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Mexico, Human Rights
Mexico: An Endeavor to Protect Human Rights

Do we ever think about what we have available to us daily? We have many things like food, water, education, healthcare, and basic rights. Other places do not have enough access to these things. In this case, it is countries like Mexico. Mexico is a stage three-country, still struggling to obtain access to good quality water, food, sanitation, education, healthcare, and rights. The country's population as of 2017, is about 129.2 million. The percentage of rural inhabitants is 21.16% and the urban inhabitants are about 78.84%, almost 130 million according to the World Bank. This means that there are still a lot of people without access to these vital resources, and it needs to be acknowledged.

Mexico's government is a democracy or a system in which the citizens' ideas or opinions are taken into consideration by the government and representatives. Their government is run by the current president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador. About 13% of Mexico's land is suitable for cultivation purposes, there are also currently about 6% of the land that is cultivated with permanent crops according to LandLinks. The climate is hot and mainly dry. Mexico is in North America, and agriculture is vital. Their main exports consist of vehicles, machinery, medical instruments, fruits, and vegetables. "Mexico is the United States' second-largest export market (after Canada) and third-largest trading partner (after Canada and China) (UnitedStatesDepartmentOfState, 2019)."

Since agriculture is important, there are many jobs in this field. Many families rely on this or other fields of work to sustain a good life in Mexico. Money is an issue. Earning money can be a struggle for most inhabitants because of the regular wage. Some jobs in Mexico consist of industrial careers like engineering or plumbing and things along that line, as well as any career dealing with agriculture, and law enforcement. One in seven Mexican workers earns the average minimum wage of 65.58 pesos (\$5.10) a day or less according to SeniorJobBank.

Food insecurity is evident. There is usually a lack of money for basic necessities. This is all due to the minimum wage. The lack of money as mentioned does pose a barrier, in other words, to access food which is vital for anyone to survive. Furthermore, there are families to feed. The standard family size is 4-5 people. A typical diet consists of a lot of corn-based products. Mexicans usually go to a market or a local grocery store. Meals are prepared by chopping vegetables, adding seasoning and spices, cooking in a pan with peppers, and serving with the common side of rice and beans. All of this is the norm in Mexico, and it is a place that millions of people call home. It is also important for citizens to live in certain places without having to worry about basic necessities.

The usual dwellings in Mexico are smaller and made of adobe, or clay material that hardens over time making a concrete-like texture. They are usually built along hills or on bumpy streets. The houses are usually adjacent to one another. With financial limitations, being able to afford education or healthcare is an issue. There is access to education, similar to that of the United States in regards to payments. In

regards to healthcare, most locals can only afford basic care. Being able to obtain these things should be a human right, and this is a prevalent issue in the country of Mexico.

A human right that everyone has is to be able to live in healthy environmental conditions, and that is unfortunately not that case for some inhabitants. In 1982, the World Charter for Nature acknowledged that “Mankind is a part of nature and life depends on the uninterrupted functioning of natural systems which ensure the supply of energy and nutrients.”

Human rights are rights that justifiably belong to anyone and there are violations of them, the criminal justice system routinely fails to provide justice to victims of violent crimes and human rights violations in Mexico as of 2018 (HumanRightsWatch,2019). There is more assumption rather than investigation, and that in itself can explain the many human rights violations that occur, and they can be anything from the law to women’s rights or even healthcare. The incessant amount of crimes that are committed almost daily in this country, can contribute to the fact that there are even human rights violations. There are “extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture. Impunity for these crimes remains the norm. Laws enacted in 2017 could help address the problems of torture and disappearances, but implementation has lagged (HumanRightsWatch, 2019).” There is more recorded crime in rural areas as opposed to urban areas.

