

Resistance

We need the government to see us and invest in us.

—SERENA

Doña Mathilde was sitting with her sister and father outside their joint family house in Santa María Asunción, Oaxaca. The house was on a hillside and had a sweeping view of the steep valley below, including the family's farming plots and the road we had traveled to arrive at their house. The road was uncharacteristically well-paved, making the journey from the county seat in Santiago de Juchitán ("Jux") relatively quick. Doña Mathilde's greeting conveyed warmth. "Ven, ven, sientate" (Come, come, sit), she gestured to me. After recounting her one and only journey to the United States in 1990, Doña Mathilde began to tell me about why and how she joined the FIOB: "There was a staff member who came and interviewed us, had meetings, and engaged in trainings about the rights of women. I started to change my way of thinking with the organization. And the pueblo changed too. Now there are women at the assemblies."

The changes that Doña Mathilde made as a result of the FIOB meetings and trainings were profound. She contrasted her experiences when she first returned from the United States more than twenty years earlier: "At that time, I was stupid. I did not even leave the house. Women at the time had to be in the house all the time. You could run to give food to your husband, but you had to come right back to the house. Women used to be hit. I was not, thankfully, but I know a lot of women who were."

Though Doña Mathilde did not report suffering physical violence, she said she was subject to the control of her movements that characterizes many women's lives. Doña Mathilde says she only began to recognize how this manner of living was oppressive when she began working with FIOB. Once this process of realization began, Doña Mathilde's thinking and actions evolved rapidly. From not leaving the house, Doña Mathilde had become a local community leader, participating in both economic projects and political decision making. She was involved in a wide

range of income-generating projects, including a mole paste-making project with other women, a cloth-making venture with other women and an organic farming project that included men and women. She also indicated that she and the other women had a savings club which they used like a bank to help each other in times of need. In addition to these projects, Doña Mathilde had begun to participate in the *autoridad* assemblies in Santa María Asunción. It was through these meetings that she reached the conclusion that “the pueblo changed too.” In describing the current work of the *autoridad* assembly, she characterized it as falling on the more democratic side of the spectrum, allowing for women to express their opinion alongside men. “We are discussing now how we are going to ask for more work in the town so that people do not have to go to the U.S.,” she said.

Two hundred twenty-five miles due north of Doña Mathilde’s family farm in Santa María Asunción stood a small, freshly painted house at the top of a hill in San Francisco de Tetlanohcan, Tlaxcala. Tetlanohcan is one of several towns in Central Mexico with a majority Nahuatl population, and this house stood at the edge of a densely populated *barrio*. The house is the central meeting place for CAFAMI. Inside the house, several members of CAFAMI were talking about an upcoming market where they would be selling their line of herbal beauty products. After the meeting, I walked home with Celia, one of CAFAMI’s earliest members. She told me that she had joined with her sister. They had both heard about a group of college students who were working with migrant families. “I heard that a group had been able to visit their families on the other side, and I wanted that opportunity too.” Celia was talking about a group organized by CAFAMI that had brought a culturally unique performance to the United States in 2007, including a play produced according to the methods of Theater of the Oppressed.¹ These workshops wrought a “script” from the words and movements participants used to describe their experiences.

When it came time for Celia to participate in the theater workshops, however, she found it challenging. “It was hard at first,” Celia said, “Normally, we do not talk about these things. But I took strength from the others, especially my sister. I did not know that we had the same experiences. Now I feel that I can speak about things.” The “things” that Celia found hard to talk about were her experiences with migration and domestic abuse. Her realization that her sister had the “same experiences” was echoed by many women who participated in the theater workshops. Celia went on to be part of the second group to visit the United States, bringing a production about the pain of family separation in migrant communities like San Francisco de Tetlanohcan. But her “speaking up” was not limited to speaking of her experiences. She also participated in efforts to lobby the state and federal governments for more resources for the Nahuatl communities of Central Mexico. She described one of the most recent efforts over dinner in her house.

We have a workshop to generate demands for a senator in Mexico City. We are going to demand more work, and to allow people over the age of forty to work in the plants here in Mexico. We also need a health center where the doctors come in the morning and afternoon. Right now, there are only fifteen appointments each day, and then you have to wait to the next day.

In stark contrast to the dusty hills where I met Doña Mathilde and Celia, Serena spoke to me from her restaurant on the malecón in Chiltepec, Tabasco. Over 400 miles southeast of Tetlanohcan and over 500 miles northeast of Jux, Chiltepec was surrounded by a riot of tropical green on one side and the sea on the other, a view that was pockmarked by the black-gray plumes of smoke from the nearby oil refinery. Serena had migrated to the United States many times on a visa for temporary unskilled workers known as the H-2B.² She worked as a *jaibera* and was one of many women from Chiltepec and nearby Soyataco to do so. These journeys to the United States changed her view of herself, her domestic relationships, and her desire to advocate for more resources to reach her town of Chiltepec. She described the process that unfolded over the many years that she journeyed to the United States: “There they see your work. Even after my children finished school, I went back for another three years. A person gets used to working and having their own money.” “There” referred to the United States. In saying that her work was seen abroad, she was also referring to the unseen work she had been doing for years as a housewife. And by “getting used to . . . having [her] own money,” Serena drew a distinction from her experience before migrating when her husband was the person in charge of the household finances despite the fact that Serena worked part time outside the house at a nearby school. When Serena returned, she looked for ways to remain financially independent from her husband. She started her own business, the seafood restaurant where we first met. Her decision did not come without conflict with her husband, who expected her to return to a full-time role as a housewife. However, Serena prevailed, involving her mother-in-law in what Deborah Boehm would describe as a “series of negotiations through which women are exercising increased power in some circumstances but also facing the reassertion of male dominance.”³ Unlike Doña Mathilde and Celia, Serena did not have an organization to plug into when she stopped migrating. However, Serena’s experience running the restaurant also shaped her interest in organizing other women to seek resources from the state. “We need the government to see us and invest in us,” she said.

Women’s Transformations and Community Resistance

Doña Mathilde, Celia, and Serena experienced massive shifts in their self-perception as a result of their experiences with migration, either as a migrant themselves or as someone whose family member had journeyed to or settled in the United States. These shifts in self-perception led all three women to renegotiate their positions within their families and communities and to create and join efforts

to establish economic self-sufficiency and repair the emotional loss of family separation. These shifts, moreover, carry into their families and towns as a whole, galvanizing entire communities to confront the various threads of migration as extraction with efforts to make migration a choice. Their efforts are beginning to reverse the harms of divestment, displacement, and entrenchment embedded in the extractive process of migration through demands for state resources, creation of sustainable local sources of income, and transformation of emotional loss into new forms of connection. This chapter therefore begins with a deeper description of the ways in which women's experiences and initiatives inform the organizing strategies of FIOB and CAFAMI and inform demands coming out of less formally organized migrant communities like Chiltepec.

