



RECIPE BOOK FOR

# Powerful Women

STORIES TO INSPIRE YOU



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The Trust for the Americas is a nonprofit organization affiliated with the Organization of American States (OAS). Established in 1997 to promote public and private partnerships, The Trust has implemented projects in 24 countries and worked with over 1,000 organizations in the region. Our initiatives seek to promote educational and economic opportunities, as well as government accountability and transparency.

The Trust for the Americas creates a brighter future for people in Latin America and the Caribbean by providing access to economic opportunities, fostering governance and transparency, and promoting social inclusion. The VIVE Project (Spanish acronym for “Come, Be Inspired and Sell”) is implemented in Mexico by the Trust for the Americas with the support of Walmart Foundation and in partnership with ManpowerGroup Foundation. Since 2016, VIVE seeks to increase the economic empowerment of Mexican women.

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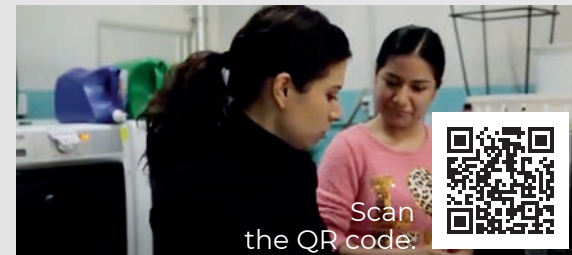
# The VIVE Project



The VIVE Project (“Come, Be Inspired and Sell”) is committed to generating opportunities for learning, employability, and entrepreneurship in order to promote the construction of an economic

setting with the participation of women in equal conditions. Since 2016, VIVE has contributed to empowering women through training in technical and life skills including sales, retail, customer service, and entrepreneurship abilities that allow them to access jobs in the formal labor market or start their own business, as well as increase their agency and leadership capabilities. During its implementation, the VIVE Project has sought to continually foster the potential of its graduate’s through additional initiatives such as the module and virtual course on the Prevention of Violence against Girls and Women, Entrepreneurship HUBS, Digital Components implemented via mobile phone, The Trust’s Directory of Entrepreneurs and the VIVE Talent Pool.

- a. Financed by the Walmart Foundation in the United States and implemented by The Trust for The Americas in partnership with ManpowerGroup.
- b. Targeted to women over 15 years old that live in situations of vulnerability such as unemployment, violence, sparse formal education, poverty, among others.
- c. In Mexico, VIVE has operated in 245 municipalities from 29 states and has created a network of 771 allies.



HEAR ABOUT HOW VIVE TRANSFORM LIVES FROM THE VOICE OF TEN OF OUR GRADUATES SHARING THEIR STORIES: WATCH VIVE PROJECT’S 2019 VIDEO



## *Paul Dyck*

*Vice President of Global Government Affairs, Walmart*

71,000 people trained are a reason for Walmart and The Trust for the Americas to be proud and celebrate. We started this path with a blank canvas four and a half years ago,

and today we are filled with wonder with the result.

Thanks to the efforts of the VIVE Project (“Come, Be Inspired and Sell) thousands of women in Mexico have today better opportunities to access a job, start a business and take decisions with more freedom and independence. Furthermore, we were able to train more than 56,000 women, exceeding our initial goal by 15%.

At Walmart, we firmly believe in increasing women’s opportunities to build, by themselves, better living conditions for themselves and their families. This initiative is an example of the shared commitment that Walmart, Walmart Foundation, and the Trust for the Americas have in generating impact and creating value in the communities we are part of.

We established ambitious goals in each new phase of operations, goals that the Trust and its team pursued with empathy and professionalism. The Trust for the Americas’ vision has allowed the VIVE Project to continually grow, improve, and constantly renew itself to assess the needs of women by working towards their economic autonomy and the prevention of violence.

This recipe book reasserts the relevance of continuing the promotion of development projects with a focus on gender, which contributes to closing the inequality gaps between men and women. The experience of VIVE Project proves the exponential impact that is generated when a woman is empowered, with a multiplier effect in their environment.

At Walmart, we feel satisfied with the achievements made in partnership with the Trust for the Americas and the VIVE Project. We join this celebration and hope to keep on collaborating so we can, jointly, promote large-scale social impact in Latin America.



## *Linda Eddleman*

*Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of The Trust for the Americas.*

With this Recipe Book for Powerful Women, we celebrate more than four years of VIVE Project's operations and express gratitude for the opportunity of training more than

71,667 people, of which 56,753 (79%) are women. Each one of them has a story of growth and learning with the VIVE Project that can only be told from the voice of the graduates themselves. For this reason, we are truly excited to share with you 71 stories of powerful women, each story representing one thousand of the people trained.

These graduates are now changemakers in their communities and envision themselves as more independent, actively participating and professionally qualified women. I encourage you to read one of these stories each morning and let yourself be inspired by the messages and guidance that they shared with us in this recipe book.

We want to show our gratitude to all the people that collaborated with the VIVE Project

and to the Walmart Foundation in the United States, we feel very proud of the great achievements we have attained.

In the Trust for the Americas, we will continue to work towards the economic empowerment of women. Promoting their inclusion generates a direct impact on gender equality, economic growth and the eradication of poverty and violence against women and children in our region.

*“To all those women who were told all their lives they were not capable of anything, and that with the VIVE Project discovered themselves to be unstoppable.”*

*María Fernanda Barragán,  
VIVE Project Facilitator  
at Celaya, Guanajuato.*



Some of the pictures that illustrate the stories were edited in order to protect the woman's identity.

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# About the Recipe Book

**I**n 2018, Klaudia Gonzalez Martinez, VIVE Project's National Coordinator, and Maria Fernanda Sierra Perea, VIVE Project Program Manager imagined a space in which the graduates would be able to tell their personal and professional growth stories. Sharing this recipe book fills us with excitement since these stories illustrate how the VIVE Project did not only give our beneficiaries learning and job-related opportunities, which was our initial goal, but also contributed to empowering women, preventing violence, generating social cohesion, as well as support and sorority networks.

This **Recipe Book for Powerful Women** presents success stories from our graduates in six main sections: Empowerment, Employability, Violence Prevention, Entrepreneurship, and Community Impact. Furthermore, a special section is focused on Resilient Women, seeking to recognize our graduates' perseverance when confronting great challenges during the pandemic.

The stories presented here have been collected during the four years of the VIVE Project's operation, from the different national field locations. We have recently followed up on many of these success stories. This recipe book has been in the making for more than two years, and each member of the VIVE Project's team has been fundamental to achieve this result.

We want to express our gratitude to each graduate that shared her empowerment and resilience story with us. We hope this recipe book will encourage more women to strive to achieve their dreams, to believe in themselves, to seek a violence-free life, and to become unstoppable.





# Resilient Women: Challenges are Opportunities

**D**uring the months of social distancing we investigated the stories of 16 entrepreneurs who graduated from the VIVE Project that stand out for being RESILIENT WOMEN during the pandemic.

Despite the many challenges, all of them agree that this time can be seen as an “OPPORTUNITY” to grow, innovate, get to know, and reinvent themselves.

The stories of these women will be presented in the different sections of this recipe book and can be identified with the heading “RESILIENT WOMAN DURING THE PANDEMIC”.

“*Resilient  
Women During  
the Pandemic*”





# EMPOWERMENT

“When women are trained, they simultaneously enhance their capacity to build a future by choice. VIVE has allowed us to watch them become empowered, to turn into what they want to be and to love themselves.”

**Deyanira Moyeda,**  
VIVE Project Labor Adviser  
at San Luis Potosi



## HOW DOES THE VIVE PROJECT IMPACTS ITS BENEFICIARIES?<sup>1</sup>



**94%**

stated that VIVE has impacted positively their life.



**90%**

increased their capacity to make independent decisions.

<sup>1</sup> Internal monitoring survey for VIVE graduates, 2020. Sample 422 (95% confidence level and 5% margin of error).

# HOW DOES THE VIVE PROJECT IMPACTS ITS BENEFICIARIES?

Through the training, the VIVE Project has sought to empower their graduates economically, professionally and individually.<sup>2</sup>

**71,667**

People graduated from the VIVE Project

**56,753**

Women graduated (79%).  
**15%** beyond our initial goal.<sup>3</sup>

**VIVE's on-site training course** in marketing, retail, sales, and customer service topics.

**Online training approach during the pandemic:**

- **Virtual Courses and micro-learning**
- **18** courses transmitted via Facebook Live.
- **876** people trained.
- **20** states within Mexico and 8 countries in Latin America.

**VIVE's online training courses**

- **5** available courses.
- **1,317** people graduated.



Scan this QR to enter our Virtual Platform.

To course the VIVE Project's on-line training access The Trust for the Americas  
<https://aulavirtual.trustfortheamericas.org>

<sup>2</sup> Trust's Information System, 2016-2020.

<sup>3</sup> Initial goal of women served: 49,100.



# Magalia

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# Smile

**M**agalia (44) tells us that she never had a job before VIVE. She currently lives with her husband and her children in Oaxaca and used to be a full-time mother and a wife, therefore, she never looked for a job. Nonetheless, she changed her mind and spoke to some friends with whom she later signed-up for our training.

"Taking the training helped me gain tools to obtain a job and also motivated me to pursue my dreams." After the course Magalia was hired as a part-time worker at a department store in Oaxaca. She is very motivated to continue working and to become an example for her children. "VIVE has changed my life, I was able to get a job and, what is better, I smile a lot more now!"

*“VIVE has changed my life, I was able to get a job and, what is better, I smile a lot more now!”*



# Maria de la Paz

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# Renovation

**M**aría de la Paz (42) is a woman from Xalapa who used to work at a car sales agency. She heard about VIVE through Facebook and decided to enroll in the course. At that moment, she was looking for another job since she was being harassed at the agency. VIVE trained her in sales, customer service, and entrepreneurship, which motivated her to start her own business, an optical store called "Mendoza's Optical Store." Maria de la Paz invested her savings to open the store and, with the help of the local VIVE team, she was able to properly register her business. "I will never go back, I had difficult times before VIVE, but my facilitator encouraged me to start my own business; I even sold my car to open this optical store. All the effort paid off quickly and my business started growing more and more, I even got to buy a new car! VIVE left many good things in my life."

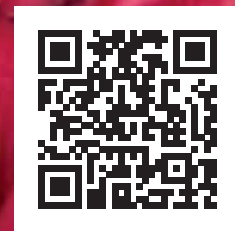
*“I am now an independent businesswoman.”*





# Maria

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# Empowerment

**M**aria (42) is a woman from Mexico that had only completed middle school when she took VIVE's training program at a RIA center run by our ally Proaccesso. She told us that before VIVE she was "Sad, lonely and irritable" and never left her house. She thought that since she was a woman it was her job to stay at home and be of service to her husband and her children. "When I was a girl I wanted to study and do more with my life, but I was already 40 and I felt useless." Maria and a friend took the training and applied for a job as sales representatives at a local supermarket afterward. She obtained the job and is now employed full time. "I feel that I have achieved something. VIVE was a radical change in my life because for the first time I feel useful, and having a job was my dream. I encourage other women to take the VIVE training because it has really helped me to improve as a woman and as a person too."

*"I feel that I have achieved something. VIVE was a radical change in my life because for the first time I feel useful."*



# Apolonia

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# Future

**A**polonia (60) from Guadalajara, was unemployed and decided to join a group of senior people to learn how to make hand-crafted goods. She considers that her age has been a hindrance to staying economically active. Nonetheless with the VIVE training she proved to herself how much potential she still must keep on learning and to become an entrepreneur. “My plans have changed a lot. I am now even planning to sell the products that we make in our senior people group so we can all benefit from it.”

“My plans have changed a lot. I am now even planning to sell the products that we make.”



# Resilient Woman

## Dalila

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# Resilience

**D**alila (57) from Merida, Yucatan, is a hard-working woman. The women in her family were not allowed to study, nonetheless, Dalila was tenacious and decided to begin elementary school while working at a local farm to economically support her family. When she was about to start middle school, she could not afford a uniform and had to drop out. Nevertheless, her resilience, even at such a young age, made her find a different way to continue her education. Dalila told us “One day I saw the school principal and approached her saying: I want to study.” The principal supported her and Dalila was able to continue studying, earning a technical degree and an English certification.

Before becoming an entrepreneur, she used to be a teacher and a storyteller for kids in her community. Dalila retired and divorced at the same time, which took a toll on her self-esteem, she felt her life purpose was lost.

Around then, she found out about the VIVE Project’s training held in partnership with CREA. When she heard that the training was focused on empowering women, she thought it would be an excellent opportunity, since she felt overwhelmed and was always crying due to all the difficulties she was facing. “When I arrived at the training session, I became very excited because I found a group of people who were planning to start a business with so much enthusiasm, it was contagious.” While being trained by VIVE, she also enrolled in a course to make notebooks, resulting in the perfect match to start her business “Nirvana Artisanal Notebooks.” Dalila started selling her notebooks in temporary exhibitions and in her sister’s street market stand, however, shortly after a public emergency was declared due to COVID-19. “When I was told I could not go out, I started to feel sad again, but I was invited to take VIVE’s Online Training Courses, as well as the Digital Entrepreneurship Component and I learned a lot. Now I even have a Facebook and Instagram pages for my business.”

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Dalila has included several artisanal techniques into the production of her notebooks, and now she creates personalized notebooks upon request. Now she also sells totes, caps with face shields and masks with counted-thread embroidery. “I am very happy because I have more sales every day. I feel that the pandemic benefited me; I have focused on producing and preparing myself more with VIVE and CREA.” Dalila has even been able to employ three people to assist her in the manufacture process.

Dalila has recently decided to resume her role as a storyteller and now tells stories live on social media. “I feel quite content because taking this course with VIVE has motivated me a lot. Nowadays as soon as I wake up, I am sewing, putting notebooks together or selling them. I feel like VIVE boosted all that energy that was asleep within me. Now when I sell, even if I have a mask on, you can see my smile in my eyes.” In the near future, Dalila dreams of having a store in which she can sell her notebooks and where her clients can sit for a coffee and read.

*Dalila tells this to the women that  
are life warriors:*

*“Overcome your  
fears, dare to start  
your business, work,  
and be optimistic.  
Smile!”*





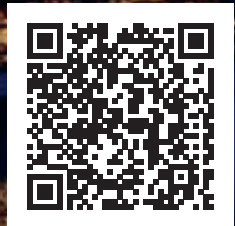
# SU POTENCIAL

Mi



Laura

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El Ticomán



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# Progress

**L**aura (34) has had a traditional Mexican confectionery shop since 2018. She identified the need to innovate and improve her business performance, therefore she approached SEDECO in Pachuca, in search of training opportunities. There she took VIVE's course through our partner CREA.

"My journey with this great entrepreneurship project started there. They provided me with a series of mentorships and when I applied what I learned, I was able to implement my business plan; with it I participated in the contest "My Business Pitch", where I was awarded second place." In November 2019, Laura became a member of the Mexican Association of Businesswomen (AMJE in Spanish) to further boost her business endeavor. "It is hard to be a woman given the multiple roles and occupations we have in society, but we must raise awareness about how we can overcome barriers by changing our way to face reality."

*"They provided me with a series of mentorships and when I applied what I learned, I was able to implement my business plan."*



# Esperanza

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QR code.



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# Renewal

**B**efore VIVE, Esperanza (63) from Colima dedicated most of her time caring for her household and grandchildren. VIVE's training program helped her start a business, allowing her to become economically independent while continuing her tasks as a caregiver.

