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## FUNDACIÓN DE ESTUDIOS PARA LA APLICACIÓN DEL DERECHO (FESPAD)

### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization: Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho (FESPAD)  
Sector: Civil Society  
Project Title: Violence Against Women: A Citizen Security Problem  
Location: Mejicanos (San Salvador), El Salvador

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although El Salvador has made progress in passing legislation that protects women's rights and seeks to prevent violence against women, these advances have not permeated several sectors of the population due to low levels of education, the persistence of a patriarchal culture, as well as lack of knowledge among women about their rights and how to access justice. To address this problem, Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho (FESPAD) [Foundation for Studies on the Application of Law] proposes to carry out a training program for women in the community of Mejicanos that will empower them with knowledge and information to assert their rights. In addition to the training, FESPAD proposes to create links between women and state institutions, with the purpose of facilitating their access to the Salvadoran state's integral protection system. In addition, the intervention will have an economic empowerment component to reduce the dependence of women on their partners. The project will be evaluated using a randomized controlled trial (RCT).

### 3. IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho (FESPAD) has more than 28 years of experience in El Salvador. One of its main areas of work is the promotion of criminal justice and citizen security through the correct application of law and the strengthening of governmental institutions. Since the signing of the peace agreement in El Salvador, FESPAD has sought to ensure compliance with the rule of law, as well as the consolidation of public security and democratic criminal justice systems. In addition, FESPAD has extensive experience working in vulnerable territories and has gained access to neighborhoods to which the government has only limited access. This has converted the organization into an important link between the members of these communities and public institutions. In the last two years, FESPAD has intervened in 63 communities in 7 municipalities at the national level, prompting the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to recognize its work in the prevention of violence and a culture of peace.

### 4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### A. PUBLIC POLICY PROBLEM

El Salvador has passed legislation to ensure the rights of women, among others the Special



Academia para el Análisis de Seguridad  
Web: [www.aas.jjay.cuny.edu](http://www.aas.jjay.cuny.edu) Email: [infoaas@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:infoaas@jjay.cuny.edu)  
+(503) 7067-4956  
@AAS\_ElSalvador  
AcademiaparaelAnálisisdeSeguridad

Comprehensive Law for a Life Free from Violence for Women (LEIV). In addition, some municipalities have created state agencies to provide better legal attention to women, including the Integrated Courts and UNIMUJER offices of the National Civil Police.

Despite these efforts, violence against women remains a serious problem in El Salvador, one that is often hidden among homicide figures that receive the most attention. For example, in 2015, 5,019 cases of sexual violence and 575 femicides were reported, nearly double the previous year's figures in both cases. These figures likely underestimate the problem, however, since many cases are not reported to the authorities due to lack of information on how to report, women's lack of knowledge regarding their own rights, weak links between communities and public institutions, and a lack of quality data regarding the prevalence of such violence. For example, the National System of Data and Statistics on Violence against Women has not yet entered into operation, as ordered by the LEIV since 2012. In addition, structural factors such as the country's patriarchal culture have normalized violence against women, resulting in underreporting to authorities.

## **B. PUBLIC POLICY OBJECTIVES**

To address the problems identified in the previous section, FESPAD proposes an intervention with the following strategic objectives:

### **In the short term:**

1. Empower with information and knowledge women in vulnerable territories, especially regarding their rights and mechanisms to report acts of violence.
2. Provide legal advice and support to women on how to access the national protection system.
3. Encourage women to report to the authorities acts of violence.
4. Create links between women and state institutions, thus facilitating their access to the legal system and other public resources.

### **In the medium-term**

1. Reduce rates of violence against women in areas where the intervention occurs.

## **C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY**

FESPAD proposes to train women in the community of Mejicanos, El Salvador. First, female community leaders will be identified to help identify and convene other women for training. A set of incentives for participation will be randomly assigned (an "encouragement" design), making it possible to measure the causal effect of the program on various indicators of interest among women participating in the program. The trainings will be conducted in four groups of 25 women each and will last four weeks, with one workshop held per week per group. The workshops will address topics of women's rights, access to justice, gender-based violence and state resources available for women. These trainings are expected to help bridge the gap in women's access to justice. In addition to these events, a "Violence, Security and Gender" forum will create links between women in these communities and relevant government institutions.



#### D. EXPECTED RESULTS

The evaluation plan will measure the results of the program at the individual level, through surveys applied to women from Mejicanos. In order to ensure that respondents answer sensitive questions truthfully, the team will use experimental survey designs (“list experiments”).

##### Short-term results:

1. Improve women’s knowledge of their rights and access to justice.
2. Create community support networks and construct links with governmental authorities.

##### Medium-term results:

1. Increase the number of reported cases of violence against women.
2. Improve the conditions of access to justice for women in Mejicanos.

#### E. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

A major challenge is to achieve cooperation and participation from the multitude of governmental institutions working on issues related to women's security and human rights. Absent such cooperation, it would be difficult to guarantee the generation of productive links between women and such institutions. The accumulated experience of FESPAD in linking the state institutions with vulnerable communities, however, would help overcome this challenge. Another obstacle is to maintain access to areas in which the intervention is ultimately carried out. Thanks to its decades of experience working in local communities, FESPAD has strong ties to obtain access despite changes in security conditions, helping to mitigate this concern.

#### F. PRELIMINARY TIMELINE

Activity	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Development of training						X	
Logistical preparations for training						X	
Training						X	
Monitoring and evaluation						X	
2nd session Academy for Security Analysis						X	
Preliminary data analysis						X	




## G. BUDGET

Item	Project costs		Cost sharing		Grand total
		JJ for FESPAD	FESPAD	Other	
<i>Personnel</i>	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Fringe Benefits</i>	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Travel</i>	\$	1,245	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,245
<i>Equipment</i>	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Supplies</i>	\$	32,320	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 32,320
<i>Contractual</i>	\$	21,435	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 21,435
<i>Other</i>	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Direct Charges</b>	\$	55,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,000
<b>Indirect Charges</b>	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$	55,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,000






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 Web: [www.aas.jjay.cuny.edu](http://www.aas.jjay.cuny.edu) Email: [infoaas@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:infoaas@jjay.cuny.edu)

 +(503) 7067-4956

 @AAS\_ElSalvador

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