Report

Using Anticipatory Experimentation to Explore and Create Futures of Safety for Women in Mexico

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Abstract

Women in Mexico are subject to unusually high and traumatic levels of violence. This paper reviews a workshop process done in Mexico City that addressed the problem of violence against women using the Anticipatory Experimentation methodology. Based on a workshop at Centro University in Mexico City on the eve of historic protests against violence against women, the paper provides an overview of contemporary challenges, historical changes, as well as deep mythological images and assumptions within Mexican society that are pathways to reconceptualization. Leveraging emerging issues and recovered narratives to address and reframe the problem, the paper concludes with the metaphor of the Chamana as the narrative seed from which new ideas and experiments might be developed to address violence against women in Mexico.

Keywords

Introduction

Recent years in Mexico have seen an unprecedented increase in violence against women. In 2019, from January to September, 2833 women were murdered in the country. By April 2020 and the necessary lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, murders increased 6.9% - the highest rate registered in our country in a month. And just in January 2023, 302 women were killed by violence, 2.7% more than in the same month of 2022 (Baranda, 2023).

Anger and discontent have been building for years, but it was Ingrid Escamilla, 25 years old, and Fátima Aldrighett, 7 years old, that set off the anger of women all over the country. After Ingrid's body was found, her dismembered body appeared on different national newspapers' front pages - see figure 1. Police members were responsible for illegally leaking those photos.

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Fig.1: El Diario Pásala and La Prensa published Ingrid's photos. Photo: Special

Many human rights organizations and activists requested the photos be removed to respect Ingrid's death, but the Mexican Government refused to act. In February 2020, the first protest of the year to protect women in México made some noise; small changes were made but not enough to guarantee the safety of more than sixty-three million Mexican women.

March 8th and 9th, 2020 were a watershed. There was nothing to celebrate; instead, women went on a national strike - see figure 2. Mexico lived a "day without women." Protests happened in the main cities of the country, demanding solutions for the situation, to enforce laws and to make a stand to challenge old behaviours.

Fig.2: March 8th, 2020. Arriving to Zócalo in Mexico City, women were demanding their rights, *"I'd rather you fight than be raped and killed."* Photo: Abril Chimal

["In Mexico, Women Go on Strike Nationwide to Protest Violence. Tens of thousands demanded government action to halt the killing of ten women every day, on average." New York Times headline March 9th, 2020.]

As part of the Design of Tomorrow program at CENTRO in Mexico City, led by Dra. Karla Paniagua, Dr. José Ramos collaborated to create a workshop that allowed students to challenge this issue's "used futures," to envision alternative Futures of Safety of Women in Mexico - see figure 3, and create experimentation pathways that could be used to address the issue.

CENTRO is dedicated to the professionalization of creativity and encourages students to use it as a catalyst for change, innovation, and value creation.

In the program, education is anchored in the study of anthropology, integrating a systemic perspective on what it means to be human and promoting complex thinking for problem-solving.

Fig.3: José Ramos and participants during the workshop. Photo: Jasso @by_jasso

When the workshop was held the issue of violence against women was front and center. Protests had taken place before and during the workshop. And the majority of participants were also women. This issue felt pressing and there was a desire to address it. There wasn't an explicit research question that we formulated. The goal was to simply explore how to respond to violence against women in Mexico using the anticipatory experimentation approach.

The research findings are presented in sections 2, 3 and 4 as part of the Anticipatory Experimentation Methodology (AEM). The findings are not fundamentally different from the workshop process. All findings are derived from the step by step participation of people in the workshop, the participants. A literature review has added nuance to the findings but has not changed or altered it.

This paper is structured according to the anticipatory experimentation approach taken in the workshop. The next section outlines the Anticipatory Experimentation Methodology. In section 2, we review the process and findings on the used futures of the issue. In section 3 we review the process and findings on new futures and new assumptions. In section 4 we review the process and findings on developing ideas for experimentation. We conclude the paper with a discussion on the process, limitations and next steps.

Methodology

The methodology used for the workshop is known as Anticipatory Experimentation (AEM), and it was originally developed by José Ramos (2017) referenced in figure 4. It is a method for bringing the preferred future into the present through experiments that can scale for impact. The method creates a bridge between the preferred future and real-world experiments that bring that future into being, coupling a visioning approach with an ideation method that leads to specific and implementable ideas, which can culminate in experiments. One of the hallmarks of the methodology is to begin with a critical futures assessment that allows participants to challenge "the used future" (Inayatullah, 2008). This helps to prevent a problem prevalent in innovation and design processes, namely, the developing of solutions to problems from unquestioned worldviews, perspectives and epistemological assumptions that exacerbate the problem. Anticipatory Experimentation is a kind of epistemological intervention, a way to generate ideas and experiments from an image of the future based on new, different, more empowering, and authentic assumptions, narratives, and worldviews.

With respect to participant involvement, eight women and two men participated in this workshop; the teams were evenly divided in groups of 3-4. Participants were mostly millennials, upper-middle class (CENTRO is a private school).
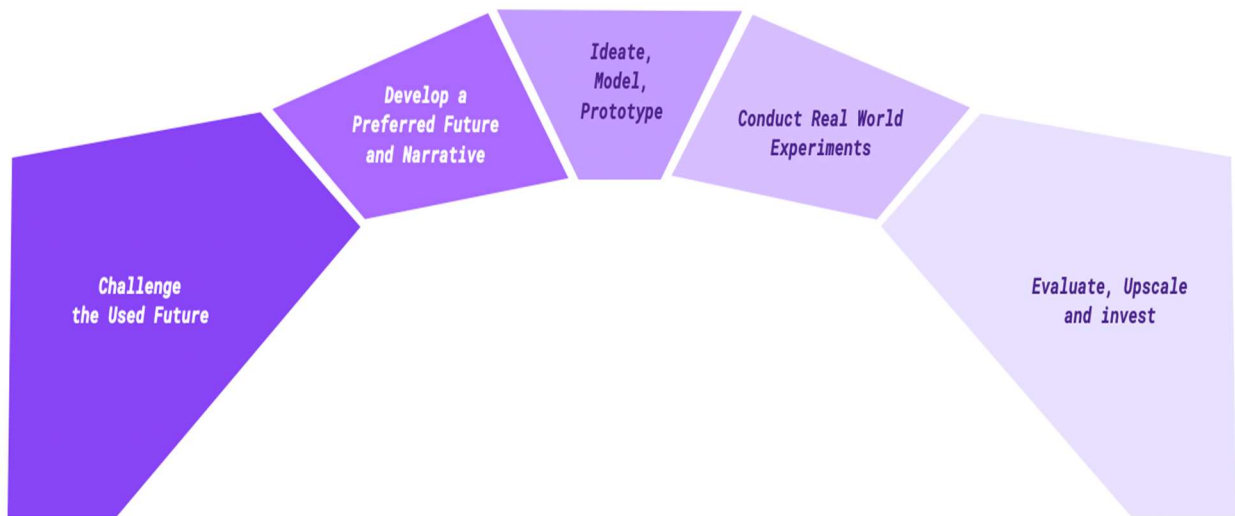
The method has five key steps:

Fig.4: Anticipatory Experimentation Methodology (AEM)

4.   Challenge the used futures of the issue
5.   Envision a preferred future or just new assumptions
6.   Ideate new strategic pathways and ideas for change
7.   Define, develop and run real-world experiments
8.   Evaluate, adapt and scale for impact

Each step can use a variety of methods. In table 1 are listed methods used in this research project**.**

Table 1 List of methods used.

