

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation Report

Executive summary Guatemala

Freedom of expression and quality of journalism:
Empowering indigenous people and urban youth via
local radio stations in Guatemala

Background

Guatemala suffers from a high crime rate. Large population groups, especially indigenous people, live in poverty and are excluded from social participation. The media landscape is dominated by a few commercial and politically influential providers. Municipal radio stations often do not have a broadcasting license and suffer from economic problems. In addition, journalists must expect intimidation and threats—not only from organized crime, but also from political officials and security forces. The country's cultural and linguistic diversity is barely reflected in the media, which means that particularly disadvantaged groups are denied access to relevant information. The situation in the Petén region (project region) is problematic. The lack of media diversity there prevents the possibility of a differentiated formation of opinion. In the city, too, the lack of information diversity in the media information system has led many young people to indifference. Their confidence in state institutions is alarmingly low. Guatemala has not yet dealt with its armed conflict of the recent past. In the violent conflict of 1960–1996, an estimated 200,000 people died and 45,000 are considered missing. Even today, the transparent handling of human rights is still not guaranteed.

The BMZ has been supporting the project since 2016. It ends in December 2019. As the primary target group, the project addresses disadvantaged population groups, primarily of indigenous origin. In Guatemala City, the focus is also on young people and young adults. Two project objectives have been defined: 1. Disadvantaged population groups—young people and young adults from marginalized urban peripheries and the rural population, especially those with an indigenous background—make use of diverse opportunities for participation and dialogue. 2. Media workers from rural areas are able to work professionally and in a journalistic manner, taking security risks into account.

There are three project partners with a total of four project strands: The Guatemalan Institute for Radio Education (IGER) maintains the two radio stations Radio Sónica (Guatemala City and Peripheral Areas) and the bilingual Radio Sayaxché in Petén. Radio Sónica addresses young people with their themes and concerns and involves them in the design of programs. Radio Sónica's work was expanded in 2018 to include a MIL component through an amendment and an increase in funding. This is essentially implemented in close cooperation with schools in socially deprived areas of Guatemala City. Radio Sayaxché broadcasts in the Petén region in Spanish and in Kekchí. Representatives of 15 organizations were empowered to design the radio program with their own themes. This covers almost 20 hours a week.

IGER's "Maestro en Casa" self-study program for students is broadcast by both radio stations. According to the project proposal, the Universidad Rafael Landívar (URL) was to establish a study course for the training of journalists in rural areas, but this was not possible due to the lack of enrolments and difficult internal university processes. Despite intensive efforts to achieve closer cooperation, the university-affiliated digital newspaper Plaza Pública could only be sporadically integrated into the project. One success of the coop-

eration, however, is the publication "Así investigamos (Y así nos cuidamos)" for which the project is responsible, and which is successfully used at the URL.

The project now concentrates increasingly on the constructive confrontation with human rights violations of the past and is working on an interactive map (Mapeo) that depicts human rights violations with the help of stories. The Memorial Para La Concordia (a memorial to all victims of armed conflict in Guatemala) is a close cooperation partner in the sponsorship sense. Students of the Faculty of Political and Social Science were involved in the work on Mapeo in special seminars, just as workshops with journalists also served to strengthen collaboration on the interactive map. Via the Munis Abiertas initiative, Congreso Transparente (now known as Guatecambia) supports municipal representatives and civil society groups in their demands for their right to information from state institutions. A specially programmed digital tool serves as support for this; civil society groups are given an understanding of how to deal with it in workshops. The work with political representatives has been discontinued due to lack of interest.

The aim of the evaluation was to verify the achievement of the objectives and the impact of the project, taking particular account of its particular working structure, and to formulate recommendations as a basis for collaborative learning. The results will be used for the design of follow-up projects and the further development of the organization. The evaluation took place from November 2018 to April 2019 and was based on the OECD/DAC criteria. The initial workshop, a secondary data analysis and interviews with DW Akademie staff were followed by a written survey data collection among the country managers and an 11-day field phase in Guatemala.

Conclusions of the project evaluation

Relevance: The project addresses and activates disadvantaged population groups who generally have little access to reliable information and who have only limited reflection skills in media consumption. This is achieved very well through cooperation with the two radio stations. Off-air activities such as forums, seminars and MIL seminars (Radio Sónica/Cabina Móvil) enable young people to deal critically with information. Collaboration with 15 civil society organizations enables the rural population in Petén to critically process topics relevant to them and prepare programs for broadcast on Radio Sayaxché. The de facto bilingualism is target-oriented, and the active involvement of women has been successful.

