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**Viajemos Seguras and Mejoramiento Barrial: Institutionalizing the fight against
gender-based violence in Mexico City's public realm.**

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Abstract

Gender- based violence in the public realm is an issue found in multiple nations which threatens societal development. With growing pressures to create more inclusive and equitable communities, countries and cities have begun to take concrete steps towards fighting violence against women. This master thesis analyzes the programmatic approach taken by the Mexico City government to fight gender based violence in the public realm. Particularly, it looked at how through the use of two programs, Viajemos Seguras and Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial, the local officials have attempted to create safe experiences for female users. These programs relied on physical interventions such as women only subway cars and buses, reporting modules, installation of lighting and clearing obstacles and vegetation to create safer environments.

Using user-based interviews and surveys, this thesis identified measures in which these two programs have been successful at increasing perceived safety. While the respondents recognized the temporality of these solutions, and the need to attack the societal roles and tendencies such as the Mexican machismo, the female users did feel more comfortable using the services provided through the programs. In the end, despite the long road ahead the Mexico City government's intentions and interventions are headed in the right direction.

Chapter 1: Why safe public transportation and spaces matter?

Each and every day more and more women join the workforce. They leave their homes, venture into the city, while still being the primary domestic caregivers. "Women's multiple roles and their associated time poverty impacts significantly on the ways they travel." ¹ Women have different access patterns to employment as well as financial resources which shape and program their journeys in unique ways. The built environment is a critical factor in the creation of gendered uses and the associated power relations². Since the late 70's, scholars have recognized the many obstacles faced by women when freely and satisfactorily using the public realm. These obstacles include the fear of crime and harassment.³

According to some scholars, this fear is born out of a user's lack of control, "otherwise known as vulnerability." ⁴ The likeliness of feeling vulnerable to violence or attack can restrict their patterns and schedules, preventing them from accomplishing their everyday tasks. This vulnerability is exacerbated by certain physical aspects of the structures in themselves, such as poor lighting, lonely bus stops, among others, which

¹ Kerry Hamilton, Linda Jenkins, Frances Hodgson, and Jeff Turner, "Promoting Gender Equality in Transport", Equal Opportunity Commission, Research and Resources, vol. 32 (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2005), 19.

² Burgess, Gemma. "Planning and the Gender Equality Duty – Why Does Gender Matter?" People, Place and Policy Online, 2008, 112-21. doi:10.3351/ppp.0002.0003.000

³ Kristen Day, "Constructing Masculinity and Womens Fear in Public Space in Irvine, California," Gender, Place & Culture 8, no. 2 (July 14, 2010): 109, accessed October 11, 2017, doi:10.1080/09663690120050742..

⁴ Nilay Yavuz and Eric W. Welch, "Addressing Fear of Crime in Public Space: Gender Differences in Reaction to Safety Measures in Train Transit," Urban Studies 47, no. 12 (March 15, 2010): 2492, accessed November 4, 2017, doi:10.1177/0042098009359033

limit a female's freedom of mobility.⁵ Unpleasant experiences in public spaces and public transportation, or fear of them, limit on a woman's "ability to benefit from opportunities and convenience".⁶ Studies have found that women tend to "generalize their experiences across time, space and type of victimizations".⁷ In other words, women who have been subject to violence or know of someone who has been a victim will develop a certain level of fear towards either the public space or public transportation system. As pointed out by some researchers, it is very different to fear rape and murder, than to fear a mugging or beating.⁸ It "reduces their capacity to go to work, school and public life."⁹ The provision of safe public transportation and spaces needs to be insured to increase female's potential of freely participating in public life.

Since the mid-2000's, Mexico City has acknowledged the importance of providing safe open spaces and public transportation for women. The City has actively tried to combat violence against women in the public realm through programmatic initiatives, yet recurrent episodes of violence coupled with mass local uproar, question the efficacy of these actions.

This thesis aims to identify how Mexico City's local initiatives have tried to ensure a safe environment for women when experiencing the city. Critical to this assessment, is to identify how the initiatives to counteract violence against women in public spaces and

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid, 2491

⁷ Ibid, 2493

⁸ Mexico, INMUJERES, *Programa Ciudad Segura Y Amigable Para Ninas Y Mujeres*, June 27, 2017, 13, accessed October 04, 2017, <http://inmujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/cdmx-ciudad-segura-y-amigable-para-mujeres-y-ninas>

⁹ 018. *Forbes Website*. March 18. Accessed December 01, 2017. <https://www.forbes.com.mx/las-10-ciudades-con-el-transporte-mas-peligroso-para-mujeres/>

public transportation have been successful in providing perceived safety. It will attempt to shine a light on gender-based violence in the public realm within Mexico City. It will investigate if the Mexico City government has addressed gender inclusiveness in planning, particularly in policies regarding public transportation and open space provision. More specifically, it seeks to analyze the affirmative actions used in two locally administered programs to counteract violence against women, and the user perception of these interventions. While this thesis could focus on just one of these programs, it is the combination of both public realms, transportation and space, that ensure a complete safe urban experience.

The Viajemos Seguras Program, overseen by the Women's Institute of Mexico City (INMUJERES), uses an array of actions to provide safe journeys for female public transportation users within Mexico City. The second program, Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial, is a community based public space upgrading program managed by the Secretary of Social Development, which aims to provide safe and inclusive spaces for women. This thesis will focus on how these programs have been successful both from the official perception and that of the users. For purposes of this thesis, success will be defined as having knowledge of the program, and using the services or interventions provided through the programs. Finally, it will hone in on areas for improvement and provide recommendations for future development.

Methodology, Data, and Limitations

The methodology for this research uses a combination of policy analysis, archival research, expert interviews and survey collection. Initial methodology included a historical study of policies developed surrounding gender based violence in the public realm. It comprised interviewing agency officials and program coordinators, users, and experts which included academia and journalists. Coupled with these interviews and policy analysis, archival research about previous initiatives as well as the current climate surrounding this topic, would help paint a descriptive picture of the City's, and program's context. However, due to the relevancy of the research topic, and the dependency on local officials, and unforeseeable constraints, the methodology suffered alterations along the way. Consequently, these changes represented limitation which influenced the findings identified as well as subsequent recommendations.

Limitations

First, after a deadly 7.4 earthquake hit Mexico City in September of 2017, severe structural damages to public buildings limited access to archival information. Particularly, case files for the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial housed in the Secretary of Social Development's Archive were compromised. After many attempts, access to this information was denied on grounds of safety considerations.

Next, effectively communicating with respondents was an arduous task. Due to classism associated to race, as a white female it proved challenging to engage with darker skinned respondents, many of whom were initially distrustful. Coupled with this distrust, was also my personal fears and concerns regarding misleading signals, which could lead to further communication barriers. After many attempts, I was finally able to be more assertive and approach the respondents in a respectful yet inviting manner.

Furthermore, violence against women has continued to be a heated discussion in Mexico City after multiple heinous crimes were committed between September and December of 2017. This has led to continual evolution on both a programmatic and legal stage. Due to the constant modifications, certain aspects of this thesis may have been subject to change during the time of research.

Methodology

As an initial step, I collected background information regarding the development of violence against women and the process of mainstreaming this critical issue into policy agendas. To help contribute to this background information, I examined existing information on the topic in Mexico, as well as other comparable cases. Furthermore, I analyzed the existing national statistics regarding gender violence, safety, population trends and sociodemographic, provided through the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI).

Secondly, having set a backdrop to the development of these programs within the Mexico City context, I conducted archival research to identify the key factors that catalyzed this shift within policies. Next, I attempted to hold expert interviews with the

involved stakeholders. Due to the sensitivity associated with gender- based violence, these interviews were subject to an Institutional Review Board certification. In hopes of gathering a more complete description of the officially perceived success, after receiving IRB approval, contact was attempted not only to lead agencies, but also supportive secretaries. This entailed reaching out to five to seven city agencies involved in some aspect of the studied programs. However, due to the current electoral season in Mexico City government, many of the participating city officials were not available or willing to converse about the programs.

Facing this roadblock, the initially proposed methodology suffered alterations to accommodate for these obstacles. After discussion with my thesis advisor, the focus of this thesis was shifted towards user experience and their perceptions of success. To do so, internet based surveys regarding public transportation ridership were subject to the Institutional Review Board approval. Upon certification, these surveys were deployed through social media, email and other electronic means.

Additionally, following the previously designed methodology, and relying on personal and professional contacts through the Universidad National Autonoma de Mexico, I interviewed academicians involved in the program development as well as experts on combating violence against women. These interviews consisted of questions about:

- The historical development of the program.
- The role of the agency in the development of the program and the function of the agency today.

- The known success rates
- Evaluation and monitoring mechanisms, and the role of the agency in this process.

Samples of these questions include the following:

1. Could you please state your role in the program?
2. How long have you been involved with the program?
3. Can you please explain the program? What are the objectives? How does it work? Who oversees the program?
4. How long has the program been in place?
5. How did it come about? Why was it needed?
6. Is the program successful? Why?
7. If yes, Could you provide concrete examples of this success?
8. Does the program include evaluation and monitoring?
9. How do you monitor the program?
10. How do you evaluate the program?
11. Is this information publicly available?

Having compiled the official information from both archival material and interviews, I aimed to find what the reality on the ground is. To accomplish this, I conducted structured interviews with users/beneficiaries of these programs. In the case of "Viajemos Seguras"

I interviewed a sample of 42 female riders of the Mexico City public transportation system. The number of collected interviews was limited to the availability and willingness of participants. These structured interviews aimed to gather information on the effectiveness of this program. The following questions are samples of the structured interview:

1. How long have you been using the public transportation system?
2. How do you feel using the public transportation system?
3. Do you often travel on your own? If no, why not?
4. Do you avoid traveling at certain times, routes, etc.? If so, why and which one?
5. Have you experienced discomfort in the public transportation system? If you are comfortable could you share more details?
6. If so, when was the last time you experienced it?
7. Do you think this has gotten better or worse in the last five years?
8. Are you aware of the existence of the program, Viajemos Seguras?
9. If so, have you used their services?
10. Have you used the confined subway carts/ confined buses?
11. If so, how do you feel using them?
12. Do you believe this is an adequate solution to make public transportation more hospitable to women users?

13. What kind of improvements do you think could be done in the Public Transportation for women?

Coupled with this, I relied on social media to distribute the previously mentioned electronic survey. This survey provided insight on the level of diffusion the Viajemos Seguras program has, level of usage, as well as user based suggestions to combating violence towards women in the public realm. Over 200 Mexico City residents responded the survey. While this sample size is not statistically representative, it provides observations on the everyday experiences of female riders. I analyzed the results obtained from the users, through both interviews and surveys. I constructed an official perception of the "programs success rates" through reported figures in any form of evaluating documents as well as supporting public statements. To further support any claims or contributions of success I relied on collected journalistic reports. I then compared these official reports with those recorded by users to corroborate the information and identify any contradictory information between the official vs. user's perceptions. Acknowledging the limitations of interviewing a small sample of users, I used the mentioned journalistic information to provide insight of viewpoints that may not be captured in the interviewed and surveyed population. Furthermore, I looked into the instruments currently in place regarding evaluation and monitoring. I traced the steps to verify the transparency of this process. I identified the gaps which could mislead the officials and the general public.

For the "Mejoramiento Barrial" Program I undertook a similar process. First, I tried to conduct interviews with the coordinating agencies. The Ministry of Social Development

(Secretaria de Desarrollo Social) heads the program itself, but the approval and monitoring of the interventions are done through a technical committee made up of a host of organizations. I attempted to meet with a representative from each agency who are involved in the technical committee. Through a structured taped interview, I attempted to explore their knowledge of the program as well as the perceptions they have about the program's success. Upon receiving IRB approval, I was able to interview the former director of the program, focusing particularly on the program requirement of creating inclusive environments for women. I conducted site visits and female users in three public spaces deemed successful by the previous director. Through semi-structured interviews, I gathered their perception of the area as well as their knowledge and thoughts about the program. The questions included were similar to those in the Public Transport and can be found in the appendix.

Finally, through the analysis and comparison of official vs. on the ground perceptions, I identified gaps in each of the programs whether it be in implementation itself, or in the monitoring and evaluation of the program. These gaps serve as the target areas for future improvement. Finally, I provide detailed recommendations which include attributing responsibilities to city agencies, community and other stakeholders such as CBO's and NFP's.

Chapter 2: Development

For over 20 years, international platforms have recognized violence against women as a critical component of gender inequality. Through thorough research, the United Nations defined violence against women as “any act of violence based on the membership of the female sex.”¹⁰ Using a variety of resources, they began to understand better “the link between gender and violence.”¹¹ The World Health Organization found that gender inequalities produce vulnerability to violence. Traditions and customs which emphasize male dominance over women increase their vulnerability to being victims of various forms of violence. As stated in the 1993 UN General Assembly Declaration of the Elimination of Violence of women “violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, ...it is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.”¹² The forms of violence are various, from traditional practices such as female genital mutilation to sexual harassment and intimidation at work.

Initiatives spearheaded by the United Nations in as early as the mid-1970's aimed to bring this topic to the conversation and provide awareness on the matter. Shifting the

¹⁰ Organization, World Health. 2009. *Promoting gender equality to prevent violence against women*. Malta: WHO, 3. Accessed October 2018 http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/gender.pdf

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Nations, United. 1993. "*Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*." Accessed October 2018. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

focus from a family-unit based problematic to a more policy broad perspective, the United Nations organized a series of conferences during the declared “decade of women” from 1975 to 1985.¹³ At Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985) the progressive emergence of “violence against women as a serious international concern”¹⁴ was noteworthy. In 1985, the UN urged governments to expand efforts in raising public awareness of violence against women as a societal problem and increase assistance efforts to victims of violence by providing shelter, “support, legal and other services.”¹⁵

Continuing its work in fighting violence against women, the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 became the ideal opportunity for activists and their concerns about gender-violence to take center stage.¹⁶ It concluded with the adaptation of the declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. After finding that social pressures intensify violence against women, this document aimed to address the use of custom and traditions to excuse and perpetuate gender-violence practices. For example, Iraqi Kurdistan residents have used custom, Islam, morality, tradition as justifications for female genital mutilation. Policymakers targeted social norms such as those accepted in China and South Africa, where physical violence is an acceptable way to resolve conflicts within a relationship.

As a direct consequence of this mandate, gender was mainstreamed into all policies and programming done by the United Nations.¹⁷ The work done by the

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Ibid

international organization can be found reflected and adopted in many countries, hoping to reduce the incidences of gender-based violence.

