

Nomination 1 Highflyer Award 2024

#SomosVoz: A Journey from Violence to Healing | HealthNet TPO

Last year we already noted that providing a platform for and amplifying the voices of local activists often proves highly effective. These efforts often involve alliances where one or more Dutch INGOs collaborate with organizations in the Global South, primarily to support and strengthen them.

Last year, both HIVOS and its partners, as well as Mama Cash and Both Ends, received nominations for the respective alliance campaigns 'Voices for Just Climate Action' and 'Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action.' This year, we're pleased to nominate the campaign '#SomosVoz' or '#WeAreVoice.' and specifically the video 'A Journey from Violence to Healing.'

This campaign and video are the result of a collaboration between the Netherlands-based HealthNet TPO and Colombia-based GOAL, with support from Irish Aid and the Dutch Embassy in Colombia. The two organizations joined forces to, as they put it, 'create a social and pedagogical campaign to spark conversations that contribute to safe and protective spaces for women (...) and, in turn, represent a step towards the elimination of gender-based violence (GBV).'

The video, an artistic production by Buen Ayre Visual, documents a gathering in a theater in Bogotá, Colombia's capital, earlier this year. Over twenty women from various regions of the country, all survivors of gender-based violence, came together on stage to share their stories as part of their journey toward healing and prevention. As described: '24 women from different territories, feelings, roles, talents, activisms, and sensitivities (...) wove critical, sensitive, emotional, and situated conversations about the contexts interwoven in the approach to GBV (...) to craft pedagogical, sensitive, situated, and resilient messages that offer new perspectives contributing to the prevention and non-repetition of GBV cases in Colombia.'

Both the gathering and its recording showcase, in a deeply creative and emotional way, the profound impact of violence on these women's lives and how their coming together to share their experiences serves as a powerful form of resistance: 'Coming together as the most powerful revolution that can exist in a world full of violence.' The stories, voices, movements, embraces, strength, and tenderness of the women take center stage. Through voice-overs, several women narrate their experiences; while their identities remain anonymous, that's beside the point. It's about the collective, the shared experience.

The result is not only respectful but also nuanced, powerful, artistic, and above all, deeply loving. This gathering of women marked the start of a campaign that will culminate in the release of 16 short documentaries, which are scheduled to debut later this month on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence (November 25). We are eagerly awaiting their release. [Update 08-11-2024: The 16 short documentaries are now available here!].