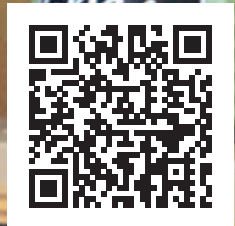
Esperanza now grows blackberries to sell locally and produces dressings and jams. She sees herself being able to export her products and is motivated to expand her business and generate job opportunities for women in her community. "My finances have changed a lot. The VIVE Project has taught me that I can be a productive woman, even at my age. I know I can achieve many things for family's wellbeing and me."

*“My finances have changed a lot. The VIVE Project has taught me that I can be a productive woman, even at my age.”*



# Ana Ruth

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QR code.





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# Heroine

**A**na Ruth (48) is the owner of “Arucca”, an artisanal aromatic candle shop that uses recycled materials collected in Xalapa (Veracruz) for packaging. Months before taking VIVE’s training, Ana Ruth used her knowledge about aromatherapy to start making candles. The response from her husband was all but positive, he told to stop fooling herself by trying to start a business. Ruth decided to do it anyway and secretly started to sell the candles among her friends. As she launched her business she decided to divorce her husband due to his constant psychological abuse. Soon after the divorce, a friend told her about the VIVE Project, and she decided to participate in the training in 2017. Ana Ruth believes that VIVE helped her at her most vulnerable moment by boosting her self-esteem and teaching her to build a successful business. “VIVE took the blindfold off my eyes and showed me that I am an important woman”, says Ana.

Ruth is currently employing women to work in her candle workshop: “My goal is to conti-

nue hiring single mothers that have been through a similar experience. If we believe in our capacity to be successful, then we will be an example for our kids and other women.”

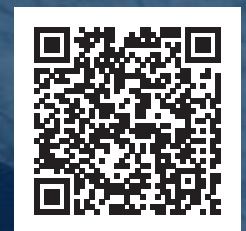
In 2019 Ruth participated in the contest “My Business Pitch”, in which she presented her business with great skill. “I challenged myself and realized that I was capable of achieving whatever I set my mind to. When I won first place at the Veracruz pitch, I felt great satisfaction knowing that my effort, intelligence, and capacity had been considered.” Ana Ruth won an economic incentive and a personalized entrepreneurship mentorship, which she used to improve her packaging. “That was the best gift that VIVE has given me: recognizing myself as a capable and successful woman.” Ruth concluded by saying “It does not matter how old you are, there is always time to make your dreams come true, VIVE helped me and now, I am achieving it.”



# Resilient Woman

## Karen

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# Breakthrough

**K**aren (34), from Coatepec (Veracruz), has a BA in tourism and took VIVE's training in 2018. Karen is a single mother of a 10 year-old girl as well as the owner of a small business called "Keychains by Karen DC", dedicated to the creation of handmade keychains, didactic material, aprons, and other products made with felt. She loves working in sales and customer service.

Karen excitedly tells us how her business came up: "It started three years ago and helped me out of the depression I was suffering due to a break-up. I started this as part of my occupational therapy, I only made heart keychains for my daughter." Her daughter used the keychains to decorate her school backpack and much to her surprise, Karen started receiving orders from her daughter's friends and teachers. Later they began to take orders for parties and events. "This has grown in an unexcepted way." She was later selected to participate in a contest for artisans at her municipality.

"There, I heard about the VIVE Project, I took the training, and it was a turning point. The training opens your mind. It helped me focus, orient myself, and innovate. Because of VIVE, my hobby became my business." Additionally, the training allowed her to know other women that had been in a similar situation, and that helped her to be more confident. She even started a collaboration with Ruth, fellow VIVE graduate and the entrepreneur behind Arucca, with whom she has built a beautiful friendship based on mutual support. "This is what VIVE left me: friends, empowerment, confidence, courage, and being able to believe in the value of my business."

"Keychains by Karen DC" currently employs six people and offers many products and designs. Karen is amazed by how far she has come, she remembers starting with a keyring and a piece of fabric: "Now I have no color restrictions, I buy the stuffing by the kilo, and have not stopped working." Her business allows Karen to be, not only economically

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stable, but also emotionally. “VIVE was a breakthrough: participating in VIVE’s Virtual Market and being part of the Directory of Entrepreneurs are seeds that you sow and that will bring results when you least expect it.”

Despite the pandemic having a negative impact in her sales, including the cancellation of five paid exhibitions, Karen has not given up and takes advantage of any opportunity to promote her products. “Recently, a man from Canada placed an order. That made me lift myself up and now I suddenly have a lot of work.” The pandemic pushed her to get out of her comfort zone and to growth solutions. She invested in social media ads, increased her posts on Instagram and started to ship nationwide. “I was so motivated, I told myself: ‘You can do it!’” She has even started a new printing business with her brother, who also took VIVE’s training courses.

One of the things that makes Karen proudest about being an entrepreneur is that she gets to spend more time with her daughter, who at the age of 10 has the characteristics of a potential entrepreneur. “She sees me and becomes motivated; she is really capable, and I know I am teaching her abilities that will help her in the future.”

Karen wants to advise other entrepreneurs like herself:

*“Do not despair, some days are difficult but trust yourself and don’t be afraid. If you are a single mother, your daughter will never be a hindrance, instead, she will be your reason not to give up.”*





VEN  
INSPIRATE  
VENDE

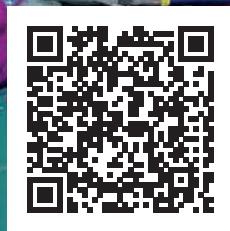
# VIVE

**Ollin**  
ROPA Y ACCESORIOS  
ARTESANALES



# Ana Laura

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QR code.





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# Precious

**A**na Laura (52) is a seamstress, an artisan, and the entrepreneur behind “Ollin” artisanal clothes and accessories” located in Celaya, Guanajuato. “The VIVE Project helped me gain confidence, and empowered me and my business, now I make decisions by myself.” In addition to completing the VIVE training curricula, Ana Laura has been an active participant in the 2019 and 2020 editions of the Digital Entrepreneurship Component. Ana Laura emphasizes that in these virtual courses she learned a lot about emotional intelligence and was able to identify the areas she needed to assess as an entrepreneur.

With a smile on her face, she tells us: “The training has given me the tools to start my own business, mainly how to plan.” During the months of social distancing, Ana Laura adopted a new sales scheme through social media and has continuously prepared herself. She also participated in the VIVE’s Project 3rd Virtual Market and the C@ffee with Heroines, Celaya edition, during which she shared the

best practices she has implemented to revitalize her business in these trying times.

“*VIVE impacted my life by helping me realize how precious I am and that I can achieve my goals no matter the difficulties I face.*”



Gracia

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# Self-confidence

**G**racia (65) was not comfortable showcasing the artisanal dolls that she produces and sells as her only source of income. “During training, I was ashamed to show my product to my classmates. I was very insecure about the artisanal cloth dolls I made, but after a few sessions on personal initiative, I was able to overcome my fear and decided to show the dolls to my peers. With their feedback I became confident to continue innovating and today, I have an artisanal cloth doll line, all with traditional dresses from the Guerrero state. This confidence has allowed me to increase my clients and my sales.” affirms Gracia. Now she is very proud of the dolls she makes and of how joyfully she sells.

*“I became confident to continue innovating.”*



Jenifer and Margot



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# Motivation

**W**hile in rehabilitation treatment in San Luis Potosi, Jenifer (24) and Margot (51) completed the VIVE training courses. Jenifer had been previously employed as a security guard at a factory. She now looks to the future expectantly because she is certain that what she learned is going to help her obtain a better job once she is done with here treatment. "This was a great opportunity, something I had never experienced, I had never obtained any kind of certificate. Now I put more effort into everything I do and find strength in knowing that there is something better waiting for me outside."

After taking VIVE Margot is also inspired to work proactively towards her recovery and is excited to go back to her family business. Both are committed to the knowledge acquired and have decided to work towards obtaining better job opportunities in the future.

*“Now I put more effort into everything I do and find strength in knowing that there is something better waiting for me outside.”*



Sandra

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# Acomplishments

**S**andra (34) and Gisela (30) both entrepreneurs from Los Cabos, Baja California Sur, consider that the VIVE Project surprised them by teaching them more than expected. Sandra, a therapist with a private practice, tells us: “Now, I put effort into understanding why I want things, this has greatly benefitted my ability to reach my goals. I now see a chance improve in every entrepreneurship experience.” Gisela had only expected to learn about sales, instead, she also learned about herself and dared to believe in her potential: “After VIVE my plans changed a lot, I identified my abilities and how they can help me achieve my goals, and most importantly, in VIVE I learned about my value as a person and the importance of being a woman.”

*“In VIVE I learned about my value as a person and the importance of being a woman.”*



# Resilient Woman

## Teresa

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# Motivation

**T**eresa (45) is a member and the legal representative of a women's cooperative that produces pulque, a beverage native to her locality, Milpa Alta, in Mexico City. "We are a total of seven women in the cooperative and we seek to empower ourselves. We are breaking stereotypes since this product is traditionally only made by men", Teresa tells us. She is an accountant and for many years she worked as such, however, she stopped working after her 8 year old son had an accident and needed to dedicate her time to his recovery therapies. A year after the accident, Teresa was invited to a course to create cooperatives, and decided to create a cooperative to produce pulque with other people, most of them women.

Teresa found out about VIVE through her local municipality and took the course with a fellow member of the cooperative so as to later share their knowledge with the rest of their group. "Despite having experience as an accountant, it is not the same to administer an established company than to start one

from scratch, that was what I needed and what learned with the training." Teresa continues to apply the business model she learned in the course and recalls how motivational it was to share her experience with other optimistic entrepreneurs.

**"Before the VIVE Project and due to my previous experiences, I used to be insecure and unambitious. After VIVE, I learned to value myself, to respect myself. I reflected upon about many things, I started to set goals and to find strategies to reach them. It is now very satisfying to see the cooperative growing, and it is a result of what I learned with VIVE."**

She has been a very resilient woman and her strength inspires us all. She has faced many hard challenges during this pandemic, individually and as part of the cooperative. Teresa shared with us that a person dear to her passed away and also, how difficult it was when one of the women from the cooperative tested positive for Covid-19. "The members of the cooperative had to put a lot of effort to obtain resources to help her. She needed oxygen but by then had been closed for ope-



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erations for four months because of the pandemic.”

Teresa and her business partners have had a difficult time trying to keep their cooperative afloat, but have not given up. To increase their sales, they have been advertising their pulques online for home delivery.

In June 2020 Teresa participated in VIVE’s C@ffee with Heroines, Mexico City edition. She told us: “After that coffee session with the VIVE Project I feel very motivated. It helped me remember that I can do this, that I am not alone, and that we (in the cooperative) will get through these hard times.”

In the future, Teresa sees herself as a businesswoman. She wants to escalate her cooperative into a big enterprise; “An business in which you can find all the maguey-derived products you can imagine.”

With her story of resilience, Teresa urges us to:



*“Show empathy towards your co-workers, do not give up, and believe in your potential to do the things you put your mind into.”*



Heroínas Vive

VIVE  
VEN INSPIRATE VENDE



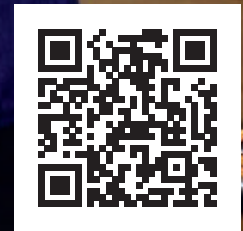
# PLATAFORMA MORÁMICA



PLATAFORMA MORÁMICA  
EXPOSICIÓN DE FOTOGRAFÍAS  
DEL MUNICIPIO DE MORALES  
DE MARÍA LEONOR

## Fabiola

Get to know Fabiola  
by scanning this  
code QR.



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# Creativity

**F**abiola (42) is a proud Mixteco woman and mother of two teenage daughters. She lives in Milpa Alta, where she took VIVE's training course. In 2018, she was the winner of the national photography contest conducted by the VIVE Project, in collaboration with The Trust for the Americas and the OAS. "I took VIVE's course, it helped me become an empowered woman and to overcome barriers. I was able to prove this to myself by participating in the photography contest organized by VIVE, in which I won first place. I could not believe it. I am very proud of it." As a result of the contest, Fabiola discovered her passion for photography and has since been invited many times to exhibit her photographs. She also participated in a forum for photographer women and in the Women Economic Forum, Mexico City edition, in which she shared her experience as a VIVE graduate.

Another passion of hers is to grow plants at her greenhouse. She considers herself a lover of learning. Whenever she has the opportunity, she expands her knowledge on growing

ornamental plants, commercializing cosmetic products derived from nopal, and new photography techniques. Likewise, she is very dedicated to her community, she is currently part of a local project focused on promoting arts and culture at Milpa Alta.

*"I am thankful to VIVE for everything it has done for me and hope that this program continues encouraging women to pursue their dreams."*





## EMPLOYABILITY

*“I became a change agent without realizing it. When I reconnect with VIVE’s graduates, I can tell that after taking the course they have flourish professionally, either by obtaining a job or starting a business*

*That is a great satisfaction!”*

**Maara Guadalupe Lomelí Rea,**

VIVE Project Labor Adviser  
at Guadalajara, Jalisco

## HOW DOES THE VIVE PROJECT IMPACT ITS BENEFICIARIES<sup>1</sup>



**95%**  
acquired new  
technical life and  
job skills.



**49%**  
perceived an  
increase in their  
incomes.



**19%**  
found a job or  
started a business  
after taking VIVE's  
training.

<sup>1</sup> Internal monitoring survey for VIVE graduates, 2020  
Sample 422 (95% confidence level and 5% margin of error).

# EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY



The VIVE Project's courses seek to assist graduated women in finding better economic opportunities.



## VIVE's Talent Pool

Launched in July 2020, it compiles information on the professional profiles and interests of our graduates to match them with potential employers.

- **30** registered graduates.



Scan this QR code to visit the website.

## VIVE's Virtual Job Fair

- The Virtual Job Fair seeks to link our graduates with employment opportunities through talent attraction videos provided by our partners employer institutions.
- **16** participating employer partners



Leticia

Get to know Leticia  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Determination

**L**eticia (45) from Milpa Alta (Mexico City) was unemployed and spent most of her time at home. As a result, of the knowledge and abilities she acquired in VIVE, she was hired to work at a local wholesale store. She told us that during her job interview they asked her how familiar she was with customer service. Since she had taken VIVE's courses, Leticia gave them a complete answer proving that she knew how to carry out the activities requested in that job.

Today, she has been promoted to cashier supervisor and was recently rewarded for being the best second membership seller of the store.

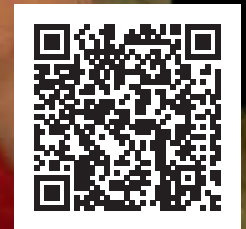
*“I know that I can achieve whatever I want, I need to work hard, but if I want to, I can achieve it.”*





# Carmen

Get to know Carmen  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Resolution

**B**efore participating in VIVE's training Carmen Alejandra (36), from Colima, was selling beauty products as an independent worker. Carmen always liked sales and had great customer service skills. When she heard about the training she decided to enroll without hesitation, even when getting to the training represented a very important economic expenditure.

Carmen attended each session of the training and after successfully completing the 40 hours, she was certified by CONOCER in retail merchandising for self-service stores. Afterward, she was linked to a temporary job opportunity in which could double her income.

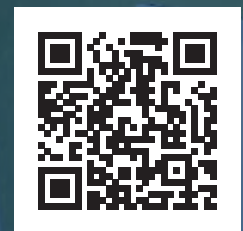
*“Carmen was hired and today she continues to carry out her new job successfully.”*



# Resilient Woman

## Lorena

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by scanning this  
QR code.