In the Mixteca, the experiences of women like Doña Mathilde were consciously channeled by FIOB organizers, increasing women's participation in existing *asambleas* (assemblies or meetings) but also informing the development of existing and new projects that sought to wrest resources from the state and create alternative sources of income. FIOB District Coordinator Rosa Mendez put Doña Mathilde's story in a larger context.

They began to understand their own experiences of exclusion within male-dominated *autoridad* assemblies despite being the majority of people present. We also organized consciousness-raising workshops that started with what the women wanted to talk about. And, for many women, it was their own experience of migration that brought them to FIOB.

The efforts that Rosa described began in the late 1990s when women's participation in the governance of Indigenous municipalities was abysmally low despite comprising the vast majority of people attending the decision-making *asambleas*.⁴ The efforts began to build steam by 2004, as Centolia Maldonado Vásquez and Patricia Artia Rodríguez, two scholars and FIOB members, observed:

The women of the FIOB have made significant gains in finding ways to improve their well-being and to advance their social economic and political rights. After a long journey, the women have begun to create and enter spaces where they can exchange experiences, speak their minds and gradually build leadership.⁵

These "significant gains" continued to build over the years. When I last spoke with Rosa in 2017, she described the change in women's roles throughout the region.

In Santa María Asunción [where Doña Mathilde lives], there has been an increase in participation from women who were migrants. Some of them went to the U.S. Upon their return, they have started a project in organic vegetables. They also have projects to make mole, and *totopos* [tortilla chips] from the organic corn they grow. In San Miguel Tlacotepec,⁶ the women rose up, and now there are 80 percent women in the [autoridad] assembly. In Benito Juárez [Yucunicoco], women began to vote in their local assemblies after FIOB did a consciousness-raising workshop with them.

Thus, the interrelated process of women's changing self-perception and FIOB's organizing efforts have moved women toward equally interwoven expressions of self-determination, both political and economic. For another returned migrant, Doña Nancy, the decision to join FIOB was mostly about "having her own money." Doña Nancy was Triqui, and her family had migrated to Santiago de Juxtlahuaca from their home community in Putla, Oaxaca, because of violent political conflict there. Like many others, she experienced multiple dislocations, moving with her family to northern Mexico to pick tomatoes as a child and finally moving to the United States with her husband in 2002. Doña Nancy had not liked her experience in the United States, indicating like many others, "It is not the same being in your country as in another country that is not yours." And being in the United States meant that Doña Nancy had to work in arduous conditions. Despite these hardships, the ability to earn her own income afforded Doña Nancy a level of independence that she did not want to give up when she returned to Jux. She told me about the decision to join FIOB at her stand in the main plaza of Jux where she sold embroidered blouses and purses.

I joined FIOB three years ago [2010]. I joined because I had been accustomed to having my own money when I was in the United States. I did not want to depend on a man. My husband started to work when we came back, but I did not. So I liked to have my stand in the main plaza where I can sell my things. I also work with FIOB to make blouses and purses to sell abroad.

In not wanting to "depend on a man," Doña Nancy was expressing the same desire for self-sufficiency described by Doña Mathilde and Serena. The economic activity led to leadership development. The other women in the collective clearly regarded Doña Nancy's experience as valuable as they elected her president of the collective for the purposes of filing legal paperwork. Doña Nancy's and Doña Mathilde's leadership in various aspects of FIOB's work mirrors the leadership of women in transnational Mixtec movements to improve local living conditions in Mexico and the United States.⁷ As Abigail Andrews has documented, women in various parts of the Mixteca who have very different organizing goals are moved to leadership by their experiences of and reactions to migration, which have in turn resulted in critical shifts in their self-perception and the way they interact in their homes and communities.⁸ These women's participation in political processes means that the demands that organizations like FIOB make are being informed by a more inclusive contingent of the community.

CAFAMI presents an even more clear-cut example of the power of women's organizing. Whereas FIOB initially focused on male-centered organizing and has come to include women over the years, CAFAMI originated and continues to be an organization dominated by women. These are the women who have been left behind as fathers, husbands, older brothers, and, increasingly, older sisters migrate to the United States. CAFAMI opened up a physical space for these women to

gather and discuss issues of importance to them. As expressed by Celia, this resulted in women beginning to express themselves more openly. Like Celia, Doña Silvestre participated in the Theater of the Oppressed workshops that invited women to share their experiences and build a “script” for a play from those experiences. Doña Silvestre shared how the theater workshop energized her to speak up. “At first, it was difficult for me to speak up in public,” she said. “But then it was easy because it was just telling our experiences. I feel very good having been part of these works. Now I speak up more.”

Through the theater workshops, Celia, Doña Silvestre, and the other women expressed their dialectical experiences of loss and freedom from abuse that accompanied the migration of their husbands and sons (and fathers in the case of other members). These were then translated into a series of performances that covered themes of domestic abuse and the loss of family members to migration, showing the prevalence of pain from both family violence and family separation. The second play was named *La Casa Rosa* (The Pink House) in reference to one of the *migra casas* that had been built by a migrant in the United States but was sitting empty waiting for their return. Each of the women performed her stories of loss inside this empty house, a powerful metaphor for the abandoning experience of migration. Even more profoundly, the women of CAFAMI produced the play as a way of reversing that experience of loss and reconnecting with loved ones in the United States. As Celia indicated, “Seeing my children again was the most important . . . part of being in the play.” Thus, women’s willingness to access profound sources of pain transformed into an ability to mobilize a creative and powerful mode of repair for those wounds and a restoration of community connections torn apart by migration.

These investments in building community also resulted in organizing to wrest resources from the state and create new sources of economic stability. Irena connected the emotional need that brought her into the group with the demands and projects she participated in. “I joined CAFAMI two years ago,” said Irena. “I liked the atmosphere. I could find people to talk to about raising my children without their father, my worries for my husband [in the United States].” Irena soon found herself engaged in much more than communing with other women about her experiences. She became involved in a theater project with Celia and Doña Silvestre, a documentary about life in Tetlanohcan, with similar goals of reconnecting migrant families, and an income-generating alternative medicines project, which sought to both reestablish local sources of income and supplement the often-insufficient remittances from family members abroad. The opening of a space for women to share experiences has resulted in tangible efforts to repair the emotional damage wreaked by migration and invest in new ways of relating to family members and new sources of economic stability.

