA ES...



Tener una familia feliz

"Me llamo Marta. A los 15 años quedé embarazada. Todo mundo me rechazaba por eso. Estuve a punto de dejar mis estudios. Mi novio me abandonó. Solo no hubiera podido mantener un hogar. Decidí interrumpir mi embarazo. No fue fácil, pero pude rehacer mi vida. Hoy tengo una familia feliz".



A Comprehensive Law to decriminalize abortion

- ❑ Adequate to our social and political context
 - ❑ Moderate: up to 12 weeks
 - ❑ Rigorous legal and social arguments
 - ❑ At the center: women's health, life, autonomy and freedom
 - ❑ Guaranteed access to free public services
 - ❑ Prevention of unwanted pregnancies
 - ❑ Prioritized programs on sexual and reproductive health services: access to birth control methods, including emergency contraception
 - ❑ Promotion of sexuality education: “Tu Futuro en Libertad”, “Your Future with Freedom”
-



Multiple elements of success

- ❑ A social and political crisis
 - ❑ A dispute among conservatives and liberals
 - ❑ Mexico City's liberal society with a clear process of secularism
 - ❑ Diverse public speakers in favor of decriminalizing abortion beyond the feminist movement
 - ❑ A favorable public opinion supported by the media
 - ❑ A left wing majority in the House of Assembly
 - ❑ A pro-choice government empowered due to the belligerence of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and anti-choice fundamentalist organizations morally discredited
 - ❑ Strong foundations to decriminalize abortion
 - ❑ An international tendency to liberalize abortion laws
 - ❑ An international human rights framework
 - ❑ NGOs well organized and prepared to seize the opportunity
-



What to do?

EN EL DF TIENES LAS PRIMERAS 12 SEMANAS PARA DECIDIR.
YA NO ES CLANDESTINO. LA LEY ESTÁ DE TU LADO.



OTROS HOSPITALES

1

Ve al Módulo de Atención Ciudadana de los hospitales aquí mencionados.

Si eres menor de edad debes ir con padre, madre o representante legal.

2

Llena la solicitud que te entregará el hospital.

Documentos:
Identificación oficial y comprobante de domicilio.
Estudio de embarazo (opcional).

3

Te pedirán que firmes el Consentimiento Informado para la Interrupción Legal del Embarazo (ILE).

4

La Interrupción Legal del Embarazo (ILE) será realizada en un máximo de cinco días.

INFÓRMATE AL 5544 4221

**SI RECIBES ALGÚN MALTRATO
O TE NIEGAN EL SERVICIO
LLAMA AL 5658 6223**

Hospital Materno Infantil Xochimilco

Tel. 5676-0555 Calzada Nativitas Esq. Prolongación 16 de Septiembre s/n Col. Xaltocán, Deleg. Xochimilco

Hospital Materno Infantil Cuajimalpa

Tel. 5812-0570 Av. 16 de Septiembre s/n Col. Pueblo de Contadero, Deleg. Cuajimalpa de Morelos

Hospital Materno Infantil Tlahuac

Tel. 5842-3605 Av. Tlahuac-Chalco 231 Col. La Habana, Deleg. Tlahuac

Hospital Materno Infantil Topilejo

Tel. 5848-0469 Santa Cruz No. 1 Col. San Miguel Topilejo, Deleg. Tlalpan

Hospital Materno Infantil Magdalena Contreras

Tel. 5683-5108 Av. Luis Cabrera No. 619 Col. San Jerónimo Lidice, Deleg. Magdalena Contreras

Hospital General Dr. Enrique Cabrera

Tel. 1285-7100 Av. Prolongación 5 de Mayo No. 3170, Esq. Centenario Colonia Exhacienda de Tarango, Delegación Álvaro Obregón

Hospital De La Ciudad De Mexico "Dr. Belisario Domínguez"

Tel. 5850-0000 Av. Tlahuac No. 4866, Esq. Zacatlán de las Manzanas Col. San Lorenzo Tezonco, Delegación Iztapalapa

Hospital General Milpa Alta

Tel. 5844-5576 Carretera Milpa Alta Chalco Km. 2.5 Barrio Santa Cruz, Delegación Milpa Alta