# Adaptability

**L**orena (49) describes herself as a survivor, especially given the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. She is an active woman, with plenty of experience in sales, and currently carries out more than four economic activities in which she sells products and services. “This contingency has tried us all. I was left without a choice, my store, Pia Caterina, where I sold christening gowns, was robbed, and due to threats and extorsions, I had to permanently close.”

Lorena heard about VIVE Project’s training program in March 2019, through Celaya’s Office of Economic Development, our partner, and decided to enroll. She participated at the VIVE’s Virtual Market Celaya edition, in which she presented her former business “Pia Caterina”. The training provided her good support network of fellow entrepreneur women. She remains in contact with them and they support each other by promoting their products constantly. “I thank the VIVE Project for encouraging us to strengthen our

entrepreneurial skills. Without VIVE, I would be lost. VIVE reinforces women's worth because it recognizes that we are important to our families' economy.”

Lorena has experienced the harsh effects of the pandemic after closing her business, and despite her plans to restart her activities as a full-time entrepreneur, she first needs to reach economic stability. motivated by this, she started to look for a job as a salesperson, “I realize I could be a store salesperson; I learned all the necessary skills and abilities with you in the course. VIVE has been a breakthrough, I feel that it is a guide that is constantly reminding me to bring myself up to date and to not give up. It has not been easy, but the Lorena before and after VIVE is not the same. I have learned to adapt.”


As a resilient woman she has shown that, even when circumstances are unfavorable, her capacity to adapt is her best asset. “I have focused in using everything I have learned. I started crafting soaps, making marmalades,

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selling fans and I also am an insurance agent at a bank.” These activities have yielded her good results, and she tells us that she already has an order of 500 soaps for December. “That is how I have been surviving. Some days my clients just come and say: ‘What are you selling now Lorena?’ and I tell them that I sell a little bit of everything.”

Excitedly Lorena tells us she has been developing a project to manufacture and sell Christmas piñatas with her sister. She is certain that she will be able to materialize many of the business ventures she has imagined, especially because she has all the necessary entrepreneurial abilities. “When you hit rock bottom, all you have left is to find something to hold on to and push yourself forward.”

Lorena advises us:



*“We must continue to adapt and to support each other. Let’s promote our business through word-of-mouth advertising. That is helpful for us entrepreneurs.”*









# Adriana

Get to know Adriana  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Perseverance

**T**wo years after taking VIVE's training, Adriana Margarita (41) tells us that her present is very promising. When she was unemployed, she dedicated all of her time to care and domestic tasks. While she was taking VIVE's training, she was also going through a very difficult family situation, which led her to become economically independent. Ever since Adriana has sought to learn technical and professional abilities to have a fixed income and be able to support her children. "Thanks to VIVE, I was able to obtain a job at the Family's Community Center in San Luis Potosi, where I am currently teaching a crafting class. At the beginning I only taught one class, now I teach four classes a week." Additionally, she recently started a jewelry business as a backup source of income: "VIVE boosted my self-confidence and changed the way I face problems." Adriana's next goal is to set up a physical store in which she can display her products and grow her business.

*“Thanks to VIVE, I was able to obtain a job at the Family’s Community Center in San Luis Potosi, where I am currently teaching a crafting class.”*





# Yascara

Get to know Yascara  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Knowledge

**Y**ascara Sarai (35) from San Luis Potosi, enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and three kids. When she took the VIVE training, Yascara was working as an administrative assistant at the “Eurollantas” tire shop. She enjoyed the dynamism of the training and how it allowed her to better understand the activities she had to perform as a part of her job. For her, VIVE was the boost she needed and to help her improve. After finishing her training, she was promoted to manager and her income doubled. Yascara now tries to spread the knowledge she had access to among her co-workers, by teaching them about customer service and strategies on how to increase their sales.

“After VIVE my hunger for knowledge increased, something that had never happened before, and I was able to see all the good things I could achieve if I applied these new abilities. Thank you VIVE!”



MIKLOS

MIKLOS STORE



# Resilient Woman

## Karla

Get to know Karla  
by scanning this  
QR code.



# Voice

**K**arla (39) describes herself as an idealist, creative, and resilient woman, especially when facing complicated situations in life. Besides being an Administrative Assistant at the VIVE Project and a graduate from VIVE's on-line courses, she is an industrial designer and the entrepreneur behind "MIKLOS Store", an on-line social media-based shop focused on selling second-hand clothes. Karla continually updates her videos on social media, showing each garment in a fun and creative way, making the consumer feel familiar with the store and demonstrating her conviction on opting for a "second-hand fashion, fashion that helps preserves the planet", as her slogan reads.

She decided to start a business after feeling uncomfortable in her previous job and not having an appropriate remuneration. Assertively, she identified that to become an entrepreneur and to build the foundations of her business idea, she would need to have a steady income to support herself, therefore, she started looking for job opportunities. She

then participated in the recruiting process to join the VIVE Project as an Administrative Assistant and was finally selected. "This job opportunity was tailor-made for me: a woman, part-time, working from home. It was just what I needed to continue working on MIKLOS and to generate some extra income."

Karla's work experience at VIVE has been completely different from her previous ones; "I realized that there are women that work to benefit other women, that you can have an excellent work environment. I now know the meaning of the word SORORITY." Karla participated in "My Business Pitch" virtual contest, in which she won a personalized mentorship for her business, which was very useful for generating a growth plan for MIKLOS.

In 2020 Karla is more confident and continually seeks to see this crisis as an opportunity. "This is the second crisis I face. While starting MIKLOS in 2017, I had to deal with the earthquake. Now I am also trying to see this difficult time as an

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opportunity for improvement.” A month before the pandemic started in Mexico, Karla opened a physical store for her clients to go and try on clothes. “At the beginning, I felt confused. I used to personally deliver the clothes purchased, and now that is something that put my clients, my family and myself at risk. I decided to stop MIKLOS’s operation for two months and started to think about how to let my clients visit my store without risking them .” As an innovation, she has started to offer virtual visits to the MIKLOS store and has found shipping services with competitive prices. “This strategy has been working very well and that motivates me not to be afraid of this crisis.”

Karla finishes her story by saying:

*“VIVE has been a breakthrough for me, in the way I see myself as a woman. I love what I do in VIVE and I love what VIVE does.”*

From her experience, Karla advises us:

*“Sometimes, as an entrepreneur, you feel alone, frustrated, and full of questions. Look for support so you can find inner strength and at the same time, strengthen your business idea.”*



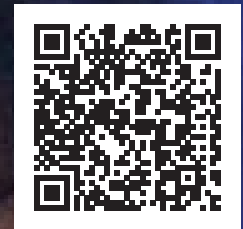


Use the nylon bags  
@corralyut



Lucia

Get to know Lucia  
by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Purpose

**L**ucia (41) is a woman from Durango that has faced several challenges to find a job, due to her lack of professional experience and not having a college degree. When she found out about VIVE through Facebook, she thought it could be a fun experience, but now she is surprised by how much she learned. With the knowledge acquired in VIVE, she was able to find a job as a salesperson at a bank. Lucia is extremely good at it!

She is in charge of recruiting qualified personnel, and for that she is convinced that VIVE changed her life for good: the training was the motivation she needed and now finding employment is not a problem for her.

VIVE not only helped Lucia find a job, but also helped her change the way she sees herself.

*“I am now constantly searching for more and better opportunities, I stopped being just a bystander in the crowd, now I feel special.”*

Entrar 



VIVE

Máquina  
Tema

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# Personal Growth

**S**andra Luz (46) from Mexicali, Baja California is a mother of four children and grandmother. In 2016 she was working as a gas station attendant when the labor adviser at Mexicali approached her and invited her to participate in one of VIVE's training sessions. The following day, after her shift, Sandra Luz arrived at the center, thrilled to start her training course. She told us that she was able to put into practice everything she learned with the courses with her family and at her job: "VIVE has transformed me into a much more confident woman. I know I am capable of achieving anything I want."

After the training, Sandra Luz was promoted and now works at the Human Resources Area of that company, where she is still applying everything she learned during her training. "VIVE inspired me to be better, and I am very thankful for being part of this project, and for everything it has given me."

*“VIVE has transformed me into a much more confident woman. I know I am capable of achieving anything I want.”*

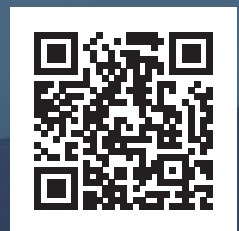




# Resilient Woman

Janette

Get to know Janette  
by scanning this  
QR code.



# Will Power

**J**anette Angelica (26) describes herself as a hardworking, independent and strong-willed woman. Currently, she works as a high school principal and is also the owner of an educational training center. She took VIVE's complete course and was invited of our partner, Celaya's Institute for Youth Development. "It was worth it waking up early every day to attend the training and share with my course mates. It was something that helped me discover myself and become more empathetic." During her course Janette identified customer service to be particularly important for her two economic activities, since then, her customer service skills have made her stand out as an educator; "I learned to work through my emotions, and to know, understand and actively listen to the other person I am talking to." She considers that the VIVE Project has motivated her to find strategies to help her materialize her projects and goals; "I am a dreamer, but I was not able to turn those dreams into a reality, I doubted

my capacities all the time and did not know my full potential. VIVE empowered me tremendously, now I fight for my dreams and convictions."

Janette tells us that during these months of social distancing due to COVID-19, the most prominent lesson she has had is the importance of adaptability. For example, the team at her training center had to work to adapt her summer course into a virtual scheme. "It has been a very complex process because all of a sudden we needed to adapt our activities." Additionally, getting to know more about herself has been one of the strategies that have allowed her to be resilient when facing of all the economic, work, and emotional hardships she has been through this year. "I felt overwhelmed with the work and emotional weight I was carrying, but this time has allowed me to identify how to become a better person and businesswoman".

Janette wants to keep on learning so she



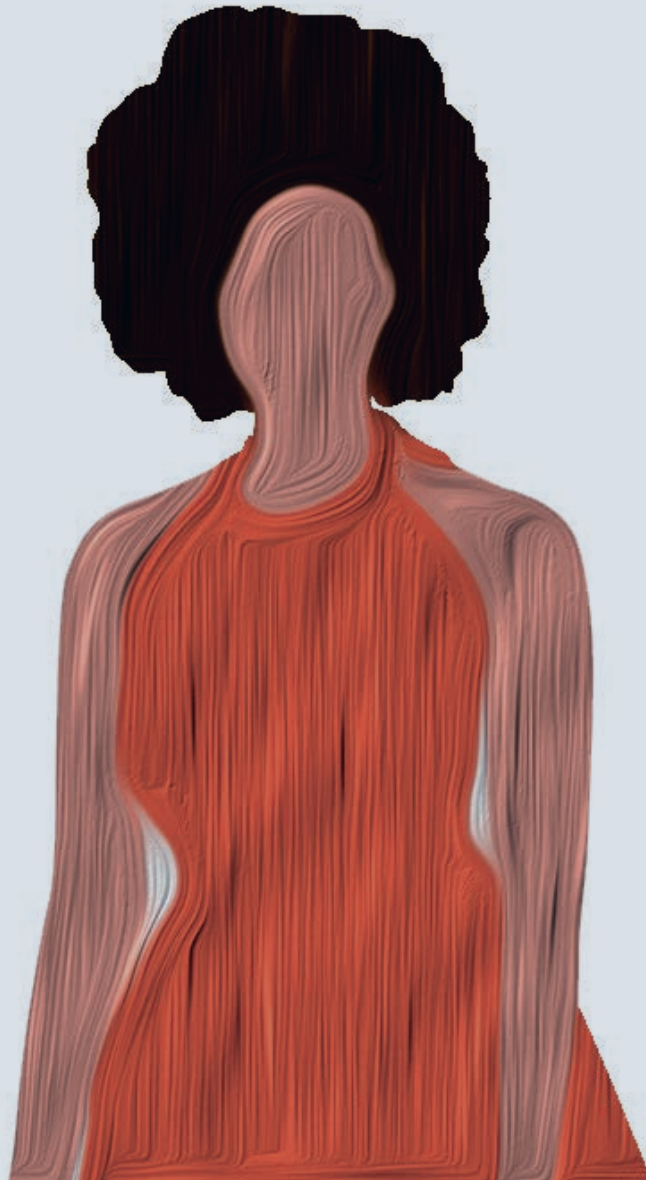
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help her students and her family through this distance-learning process. In the future, she will continue to make efforts to positively contribute to the academic learning process and also sees herself as a stronger and more empathetic woman: “In VIVE I discovered that I love to work for the wellbeing of people, and I found the will power that I needed to carry out my projects.”

If you are a businesswoman, I advise you to:

“*Know yourself and your worth, identify the potential you have; learn to listen to others but do not let them undermine the confidence you have in yourself. Use hardships to become stronger.*”





Sandra

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# Love

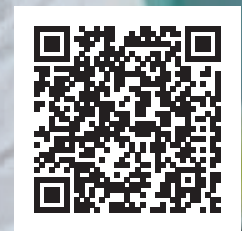
**S**andra (30) has been a businesswoman for many years and sells street food in Hidalgo. During training, she learned several strategies to give better customer service and has been creatively applying them in her business. These strategies have given her excellent results; now she sells her products faster and according to what she told us, her work hours have been reduced by almost two hours each day.

*“Now I have more clients to whom I sell my products with more assurance, confidence, and love.”*



# Silvia

Get to know Silvia  
by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Enthusiasm

**S**ilvia Sarahí (26) from Guadalajara took VIVE's training while working at her previous job. "The VIVE Project was a drastic change in my life since I had been longing for a better job, and I was able to find it." Before VIVE, Silvia worked at a daycare center and is now employed at a community college. She told us that the training helped her communicate better and her customer service is constantly improving. Silvia is very excited to continue developing her professional skills, her plans have changed for the best because she is not afraid of what might come next.

*"I would like to train more people, so they can be able to provide better customer service."*



# Yuridia

Get to know Yuridia  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Dreams

**Y**uridia (36) is a woman from the state of Guerrero that is currently living in Mexicali, Baja California. She became a mother at a very young age and has been the only economic support of her child. When Yuridia took VIVE's training she was working as an advisor to college enrollment, supporting young people during their registration process. "At VIVE I learned how to close a deal, the different types of customer service and how to make a CV". Yuridia tells us that when she showed her employers her VIVE certification she was promoted to "Prospective Analyst" and now, she has her own office.

In addition to being able to obtain a promotion, she was inspired to finish high school and wants to get a Marketing degree. "God willing, I hope to start my degree soon. My next dream is to be able to escalate to a job position in which I can perform managerial tasks because each day I feel more and more confident in my current position and I want to achieve more. Thank you VIVE!"

*“At VIVE I learned how to close a deal, the different types of customer service and how to make a CV”.*







## VIOLENCE PREVENTION

*“It is touching to hear women speak about how VIVE impacted their households and motivated them to take full control of their lives. Some social factors might have clipped their wings, but they have decided to become empowered, open their wings and fly as high as they can.”*

**Yahaira Jameleth Ramos García,**

VIVE Project Facilitator  
at Guadalajara, Jalisco

# HOW DOES THE VIVE PROJECT IMPACT ITS BENEFICIARIES?<sup>1</sup>



**87%**

learned to identify gender-based violence.

<sup>1</sup> Internal monitoring survey for VIVE graduates, 2020  
Sample 422 (95% confidence level and 5% margin of error).

# PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS AND WOMEN

## Handbook on the Prevention of Violence Against Girls and Women

- 1,125 downloads.
- Helps identify the different types of violence against girls and women.
- Provides information regarding the different agencies that assist victims.