In Tabasco, there is yet a third dynamic at work, this one among largely female migrant community members who have returned but who have not as yet formally

begun to organize collectively. As outlined in previous chapters, the communities I visited in Tabasco did not have the same strong Indigenous identities I witnessed in Tlaxcala and Oaxaca. This may be part of the reason that collective organizing was not as present in this region. Another factor may be the difference in access to lawful migration methods. Women from Tabasco generally migrated to the United States with visas, whereas men from the area tended to migrate without authorization. The community may not have the same set of collective experiences from which to draw cohesive organizing strategies. However, the lack of formal organizing did not stop individual returned migrants from expressing many of the same demands as FIOB and CAFAMI members. When Serena commented that the government needed to “see” people like her, she was expressing the invisibility she felt that was brought on by the profound abandonment of migrant communities like Chiltepec. This abandonment was particularly stark in a place like Chiltepec, which was less than three miles from a bustling hotel and restaurant plaza serving the oil industry. Since the 1970s, when oil extraction began, the local fishing industries that once sustained Chiltepec have been dismantled, and almost every working-age adult has migrated to the United States. Thus, when Serena indicated that the government needed to “invest in us,” she was expressing a desire for a return of resources directed at oil production and benefiting largely foreign corporations.

The stories of Doña Nancy, Doña Mathilde, Serena, Celia, and Doña Silvestre point to profound shifts in gender perceptions and norms as a response to the extractive process of migration. Each of these women confronted migration in different ways, but all took steps toward self-determination. In most cases, these women did not act alone. Particularly in FIOB, women and men worked together to push for change, but even in Tetlanohcan, where CAFAMI is exclusively female, and in Chiltepec, where the experience of migrant women dominated, women’s experiences were creating change for everyone in the community. Their efforts both initiated and supported campaigns to redistribute state resources, create local and sustainable sources of employment and income, and repair the emotional damage wrought by migration.

The remainder of this chapter details specific ways in which these highly varied migrant communities are resisting migration as extraction. Though none of the communities used the term “extraction” or specifically saw “migration as extraction,” their efforts are clearly aimed at reversing the three phases of migration as extraction that dislocate their communities, displace them into exploitative and/or carceral spaces, separate families, and entrench migration as the purported solution for economic development. Despite the differences in identity and level of formal organizing, the chapter illustrates that these communities have built similar analytic frameworks and projects that seek to (1) wrest resources from the state, as a reinvestment of resources dislocated to support large corporate entities; (2) create local sustainable sources of employment and income that counteract the

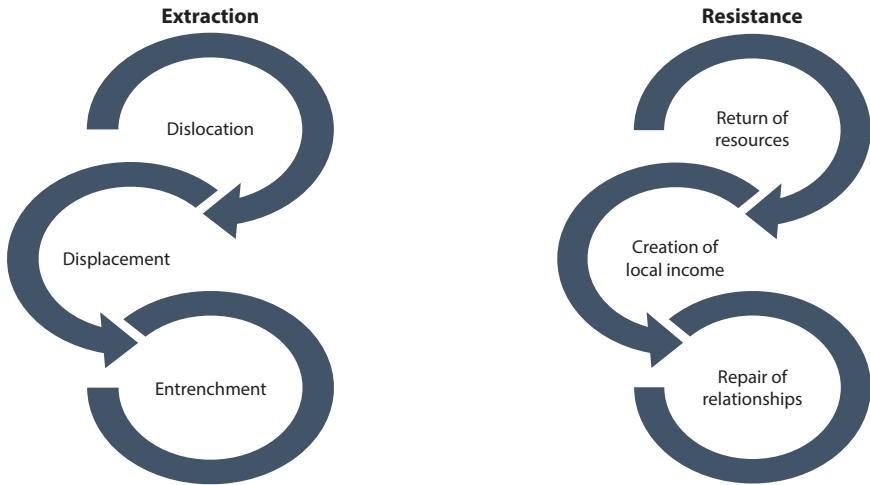


FIGURE 15. Extraction and Resistance in Migrant Communities.

displacement of community members abroad; and (3) repair familial bonds torn by migration (figure 15).

RESISTING EXTRACTION WITH THE RIGHT TO STAY HOME

Of the communities I visited, the most long-standing and analytically developed response to what I call migration as extraction was FIOB's campaign for *el derecho de no migrar*, or the right not to migrate. In claiming a right *not* to migrate, FIOB was drawing attention to the various intersecting policies and practices that compel people to move. FIOB cofounder, Gaspar Rivera Salgado, has defined the right not to migrate as expressing the need to recognize economic rights like "the right to go to school, the right to make a living from farming, or the right to health care and decent housing."⁹ Underlying this assertion of rights is a call for sufficient resources directed at things like education, agricultural supports, health care, and housing, alongside other economic projects like job creation. Moreover, as Rivera Salgado has also indicated, the right not to migrate expresses a demand for autonomy, meaning that "people in communities of origin, therefore, not banks and corporations, should control the economic development choices that . . . make it possible for people to stay."¹⁰ Thus, the right not to migrate encompasses demands for self-determination over economic and political decisions and campaigns asserting that autonomy to reclaim resources appropriated by economic and political elites.

The right not to migrate is fundamentally different from the right to free movement, rooted in liberal political theory.¹¹ However, it is not the opposite of the right

to migrate, nor does it contradict arguments in favor of free movement. Arguments for the right to move freely challenge border controls and deportation powers as inconsistent with the commitment in liberal polities to individual rights.¹² Where the right to migrate challenges a nation-state's power to exclude, the right not to migrate excavates further, surfacing and challenging an economic and political ordering that compels migration for accumulation of profit and then spreads this wealth accumulation to include control of migration. Thus, the right not to migrate is not so much about regulating migration in ways that are consistent with an existing regime of political rights but rather requires a fundamental rethinking of what migration is and what rights are. Migration, in the context of the right not to migrate, is a part of racial capitalist relations that redistribute wealth and a labor in ways that benefit economic elites. Thus, when Gaspar Salgado argues that there is a *right* to go to school, a *right* to make a living from farming, and a *right* to health care and decent housing, he is arguing for a fundamental rethinking of rights as economic, cultural, and social. Framing education, earning a living, and health care and housing as rights, moreover, challenges the normalization of state policies divesting from these institutions in the name of modernization and structural adjustment. Under the right not to migrate framework, investments in these institutions are required, and it is the state's responsibility, rather than migrants' responsibility, to invest.