Hospital Materno Infantil Cuauhtepc

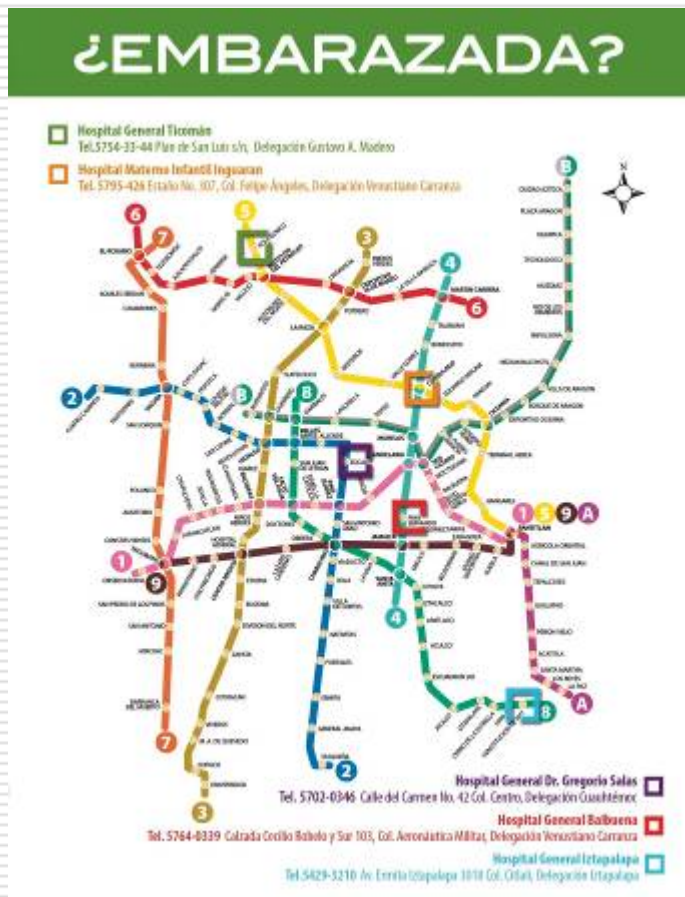
Tel. 5306-0622 Av. Emiliano Zapata No. 17 Col. Cuauhtepc Barrio Bajo, Delegación Gustavo a Madero



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Where to go?





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Who has an abortion?

¿EMBARAZADA?

EN EL DF TIENES LAS PRIMERAS
12 SEMANAS PARA DECIDIR.
YA NO ES CLANDESTINO.
LA LEY ESTÁ DE TU LADO.

INFÓRMATE: 56 58 11 11
www.andar.org.mx **andar**

Who has an abortion?



¿EMBARAZADA?

**EN EL DF TIENES LAS PRIMERAS
12 SEMANAS PARA DECIDIR.
YA NO ES CLANDESTINO.
LA LEY ESTÁ DE TU LADO.**

INFÓRMATE: 56 58 11 11
www.andar.org.mx **andar**

Logos of various organizations and institutions are listed vertically on the right side of the poster.



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Who has an abortion?

¿EMBARAZADA?

**EN EL DF TIENES LAS PRIMERAS
12 SEMANAS PARA DECIDIR.
YA NO ES CLANDESTINO.
LA LEY ESTÁ DE TU LADO.**

INFÓRMATE: 56 58 11 11
www.andar.org.mx **andar**

The advertisement features a woman with a thoughtful expression, resting her chin on her hand. The background is dark and moody. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent green and white banner. The 'andar' logo is in the bottom right corner.

Legal Abortion Services

- ❑ As of October: 16 months, 14760
 - ❑ Provided in 14 public city hospitals and 1 clinic
 - ❑ Mexico City residents: 11740 (79.5%)
 - ❑ Other states of the country: 3020 (20%)
 - ❑ 52% single, 40% married or unite, widows 85%, Catholics 80%
 - ❑ Minors are accompanied in 95% of the cases (0.25)
-

Use of medical procedures

- Gestational age 8-9 weeks
 - Misoprostol: 6221 (42%)
 - Misoprostol + aspiration: 5980 (40.5%)
 - Misoprostol + d&c 2559 (17.3%)
-

Services provided

- ❑ **Counseling** is provided by social workers and nurses: includes the three options: 1. Reconciliation with pregnancy. 2. Adoption. 3. Abortion.
 - ❑ **Contraception** is emphasized during the whole process.
 - ❑ In all 14 hospitals, 80% take contraceptive.
 - ❑ 65% prefer the use of IUD.
 - ❑ All **adolescents** are given **materials** on reproductive health to prevent STIs, emergency contraception and a strip of 10 condoms and 2 boxes of contraceptives
 - ❑ In one of the clinics, it has been registered that **only 3% have reconciled with their pregnancy.**
-

Significance of the Supreme Court Resolution

- On August 26th, 2008 the Supreme Court upheld the law's constitutionality, setting national jurisprudence
 - A super majority of 8 Justices (of 11 total) voted for the health, life, autonomy and freedom of women to decide about their reproductive lives
-



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Post-ruling campaign

**LA SUPREMA
CORTE ESTÁ
A FAVOR DE LA
IDA**

Gracias a la ratificación de la ley de interrupción del embarazo, la vida de miles de mujeres ya no corre peligro en prácticas clandestinas. Hoy en el DF, el derecho a decidir sí se puede ejercer.

Asociación
andar
por el bienestar & salud

www.andar.org.mx



Post-ruling campaign

Por la defensa de la vida y los derechos de las mujeres

Despenalizar el aborto...

- No obliga ni incita a ninguna mujer a practicárselo.
- Protege la vida y la salud de las mujeres
- Respeta su capacidad de decidir y valora su proyecto de vida

Defiende tus creencias personales

No dejes que nadie

decida por ti

Post-ruling campaign



PARA LA SUPREMA CORTE
LA INTERRUPCIÓN DEL EMBARAZO
ES DE LEY
¿Y EN NUESTRO ESTADO CUÁNDO?





Implacables en la batalla, generosas en la
Victoria

Relentless during battle, generous in victory)

Jorge Luis Borges



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Thank you!