Step in AEM	Techniques and Methods used
1 – Challenging Used Futures (Critical Futures Assessment)	Vision Cycles (timeline method) Emerging issues analysis (Molitor, 2010). Causal Layered Analysis (Inayatullah, 1998) (helps identify older assumptions) Sarkar game (Hayward & Voros, 2006).
2 – Creating New Assumptions or Visions for a Preferred Future)	"Integrated" Visioning (Inayatullah, 2008) Causal Layered Analysis (helps develop new assumptions and pathways) Futures Wheel (Glenn, 2009)
3 – Ideation (generate ideas that draw from new assumptions or visions)	Futures Action Model (Ramos, 2013) (helps to generate ideas in context of emerging futures)
4 – Design and Run Experiments	5S experiment evaluation
5 – Evaluation for Iterating (Altering or Scaling)	Not used here

1 - The Used Futures

The "used future" (Inayatullah, 2008) denotes an image of the future that has been uncritically or unconsciously adopted from another context, which no longer serves peoples' interests. It may also denote images of the future that are out of sync with a changing context. Challenging the used future is akin to emptying a cup so that there is room to put something new in.

To look at used futures, we used a technique called Vision Cycles – see figure 5. This timeline technique asks about how visions influence people's actions, their effects, and how these effects lead to new interpretations that become new visions of the future.
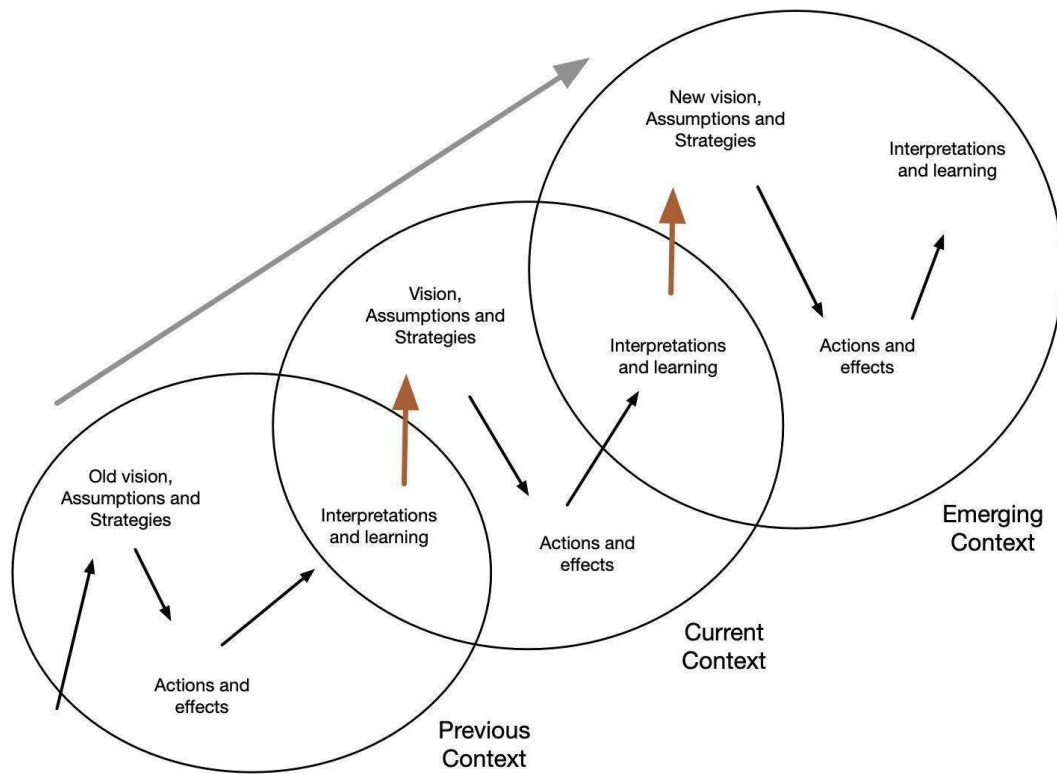
Fig.5: the Vision Cycles framework

The Vision Cycles technique is based on the idea that visions and implicit social directions lead to actions that have real world effects and impacts. When these effects and impacts become realized through societal experience, they then lead to socially diverse interpretations and learnings. And these learnings then lead to new visions and implicit social directions.

Using the Vision Cycles technique the group identified previous waves of visions for women in Mexico, the past, the current, and the emerging- see figure 6:

- Deep Past: Hard Core Patriarchy
- Recent Past: Patriarchy Light
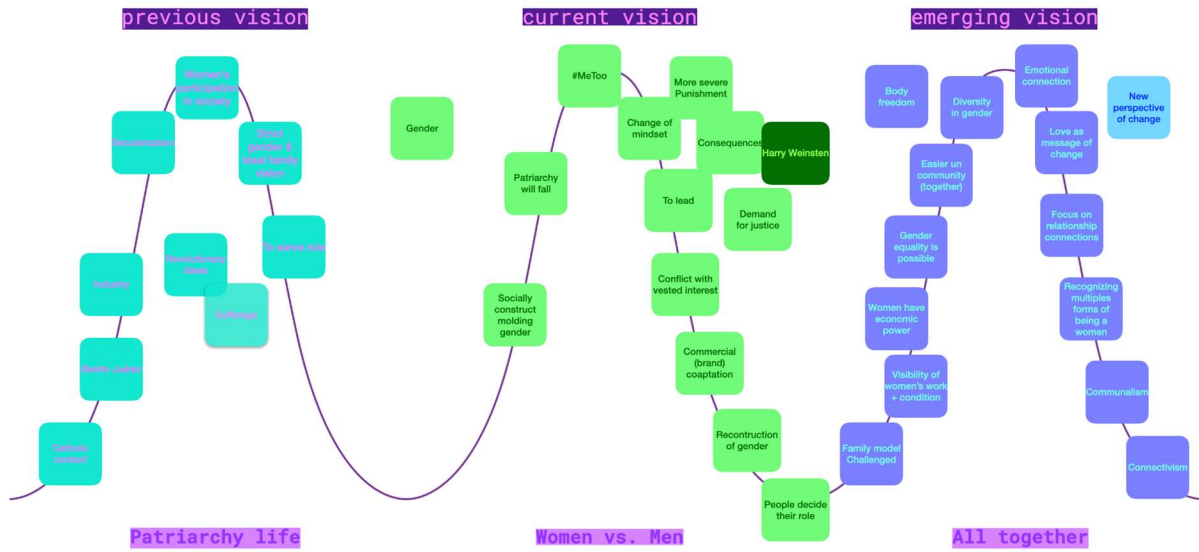- Current: #Metoo
- Emerging: All Connected

Fig.6: Initial Vision Cycles exercise iteration. After analyzing the information with the participants, the titles were reworded.