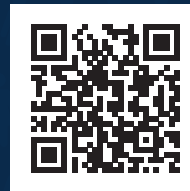
Scan this QR code to download the PDF file.

## Module on the Prevention of Violence Against Girls and Women

- 22,700 people trained (88% women).
- Partnership with CONAVIM (National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women).
- Contributes to the prevention of gender-based violence.
- Included in the training (2 hours).

## Virtual Course on the Prevention of Violence Against Girls and Women

- Guides the trainees through recognizing violence and identifying how to take action if one is or has been a victim of gender-based violence.
- Launched in July 2020.



Scan this QR code to access VIVE's Virtual Platform



Aide



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# Acción

**A**ide (37) is an independent architect from Temoaya, a small town in Mexico state; she took our Entrepreneurship HUB through our partner CREA. In her testimony she told us that she was a victim of domestic violence, which forced her to leave her house, to protect her son and herself. When she enrolled in our program, she was unemployed and perceived herself as shy and insecure. As the training advanced and the module on the Prevention of Violence Against Girls and Women was imparted, Aide started to share her life experience; doing so helped her understand what she had lived through and at the same time, she was able to feel the sorority of her training mates and facilitator. She realized that other women in the course had undergone similar experiences and realized she was not alone in the process of becoming an independent woman.

At the beginning of the training, Aide was not very confident about her business idea regarding the manufacturing of bricks for housing constructions. When she shared her business

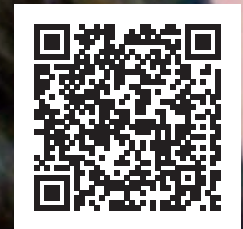
idea with her family and friends, they told her that it was impossible. However, with great support from her course mates, she took her idea to the “My Business Pitch” contest, organized by VIVE and CREA in October 2019. Even though she was not a finalist at the contest, she was approached by an architect who offered her a business partnership. **“Now I think big, I feel like a have more opportunities.** I have developed several business ideas that are within my area of interest; before, I did not dare think I could materialize those ideas, but now, I feel capable, empowered, and confident. Thank you VIVE for changing women’s lives”.

*“Now I think big, I feel like a have more opportunities.”*



# Romelia

Get to know Romelia  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Support

**R**omelia (22) took VIVE's course through our partner, Eva de Camou Foundation, at Navojoa, Sonora). She is studying communications and told us that "VIVE gives us the opportunity to grow as women and as entrepreneurs by giving us very useful tools." Romelia also believes that the course on the Prevention of Violence will allow her to be better prepared to identify violent situations and to support other women. "Now I think about how to apply and share my knowledge with other women that are going through domestic violence situations, this information is truly useful for us."

*“Now I think about how to apply and share my knowledge with other women that are going through domestic violence situations.”*



Tomasa



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# Freedom

**T**omasasa (55) became widowed a few years ago and was in a deep depression. She took VIVE's course in Mexico City, and during the module of Violence Prevention, she realized that she had lived in a violent environment in the past. The courses helped her overcome the emotional hardships she was facing and aided her in becoming more confident and empowered. "VIVE inspired me to open a restaurant. Each morning I wake up and go straight to my business. Now I dress as I want to and do not let anyone tell me what to do or how to behave, I make my own decisions now. I hope many women take this training and don't let anyone mistreat them."

*“Now I dress as I want to and do not let anyone tell me what to do or how to behave, I make my own decisions now.”*



# Resilient Woman

## Maria de los Angeles

Get to know Maria de los Angeles by scanning this QR code.



# Unity

**M**aria de los Angeles (56) is joyful, disciplined, and loves teamwork. She, took VIVE's training through our partner, the program "Ambientes de Paz y Desarrollo" (Environments for Peace and Development) of Toluca's Municipal Government in Mexico state. At age 23, she started a family business and now, 20 years later, her business was faced with several challenges that resulted in its closure. "At that moment I realized that for many years I was working to achieve my father's dream, but not mine. I started trying to find myself again." Maria de los Angeles was confused about the path she wanted to take, situation that worsened due to an economic shortfall, "I fell into an emotional pit."

She wanted to start a social impact business and identified that many of the women in her community faced difficulties to find employment and were victims of domestic violence. Therefore, she started "Disfruta Saludable" (Enjoy health), producing fruit marmalades with no added sugars. "This business matches

the necessities of my community with my passion for food." In the future, she plans to fully employ women from her municipality, and has started integrating products crafted by artisanal women in her packaging.

Due to the pandemic, during the first months of 2020 "Disfruta Saludable" had no sales; Maria de los Angeles was unable to pay her rent and had to live at her store for a while. In order to keep her business afloat, she started selling breakfast and lunch, followed by face shields. "I heard people saying that they could not believe I was selling sandwiches down the street, as if it were something I should be ashamed of. That was merely a step that helped me restart my business." Proving her great social commitment, Maria donated one in ten mask shields sold to her local health institutions. She is also prepared to launch her business through social media. "The VIVE Project was what motivated me to use social media for my business. I used to think that, since my clients were unable to taste my products, I would be unable to sell them, but that was all in my mind." Maria reali-

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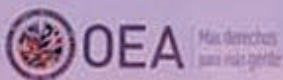
ized that digital advertising was indeed attracting new clients who later become loyal customers. She also highlights that the most valuable thing she learned at the training was to identify emotional violence. “The topic on gender violence prevention was transcendental; I detected I was a victim of violence as well as a replicator.”

During the past months, Maria de los Angeles has generated alliances with other entrepreneurs that offer products complementary to the marmalade, preparing gift kits during the holidays. “On Father’s Day, we offered the first kit with cheese, artisanal bread, marmalade, and damiana infused mezcal. All of those products were sold by entrepreneur women from Toluca, we support each other.” Maria de los Angeles has invited many other businesswomen to take VIVE’s course and has her mindset on making her business beneficial for many more women in the future. “I do not want to have employees, I want to have collaborators, entrepreneur sisters and businesswomen, so that together we can generate great projects.”

“If you are an entrepreneur, I advise you to:

*Speed up the process of implementing on-line sales for your business and to continually prepare yourself.”*





# PROYECTO VIVE 2019







Mayra

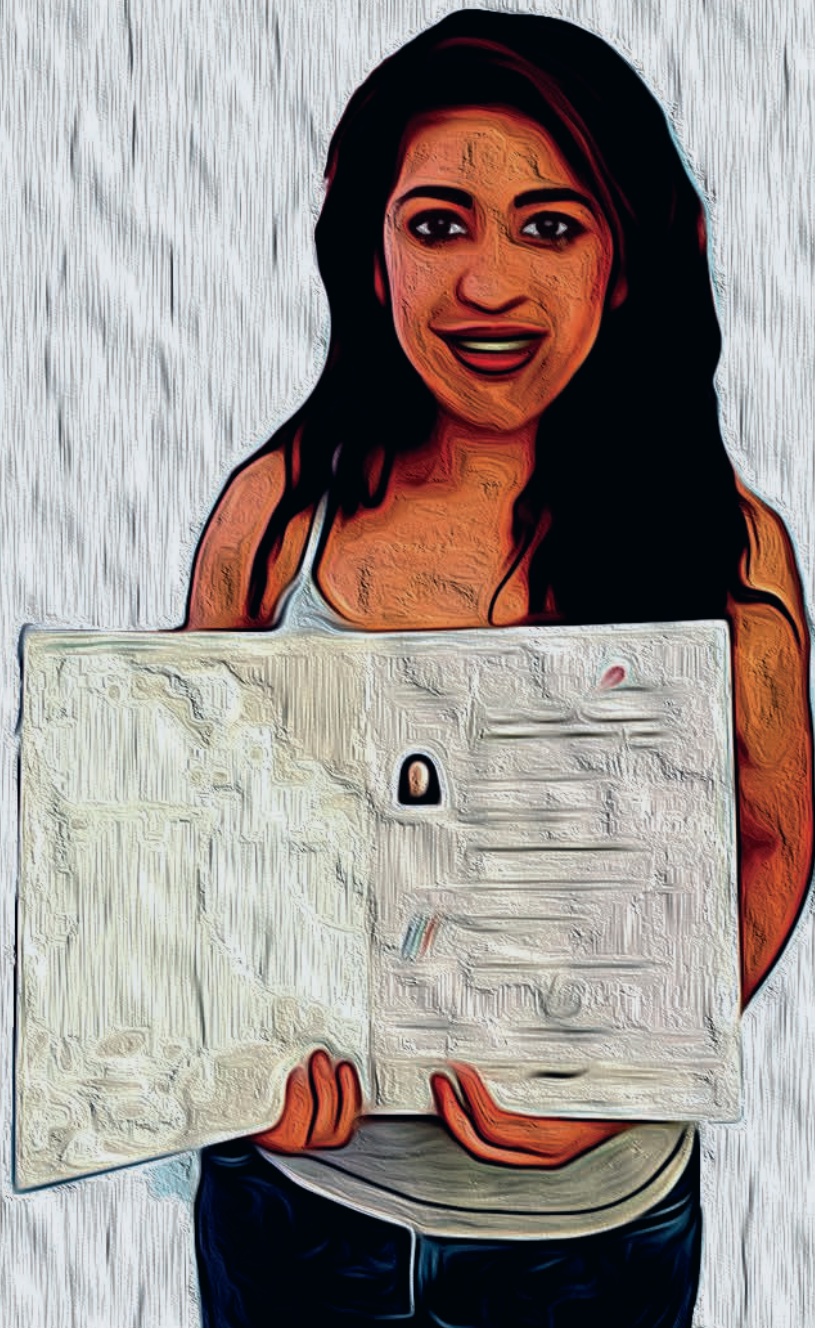
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# Freedom

**M**ayra Monserrat (36), from San Luis Potosi, is the owner of two businesses: she sells baby clothes as well as hats and cowboy boots. After divorcing, she decided to start her first business so she could be economically independent. Being an entrepreneur has allowed her to spend enough time with her son, who has special needs. Initially, Mayra took VIVE's 10-hour training course, while she was at the women's shelter for victims of domestic violence. She enjoyed the training so much that she decided to take the complete 40 hours-course. "VIVE gave me the tools to consolidate my first business and to start a second one. The knowledge and counseling I receive at VIVE have helped me administer the finance of my businesses wisely."

*“VIVE gave me the tools to consolidate my first business and to start a second one.”*





Cecilia



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# Learning

**C**ecilia (20) is a woman from San Luis Potosi who participated in the VIVE training while sheltered in a center for victims of domestic violence. Cecilia was very excited to learn about customer service, which she thought was a very useful skill. After VIVE, she left the shelter and obtained a job as a customer service trainer at a well-known fast-food restaurant chain. She emphasized that the customer service skills she learned at VIVE were particularly useful because she now knows how to adapt to different types of clients. “I have always believed that studying and obtaining the right tools can open many doors.”

“*This training allows you to grow; after VIVE, I see my life thriving.*”



Esperanza

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# Confidence

**E**speranza (36) is originally from Culiacan, Sinaloa but now lives in Los Cabos, Baja California Sur with her three children. When she was younger, she was unable to conclude her college education and had to work to economically provide for her family.

In 2016, when Esperanza arrived at the “Poder Joven” community center and started her training with VIVE, she had low self-esteem, was unemployed, and had recently divorced because of the domestic violence she experienced. She was always joyful and excited to participate in the activities, committed to learning as much as she could every day.

Slowly but surely, she became more confident of herself and her abilities, which were plenty and outstanding. Despite her former partner forbidding her from having a formal job, she felt ready to start working again. Esperanza was hired as a salesperson at a local store where she still works today.

“*Esperanza was hired as a salesperson at a local store where she still*



FUNDACION  
PROACCESO



Yyvone



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# Self-assurance

**Y**wvone (52) elaborates and sells fabric handicrafts and is a crafting teacher. When she took VIVE's training she learned to be better organized at her business and at her job. She felt motivated to participate in the first Entrepreneurs' Fair organized by our partner Proacceso. Ywvone had never participated in an exposition with her products and was able practice what she learned in the training. She was also very thrilled to participate in the Digital Entrepreneurship Component in 2019. "It was my first big opportunity to boost my business. I put into practice everything I learned at the VIVE training. It gave me the self-assurance that I needed, I overcame my fears and stopped doubting my abilities. Furthermore, I was empowered through the module on the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence, that's how I started to believe in my talent and to recognize the worth of my work."

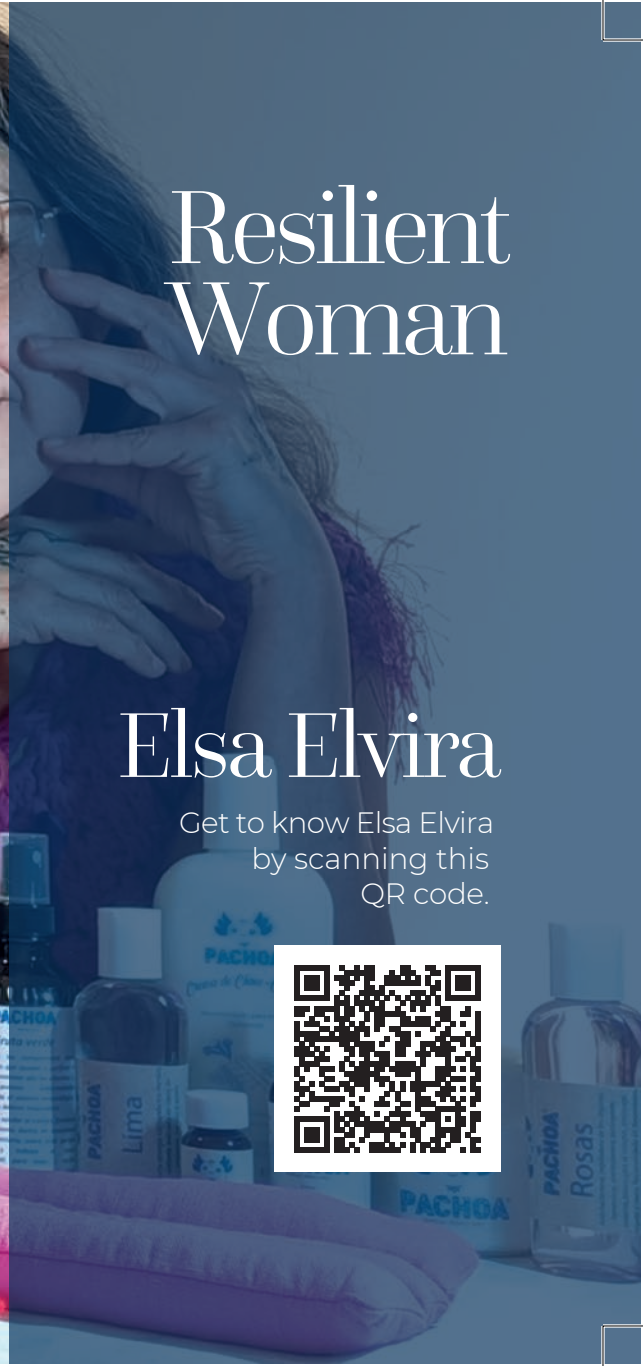
*I was empowered through the module on the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence, that's how I started to believe in my talent and to recognize the worth of my work."*



# Resilient Woman

## Elsa Elvira

Get to know Elsa Elvira  
by scanning this  
QR code.



# Reinventing Yourself

From Hidalgo, Elsa Elvira (60) bursted with joy when she found out she would be part of this recipe book: “Ten years ago a medical diagnosis gave me only one to live, and I told myself I wanted to leave a mark somehow, I have worked a lot and being part of these stories of success is just amazing for me!”

