

# MAQUILÁPOLIS

[city of factories]

A film by **Vicky Funari** and **Sergio De La Torre**

in collaboration with the women of  
Colectivo Chilpancingo Pro Justicia Ambiental  
CITTAC (Workers' Information Center)  
Promotoras por los Derechos de las Mujeres  
and the former organization Grupo Factor X / Casa de la Mujer



## Discussion Guide

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David Maung

## Letter from the Filmmakers

### Dear Colleagues,

We began the Maquila Project in 2000, by inviting factory workers in Tijuana and community organizations in Mexico and the U.S. to join us in creating a film that depicts globalization through the eyes of the women who live on its leading edge. The factory workers who appear in the resulting film, **MAQUILÁPOLIS**, have been involved in every stage of production, from planning to shooting, from scripting to outreach. We wanted to engage in a collaborative process that would break with the traditional documentary practice of dropping into a location, shooting and leaving with the “goods,” which would only repeat the pattern of the maquiladora itself. We sought to merge art-making with community development and to ensure that the film’s voice would be truly that of its subjects.

One thing all the participating workers in **MAQUILÁPOLIS** have in common is a sense of agency: they are *promotoras*, women who sought out training in human rights, labor rights and environmental justice from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and who became advocates committed to passing their knowledge on to their communities. When we met the *promotoras*, they were each at a point of discovery in their

lives, blossoming as women, human beings and activists. We knew that working with them would be an amazing way to tell the intertwined stories of globalization, of the maquiladoras and of citizen activism. We hoped the collaboration would yield a documentary which would be useful to the *promotoras* and their communities. We also hoped to further the *promotoras*’ work by providing them with the equipment and skills to create their own videos in the future. After the completion of **MAQUILÁPOLIS**, we have continued to work with the same group of *promotoras* as well as a broad cohort of partner organizations on a Binational Community Outreach Campaign. This Discussion Guide is one piece of that campaign.

As to our personal motivations for making this film, we are both artists who believe that art can and does participate in a cultural dialogue concerning social change and justice. Our work is informed by our own hybrid lives: Vicky is a U.S. citizen who grew up in four countries and six cities, including Mexico City. Sergio is a U.S. and Mexican citizen who was raised in Tijuana and migrated to the San Francisco Bay Area as an adult. Our work on **MAQUILÁPOLIS** is part of our ongoing investigations into biculturalism, migration, gender and labor.

While films rarely effect measurable, concrete changes in the world, they are powerful tools: they open minds and create dialogue, necessary precursors to and ingredients of action. One of our great pleasures has been to watch this film open up new realms of thought, emotion and experience for audiences, just as the process of making the film opened our own minds and hearts. We hope that through this film and discussion guide viewers come to understand their own intimate relation with Tijuana, with Carmen, Lourdes and other maquiladora workers. We hope that people on both sides of the production/consumption equation begin to recognize each other as global citizens rather than simply as consumers and producers. We hope that people will understand that NAFTA-style treaties do not benefit the many but the few, and that one way to combat them is to support causes like those of the Chilpancingo Collective, CITTAC and the NGOs that organize to question and to resist the dark side of globalization. We hope that you will be inspired to action, so that the work of women like Carmen and Lourdes can lead to ever greater changes for the better, in Tijuana and around the world.

**Vicky Funari and Sergio De La Torre**  
Filmmakers, **MAQUILÁPOLIS**

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## The Film

Carmen and Lourdes work in Tijuana's *maquiladoras*, the multinationally-owned factories which came to Mexico for its cheap labor. Each day these factory workers confront labor violations, environmental devastation and urban chaos – life on the frontier of the global economy. In **MAQUILÁPOLIS**, Carmen and Lourdes reach beyond the daily struggle for survival to organize for change: Carmen takes a major television manufacturer to task for violating her labor rights. Lourdes pressures the government to clean up a toxic waste dump left behind by a departing factory. The women also use video diaries to chronicle their lives, their city and their hopes for the future.

As they work for change, the world changes too: a global economic crisis and the availability of cheaper labor in China begin to pull the factories away from Tijuana, leaving Carmen, Lourdes and their colleagues with an uncertain future. As promotoras – community advocates who fight for social justice – Carmen and Lourdes serve as role models for taking action in the face of adversity.

## The Campaign

Our Binational Community Outreach Campaign, designed and implemented collaboratively with factory workers and stakeholder organizations in the U.S. and Mexico, uses **MAQUILÁPOLIS** in diverse education and advocacy contexts to create meaningful social change around the issues of globalization, social and environmental justice and fair trade. The primary strategy is to use the film to promote dialogue and as an organizing tool: to get people involved and mobilized for change and to support cross-issue and cross-border activism.

Our campaign team includes dedicated activists on both sides of the border, media-makers committed to social change, and most importantly a group of women factory workers struggling to bring about positive change in their world. Our core Campaign Partners are: Chilpancingo Collective for Environmental Justice; CITTAC/Worker's Information Center; Binational Feminist Collective; Environmental Health Coalition; Global Exchange; Maquiladora Health and Safety Support Network; San Diego Maquiladora Workers Support Network; SweatFree Communities; and Women Thrive Worldwide. Other organizations have also partnered with us to organize and promote events, including the Sierra Club, Comité Fronterizo de Obreras (CFO/Border Workers' Committee), Students Against Sweatshops and many others. We invite you to participate in the campaign by using the film and this discussion guide in your own organization and community.

## Credits and Acknowledgements

This guide is based on an earlier guide produced by the PBS series *P.O.V.* for the national broadcast of **MAQUILÁPOLIS**. We are grateful to them for their permission to adapt that guide for our campaign.

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- **Global Exchange**
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# Using this Discussion Guide

This guide is designed to help you use **MAQUILÁPOLIS** as the centerpiece of a community event. It contains suggestions for organizing an event as well as ideas for how to help participants think more deeply about the issues in the film. The discussion questions are designed for a wide range of audiences. Rather than attempt to address all the questions, choose those that best meet the needs and interests of your group.

## Planning an Event

MAQUILÁPOLIS can be used to present information, get people interested in taking action on an issue, provide opportunities for people from different groups or perspectives to exchange views, and/or create space for reflection. Using the following checklist as a planning tool will help ensure a high-quality, high-impact event:

### **Have you identified groups who could be co-sponsors and/or participants?**

Use this opportunity to build alliances and coalitions in your community. Target groups who would find it useful to talk with others about the issues raised in the film – as well as people who can link these conversations to concrete changes in your community.

**Have you defined your goals?** Set realistic goals with your partners. Will a single event serve your goals or will you engage in an ongoing project? How will you evaluate the event to see if you have met your goals? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges. Small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)

**Get the word out.** Try reaching people through newsletters, community bulletin boards, email, bookstores, churches, and libraries. When feasible, personal invitations work best. Think about mailing, faxing, or handing out invitations. Follow up with phone calls.

**What other participants might you need?** Do you need an outside facilitator, translator or sign-language interpreter? Are there local experts on the topic or community leaders who should be present to speak with the audience?

**Have you scheduled time to plan for action?** Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even if the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for people who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issues. For those who are new to the issues, just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.

### **Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel comfortable?**

Is it wheelchair accessible? Can the site be reached easily by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is it neutral territory?

### **Will the way that the room is set up help you meet your goals?**

Is it comfortable? If you intend to have a discussion, can people see one another? Will everyone be able to see the screen and hear the film easily from their seats? Are there spaces to use for small breakout groups?

### **Help your audience feel welcome by:**

Providing driving directions and public transportation information in advance, letting people know where to park, using signs, maybe providing refreshments.

