TOTONACAS INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OF THE NORTHERN SIERRA OF PUEBLA

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY: STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE HERITAGE LOSS AND PROMOTE BUEN VIVIR IN TOTONACAS COMMUNITIES OF THE NORTHERN SIERRA OF PUEBLA

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RESEARCH PROGRESS
FIELDWORK WITH INDIGENOUS WOMEN



"The Totonacas Indigenous women of the Northern Sierra of Puebla are pillars of Buen Vivir and the solidarity economy. Through their ancestral wisdom, organisation, and collective work, this research aims to promote ways of life based on cooperation, reciprocity, and care for the territory; to contribute to strengthening community autonomy; and to preserve cultural identity, showing that collective well, being can be built from the roots and the dignity of Indigenous peoples."

LOCATION



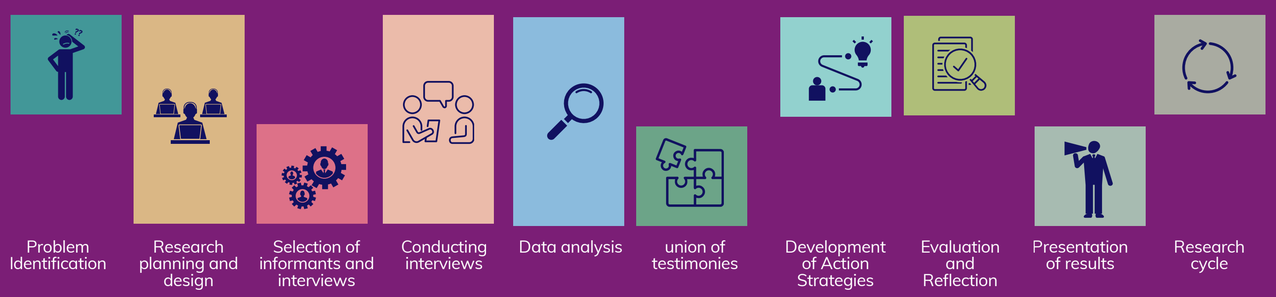
SOCIAL PROBLEM

In San Felipe Tepatlán, Indigenous women play a key role in cultural preservation and in the pursuit of Buen Vivir. Despite migration, lack of opportunities, and the threats posed by large-scale projects that create uncertainty, they drive economic revitalisation through their knowledge and community practices. Their participation strengthens the local economy, the relationship with the land, and the continuity of Totonaca identity, demonstrating that Buen Vivir is built through resistance, solidarity, and cultural rootedness.

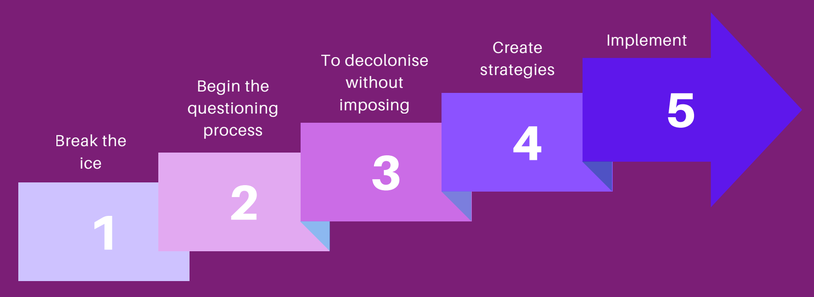


RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

METHOD
PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH
ORAL HISTORY



METHOD – PEDAGOGY OF THE QUESTION (PAULO FREIRE



RECIPROCITY
FAIR WORK
ENVIRONMENT
CULTURAL HERITAGE
SOLIDARITY

Documentation of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in San Felipe Tepatlán

Gathering information about the cultural heritage of San Felipe is essential for preserving collective memory and strengthening the community's identity. This process makes it possible to recognise the knowledge, traditions, and values that have given meaning to local life, while also serving as a foundation for promoting development projects that respect and enhance the cultural richness of the community.





Community Engagement Activities (Totonacas Offerings Contest)

The Totonacas Indigenous Offerings Contest represents a valuable cultural expression that strengthens the community's identity and sense of belonging. Through this event, ancestral knowledge, symbols, and rituals that honour life and collective memory are preserved. It also fosters intergenerational participation and pride in Totonac roots, contributing to cultural and community strengthening.





Construction of a Catholic Church La Fábrica, H. Galeana

The project aimed to strengthen community organisation for the construction of the local Catholic church through a participatory process led by Indigenous women, who took on leadership roles in managing and coordinating the church committee. Using community participation methodologies, collaboration among residents was encouraged, leading to the training of local builders in reading architectural plans, the organisation of collective workdays, and the management of local financial support. Thanks to this joint effort and the commitment of the women, more than 40% of the church's construction has been completed, standing as a clear example of cooperation, faith, and community work.





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