International Reaction

In 2000, the General Assembly noted that “many forms of violence against women and girls had become subject to national level legislation, policies, and programs.”¹⁸

In Nigeria, 3 in 10 women are subject to some form of assault, be it physical, mental or sexual, before age 15.¹⁹ As a response to the UN mandate and working to combat these issues, Nigeria created the National Gender Policy. It attempts to build a society without discrimination, protect all citizens human rights and well-being which leads to "equitable rapid economic growth."²⁰ The National Gender Policy cements the country's intent to value women's reproductive and productive roles within the country's development. It uses strategies such as policy, partnerships and program reforms as an opportunity to mainstream gender in all sectors and at all levels. This entails prioritizing partnership redefinition and service delivery redesign within government and other stakeholders, as well as strengthening the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development's mandate.²¹

¹⁸ Nations, United " *United Nations Work on Violence Against Women*" Accessed December 11, 2017. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/news/unwvaw.html>

¹⁹ "Gender Based Violence," UNFPA Nigeria | Gender Based Violence, March 08, 2017, accessed March 05, 2018, <http://nigeria.unfpa.org/node/6123>.<http://nigeria.unfpa.org/node/6123>

²⁰ Nigerian Government. 2006. *National Gender Policy*. Lagos. Accessed November 15, 2017. http://www.aacoalition.org/national_policy_women.htm#iq_18

²¹ Ibid

Honduras National Women's Policy provides women with full enjoyment of citizenship, guarantees a non-discriminatory environment, female empowerment as well as access to equal opportunities.²² The National Women's Institute's tasks include implementing these policies by influencing the public agenda, reviewing gender-sensitive budgets, focusing on the territoriality of gender policies accounting for ethnic, socio-economic and political differences. Mainly, the National Women's Policy addresses the growing number of femicides in Honduras, which according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, "has one of the highest femicide rates in the world."²³ The policy also focuses on the need to create firm actions to overcome the challenges of legal enforcement, as well as the barriers to prevention and victim attention.²⁴ This policy spells out specific efforts to work towards the overarching goals and attributes specific agencies to each of these actions.

Mexico's response

As Mexico entered the early 2000's, a traditionally male society began opening doors for women. Unfortunately, according to scholars, many men had not found ways to

²² Gobierno de Honduras. 2010. *Política Nacional de la Mujer*. Tegucigalpa. Accessed December 15 2017 <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/hon157565.pdf>

²³ Cecilia Menjivar and Shannon Drysdale Walsh, "The Architecture of Femicide: The State, Inequalities, and Everyday Gender Violence in Honduras," *Latin American Research Review* 52, no. 2 (August 16, 2017): , 226. doi:10.25222/larr.73.n, Accessed December 2018. <https://larrlasa.org/articles/10.25222/larr.73/>

²⁴ Ibid

grasp these changing gender roles.²⁵ This tension led to violent outburst and increase in incidents of attacks against women.

To counteract this, and committed to the UN mandate, the country began taking an active role in the advancement of gender equality, specifically in combating gender-based violence. For instance, to better inform policymakers, the state committed to the provision of information on the magnitude and implications of gender-based violence. As a result in 2003, a survey of 26,042 women across the country was conducted regarding their experience with gendered violence. Results showed that 19.6% of women experienced psychological violence, 9.8% physical violence, 7% sexual violence.²⁶ Most importantly, the information displayed a critical issue regarding the discussion in itself of this violence, with most women not disclosing their experiences to anyone, nor seeking legal assistance.²⁷

This survey was conducted again in 2006 to continue monitoring the evolution of the situation. The study was conducted among women who attended the free of charge universal healthcare facilities. A total of 22,318 female users of health services from 31 out of the 32 entities in the country were surveyed.²⁸ Of the total respondents, 33.3% of

²⁵ Villegas, Paulina. "E Puede Desaprender El Machismo? Una Organización En México Cree Que Sí." NY Times, April, 2017. Accessed April 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/es/2017/04/24/eliminar-machismo-sociedad-mexicana-gendes/>.

²⁶ INEGI. 2004. *Encuesta Nacional de Violencia Contra las Mujeres*. Mexico. 19. Accessed November 2017 <http://www.salud.gob.mx/unidades/cdi/documentos/DOCSAL7537.pdf>

²⁷ Ibid, 25.

²⁸ INEGI. 2007. *Encuesta Nacional de Violencia Contra las Mujeres*. Mexico. 17. Accessed November 2017 http://internet.contenidos.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/productos/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/estudios/sociodemografico/mujeresrural/2011/702825048327.pdf

them had been subject to some form of violent relationship; this represents that 6 of every ten women in 2006 in Mexico had suffered some violence²⁹.

Using these findings as a justification, the Federal legislature, created the Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a Una Vida Libre de Violencia (General Law of Women's Access to a Life without Violence) herein referred to as LGAMVL. Through a strenuous process, the law was finally passed in February of 2007. This established a turning point for the Mexican policy-making process, as it included broader aspects of violence beyond just physical.³⁰ Additionally, it mandated the creation of a system charged with “coordinating efforts, instruments, policies, services, and interinstitutional actions, for the prevention, attention, sanction, and eradication of the violence against women.”

Furthermore, this law acknowledged the growing pressure of local politics. It recognized that “cities are more than ever prominent actors in global development that combining a great richness of institutions and resources, are key for development opportunities.”³¹ As a result, the LGAMVL stipulated the creation of local laws which aim to address violence against women within their states. By contextualizing the policies to a locality's unique characteristics, the legal body created better treated and targeted the desired outcomes.

²⁹ Ibid, 35

³⁰ INMUJERES. 2017 *Programa Ciudad Segura y Amigable para Ninas y Mujeres*. Mexico. Pg. 4 . Accessed November 2018 <http://inmujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/cdmx-ciudad-segura-y-amigable-para-mujeres-y-ninas>

³¹ Ibid (author's translation)

Complying with these provisions, in February of 2008, the government of the former Federal District passed the “Ley de Acceso a las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia del Distrito Federal” (District Federal’s Law of Women’s Access to a Life without Violence), herein referred to as LAMVLVDF. This ordinance was the result of an ample and profound coordination effort, as well as the sum of expert opinions and civic society’s will. It emphasizes the need for adequate and efficient mechanisms on the State’s part to allow women to access quality and just service. This law coordinates three levels of public policies, prevention, attention, and access to justice, hoping to guarantee women a life without violence.³²

This initiative aimed to provide a legal framework towards the fight against gender inequality and violence against women.³³ Most importantly, it required the elimination of all forms of discrimination and the establishment of affirmative actions favoring women within all aspects of the local government. This included tangible responsibilities attributed to each involved city agency. The legislation relied on three key policy instruments aligned with the overall purpose of equal opportunities and non-discrimination.³⁴ These included:

- The System for Equality between Women and Men in Distrito Federal
- General Program for Equal Opportunities and no discrimination towards women.

³² Ibid (author’s translation)

³³ Ibid pg. 5 (author’s translation)

³⁴ Asamblea del Distrito Federal. 2007. *Ley de Acceso a las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia del Distrito Federal*. Mexico. Accessed September 2017 <http://www.aldf.gob.mx/archivo-fde12a5698a6daa612f4515f386b1beb.pdf>

- The safeguarding of gender equality regarding equality

Since then, efforts have been made on the government's part to sensitize and train officials in the complexities of dealing with victims of violence. Accompanying toolkits were developed to help foster a comforting environment. The general program served as the primary platform used to define strategies and carry out actions to satisfy the policy goals. This program aimed to not only foster the fulfillment and enjoyment of all human rights for women but more importantly, "guarantee that all governmental public policies incorporate equal opportunities, equal treatment and non-discrimination in their programs and actions."³⁵ Furthermore, unlike previous initiatives, this program included strict norms on monitoring and evaluating outcomes.

Through the Mexican National Survey on Home Relationship Dynamics, the high occurrence of violent acts towards women and girls in the public realm was identified as a problem in need of tackling.³⁶ The local government, supported by the UN Women Office of Mexico, along with a variety of community-based organizations (CBO's) resolved to prioritize the creation of safer experiences for women and girls within the city.

³⁵ INMUJERES. 2017 *Programa Ciudad Segura y Amigable para Ninas y Mujeres*. Mexico. Pg. 4. Accessed November 2017 <http://inmujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/cdmx-ciudad-segura-y-amigable-para-mujeres-y-ninas>.

³⁶ INEGI. 2011. *Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinamica de la Familia en Mexico*. Mexico. Accessed October 2017 <http://www.dif.gob.mx/diftransparencia/media/encuestanaldinamfamiliamex2011.pdf>

Chapter 3: Institutional Response

Experiences abroad

The fight against gender-based violence in the public realm has been fought in many other metropolises. From Bangkok to New Delhi to Guatemala, women have been subject to violence in multiple forms, though most critically, sexual violence. While Mexico City developed their programmatic response, cities across the world worked to study the concerns, and recognize violence against women in the public realm as a societal problem. These cities intervened through a variety of measures both at the policy level and on the ground hoping to respond to this concerning issue.

For instance, some countries have relied on the increasing accessibility to technological advancement to gather data and tailor apps to women's needs. Circle 6, originally designed to aid college students in preventing sexual violence, is an app which allows targets of sexual harassment, to rapidly reach out to one of six trusted previously chosen contacts.³⁷ Contact can be in the form of a text message, call or chat, all accessible through icons. The message includes GPS coordinates to allow for easy location. This app has been deployed in Delhi, India, with adaptations to best fit the female

³⁷ Bank, Asian Development. 2015. Policy Brief a safe public transportation environment for women and girls. PHILIPPINES: ADB. Page 3. Accessed November 2017. file:///C:/Users/gatat/OneDrive/Escritorio/safe-public-transport-women-girls.pdf

users' needs. On top of the defined functions, Circle 6 connects users to a women's advocacy group Jagori, through a 24-hour hotline.³⁸

Meanwhile in Cairo, Egypt, efforts have been made to foster improved mechanisms of data collection. HarassMap, is a volunteer-based initiative created in 2010, building off of data collected through social media, text messages, and a website, this project displays both incidents of sexual harassment as well as incidents of intervention, or in other words support to avoid/stop sexual harassment.³⁹ A heat map provides police with focused areas in need of increased vigilance.

Gender-based violence in Public Transportation: Experiences from abroad

Over a 100 years ago, Japanese officials identified the need to provide women users a space to hide from ogling men on the country's public transportation⁴⁰. After years of going back and forth, in 2000 Japan brought the women only train cars back for good.⁴¹ Local public transport company officials opted to do so as a means to "protect women from gropers".⁴² Despite being an option for many female users, opposition groups question the reasons behind this intervention, arguing video surveillance and awareness campaigns to be more effective.⁴³

The Japanese model of female exclusive public transportation has been studied and replicated around the world to different degrees of acceptance. A policy brief

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ HarassMap. "Reporting." HarassMap. Accessed April 2018. <https://harassmap.org/en/reporting>.

⁴⁰ Krieger, Daniel. "Why Women-Only Transit Options Have Caught On." CityLab. July 12, 2013. Accessed May 2018. <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2012/02/why-women-only-transit-options-have-caught/1171/>.

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² ibid

⁴³ ibid

published by the ADB conducted surveys on 630 women in Tsibili, Georgia, Baku, Azerbaijan and Karachi Pakistan to identify perceptions of female public transportation users.⁴⁴ All three cities have implemented some form of female exclusive spaces. They found that “Sexual harassment in public transportation is a concern for women in all three cities.”⁴⁵ A majority of the surveyed women were either students or working women, who used the public transportation to arrive at these activities, and thus by being frequent public transportation users they were invested in maintaining it safe for them.⁴⁶ They also found that “the majority of respondents who had faced sexual harassment did not receive help when they needed it; most respondents also said that they did not render help to the targets when they witnessed sexual harassment.”⁴⁷ Although the study is thorough, some limitations exist such as a reduced sample size, the age of participants was 15 and older, and the surveys used in each country differed slightly. Furthermore, recommendations given are blanket, it is to say they have not been tailored or contextualized to each country.

In the Brazilian city of Curitiba, busses are the main form of transport for approximately 45% of the population.⁴⁸ Recognizing the high volume of usage, and high incidence of sexual harassment on public transport, officials acknowledge the need to

⁴⁴ Bank, Asian Development. 2015. Policy Brief a safe public transportation environment for women and girls. PHILIPPINES: ADB. Page 7. Accessed November 2017. file:///C:/Users/gatat/OneDrive/Escritorio/safe-public-transport-women-girls.pdf

⁴⁵ Ibid PG. 10

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Yadav, Neha. "Reframing the Issue of Women's Safety in Public Transport in Brazil and France." TheCityFix. January 29, 2016. Accessed May, 2018. <http://thecityfix.com/blog/reframing-issue-women-safety-public-transport-brazil-france-neha-yadav/>.

act. However, after Mayor Gustavo Fruet rejected implementing female exclusive buses, authorities proposed “*Bus with no Abuse*” (*Busao Sem Abuso*) awareness campaign in collaboration with the local bus company and syndicate of bus drivers.⁴⁹ This initiative targets silent bystanders by teaching riders and public transport employees to intervene when faces with incidents of sexual harassment. It equally encourages the public to report cases to the local authorities.⁵⁰

This phenomenon is not exclusive to the “global south.” A 2007 study conducted by the then-Manhattan Borough President, Scott Stringer surveying sexual harassment on public transportation in New York City, found that 51 percent of victims of sexual harassment had occurred during morning and evening rush-hours.⁵¹ This study used mass media to publicly distribute the survey, which provided one of the first limitations, a bias towards users with internet/computer access. Furthermore, the study acknowledges the use of different definitions for sexual harassment and sexual assault than those used by the legal system.⁵² Only 1,799 surveys were collected making the sample size very small. Finally, the sample is not considered a randomize due to the previously mentioned bias towards media users.⁵³ As a response to these claims, New York City increased the severity of a sexual harassment on public transportation offense. Previously considered

⁴⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Borough President, Manhattan. 2006. *Hidden in Plain Sight*. Pg. 5 Accessed November 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/nyregion/city_room/20070726_hiddeninplainsight.pdf

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid

a misdemeanor, today individuals found guilty for “sexually motivated touching” are charged with a felony and the possibility of facing jail time.⁵⁴

Another approach taken by the British government has been to encourage reporting among victims of sexual assault in public transportation.⁵⁵ The project Guardian campaign, launched in 2013, relies on video clips of incidences of sexual harassment on the public transportation.⁵⁶ As a result, reported incidents have increased 25%⁵⁷, and while this could be a discouraging fact, having concrete numbers highlights the critical state of this issue and allows lobbyists to push the topic to policymakers’ center stage.