## Potential Partners and Target Users

MAQUILÁPOLIS is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use by:

- Groups focused on any of the Key Issues listed on the next page
- Promotoras (Community Advocates) in Mexico and the U.S.
- High school and college students
- Faith-based organizations and institutions
- Legislators and other policy makers
- Community organizations with a mission to promote education and learning

## Event Ideas

Use a screening of MAQUILÁPOLIS to:

- Celebrate International Women's Day (Mar 8), May Day (May 1, International Workers' Day), Labor Day (first Monday in Sept), Earth Day (Apr 22) or Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept 15 – Oct 15).
- Invite your elected officials to discuss their positions on NAFTA and on other proposed free trade agreements. Ask them to explain the provisions of these treaties and their real and proposed impact.
- Convene a panel of experts to compare the environmental issues raised in the film with community responses to industrial pollution in your community.
- Tell the story behind how a category of consumer products, such as clothing or electronics, comes to market. Discuss how our purchasing decisions might help or harm workers in developing countries.

**Will you be using a video projector and screen or a TV monitor?** DVD player or computer? Do you have speakers that are loud enough for the space? Have you tested the equipment?

### **What other materials do you need?**

Flyers? Handouts? A resource list? Some materials are available on our website, [www.maquilapolis.com](http://www.maquilapolis.com)

**Will you need childcare for the participants?** Discussions are more productive when children are entertained, if you can afford it or arrange it with volunteers.

# Facilitating a Discussion

Controversial topics often make for excellent discussions. By their nature, those same topics can also give rise to deep emotions and strongly held beliefs. Strong facilitators can create an atmosphere where people feel safe, encouraged and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share their ideas openly and honestly. Here's how:

## Preparing Yourself

**Who should facilitate?** You may or may not be the best person to facilitate, especially if you have multiple responsibilities for your event. If you are particularly invested in a topic, it might be wise to ask someone more neutral to guide the dialogue. Be sure that your facilitator receives a copy of this guide well in advance of your event.

### Key Issues

**MAQUILÁPOLIS is an excellent tool for outreach because the people directly involved tell their own stories, bringing global issues down to a personal and practical level. The film will be of special interest to people interested in these issues:**

Border issues

Economics

Environmental justice

Environmental law

Feminism

Globalization

Immigration

Industrialization

International trade

Labor Rights

Migrant labor

Mexican/American border

Multinational corporations

NAFTA and Free Trade

Pollution

Poverty

Fair Trade

Social justice

Unions

Women's and gender studies

### **Identify your own hot-button issues.**

View the film before the event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

**Be knowledgeable.** You don't need to be an expert on Mexico, working conditions, or international trade to lead an event, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. In addition to the Background Information section on the following pages, you may want to take a look at the suggested websites and books in the Resources section and the Reading List on pages 15-17.

**Be clear about your role.** You may find yourself taking on several roles for an event, such as host, organizer or even projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. As members of the group share their viewpoints, it is important to remain neutral and help the discussion along without imposing your views on the dialogue.

**Know your group.** Issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have they dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion and socioeconomic class can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles and prior knowledge. An experienced facilitator can help make sure everyone gets heard.

## Preparing the Group

**Consider how well group members know one another.** If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time at the beginning of the event for introductions or an icebreaker activity.

**Agree to ground rules around language.** Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect. Typically such rules include prohibiting yelling and the use of slurs and asking people to speak in the first person ("I think...") rather than generalizing for others ("Everyone knows that...").

**Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard.** Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion. If the group is large, are there plans to break into small groups or partners?

**Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate.** In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue.

**Encourage active listening.** Ask the group to think of the event as being about listening as well as discussing. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas.

**Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of their own experience.** Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. Everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and each of them may be accurate. It can help listeners to understand others' perspectives if people identify the evidence on which they base their opinions.

# Background Information

## What is a maquiladora?

Maquiladoras are the multinationally-owned assembly plants which dominate the economy of the U.S.-Mexico border region. In 1965, the Mexican and U.S. governments established the Border Industrialization Program, designed to encourage the building of factories on the Mexican side of the border. Under the program, an American corporation could set up a plant in Mexico, ship parts or raw materials there for assembly, and bring the finished goods back into the U.S., all duty-free. U.S. companies began opening assembly plants, drawn by these lucrative tax incentives, cheap labor and weak enforcement of environmental and labor laws. The new system provided jobs for Mexicans, cheaper consumer goods for U.S. citizens and higher profits for manufacturers. With the advent of the factories, Tijuana became one of the first “maquilized” cities in the Americas. It grew at an astounding rate, more than quadrupling in size in 30 years.

## The Impact of NAFTA

When the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) took effect in 1994, the growth accelerated: between 1994 and 2000 the number of maquiladoras in Mexico doubled, and the industry’s labor force grew to more than a million people. At the peak of the NAFTA boom in 2000, there were 3,700 maquiladoras operating in Mexico, employing over 1.3 million workers.<sup>1</sup> Tijuana’s infrastructure could not keep pace with this growth, leaving vast areas of the city without basic services. Globalization promised jobs, and working class Mexicans uprooted their lives in other parts of the country to migrate to those jobs, despite the costs: low wages, poor labor conditions, human rights violations, lack of housing and environmental degradation.

Opponents of NAFTA had predicted some of these consequences and had pressed for side agreements intended

to protect workers’ rights and to curb pollution. Complaints filed by workers under the resulting labor side agreement, the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation (NAALC), have included life-threatening health and safety conditions, firing workers for union organizing, forced pregnancy testing and denial of collective bargaining rights. Yet, as of 2004, according to the Maquila Solidarity Network, “not one of the 28 complaints made under the NAALC has resulted in any significant improvements in labor law enforcement or in workers’ lives.”<sup>2</sup> The environmental side agreement created the Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America (CEC) to encourage adherence to environmental regulations, but it did not have the authority to force clean-ups. That was left to the North American Development Bank (NADBank) and the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC). Despite many reports of environmental abuses, enforcement of NAFTA’s environmental side agreement has been lax.<sup>3</sup>

NAFTA supporters point out that over the past decade the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has spent more than half a billion dollars on cleaning contaminated water and improving air quality in border areas that have grown under the treaty. They also emphasize that Mexico’s gross domestic product has increased from \$767 billion to more than \$1 trillion since NAFTA’s implementation.<sup>4</sup>

## Globalization’s Boom and Bust Cycle

In 2001, NAFTA’s boom gave way to a bust: with the global economic destabilization of 2001-2003 and with the increasing availability of much cheaper Asian labor, factories suddenly started

leaving Mexico. 350,000 maquila jobs disappeared, and unemployment became endemic in Tijuana. Displaced workers had to face the reality of Tijuana’s dependence on a global economic system which offered them no long-term security.

After several years of decline, Tijuana’s maquiladoras began to rebound, because locating assembly plants in Mexico continues to offer substantial savings to corporations. The National Council for the Exporting Maquila Industry (CNIME) reports that at the end of 2006 there were over 1.1 million people working in the industry nationwide.<sup>5</sup> However, many of the women who participated in the MAQUILÁPOLIS project report that their living and working conditions are significantly worse than before the 2001 economic crisis. In 2009, with the world in a new and more serious crisis, their futures are more uncertain than ever. Today, Tijuana is a sprawling, chaotic city that provides for the rest of the world before it provides for its own people. With plans in the works for NAFTA-style trade agreements throughout the Americas and Asia, Tijuana is also an example soon to be followed by cities throughout the developing world.

The remarkable women profiled in MAQUILÁPOLIS are part of the multitude of factory workers who weave the very fabric of daily life for every consumer nation, producing televisions, electrical cables, toys, clothes, lenses, computer keyboards, batteries, IV tubes and more. Carmen Durán, Lourdes Luján and their colleagues are working to transform their world and carve out lives of agency in this new and complicated century. As factory worker Lupita Castañeda says: “Within globalization, a woman factory worker is like a commodity. This worries me because we are just objects, objects of labor... I want to be a person, I want to realize my dreams.”