Deep Patriarchy

Historically, the term patriarchy was used to refer to autocratic rule by the male head of a family. In 1883, Marx and Engels wrote in "*The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State"* that the patriarchal family, private property, and the state arose together. Canadian sociologist Dorothy E. Smith described patriarchy as "the totality of male domination and its pervasiveness in women's lives" (Ritzer et al., 2010). The world we know has been governed by these principles. Men have created the world for the benefit of men, characterising women as weak, chaotic, sentimental, and made for house and family chores.

In Mexico, however, we have an out-spoken social structure; from more than 125 million Mexicans 51.6% are women, many of which express matriarchal power. This has been reinforced by the powerful Catholic veneration to the Virgin Mary, which in Mexico takes the form of worship of the "Indian" Virgin of Guadalupe, and if we go further back in time, we have Malintzin, the key figure in the conquest of the Mexicas as an unrecognized leader during the Spanish Conquest.

According to his study *"Sexual Behavior in Mexico"* the sexologist Dr Osvaldo A. Quijada argued that while machismo is a core behaviour and "there's a generalized conviction of male superiority" he also remarked as a hypothesis… "isn't it possible that behind the gross and grotesque caricature of male domination, there should be real female domination?", adding, "The man who shouts out his masculinity is often guided and controlled by a woman. His shout is only that: reaffirmation of something he has lost" (Quijada, 1975). This grotesque caricature of male domination provides a glimpse into Mexico's used futures, where the main actors in our society are women, but controlled by men.

The historical structure of violence is an example of this. Mexicans began their territorial expansion phase through military strategies, men became warfare specialists, and women became the bounty. Malintzi, best known as Malinche, was given to Cortes as a "gift" to help the Spaniards get to the capital Tenochtitlan, and was mischaracterized as a traitor. She was not recognized for her accomplishments, saving her tribe, learning Spanish, and being an essential piece in our history.

Another example is Mexican's Golden Age cinema, women admired this image of Pedro Infante, the ultimate Mexican macho, taking women under his control and utilizing them for his own sake – see figure 7.

Fig.7: Pedro Infante y las Abandonadas. Scene from "Los Tres García" 1947.

Patriarchy Light

Women progressively gained their right to vote around the world between 1894 and 1971 through the Women's Suffrage Movement. Mexican Women's Suffrage happened in the mid 19th Century. Women were not allowed to vote or take office under Porfirio Díaz's presidency, according to Mexico's liberal constitution from 1857 – see figure 8.

Fig.8: Guerrilleras Zapatistas, Mexican Revolution. Photo: Desconocido Magazine

After the Civil War and French intervention, on any consideration of women's role in Mexican political life was put on hold. It was not until 1878 that the journal La Internacional articulated a detailed program of reform that aimed at "the emancipation, rehabilitation, and integral education for women". During President Luis Echeverría's mandate (1970-1976), there were indirect efforts to combat machismo, establish a birth-control policy, and Mexico City became the venue for The United Nations' conference for Women.

Thanks to all of these events, in the present we Mexican women have rights, freedom of speech and individuality - but Mexico still remains patriarchal. For example, as seen in the brochure below in figure 9, a 2020 summit on breastfeeding expressed this unconscious cultural bias, as all the speakers were male! This means that

formalistically, women have the right to vote, and are equal under the law, but culturally and in practice discrimination and gender bias is widespread, and structural violence continues - hence we call this "patriarchy light". This used future sees a "modern" Mexico with all the formalisms of equality, but it still has at its core the man as the head, master, or leader of the family and society and women remain invisible, keeping with Quijada's hypothesis that "behind the male domination, should exist real female domination" we have as evidence that women have gradually gained ground over patriarchy, and that 3 out of 7 Mexican households are headed by women over the past several decades (Aguilar, 2010. Navarro, 2010)

Fig.9: Breastfeeding Summit. Oaxaca, Mexico. 2020.

#Metoo

Since 1945, the United Nations has declared gender equality a human right. After that, in 2015 under the Millennium Development Goals, gender equality and women's empowerment became part of the agenda.

When we talk about women's empowerment first, the collective image that pops up in our minds is J. Howard Miller, World War II poster propaganda image: *We Can Do it!.*

Since then, a lot of things have happened to enable women's empowerment. It became more and more common to see women in business, in sports, brands creating campaigns to empower women. Unfortunately, despite all efforts, women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world.

According to Goal 5 of the United Nations report (United Nations, 2015), one in five women and girls between the ages of 15-49 have reported experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner within 12 months and 49 countries currently have no laws protecting women from domestic violence. This situation has led to various movements to support women who have been victims of violence.

In 2017, dozens of women accused Harvey Weinstein, an important film producer, of rape, sexual assault and

sexual abuse, using the '#MeToo' hashtag as a battle cry. While he was found guilty and sentenced to 23 years in prison (Paul, 2020), #MeToo became an ongoing movement for justice and retribution, where women who have suffered abuse outed many other men in the coming years.

The situation in Mexico is arguably worse. From 2017 to 2020, femicide increased from 7 deaths per day to 10, and now by 2023 it has increased considerably to 15 deaths per day. Femicide transcends divisions, age, class, race, and politics. Most of the killings have been by a family member, partner, friend, or less frequently a stranger.

However, in Mexico the #MeToo movement didn't take off as in other parts of the world. It wasn't until March 2019 when, Ana Gonzalez tweeted about sexual harassment committed by a famous writer (Villegas, 2019). After that, it exploded in Mexico as well. Dozens of complaints from film, academia, the non-profit sector, business, law, theatre, medicine, politics and more were posted on social media. The Vision Cycles analysis revealed that while #metoo serves an important purpose in challenging the violence and abuse of women and represents justice for victims, it is not enough- see figure 10.

