

CIVICUS SOLIDARITY FUND INTERVIEWS:

CENTRO DE DERECHOS HUMANOS ZEFERINO LADRILLERO, MEXICO



Tell us a little bit about your organisation and the support you requested from the CIVICUS Solidarity Fund (CSF)

The Centro de Derechos Humanos Zeferino Ladrillero works for human dignity in one of the most hostile, adverse and repressive territories in Mexico in terms of human rights. From the work we have done in defense of the land, water, forests, indigenous peoples, and the environment, we found that a great problem is also the use of the justice system to criminalize social protest as well as poverty.

We saw the need to promote legal instruments that allow the release of those unjustly imprisoned and we were able to find in the CIVICUS Solidarity Fund the necessary support to develop advocacy work, dissemination on social networks as well as to provide legal support for those in vulnerable situations who require this holistic support to be set free.

How was your organisation's experience mobilising resources?

For us, receiving the grant from the CIVICUS Solidarity Fund has been very important, in the sense that this allowed us to have the possibility of financially supporting 3 of our lines of work, as well as to have the means to pay for our local transportation, which we need in order to carry out our work.

What was the most important change that you have observed as a result of being awarded the CSF?

We can identify 3:

1) Approval of the Amnesty law in the State of Mexico last December 2020, which is the result of the advocacy work carried out by hundreds of families throughout the state of Mexico, together with the Centro Zeferino Ladrillero; 2) The need to rethink the justice system has been placed on the public agenda of the state of Mexico, adjusting it to international principles and standards on the matter; 3) Freedom of unjustly imprisoned persons; At the beginning of February Antonio Félix and Leticia Arcos were released after spending 3 years unjustly imprisoned and thanks to the advocacy, visibility to the issue and legal action were finally released.



Other than the financial support, has being part of the CSF been helpful in any other ways?

The possibility of having connections and articulation with sister organizations from other countries. The work of the Zeferino Ladrillero is at a grassroots level and that tends to make it difficult for us to follow up internationally, but without a doubt the CSF was an enriching experience that allowed us to think about the international projection of our work.

What could have made the experience better?

A more personal link, face-to-face meetings, but of course the context of the global pandemic has made this very humane exercise of communication in person difficult for us.

Any advice for future applicants?

Commit with all the courage and spirit to the defense of human rights will, at some point, generate changes and wins from and for civil society, this is something we need to support and fight for even in disruptive times.

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