<sup>1</sup> G. Brown “NAFTA’s 10 Year Failure to Protect Mexican Workers’ Health and Safety” Dec. 2004

<sup>2</sup> Maquila Solidarity Network, “NAFTA Ten Years Later: Why the Labour Side Agreement Doesn’t Work for Workers”, <<http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/en/issues/trade/nafta/naalc/critique>>

<sup>3</sup> “A Free Trade Boom or an Environmental Bust?” NAFTA Missteps Harm Mexico Critics Say” By: Letta Taylor, Newsday, December 29, 2003

<sup>4</sup> “Behind the Debate: Propelled to Protest, Driven to Migrate; Mexican Deportee’s U.S. Sojourn Illuminates Roots of Current Crisis.” By: Manuel Roig-Franzia, The Washington Post, April 17, 2006

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.cnime.org.mx/estadisticas/empleos\\_generados.htm](http://www.cnime.org.mx/estadisticas/empleos_generados.htm), <http://www.cnime.org.mx/english/about/history.htm>

# The Labor Situation

Mexico's Federal Labor Law and Article 123 of Mexico's Constitution give workers the right to labor unions, a living wage and decent working conditions, among many other rights. As Jaime Cota, a labor advocate featured in MAQUILÁPOLIS, says, "the law is pretty good for workers, but the authorities won't uphold the law."

The Mexican government and the foreign – mostly U.S. – corporations that own the maquiladoras have a tacit agreement that real unions will not be permitted. The typical maquiladora either has no union or has one that does virtually nothing for workers. Consequently bosses treat workers poorly. The work is tedious, repetitive, fast-paced, and physically and mentally exhausting; yet wages, while higher than those in agriculture, are kept at a subsistence level. Workers are routinely exposed to toxics and other health risks without adequate safety training or protective gear. Management discriminates in hiring, preferring young women and rejecting women who are pregnant or over 35, and blacklists union activists. Workers generally work a 44-hour week, but they may be pressured into overtime and double shifts. Some maquiladoras fly by night, taking their equipment and profits with them and leaving workers without jobs or the severance pay required by law.

In the film, Carmen takes her labor claim against Sanyo to the local Labor Board (Junta de Conciliación y Arbitraje). The Mexican Labor Boards are tripartite bodies made up of government officials, employer representatives and corrupt union officials. Although the supposed purpose of the boards is to protect workers' rights, they typically deny workers the right to strike, collaborate with employers to fire workers who speak out and refuse to recognize independent unions.

## Unions and the Maquiladora Industry

Since the Mexican Revolution, the Mexican government has controlled the labor unions and forced them to follow government policy, at times using military and police force to do so. For over 70 years, virtually all of the large "official unions" were affiliated with the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Union officials got out the vote for the PRI, and the PRI made union officials into Senators, Congressional Representatives and state governors. In 2000, when Vicente Fox of the conservative National Action Party (PAN) became Mexico's president, the links between PRI, government and unions began to break down. The official unions increasingly turned to company owners for support, tending to become company unions.

Most new employers will choose a union for their plant before workers are even hired. The corporation pays a labor lawyer and the union official for a contract that



Photo: Darcy McKinnon

## Resources for promoting and protecting workers' rights

**CITTAC, the Workers' Information Center, promotes, supports and accompanies the struggles of workers in the maquiladoras to better their living and working conditions. In the film, CITTAC helps Carmen and her co-workers with their claim against Sanyo.**

**The Maquiladora Health and Safety Support Network (MHSSN) is a volunteer network of occupational health and safety professionals who provide information, technical assistance and on-site instruction on workplace hazards in the maquiladoras.**

**See Resources, page 15, for information on how to contact them and get involved. See Taking Action, page 14, for ideas on steps you can take to promote and protect workers' rights.**

provides only the minimum wage and government-mandated benefits. This "protection contract" protects the employer from a legitimate union and from having to pay higher wages or provide more benefits. The resulting "ghost union" is so called because workers often don't know it exists. When workers decide they want to organize a union, they get an unpleasant surprise from the boss: "You can't organize – you already have a union." As Jaime Cota explains, "The unions don't serve the workers, because they don't even need the workers' dues. They live off the money paid by the employers to the union. So naturally the union protects the employer."

Despite the collusion between government, corporations and corrupt unions, workers in Mexico continue to struggle for independent unions. As Benedicto Martínez of the independent Authentic Labor Front (FAT), explains, "The FAT and the National Union of Workers (UNT) and others have continued to build a democratic workers' movement that can have an impact on public policy. And we have made some advances. It is encouraging that recently we have succeeded in bringing the independent unions, peasants' and farmers' organizations, and the indigenous movement together in one coalition."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Personal correspondence between filmmaker Vicky Funari, Benedicto Martínez of the FAT and Robin Alexander of the UE, March 2007

# Globalization, Free Trade, Fair Trade

## What is Globalization?

Globalization, or more specifically “corporate globalization,” refers to the expansion of capitalism to cover the world and draw every country and people into it. One could say this began in the 1500s with the Spanish conquest of Latin America and the creation of a world slave trade. During the 19th century, global expansion took the form of imperialism, as European nations, the U.S. and Japan built empires by conquering other countries, principally in Africa and Asia, and making them colonies. In the 20th century, revolutions led some nations to withdraw from capitalism and attempt to create socialist economies. But with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, and with China and Vietnam adopting capitalism, few non-capitalist countries remain. Today capitalism covers the world, spread by the continuing process of corporate globalization. Since the 1980s, globalization has been furthered by debt and neoliberalism.

## Debt and Neoliberalism: The Washington Consensus Comes to Mexico

During the 1970s oil prices rose. Mexico’s government, like those of other oil-rich countries, borrowed billions of dollars, using its future oil income as collateral. When oil prices fell in the early 1980s, Mexico went bankrupt, putting it at the mercy of the New York banks. The Mexican bankruptcy took place at the same time as the rise of “neoliberalism,” the new free market economic politics promoted by the administration of President Ronald Reagan and taken up by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These policies came to be called the “Washington Consensus.”

To get loans to keep their economies going, Mexico and other developing nations had no choice but to accept the IMF’s neoliberal “structural adjustment programs” (SAPs). Borrowing nations are required to write letters of intention acceding to the IMF’s austerity plans, which typically require: privatizing of government-owned companies, opening mar-

kets to foreign investors and “free trade,” devaluing currency, cutting the federal social welfare budget and fuel and food subsidies, weakening the power of labor unions, and eliminating or rolling back labor regulations. In Mexico, as in other debtor nations, these changes hurt the working class but favored multinational corporations, which flooded into the lucrative trade environment.

## Some Strategies for Change: Fair Trade and Sweatfree

In reaction to the devastation caused by free trade, reformers and activists have developed a variety of strategies to promote alternatives. These strategies, which involve activism by consumers, workers, stockholders and policy-makers, can be broadly grouped under the names “fair trade” and “sweatfree.” Strategies include: sweatfree campaigns to get schools, religious institutions, and city and state governments to do business with companies that commit to respecting workers’ rights in their supply chains; stockholder activism to get corporations to agree to ethical sourcing and social responsibility; workers’ cooperatives that pay a living wage and enable workers to have a voice on the job; pressure on companies to respect workers’ demands for better practices using tactics like union activism, petition drives, store actions, solidarity strikes, boycott campaigns, and international networking; and educating and pressing legislators for fair trade laws and changes to free trade agreements.

The fair trade movement calls for greater fairness in dealings between developed and developing countries. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are building an alternative marketing system to bring Fair Trade certified agricultural goods and handicraft products made by fair trade cooperatives to markets in the U.S. and Europe. Large corporations have been pressured to sell Fair Trade certified products with some success.