Even as the right not to migrate seeks to make it possible for more people to thrive in their home communities, it is not an argument for no migration. Rather, it is an argument that migration should be a choice. This fundamentally challenges the ability of corporations, and the governments supporting them, to determine who is allowed to migrate and where with a framework in which migrant communities, critically in this case, Indigenous migrant communities, have more control. Thus, the right not to migrate is both a set of material demands and a political project seeking to realize these material demands through reclaiming the right of Indigenous migrant communities to self-determination, including migration if that migration is by choice.

The struggle for political control and demands for economic investment that make up the right to migrate movement are rooted in a long history of decolonial struggles in the Mixteca. Mixtec communities have been resisting colonization since the sixteenth century. Twentieth-century resistance has seen the formation of organizations like the Unión Nacional de Organizaciones Regionales Campesinas Autónomas (UNORCA; National Union of Autonomous Regional Peasant Organizations),¹³ which, since the 1970s, have fought (at times in literal violent conflict with state leaders) to demand better agricultural working conditions, control of the use of land, and control of local political decision making free from the intrusion of political parties.¹⁴ Part of what emerged from these various movements was the call for a return to a system of governing indigenous municipalities known as *usos y costumbres*. This is a form of self-governance for Indigenous

communities who had been excluded from the formal Mexican state. It provides an official entity through which to demand resources and to demand autonomous decision making over the use of land and other resources.

Oaxacan communities had been fighting for this form of self-governance for decades. In 1994, the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN; Zapatista National Liberation Army) in Chiapas gained international attention. The short-lived armed rebellion was followed by years of negotiations with the Mexican government, which produced a mixed set of recognitions of Indigenous rights to self-governance.¹⁵ In Oaxaca, where many indigenous groups supported the EZLN, the armed rebellion and the negotiations that followed paved the way for an amendment to the Oaxacan constitution making the *usos y costumbres* system of self-governance official state law in 1995.¹⁶ Two years after that constitutional reform, 418 of Oaxaca's 570 municipalities had chosen to adopt *usos y costumbres* as their electoral system. Many of those, including Laguna and Santa María Natividad, are located in the Mixteca.

Under *usos y costumbres*, the municipality would be able to run their own local elections independent of the political party system, making decisions through participatory democracy, and monitoring compliance through a parallel (and often informal) system of law enforcement and community justice.¹⁷ Elections are run by a general council made up of elders from the community who have successfully served in a submunicipal level of governance, an *autoridad*. *Autoridades* are groups of individuals from the same village within a municipality.

It is in this context of increased localized political power that the precursor to FIOB was formed in 1991. The Binational Mixtec-Zapotec Front was initially organized in the United States by migrants from these two Indigenous communities who sought to improve working conditions for people displaced and transferred into agricultural positions in that country. The movement soon expanded through circular migration and cross-border communication to take on the forces of displacement more directly, in a process that Andrews calls "remitting resistance."¹⁸ As the group expanded to include members from Indigenous groups other than the Mixtec and Zapotec, it became known as FIOB. In this earlier formation, FIOB sought to promote effective community development projects in the Mixteca that would allow people to remain in their communities and with their families.¹⁹ Thus, even before the right not to migrate was named, FIOB resisted dislocation of its community members. As the group evolved, it "developed a framework for seeing the connection between the displacement of people in their countries of origin and exploitation and repression of those communities in the countries where they go to work."²⁰ This framework informed the connections made in this book between the dislocation and displacement phases of migration as extraction.

By 2013, when I visited, the framework connecting dislocation and displacement had matured to also include a critique of so-called development policies that worked to entrench migration as a survival strategy. FIOB's work had expanded

to encompass a wider range of strategies including gaining access to information, campaigns to demand more state resources, and the creation of *autoempleo* (community-created jobs). Their analytic framework was mirrored in calls by CAFAMI to make migration a choice, invest in local sources of income, and to repair the economic and emotional damage wrought by migration as well as the calls by migrants like Serena for the government to “see” communities like hers. These calls translated into three concrete strategies for reversing the extractive dynamics of migration: 1) wrest resources from the state, as a reinvestment of resources dislocated to support large corporate entities; 2) create local sustainable sources of employment and income that counteract the displacement of community members abroad; and 3) repair familial bonds torn by migration.

Wresting Resources from the State

Tucked into the foothills known as the Sierra de Oaxaca, Jux houses the Oaxacan office of FIOB. It was here that I met Don Margarito Santos, one of the autoridades of Laguna. Don Santos was at the office to meet with Bernardo Ramirez Bautista, state coordinator of FIOB, to discuss plans to ramp up efforts to obtain resources from the state and municipal governments. Laguna had been allocated funds under Ramo 33, a funding line for Indigenous communities. However, the funds were not forthcoming. “We have to protest to get them to pay,” explained Don Santos. He went on to describe protests in 2012 and the state’s reaction: “We went to the municipal presidency last year, but the government sprayed us with gas instead of doing anything. They did not do anything. We also went all the way to Oaxaca [the state capital] last year, but they did not do anything either.”

Despite the violent reaction of municipal officials and the indifference of state officials, Don Santos and others from FIOB persisted in pressuring the state and local government until they were able to get some funds disbursed in 2017. As outlined in chapter 3, this resulted in the partial construction of irrigation pipes channeling water from a valley into the mountainside where most farming was done. The efforts to obtain state funds is one of many ways that FIOB organizes to build migrant community power and reverse the extractive forces of migration.

Reinvestment of state resources is a key demand of FIOB, CAFAMI, and individual returned migrants in Tabasco. As Don Santos of Laguna outlined, resources that have been allocated for the community’s benefit do not always make it to the intended beneficiaries. Bernardo indicated that an investigation by FIOB members, including Don Santos, had uncovered that between a quarter and a third of the resources that had been allocated to Jux under Ramo 33 never arrived. This information led to the protests that Don Santos described to obtain sorely needed revenues.

Moreover, each pueblo participating in FIOB is spurred on by the knowledge that other involved communities have prevailed in getting the full resources

they are owed. For example, in Santa María Asunción, access to information has resulted in real infrastructure improvements. Don Manuel, who is Doña Mathilde's husband and one of the autoridades in that pueblo, reported, "We learned more about what we were promised. And we went to the municipal heads and the state officials and we talked to them, we protested. Now the government gives us more support under Ramo 33. For the last six years, they have done more. They paved the road that passes through the town, for example." Paving a road may seem like a small victory, but in a region like the Mixteca, this is an enormous improvement. Most roads are either dirt or were paved so long ago that they are badly damaged and difficult to pass. Journeys of 30 to 40 kilometers (16 to 26 miles) take hours, and some routes are circuitous. This makes it particularly difficult for farmers and other makers to bring their products to markets in larger towns and cities. The new roads in Santa María Asunción paved the way for these makers to improve their earnings.