Everyone is affected. “Mexican laws do not adequately protect women and girls against domestic and sexual violence. (HumanRightsWatch,2019)”. There is availability to contraceptives and abortion clinics for females that were victims of rape, but there is still the issue of “preventing gender-based violence and the trafficking of women and girls.” Men do not face as much discrimination as women in Mexico. The elderly and children do not face any violations as much as the adult generation, but access to good educational systems may be an issue for some families. It isn’t just locals, migrants in Mexico are commonly faced with human rights violations. There are allegations that the government is involved.

There have been many violations regarding many things. Most commonly known are law-related violations. Most people do not usually have access to a fair trial. This itself has been a controversial topic, but it is to be recognized, as it may be a barrier in being able to achieve a better environment and being able to ultimately protect human rights. Between December 2012 and January 2018, the Comisión Nacional de Los Derechos Humanos (CNDH) or the National Commission of Human Rights received more than 3,000 complaints of abuses against migrants (CNDH, 2019). And a 2017 WOLA report, citing official numbers, indicated that there had been 5,294 reports of crimes against migrants between 2014 and 2016 in five states alone (HumanRightsWatch,2019).” Although the crime rate is still higher in range, there has been little progress in the justice system in late 2018.

“Mexico continues to be one of the most dangerous countries in the world to defend human rights and practice journalism. Attacks on defenders and journalists occur regularly, creating a worrisome environment of self-censorship and intimidation (WOLA, 2020).” Other federal organizations have noticed some of the amount of unnecessary violence or violations that Mexico has experienced. “A United Nations independent expert today urged the Mexican Government to strengthen the national structures that protect human rights, in particular the right to life, and reduce the involvement of the military in policing to reduce the use of force in the country (UnitedNations, 2013).

The global financial crisis in late 2008 caused a massive economic downturn in Mexico the following year, although growth returned quickly in 2010. Ongoing economic and social concerns include low real wages, high underemployment, inequitable income distribution, and few advancement opportunities for the largely indigenous population in the impoverished southern states. Since 2007, Mexico's powerful drug-trafficking organizations have engaged in bloody feuding, resulting in tens of thousands of drug-related homicides according to the Central Intelligence Association as of 2019. The Mexican government has passed some laws and has tried to make the justice system more effective and efficient.

Europe, Portugal, and Norway have recently started to open its doors to asylum seekers. “The pledges by the two countries may be a sign that the EU’s beleaguered emergency asylum seeker mechanism – a key ingredient to solving Europe’s refugee crisis (Dam, 2016).” Their purpose was for asylum seekers to find comfort and avoid chaos, which was a great way to handle the situation. There should be legal documents being signed for the fair treatment of all people set in place by government officials. The downside to this is that it would be difficult to get anything agreed on fast, or even presented to them unless there are big organizations that can help represent smaller ones and citizens. This would be a peaceful option.

To begin with small steps, there should be policies set in place in public buildings like police stations, schools, hospitals, or court buildings. If there is a document that the government can try and come up with or sign an agreement to, then that would be presented to the citizens of Mexico, and therefore would be in effect since it is then considered an official document instituted by the government. To make a change, government officials should lead this and work with the United Nations (UN) and the Comisión Nacional de Los Derechos Humanos (CNDH), it is local and they will be able to discuss matters regarding this specific topic and or issue, and all citizens can do is encourage it until it happens.

There should be things like protests to get the attention of any officials. Community members and organizations can protest, even though it may be a small step, it is a vital one. Since the focus of CNDH is to protect human rights, then it would be a great source to reach out to. There is another question locals might ask, and it regards funding. To start, fundraisers can take place. Global donations can also help. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and its articles should serve as a guideline on how to create policies in Mexico. For example, in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 9, it states, “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile,” as well as Article 11 which states, “(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.”

This declaration can be of use as a source on how to handle most of the common issues regarding human rights violations. These types of rules or policies can help to guide Mexico officials come up with solutions to help its citizens, especially those facing discrimination or those who do not have access to the same things that other inhabitants of Mexico have. It will be able to be upheld by the efforts of the government and its partners to keep these laws and/or policies intact for many years and then some.

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