“Sweatfree” or “no sweat” campaigns fight exploitative conditions in manu-

facturing plants. In solidarity with worker organizing, sweatfree advocates put pressure on big name brands and on stores to quit dealing with manufacturers and subcontractors that flagrantly violate workers’ rights. In response, some corporations have created “corporate codes of conduct,” rules their manufacturers are supposed to abide by to protect workers. The danger of corporate codes of conduct is that they may be used as cosmetic measures designed to cover up continued worker exploitation. The sweatfree movement recognizes this limitation to so-called “corporate social responsibility” and has been active in exposing ongoing workers’ rights violations by corporations that claim to no longer use sweatshops.

Many countries, particularly in Europe and Latin America, have a history of worker-owned cooperatives. Worker-owned cooperatives exist in manufacturing, construction and services, and have been most successful in finance, such as banks and insurance programs. When workers own and run the company, the company treats workers more fairly. For example, the Comité Fronterizo de Obrer@s in Piedras Negras has created a worker-owned maquiladora that produces organic cotton t-shirts. However, workers’ cooperatives, like sweatfree businesses, find it hard to compete in the current free market economy.

## Resources for Promoting Sweatfree and Fair Trade

**SweatFree Communities coordinates campaigns for public and religious institutions to adopt sweatfree policies that end public support for sweatshops and generate demand for products made in humane conditions, with living wages.**

**Global Exchange is a membership-based international human rights organization dedicated to promoting social, economic and environmental justice around the world.**

**See Resources, page 15, for information on how to contact them and get involved. See Taking Action, page 14, for ideas on steps you can take to promote sweatfree working conditions and global fair trade.**



# Environmental Justice

Lourdes Luján is an ex-factory worker and resident of Colonia Chilpancingo, a neighborhood that borders a huge industrial park in Tijuana. In MAQUILÁPOLIS, she recounts how she came to realize that the chronic health problems she and her neighbors were suffering from might be the result of toxic wastes from the factories. Together with Environmental Health Coalition of San Diego (EHC), they started the Chilpancingo Collective for Environmental Justice to advocate for the cleanup of waterways and of a toxic waste site in their neighborhood. The Chilpancingo Collective and EHC are waging a long-term, cross-border environmental justice campaign, just one of many environmental justice initiatives in communities around the globe.

The environmental justice movement believes that all people and communities are entitled to the right to live, work, learn and play in a safe and healthy environment. The movement builds self-determination in communities that bear an unequal environmental burden: low-income communities, communities of color, residents of the developing world, and women and children. Communities around the maquiladoras are among the most severely affected by industrial pollution and by government failures to legislate effectively and to enforce existing environmental laws.

## An Update on *Metales y Derivados*

Of the 66 documented toxic waste sites in Mexican border states, the most infamous is Tijuana's *Metales y Derivados*, a U.S.-owned maquiladora that recycled batteries. The film tells the story of the fight to clean up the site, located in the Otay Mesa Industrial Park, just uphill and upstream from the Chilpancingo neighborhood. In 1994, *Metales y Derivados* was shut down because of its failure to comply with Mexico's environmental laws. The owner, U.S. businessman José Kahn, abandoned the site and fled to San Diego to avoid arrest. He left behind 23,000 tons of mixed waste, including 7,000 tons of lead slag, exposed to the elements and threatening Colonia Chilpancingo. Residents tested positive for elevated levels of lead in their blood and there were high rates of cancers and birth defects.<sup>1</sup>

In 1998, EHC and the Chilpancingo Collective filed a petition with NAFTA's environmental agency, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), hoping to compel a cleanup. The resulting 2002 CEC report concluded that the site represented a "grave risk to human health." Yet the CEC has no authority or resources to clean up toxic sites.

<sup>1</sup> "A Toxic Legacy on the Mexican Border: Abandoned U.S.-Owned Smelter in Tijuana Blamed for Birth Defects, Health Ailments" by Kevin Sullivan, *The Washington Post*, February 16, 2003



Lourdes Luján videotaping during the *Metales y Derivados* Site Cleanup, 2007. Photo courtesy of EHC

In 2004, after over a decade of organizing, EHC, the Chilpancingo Collective and the community finally celebrated a landmark cleanup agreement. The film documents the signing of that agreement, which called for remediation to be completed within five years; included long-term, independent community monitoring; and established a binational working group that included community residents and the Mexican and U.S. governments.

Soil samples taken during the cleanup process showed concentrations of lead as high as 200,000 mg/kg. The industrial cleanup level in both Mexico and the U.S. is 800 mg/kg. Neither *Metales y Derivados* owner José Kahn nor his company contributed to the cost of the cleanup.<sup>2</sup> *Metales y Derivados* is a clear

<sup>2</sup> "EPA Says Worst Toxic Waste Removed from Tijuana Site." By: Joe Cantlupe, *Copley News Service*, August 5, 2005

## Resources for Promoting Environmental Justice

**The Chilpancingo Collective for Environmental Justice is a group of Tijuana citizens who work for environmental justice and to protect the health of communities near the maquiladoras.**

**Environmental Health Coalition is a social and environmental justice non-profit organization founded in 1980, which organizes and advocates to protect public health and the environment threatened by toxic pollution.**

**See Resources, page 15, for information on how to contact them and get involved. See Taking Action, page 14, for ideas on steps you can take to promote environmental justice in maquiladora communities and in your own community.**

example of the failure of NAFTA to live up to its negotiators' promise to protect public health and the environment. Yet it is also a symbol of environmental justice achieved. The case established for the first time a structure for cross-border and community/government collaboration on toxic site cleanups. Amelia Simpson of EHC notes that, "It's time to reject the NAFTA model in favor of a fair trade model that includes enforceable environmental mechanisms that citizens can use to protect their communities."

The cleanup was completed in 2008, ahead of schedule. Lourdes was there to document the final stage on video, noting that "a final remediation plan represents a historic moment for my community, the environment, our cross-border region and Mexico."

# Women in the Maquiladoras

*“As a promotora, you promote the law. What little you know, you pass on. I can’t stay quiet anymore, I have to defend whatever right is being violated. You sow the seeds of what you have learned. You are a student, and gradually you become a teacher.”*

–Carmen Durán, factory worker and promotora

## What Does Gender Have To Do With It?

Women have been central to the maquiladoras since the first factories were built in the mid-1960s. Prevailing beliefs about gender helped determine the structure of the maquiladoras and of export processing zones around the world. The corporate entrepreneurs who designed the maquiladora model envisioned their ideal work force: docile females, with no organizing experience, and with small, agile hands. Women originally made up 80% of maquiladora workers. In recent decades, more men have been hired due to labor shortages and more heavy industries, but according to the American Friends Service Committee, women “are still in the majority, constituting up to 70 percent of the workforce in light assembly industries and 57 percent overall.”<sup>1</sup>

Beyond the hardships faced by all maquiladora workers, women workers face additional obstacles based on their sex alone. More men are hired to work in higher-paying jobs as administrators, technicians and skilled workers, while more women than men work in the lowest-paying jobs on the production line. Maquiladoras prefer young women, typically refusing to hire women over 35. This forces older workers to cling to jobs, knowing they cannot seek better conditions elsewhere nor risk getting fired by advocating for better conditions. Also, most maquiladoras require pregnancy tests as part of the hiring process. Refusing to hire pregnant women saves employers the cost of paying for maternity leave, but is a violation of Mexico’s labor law.

Far from protecting its workforce of women in their prime reproductive years, the industry typically does not provide adequate safety equipment or training. Constant exposure to toxics on the job is a health risk for all workers, but it represents a greater problem for women of reproductive age because toxics have a greater impact upon growing children and developing fetuses than they do upon adults. As worker Carmen Durán discovered when she asked an English-speaking visitor to translate the label on a tube of paste she worked with, she was endangering her own children by carrying toxics home on her skin and clothes. Also, sexual harassment is common in the maquiladoras, and is one of the most difficult labor problems to address because it is frequently seen by perpetrators, victims and regulators as “natural” behavior rather than as a violation of human rights.