The fight to reinvest in communities includes a participatory democratic process about what projects to pursue, in contrast to the top-down decision making involved in government-run projects like 3x1. For example, Don Santos recounted the process used in Laguna.

First, we hold an assembly to ask the people what they are going to do this year. We take proposals from the community and then ask the people to decide. It is done through community discussions. Sometimes this takes a few days. The community gathers, discusses, and comes to a decision, "This is what we want to do this year." Then we [the autoridades] go to the municipal presidency to ask for the project. We do the application. It used to be hard to fill out, but now we have a form created for us [by FIOB staff], and we just have to fill in blanks with the name of the municipality, the name of the authority, the community, the work, and the quantity of materials requested.

As Don Santos described, sometimes the democratic process is slow. But the process for completion of projects can be even more drawn out, requiring the constant vigilance of community members. In the case of Laguna, the irrigation project voted on in 2012 was still not completed as of this writing. A similar dynamic played out in nearby Santa María Natividad. In March 2013, I attended a meeting of the town's autoridad at which officials discussed progress on a project begun with the help of FIOB. The project had been approved by the community's assembly, similar to the one described by Don Santos in Laguna, and entailed building a sewage and drainage system. Funds for the project came from the Mexican government's 3x1 program, which required a financial commitment of \$250,000 from community members and matched those funds with equal amounts from the municipal, state, and federal governments. All of these steps had been completed over years of close collaboration between the autoridad and FIOB organizers to ensure democratic participation in the selection of a project and to ensure that the promised funding from the public entities materialized.

Funding for the 3x1 project had been approved in 2009, and work had begun shortly after, thanks to constant pressure by the *autoridad* and FIOB. By 2013, one of the *autoridades* at the meetings I attended indicated that the pipes had been laid but they had not yet built the water treatment system. Most of the conversation during the half-day meeting (translated from *mixteco baja* to Spanish by an FIOB organizer, Cipriano) was about how to complete the water treatment system. It seemed that the municipal government, charged with disbursing funds, had finally done so and that work was progressing slowly but steadily.

After the meeting, everyone gathered for a meal of earthen roasted goat, a specialty made possible by Ricardo and Luna. Both Luna and Ricardo were happy about the work being completed in the village, but Ricardo emphasized that the investment from the government had come only after a lot of pressure from the people. Ricardo's comments speak to the ways in which Indigenous communities continue to lack political power despite the gains in autonomous governance since the 1990s. Government officials do not feel the need to visit Santa María Natividad because they do not feel accountable to people in this area. Don Santos similarly spoke of the lack of attention of government officials when they failed to disburse funds allocated under Ramo 33. This results in the need to constantly pressure state officials through protests and other means. FIOB regularly used protests as part of a larger strategy. On February 18, 2013, there was a peaceful march in Oaxaca to get resources for projects that were promised in 2011. Five years later, in 2018, FIOB was again having to threaten to protest in order to get work completed that had been promised in 2017. As Don Santos points out, the protests alone are often not enough to get the work done. But they are an important part of the overall strategy of political and economic power building, which includes learning what resources were allocated, meeting with government officials, and street protests.

Demanding resources from the state is also an imperative in Tlaxcala. Though basic infrastructure is better here than in Oaxaca, decades of divestment have left gaps in education and health care funding. Similarly, the development of the *maquiladora* industry with its insecure and dangerous work has resulted in the lack of sustainable employment opportunities in the area. As in Oaxaca, divestment has displaced thousands of people from the community. It was this dislocation that led to the formation of CAFAMI in 2007 to serve as a space for those left behind by migration. Like FIOB, CAFAMI's organizing vision has evolved based on the demands of the migrant communities in Tlaxcala and the collaborations they have with migrant communities in other parts of Mexico. And like FIOB, CAFAMI fundamentally seeks to reverse the migration as extraction cycle by fighting for sufficient investment in local communities that would allow people to remain in Mexico. As Itzel Polo, one of the organization's supporters remarked: "We can create an economy from the local, from the communities, and not from the perspective of [globalizing] forces like large corporations. The phrase we

organize around based on the community perspective is ‘migration should be an option, not a necessity.’ ”

CAFAMI members have sought to “create an economy from the local” and make migration a choice in a number of ways. For example, CAFAMI has participated in a number of protests in Mexico City seeking better employment creation and other investments from the state. As described by Celia, one of these was a workshop to generate demands for a senator in Mexico City. CAFAMI’s advocacy has long sought to have the Mexican government reinvest in migrant communities. This includes fighting for greater resources for job creation, education, and health care to allow more people to remain in Mexico. In more recent years, CAFAMI has also joined with other organizations to make life for returned migrants easier. However, they face indifferent bureaucrats and lawmakers.

Gabriela was only fourteen years old when she had her first taste of the difficulties of this advocacy work. “We have been demanding a lot,” she said of her work with CAFAMI. “We visited Congress after the trip to the U.S. We demanded a law to help create jobs, make it possible for people to continue working after forty, but the government does not care.” She got the impression that the senators representing Tetlanohcan did not care because they only met with them for a few minutes and then only praised the all-woman delegation’s migrant relatives. “They don’t take responsibility. They could do a lot of things but they don’t do it,” she lamented.

Both Celia and Gabriela emphasized demands for more work and opportunities for employment. These demands carry deep and substantial meaning in a place like Tetlanohcan where available work has become more and more fleeting as neoliberal reforms dug deeper into the community. The once-stable agricultural and wage labor work evaporated as structural adjustment policies removed supports for agriculture and suppressed wages. Available work became even less stable as trade protections crumbled and U.S.-owned *maquiladoras* moved in with their contingent positions, low wages, and high lay-off rates. The rampant age discrimination that Celia described was a sign of the search for “perfect workers” inside Mexico in much the same way U.S. employers sought “perfect” Mexican workers across the border. Older workers were considered too feeble or slow to carry out the punishing demands of work in the *maquiladoras*. And the focus on *maquiladora* development meant the absence of investment in other industries that could create more stable jobs and whose profits could remain in the community rather than benefit large corporate interests in the United States.

Even in Tabasco, where there are no formal organizations like CAFAMI and FIOB, returned migrants understand that the key to a sustainable future for their communities is to redirect state resources. For example, Serena’s experience with migration showed her that self-sufficiency was possible. Unlike most of the migrants I interviewed, Serena had been migrating to the United States on a visa and was therefore able to have a bit more control over when she stopped working.