Gender-based violence in Public Space: Experiences from abroad

In 2010, UN Women created the “Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces” Program with the objective of creating safer setting for women in cities across the globe. Piloted in five cities, this initiative helped modify existing conditions of both legal frameworks as well as urban design guidelines in the city. As an initial result, Quito modified its exiting laws to include harsher actions against sexual harassment.⁵⁸ Coupled with this, the program has begun studying physical interventions which instill long term changes in the population.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Bank, Asian Development. 2015. Policy Brief a safe public transportation environment for women and girls. PHILIPPINES: ADB. Page 2. Accessed November 2017. file:///C:/Users/gatat/OneDrive/Escritorio/safe-public-transport-women-girls.pdf

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ "Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces." <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/safe-cities-and-safe-public-spaces-global-results-report-en.pdf?la=en&vs=45>.

⁵⁹ Ibid

In Iran a movement of women only parks has sparked much controversy, yet had significant changes in female perceptions. These public spaces allow for women to fully engage in activities and freedom which otherwise is limited.⁶⁰ While the perceptions of safety may be different, this case study lends itself to present a space where women do not have to think about a broader context beyond the here and now, an objective for the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial.

Local Response: Programs on Public Transportation

Mexico City has a robust multimodal transportation system. It is made up of twelve subway lines (figure 1), six bus-rapid transportation lines, multiple bus routes and one light rail line. These modes are individually managed by decentralized public organisms which oversee maintenance, operation, expansion, and financing. Due to a high subsidy, and extreme traffic congestion, mass public transportation is the principal means of mobility for most of the city's population. From 2006 to 2017, the subway alone averaged 4.1 million daily passengers.⁶¹ With an estimated population of 22 million, the subway serves over 20% of Mexico City's population. The bus rapid transport system has registered monthly usage between 2008 and 2017 at an approximate 16.6 million passengers.⁶²

⁶⁰ Zee, Renate Van Der. "'We Hate the Headscarf': Can Women Find Freedom in Tehran's Female-only Parks?" The Guardian. August 09, 2017. Accessed May 02, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/aug/09/women-only-parks-tehran-iran-segregated-outside-spaces>.

⁶¹ INEGI. 2017. *Transporte Urbano de Pasajeros Ciudad de Mexico*. Mexico. Accessed February 2018 <http://www.beta.inegi.org.mx/proyectos/registros/economicas/transporteurbano/>

⁶² Ibid

Figure 1: Map of Mexico City Subway



Source: Metro CDMX

With such high volumes of usage, the local authorities, supported by academia, determined public transportation as the primary urban component to attack when combating violence against women. Studies found that females traveling on Mexico City's

mass transit system, particularly young women regularly encountered violent incidents, ranging from sexual slurs to molestation and sexual abuse.⁶³ For instance, a 2011 Reuter's poll, in collaboration with YouGov, 64% of the 380 women surveyed had "been groped or otherwise harassed on public transport."⁶⁴

To better address this, article 23 of the LAMVLVDF tasked the Federal District Public Transportation System with the creation of mechanisms of prevention and detection of female victims of violence, carry out research and statistical studies which lead to the creation of violence preventive public policies and create prevention campaigns. ⁶⁵

Viajemos Seguras, created in 2008, was envisioned as a response to both the legislative power and civil society's call for actions. This inter-institutional program aimed to prevent sexual violence against women public transport users, attend victims of sexual violence in transportation and promote safety, citizen vigilance and ultimately social development.⁶⁶ Aligned to the policy framework, "Viajemos Seguras" aimed to provide solutions towards the diverse forms of sexual violence occurred by strangers in Mexico City's transportation. As previously mentioned, "these forms of violence negatively impact

⁶³ INMUJERES. 2017 *Programa Ciudad Segura y Amigable para Ninas y Mujeres*. Mexico. Pg. 15. <http://inmujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/cdmx-ciudad-segura-y-amigable-para-mujeres-y-ninas>

⁶⁴ Crina Boros, 2014. *Latin American cities have most dangerous transport for women, NYC best*. Reuters Accessed October 2017. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/women-poll/exclusive-poll-latin-american-cities-have-most-dangerous-transport-for-women-nyc-best-idUKL6N0S32MQ20141029>

⁶⁵ Asamblea del Distrito Federal. 2007. *Ley de Acceso a las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia del Distrito Federal*. Mexico. 10- 11 Accessed September 2017 <http://www.aldf.gob.mx/archivo-fde12a5698a6daa612f4515f386b1beb.pdf>

⁶⁶ INMUJERES. 2017 *Programa Ciudad Segura y Amigable para Ninas y Mujeres*. 5. Accessed November 2017. <http://www.inmujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/programas/programa/cdmx-ciudad-segura-y-amigable-para-mujeres-y-ninas>

their [females] opportunities to access resources. Such as education, employment, health services, culture and social participation".⁶⁷

Viajemos Seguras relied on collaborative work from multiple stakeholders invested in commuting and preoccupied with the users' wellbeing. This program integrates eleven city agencies/department including the Collective Transportation System-Metro, Electric Transportation System, Metrobus, Multimodal Transfer Centers, and the Secretary of Public Safety, who collectively work to carry out, monitor and enforce the program's interventions. These consist of four strategic actions: Atenea buses, women exclusive services of electric transport, separated areas within the subway and Metrobus (women exclusive), and reporting modules.⁶⁸

INMUJERES launched Atenea, Mexico City's Women's Institute, in 2008 as city-wide women exclusive "pink" bus system. INMUJERES chose to introduce units, along with taxis, in this color to raise awareness towards women's rights and the need for equal mobility. Initially, the eight pink units operated from 9:00 to 18:00, providing service for women and children under the age of sixteen along two routes. By November of 2012 service had expanded to 51 routes, 100 units and working schedule from 6:00 to 23:00.⁶⁹

Services of electric transport exclusively serving women were initially launched along two different routes. They operated from 5:45 to 22:50. While this is a positive

⁶⁷ Ibid, 6

⁶⁸ Ibid, 45-48

⁶⁹ Ibid

initiative due to the magnitude of coverage each route has it has yet to be subject to expansion.

Reporting modules were put in service in six of the most used subway stations in the last quarter of 2012. These posts are found at transfer stops operating Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 20:00. These posts aim to "tend to victims of sexual violence with increased efficiency and promptness." Specific actions include access to legal resources such as lawyers, transportation to the courthouse, follow up on the case, and overall outreach.⁷⁰

Replicating examples found in Rio de Janeiro, Cairo, Jakarta and Tokyo⁷¹, Mexico City introduced women exclusive subway cars and Metrobus seats. During peak hours, the first three subway cars are determined to be for female use only. This separation occurs through a variety of forms. Some stations have permanent structural barriers. Others register semi-permanent barriers such as cardboard divisions. However, the most common type relies solely on signage located both on the ceiling and floors of the station. As for the Metrobus, this segregation is carried out only through signage. In both cases, police officials are stationed at the beginning of these exclusive areas to ensure enforcement of the separation (empirical evidence).

Violence against women has continued to exist, provoking a mass female movement demanding a response in early 2015. As a result, "Viajemos Seguras"

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Sanghani, Radhika. "These Countries Tried Women-only Transport. Here's What Happened." The Telegraph. August 26, 2015. Accessed April 2018. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/11824962/Women-only-trains-and-transport-How-they-work-around-the-world.html>

underwent restructuring, and in 2016 was passed as a more aggressive and improved “Viaja Segura.” Modifications included the permanent designation of female-exclusive subway cars, harsher enforcement of the segregation and increased severity of punishment for violators.⁷²

Local Response: Programs addressing public space

Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial was created in 2007 under the government of Marcelo Ebrard's Secretary of Social Development. Established as a short-term experimental intervention,⁷³ the program helps rescue and improve public spaces and social infrastructure within Mexico City's barrios, neighborhoods, towns, and residential units granting them up to 500 thousand pesos for new projects and \$ 1 million for continuing projects. Ultimately the program aims to provide "favorable and safe urban environments which foster social cohesion." ⁷⁴This is done through a participative, integrated, and inclusive and gender-equal process. Today it serves over 1,120 neighborhoods which have “noticeably improved their quality of life through their community work”.⁷⁵

⁷² Abril Mulato. "Sí, En México Ya Se Puede Multar a Los Hombres Que Usan Los Vagones Del Metro Para Mujeres." Verne. June 15, 2016. Accessed March 15, 2018.

https://verne.elpais.com/verne/2016/06/15/mexico/1465954201_743742.htm

⁷³ Georgina Sandoval and Alberto Martinez, El Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial De La Ciudad De Mexico Y La Necesidad De Evaluarlo, Departamento Para La Investigacion Y Conocimiento Del Diseno, Universidad Nacional De Colombia, Bogota Colombia, 2012, 9, Accessed February 2018

https://issuu.com/sem_proceso_urbanos_informales/docs/el_programa_comunitario_de_mejoramiento_barrial.

⁷⁴ Alicia Ziccardi, "Espacio Público Y Participación Ciudadana El Caso Del Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial De La Ciudad De México," Gestion Y Politica Publica 21, 7 (December 15, 2011): , accessed March 03, 2018, http://www.gestionypoliticapublica.cide.edu/num_anteriores/Vol.XXI_No.I_vol-tematico/06_Alicia_Ziccardi

⁷⁵ Ibid, 2

The projects are implemented in areas of a medium, high and very high marginality. Regions which are subject to conflict and social insecurity are also eligible for the program's benefits. The community must come together through a participative process to create a competing file. Before submitting the proposed projects to the Secretary of Social Development, all proposals are presented and agreed upon by residents at a neighborhood assembly meeting. Once approved by the residents, a project promoter is selected to "promote" the competing file. Then it is subject to revision by a Mixed Technical Committee. This entity is made up of members of multiple city agencies such as Secretary of Urban Development and Housing, Secretary of Governance, and Secretary of Public Works and Services.

This process of citizen participation exemplifies Arnstein's (1969) notions of power redistribution⁷⁶. By enabling those often excluded from decision making to take part not only in the implementation⁷⁷ phases but also in the definition of needs and the design of urban social policies, new forms of citizenship are promoted.⁷⁸

Upon the change of mayoral hands, the 2012 operational rules were modified, or "evolved" to account for the surrounding political changes. According to Alberto Martinez, former head of the program, as leaders and society grew more aware of the need for equitable processes, and above all the provision of safe spaces for women, the PMCB

⁷⁶ Arnstein, Sherry R. "A Ladder Of Citizen Participation." *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (July 4, 1969): 216-24. doi:10.1080/01944366908977225.

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Alicia Ziccardi, "Espacio Público Y Participación Ciudadana El Caso Del Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial De La Ciudad De México," *Gestion Y Politica Publica* 21, 6 (December 15, 2011): , accessed March 03, 2018, http://www.gestionypoliticapublica.cide.edu/num_anteriores/Vol.XXI_No.I_vol-tematico/06_Alicia_Ziccardi

required committees to provide reasoning as to how this action would specifically target the previously mentioned goal.

Having been approved, residents of the neighborhood will form three committees tasked with the management and completion of the proposed project. The administrative committee is responsible for the financial aspects. This includes receiving and administering funds as well as being held accountable for the correct distribution of such. The committee also provides the other committees as well as the Secretary with any pertinent information.

Through the use of financial reports and blogs provided by the administrative committee, the supervision committee oversees the correct use of the authorized funds, as well as the quality of the project. Finally, the community development committee promotes and solidifies the neighborhood participation processes established within the project proposal.

As mentioned above, this program started as an experimental initiative. This condition allowed it to operate without monitoring or evaluation mechanisms, nor any measurable objectives. By 2013, as the executive, local government changed hands, public officials acknowledged the need to include evaluation practices as a fundamental part of public management. Authorities recognized that through evaluation exercises "technical and political elements" would be provided and ultimately improving the

program's overall performance.⁷⁹ Since then, annual program evaluations have been required by law published within the Official Gazette of the Federal District.

This program has received a handful of prizes due to its success in empowering communities and leading the process of citizen participation. Rewards and recognition include Deutsche Bank Urban Age, World Habitat Award, and Recognition by the Regional Center for learning based on evaluation and results, and the international Dubai prize for best practices. ⁸⁰Most recently, in January of 2017, the Program was identified Inter-American Development Bank as one of the best practices within the category of "Leadership and Civic Participation of Women." Specifically, related to this research, this participatory process has been particularly popular among female residents, who often take part in the proposal and management phases. A majority of these women ultimately become the local committee members, a role which empowers them, granting them ownership over the project. Ultimately, ownership and empowerment lead these women to become more secure in using the spaces they helped create.

⁷⁹ Secretaria De Desarrollo Social, Subsecretaria De Participacion Ciudadana, Evaluación Interna Del Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial 2014 (Ciudad De Mexico, DF: GDF, 2014). 3, Accessed March 2018 http://data.evalua.cdmx.gob.mx/docs/evaluaciones/internas/2014/ei_pcmb_sedeso_2014.pdf

⁸⁰ "*Mejora tu Barrio*". Accessed February 2018. <https://mejoratubarrio.com/el-programa-de-mejoramiento-barrial-y-comunitario/#sobreelsitio>

Chapter 4: Success

Viajemos Seguras

In April of 2015, the local female population demanded safer spaces and the right to free enjoyment of the public realm. The Mexico City government committed to providing results 30 and 100 days later. As a response, by May of that same year, supported by UN Women Mexico, officials launched the 30/100 Strategy.⁸¹ Derived from the Program for Safe and Friendly City for Women and Children, this selection of immediate actions aimed to prevent and sanction violence towards women in the public realm.⁸²

Actions geared explicitly towards public transport included “strengthening security and surveillance operations within public transportation, specifically in stations where the incidence of sexual violence cases had been higher and in peak user times.”⁸³ Separating barriers were bolstered. The security surrounding the stations was improved, and the use of surveillance videos within the Multimodal transfer Centers increased.⁸⁴

Thirty days after these actions were announced, INMUJERES published the progress thus far. First, spatial interventions were vital in creating safer environments.