Women work *la doble jornada*, doing double duty as factory workers and as domestic workers, arriving home from the factory only to start their other job – cleaning, cook-

<sup>1</sup> American Friends Service Committee, “Women in the Maquiladora,” <http://tamejavi.com/mexico-us-border/womeninmaquiladoras.htm>



Photo: David Maung

## Resources for Promoting Women’s Rights

**Women Thrive Worldwide** is an advocacy organization that shapes U.S. policy in the areas of international assistance and trade, to make them more responsive to the needs of poor women in developing countries to foster economic opportunity for women living in poverty.

The mission of **Colectiva Feminista Binacional** is to strengthen the human, spiritual, and political aspects of the various women’s struggles in the border region.

See **Resources**, page 15, for information on how to contact them and get involved. See **Taking Action**, page 14, for ideas on steps you can take to promote women’s rights.

ing and caring for children, husbands and extended family. Many are single heads of households, which increases their burden, both as parents and as wage earners.

## Women and Activism

MAQUILÁPOLIS traces the lives of a group of women as they develop over the course of several years and shows them not as victims of their circumstances but rather as social change agents.

As women have entered Mexico’s workforce, they have gained financial independence and challenged their traditional roles in society. In communities around the maquiladoras, women are frequently the grassroots leaders, organizing their neighborhoods to fight for land titles, running water, sewage systems and electricity, bringing delegations and rowdy demonstrations of women to city hall. Acknowledging and furthering the power of women in their communities, many organizations have adopted a model of organizing based on the promotora. A promotora – literally a promoter, but also meaning a pioneer or an instigator – is an educator, agitator, and organizer in the community. Promotoras seek out training in human rights, labor rights, environmental justice, and women’s health from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They go on to teach others in training sessions held in homes or neighborhood centers. They grow personally through this experience, and they become leaders.

# Participatory Media

Media portrayals of the maquiladoras typically focus either on the economic opportunities the industry brings to Mexico or on the plight of workers as disempowered victims of globalization. In MAQUILÁPOLIS, maquiladora workers are experts who can provide us with keys to our common future. They tell their stories in their own voices, through their own eyes, and with their own cameras. Through a series of workshops, the MAQUILÁPOLIS filmmakers trained a group of factory workers who were also promotoras to use video cameras, to record sound, to write narration, and to edit. The participants created intimate video diaries and portraits of their communities, helped structure the stories told in the film, and have participated in the outreach campaign from planning to execution. The MAQUILÁPOLIS filmmakers were able to buy production and editing gear for the group, and this gear remains in Tijuana, housed at the offices of the Chilpancingo Collective for Environmental Justice, for the long-term use of the promotoras.



Photo: Darcy McKinnon

## The Promotoras of MAQUILÁPOLIS

*"We are community advocates, promotoras. We are women who have worked in the factories and have learned about our rights as women and as workers. Through this knowledge we see things differently. Every day, we clear new paths. We make changes in our daily lives, in our communities, in our workplaces and within ourselves. To be a promotora is a big responsibility."*

– Lupita Castañeda, Promotora

**Lupita Castañeda** is an ex-maquiladora worker and a promotora. A migrant from Guadalajara, she worked in a pantyhose factory, but after a medical leave she could not find another job because she was past 35, the age typically considered by the maquiladora industry to be "too old." This dilemma led her to seek training to become a promotora, an advocate for women's and workers' rights. Lupita has participated extensively in the MAQUILÁPOLIS project: she took our video production and editing workshops, co-wrote and co-voiced the film's narration and was Outreach Campaign Coordinator. She has travelled widely with the film, and she organized our Street Cinema Tour, which in 2007 visited 7 cities along the U.S.-Mexico border to show the film in community settings.

**Carmen Durán** is a factory worker and single mother of three. She worked for Sanyo for six years, but when the company moved the product line to Indonesia and laid off workers without providing legally required severance pay, Carmen became an activist and helped spearhead the filing of a claim with the labor board. That claim was eventually settled successfully, and Carmen was awarded severance pay of US\$2,500, an amount far greater than the US\$200-\$300 companies generally pay. Carmen continues to work in factories, and is also a volunteer promotora at CITTAC, the Worker's Information Center in Tijuana. She participated in MAQUILÁPOLIS video production and editing workshops, co-voiced the film's narration, and has travelled with the film to Barcelona, New York and other cities to speak with audiences.

**Teresa Loyola** is a long-time factory worker, mother and grandmother. She is a co-founder of the Tijuana group Promotoras por los Derechos de las Mujeres (Women's Rights Advocates). She participated in MAQUILÁPOLIS video production and editing workshops, co-wrote and co-voiced the film's narration, and has travelled with the film to Minneapolis, San Antonio and other cities to speak with audiences. She participated in our 2007 Street Cinema Tour, visiting 7 cities along the U.S.-Mexico border to show the film in community settings.

**Lourdes Luján** is an ex-factory worker and resident of Colonia Chilpancingo, a neighborhood that borders a huge industrial park in Tijuana. When she found out that the chronic health problems she and her neighbors were suffering might be the result of toxic wastes from the factories, she co-founded the Chilpancingo Collective for Environmental Justice. After a long struggle against great odds, the Collective, along with the U.S.-based Environmental Health Coalition, won a binational government clean-up of the abandoned Metales y Derivados factory site. Lourdes participated in MAQUILÁPOLIS video production and editing workshops and has travelled to Seoul, Oslo, New York and other cities to speak with audiences. She participated in our 2007 Street Cinema Tour, visiting 7 cities along the U.S.-Mexico border to show the film in community settings.

**The other participating promotoras are:** Diana Arias, Eva Bailón, Lucía Blanco, Natividad Guizar, Vianey Mijangos, Yesenia Palomares, Delfina Rodríguez, Francis Rodríguez, Adela Rivera, Rocio Salas, Blanca Sánchez and Coty Valdez. Many of them are available for speaking engagements. Their contact information is in the Resources section of this guide on page 15.

# Discussion Questions

Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen. If the mood seems tense, you may want to pose a general question and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion.

Unless you think participants are so uncomfortable that they can't engage until they have had a break, don't encourage people to leave the room between the film and the discussion. If you save your break for an appropriate moment during the discussion, you won't lose the feeling of the film as you begin your dialogue.

One way to get a discussion going is to pose a general question, and then follow up with questions more specific to the goals of your event and the interests of your audience.



Photo: Annelise Wunderlich

## General Questions

- What new information or insight did you gain from this film? What was your initial reaction?
- What was the one thing that struck you most or surprised you?
- Which scenes from the film did you find to be especially powerful? What, specifically, did you find to be compelling?
- If you could ask anyone in the film a single question, whom would you ask and what would you ask them?
- What context does your own experience provide for interpreting the events in the film – things that have happened in your life or community?
- Given the health risks described by the women in the film, if you were in their position, do you think you would seek work at the factories? Why or why not?
- List all the ways that you see people in the film working for justice. Define justice in this situation.

## Questions on Labor Conditions

- The government official from Baja California (the Mexican state where Tijuana is located) describes the maquiladoras as places where workers can earn relatively high wages. He says that people who work in the factories “are in good shape.” If you had been at that meeting, how would you have responded to him? What is your assessment of the benefits and harm of the maquiladoras?
- Describe the physical conditions of the workers’ neighborhoods. How does their standard of living compare with that of average factory workers in the U.S.? What accounts for the differences?
- How do you feel about your own job? Do you feel you have good wages, conditions and fair treatment? What would you like to see changed at work? How difficult would it be to achieve that change?
- To defend themselves, workers need power. How can workers organize to build their power to improve their lives and their communities? What are the principal obstacles to worker self-organization?
- Are your labor rights guaranteed in your nation’s Constitution? Do you believe that your labor law is good on paper? What about in practice? Why or why not? What sorts of reforms do workers and unions in your country need? What sorts of changes in government economic policies might improve your job situation?
- Do you have a union where you work? How do you feel about your union and/or unions in general? Do you think workers should have the right to unionize? What sort of presence do labor unions have in your community?