She had used her remittances to buy a small restaurant offering a number of local seafood specialties. However, disinvestment and pollution in Chiltepec brought on by the incursions of the petroleum industry meant she lacked the customer base needed to make her business profitable. When we spoke, Serena identified the issue as rooted in a lack of resources from the state. “We need the government to see us and invest in us,” she said, referring to the lack of infrastructure that would allow people to access Chiltepec. A two-lane, well-paved highway ended in Paraíso, only a few miles from Chiltepec but boasting an oil refinery and a U.S.-based hotel chain. Thus, Serena’s call for the government to “see” her was a call for more government investment, echoing the demands of more mature organized groups like FIOB and CAFAMI.

Creating Alternatives and Filling Gaps

At the same time that communities fought for more state investment in job creation, they also took it upon themselves to create local sources of income to counteract the need to migrate and satisfy the economic gaps that remittance income could not quite fill. A key feature of these income-generating programs was their noncapitalist nature. Rather than reinforce the structures that captured surplus value from workers in agriculture, manufacturing, or other industries, migrant communities created cooperative structures in which those performing the work were in charge of the means of production (whether that was producing food, herbal medicines, or leather bags) and in which all members shared in the profits of the venture. Though they operated in the larger context of capitalism, and more specifically, neoliberal capitalism, the projects are examples of attempts to carve out niches of more egalitarian and democratic relationships than those present in the larger economic system. FIOB’s Rosa Mendez described two employment creation programs in the Mixteca. One project sought to help farmers grow organic products. Rosa indicated that this project was funded by the Ford Foundation, whose materials describe the project’s goals thus: “Help small farmers in Mexico increase crop production and access U.S. and Mexican markets; and demonstrate more productive use of remittances in poor rural communities where migration is common.”²¹ The foundation’s description of project goals is consistent with historical neoliberal understandings of the need to “modernize” Indigenous communities so that they can be more productive and better participants in capitalist markets.²² The last goal, “productive use of remittances,” is a direct reference to the remittance-to-development mantra touted by international banks and the Mexican government that seeks to absolve the state of its obligation to support its citizens and instead saddle migrants with the responsibility.²³

In practice, FIOB members operationalized these projects in ways that created worker-owned cooperatives in which profits were distributed equally among members. Thus, while the project operated within the confines of existing markets that may themselves have been exploitative, the project itself was arranged to

distribute resources in a more egalitarian and democratic manner. Elfego, who had returned to San Martín Duraznos in 2009, said he had the idea with his friends to cultivate organic mushrooms, or *setas*, which were becoming a delicacy in the more touristy parts of the state. “We started to organize ourselves to go on a better path [than migration], and from there we were introduced to FIOB,” he said. In 2011, with FIOB’s support, he was able to obtain a starter kit for the *setas* and training on how to plant, care for, and harvest the fungi. During our conversation in 2013, he walked me through his son’s half-finished house, which was serving as storage for his first harvest. “These have come out well,” he beamed. “The plan is to talk to restaurants in Oaxaca about buying these and maybe get a contract.” Elfego was well aware that one way to realize the employment-creating potential of *setas* was to tap into the global market that visited Oaxaca. But Elfego was also thinking about local sustainability. Mushrooms were a relatively sustainable product in the soil-eroded Mixteca as they do not require planting directly in the earth. Moreover, they can withstand the eight-hour bouncing, winding ride from San Martín to the capital, making them well suited to the underdeveloped infrastructure. And Elfego and his friends would share equally in the profits from selling to upscale Oaxacan businesses.

In addition to mushrooms, Elfego and his companions had planted basil, pomegranate, and Mexican limes. In describing these efforts, Elfego discussed the potential for simultaneously expanding community involvement and increasing income. “We need a big greenhouse so that more people can come and work on the organic products project,” he said. “It would create more employment if we had a greenhouse and could grow more things. We could also do more business because we would have more to sell.” But he also saw challenges in getting people to join the project. “The seeds we get from Mexico City do not always produce,” he said. Those seeds were provided by the Ford Foundation’s Mexico City office, according to Rosa. Elfego went on to explain, “We lose a lot of crops. For that reason, many of the other farmers do not want to bother with organic. They want to continue doing things their way.” Continuing to do things “their way” involved the use of fertilizers and pesticides, which became common in the Mixteca in the 1980s as rainfall began to decline. Continuing to use these products, despite knowing that they might harm the soil in the long run, spoke to the precarious economic health of these farmers and their families. A bad crop could be devastating in an environment void of economic security nets. Despite these issues, the project persisted, and Elfego continues to try to convince his neighbors to return to organic methods.

Similarly, Doña Mathilde worked on a number of different projects to create employment and supplement remittance income. Some of the projects are with other women from Santa María Asunción, and others are projects that she is doing alone. One of the group projects was to cultivate organic produce, similar to the one Elfego was involved with in his community. Looking out over her family’s

property, Doña Mathilde described the variety of products her group was able to cultivate, “We are planting tomatoes, tomatillo, lettuce, cilantro, radish, chard, broccoli.” Despite the fact that it was Doña Mathilde’s family that owned the land, “everyone shares in the income.” In another of her groups, Doña Mathilde told me, “we are making *mantel* [cloth used for women’s blouses] to sell during our fiestas, especially August 15 [the feast of the assumption of the Virgin Mary, for whom the town is named]. We make about \$10,000 MXN during the fiestas.” These proceeds are distributed among the group. That amount can stretch to cover about two months of expenses in this region. In some of her ventures, the spirit of collective work and profit sharing was not as successful. In a third project, Doña Mathilde explained:

There used to be a group of five of us who made and sold mole paste, but two died and another one left the organization with \$9,000 MXN of our money. The investment for the paste is pretty big—\$5,000 to 10,000 MXN—so we need to be able to make a profit. I decided to continue without the group to see how it goes. Now I sell in the market in Juxtlahuaca by order.

Even with these risks, Doña Mathilde’s involvement in various employment creation projects was not unique in Santa María Asunción. She indicated that 134 people from her village (with a population of 1,600) were engaged in different ventures, mostly through FIOB but also some independent projects. She proudly stated, “My entire family is involved, including my ninety-year-old father.” Doña Mathilde connected her family’s efforts to larger efforts to create more locally sustainable sources of income for the entire community. She said, for the upcoming municipal-wide *asamblea*, “we are discussing now how we are going to ask for more work in the town so that people do not have to go to the U.S.” The “ask” was a demand for state investment in employment creation in order to reverse the migration as extraction cycle.