In July 2019, Elsa took VIVE’s training through our parent CREA at the Women’s Community Justice Centre of Hidalgo, and later participated in the 2020 edition of the Digital Entrepreneurship Component, which focused on being entrepreneurs through difficult times. Before VIVE, Elsa faced several economic and personal challenges: she had no income, no job, and was a victim of domestic violence. With determination, she strived to attend each of the training sessions, where her business “Pachoa” was conceived. “Pachoa”, which Elsa describes as her soulmate, offers herbal medicine products and advice. Her business idea emerged from her own experience with fibromyalgia: when she started using herbal medicine for treating her condition, she expe-

rienced an impressive recovery. “Honestly, Pachoa is born out of hunger; I had nothing, and I was sleeping at a friend’s couch.”

A few months after VIVE, Elsa divorced and accepted a micro-financing provided by the Community Center. She received a sewing machine and fabrics to produce herbal medicine compresses that she sold at local fairs. Since then, little by little, she has been increasing her product variety. “I haven’t stopped working. This whole COVID situation has been hard, but I am currently taking courses on how to improve my sales strategies and how to use digital platforms, such as Facebook, to sell my products.”

During the first months of the contingency, Elsa’s income sharply decreased; she had to move in with her daughter and reduce her stock. “The first month I became depressed, but then I decided to stay resolute and balanced to maintain my health.” Elsa has started to record and publish videos in her social media accounts promoting healthy habits


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and seeking to increase her sales.

Reflecting on her participation in VIVE Elsa tells us: “I was in the middle of the hurricane and now, with the support of the courses and the inspiration of my fellow course mates, I have been able to have a moment of calm to think how to keep on moving. It was not a mistake to enroll in the course.” Additionally, Elsa has developed an “orange” product line (the color associated with the campaign for the prevention of violence against girls and women) that includes her famous lotion of gardenias; “All the profits from that line, be it a little or a lot, I donate to the women at the Justice Centre that still need financial support.”

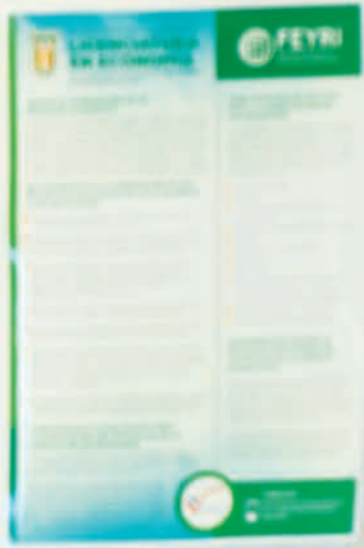
With tearful joy in her eyes, she tells us that; “It has been worth it to have this time for myself. Elsa is now a free, consistent, assertive woman that has learned to love herself. I feel stronger, more confident, blessed, optimistic, and very happy. I am satisfied with my progress.” In the future, Elsa wants to open a store in which her clients can get to know her and Pachoa’s products personally, where she can employ women from the Justice Centre.

“If there is something, I would like to share with you it is this:



*Love and respect yourself,  
never stop loving  
yourself, do not lose  
faith, and be sure your  
happiness does not  
depend on anyone else.”*







Ana

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# Peace

**A**na (41) from Mexico City, works at a flower shop and runs an on-line product sales business. She found out about VIVE's training through a billboard she saw on the subway. Ana has implemented most of the knowledge she acquired at the training in her job. Even though the customer service for her business is online, VIVE still helped her provide excellent customer service. "I realize that now my customer service, both online and at the flower shop I work at, has improved." She thought that the Violence Prevention module was noteworthy, especially since at some point in her life she experienced gender violence. Likewise, she thinks that the support of organizations and institutions is essential for women to get out of violent environments. After the course, VIVE helped her find a volunteering experience with our partner CREA, at a project aimed at supporting businesswoman. Ana put herself forward and was selected for the opportunity. Now she is very happy to contribute to the empowerment of women.

*“If we, as business-women, prepare ourselves, it is much more likely that our business thrives, and that will help us become independent from what keeps us in a violent environment.”*





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## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*“VIVE has filled me with dreams and goals the same way it has its graduates; they are women that truly inspire me.”*

**Nancy Moreno,**  
VIVE Project Labor Adviser  
at Celaya, Guanajuato

# HOW DOES THE VIVE PROJECT IMPACTS ITS BENEFICIARIES <sup>1</sup>

4,546 WOMEN STARTED A BUSINESS



**98%**  
learned new  
technical skills for  
her businesses.



**97%**  
has a better  
understanding of  
her market and  
suppliers.



**88%**  
identified new  
financial sources.



**97%**  
identified the  
value proposition  
that differentiates  
her business.

<sup>1</sup> Internal monitoring survey for VIVE graduates, 2020. Sample 422 (95% confidence level and 5% margin of error).

# STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Entrepreneurship HUBS

- 4,904 women graduated.
- 6 VIVE locations and 4 CREA locations.

## “My Business Pitch” Contests

- **2 editions:**
  - **2018:** 6 women awarded \$1,700 USD at 2 locations.
  - **2019:** \$18,000 USD disbursed to improve the investment plan of the outstanding businesses proposals.
  - **18 winners** of \$1,000 USD each and personalized entrepreneurship mentorships prizes at six VIVE locations and four CREA locations.

## Virtual Markets

- **10** editions via Facebook Live.
- **65** small businesses promoted.
- From 10 states of Mexico.

## VIVE entrepreneurship Directory

- **VIRTUAL PLATFORM** that compiles our graduates' business ventures information to link them with possible allies and clients.
- **120** business registered.



Scan this QR code to access our Virtual Platform.

## Digital Entrepreneurship Component

- Live Webinars via Facebook, short videos, podcasts, and interactions via mobile phone.
- 2 editions.
- 628 graduates.
  - From 23 states of Mexico and 6 countries in Latin America.
- 16 personalized entrepreneurship mentorships.

<sup>2</sup> Trust's Information System, 2016-2020.



# Rocio

Get to know Rocio  
by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Sorority

**M**argarita (67) and Rocío (39) are the two successful entrepreneurs from Mexico City behind “Cheelzi”, a business specialized in chocolate. Aside from working side by side, they are also mother and daughter-in-law. Cheelzi offers a great variety of chocolate confections and chocolate by-products, they come in different presentations and flavors, as well as in lotions, tea, and even, soap.

Her business has rapidly sky-rocketed since it started in 2017. They have continually tried to differentiate their product’s value, advertising them as products with health benefits.

Margarita took VIVE’s training with our partner CREA, and later participated in the “My Business Pitch” contest. 2018 edition, obtaining the first place. She used her \$1,700 prize to develop and improve her business’s image and to buy cacao of the best quality. “I am very thankful for having obtained the first prize at that contest, I am proud of being recognized as an entrepreneur.” Some weeks

after the contest, Cheelzi’s chocolates were sent to Washington D.C. to be shared with the members of Board of the Trust for the Americas during the 2018 Annual Report presentation.

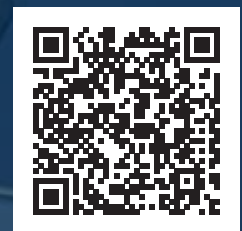
Both are an example of sorority and outstanding passion for their business, always willing to share their experience, knowledge and job opportunities with other graduates; they have even offered to help other women create the Nutrition Facts label for their products. Recently, Rocío participated in the second edition of VIVE’s Virtual Market and shared her tips of how to overcome the hardships that many businesses have faced during the pandemic.



# Resilient Woman

## Ana Karen

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by scanning this  
QR code.



# Support

**A**na Karen (30) is a nutritionist and entrepreneur from Celaya, Guanajuato. Her mother died when she was 20 years old, and since then, she has been taking care of her younger brother as if he was her son. She explains that the VIVE Project was her main motivation to start her own business; it helped her define a business idea and to develop relevant finance and management skills. “I had thousands of business ideas, but it was until VIVE that I decided what I wanted to achieve. I feel that without VIVE many years would have gone by without becoming an entrepreneur.” With the guidance of her facilitator, she defined her project and opened a comprehensive nutrition center called “Preventive Center.” At the same time, the training motivated her to create a non-profit association linked to her nutrition center. “Now I offer these services in a clinic in Queretaro and have consolidated I team of four health professionals.”

Ana Karen also participated in the “My Business Pitch” contest in 2019, where she was awarded second place and obtained a prize of \$1,000 as well as a personalized entrepreneurship mentorship. “It all started as a dream, but now my business is a reality.” Ana Karen realizes that her participation at the pitch became an important asset to her business since now she continually uses the pitch approach to present her business to potential business partners.

During the contingency due to COVID-19, Karen had to adapt her service and customer services schemes to the social distancing measures. “We opened our center just before the quarantine started, we had no clients and were paying rent. Then, we understood that we either adapted or let our business die. We started offering online consultations and began to learn more about using social media for our business.” Ana Karen learned to record and edit videos and to use videoconferencing tools, among other digital skills.

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“One of the biggest lessons this pandemic left me is how much we need each other’s support. I had very limited resources, so I exchanged my services as a nutritionist with two friends, one was a marketing graduate and the other one a graphic designer: I offered my nutritionist services, and they gave me weekly consulting sessions on how to improve my Facebook page and how to attract more clients.”

Ana Karen is motivated by the plan to revitalize her business; a strategy focused on being active on social media, accompanied by an e-mail campaign focused on generating partners in the medical community. “I am always thinking about new strategies and applying all of the things that I learned in VIVE.” In these last weeks, Preventive Center has offered more online consultations, and this has helped Ana Karen become more confident in her strategy. “Yes, I have been through moments in which I feel like closing my business, but when I see that these new strategies have been paying off, I regain confidence in my project.”

Ana Karen shares this advice for her fellow entrepreneurs:

*“Persist, do not postpone the things you need to do, and be more organized with your finances. Finally, become familiar with new technologies, adapt and be empathetic with the technological needs of your clients, offer your guidance if they need it.”*





# VIVE

VEN  
INSPIRATE  
VENDE

#ProyectoVIVEmx

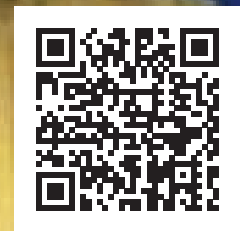
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 /ProyectoVIVEmx



# Claudia

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by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Stability

**C**laudia Veronica (46), a businesswoman and single mother of two kids, shares with us that VIVE helped her business grow significantly. She was trained by our partner ManpowerGroup, and her dream was to open a store to sell the artisanal chocolates she produces. When we interviewed her for this project, she was very excited to tell us she had recently received a \$50,000 pesos funding from the Social Development Fund of Mexico City (FONDESO in Spanish), a fund she heard about during training. Claudia also generated a business alliance with other entrepreneurs to rent a space in which all of them could sell their products. “Due to what I learned at VIVE, I change my products presentation: I realized they were not up to the expectations of my clients. I learned to lead my team and to manage the finances of my business. I identified where my business was having losses, and as a result, I was able to increase my profits.” Claudia emphasizes that VIVE was an enor-

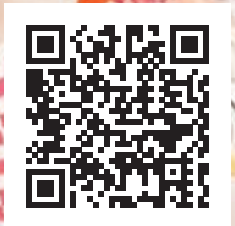
mous motivation that helped her obtain the financing needed to buy new equipment and increase her production.

“*Now I know what financial stability is. At VIVE they listen to you, support you and offer you the tools you need to be successful.*”



# Sharon

Get to know Sharon by scanning this code QR.





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# Encouragement

**S**haron (25) started “Toby’s Cookies” alongside her sister. “Through VIVE’s course, we found a way to express ourselves, to learn, and to become entrepreneurs with social impact. This knowledge, for us as women, is fundamental, especially since most people do not have a chance to obtain it.” Both took the Entrepreneurship HUB with our partner CREA and participated at the “My Business Pitch” contest 2019, Hidalgo edition, in which they earned 1st place, and as a price, received a \$1,000 USD incentive as well as a personalized mentorship to improve her business plan.

Sharon emotionally shares: “This business has brought joy to our hearts, having won the contest means a lot for us, these opportunities are very valuable for a young entrepreneur like me.” Since the contest took place, they have increased their marketing efforts and in consequence, their sales have increased, “We want to thank you for the mentorship we received, with this support we have laid the foundations to grow our busi-

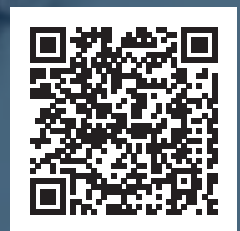
ness. Thanks to the business consultancy and the partnerships that VIVE has helped us obtain, we have been able to improve our brand; the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness helped us improve our logo and are currently working on improving the label on our cookies.”



# Resilient Woman

## Raquel

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scanning this  
QR code.



# Support

**R**aquel (39) graduated VIVE in 2017 and has completed most of the extended curriculum as well. She has also participated in several of our activities, such as the “My Business Pitch” contest, the Virtual Market (Mexico City edition), several C@ffees with Heroines and is even the creative mind behind VIVE’s official jingle!

She is a chemist, however she tells us that before VIVE’s training, she had been unemployed for over six months. As she was struggling to find a job in her professional field, she decided to look for jobs in the sales sector, but did not have enough experience. As a single mother, she encountered several barriers to find a job: “In my job interviews, I was led to believe that being a mom was a hindrance. On almost all these occasions they asked me: who will take care of your son? How often does he get sick?”

After several attempts, Raquel told herself: “If there is no job that covers all the necessities I have, I have to create it myself.” That is how

“Mommy and Daddy Love” came to life, a business focused on offering guidance to mothers and fathers during the different stages of growth of their children, especially during the early stages, offering a variety of products such as pregnancy and breastfeeding pillows, carrying slings, among others.

“At that moment I heard about the sales certification by CONOCER that the VIVE Project was offering. My love story with VIVE began then.” Raquel tells us that since she graduated from VIVE, she started to network and has obtained very valuable professional skills. Later, she took the Entrepreneurship HUB and tells us that **“The course was extremely useful, I was able to determine the target market of my product and to set competitive prices.”**


Raquel has recently stopped the operations of her business since most of her raw materials providers closed as a product of the pandemic. “I do not plan to let ‘Mommy and Daddy Love’ go, but for the time being I need to start developing a new project.” She newly

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undertook a new project called “Embrace Science”, in which she creates and shares audiovisual content regarding parenting to provide guidance and counseling to families. Raquel considers that, in these trying times, VIVE has supported her with knowledge and sorority, especially through the Digital Entrepreneurship Component, which helped her identify the necessities of her market and to work through the emotions she was dealing with regarding her and her business. “I loved the digital component, it motivated me to overcome the challenges and fears that I was facing as an entrepreneur. Everything I learned I have been applying. I learned that a “no” is not always something bad, but an opportunity to change.”

Raquel is very pleased with the results that the Digital Component has helped her achieve; she won a personalized entrepreneurship mentorship for her active participation in the course, and became inspired to use new technological tools, such as podcasts and videoconferences, in her business.