These include:

⁸¹ INMUJERES, Estrategia 30-100 Contra La Violencia Hacia Las Mujeres En El Transporte Y Los Espacios Públicos., 3, accessed March 10, 2018, http://inmujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/Estrategia%2030-100/Informe_Estrategia_30_100_100_Dias.pdf

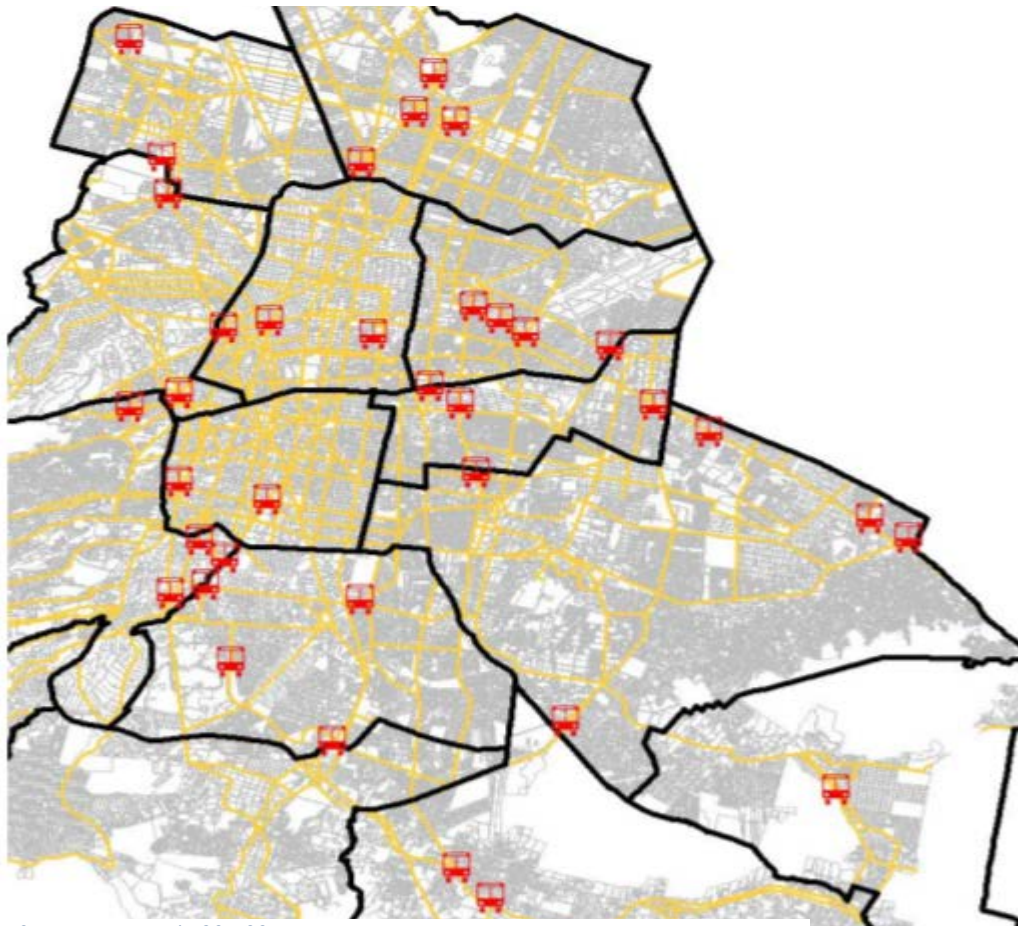
⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Ibid, 4

⁸⁴ Ibid

- fixing 61 lamps in eight subway lines⁸⁵
- Installing 373 video monitoring systems in 36 multimodal transfer centers.⁸⁶

Figure 2: Location of videomonitoring



Source: Estrategia 30-100

- Recuperating the public spaces surrounding three subway stations through the dismantling or relocation of informal commercial stands.⁸⁷ Through this

⁸⁵ INMUJERES, Estrategia 30-100 Contra La Violencia Hacia Las Mujeres En El Transporte Y Los Espacios Públicos a 30 días, 2, accessed March 10, 2018, http://www.sg.cdmx.gob.mx/descargables/PPTAccionesa30dias_M.pdf

⁸⁶ Ibid, 13

⁸⁷ Ibid, 11

action, tight dark spaces are eliminated and clear paths to and from subway stops were created.

Figure 3: Before Intervention



Figure 4: After Intervention



Tied to the physical interventions, INMUJERES and the Mexico City government deployed additional workforce. Over 900 auxiliary police officers were placed permanently through the six Metrobus lines.⁸⁸ Furthermore, policewomen were set in each station to assist with complaints, and cases of harassment or sexual abuse.⁸⁹

Additionally, ATENEA bus service was extended until 23:00hrs, and 100 additional units were included to increase frequency during peak hours.⁹⁰ Finally, 271 Non-Atenea bus units were incorporated into the transportation system, all of which had reserved seating, accessibility ramps and surveillance cameras. During this period, INMUJERES

⁸⁸ Ibid, 15

⁸⁹ Ibid, 3

⁹⁰ Ibid, 4

registered an increase in female- user participation, concluding in greater trust in the institution and public administration. ⁹¹

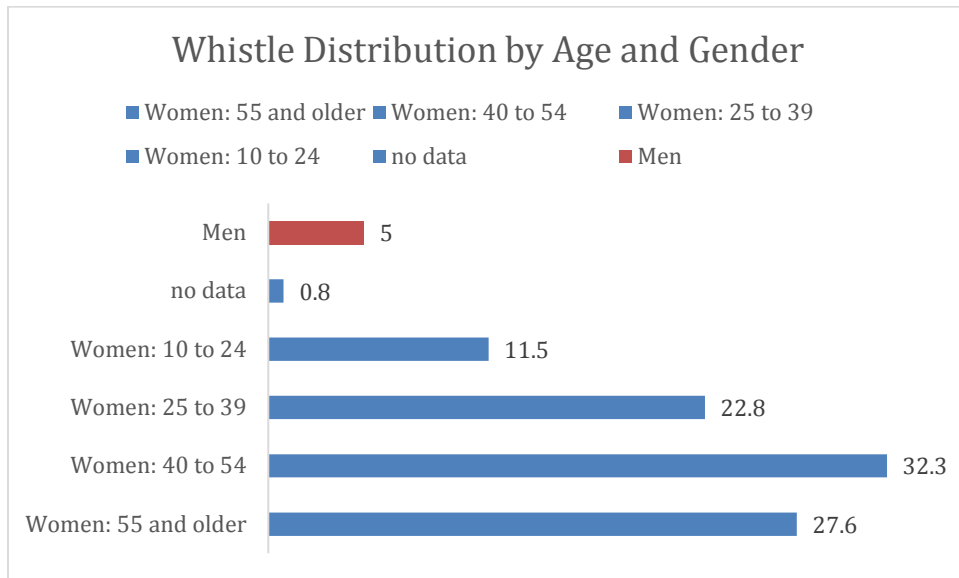
Working towards the 100-day mark, the previously mentioned actions continued to be carried out. In May of 2015, INMUJERES introduced an additional preventative measure, “Vive Segura” whistle. This tool represented a means to alert both the general public and policing officials of threatening circumstances within public transportation. ⁹² INMUJERES distributed over 25 thousand whistles to female public transportation users within the first three months (FIGURE). ⁹³ An accompanying protocol was developed to better train officials to respond to the situations identified by the whistleblowers. The A.D.A. protocol addresses arrival to the site of harassment, detention of harassers and attention to the victims.

⁹¹ Ibid

⁹² INMUJERES, Estrategia 30-100 Contra La Violencia Hacia Las Mujeres En El Transporte Y Los Espacios Públicos., 23, accessed March 10, 2018, http://www.sg.cdmx.gob.mx/descargables/PPTAccionesa30dias_M.pdf.http://inmujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/Estrategia%2030-100/Informe_Estrategia_30_100_100_Dias.pdf

⁹³ Ibid

Graph 1: Whistle Distribution.



Source: *Estrategia 30-100 Contra La Violencia Hacia Las Mujeres En El Transporte Y Los Espacios Públicos*

Despite the government's monumental efforts, harassers continued to invade female-only cars. In June of 2017, police officials detained a 42-year-old man wearing makeup, a wig and flowered dress after being accused of riding in female exclusive cars while sexually harassing a minor.⁹⁴ During October of that same year, police officers detained a 39-year-old man for groping a minor under her skirt while in the company of her mother.⁹⁵ These continuous incidents question the effectiveness of the program, and most importantly, the user's perception regarding her safety.

User Satisfaction and Concerns

⁹⁴ "Se Viste De Mujer Para Tocar a Usuaris Del Metro." Milenio Digital, January 28, 2017. Accessed March 13, 2018. http://www.milenio.com/policia/hombre_vestido_mujer-tocamientos_metro-mujeres-linea_9-milenio-noticias_0_983302018.html.

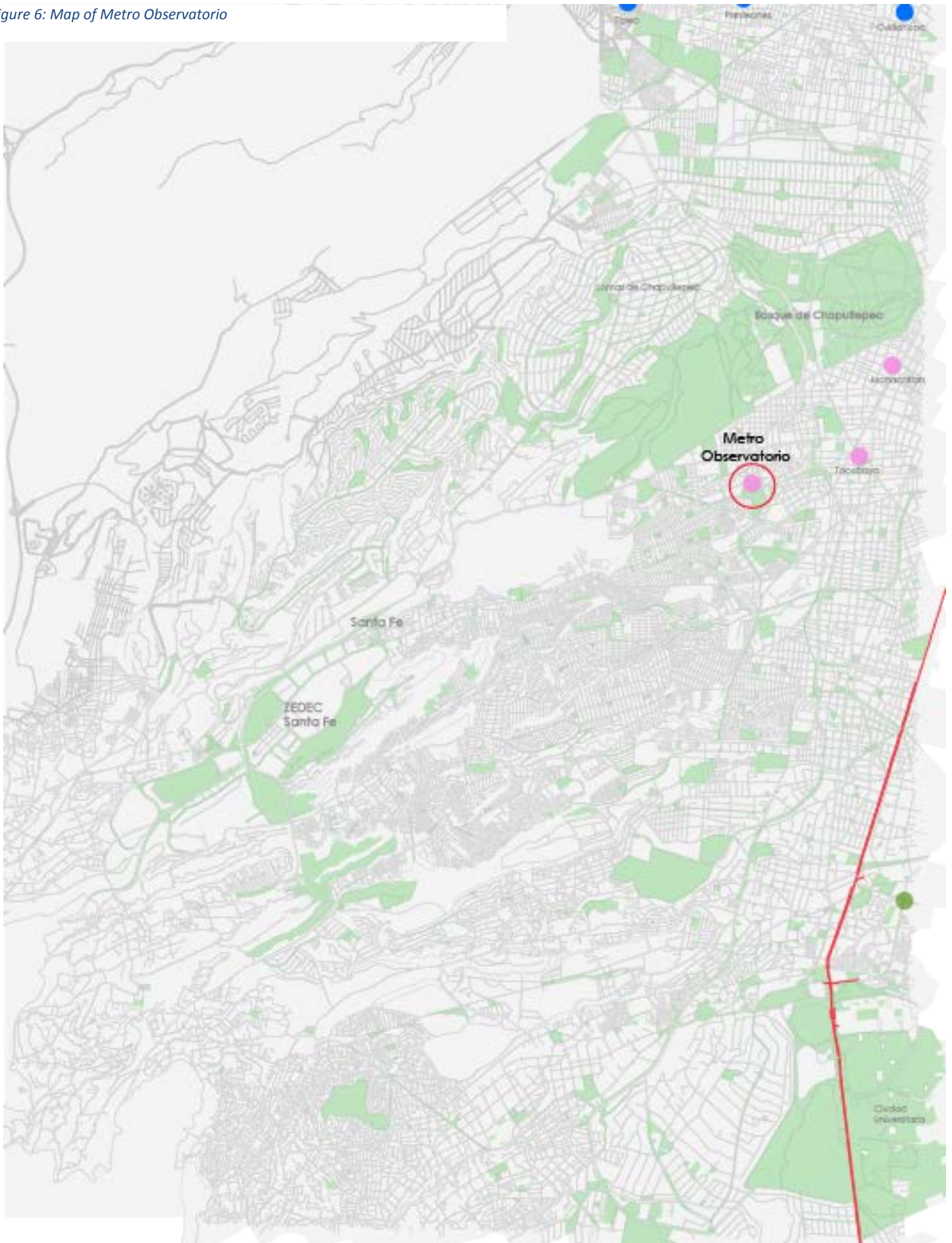
⁹⁵ "Cae Hombre Por Acoso Sexual a Menor En Metro Indios Verdes," Notimex, October 10, 2017, , accessed March 13, 2018, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/comunidad/2017/10/19/1195591>.

Aiming to gather the user's perception of the INMUJERES interventions, I conducted a digital survey of over 200 residents of Mexico City. Coupled with the survey, forty interviews were conducted at four different subway stations throughout Mexico City. The interviewees were female users located at one of the subway stations, and upon introduction and explanation, were invited to participate in this study.

Ten interviews took place at Metro Universidad, the last stop on the green #3 line which travels from north to south across the whole city. It is one of the most highly used lines due to the routes and multiple connections it offers. This site is located at the entrance of the UNAM, Mexico's National University, within Santo Domingo, a formerly informal settlement and highly dangerous neighborhood. The station serves as a hub for buses traveling further south. It is surrounded by businesses catering to the academic community such as small restaurants, bookstores and other miscellaneous shops. Because of the strong ties to the university population, this station tends to concentrate higher volumes in the day.