In addition to agricultural projects, FIOB organized its members, particularly women, to try to leverage Indigenous artistry as a source of income. One such project was to train existing artisans how to make blouses and bags that could be sold in the United States and Canada. Rosa described the overall project: “Oxfam Mexico funded us to help the artisans make designs and stitching of a quality that would be bought for export. Oxfam is helping by giving tips based on work they did with a group in Zacatecas. They also have bought some of the material for the women to use in the project and have other resources.” Among the other resources were industrial sewing machines, which were being set up during my first week in Jux. Another resource was a trainer from the nearby state of Puebla who came to help the women learn about how to make sure that their purses and bags would be appreciated on the international market. The profit-sharing structure of this project, like that of agricultural projects, was democratic. The women would share equally in the profits made by their collective sale of the bags. However, in this

situation, the women did not have as much control of which products to make or how to make them. Rosa spoke to the challenge that posed for attracting women to the project and keeping their interest.

Most of the women already make crafts but in their own form. These do not sell that well, and so they are learning how to make their work more marketable. One of the key things the women are learning is how to measure with a measuring tape so that products turn out the same size every time. . . . There were twenty-two women involved in the project at first, but that decreased to twelve and now to six. It is difficult when they have so many other things going on. It is also personality dependent. Some do not like to change their design. Others like learning new things.

In describing the need to change these women's artistry from "their own form" to something "more marketable," Rosa was articulating the shifts needed to participate in the globalized capitalist market. The resistance of some who "do not like to change their design" shows that these singularly profit-seeking shifts were not overwhelmingly welcome and that the participants sought to maintain their designs as an artistic expression. Moreover, the lack of control over the designs meant that the women themselves did not feel as enthusiastic as Elfego and Doña Mathilde did about their endeavors. "I'd like the women to take charge of the project themselves and not depend on FIOB so much," said Rosa. However, in the months that I visited the sewing site, one of the other FIOB staff members, Isabel, was initiating sewing sessions and regularly checking in on the women to see how they were doing. Though it was not clear exactly why women did not take ownership in the way that Elfego and Doña Mathilde did, it may be that they felt less included in the decisions about what kinds of products to make and how they should be made. It may also have to do with the fact that the women on this project were Triqui, a different Indigenous group than the Mixtecs that formed the majority of Jux's population and FIOB's staff.

One of the women involved in the sewing cooperative was Doña Elena, a Triqui woman who moved to Juxtlahuaca from San Juan Copala with her mother and older brother. We spoke in her stall in the main plaza of Jux where she sold Triqui blouses, purses, and bags of her own design. "Originally, I got to know FIOB because they helped the plaza venders when the municipal president tried to make us leave the plaza." Once she joined, she learned about the project that Rosa described and decided to join because of the possibility of selling her products to a wider market. However, Doña Elena soon faced challenges trying to adapt her craft for an international market. "We had a workshop with the store owner from Puebla where she showed us how to cut the leather and make patterns so we could sell them to fancier places," she explained.

I liked learning the new techniques, but they are very difficult. The cuts and weaving have to be exact. With our traditional products, we just make the things in square forms, sew them up, and there it is. Because it is difficult, we are losing women

from the group. There were twelve, and now there are only six. I don't know if I can continue with the project. My back may not be able to handle the work. Also, I don't know if this woman [the trainer] knows what she is doing. I took her advice on one of my bags, and it turned out so badly.

Doña Elena was not alone in expressing frustration with the project. Doña Nancy, who is also Triqui and also moved to Juxtlahuaca at a young age, said, "The work is difficult. The blouses are especially difficult. The work is very fine, and I am not sure my back can stand the work." Like Doña Elena, Doña Nancy learned about FIOB from others in the plaza and joined in 2010. Though she was not enthusiastic about the work, she was interested in the cooperative aspect and the possibility of creating income streams for herself and other Triqui women. "FIOB is helping us become a legal cooperative," she indicated. The application had already been submitted, with Nancy listed as president of the cooperative.

Two hundred twenty-five miles due north of Juxtlahuaca, in San Francisco de Tetlanohcan, a different organization was helping a different Indigenous group create income to help fill economic gaps left by structural adjustment. Here the women of CAFAMI initiated a business venture on their own, without assistance from or decision making by outside funders. Like the project in Juxtlahuaca, CAFAMI's business venture drew on Indigenous knowledge and practice. CAFAMI's cooperative cultivated medicinal plants to create a variety of health and beauty products for sale. In this alternative medicines project, the collective made products that addressed a variety of issues, from body aches and infections to acne and dandruff. The knowledge of plant-based medicines itself was cultivated by CAFAMI's programming. Early in its history, migrant families sought to reclaim their language and hired a teacher to give classes in the Nahuatl language and other aspects of Nahuatl culture. One of those cultural lessons was about traditional plant-based medicines. Thus, the confluence of affirming Indigenous culture, building connections between women, and seeking local sources of income merged to create the alternative medicines project.

One of the unofficial leaders of the group was Doña Luisa, who did not have any migrants in her family but joined CAFAMI because she "liked the atmosphere." Doña Luisa's family was one of the few large landholders in Tetlanohcan, and she provided some of that land to CAFAMI for growing medicinal plants. She had some knowledge of these crops from her family but also learned a lot in the workshops at CAFAMI. She was the first to experiment with using the products when she traveled with CAFAMI to the United States in 2008. Doña Luisa took part in the organization's production of a "carnival" showcasing regional dances, foods, and herbal medicines. While she was in the United States, she "administered a lot of this traditional medicine to people from the community." The ailments she treated ranged from dandruff to back pain.

Helping her community members in the United States made Doña Luisa and others think about investing more in the knowledge and cultivation of medicinal plants for profit. Like the structures created by FIOB members, the women in the alternative medicines project are worker-owners. They do all the work to cultivate the plants and formulate the various products and share in the profits equally. The challenge that they face is that state structures continue to favor large corporations over smaller enterprise and favor goods from transnational U.S.-based corporations over locally produced goods, making profitability a distant goal. As Doña Luisa theorized:

There needs to be support for the creation of natural products. They sell all the American brands here, but these natural products, Indigenous products are better. Instead of products from the U.S. coming here, we should be able to find a market for our products in the U.S. Then maybe the children, they would not have to go there.

The difficulty of getting support for a local, Indigenous product mirrors the larger economic shifts in Mexico that continued colonial forms of extraction. Since the 1960s, resources have been allocated to large-scale agriculture and industry, while supports for local farming and manufacturers evaporated. This has famously resulted in the replacement of diverse varieties of locally produced Mexican corn with an influx of government-supported, commercially farmed monoculture corn from the United States. It has also resulted in the replacement of local manufacturing and enterprise. A key example is the textile industry in Tlaxcala, which has been replaced by *maquiladoras* where textiles are assembled rather than made for U.S.-owned retailers. This same pattern affects the ability of the alternative medicines group to obtain the support they need to launch a full-scale business, much less one that can market its products outside their local economy.