To those entrepreneurs as passionate as I am:



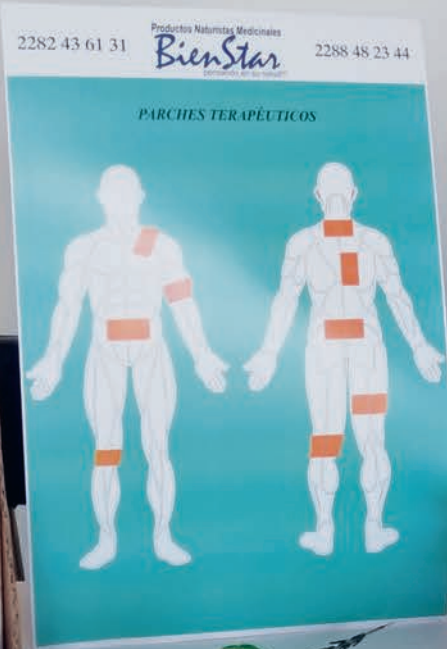
*“This is a job in which you must constantly believe in yourself if you don’t work in overcoming your fears nobody else will do it for you. If you believe in yourself, you will believe in your business.”*





PARCHES TERAPÉUTICOS, MICROBOSIS, CREMA DE ROMERO  
GEL DE LAVANDA, UNGENTO DE EUCALIPTO

Informes: Celular: 2282 43 61 31, WhatsApp: 2288 48 23 44  
Xalapa, Veracruz



# Maria del Rocio

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# Innovation

**M**aria del Rocio (68) from Coatepec, Veracruz took the sales and customer service training, as well as the entrepreneurship HUB. Three years ago, Maria del Rocio started her business “BienStar”, in collaboration with two of her sisters; they produce and sell natural body care products. Maria considers that the content of the course is excellent and is thankful for the continuous oversight and guidance she has received from her facilitator and job adviser. “I want to share with all of you some good news: we recently received the approval of our trademark; we already have barcodes and are working on improving our logo.”

When she took the training, Maria identified the necessity of innovating in her business; therefore, she introduced new products such as therapeutic patches for soreness. “This innovation has allowed us to launch new products. Our business has grown considerably thanks to VIVE.” Maria plans to continue to

participate in VIVE's new initiatives to keep acquiring knowledge.

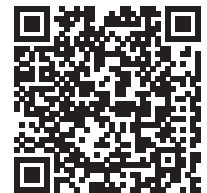
“*VIVE has allowed us to become professional entrepreneurs and we are doing so with excellent results.*”





# Elizabeth

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by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Success

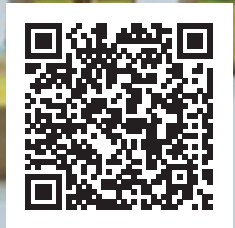
**E**lizabeth (35), from Celaya, Guanajuato considers that VIVE's training made her twice as successful. "The VIVE project was a catapult in my life; I was able to obtain a better job and started a business with my family." Elizabeth now has two different income sources: she is the owner of a taco restaurant and continues working at her previous job, but with a better salary.

*“Thanks to everything I learned with VIVE I feel successful while managing two different businesses.”*



# Leonor

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by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Challenge

**L**eonor (42) graduated from the Entrepreneurship HUB and was the winner of the contest “My Business Pitch”, implemented in partnership with CREA in Chilpancingo, Guerrero. She is a very creative woman that accepted the challenge of becoming an entrepreneur. She already had a business idea but was unsure if that proposal had any value-added, so she decided to create a new project during the training with the intention that it could become her new source of income. That is how she started “Doña Leonor’s Instant Beans” a recipe for home-style beans that are ready in less than five minutes. With this business idea, Leonor decided to participate in the contest, winning first place with an outstanding pitch. “My business idea came from what I learned at the course; I previously had another business idea but felt like it had no future. The course was very comprehensive, VIVE guided me step by step, from the starting up my business until the implementation of my idea. I want to encourage women to not be afraid, effort does pay off.”

Currently, “Doña Leonor’s Beans” has environmentally friendly packaging and is sold at several stores in Chilpancingo.

“*The course was very comprehensive, VIVE guided me step by step, from the starting up my business until the implementation of my idea.*”



# Maria Isabel

Get to know  
Maria Isabel  
by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Growth

**M**aria Isabel (58) was trained by our partner Proceso in Toluca, Mexico state. She is a retired woman who used to produce vegan milk solely for self-consumption until her friends started to occasionally buy some of it. During her training with VIVE, she realized that producing and selling vegan milk had the potential of becoming her main source of income. “I never imagined that I could have my own business. With VIVE I learned how to start my own business and how to manage it. Here, I have been motivated to become a better entrepreneur and a better woman; I am willing to take my project as far as I can.”

Now Isabel sells her milk from home and at local fairs. In less than four months she was able to develop her brand and double her sales. She feels confident and considers that the growth of her business is allowing her to save and reinvest. Additionally, Isabel won a personalized entrepreneurship mentorship for her active participation in the Digital Entrepreneurship Component of 2019 and

has been trying to take as much advantage of her mentorship as she can to become a better entrepreneur.

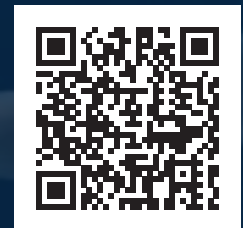
“With VIVE I learned how to start my own business and how to manage it. Here, I have been motivated to become a better entrepreneur and a better woman.”



# Resilient Woman

## Wendy

Get to know Wendy  
by scanning this  
QR code.



# Transformation

**W**endy (45) from Merida, Yucatan, has two jobs; during the mornings she works at the Public Education Secretariat, and during the afternoons she works with her husband at “Yucapax”, her music school. She decided to start a business when her husband was unemployed and facing a delicate health situation. “You discover, as a woman, all the inner strength you have to provide for your family. Suddenly I became the main provider of my household.”

Wendy tells us that she sees herself as a phoenix since she has transformed herself and VIVE has been an important part of this transformation. **“I have transformed my way of seeing life and I learned to not give up.”** Before VIVE, Wendy felt that she did not have the tools to be an entrepreneur, there were a lot of rival businesses and she did not know how to approach clients. At the training she learned to identify her target market and to offer a differentiated value proposition to her music school. “Despite having started the

business we had a dream about for so long, I did not have the tools necessary to manage it.”

During the pandemic, Yucapax has implemented changes that have been fundamental to continue operation, now she offers virtual classes. “It was a complete shock, our whole business model changed overnight. We had to spend a lot of time figuring out how to adapt to this new reality.” Wendy faced several challenges in this adjustment process, she had to learn to use several digital platforms as well as to find ways to attract new students, especially since many of her regulars could no longer afford music classes. Innovatively, she decided to participate in activities that publicized her business through social media, one of them being VIVE’s Virtual Market. These activities helped her find new clients who were interested in learning to play an instrument. “It (the Virtual Market) meant a lot for all of us, especially knowing that my participation was going to be broadcasted nationwide.”

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Yucapax has also been trying to revitalize her social media presence and have decided to broadcast live music events, collaborating with other entrepreneurs and local artists. “Now we have booked several dates with entrepreneurs and artists interested in participating in these events.”

Wendy advises all the entrepreneurs facing challenges during this pandemic to:

“*Have a lot of faith and surround yourself with great, wise, people; believe in yourself first, and be sure of what you can achieve.*”





El amaranto es una rica fuente de proteína, calcio, hierro, ácido fólico y vitaminas A, B y C

**Cheelzi**  
Dios Cacao

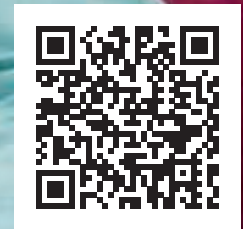
Caja con 8 paquetes de dos edulcorantes  
Contenido Neto: 96 g

**Cheelzi**



# Brenda

Get to know Brenda  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Impact

**B**renda (37) is an entrepreneur who leads a daycare center that has been in operation for 12 years. She decided to take VIVE's entrepreneurship course, imparted in partnership with CREA, since she identified that her business was poorly managed in financial terms. Thanks, the knowledge acquired, she now uses a ledger to keep track of income, expenses and generates her business financial statements. Similarly, she has improved her personal finances and continually shares this knowledge with her co-workers. "This course has been really useful for me, I thought that I was profiting from my business, but when I set the prize of the service, I realized I was making losses." Brenda's goal is positively impacting children and their families, towards a more inclusive and safer environment. Brenda has faced many challenges during the months of social confinement in Mexico, but she is resolute to implement new strategies that allow her to continue running her daycare center.

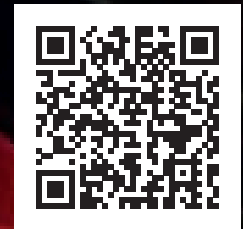
*“This course has been really useful for me, I thought that I was profiting from my business, but when I set the prize of the service, I realized I was making losses.”*





# Juana

Get to know Juana  
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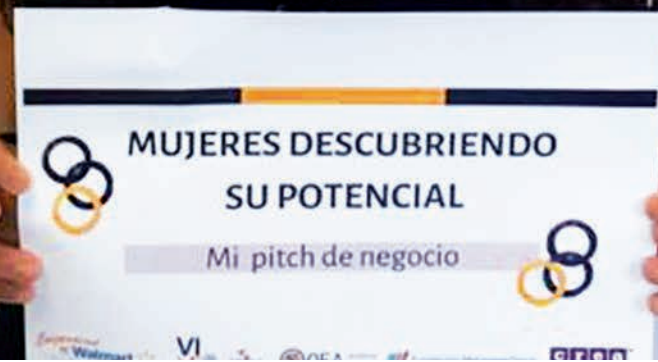
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# Strategies

**J**uana (55) is a volunteer teacher of artisanal clay techniques at the “Artisan’s Center” of Guadalajara. She also manufactures and sells beautiful and colorful clay figures. After VIVE, Juana increased her sales by using the customer service, sales, and communication skills she learned at the training. Likewise, she has improved her teaching skills. “After I took the course, I saw an improvement in my sales numbers. I recently presented my clay handicrafts at a very important exposition in my region.”

“After I took the course, I saw an improvement in my sales numbers.”

Katia  
Margarita



INS

mx

VIVEmx

Walmart VI @CEA

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# Optimism

**K**atia Margarita (24) is a fitness instructor and now, also the entrepreneur behind “The Brunch”, a healthy food alternative in Guadalajara. For Katia, VIVE was the support she needed when starting her own business and helped her consolidate her business idea. KATIA won first place at the “My Business Pitch” contest, organized in partnership with CREA, obtaining an economic incentive and a personalized entrepreneurship mentorship with our partner, Cubo Social. “VIVE supported me with my project a great deal. Today I have implemented strategies to boost my brand, formalize my business and improve my advertising. I am much more focused as an entrepreneur and was finally able to implement my project at a 100%.” Thanks to the mentorship received, “The Brunch” now has a strategic brand positioning plan, a sales strategy, an outline of potential partners, and an advertising plan, for which a digital marketing agency has been hired. Katia is very proud to tell us that she will soon inaugurate her first store at Guadalajara.

*“VIVE supported me with my project a great deal. Today I have implemented strategies to boost my brand, formalize my business and improve my advertising.”*



Cada producto contiene esfuerzo,  
dedicación, calidad, elementos  
naturales y lo mejor sin Químicos  
conservadores.  
Nuestro secreto es ponerle amor  
que hacemos manual. A su vez  
ELABORAMOS:  
-Mayonaises tradicionales de  
sabores  
-Mayonaises de Olio  
-Mayonaises Vegetales  
Aderezos  
Salsas

SAS  
AS  
EZOS  
41.98.74  
Mayonaises

Sara



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# Foresight

Sara (32) is a very enthusiastic entrepreneur who is sure of the potential of her business, “Kujú” in which she produces traditional mayonnaise, dressings, and seasonings. She tells us that the VIVE Project was key to improving her brand and organizing her business. When she learned about operating costs during training, she realized she was making losses. After VIVE, Sara started to innovate and increased the variety of products offered, she also learned to evaluate the viability of each one before putting them on the market. Nowadays Sara has well-defined plans for her business future: she developed a short, mid, and long-term plan for her brand and has started to take actions to achieve those goals. “I want to continue growing my business. My product will be in an exposition in Mexico City. In a few months, I will place my product in new markets such as Puebla, Tabasco and Mexico City. I see change and a very optimistic future for my business.” Sara also participated in VIVE’s “My Business Pitch” contest in Coatepec, Vera-

cruz. She stood out with her well-organized business plan and left a great impression on all the assistants after an excellent display of her products.

*“I see change and a very optimistic future for my business.”*



# Resilient Woman

## Claudia Guadalupe

Get to know Claudia  
Guadalupe by scanning  
this QR code.



# Reemerge

**C**laudia Guadalupe (47) has a natural artistic talent, proud of her culture and roots, she is an entrepreneur, passionate about aromatherapy. Her business emerged a few years ago after realizing that the only moment of relaxation she had, at the end of a very demanding routine, was her bath: "I lighted a candle and used aromatic soaps." When Claudia enrolled in a soapmaking course, her adventure as the entrepreneur behind "Goga's Soap", her business producing artisanal soaps and cosmetic products, started. As well as being an entrepreneur, Claudia also works at the Water Supply Archives Facility of her municipality, "I am currently the only economic support of my family."

In 2018, Claudia participated in the VIVE Project course, implemented by our partner Instituto de las Mujeres de Los Cabos (Los Cabos Woman's Institute). Since then, she has taken full advantage of VIVE's continuous training programs and initiatives, such as the Digital Entrepreneurship Component, the Entrepre-

neurship Directory and the Virtual Markets. "VIVE does not only encourage you to become an entrepreneur, but also helps you work with your emotions and to confront challenges. Now I feel more confident because I can identify the types of clients I might encounter, and I know how to approach them better. VIVE was an important breakthrough in my sales strategy." Claudia is very proud of being an artisanal producer and of integrating local raw materials into her production. "I make these products thinking of the final user, hoping they will be truly beneficial for them."

As a result of the pandemic, she had to momentarily reduce her soap production given that she lacks the capital to acquire raw materials. Despite the difficulties, Claudia looks back and reassures herself as a resilient woman. She has become stronger after facing several hardships; "The Claudia you see right now is not the same Claudia from 20 years ago. Hurricane Odile left me with absolutely nothing, it left my daughters and me on the street. Since then, I have become stronger." For


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that reason, she sees the pandemic as a new challenge, an opportunity to improve.

In the past months, she has concentrated on learning. “I have focused on learning through online courses on cosmetics and with VIVE’s on-line courses and live transmissions.” Additionally, she has invested to improve her logo and will soon launch her website to promote and sell her products, including soaps, lotions and artisanal bath bombs. As a resilient entrepreneur, Claudia is motivated to continue designing and creating. She is currently working on new baby soap and a soap to restore sun-burnt skin. “I am preparing myself for a product relaunch.”

In a near future, Claudia wants to entirely transfer her sales operations to a virtual schema, so as to manage her time more efficiently; “I don’t want to be again in the situation of not having enough time for me. My business is my passion, but I also want time for myself.”

If you are also an entrepreneur:



*“It is important to receive feedback, but also to look back and see everything you have achieved.”*





Mermelada de  
Zarzamora



# Nayeli

Get to know Nayeli  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Happiness

**N**ayeli (25) took VIVE's training course in 2016 in San Luis Potosi and shares with us that VIVE triggered the launch of her business. In "Papelería y Mercería La Unica" she sells stationary. During our interview, Nayeli tells us about her new achievement: she will be soon inaugurating a second location "I feel like I am where I want to be professionally, I feel happy, I am happy, and I am looking towards growing my business in a short time."

*“I feel like I am where I  
want to be professionally,  
I feel happy,*





# Maria Magdalena

Get to know Maria  
by scanning this  
QR code.