Fig.10: Protest during Pussy Riots performance at Festival Ceremonia, 2019. Photo: Abril Chimal

All Connected
The Vision Cycles technique surfaced an emerging theme: "All Connected". Women speaking out against violence have been heard all over the world, and have become a trending topic; in the future this could move past a man vs. women dynamic – and involve solidarity and responsibility taking by men – a less confrontational and more collaborative approach between sexes. We are also starting to be more connected to ourselves, with our emotions,

making communication easier. We also see our deep interconnectedness across many issues and people. This view presents the issue as one of solidarity, how can men take ownership of the problem together with women, rather than playing a defensive role – see figure 11.

Fig.11: March 8th, 2020 Strike. Mexico City."Respect my existence or wait for my resistance". Photo: Abril Chimal

Estimation of Cultural Expectations

As a complement to the analysis of previous visions (now used futures), several participants pointed out that these implicit visions of gender relations differ considerably between regions across Mexico. Given as an example Mexico City (Center), differs significantly from other parts of Mexico, for example the South and North of Mexico. We did a poll within the group to get a sense of what we thought the demographic breakdown was across these regions – see figure 12.

   North and South states' behaviours were compared with Mexico City's, and we distinguished two main factors could that could affect (favourably or against) violence against women in Mexico:
   - **Religion** (indistinct) has been one of the main factors that dictate the way men treat women. Even though the northern states are near the US, these borders are the most socially conservatives US states.
   - **Diversity** (nationality, race, sexual orientation, etc.). International tourism (leisure or business) has a huge impact on the economy of a state in Mexico; but it also has a cultural influence and requires openness to different beliefs and behaviors. We can see this reflected in politics and laws. (Tourism drives value for diversity and liberal values).

Overall, the conclusion was that the South of Mexico (Quintana Roo, Yucatán, Chiapas, Oaxaca, etc) was more likely to hold on to "Patriarchy Light" cultural expectations, followed by the North (Nuevo León, Sonora, Chihuaha, Sinaloa…). In Mexico City "Patriarchy Light" is thought to be well below 50%, and #Metoo is past tipping point status, and All Connected is significantly emerging. (It should be understood this was an internal participant poll, unsupported by external research).
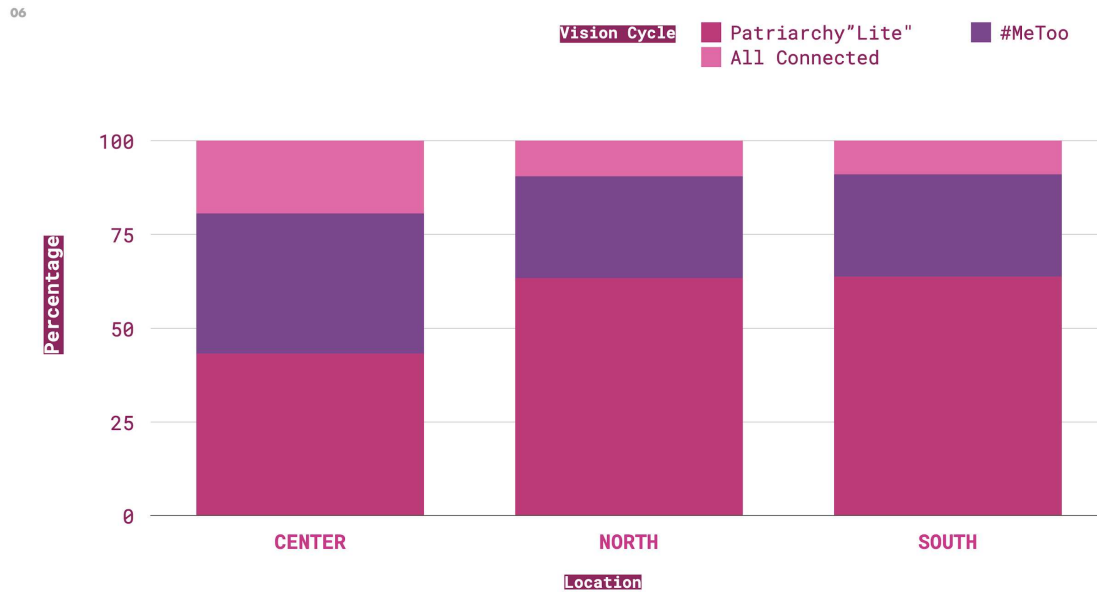

Fig.12: Vision Cycles perception of the group.

Fig*2*- Emerging Issues Analysis and Futures Wheels
Emerging issues analysis (Molitor, 2010) is fundamental to challenging a used future. It is most often the case that we hold images of the future in our minds that are based on untested assumptions. Emerging issues analysis helps to disturb our assumptions about the future, either challenging existing notions, or providing new data within which we can consider new possibilities. It is also the basis for developing new assumptions on the future which can support new visions.

In this workshop, we did an emerging issues analysis (Molitor,2010) showed in figure 13, generating dozens of issues, and selected the ones we thought were most relevant to the futures of addressing violence against women. We then ran each of the selected emerging issues through a Futures Wheel process (Glenn 2009) – see figure 14. Futures Wheels is a technique to look at first and second-order effects of a potential emerging issue or wildcard / what if?
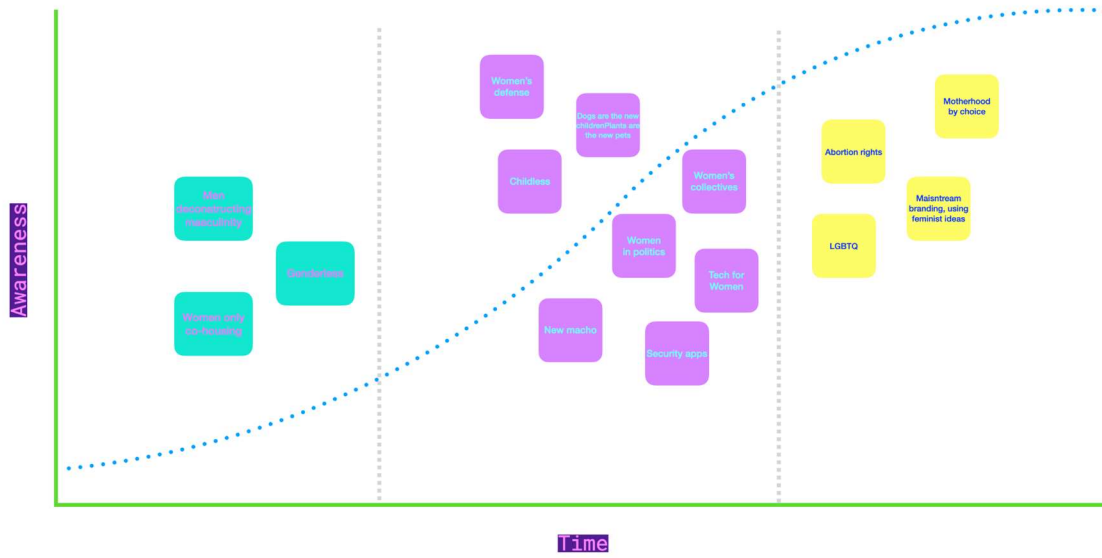
Fig.13: The workshop's first iteration of Emerging Issues. Illustrative purposes.