The work on Mapeo involves URL students who will later act as multipliers and possibly also as decision-makers. Journalists and representatives of human rights organizations were also involved in the research of content. At relevant events, Mapeo attracts a great deal of attention and interest from important stakeholders, such as teachers, foundations and NGOs. Munis Abiertas primarily trains civil society groups and journalists to use the online tool to obtain information. However, the actual need is not evident.

The approach of focusing primarily on non-traditional media development actors in all four project strands has proven its worth and

contributes to a broader use of and, above all, contribution to radio and digital media, which also includes a critical examination of information offerings and their reliability. In all four strands, digital instruments in terms of MIL are used. Radio Sónica's inclusion of increased MIL activities in numerous schools gave the project an additional innovation boost with regard to MIL and digital media. These measures are transferable and can be extended in the long term to other areas of the country and probably also in Petén. The project shows a high degree of networking without creating redundancies. All four project strands meet the development policy objectives of the BMZ in Guatemala. Based on these findings, the criterion Relevance has been rated as "overall fulfilled".

Effectiveness: The working structure of the project in Guatemala is target-oriented and cost-effective. The intensive monitoring of the country manager is seen as a valuable contribution to project partners' capacity development. The mainly digitally-managed communication among the decentralized team corresponds to the project's own media focus. The digital principles, "design with the user" and "release and improve", are implemented in all work strands, at least in their initial stages. At Radio Sayaxché, for example, the listeners, i.e. people from the region, produce a large proportion of the programming themselves, and at Radio Sónica young people also contribute to radio broadcasts. The social media channels are used in the four project strands to actively involve the population.

Increasingly, MIL activities are taking place. Both Mapeo and the online tool of Munis Abiertas meet the demand for a "data driven" style of work. The work on Mapeo involves research and the generation of reliable information; Munis Abiertas' digital tool also supports research work. The seminar participants and journalists can be seen as important multipliers. Several workshops were organized, particularly throughout 2018. The presentation of the tool at important events such as the Book Fair and Gobierno Abierto attracted a lot of attention. Based on

these findings, the criterion Effectiveness has been rated as "overall fulfilled".

Efficiency: The flexible remuneration of the project managers and project input through a local lawyer (management of the escrow account) are efficient. The lean administration saves resources. The already existing synergies between the four project strands can be expanded, and networking with other cooperation partners has been successful. The project work has led to a more targeted orientation at Radio Sónica towards the needs and lifestyle of the young people being addressed. The Guatemal team has made great progress, especially with regard to working with digital tools, and applies modern work structures. Based on these findings, the criterion Efficiency has been rated as "comprehensively fulfilled".

Impact: The two radio stations have contributed in each of their catchment areas to a critical approach to information and the ability on the part of listeners to actively research and disseminate content themselves. Radio Sayaxché's work activates the targeted indigenous population of the Petén region, and a relatively high participation of women as moderators has a positive effect on women's self-image. The project thus makes a decisive contribution to social inclusion. The radio station also makes an important contribution to strengthening Kekchi's image in terms of language policy.

The project strand Munis Abiertas is more difficult to measure in terms of impact. With the digital tool for information requests, however, a potential step has been taken towards active citizenship. Mapeo is an innovative, digital instrument that launches an honest way of coming to terms with the past. Overall, the project contributes to the capacity development of the project partners with regard to media and information literacy as well as their professional and target group-oriented work. Based on these findings, the criterion Impact has been rated as "overall fulfilled".

Sustainability: In the case of IGER, the project is working with a resilient organization, and Guatemala also has a promising future. The two radio stations as well as Munis Abiertas can be regarded as stable players. Mapeo as an online tool is functional and could possibly survive without the DW Akademie project. All in all, the project has proven itself to be structure enhancing, not only in terms of stabilizing the individual project partners and their work, but also with regard to a broad thematic networking of various initiatives in the field of information retrieval and verification. The internal linking of the individual strands of the project contributes significantly to this. Based on these findings, the criterion Sustainability has been rated as "overall fulfilled".

DW Akademie

is Deutsche Welle's center for international media development. As a strategic partner of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), DW Akademie carries out media development projects that strengthen the human right to freedom of opinion and promote free access to information. DW Akademie also works on projects funded by the German Foreign Office and the European Union—in approximately 50 developing and emerging countries.

Contact

Dr. Jan Lublinski
Head Research and Evaluation
jan.lublinski@dw.com
53113 Bonn
Germany



DW Akademie



@dw_akademie



youtube.com/DW Akademie



dw-akademie.com

The objective of the external evaluation is to provide a constructive assessment of the project results. It does not necessarily align with the perspective and planning of DW Akademie. Nevertheless, all findings were discussed in order to allow lessons learned to be incorporated into the development of future strategies.