Photo: jesikah maria ross



Photo: David Maung

### Questions on Globalization, Free Trade and Fair Trade

- The women in MAQUILÁPOLIS come to see the function of workers in the globalized economy as replaceable commodities. Do you share their vision of how workers fit into the economy? Who benefits from this free-market system? Whom does it harm?
- Have you ever done the shirt tag test? Look at the tags on shirts worn by people in this room. Read the labels on other clothes, shoes, and furniture, and on the equipment used to show you this film. Where were they produced? What do you know about how products are manufactured in those countries?
- What do you perceive as the roles of the following in establishing and protecting workers' rights: the corporations that manufacture products in the maquiladoras, the U.S. government, the Mexican government, religious institutions, human rights organizations, and U.S. and Mexican citizens?
- Would you be willing to pay a little more for food, clothes or other merchandise if you knew they were being produced under fair conditions? What about others in your community – friends, neighbors, business owners, public servants, church-members?
- How do you think your local city officials would react if you asked them whether city uniforms come from factories with good working conditions, and asked them to commit to sweatfree procurement policies? How might your local grocery store staff react if you asked them to stock a fair trade product?

### Questions on Environmental Justice

- U.S. labor and environmental laws prohibit many of the practices described in the film on American soil. Some Americans blame those laws for adding to the cost of doing business and driving jobs to countries with fewer regulations or lax enforcement. Given what you see in the film, should the U.S. relax its regulations in order to keep jobs in America? How would you balance the need for jobs with the need for the protection of workers and the environment?
- What would you do if you saw environmental changes in your neighborhood like the ones in the film? What kinds of environmental threats do exist in your community or neighborhood? How does your community stay informed about possible threats? What might you do to make your own community's living conditions healthier?
- Lourdes explains her motive for environmental activism by saying, "I am struggling to give my kids a healthier, cleaner future... my hope is that someday, there will still be factories, but ones that don't destroy the environment." Can you imagine a world where industrial processes would not be in conflict with environmental balance and public health? What are a few simple steps you could take to promote such a vision?

### Questions on Gender and Women's Rights

- The film reports that "when the maquiladora industry began, women represented 80% of the industry's labor force." In your view, what are the potential impacts of this gender division on the workplace, families and the community?
- Do you think that women in the maquiladora industry face the same problems and issues as male workers? Are there obstacles that might be specific to women workers?
- Have you ever faced gender discrimination in the workplace? Or sexual harassment? How did you handle those problems?
- How have you seen women's roles in your family change over the last three generations? Have women in your family entered the workforce and how did that change your life and theirs? Were your grandmother's and mother's experiences different than your own? Do you see the *doble jornada*, women's double duty, in your own family?
- What specific steps did the women in the film take to become promotoras? What risks did they take? What rewards did they reap?
- Have you ever been involved in learning about an issue and then teaching and guiding others on that issue? How did that experience affect you? Can you see using the promotora model in your workplace, community or society at large? Who are the advocates in your community? How might you support them?

# Taking Action

What does it mean to take action to solve a problem? Taking action runs the gamut, all the way from beginning to think and learn about an issue, to doing research, to participating in or organizing discussions, to exerting pressure to change things. What sort of action are you prepared to take now? How might you begin?

List anything in the film that inspired you or made you angry. Choose one item from your list and follow up on it. Research it and suggest possible actions, or find organizations working on the issue and ask them what they are doing and how you can help. Or just use one of the suggestions below to get started:

**Participate in a Border Tour.** Border Tours are a great way to learn more about the issues, meet maquiladora workers and activists, and forge cross-border links. MAQUILÁPOLIS Partner Organizations the San Diego Maquiladora Workers' Solidarity Network, CITTAC, Environmental Health Coalition and Global Exchange all offer border tours that visit maquiladoras, workers' communities and grassroots groups in Tijuana. For tours led by CITTAC and the San Diego Maquiladora Workers' Solidarity Network, visit: [www.sdmaquila.org/](http://www.sdmaquila.org/). For tours led by Environmental Health Coalition, visit: [www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org). For tours led by Global Exchange, visit: [www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org). Tours to other cities along the border are led by similar organizations in Texas and Arizona.

**Support the organizations that do the work, and stay informed on their activities.** Donate to the MAQUILÁPOLIS Partner Organizations listed on pages 15-16. Tell interested friends and colleagues about the work these groups are doing. These organizations need your support! To stay informed about what they are up to, sign up on their email lists and/or create google alerts. For example, you can sign up for the San Diego Maquiladora Workers' Solidarity Network email list at: [maquilatijuanaandiego@earthlink.net](mailto:maquilatijuanaandiego@earthlink.net). They send out e-bulletins on current labor and maquiladora news..

**Build worker-to-worker and union-to-union ties across borders and industries.** If you are a labor union member, whether as an industrial worker, service worker, public employee or teacher, arrange to show MAQUILÁPOLIS to your union. Workers could be asked to compare their own experiences with that of the maquiladora workers. You could invite a maquiladora worker or a

labor activist to visit and speak at a union meeting and brainstorm about ways to build worker-to-worker and union-to-union ties.

### **Promote sweatfree workplaces.**

A sweatfree purchasing campaign is an effective and concrete local action you can take to help humanize the global sweatshop economy. Here are three ways to take action with Partner Organization SweatFree Communities:

1. Bring the sweatfree campaign to your community. To learn more, email [organize@sweatfree.org](mailto:organize@sweatfree.org)
2. Endorse the campaign: [www.sweatfree.org/endorse](http://www.sweatfree.org/endorse)
3. Next time you buy clothes, buy sweatfree: [www.sweatfree.org/shopping](http://www.sweatfree.org/shopping)

**Promote fair trade.** When the U.S. Trade Representative negotiates a free trade agreement, it must go to Congress for a vote. This is the key time to demonstrate your support of fair trade policies and your opposition to the failed NAFTA model. If you are a U.S. citizen, call and write your representative. You can have a powerful effect by simply asking his or her stand on trade policies and expressing your opinion on these policies. To find your representative's number, call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121, or go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

**Promote women's rights around the globe.** Women throughout the world are organizing around issues of equal rights, equal pay and treatment on the job, and to prevent violence against women. Set up a screening of MAQUILÁPOLIS at a women's organization in your community. Consider whether a local women's organization might effectively adapt the promotora model for its own work.



Photo courtesy of EHC

In the U.S., you can support the following two initiatives by Partner Organization Women Thrive Worldwide: The GROWTH Act would give women in the developing world the tools and resources they need to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. The International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWA) incorporates solutions for reducing violence against women into U.S. foreign assistance programs. You can sign online petitions to Congress supporting these groundbreaking pieces of legislation: [www.womenthrive.org](http://www.womenthrive.org)

**Get involved with a faith-based social justice committee.** Many churches, synagogues and other religious organizations have social justice committees that work to improve conditions in the community. Organize a showing a MAQUILÁPOLIS through your local church social justice committee. The committee could look into environmental and labor conditions in your own community. The church could invite a speaker from CITTAC, the Environmental Health Coalition or a similar organization to talk with church members and build support for change.

**Meet with and support immigrant and Latino workers in the U.S.** Many communities have workers' centers or Latino community organizations that involve Latino laborers and immigrants. Reach out to these organizations and set up a screening of MAQUILÁPOLIS where immigrant and Latino workers can watch it along with other community members. Create an opportunity for dialogue about the impact of globalization on migration and the economies of both Mexico and the U.S.