The group focused on these issues:
- Alt Right Neo Macho
- Women's Violence Prevention and Support Co-ops
- Security app and tech for women
- Women CO-Housing
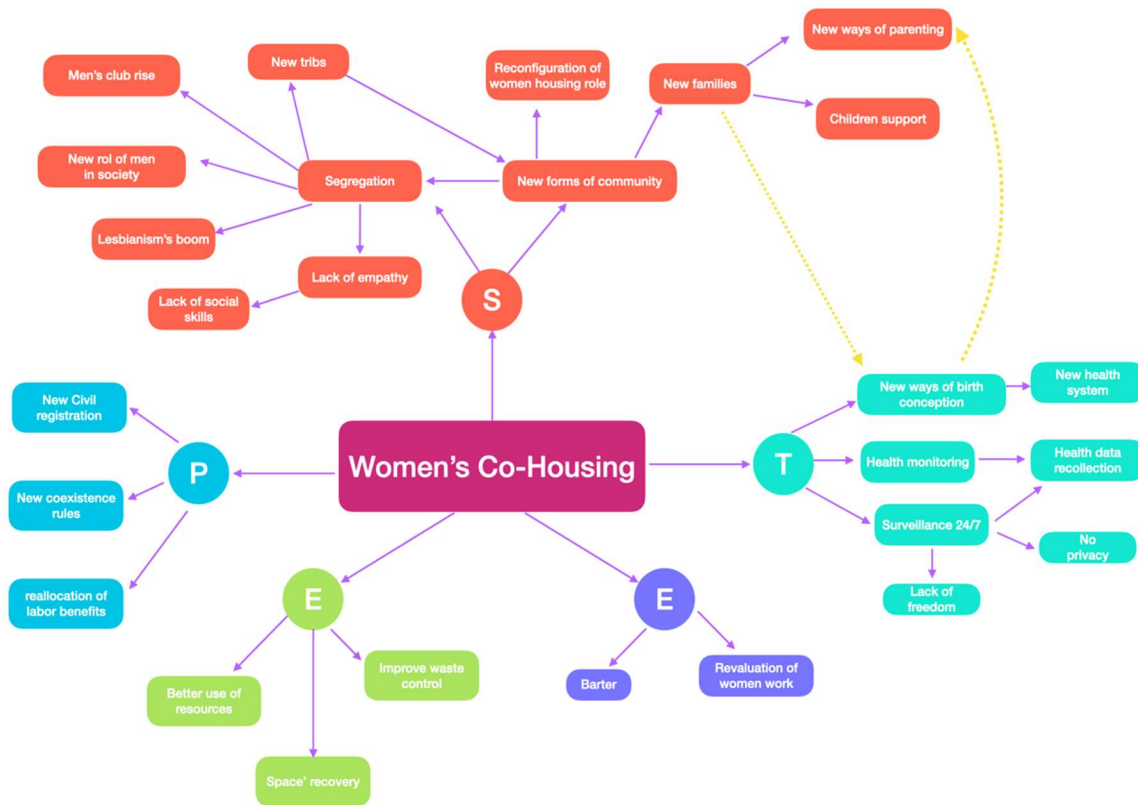- Tech-Based Community Support Networks

Fig.14: Example of the Futures Wheel exercise during the workshop. Illustrative purposes.

Alt Right Neo Macho

A new kind of men's movement has taken shape. Incels, alt-rights, rage against feminism, the political support of Trump, thought leaders like Jordan Peterson, and this phenomenon can also be observed in the country's futures and foresight sector, where, despite the fact that women dominate the field (SOIF, IDRC & Chimal, 2022) – see figure 15, men continue to receive the most exposure and recognition.… a number of dots begin to connect across the social spectrum. What is happening? There is palpable fear and distress in many men, who have lost traditional social roles, status, and are increasingly confronted by the new economic power of women. In Mexico it manifests through passive-aggressive behaviour, a cartels minions over-exaggerating their power through violence, heightened domestic violence that betrays a male's fear of losing power, the use of terror as a way of controlling the uncontrollable. What is new here are the intersections: the confluence of strong-man leaders appealing to weak-feeling men, the use of fake news to shape public opinion, an emerging ideology of manliness (e.g. Andrew Tate), polarization and creating an enemy (feminism), and the (hidden) hope that hierarchical / patriarchal roles will be re-institutionalized.

Fig.15: Conference Poster from UAM UNESCO Chair in Mexico City 2023.

Women's Violence Prevention and Support Co-ops

The group identified the co-operative form as a way in which women are building solidarity and working to prevent violence against women. The co-op movement is well over 100 years old, beginning from credit and housing mutuals in the early 19th century, and evolving into food co-ops and other forms in the 1970s. The micro-lending strategies that led to the Grameen Bank and the work of Slum Dwellers International are examples where mutualizing women's resources and building solidarity creates substantive change. Today co-ops are seen as ideal strategies to mutualize shared interests. They can build support funds for women in need, legal fees, and longer-term economic self-sufficiency. They can leverage technology for education, inclusive development, and women's security. They can work to create safe and healing spaces for women who have been traumatized by violence. They can create a greater sense of autonomy for women to speak freely and honestly about their experiences. And they can support women to get into positions of power and influence and advocate for change in society.

Security apps and technology for women
Personal security has been a significant concern for women. The dilemma is, can women's safety be guaranteed when attackers are close friends and family? Can technology be a tool to boost surveillance and safety? Over the years, various potential solutions have been put on the table, whistles, panic buttons, bracelets; you name it. But the law and public policy has not incorporated technology into a viable system. Imagining this scenario only covers a small part of a larger picture, just a tiny percentage of the population might have enough economic resources to use these technologies. Leveraging the potential of technology to protect women would necessitate a broader social transformation in the country, as those currently able to access these technologies are economically privileged. There are also potential negative consequences of these technologies, like over surveillance, hacking, data server overpopulation, blackmailing. With this issue, we must consider that this could become a system that is not just reliant on government regulation, where citizen oversight is needed to develop more effective and better outcomes.

Women Co-Housing
Can we imagine Huimilpa or Juchitan becoming a real thing across the country. (Humilpa is a community where only women live and Juchitan is an indigenous community led by women only). The idea of women's only co-housing would allow women to maintain privacy, guarantee safety, build a participative and collaborative community, and encourage women to develop various projects. Far from a utopian image, violence against women is pushing women to consider this as a new possibility. The downside to this is in creating close-knit communities without diversity. Would it imply disruptive relocation, unequal labor benefits, and different ways to co-exist? Will this cause significant social impacts, lower social skills, lower empathy for others (such as men)—reconfigure women's roles, create tribalism, or segregation, or lesbianism? And for men and women, outside the co-housing, would it increase clandestine men's clubs, create a new role for men in society, and new forms of community? Parenting would be different as we know it today.

