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Making the invisible visible : the position of indigenous women in Mexico. A general overview of the challenges ahead

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PROPOSITIONS

1. In Mexico, the rights of indigenous peoples, and more specifically indigenous women's rights, are yet to be met.
2. Indigenous peoples, and indigenous women in particular, are invisible in Mexican society. Indigenous women face multiple discrimination: as women, as indigenous persons, and because of the stigma of poverty. This discrimination occurs in all spheres of society, both at institutional and social level. Action is therefore required, among others in health care, politics, media and education.
3. To be able to guarantee adequate and quality health care for indigenous peoples, two issues need to be addressed in parallel: indigenous peoples need to get equal access to good medical care within the existing institutional health care system, and an intercultural approach to health care needs to be introduced.
4. Mexican indigenous women are severely underrepresented at all political levels. Nevertheless, in the communities changes are taking place, and women are standing up for their political rights. Indigenous women advocate for achieving women's rights within the traditional normative system of '*usos y costumbres*'.
5. The representation of indigenous women in Mexican media has been based on stereotypes. These stereotypical images make actual indigenous peoples invisible and subject to numerous prejudices. The media perpetuate the negative perception and discrimination of indigenous peoples in Mexico, also leading to the internalization of this discrimination.
6. Indigenous peoples need to be offered quality education that meets their specific needs, including education and access to teaching materials in their own languages. To guarantee quality education, schools, teachers, and teaching programs need to be evaluated on a regular basis.
7. Indigenous women are agents of change. They are conquering new spaces and finding alternative ways to participate. However, more mainstream spaces should open up for indigenous women in all areas of Mexican society, and they need to be allowed to speak up for themselves.

8. Racism is deeply rooted in Mexican society, yet it is hardly acknowledged. Indigenous peoples are systematically discriminated, ignored, and mistreated. Stereotypes and prejudices need to be challenged, and mentalities need to change.
9. Mexican women in general, are still facing sexism and gender discrimination. Mexican society is characterized by a persistent machismo. Mentalities need to change to address this machismo and move towards gender equality.
10. There is a persisting male bias in anthropological research. By means of this male bias, anthropologists have been perpetuating the subordination of women. A gender perspective needs to be included in all research. Not taking gender for granted will lead to new and more complete understandings of the studied societies as a whole, and will result in more inclusive research.
11. Academia needs to valorize more sources of knowledge, for example indigenous peoples themselves. The inclusion and participation of indigenous peoples in academia needs to be part of the scientific agenda.
12. The Mexican government needs to make sure official statistics, disaggregated by gender and as trustworthy and complete as possible, are collected. Special attention must be given to disadvantaged areas and population. These data are essential to identify existing problems, to determine their extent, and to develop adequate policies.