# Resources

## How to Buy the Film

MAQUILÁPOLIS is available for educational, community and home video purchase in the U.S. from distributor California Newsreel.

Please contact: [www.newsreel.org](http://www.newsreel.org), 877-811-7495  
(full-length version, 68 minutes)

MAQUILÁPOLIS is available in Mexico through the Chilpancingo Collective for Environmental Justice. Please contact: Lourdes Luján, Magdalena Cerda, 52-664-647-7766, [lujanlourdes3@gmail.com](mailto:lujanlourdes3@gmail.com), [Magdalenac@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:Magdalenac@environmentalhealth.org)

A shorter version (56 minutes) is available in the U.S. from P.O.V. for community screenings. Please contact:  
<http://www.pbs.org/pov/utills/povengagements.html>

## The MAQUILÁPOLIS Team

**Vicky Funari**, Community Outreach Campaign Director and MAQUILÁPOLIS Producer/Director: [vfunari@sonic.net](mailto:vfunari@sonic.net), [www.maquilapolis.com](http://www.maquilapolis.com), 707-980-2053, 610-642-1188, 707-557-0946

**Sergio De La Torre**, MAQUILÁPOLIS Producer/Director: [delatorreguerrero@gmail.com](mailto:delatorreguerrero@gmail.com), 510-421-1569

**Lupita Castañeda**, Promotora and Campaign Coordinator in Mexico: [marlupitac@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:marlupitac@yahoo.com.mx), 044-664-331-23-30, 664-686-98-75

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**Yesenia Palomares**, Promotora: [yeseniaPR7@hotmail.com](mailto:yeseniaPR7@hotmail.com), 664-647-7766, 044-664-291-5586

To contact any of the other participating promotoras, please email or call Campaign Coordinator Lupita Castañeda.

## The MAQUILÁPOLIS Directory

The MAQUILÁPOLIS website offers a downloadable, bilingual **Directory of Support Organizations for Workers and their Communities** created by the MAQUILÁPOLIS Outreach Campaign as a free community resource. The Directory, like the film, takes a cross-border and cross-issue approach to exploring solutions, actions and change. The work of the 110 groups in the Directory ranges widely, from supporting labor struggles to promoting environmental justice, from protecting women's rights to advocating for global fair trade policies. We invite you to use and to share this resource. Please visit <http://www.maquilapolis.com/> to download.

## MAQUILÁPOLIS Community Campaign Partner Organizations

Following is a list of our Campaign Partner Organizations on the MAQUILÁPOLIS Community Outreach Campaign. Please contact these organizations to find out what they are doing to bring about progressive change. And get active! In addition, these organizations can lend out DVDs of the film for organizing and community-based events.

### CITTAC, Centro de Información para Trabajadoras/es, A.C. (Workers' Information Center)

The Workers' Information Center (CITTAC) is a civil association of women and men of Baja California that promotes and supports workers' struggles, especially assembly plant workers, to improve their living and working conditions, to defend their human rights, particularly labor rights, and to create independent and democratic organizations.

#### Contact:

Jaime Cota, Margarita Avalos, Carmen Valadez, 664-622-4269

<http://cittac.org/>, [cittac@hotmail.com](mailto:cittac@hotmail.com), [magui2001camx@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:magui2001camx@yahoo.com.mx), [carmenvaladez69@hotmail.com](mailto:carmenvaladez69@hotmail.com)

US address: PMB 193, 601E San Ysidro Boulevard, Suite 180, San Ysidro, CA 92173

Mexico address: Dolores 32 B, Fracc. Dimenstein, Tijuana, BC

### Colectivo Chilpancingo Pro Justicia Ambiental (Chilpancingo Collective for Environmental Justice)

We are a group of compañeras/os who work together for environmental justice and to protect the health of our community. We work to raise consciousness among our neighbors and we demand of the Mexican and U.S. government authorities that they protect the health

and the environment in our community and for all communities nearby the maquiladoras.

#### Contact:

Lourdes Luján, Yesenia Palomares, Magdalena Cerda, 664-647-7766  
[chcolectivo@prodigy.net.mx](mailto:chcolectivo@prodigy.net.mx), [lujanlourdes3@gmail.com](mailto:lujanlourdes3@gmail.com), [Magdalenac@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:Magdalenac@environmentalhealth.org)  
Av. del Fuerte # 15861, Col. Campestre Murúa, Tijuana, BC C. P. 22500

### Colectiva Feminista Binacional (Binational Feminist Collective)

We are an independent, binational feminist organization. Our mission is to participate in the formation of a new movement that helps strengthen the human, spiritual, and political aspects of the various women's struggles in the border region.

#### Contact:

Carmen Valadez, 664-622-4269, 664-104-1194  
[colectiva\\_feminista@yahoo.com](mailto:colectiva_feminista@yahoo.com), [carmenvaladez69@hotmail.com](mailto:carmenvaladez69@hotmail.com)  
Dolores 32 B, Fracc. Dimenstein, Tijuana, BC

### Environmental Health Coalition

Environmental Health Coalition is a 25-year-old social and environmental justice non-profit organization with offices in San Diego and Tijuana. EHC organizes and advocates to protect public health and the environment threatened by toxic pollution. EHC works with low-income communities and communities of color on both sides of the border.

#### Contact:

Amelia Simpson, Director, Border Environmental Justice Campaign  
<http://www.environmentalhealth.org>, t: 619-474-0220, f: 619-474-1210, [AmeliaS@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:AmeliaS@environmentalhealth.org)  
401 Mile of Cars Way, Suite 310, National City, CA 91950

### Global Exchange

Global Exchange is a membership based international human rights organization dedicated to promoting social, economic and environmental justice around the world. We do this by sending U.S. people on Reality Tours, hosting and supporting speaking events, providing alternatives and organizing local and international campaigns.

#### Contact:

Kirsten Moller, Executive Director  
<http://www.globalexchange.org/>, t: 415-255-7296, f: 415-255-7498, [kirsten@globalexchange.org](mailto:kirsten@globalexchange.org)  
2017 Mission Street #303, San Francisco, CA 94110

### **Maquiladora Health & Safety Support Network (MHSSN)**

The Maquiladora Health & Safety Support Network is a volunteer network of occupational health and safety professionals who provide information, technical assistance and on-site instruction regarding workplace hazards in the 3,000 "maquiladora" (foreign-owned assembly) plants along the U.S.-Mexico border. Our goal is to build the capacity of workers and their organizations to understand occupational health and safety issues and to be able to speak and act in their own name to protect their health and to exercise their rights.

#### *Contact:*

Garrett Brown, Director  
<http://mhssn.igc.org/>, t: 510-558-1014 ,  
f: 510-525-8951, garrettdbrown@comcast.net  
P.O. Box 124, Berkeley, CA 94701-0124

### **Promotoras por los Derechos de las Mujeres (Women's Rights Advocates)**

The promotoras are the group of community activists/educators in Tijuana, Mexico who collaborated with the production team to create the film. These women met in training workshops at Casa de la Mujer/Grupo Factor X, a Tijuana women's organization. Since the closing of Factor X in early 2004, some of the promotoras formed this new advocacy group while others have gone on to work with other organizations.

#### *Contact:*

Tere Loyola, 664-626-4938,  
[terearte3@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:terearte3@yahoo.com.mx)

### **San Diego Maquiladora Workers Solidarity Network (SDMWSN)**

The San Diego Maquiladora Workers Solidarity Network is a bi-national effort to support the struggle of Mexican workers in Baja California. Our network supports workers, struggles to improve life and work conditions and create progressive organizations in the maquiladoras. The network also promotes the bi-national friendship and solidarity between San Diego and Baja California workers. The SDMWSN works together with the Tijuana Maquiladora Workers Network, Workers, Information Center (CITTAC) and other workers organizations in Baja California.