Tech-Based Community Support Networks
The creation of social media groups (Facebook, Whatsapp) aimed at offering local support has increased significantly during the pandemic, compared to the beginning of 2020. Mutual aid has demonstrated some of the best systems for addressing people's needs, in many cases better than any company or government could develop. This emerging issue shows a glimpse of how a Women's community support network can be. It could generate an identity, provide emotional support, medical advice, personalized medicine, and medical kits, such as gynecological assessments through wearables, and most importantly, create virtual safe spaces.

3 - New futures are built on new assumptions
In using Anticipatory Experimentation, people can decide to create a new vision for a preferred future, or they can just get clarity on the new assumptions that will be used to generate ideas. In this phase of the workshop we focused on identifying the new assumptions to draw from which to do ideation.

Causal Layered Analysis
Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) (Inayatullah, 1998), is a fundamental method in the AEM, and the inflection point from the used future to visioning. CLA provides a way to explore the deep assumptions that underpin the used future. Using myth and metaphor, one myth expresses the nature of the problem and used future, and a new myth can be imagined which expresses a resolution to it and provides the "DNA" for understanding and visioning a new future.

Table 2 CLA Visualization

CLA 1		CLA 2	
Litany	**What is the pop image or idea? What is the common but superficial understanding of the issue?** Sex trafficking, sexual harassment, femicide 10 deaths per day, mobbing, media does not profile killers, March 8th & 9th protest, emotions / verbal psychological violence	**New measurements and indicators for change**	Less femicide. Less drug abuse. More people in therapy. Increase of Mindfulness and meditation Spaces. Rise of women in power. Acceptance of gender diversity. More women walking free. New demands.
Systems	**what systems sustain the situation? research on how existing structures, policy and systems maintain the issue / problem** Stigma, segregation, income gap between men and women, objectivization, psychological disorder, extreme attachment, boys don't cry, hyper - normalization	**New social Enablers**	Support for cooperatives forms. Continuous Education. Support plus accountability circle. Preventive institutional triggers. Rehabilitation, inner / outer.
Worldview	**what culture supports the situation? the complex of ideas and assumptions that give legitimacy to the policy level** Poverty, romantic love, monopoly power, ownership over women. Mafia cartels, objectivization machismo, patriarchy, culture patterning, impunity, law of justice	**Emerging Worldview**	Holism: Mindfulness, listen to our body Health: Self-Awareness, New disorders New Philosophies. Symbiosis, oriented toward relationship process, self-fulfillment. Redefine New Normal. Genderless. Collaboration and deep connection.

Metaphor	Expresses the problem or issue through image, art, story When asked to come up with a metaphor that captured the systemic totality of the analysis (the gestalt), the metaphor that really stuck for the group was: **Cupid** **Predatory behavior of men**	Emerging Metaphor	When asked to come up with a metaphor that captured the systemic totality of the analysis (the gestalt), the metaphor that really stuck for the group was: **Shaman(a)** **Powers of Influence and Healing**

Metaphor Shift : Cupid

The metaphor shift in the CLA - see table 2 - was from the image of *cupid* to *chamanas*. Cupid is a Western-derived character that represents romantic love and the quest to conquer. In the analysis, cupid also represents a sense of possession, men's feeling that they own a woman.

This is evident in the *Litany*, considering the current events in the country, such as the occurrences of deaths and the kidnapping of women. *Systems*, the actions being taken presently contribute to the perpetuation of the disadvantages faced by women, such as the segregation in public transportation in Mexico City, which favors the patriarchy. *Worldview,* The objectification of women and the presence of machism, which view women as possessions.

The *Chamana* (woman shaman in English) is a powerful and autonomous woman with mystic, spiritual, and practical powers of influence and healing.

The Emerging Vision: The Chamana

Building on the CLA exercise and the emergent vision from the Vision Cycles exercise, the emerging vision for addressing this issue is to see the solution through the perspective of the shamanic potential of women and deep inter-dependence and connection. Given the extremity of the violence, at present the movement is focused on justice and retribution, autonomy and protection. It is a rejection of some of the dominant norms in Mexican culture - rejecting the emphasis on romantic love which spills over into a sense of ownership over women (Cupid). However beyond this participants could imagine how the polarization expressed through #metoo could give way to new forms of generative (Shamanic) power held by women, and the potential for solidarity across men and women in addressing violence.

Shamanic futures for ending violence against women in Mexico includes the recognition of the Other as a dynamic resource, and fostering cooperation between men and women. We are a totality of existence and there may be a need to transcend polarities, and even move past gender toward recovering human identities and perspectives. This point of view may lead to efforts at helping and healing sex offenders rather than punishing them. There is cultural work to do to imply men into the problem space as active participants in social change. This requires new forms of education and healthcare, and a focus on mental health. Spiritual, emotional, institutional and epistemological power centers do need to shift however. It may require women-centered services, greater political

autonomy and power by women and even political parties run by women. And drawing on and centering on women's ways of knowing, learning from nature and working with our natures and cycles, emotional wisdom and knowledge and connection as a force. Epistemological pluralism is needed to weave the science of non-violence with the shamanic knowledge of change and social transformation. Decentering these power structures accompanies shamanic power as a re owning ancient centers of power.

A real-world example of the Mexican Chamana is María Sabina in figure 16, She was born in Huautla de Jiménez and died in 1985 in Oaxaca, Oax. She was a descendant from Mazatec ancestors who had mastered traditional medicine, botany and the arts of healing through the balsam of song and language.

Her words resonated everywhere, the forest, the mountains. The word of the shaman is the language of the woman-priest who is capable of transforming herself into all things and is capable of giving them a voice. She believes in a deeper connection with nature and the cosmos. Robert Wasson called her *"La Señora"* because of her strong character and determination. She suffered from violence from her second husband, and after that, she was done with men, but she never stopped to protect nature, her children, and her mission to help others to heal minds and bodies (Agustín p.199. 2017. 199).

While she is more popularly known as the person who introduced Timothy Leary and Aldous Huxley to mushrooms, she was actually giving voice to
- New ways of being for women / new power
- New way of being for people / culture
- Gave a voice to indigenous people and indigenous ways of knowing
- She empowered people and women through her ancient knowledge

Fig.16: María Sabina, Mazatecan Shaman

The shaman can also play a futuristic role, to disclose new worlds and signs of change. Bussey (2009) writes that the "concept of the shaman [is] one who stands in the between, or better still straddles it, linking the knowable with the unknowable, the actor and the context, in ways that are non-prescriptive and unique", and further "Invoking the shamanic offers a way out for those struggling to free themselves from dominant narratives that come from somewhere else." The Mexican *Chamana* is an archetype that provides a way of escaping the dominant narrative of patriarchy in its various manifestations, and creating a new future.