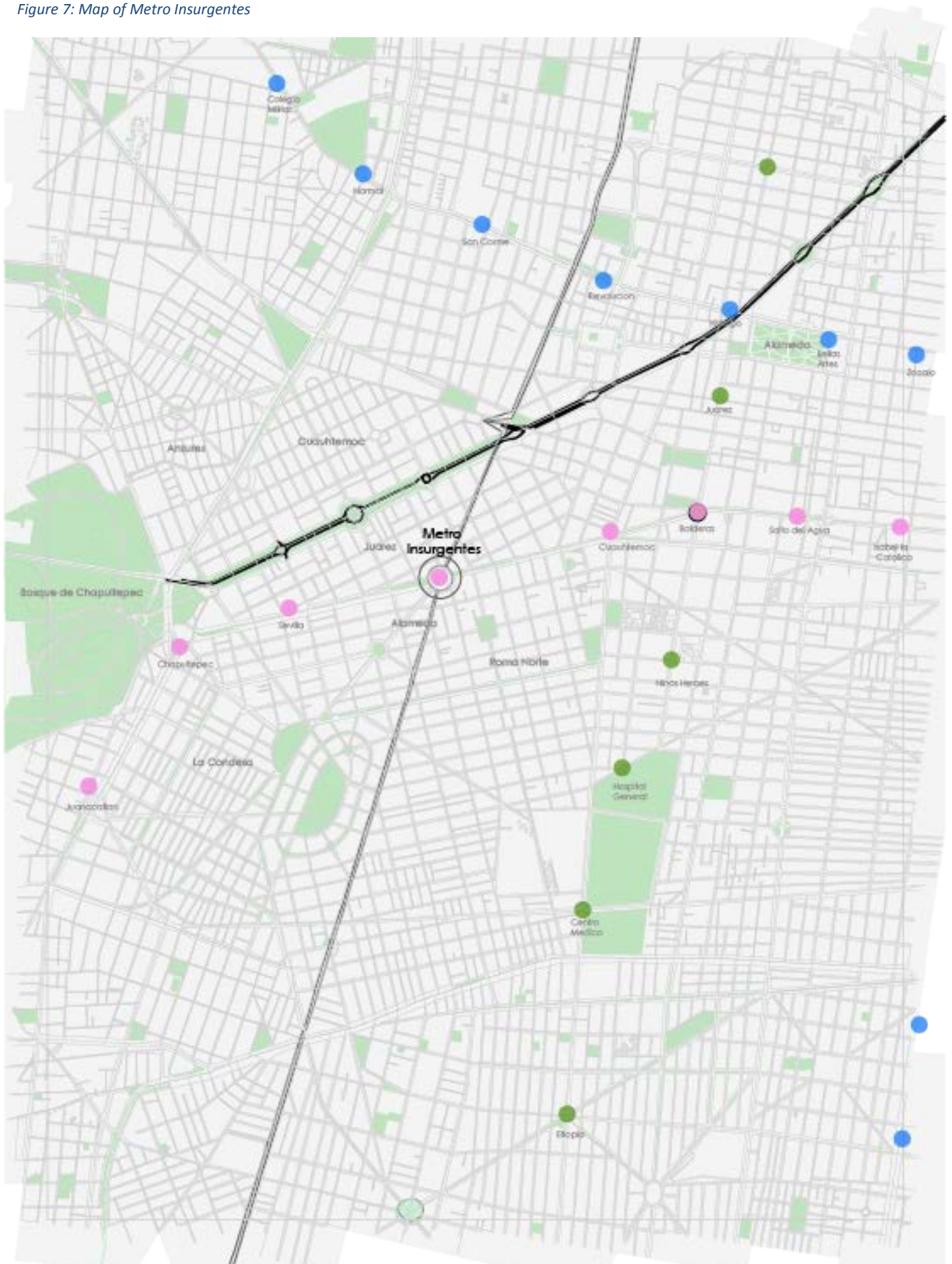
At metro Observatorio, ten female users were interviewed. This station is the terminal western station of the pink #1 line. It travels the city from east to west, starting at Pantitlan a station located on the edge between Mexico City and Mexico State. This line runs from some of the denser and poorer areas of the city, as well as serving as a commuter route to Santa Fe, one of Mexico City's main employment poles. The perimeter of this station serves as a hub for multiple routes leading to the western portion of the city where subway service has yet to arrive. It is also densely populated by informal commerce ranging from fast food to beauty supplies. Due to the strong connection with commuting population, this station is considered highly dangerous after rush hours, particularly the paths for intermodal changes.

Figure 6: Map of Metro Observatorio



Metro Insurgentes is located at the intersection of the #1 line and Insurgentes avenue, one of the city's most important corridors, as well as the location of the #1 metrobus line. This stop is also located a few blocks from Avenida Reforma, the country's most important avenue, both politically and economically. The station is located beneath one of the city's landmarks, Glorieta Insurgentes. This rotunda has recently benefitted from lighting fixtures, revamped pavement and improved pedestrian access. It is highly visited throughout the day due to the multimodal accessibility as well as the proximity to employment centers and nightlife. This was the site of ten additional interviews.

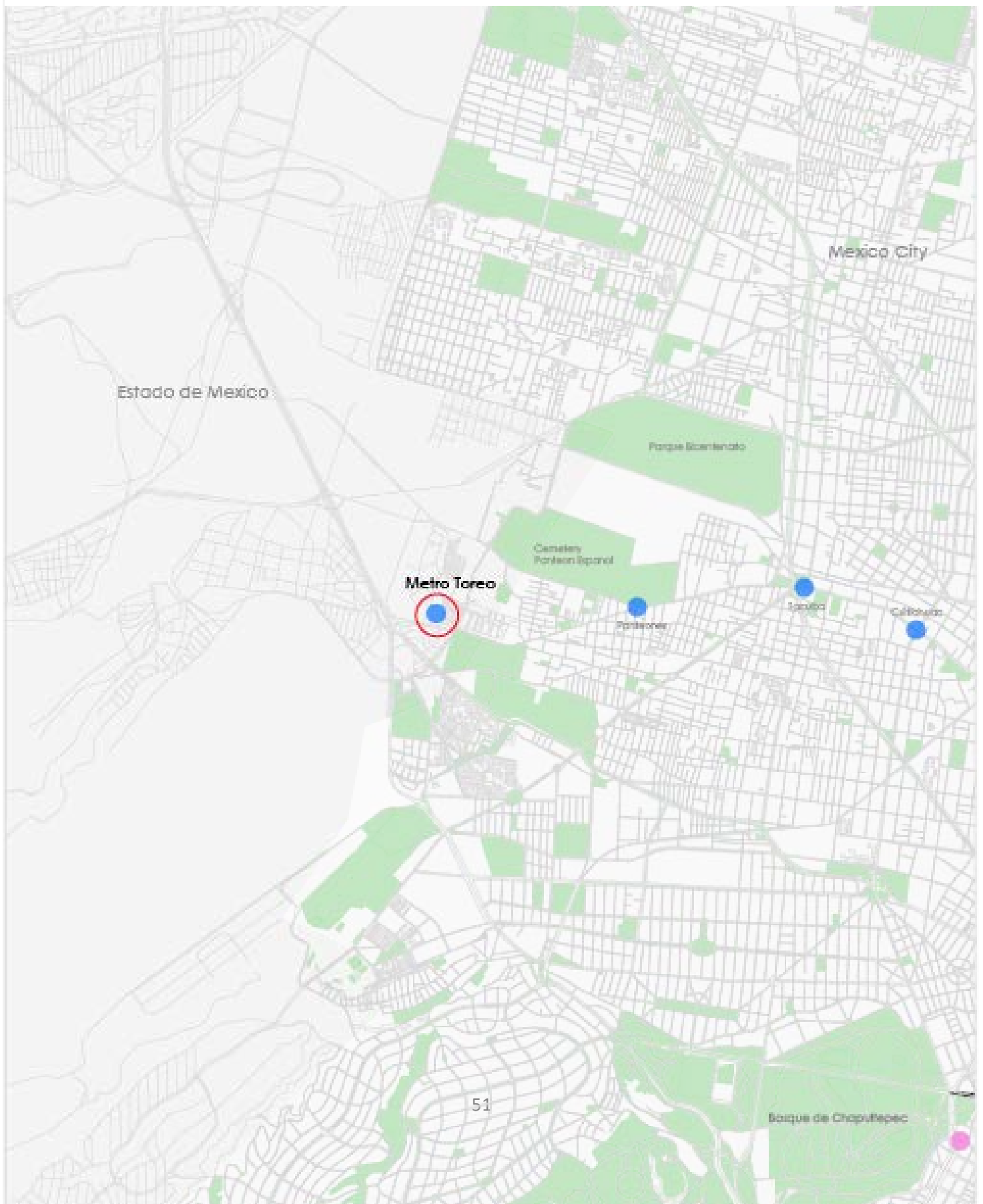
Figure 7: Map of Metro Insurgentes



Finally, Metro Toreo is located at the northern terminal stop of the #2 blue line. This line crosses from north-west to south-east of the city, ending at Tasquena. It provides access to key points in the city, including the Zocalo (the city and country's main landmark). Metro Toreo is located on the border between the State of Mexico and Mexico City. The surrounding uses are mainly manufacturing and large warehouses. This location draws high volumes of users who commute to jobs in this area, or residents from the neighboring municipalities who work within the city. To serve this population, Metro Toreo is a multimodal hub for over 30 bus routes traveling to these localities. These routes are all under the Mexico State jurisdiction, adding a further layer of complexity in regulating this space. It is known to be one of the most dangerous transfer centers with over fifteen robberies reported daily.⁹⁶

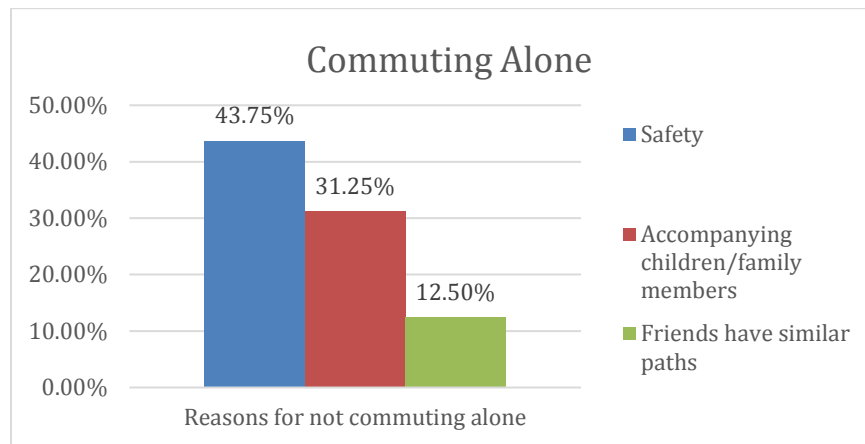
⁹⁶"Cuatro Caminos, a Merced Del Crimen." El Universal. June 21, 2017. Accessed April 2018.
<http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/metropoli/edomex/2017/06/21/cuatro-caminos-merced-del-crimen>

Figure 8: Map of Metro Terec



The majority of users surveyed and interviewed are multimodal, meaning they rely on more than one form of public transportation to cover their daily commutes. For those surveyed, the frequency of use varied with no visible trend between modes, gender, age or frequency. Almost all people surveyed travel alone (91%). However, those who choose not to reasoned the following:

Graph 2: Reasons for not commuting alone



Despite commuting on their own, ten percent of this population still has serious concerns regarding safety and dangers of commuting. Female interviews conducted at four high volume subway stations found similar traveling trends with the majority commuting on their own out of need.⁹⁷ One respondent mentioned, *“The experience is dangerous, we get scared, especially at night and in the early morning when it is still dark*

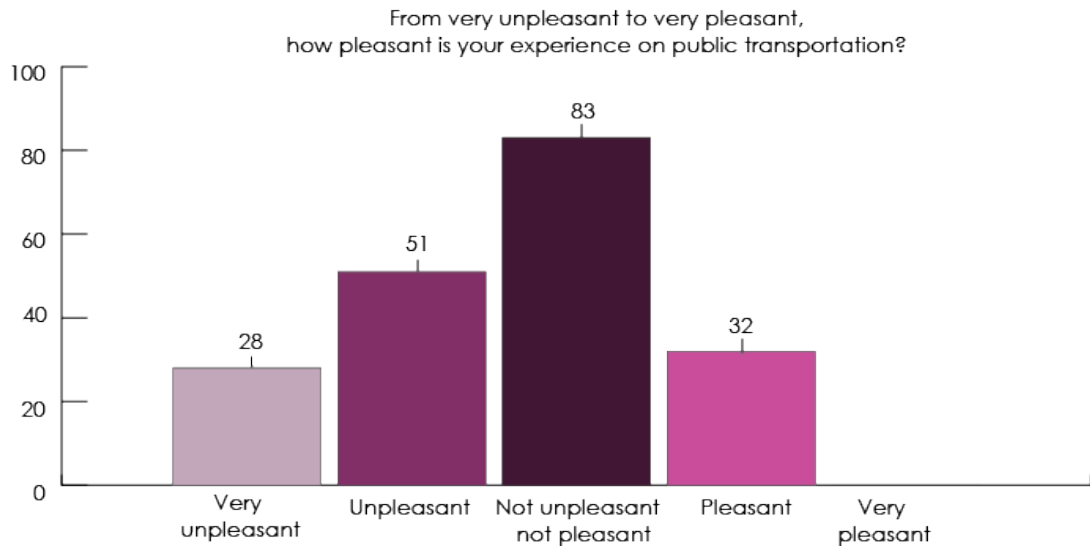
⁹⁷ 48 interviews were conducted with female users in four high-volume subway stations, located in the south of the city, the center, the north, and the west. Two of these stations are transfer sites where two or more lines convey. The other two are terminal stations located at important public institutions.

and not as many people.” Another revealed that out of her parents’ fear of danger she is often accompanied when using public transportation.

Experience

The survey asked respondents about their overall pleasantness of the public transportation experience. Answers were intermediate to very low levels, and no one found the experience to be very pleasant (Graph 3).

Graph 3: Experience using public transportation



As previously mentioned, authors have found women are more likely to reroute or modify their commutes out of fear or perceived danger. Of the surveyed population, 85% do alter their routes, 35% of who do this out of concerns for their safety, emphasizing fear of theft as well as being harassed.

“I avoid traveling at night, and on the A, B, red and yellow lines because you see ugly things, it’s not safe.” – Metro Insurgentes

Others mentioned modifying their routes to avoid hitting traffic and beat rush hour. However, interviews also identified a shift in transit modes.

“At night, after 8 or 9 I prefer to use Metrobus which I find to be a bit safer, I feel maybe the stations and policemen, but I feel it is much safer than the subway, although it takes much longer”.- Metro Insurgentes

“Yeah when I was in school, I could get there easily on the bus, but I preferred a longer route on the subway, so it was a little safer.” Metro Ciudad Universitaria

Furthermore, 91% of respondents have felt uncomfortable while using the public transportation system in Mexico City. The primary reasons include unwanted comments and physical touches, overcrowded subways and fear of robbery. During interviews, this question produced some of the most alarming results with 18 of the 42 respondents have been victims of sexual harassment. Testimonies include:

“I believe the most violent occurrence was when I was out doing a chore, and there was this man, he unzipped his pants and showed me his intimate area, so what I did was get off the subway” - Metro Ciudad Universidad

“Well I, was going to a course, and this guy was behind me, there was a lot of people, so I paid no attention, but then I started to feel bad vibes, so I got out, and I realized I had semen all over my backpack” - Metro Ciudad Universidad

“In some occasions, you feel spanking, especially when it is really full, and well oh well you need to step inside. For example, if I dress "freshly" I try and take the train with time to spare and go in the exclusive cars.” – Metro Toreo

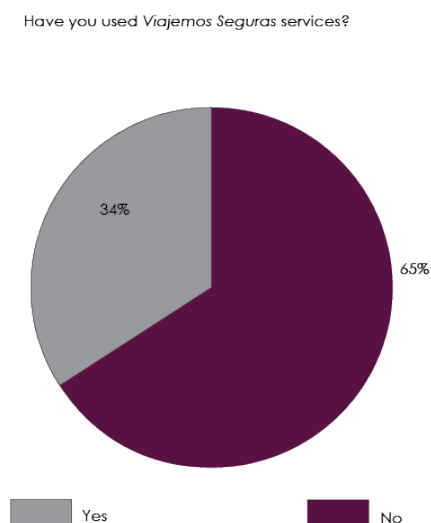
“Well I was in a hurry and I went into the mixed cars, and there was a group of 5 guys and they started to get close to me and pull on my backpack, so I turned around and asked them what was wrong, that they should leave me alone, and the people nearby me only kept on looking on without doing anything, I got angry, got out and waited for the next train to come and get in the female cars.”- Metro Toreo

These testimonies emphasize the daily obstacles female users face by merely dressing in a comfortable way, as well as the severe level of sexual harassment these users have experienced. Many of these incidents occurred recently, questioning the effectiveness of the program's actions. Because Viajemos Seguras includes reporting of these incidents, survey respondents were asked about their knowledge and experience using the program's services.