Organizers with CAFAMI have taken note of these limitations. In 2013, Norma Mendieta spoke of CAFAMI's efforts to connect with pro bono counsel to obtain business licenses and apply for funding for the project. By then, the product line had a name, Herbalini, and included six women. However, the licensing process wore on for several years. By 2017, Doña Luisa and the other women were less hopeful, almost resigned to distributing the herbal medicines locally and to their family members in the United States as a service rather than a business. But the continuation of this project, despite these setbacks, demonstrates the resilience of CAFAMI members in general. Doña Luisa and others expressed their frustrations at a fair in the capital, Tlaxcala, where they were able to inform a number of people about their product line and make a few sales. And one of the members, Leticia, expressed hope. "Many people stop and ask questions, but not a lot of people are buying yet," she said. Leticia believed that with increased awareness of the health risks of factory-manufactured products and the health benefits of herbal remedies like the ones produced by Herbalini, they would attract more paying customers.

Whether or not the efforts were financially successful, the creation of locally based income streams represented an important step within migrant communities to disrupt their own or their family members' displacement into extractive industries that generally created income for others. By coalescing around the development of products drawn from Indigenous knowledge—like the mole pastes that Doña Mathilde and her colleagues made, the blouses and purses made by Doña Nancy and others, or the herbal products of Herbalini—migrant communities were seeking to root themselves against forces that would uproot them. And the collective income-sharing structures that they created helped form niches of more egalitarian resource distribution even as they grappled with how to fit those niches into the larger system of racial capitalism operating around them.

Reintegrating the Disintegrated Family

Perhaps one of the most distinct set of community-led projects stemmed from the uniquely female membership of CAFAMI, a membership that was also made up of the family members of migrants. In addition to campaigns for state resources and organizing around local income streams, the women of CAFAMI explicitly sought to repair familial bonds that had “disintegrated” (in Gabriella’s words) due to migration. Like Gabriella, most women joined CAFAMI largely as a way to help them navigate the pain of family separation and loss. One of the projects born from this desire to heal the wounds of separation was a documentary about everyday life in Tetlanohcan.

Irena was one of the leaders of the documentary project. Her husband, Efraím, had left for his most recent trip to the United States in 2007 and had not returned because the enforcement dynamics in the United States would make a return trip north too costly and dangerous. Efraim preferred to “stand it” in the United States until he felt he could invest appropriately for his family. This meant that Irena had been left with the task of being both mother and father to their three children and of filling the gaps in economic resources when Efraím’s remittances did not cover all the bills. She was deeply involved with the economic projects, but the project she talked about most was the documentary. “We recorded the streets, traditions, carnival, school, and school parades,” she said. The project was part of the reason that Irena joined CAFAMI: it was a way to “connect with Efraím and miss him a little less.” Thus, by bringing the life in the town to Efraím, she was seeking to rebuild the family bonds that had frayed due to migration. In the process, Irena also built a deeper connection to her surrounding community. “I am not from Tetlanohcan,” she explained. “So, for me, joining meant I could meet other women, talk to them. It is the only thing I do outside the house.”

The other project that grew out of the entrenchment of family separation brought about by ongoing divestment and increasing investment in U.S. immigration enforcement was the Theater of the Oppressed workshops described by Celia. The workshops allow women to identify issues that are particularly pressing for

them and to explore these issues collectively through the process of producing a play. As Celia explained, "A teacher from the U.S. came to talk about immigration, how people cross the border, and then asked us to talk about our experiences. We were interviewed on what we thought about migration." The responses were developed into a show, including movement and spoken lines, that told the story of how migrant family members were dealing with the absence of their fathers, husbands, sons, and others. Celia joined the production because it meant that she might be able to see her two sons. "I knew that another group had gone to the United States, and I wanted that opportunity as well," she explained. Celia was referring to a group of women that CAFAMI had organized to visit the United States in 2008. The group put together a carnival of different food products and Nahuatl dances and songs to be performed at certain venues in the United States. They obtained visas under a program designed for "culturally unique" performances.²⁴

For Gabriela, who was only sixteen when she worked with the group on La Casa Rosa, the journey meant the end of a fourteen-year separation from her siblings. "It was a start," she said, "but one trip cannot erase the wounds of all these years." Her siblings, who had last seen Gabriela when she was a baby, were consumed by the need to work and had little time to spend with her.

"My sister [who worked as a server]," she sighed, "only came home to eat or sleep. Otherwise, she was working." And her youngest brother "does a double shift every day" and uses all of his time away from work to take care of his daughter who was born in the United States. Through these observations, Gabriela began to understand how entrenched migration had become for her siblings and her family who depended on their earnings and how much effort it would take to truly rebuild bonds with her siblings.

Celia had a similarly complex set of emotions at seeing her sons. She was grateful to have been able to spend Christmas with them, but she said, "There is no life there." "It was very impactful for me," she continued. "I was really happy because I got to see my son, who I had not seen for seven years. But at the same time, it was sad because I saw in reality how they lived. They stay three to a room, and they work all the time." Celia's and Gabriela's experiences reinforced their desire to fight the extractive policies that had dislocated their family members. They saw the connections between dislocation and displacement firsthand, though they would not have used this exact language. And their responses were to reinvigorate efforts to reunite with their families more permanently by organizing for more resources.

Celia and Gabriela's work to bridge the emotional and economic gaps of migration were mirrored throughout the communities profiled. Communities across Mexico are seeking to reverse the entrenched dislocating effects of divestment by fighting for more state resources. For Indigenous communities in particular, this includes fighting for the ability to determine how to use those resources. Similarly, communities are seeking to create local sources of employment that can help prevent the displacement of workers into exploitative industries in the United States,

exposing them to risks of surveillance, violence, and detention, and counteract the entrenchment of migration as the only means to economic stability. At the same time, groups like FIOB understand that migration has become so entrenched that no amount of local investment will completely obviate the need to journey north. Thus, they are combining efforts to improve local conditions with efforts to improve working conditions in their displaced destinations and make the journeys north more secure. Finally, families that have been torn apart by migration seek to re-form through programs that rebuild connection and repair emotional harm. Just as migration as extraction is multidimensional and layered, so too are the efforts of communities resisting this vicious cycle. In all of these efforts, migrant communities confront extraction with creativity, resilience, and steadfastness. But it is not the responsibility of migrant communities alone to reckon with the harm that migration as extraction has wrought. In Mexico and in the United States, those that have benefited from migration must account for the benefits they have reaped from these communities in material ways. Moreover, migrant community resistance alone cannot transform migration into an act that is chosen. Transforming migration as extraction into migration as choice requires a fundamental reordering of public policy and corporate practices.