4 - Ideas for Experimentation

Ideation is the process of generating ideas. In AEM the key principle is to draw ideas from new assumptions and a new future, rather than unconsciously rehashing ideas from the used future.

In this next part of the workshop we worked on ideation using a game derived from the Futures Action Model (FAM) (Ramos 2013). While there are many ways to do ideation, FAM is useful as a non-linear process for working across the categories of emerging futures, global responses, and initiative stakeholders. These three elements are summarized here:

From Ideation to Experimentation

At this point, from the group, three teams of 3-4 were formed based on interest and previous work. Three teams interacted in the game to create three core meta-ideas. Each of the teams then translated the ideas into **possible** experiments.

Team 1:

Idea:

Public spaces for gender education, for normally excluded groups, such as: indigents, religious, prisoners, among others. Lack of education in this group normalizes toxic behaviours. The aim of the ideas is to enhance self-exploration, power dynamics, use of proper language to make visible the problem, such as violence – see figure 17.

Experiment ideas included:
- **Create community's assemblies** - When information comes from and to their own people in communities, it helps to overcome existing biases.
- **Memes to hack reality** - Nowadays we have 3 seconds to make an impression in people's minds, one of the more effective ways to do it is through memes, these pills of information that are stick immediately in the subconscious, there's may be no better time to be informed with memes.
- **Strategic partners to use existing education spaces** - Collaborative spaces such as ATEA in CDMX downtown, promote and invite low-income communities to collaborate with artists to educate people for inclusion and to connect through art.
- **Go to jail for 24 hrs and try to understand conditions for these excluded groups** - Rapes, pregnancy and psychological violence are the most typical forms of violence, and there's no reinforcement of well-being among these groups. (Note this is a higher risk idea that would require safeguards).

Team 2:

Idea:

Create a Gender-wellness perspective. "Sell post-gender benefits". We are beginning to embrace gender inclusivity in droves, echoing gen Z's sensibilities for a more fluid expression of identity – see figure 18.

Purpose:

Link mind - body - spirit. The modern definition of health is expanding beyond nutrition and physical aspects; it also includes mental and emotional wellbeing. This will make the benefits of gender equality tangible. Educating diversities for collaborative intelligence, grass roots and inter-generational.

Experiments ideation:
- **Position in our culture an actor or cartoon with neutral gender in Mexico.** Unconsciously we still have that image of Pedro Infante, the strong Mexican Macho who has to treat us rough to be loved. Be more like "La Doña", less like "la Chorreada".
- **Miracle products with hidden messages for the self.** Stores like Erotika have been forced to cover their window display because it is inappropriate to encourage sexual exploration, the only way to spread the messages is with something hidden.
- **Wellness expo with a booth on sexual education for women.** In Mexico City WTC, there have been sex expos, but they are usually with images for men, e.g. porn actresses, toys for masturbation for men, but there's not much real information for women.
- **We need classes to explore the self.** There are workshops to explore sexuality for men or for couples, but there are not many workshops for just women.

Team 3:

Idea:
Educate diversities for collaborative intelligence, grass roots and inter-generational- see figure 19.

Purpose:
Challenging the sexual education system is something not commonly seen in Mexico, e.g. women's periods, sexual exploration, abortion options, among other topics, which are are still taboo.

Experiments ideation:
- **Graphic TV Show**: Porn Channel. Cindy Gallop and her project MakeLoveNotPorn has inspired many women and couples to become part of the real sex movement, but in Mexico this is still an underground and subversive sub-culture.
- **Instagram #PleasureFirst.** Stephanie Sarley and Instagram artist, initiated a project where women and men's sexuality are explored through fruit; we have the right to explore, and to know our anatomy as it is, not just for sexual purposes but for health too. A video recently posted by the Mexican blogger Mal Vestida made a statement: "We are not fruit, we are people." We must also educate women how to explore themselves for breast cancer.
- **Public Performance, for women** it is still prohibited to be shirtless, naked, or to show any female "private" part, so to show a naked body has become a strong statement. A recent example: Anja Rubik appeared naked in the ***[Vogue Polonia](#)*** cover, nudity is a way to protest.
- **Board-game like Hasbro-Operation** but for sexual exploration, gamification has turned into an amazing way to improve learning in kids, for complex subjects such as finance, what better way than to teach about sexuality at an early age.

Selecting an idea based on the 4 S'
Often ,we don't act on ideas because they feel too big. Other times they do not feel safe. And other times it takes us too long ... too large an investment of time for us to commit to an "if" proposition. So to set up an experiment we follow 4S'. The 4S' is a simple mnemonic to help to do prototyping. Successful prototyping requires that we move through action learning and research cycles quickly. The 4 Ss are:
- **Safe** - experiments need to be emotionally and physically safe. If it fails, we don't get physically hurt, psychologically hurt, or financial hurt. If an experiment is not safe, it will be a psychological barrier, our mind will not let us do it.
- **Small** - small experiments allow us to move quickly, test and see if something works, and adapt from there. If we try to build something too big, it can take a long time and require too many resources before we know

it is a worthwhile direction.

- **Simple** - experiments need to be simple enough for us or our teams to do ourselves. Too much complexity will overwhelm our ability to put something together. Many endeavours are complex, there is no disputing this. Getting someone to the moon is a case in point. But the road to the moon was dotted with simpler experiments that accumulated.

- **Short** - experiments need to be short enough to drive learning quickly. If it takes too long to put one together, we lose agility. A short experiment allows us to test the key assumptions something rests on, and then drive learning quickly, allowing pivots.

As a group, each idea was evaluated and we came to these conclusions:

Fig.17: Team 1 - Selection

Fig.18: Team 2 - Selection

Team 3

Ideas	safe	short	simple
•Graphic TV Show:	●	○	○
•Instagram #PleasureFirst	●	●	●
•Public Performance	○	●	●
•Board-game for sexual exploration	●	○	○

Educating diversities for collaborative intelligence, grass roots and inter-generational.

Purpose:
Challenge the sexual education system.