Fewer than half of the survey respondents knew of the existence of the “Viajemos Seguras” program (Graph 4). Surprisingly, 26% of them were men. However, when asked whether they use the female exclusive cars, the Atenea buses or have ever reported an incident, the majority of respondents had used one of the previously mentioned services

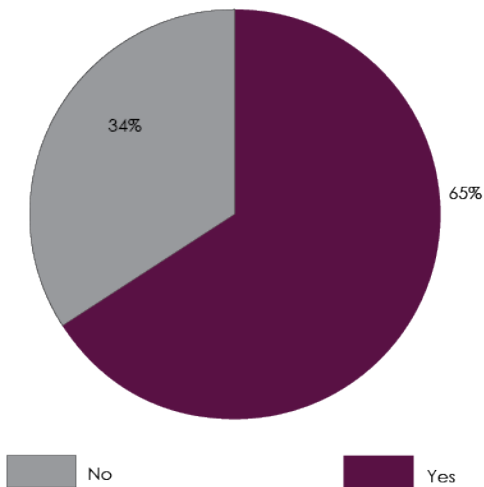
(Graph 5).

Graph 4: Viajemos Seguras Services



Graph 5: Segregated Services

Do you use seperated cars, segregated routes, or reserved seats?



This shines a light on the lack of knowledge of the program, yet a strong interest in the support it provides. Most importantly about this question is the fact that very few people are aware of Viajemos Seguras complementary services such as the information and complaint modules. Another common response was feeling safer from sexual attacks, yet not safe from violent attacks. Respondents, both surveyed and interviewed, described the female exclusive cars as being subject to a more aggressive environment between the women users. One interview respondent shared:

“Well of sexual violence, it is safer, but even among women they are very violent, pushing and shoving to get into cars, just the other day I was elbowed in the face when trying to get into the car, and that’s not the worse...” – Metro Toreo

Furthermore, male survey respondents answered to having used the “exclusive cars,” which indicates an embedded idea of segregation. In other words, male users view the female exclusive cars for females, while those which are intended to be mixed, to be for males only. When conducting interviews, some of the testimonies supported this idea, with comments such as:

“There are men that complain because we go into the “men cars” [not existent!] if we have our own, and they claim women go in there looking to be groped, but more than improving the subway system, it’s the society which is extremely male chauvinist.”– Metro Insurgentes.

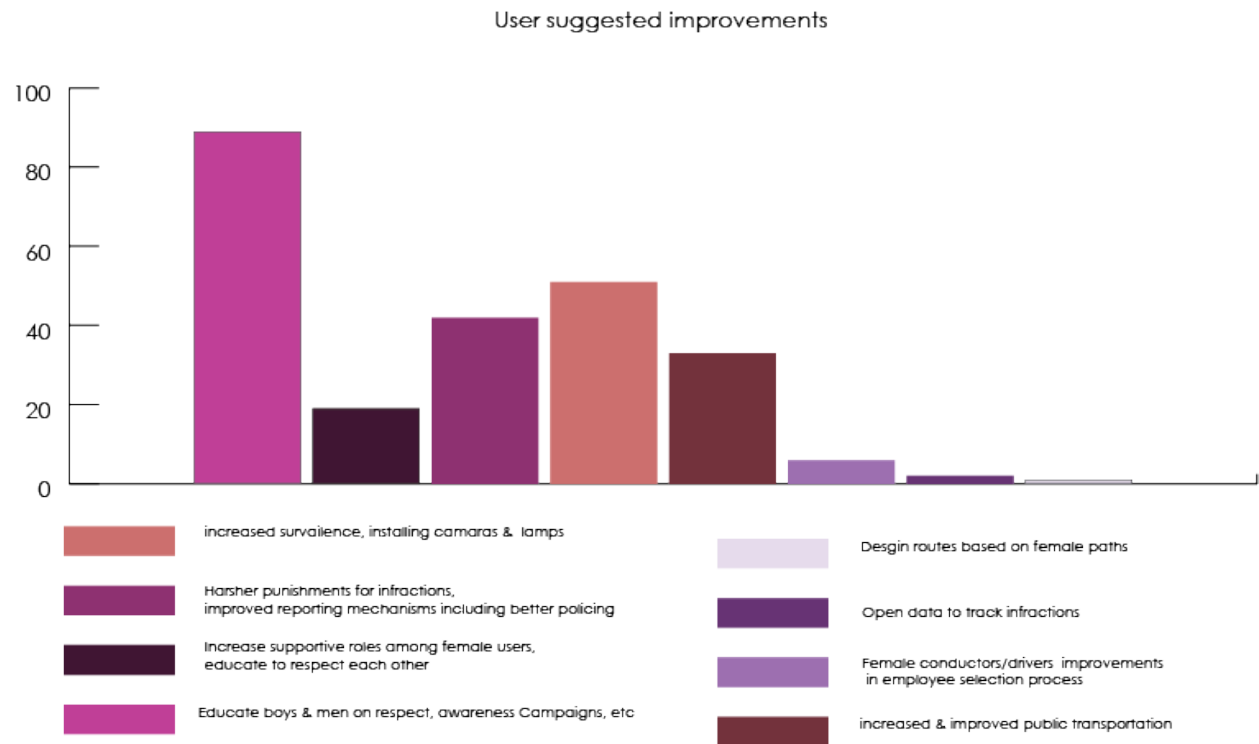
30% of the surveyed women felt more comfortable using the INMUJERES segregated transportation services. However, of those who feel more comfortable, only 70% find it to be an adequate solution. Although few men responded the survey mentioned these services make them feel discriminated, especially if they are in the company of women as they are not able to travel with them.

Finally, survey respondents were asked to provide their suggestions on how to better face gender-based violence in Mexico City’s public transportation system. As represented in this graph, the majority of respondents believe awareness and educational campaigns would lead to a cultural shift to create a respectful society. When interviewed, one user mentioned:

“Implement strategies geared towards culture and education, that we learn that our bodies are ours and no one else” – Metro Observatorio

Another typical answer was the increase of surveillance, including cameras, panic buttons, and police force and improving lighting. Furthermore, many women identified the need to develop enforcement and punishment of perpetrators. Finally, similar to cases found in the Cairo segregated subway car system⁹⁸, overcrowding was a common complaint to which respondents suggested improving overall service, with higher frequency and capacity to carry all the users.

Graph 6: Suggested Improvements



⁹⁸ Sanghani, Radhika. "These Countries Tried Women-only Transport. Here's What Happened." The Telegraph. August 26, 2015. Accessed April 2018. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/11824962/Women-only-trains-and-transport-How-they-work-around-the-world.html>

Findings

The previous user engagements have allowed me to identify a series of issues and perceptions users have regarding violence against women in public transportation.

First, the majority of respondents have witnessed or experienced violence of some form, creating a perception of danger when using the public transportation system. This fear is not only of sexual violence but also of robbery. As previously mentioned, women establish fear out of an experience. The information gathered through surveys and interviews suggest this theory holds true. Moreover, the level of fear appears to shift depending on the transit mode, with a negative correlation between regulation and fear. In other words, less regulated services such as concessioner busses have a more significant associated fear.

Next, respondents frequently use female exclusive services such as cars, buses, and seats. There is a need to increase the frequency of such services, as many respondents register aggressions amongst each other. Overcrowding, is found to be a reason for both aggressions in the female only cars, and an enabler for sexual violence. Despite usage, female respondents have very little awareness of the program in itself, and the additional services INMUJERES offers, such as legal assistance. This is key to fostering reporting practices, and ultimately penalizing harassers.

Finally, overall users believe it is a temporary solution yet it does not target the root of the problem. Passive bystanders, corrupt officials, lenient punishment, and inadequate services are all in need of improvement to help combat violence against women. Cultural

shifts are needed to create a society of respect and tolerance, which stops sexualizing females and allows them to use space freely.

Hurdles and Recommendations

Increased service quality and frequency

Upon finding crowded spaces as a key contributing factor for harassment to occur as identified by users, local agencies tasked with the effective management of Mexico City's public transportation system must work together to reduce overcrowded spaces. Although this is an issue in most large cities, due to the extension of the public transport system in Mexico City and the high reliance of locals on it, this becomes a critical concern in the city's context.

To do this, officials must work on setting a coordinated multi-modal system with reduced dispatch and waiting times, increasing the frequency and amount of units available for service. Coupled with this, the survey showed the need for better-served units which are clean, equipped with adequate infrastructures such as lighting, safety measures, and seating. Finally, units must be driven by highly trained conductors who are not only aware of transit rules and regulations but who are also sensitive to safety concerns of all users. This awareness can be introduced through programs such as those discussed in previous sections of this thesis. For instance, bus drivers can be taught adequate intervention measures as is the case in Curitiba.

Improved legal framework regarding sexual harassment and stronger enforcement mechanisms.

As identified through user interaction, both in surveys and interviews, a significant hurdle is the legal seriousness attributed to sexual assault within the public realm. Similar to the case of New York City described in a previous section, Mexico City's Penal Code includes a limited definition of sexual harassment which provides perpetrators room for flexibility in finding guilt. As of mid-2016, local representatives pushed for broader considerations to cover the multiple forms of sexual harassment within the public realm. Modifications to the code were made to grant police officers the ability to detain men using the female exclusive services. However, defined sanctions are blurry and difficult to trace.

Victims have also complained of being persuaded to not follow through while filing their assaults, contributing to lowering statistics, or "fudging the numbers"⁹⁹. A recent study followed the paper trail of harassment complaints in the Mexico City Subway System. This study found that 76% of complaints made were done by females regarding fondling or other forms of sexual harassment. However, not a single female user filed an official report.¹⁰⁰ When questioned for the reasoning behind this, 63.3% of women viewed this as a waste of time, while comparatively, only 19% of men shared this response.¹⁰¹ The same survey showed that 27.1% of female respondents did not file an official report

⁹⁹ Erendira Aquino "El Acoso En El Transporte Público: Las Mujeres Llevan Las De Perder Al Denunciar." Animal Politico, April 14, 2016. Accessed March 02, 2018. <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2016/04/que-ahi-queda-la-cosa-autoridades-en-la-cdmx-disuaden-a-victimas-a-no-denunciar-acoso-en-el-transporte/>.

¹⁰⁰ Cívica, Data. "Próxima Estación: Acoso." Animal Político. April 25, 2018. Accessed April 2018. <https://www.animalpolitico.com/blogueros-el-foco/2018/04/24/proxima-estacion-acoso/>.

¹⁰¹ Ibid

due to a mistrust in the authorities, but most alarming is that none of the male respondents registered this as a reason to desist from filing a complaint.¹⁰²

In conclusion, there is an overall lack of seriousness attributed to the severity of sexual harassment on public transportation as a crime. Furthermore, reporting practices are weak, and associated to distrust and questionable ethics. Coupled with impunity and corruption among perpetrators and enforcers, enforcement and accountability are nonexistent. To better face this, the Mexico City local government could form a learning alliance with the New York City government to learn how to create a more robust penal code, and graver sanctions for sexual harassment in the public transportation system.

On top of the need for more severe penalties, reporting must be encouraged. To do so, Mexico City could enter a partnership with the British government to learn from their example in incentivizing reporting practices. Most importantly, Mexico City must find a means to win back civil society's trust, through the creation of stronger more engaging institutions. As a final recommendation, Mexico City can rely on third nonpartisan agencies, such as UN Women, Plan International or watchdog groups to serve as the reporting centers. By engaging a third non associated party, victims may be a bit more willing to report and increase the trust in following through their complaint.

Evaluation and Public Participation

When envisioning the program's future, Viajemos Seguras must consider public participation as well as the incorporation of regular assessments validated by external

¹⁰² Ibid

actors. As was the case of the 30-100 strategy, social media has become a medium for monitoring, accountability, and evaluation of the program's performance. Pressures from female users have led stakeholders, such as civil society groups, community-based organizations, and multilateral groups, to create their communication and evaluation mechanisms. For instance, the Observatory For the Follow-up on the 30-100 Strategy, comprised by multiple collectives and organizations invested in justice for women, have analyzed the effectiveness of two of the strategy's actions and continue to put pressure on authorities to provide improved safety conditions¹⁰³.

Simultaneously, by relying on mediums such as Twitter, female collectives have used hashtags such as #niunamenos (not one less), #miprimeracoso (my first harassment) to register the frequent violent attacks against women in the public realm. As is the case with HarassMap discussed above, these interactions and the associated anonymity, allow social media to serve as an outlet for evaluation, accountability and citizen engagement.

The role of social media as well the successful experiences found in the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial, Circle 6 and HarassMap, emphasize the importance of public engagement. Viajemos Seguras needs to incorporate public participation and user-based design mechanisms. By including the user's concerns and desires, as well as the suggestions they believe best, the program will ultimately empower female users. This attention and responsiveness will help foster a trusting environment,

¹⁰³ "Nuestro Blog," Equis, November 24, 2016, , accessed March 17, 2018, <http://equis.org.mx/estrategia-30-100-no-mejora-atencion-para-mujeres-victimas/>.

improving INMUJERES's current questionable reputation regarding complaint filing as discussed above.

Tied to this recommendation, is the need to incorporate regulated evaluation mechanisms through external entities such as watchdog groups. This recommendation is especially important in a country ranked in the top 40 most corrupt in the world.¹⁰⁴ By segregating the institutional relationship between INMUJERES, local government officials and the evaluators, the overall product will have higher objectivity and credibility as an honest evaluation.

Increasing awareness through data-driven proposal design.