#### *Contact:*

Enrique Dávalos, 619-216-0095,  
[maquilatjuanasandiego@earthlink.net](mailto:maquilatjuanasandiego@earthlink.net)  
<http://www.sdmaquila.org>

### **SweatFree Communities**

SweatFree Communities supports and coordinates local campaigns for public and religious institutions to adopt "sweatfree" procurement policies that end public support for sweatshops and generate significant market demand for products made in humane conditions by workers who are paid living wages. Sweatfree campaigns succeed because they advance a positive agenda for worker justice and dignity and because they allow activists to organize for worker justice in their own communities where they know the political landscape and have direct access to decision makers.

#### *Contact:*

Liana Foxvog, National Organizer  
<http://www.sweatfree.org/index.html>,  
t: 413-586-0974, f: 207-262-7277,  
[organize@sweatfree.org](mailto:organize@sweatfree.org)  
140 Pine Street, #10, Florence, MA 01062

### **Women Thrive Worldwide (formerly Women's Edge Coalition)**

Women Thrive Worldwide is an advocacy coalition, based in Washington DC, that works to mold U.S. policy in the areas of international assistance and trade, to make them more responsive to the needs of poor women. Their targets for education and advocacy are the Congress and some of the executive branch entities (the U.S. Trade Representative's office, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, U.S. A.I.D., etc.). They consult closely with women's organizations around the world to develop and shape proposals to reflect their needs and views. Members of the Women Thrive Worldwide include CARE, Bread for the World, Christian Children's Fund, the Hunger Project, InterAction Commission on the Advancement of Women, Lutheran World Relief, Soroptimist International of the Americas, United Methodist Women and many other national and local groups.

#### *Contact:*

McKenzie Lock, Communications Manager  
[www.womenthrive.org](http://www.womenthrive.org),  
t: 202-884-8376, f: 202-884-8366,  
[mlock@womenthrive.org](mailto:mlock@womenthrive.org)  
1825 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 800,  
Washington DC 20009

### **P.O.V.'s MAQUILÁPOLIS webpage**

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2006/maquilapolis/>

In 2006, the PBS series *P.O.V.* broadcast MAQUILÁPOLIS and produced a companion Web site, which offers streaming video clips from the film, a podcast version of the filmmaker interview and a wealth of additional resources, including a Q&A with filmmakers Vicky Funari and Sergio De La Torre, and the following interviews:

#### *Wasting Away*

Author Elizabeth Grossman talks about the environmental impact of electronics manufacturing, the health risks faced by the maquiladora workers, and the necessity of enforcing environmental regulations across borders. Find out more on how you can be a responsible consumer.

#### *Growing a Green Economy*

MAQUILÁPOLIS makes the case that the well-being of factory workers in Tijuana is directly linked to a consumer's individual spending habits. Two experts in social investing explain how one educated shopper's dollar can wield clout and influence corporate practices.

### **NAFTA-related websites**

#### [www.mac.doc.gov/nafta](http://www.mac.doc.gov/nafta)

This site provides the text of the North American Free Trade Act. For information on side agreements about labor, go to [www.naalc.org](http://www.naalc.org) and [www.dol.gov/ILAB/programs/nao/main.htm](http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/programs/nao/main.htm).

#### [www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)

**The Commission for Environmental Cooperation**, created to monitor adherence to the environmental provisions of NAFTA.

#### [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

**The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency website** provides information on current government-sponsored environmental clean-ups and policies.

#### [www.profepa.gob.mx/profepa](http://www.profepa.gob.mx/profepa)

**Mexican Environmental Protection Agency website** provides information on current government sponsored environmental clean-ups and policies.



# Selected Reading List

NOTE: These resources are mostly in English. For suggestions on Spanish-language reading material, please contact our Mexican partner organizations.

## Reports

### **Globalization at the Crossroads: Ten Years of NAFTA in the San Diego/Tijuana Border Region**

Environmental Health Coalition report, © 2004  
<http://www.environmentalhealth.org/CoverGlobalizationReport.html>

### **NACLA Report on the Americas, July/August 2005 issue, Vol 39, #1**

"Mexican Workers Since NAFTA." Many articles, one by MAQUILÁPOLIS project advisor Robin Alexander. You can get these articles on the NACLA site:

<http://nacla.org/archives>

### **Metales y Derivados Final Factual Record**

NAELP, North American Environmental Law and Policy, Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America, © 2002. This is the official report by the NAFTA-created CEC on the situation at Metales y Derivados.

### **Mexican Labor News and Analysis**

Ed. by Dan La Botz. Bimonthly news magazine on labor and economic policy in Mexico. [http://www.ueinternational.org/Mexico\\_info/mlna.php](http://www.ueinternational.org/Mexico_info/mlna.php)

## Books

### **NAFTA FROM BELOW: Maquiladora Workers, Campesinos, and Indigenous Communities Speak Out on the Impact of Free Trade in Mexico**

Ed. by Martha Ojeda and Rosemary Hennessy, © 2007, published by the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras  
The story of free trade as told by maquiladora workers, a powerful disclosure of NAFTA's impact on those most affected by it - Mexican workers and farmers - and their organized resistance in fighting for a better world with dignity and justice. Purchase at: [http://coalitionforjustice.info/CJM\\_Website/New\\_Sites/NAFTA\\_Book/NAFTA\\_Book.html](http://coalitionforjustice.info/CJM_Website/New_Sites/NAFTA_Book/NAFTA_Book.html)

### **The Children of NAFTA**

by David Bacon, © 2004, published by University of California Press

### **Globalization and its Discontents**

by Joseph Stiglitz, © 2003, published by W.W. Norton & Co

This is a great book about the way the IMF and the World Bank operate around the world. It does not deal specifically with Mexico, but it does help to understand the situation Mexico is in as a debtor nation.

### **Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico's Global Factories**

by Leslie Salzinger, © 2003, published by University of California Press  
Fascinating analysis of the role of gender in global production.

### **Lives on the Line: Dispatches from the U.S.-Mexico Border**

by Miriam Davidson, © 2000, published by the University of Arizona Press

### **Free Trade and Economic Restructuring in Latin America, a NACLA Reader**

Ed. by Fred Rosen & Deirdre McFadden, © 1995, published by Monthly Review Press  
Articles from North American Congress on Latin America give broad background for what is happening in the maquiladoras by analyzing the effects of neoliberalism all across Latin America.

### **The Selling of Free Trade; NAFTA, Washington and the Subversion of American Democracy**

by John R. MacArthur, © 2000, published by Hill & Wang  
Exposé of how NAFTA got passed.

### **Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants**

by David Bacon, © 2008, published by Beacon Press

### **Mask of Democracy: Labor Suppression in Mexico Today**

by Dan LaBotz, © 1992, South End Press  
Overview on labor law and rights and brief history of labor movement in Mexico. Shows how *charro* unions and company unions work in tandem with the PRI and corporations to keep labor down.

## Websites

<http://mhssn.igc.org/>

Resources on maquiladoras and workplace health and safety. The site has links to many articles, some by MAQUILÁPOLIS project advisor Garrett Brown. A few particularly helpful ones are:

**"Speak Out: Portrait of a Failure, NAFTA and Workplace Health and Safety,"** by Garrett Brown, at [http://mhssn.igc.org/brown\\_synergist.htm](http://mhssn.igc.org/brown_synergist.htm).

This site also has a whole slew of links to key NAFTA 10th Anniversary Reports at <http://mhssn.igc.org/nafta18.htm>

<http://www.cfomaquiladoras.org/dataprincipabril05.htm>

Maquiladora statistics on Comité Fronterizo de Obreras website (in Spanish)

<http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/en/resources>

The website of the Maquila Solidarity Network offers extensive resources on worker rights, globalization, corporate social responsibility, and more.