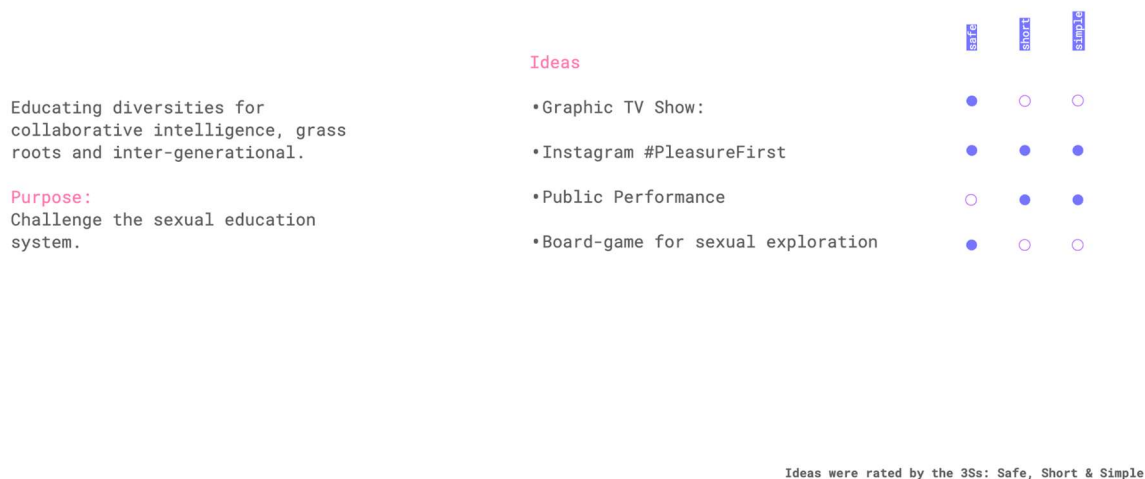Ideas were rated by the 3Ss: Safe, Short & Simple

Fig.19: Team 3 - Selection

Three days after the workshop, the world entered a pandemic emergency and it required a necessary lockdown, some classes were postponed, budgets decreased, which made it challenging to transition from ideas to experiments. But students are still keen to run these experiments as soon as possible, and the ideas remain relevant to the issue

Key themes in the research

When looking back at the work that was done and the ideas which have been plied into this brief study, a number of themes can be drawn out.

1. **Narrative, "used" selves and emerging selves.** How do we talk about what is beyond the extremes of women adopting the male macho persona on the one hand (e.g. Thatcher the "iron lady", desensitized power) and the socially prescribed martyr / maiden / maid? Women in Mexico are eager to shed these used futures and personas and discover different, new and authentic ones. One question to ask is what selves and personas the 21st century is asking women in Mexico to bring forth? We've seen young women like Greta Thunberg express a kind of "wise rage" in defense of future generations. What transgressive selves can be called forth as a resource for self and social transformation? As a futures research study time and narrative are our resources to consider the possible.

The **Chamana** is a rich metaphor that goes beyond just the issue of violence, but reaches to the heart of the challenge in Mexico, how to transform the identity of womanhood and a consequent transformation in power relations. If women's identities remain locked into used futures, objects of conquest or even matriarchal home makers, roles still remain passive in relation to violence. The Chamana invokes spiritual and psychological power, to heal and to create change. It opens a narrative space to explore a new kind of agency and power for women, but also goes beyond the man vs woman antagonisms that typify the problem and social discourse, seeing men and women as a totality. This theme also reveals the possibility of men as partners in the transformation.

2. The Chamana is a **connected** persona, to her own spiritual powers, to the psychological needs of others, to the living world.

As such **connection** is a key theme that runs through many of the ideas and findings. This means connection to our emotions and bodies. In the ideation of experiments section, there is a movement toward reclaiming the body. This involves an embrace and celebration of the female body, rather than the rejection / aversion typical in Catholic culture and doctrine, as well as sex education and emotional education. Connection to the body is also a pathway toward healing the traumas associated with violence against women (Van der Kolk, 2014).

3.   Connection is also manifest through **community**,

a fundamental theme in this inquiry, as support groups and campaigns are seen time and again as pathways to empower women in the face of structural violence. This is seen in the protests that erupted in Mexico as well as the strategies for change that are articulated. In some cases these are imagined as women-only communities that allow for autonomy, but can also be gender diverse communities that that express solidarity with women. Community is also required to generate a shared new narrative for women in Mexico, so that what women decide to bring forth does not just remain on the margins, but can be woven into the body of Mexican culture.

4.   Re-inventing manhood in relation to women.

How many times will men volunteer themselves to explain how things are or are not, today or for the future, on behalf of women? The insecure man loves talking even when he knows very little, he must fill the air with the sound of his authoritative voice, to affirm his importance and drown out any nagging self-doubts. But this research certainly locates a role for men, in listening, learning and solidarity. Partnership and solidarity by men may begin by consciously stepping back and insisting that they will be the first to listen and the last to talk about the challenge or problem. Men will need to challenge in themselves the false confidence born of insecurity, or the real confidence born of privilege. Transformative processes such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa allowed the victimizers to listen to the victims, not in a punitive way, but as a pathway toward empathy and healing. In this regard Mexican men will also need to explore new narratives for manhood and the new selves and personas that may accompany this.

Conclusion

The used futures that we identified in this report have continued to create generational trauma since colonial times. Work will need to be done systematically, across political, cultural and behavioral lines. Emerging issues, such as Security Apps and Tech for Women, Women's Co-Housing, Tech-Based Community Support Networks, Women's Violence Prevention and Support Co-ops, may provide ways of leapfrogging or hacking some cultural obstacles.

As well, there is a fine line between equality and equity in order to ensure a future that respects gender and sexual orientation differences. For some, patriarchy is the Gordian knot at its core. However, feminism can become ideologically limiting for women in Mexico and regions with similar characteristics, since oppression in Mexico has intersectional dynamics: it is not only patriarchy that is being fought against, but also classism, racism, colorism, , (neo)colonialism, and other -isms. There should be no place for the image of "The Girl Boss" (a woman with political or organizational power but who conforms to many other types of oppression - white supremacy, class superiority, relational power-over, etc.). We prefer Comandantes and Shamans (Hernández, 2022). The All-Connected vision anticipates cross-gender / interspecies solidarity to change the underlying causes of our contemporary challenges, based on a more holistic indigenous perspective than a Western one (Hernández, p.122, 2022).

To close the loop between action and foresight, we identify the need for more foresight and futures cases of women in Mexico or the Latin American region. We recognize that there are remarkable women futurists around the world, but their perspectives can get downed out in the socio-cultural context of loud / confident / tech futures in an industry dominated by men. Furthermore, there is a need for more ways to consider which communities can drive experiments that can bring this preferred chamanic future into the present. While these experiments are mentioned throughout the report and have the potential to create change, they can only live through communities with the drive and capacity to run them.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the research engagement was over only two days with approximately 10 participants. It was both limited in its timeframe and engagement numbers. It may offer a useful snapshot and insights into the issue, but it shouldn't be seen as definitive. The findings and insights are specific to the techniques and methodology used. Of course, the use of different methods and perspectives would yield different results. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this project and its findings contributes, in some small way, to addressing and healing the pain and trauma Mexican women experience.

Acknowledgments

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