As mentioned above, social media's strong presence has shaped the discussion regarding violence against women. Using the extensive data provided through media outlets as well as technical advances can help INMUJERES tailor initiatives to particular concerns or locations. Notably, by providing open data regarding counts of violence, type, place and time, users and policymakers alike can pinpoint exact areas in need of improvement. A noteworthy example is the World Bank's "hazme el paro," roughly translated "have my back," a multifaceted intervention combining "technology, marketing, and driver training to transform a bus route into a model of mixed-gender civility.¹⁰⁵ The marketing campaign provides bystanders with the necessary tools to "interrupt

¹⁰⁴ "Mexico Corruption Rank 1995-2018 | Data | Chart | Calendar | Forecast." Mexico Corruption Rank | 1995-2018 | Data | Chart | Calendar | Forecast. Accessed April 2018. <https://tradingeconomics.com/mexico/corruption-rank>

¹⁰⁵ Ana Arana, "Citiscopes," Hoping Men Can Behave, a Mexico City Bus Line Aims for Better than 'women-only', September 10, 2015, , accessed March 18, 2018, <http://citiscopes.org/story/2015/hoping-men-can-behave-mexico-city-bus-line-aims-better-women-only>.

harassment in a non-confrontational way.”¹⁰⁶ The mobile application, which includes equipping buses with WIFI-modems, allows bus users to report harassment, either as victims or witnesses.¹⁰⁷ Finally, bus drivers receive training to intervene in non-confrontational ways when faced with harassment. While the program is still in a trial phase, many users, as well as scholars, are enthusiastic towards this proposal. Local government agencies should continue to support similar initiatives as well as incentivize city labs and other stakeholders to help develop data-driven interventions.

¹⁰⁶ Karla Dominguez. "No One Helps...nadie Me Hace El Paro"; Preventing Violence against Women in Public Transport." Transport for Development. March 18, 2016. Accessed November 20, 2017. <http://blogs.worldbank.org/transport/no-one-helps-nadie-me-hace-el-paro-preventing-violence-against-women-public-transport>.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

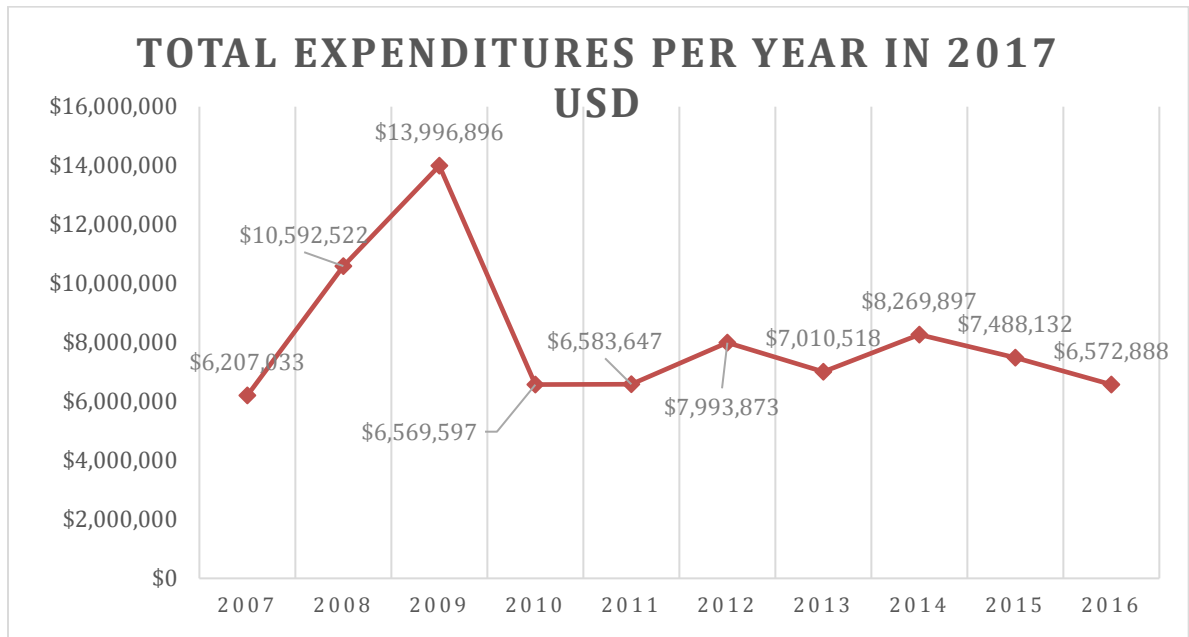
Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento de Barrio

The Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial has been long regarded as an exemplary initiative to foster community engagement and public participation. Furthermore, it has gained praise on international platforms for its fundamental role in empowering women and promoting their participation in creating safer spaces which will hopefully positively affect their lives. The 2014 Evaluation found participant distribution to be 60% female, and 40% male, and over 50% of the projects have female promoters.¹⁰⁸

During the past ten years, the program has allocated over USD 80 million to projects across the city. While the program peaked in 2009, receiving over 13 million dollars, it has slowly been declining in budgeted funds. The following chart provides a graphic distribution of funds throughout the years:

¹⁰⁸ Secretaria De Desarrollo Social, Subsecretaria De Participacion Ciudadana, Evaluación Interna Del Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial 2014 (Ciudad De Mexico, DF: GDF, 2014), 22, Accessed March 2018 http://data.evalua.cdmx.gob.mx/docs/evaluaciones/internas/2014/ei_pcmb_sedeso_2014.pdf

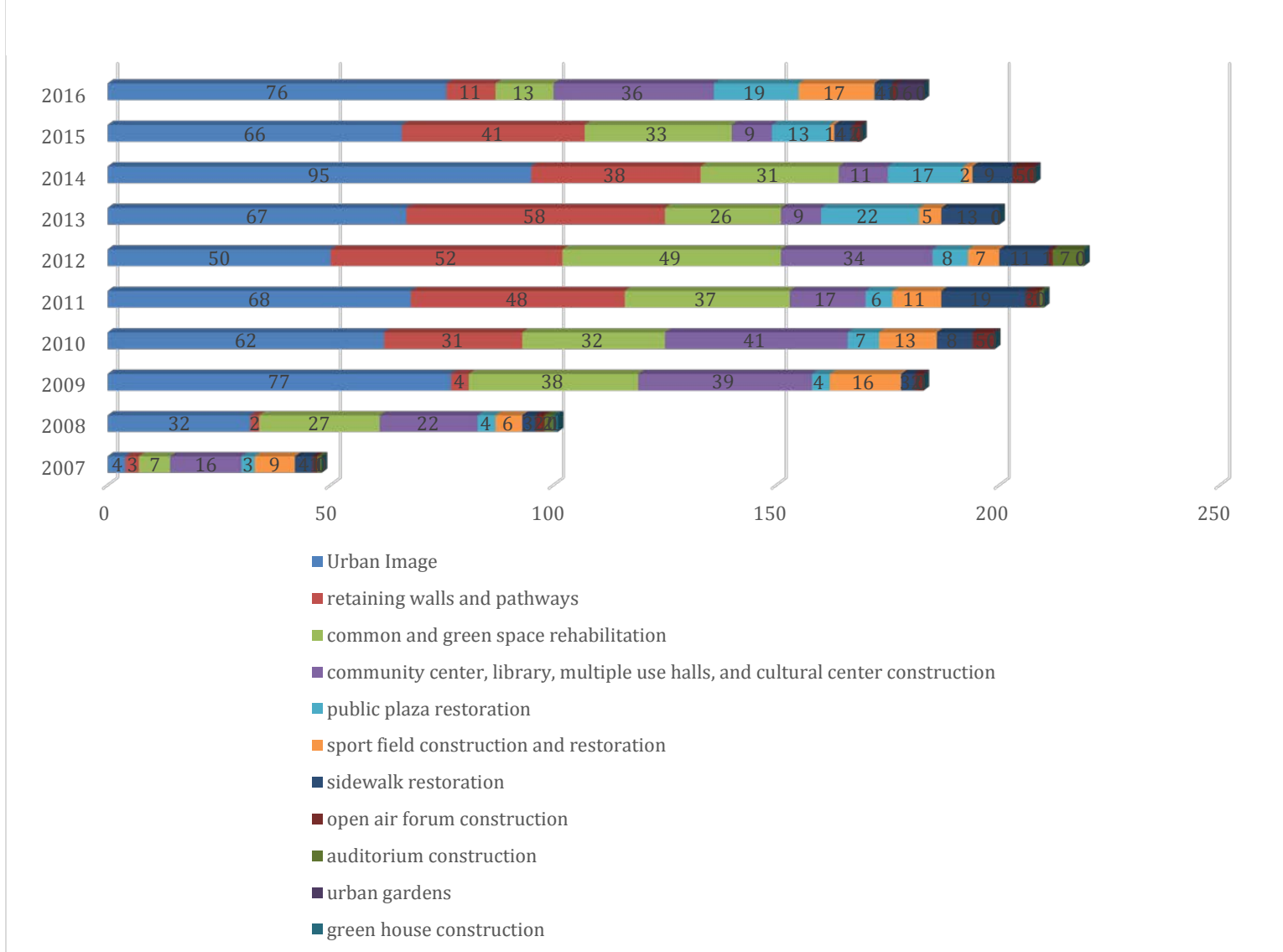
Graph 7: Total Funding Allocated.



Source: *Mejora tu Barrio – Laboratorio para la ciudad.*

These funds have helped create a broad array of projects amounting approximately 1720 from 2007 to 2016. The majority of projects have addressed issues of urban image, as well as green space rehabilitation and building retaining walls and pathways. The following graph shows a breakdown of projects by year:

Graph 8: Types of projects by year.



Source: Mejora tu Barrio – Laboratorio para la ciudad.

Official Success

Studies evaluating the program's performance consider the internal consistency among the components, operational mechanisms, objectives, and guidelines a key

determinant in obtaining successful outcomes. Coupled with this, continuity, or the possibility to compete for resources up to five years allows communities to invest in more significant, more impactful projects such as building a cultural center, or investing in redeveloping recreational spaces.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, the program has continuously incorporated feedback defined in the previous year's evaluation.

Beginning in 2016, the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial evaluations have included beneficiary satisfaction. This has been collected through interviews of residents of at least one project per city delegation. The officially accumulated data points provide supporting information to the positive aspects highlighted above. For instance 79.55% of interviewed beneficiaries are satisfied with the program.¹¹⁰ On continuity, the interviews found that projects subject to continuity have higher positive expectation due to the guarantee of additional funds.¹¹¹

When discussing the program with Alberto Martinez, former director of the program, he mentioned the longevity of the program, as well as the strong emphasis on public participation as key aspects to creating a successful program. Mainly, it is found that by requiring the beneficiaries to develop their proposals, a higher sense of ownership is obtained, striking a genuine interest in completing the task and deviating from

¹⁰⁹ Secretaria De Desarrollo Social, Subsecretaria De Participacion Ciudadana, Evaluación Interna Del Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial 2016 (Ciudad De Mexico, DF: GDF, 2016). 17 , Accessed March 2018 <http://www.sideso.cdmx.gob.mx/documentos/2016/evaluaciones/secretarias/sds/Evaluacion%20Mejoramiento%20Barrial%202016.pdf>

¹¹⁰ Secretaria De Desarrollo Social, Subsecretaria De Participacion Ciudadana, Evaluación Interna Del Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial 2017 (Ciudad De Mexico, DF: GDF, 2016). 55 , Accessed March 2018 www.sideso.cdmx.gob.mx/.../2017/evaluaciones/.../12%20EVALUACION%20PMBC.do...

¹¹¹ Ibid, 53

temptations such as pocketing the money or providing low-quality materials. The 2017 evaluation found that 39.95% of interviewed beneficiaries believe the program promotes citizen participation in the decision-making process.¹¹²

Furthermore, it has found that by allowing the community to operate the project, construction times and costs have been comparatively lower than governmental projects.¹¹³ Ultimately, despite budget cuts and administrative difficulties found along the way, the program has been able to close the inequality gap through the improvement of both the social and physical environment, promoting the greater good of creating spaces for social cohesion. Continual praise in the form of recognition and prizes on international platforms reinforces the official perception of the program's success.

User-Perceived Success

As mentioned above, the program has evolved to include female perceptions and concerns in creating safer public spaces. To better explore if the interventions have in fact established inclusive and safe spaces, 27 interviews were conducted at three intervened public spaces.

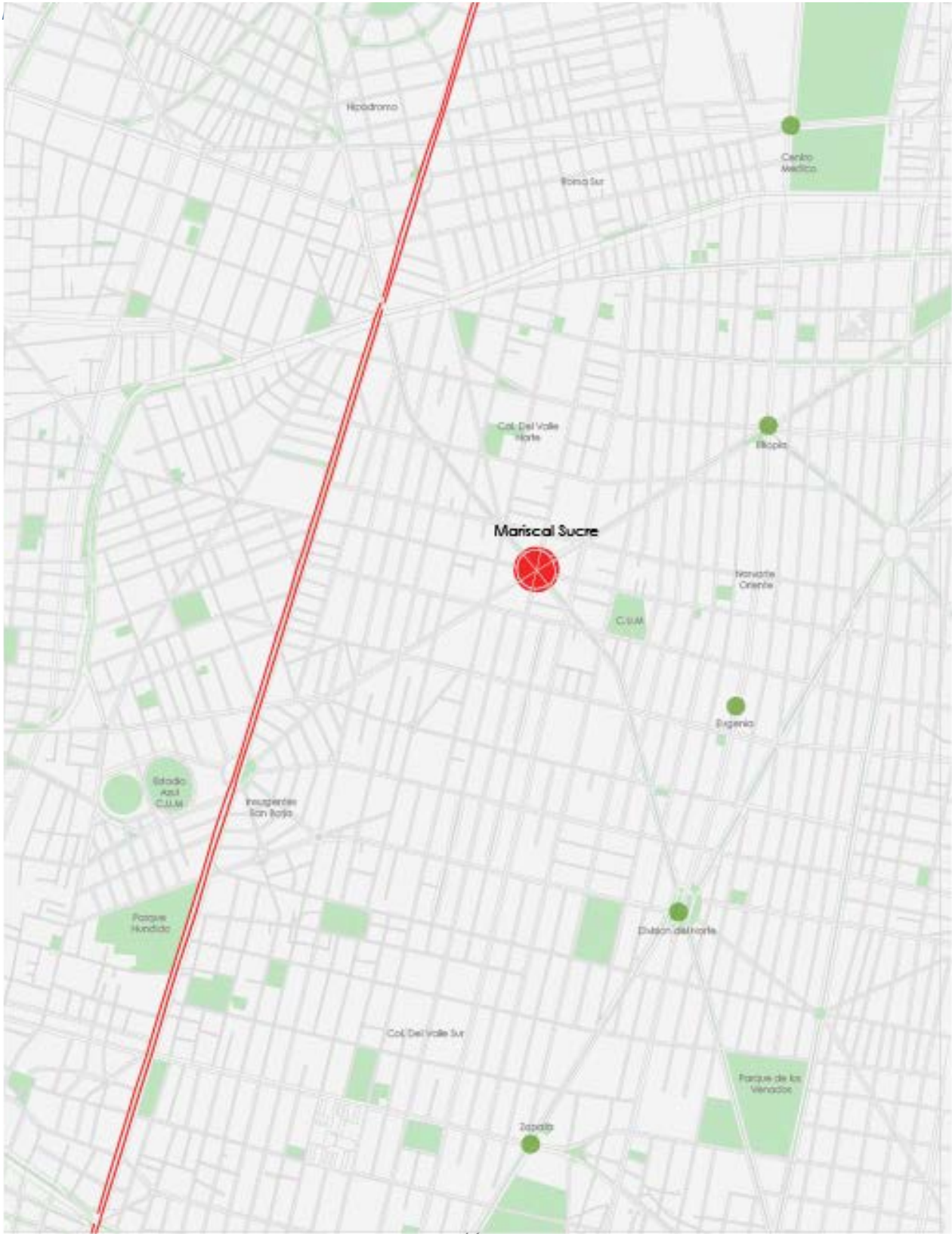
¹¹² Ibid, 55

¹¹³ World-Habitat, "Programa Comunitario De Mejoramiento Barrial," news release, 2011, World Habitat Awards, accessed February 02, 2018, <https://www.world-habitat.org/es/premios-mundiales-del-habitat/ganadores-y-finalistas/programa-comunitario-de-mejoramiento-barrial/#award-content>.