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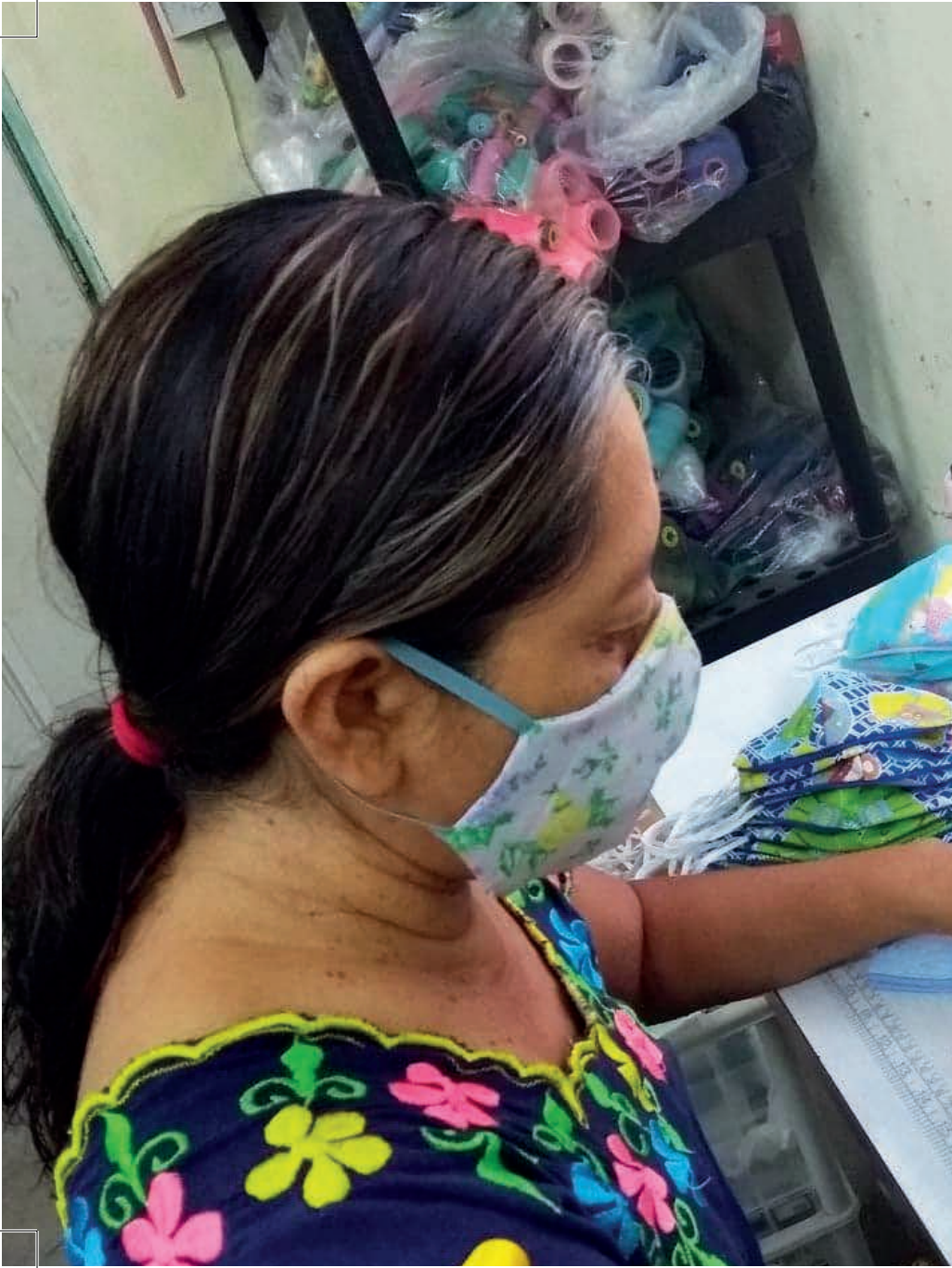
# Achievements

**M**aria Magdalena (54) is a graduate of VIVE's entrepreneurship course and the first place winner of the "My Business Pitch" contest in Celaya, Guanajuato. She has a laundry service called "A lavar y a planchar" (Let's wash and press). She tells us proudly that the training helped her formalize her business. Now, she methodically controls her expenditures and costs, has an inventory, and learned to become a better leader for her personnel. After the course, she decided to grow her business and included other laundry services. **"I implemented many changes after VIVE. I used to see my business solely as an opportunity for extra income, but now I see it as a project I want to grow and invest myself in. I have started to set myself goals I want to achieve."**

She also shares with us that participating in the business pitch contest was a challenging yet gratifying opportunity; winning was a personal achievement. She decided to invest her prize money in a washing machine, a

professional iron and shelves for the products she uses daily. Maria Magdalena plans to keep investing in her business to enhance its productivity. Her goal is to transform it into a laundromat and installing several collecting points through the city to receive and deliver laundry.

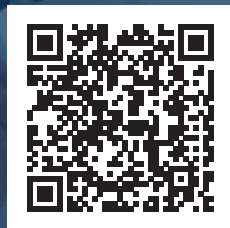
*"I implemented many changes after VIVE."*



# Resilient Woman

Alba

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by scanning this  
QR code.



# Change

**A**lba (50) from Merida, Yucatan, has been working as an entrepreneur for the last three years on "Trajes de Baño Alba H" (Alba H. Swimsuits). She took the Entrepreneurship HUB, imparted by our partner CREA alongside her 17 year-old daughter. She also graduated from the 2020 Digital Entrepreneurship Component and participated in the Virtual Market, Yucatan Edition, in which she presented her amazing products to a nationwide virtual audience.

In February 2020, Alba was invited to present the prototype of a face mask at the health exposition of the Yucatan Institute of Entrepreneurs. She performed thorough research to meet all the required standards to manufacture and sell a face mask. "With all these changes, beaches closing and zero tourism, I had to focus on this new face mask I developed." Alba tells us that shifting her business' scheme was at first terrifying; she felt more confident as she started applying the advertising and sales knowledge, she acquired at

VIVE's training. "My life has changed a lot since I was part of the training. I realized that I have many abilities to continue developing. I found the necessary tools to face these challenges." In the past, Alba tried to start other business ventures with friends, but tells us that: "Since I had no knowledge about financial planning, everything went wrong; I had nothing at the end." After those experiences, she decided to start a business on her own. "When I took the course, I realized the many financial and legal details you have to consider. If it had not been for the course, I would not have been able to start my business."

In just a few months her business has adapted to the new necessities of her clients and, despite the hardships, it has grown to the point of being able to employ other members of her family who lost their jobs due to the downsizing that many enterprises have been gone through since the pandemic started. "Our product has evolved, we have recently added to our products a facemask with our


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client's logo embroidered on it."

Alba considers that her target market is challenging, since her clients' necessities can change overnight. That is why she wants to be continually innovating and finding new growth opportunities. "A big part of the textile sector is producing face masks: I had to add an value to my product."

She finishes her story by thanking the team behind the VIVE Project, in her own words: "VIVE's donor must understand that everything this project does has a meaningful and positive impact. When a person changes, that person's complete environment is also changed."

Alba recommends us:



*“Keep learning, women are super talented, but constantly learning gives us the tools we need to be more successful.”*







# Lorena

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by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Unforgettable

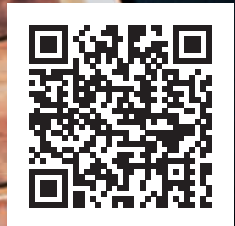
**L**orena (36) from Coatepec, Veracruz, took VIVE's entrepreneurship course in 2019. At this time, she developed a business idea focused on producing natural vanilla through in vitro plant tissue cultures that are later grown on a coffee plantation with organic, biodynamics, and agroecological certificates. With this initial concept, Lorena participated in the "My Business Pitch" contest, where she was awarded second place and obtained an economic incentive of \$1,000 USD. "I tried to make the most out of VIVE: I already had a business idea but did not know how to put it into practice. I was very excited during the course because everything I learned during the course because everything I learned applied to my business. Likewise, participating in the VIVE Project has allowed me to meet and connect with a lot of people that can help me improve my business. VIVE has been an unforgettable experience with an enormous impact in my life, and I am now implementing my business idea."

*“VIVE has been an unforgettable experience with an enormous impact in my life, and I am now implementing my business idea.”*



# Mariana

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by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Support Network

**M**ariana Sarai (27) from Mexico state is part of "Panalli", a business that produces and sells organic honey. Panalli has been a family business for three-generations: her grandmother used to be a beekeeper, then her mother, and now she is one too. Her family full of empowered women. Mariana has continually innovated with her business by offering products with a differentiating factor and introducing appealing packaging. In addition to honey, she also sells beautiful candles. In 2018 Mariana won second place at the "My Business Pitch" contest, Mexico City edition, obtaining an economic incentive of \$1,700 USD, which she used to buy more beehives and improve her products. Her honey and candles traveled to the Trust for the Americas headquarters in Washington D.C for VIVE's annual result presentation. Panalli is currently strengthening its production plant and developing a new honey-based cosmetic line. Mariana is including more women in her project and seeking new financing sources. Even though Mariana has been through hard times, VIVE allowed her to create a support

network with other graduated women, as well as being able to put into practice what she learned in the course. "I am a businesswoman: my main motivations are to generate employment and strengthen our family business. VIVE has helped me be confident, innovate and become inspired by other women. I have had the opportunity to meet Maria Fernanda Sierra, VIVE's Senior Manager, and it is always motivating to speak with her, she is a super mentor."

*“VIVE has helped me be confident, innovate and become inspired by other women.”*

Empowered  
by Walmart

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

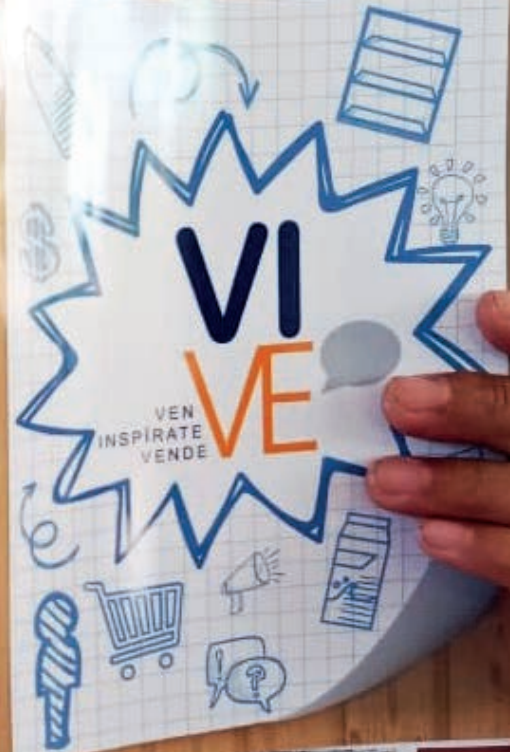
La iniciativa de apoyo económico para mujeres  
a través de Walmart Foundation



OEA *Más derechos  
para más gente*



Fundación ManpowerGroup



## COMMUNITY IMPACT

*“I discovered that there are many women trying to change their current situation, and **VIVE** is, precisely, a project they decided to trust; they felt heard and protected, they learned new sales and job skills, and also made a lot of good friends.”*

**Ana Karen Salomon Jimenez,**  
VIVE Project Labor Adviser  
at Los Cabos, Baja California Sur

## HOW DOES THE VIVE PROJECT IMPACT ITS BENEFICIARIES?



Creates support and sorority networks among the graduated women.



Promotes social and environmentally sustainable entrepreneurship ideas.



Encourages its graduates to become changemakers in their communities.



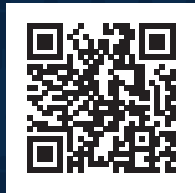
# THE VIVE PROJECT **AS A COMMUNITY**

## VIVE Week (2018 and 2019)

- Anniversary celebrations of the VIVE Project.
- 20 events held at different locations.
- +1,800 participants.

## VIVE Alumni Community at Facebook

- 1,281 participating graduates.
- Launched in November 2019.
- A platform to connect with other graduates and connect them with economic opportunities.



Scan this QR code to access VIVE Alumni Community at Facebook

## Coffee with Heroines

- Physical and virtual spaces in which VIVE's graduates shared their challenges, success, and experiences.
- **18** coffee sessions (from July 2019 to September 2020).
- **188** graduates participated.



Claudia  
y Sonia

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# Community

**I**n the Rinconada del Valle community of the municipality of Temoaya, Mexico state, Claudia (40), Sonia (27) and other women who graduated from VIVE came together to recover an abandoned public space, restored it and used it to impart VIVE's training, which was transformed into a community center. The women resorted to the local Department of Culture and committed to restoring the space. As soon as they receive the authorization to do so, they started cleaning, painting, and bringing life back to it. Now, they use the center for VIVE's training, craft courses for kids and make-up courses for the women of their community.

*“Women with a high commitment, like them, build caring and prosperous communities. Stories like this make VIVE very proud of its graduates.”*



Juana  
Alma  
Julia  
Hilda  
and Brenda



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# Opportunity

**J**uana, Alma, Julia, Hilda and Brenda took VIVE's training at the Women Social Reintegration Center of Tepepan in Mexico City. With the support of our partner, ManpowerGroup, they obtained a free CONOCER certification, with credits in Service Management and Customer Service. They told us that they have worked hard on getting out of the rehabilitation center as soon as possible and said they were grateful for the opportunity to obtain a certificate, which could help them reduce their sentence. The director of the center said: "This certification gives women extra credit to be closer to freedom. Now they can tell a judge they have a document that will help them better integrate into society and find a job."

At their graduation event, they were very proud and excited for this accomplishment that encourages them to continue making efforts to find a job and support their families once they are out of the center. During the ceremony, Alma shared:

*“We are preparing ourselves to get out of this place and reintegrate into society. I am thankful to the VIVE Project for this opportunity and for the support it has given us.”*



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# Alliances

**T**he entrepreneur women who graduated from VIVE have identified that creating support networks is essential not only to business growth, but they also have a positive impact within their entrepreneurship communities. In Chilpancingo, Guerrero, the women that took VIVE's training, taught by our partner CREA, gathered to visit Taxco and imparted free courses on how to make balms, flavored mezcal and soap. They also trained women on basic digital skills, such as using a business e-mail and designing business cards. As a result, the women from Chilpancingo generated new alliances and partnerships to expand her business. To date, this alliance between the women from Chilpancingo and Taxco is still in place, and they participate together at state-level trade fairs.

The women from Taxco later took VIVE's training course and the module on Preventing Violence Against Girls and Women. After the module, they reflected on how violence impacts the women of their communities and

decided to create a directory with the contact information of the governmental organizations that support women victims of violence. They went to the streets to share the knowledge acquired in the training and the guide they developed.

*“The students identified that there are many other women who need to be heard, or that are trying to start a business and do not know what steps to follow. Therefore, they believed in the power that partnerships and alliances have to increase their chances of becoming successful entrepreneurs.”*



# Resilient Woman

## Paola

Get to know Paola  
by scanning this  
QR code.





# Strength

**P**aola (39) lives in San Marcos Arteaga, in the Mixteca Region of Oaxaca. She is the mother of two kids and the entrepreneur behind the “Las Huertas” ecotourism center. Paola’s business seeks to promote sustainable tourism, as well as the reforestation and preservation of the bodies of water, flora, and fauna of a natural reserve that was voluntarily set aside by her family to be cared for as such. Furthermore, Paola and a group of friends impart workshops on environmental preservation at nearby schools.

In the last two years, Paola had kept track of the VIVE Project’s activities through social media, but it was only until 2020 that her community received cellular data connection, motivating her to enroll in this year’s Digital Entrepreneurship Component, focused on how to grow your business in times of crisis. Paola tells us that the Digital Component was a technological challenge she enjoyed: “I was not familiar with the technology used during the component, such as the

virtual meetings and the podcasts. This experience helped me overcome my fears. Each course arrived at the right moment and helped me reflect upon what motivates me and what my passion is.” Paola considers that VIVE helped her increase her self-awareness and become motivated; she had been quite sad due to the loss three loved ones during the pandemic: “I generated support networks, I remember each of the words I shared with my component mates and that cheered me up and pushed me to keep going on.”