Mariscal Sucre

Located in the central part of Mexico City in a middle-class neighborhood, Mariscal Sucre Park is found at the intersection of three of the City's main arteries, Avenida Amores, Torres de Adalid and Avenida Division del Norte. Offices and other day-time establishments surround the park. It has a unique hexagon shape with multiple pedestrian bridges and high-volume streets crossing through it.

Figure 9: Map of Mariscal Sucre



Since 2013, Mariscal Sucre has benefited from the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial. Mariscal Sucre Park used the allocated funding to provide maintenance to its urban furnishings, painted the sidewalks, installed children play areas.



Figure 11: Park Mariscal Sucre

Figure 10: Park Mariscal Sucre



The park is often visited by nearby residents in the early morning or early evening before dark "when it gets ugly." Interviews with users unveiled a concern for safety due to an increase in illicit activities such as drug consumption occurring in the park. Respondents believed lighting and children's play areas to be pointless without the support of local police surveillance highlighting the little attention this space receives compared to others in the area.



Figure 12: Interventions at Mariscal S.

Figure 13: Interventions at Mariscal S.



Females suggest the space could benefit from increased policing, mainly female police officers who are perceived to present more significant support towards women, as well as adequate landscaping.

Gutierrez Najera

Gutierrez Najera park is located in the northeastern delegation of Venustiano Carranza. It is located in a primarily light industrial area of the city at the end of a closed street. The park was benefited by the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial as of 2014, hoping to rescue the space from further degradation.

Figure 14: Map of Gutierrez Najera



The neighborhood committee proposed installing children play areas, outdoor exercise equipment, lighting fixtures, seating, and kiosks and increasing surveillance to create a safer and more inclusive space for female users.

Figure 15: Intervention



Figure 16: Interventions

Female users have identified these interventions as positive ones, testifying to the decrease in marijuana smokers and drunks as a consequence of the increased surveillance and lighting provided. All respondents view the interventions as critical components of creating an inclusive and safer space. *"It is safer; there are not as many lonely dark areas where women can be dragged to."* This is supported by the notion of having local government backing in the form of policing as well as maintaining the space clean and in good shape.

Another success the program intervention has had is attracting new users. When interviewed, many of the respondents mentioned they previously did not visit the park due to its run down condition. Others commented on increasing the frequency in which they visit as well as the times of day thanks to improved lighting, and additional recreational activities previously not available. Residents said this is visible by merely observing a shift in users. *"If you notice, now the majority of visitors bring their kids or dogs."* A consistent theme was the newly created comfort in visiting this public space.

Despite the successful increase of user ship, some female users still believe the space is exclusively for daytime use. Respondents shared concerns regarding nighttime patrolling. However, they recognize that delinquency is an issue found throughout the neighborhood. Placing full-time security booths has been a shared suggestion amongst all respondents.

Privada San Diego

Parque Privada San Diego is located within the southern delegation of Xochimilco in a primarily residential neighborhood. As of 2014, this public space has received funding. In 2015, this public space won the second round of funding to improve the sporting facilities. These works included building bleachers, expanding sanitary services and installing lighting fixtures.

Figure 17: Map of Privada San Diego

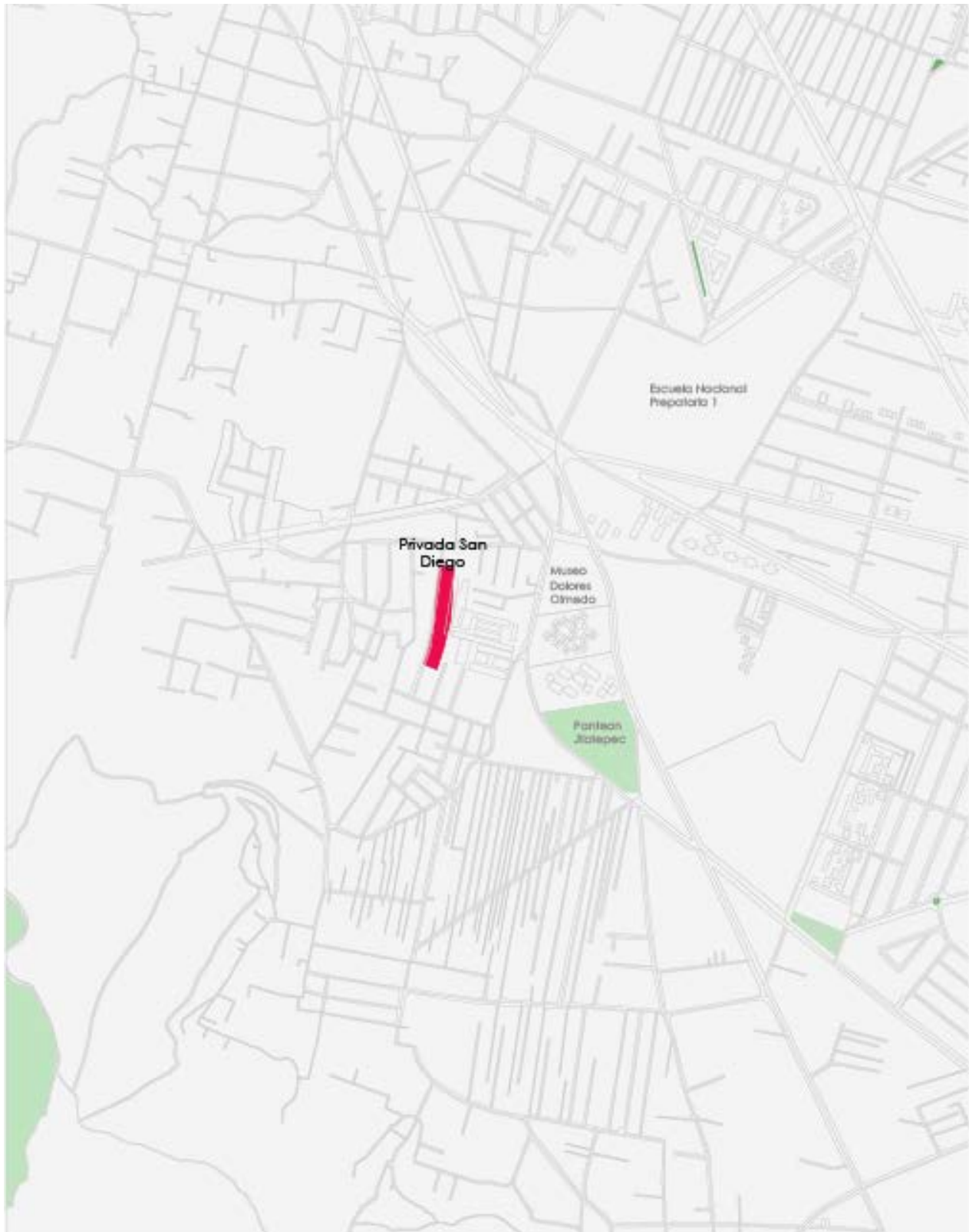


Figure 18: Fenced off field



Through conversations with local users, contradicting opinions were found. First, it is worth noting that long-time users have seen grand improvements from the original state over twenty years ago, to today's current condition. Many users believe space has become unsafe in recent years due to the lack of constant vigilance. Residents believe the improved sports facilities such as the fenced-off soccer field has created spaces for opportunity crimes such as theft, as well as drug consumption. This action was carried out as a continual intervention supported by the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento de Barrio.

All interviewed women suggested increased lighting to create a more inviting space. Notably, they viewed eliminating dark spaces which are perceived as insecure to be a key component as to why women are not interested in visiting the area. This response echoes findings of studies previously carried out by researchers in the United

Kingdom and the United States, where increased lighting “provided reassurance to people (particularly women) who were fearful in their use of public space”¹¹⁴.

Coupled with this, users suggested permanent surveillance in the form of policing, and cleaning service as they consider both aspects to deteriorate the overall ambiance. Furthermore, they view these upgrades necessary to complement the improvements already made. As one user pointed out *“what is the point of having outdoor facilities if space is unsafe and dirty, who wants to come here”*.

Findings

Through archival research, expert and user interviews many findings have been identified within the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial. An overarching theme found is that while the spaces are intervened to be made safer and more inviting, female visitation is a day time-limited activity. All beneficiaries agreed that to create a more inviting nocturnal environment for women, the perceived safety of the space would need to increase.

Tied to this issue is the need for better coordination among different levels and agencies within the government. Through interviews with experts, it was clear that policing is attributed to another agency. When tense relations appear, coordinated efforts become challenging. For instance, competing political parties make intergovernmental communication and coordination difficult.

¹¹⁴ Riggs, Mike, and CityLab. "Street Lights and Crime: A Seemingly Endless Debate." CityLab. February 11, 2014. Accessed April 2018. <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2014/02/street-lights-and-crime-seemingly-endless-debate/8359/>

Furthermore, according to operational rules, local governments are tasked with maintaining the upgraded spaces. However, as documented through site visits and interviews this task is not always fulfilled. With limited timeframes for funding, many sites must ultimately depend on local authorities to care for long-term upkeep.

Recommendations

Include policing activity within the intervention

While the PCMB has been successful in creating inviting and safe spaces for women throughout Mexico City, many female users still feel unwary of nocturnal usage. To better face this, PCMB and the Secretary of Social Development should work in coordination with the Secretary of Public Safety to foster neighborhood surveillance. These entities can draw upon "eyes on the street" principles to create workshops to train citizens in best ways for collective policing.

Furthermore, I recommend the PCMB and Secretary of Social Development implement internationally designed and deployed mechanisms such as Women Safety Audits as a part of the program follow-up. Defined as a "method to evaluate the environment from the standpoint of those who feel vulnerable and to make changes that reduce opportunities for assault"¹¹⁵, this toolkit provides female users the opportunity to pinpoint areas in need of increased surveillance. This will make the previously recommended collective policing more effective.

¹¹⁵ Making Cities and Urban Spaces Safer for Women and Girls (Bangalore, India: Actionaid, 2013).

For areas which have registered extremely high crime rates, PCMB should include the creation of permanent surveillance procedures. This can take the form of security booths or constant patrolling.

Implement mechanisms for long-term operation and management budgeting.

This past year marked the ten-year anniversary of PCMB. Initial projects have now been set into place for over a decade, needing upgrading, improving and adaptation. Notably, these investments must be maintained to guarantee the objectives such as female inclusiveness and safety are continually met. The PCMB must create coordination mechanisms among civil society, local government and the Secretary of Social Development to ensure the long-term success of these projects.

Conclusions

Gender-Based violence is a continually evolving topic within Mexico City's political context. Monumental efforts from multiple institutions have resulted in programmatic responses such as Viajemos Seguras and Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial. This thesis has aimed to define the ways in which these proposals have been successful in producing safe spaces for females within Mexico City's public realm.

Through archival research, expert interviews and user engagement, this thesis identified different ways in which the programs increased the sense of safety in female users. On the one hand, Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial has been officially regarded as being highly successful. Although there is room for improvement, the female users feel safer through the program's interventions. Key contributing factors to the success of the program are public participation, constant evaluation, and constructive feedback.

Regarding the Viajemos Seguras program, research conducted found a certain disparity between the levels of officially perceived success and user-perceived success. First, there have been no mechanisms of evaluation or monitoring set in place to track official results of the program's initiatives. This thesis relied on interviews and other media sources to identify officials' perceived success of the program's interventions. Published numbers indicate decreasing accounts of gender-based violence, allowing authorities to deem the program successful. Coupled with this, the program has publicly announced

reduced number of cases, yet strong claims of under reporting and fudging the numbers, indicate a fallacy in the claimed effect.

However, through user engagements in the form of interviews and surveys, it was evident that incidences of sexual harassment are still prevalent in the Mexico City Public Transportation System. Yet, Viajemos Seguras has been successful at providing a temporary solution to this issue. When given the choice, female users will opt to take the services provided by the program despite signifying longer commute times or delayed arrivals. While this is not the most desirable solution, it has been effective in creating better experiences for female users as found in the study above.

To better address, these identified issues, newer programs such as Viajemos Seguras must borrow from Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial's best practices in public participation and program evaluation. This thesis highlights the need to include female users' perceptions and concerns when designing measures to decrease violence against them within the public realm, as well as the inclusion of stronger evaluation mechanisms and feedback incorporation.

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Appendix

Transportation User Interview

1. How long have you been using the public transportation system?
2. How do you feel using the public transportation system?
3. Do you often travel on your own? If no, why not?
4. Do you avoid traveling at certain times, routes, etc.? If so, why and which one?
5. Have you experienced discomfort in the public transportation system? If you are comfortable could you share more details?
6. If so, when was the last time you experienced it?
7. Do you think this has gotten better or worse in the last five years?
8. Are you aware of the existence of the program, Viajemos Seguras?
9. If so, have you used their services?
10. Have you used the confined subway carts/ confined buses?
11. If so, how do you feel using them?
12. Do you believe this is an adequate solution to make public transportation more hospitable to women users?
13. What kind of improvements do you think could be done in the Public Transportation for women?

Public Space Users

- Do you live here?
- 2- How long have you been living here?
- 3- Do you come to this place often?
- 4- Why or why not?
- 5- Have there been changes in since you started visiting this space?
- 6- If so, what kind and since when?
- 7- Do you feel comfortable in this space?
- 8- If you are comfortable can you tell me why or why not?
- 9- This question will address the explicit action meant to create inclusive spaces.
- 10- What could be improved for this to be more hospitable from a women user perspective?