The pandemic has brought Paola’s business three challenges in the last months; first, it has been hard to ensure the sustainability of her business, since governmental restrictions forced a temporary closure, eliminating any possibility of receiving paying guests. “Our strongest weeks, in terms of sales, are on spring break, that is where the resources to continue operate other months comes from.” The second challenge has been generating a strategy on how to run the natural reserve in

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a post-pandemic scenario. The third one is saving the reforestation season this year which is during the rainy season: “We used to invite local schools to support us in the reforestation process, but now that will not be possible.” To overcome all these challenges Paola is generating digital communication strategies, encouraged by the digital component, she now trusts and uses this valuable tools. She seeks to promote the reforestation season and a re-inauguration of the reserve, complying with all the necessary preventive measures.

Paola is quite motivated to continue learning and happy to participate in other VIVE initiatives, such as the Virtual Markets. For now, she continues to prepare herself and her business for a re-opening.

Paola advises us:

“Look for help if you are feeling overwhelmed. Do not be afraid of new things, dare to use the new technological and social medial tools available, and above all, make people feel deserving and worthy.”



  
The Trust for the Americas otorga el presente  
**RECONOCIMIENTO**  
a:  
Por su haber obtenido el 1er Lugar en la  
"Primera Carrera Caminata Proyecto VIVE 2018"  
realizada en Celaya, Guanajuato.  
Klaudia González  
Coordinadora Nacional de Proyecto VIVE

  
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realizada en Celaya, Guanajuato.  
Klaudia González  
Coordinadora Nacional de Proyecto VIVE





# Cecilia

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by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Responsibility

Cecilia (28) from Veracruz, is one of the founding members of “Temporal”, an initiative that emerged after the prohibition of single-use plastics. Her business produces reusable and washable food wrappings and packaging made of organic materials such as wax, pine resin and coconut oil. Temporal seeks to replace disposable packaging while generating positive environmental and social impact by employing elderly people in the production of ecofriendly wrappers. Cecilia launched her business at the same time she started VIVE’s training; she considers that the course helped her strengthen her sales abilities and inspired her to seek new opportunities to advertise her product at trade fairs and expositions. A few days before telling us her story, Cecilia participated in a call for entrepreneurs with emerging social impact projects. She proudly tells us that she was one of 10 finalists from a total of 300 participants.

*“I want to thank VIVE for all the support and training they offer. I will be on the lookout for the following initiatives of the VIVE Project.”*

#CELAYAJOVEN



# Allison

Get to know Allison  
by scanning this  
QR code.



# Colaboration

Allison (23) is the coordinator of the Counseling and Prevention Unit of Municipal Youth Institute of Celaya, Guanajuato where she imparts talks on how to prevent bullying, violence, and addictions. Allison emphasizes that knowledge she acquired about customer service has been quite valuable and that the unit she coordinates has also benefited from it. Since she must communicate with young people daily, what she learned at VIVE has helped her offer a better service.

Allison also imparts training and counseling sessions on how to prevent gender-based violence, therefore, the module on the Prevention of Violence Against Girls and Women was extremely helpful. “The training helped my community a lot and helped me be better prepared as a professional. It allowed me to exponentially increase my knowledge on the topics I teach; now, I have a better perspective on customer service and gender violence prevention.” Allison feels more prepared to

offer specialized guidance to the youth in her community and considers her training will allow her to help other young people develop their career plans.

*“The training helped my community a lot and helped me be better prepared as a professional.”*

A close-up portrait of a young woman with long, wavy, reddish-brown hair. She is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is softly blurred, showing a blue object and some greenery.

# Sara Alejandra

Get to know Sara  
by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Empathy

Sara Alejandra (25) introduces herself as a nature lover and a person with a great commitment to generating social change. She took VIVE's training in 2017, with the intention of sprucing up curriculum vitae to find a job. To her surprise and in benefit of VIVE, she was hired as a VIVE's labor adviser in Tijuana, Baja California. She eagerly joined VIVE's amazing field team, who gave on-site training to women throughout Mexico until February 2020.

She told us that she enjoyed the course a lot, especially because it has a comprehensive gender perspective.

*“This job helped me realize how much I love working with women and that the best social work is the one that is implemented directly at the communities. I want to make my community a better place.”*



# Yolani

Get to know Yolani  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Strength

**Y**olani (34), originally from Honduras, migrated to Mexico City in search of mejores oportunidades para ella y sus hijos. better opportunities for her children and her. She took VIVE's training at a migrant support center with our partner INTRARE. Yolani shares with us: "VIVE was really important to me because, even though I had experience in customer service, it helped me develop new skills and feel motivated to reach my goals." After VIVE, Yolani started to work in a retail store and saved enough money to start her own business. Two months later, she opened her own grocery store. She started by selling essential products and then, little by little, she has included more products. Yolani wishes to keep on learning so her business can continue growing.

*“VIVE was really important to me because, even though I had experience in customer service, it helped me develop new skills and feel motivated to reach my goals.”*





Resilient  
Woman

Blanca



# Encouragement

**B**lanca Zenaida (54) from the Mexico state, is a dancer, a dance teacher, an artisan, and an entrepreneur. In her business “Xihuatl”, she elaborates handcrafts using corn leaves, ceramic, embroidery, and other materials. Additionally, she produces organic cosmetics and edible products, such as deodorants, dyes, toothpaste, marmalades, seasonings, and eggnog. Blanca is a graduate from the 2020 Digital Entrepreneurship Component, which focused on growing your business during a crisis; there she learned to stay active and to maintain her emotional stability. “I started to make changes and adjustments according to what I learned in the course.”

Before the pandemic, Blanca used to have a shop at a mall where she stored her raw materials and products for sales. She tells us that the mall was suddenly closed due to government measures, and she was unable to recover her products. To keep her business afloat in this grave situation, she started producing and selling embroidered face masks. This

gave her enough income and time to implement a new home delivery strategy for the rest of the products she offers; “I had to be creative, I looked for something authentic that could be sold.”

Blanca considers that during the pandemic she has been able to grow and appreciate her worth, she has realized her capacity to perform multiple tasks, at home and in her business. She is convinced that if she and her business are strengthened, she could become a potential employer for other women: “We can move forward by leaning on each. My advice to other entrepreneur women:

*“First love yourself, pamper yourself, tell yourself nice things. We are alive and that is already a lot to be thankful for. Never tell yourself destructive words.”*



# Erika

Get to know Erika  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Impetus

**E**rika (40) lives in Mexico City and is the entrepreneur behind “Garage Bazar”, a business focused on selling products made by other female entrepreneurs. Given that her business was poorly structured, Erika enrolled in the VIVE’s Project training, as well as the Entrepreneurship HUB and the Digital Entrepreneurship Component in 2019. “When I started the training, I realized how many the things my business plan lacked; at VIVE I was able to incredibly develop my entrepreneurship.” Erika also participated in the “My Business Pitch” contest, in which she won an economic incentive of \$1,000 USD and a personalized entrepreneurship mentorship. After the mentorship, she restructured her sales concept, has improved her presence in social media, and has started to layout support networks for entrepreneur women. “I envision my entrepreneurship as a business that supports more and more women. I believe Garage Bazar has the potential to become a big trade network.”

To Erika, the added value of the VIVE Project is

within the community and sorority it builds since this allows graduates to generate commercial and support alliances. “I am thankful to all the people that make VIVE possible and that incentivize our business so we can be competitive in the market. Thanks a lot for believing in me and my project.” Erika has actively participated in VIVE’s new initiatives, such as the Virtual Markets and the Coffees with Heroines, during which she shared about her adaptability and innovation capacities to strengthen Garage Bazar and support other businesswomen.

*“I envision my entrepreneurship as a business that supports more and more women. I believe Garage Bazar has the potential to become a big trade network.”*



Rosa Maria



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# Skills

**R**osa Maria (43), from San Andres Cholula, Puebla, learned to make soaps, shampoos, and body lotions at her local Women's Community Justice Centre, where she also took VIVE's training. Rosa is very happy because she also received entrepreneurship training from the students of our partner, the Institute of Technology and Higher Education of Monterrey, campus Puebla. After learning the necessary skills to promote her products, Rosa started selling them among their friends and acquaintances. Rosa mentions that the knowledge she acquired will not be stored away, but rather, be put into practice to make her business grow and herself become a better person.

*“I want to thank VIVE  
and the Justice Centre for  
giving me a second  
chance.”*



# Aimee

Get to know Aimee  
by scanning this  
QR code.



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# Challenge

**F**rom Merida, Yucatan, Aimee (26) is the proud entrepreneur behind “Aibee” a business that produces and sells waxed fabrics used to store and preserve food. The knowledge acquired at the VIVE Project, imparted by our partner VREA, motivated her to start her business. Additionally, she participated and won first place at the Merida edition of the “My Business Pitch” contest, obtaining an economic incentive of a \$1,000 USD and a personalized mentorship, which she used to define her long-term business goals and to create an advertising and communications plan. Aimee's business has improved significantly after VIVE. She has strengthened the differentiator factor of her product, being eco-friendly and reusable, and is currently working on expanding her line of products; she has even started selling reusable menstrual pads.

Aimee tells us:

*“When I first started VIVE’s course, my business idea was unclear, but now I find myself very busy selling my products in four local stores and about to launch my online sales and advertising strategy.”*



# Leslie Guadalupe

Get to know Leslie  
by scanning this  
QR code.





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# Inspiration

**L**eslie Guadalupe (17) is a young entrepreneur from Los Cabos, Baja California and was student of Hospitality Management at the time she took VIVE's training. The skills and knowledge she obtained during the course inspired her to start "Cabañas Sostenibles" (Sustainable Cabins) along with her friends, in which they rent cottages with an eco-tourism focus.

Leslie was thrilled to start this project at such a young age and knows she has a lot to learn: "I want to keep on with my business and become an excellent professional; I want to watch my business grow. I invite young people to take VIVE, it will help you enhance your business plan."

*"I want to keep on with my business and become an excellent professional."*



Resilient  
Woman

Maria  
Alejandra

# Team

**M**aria Alejandra (35) joined the VIVE Project team as Communications Officer when the project had only trained 10 women. She remembers the enormous challenge faced given that the initial goal was to train 30,000 people in one year, and there were high expectations on generating many local partnerships. Alejandra's work in the communications area was fundamental in achieving these goals.

During her first months, Alejandra faced several challenges that overwhelmed her: her daughter was only a baby, she had very demanding responsibilities, and a partner that did not support her. "I can relate to VIVE's graduates' stories because it is true that, as a woman, you might end up having three jobs; being a wife, being a mother, and your professional job." Later, she separated from her partner and mentions that "It was a difficult to become the main support of my daughter and my household, but in VIVE I learned that being a single mother was not a bad thing."

Due to all the hardships presented, Alejandra started doubting her professional capabilities: "I felt I was not going to be able to make it, that the challenge was too big." In that crucial moment, Alejandra came across the stories of Esperanza and other VIVE graduates which inspired her to keep going. "I was personally touched by the stories of our graduates, of women like Esperanza. I was going through the same things she was, having to face the world alone with our children. Esperanza had never had a job, and when she said she felt capable and motivated to work, I felt like she was telling me I can achieve my goals. I cried a bit, and after that made a firm decision to stay with VIVE."

Alejandra knocked on many doors to find opportunities to promote the VIVE Project and she realized the most effective tool was to present the stories of people like Esperanza. "Little by little, VIVE gained more advertising spaces, and suddenly I started obtaining huge donations from our partners, Teleurban and ISA Corporative." Since then, Ale (as we call her in VIVE) kept overcoming challenges,

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turning them into accomplishments: she obtained dozens of interviews, developed 13 advertising campaigns, and publicized VIVE at the Mexico City metro system for several months. “The VIVE Project has a snowball effect on your personal growth: I had grown economically, emotionally, and professionally.”

In 2018, Alejandra told her story in front of the Members of the Board of the Trust for the Americas, in Washington D.C. She spoke about how motivating it is for her to work to empower women: “Standing up in front of the Board was a test in itself. You do not realize how impactful your testimony is until other people point that out to you. I have learned to recognize my work and success, I could not do that before.”

Having returned from her trip, Alejandra opened an cybercafe. The lessons she obtained with VIVE led Alejandra to reinvent and empower herself, as well as to be proud of what she has accomplished. She has also resumed some of the dreams she had abandoned after hearing discouraging opinions from other people: she started taking English classes two months ago and recently enrolled in an online workshop to learn Portuguese.

She reflects on how women must deal with opinions that often discourage us from pursuing our goals and dreams. “Those opinions hit so hard that they dishearten you. However, I had VIVE that was encouraging me to do it. The Digital Component helped me restart many of my projects and reassured me that it is never too late to start a project.”

As well as for many other graduates, the pandemic generated challenges for Alejandra. At VIVE , it was necessary to transfer the complete on-site training scheme to virtual training. As an entrepreneur, Alejandra says: “The months following the start of the pandemic were economically very difficult , especially because I had to use my savings to keep it afloat.” And finally, being a mother meant she had to guide her daughter through online learning and the social distancing process.

Her voice fills with emotion when she reflects on how more than 71,000 people, 56,000 of them women, have been trained by VIVE. “It is not just a number: you know these women and know that they have a family, and that makes it more satisfactory. The sorority within the VIVE Project team has made this possible. I feel lucky to have met the people




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of VIVE because all of them impacted me positively.”

When Ale joined the VIVE Project, her daughter was one year-old, and without realizing it, the challenges she faced as a single mother would become, years later, the pillars of her education. As a 5-year-old, her daughter “Has grown surrounded by empowered women and she says she wants to be like them.” She is a strong girl, with the ability to express what she likes and dislikes, and who is powerful voice is used to make a positive impact in her community. “She is developing her personality with fewer prejudices and taboos. I am pretty sure that she will go far.” Recently, Alejandra and her daughter hosted one of the VIVE Virtual Markets, and introduced each of the entrepreneurs that participated with great charm.

Ale admits that the anecdotes and the good moments lived in the VIVE Project are endless, the challenges were huge but the accomplishments were even bigger.

Alejandra’s advice for all single mothers is:



*“Expand your support network, surround yourself with people that encourage you. Sometimes, important decisions will make certain people go away, do not be afraid of being alone.”*



A fundamental part of my work has been to travel across the country to supervise the implementation of VIVE: I fill myself with stories, listen to feedback, meet heroines, and learn from them. On one of those trips, I visited an estuary at Santiago, a community close to Los Cabos. There, surrounded by desert, in the middle of nowhere and in the grueling heat, a marvelous oasis created life and hope. That is the VIVE Project to me, an enhancer of miracles, sometimes in the middle of violent situations, of rampant inequality and deep sadness. These pages are a testimony of that.

My grandmother Beatriz, who did not have the chance to learn how to read or attend school, hugged me, and insisted that I had to find purpose in being a brilliant woman. Here, I found it! I feel the hope of my grandma and her hug in every woman I encountered at a jail, a refuge, or in the US-Mexico border, feeling despair. Along with these women, I have dreamed, cried, and celebrated; some of them greet me with a clenched fist, and we recognize each other's fight; others tell me they admire me and seek to follow my steps. Life has gifted me with these experiences that I keep sharing with my grandmother, even though she is no longer with us. We have made VIVE a fresh oasis in the middle of a dessert for those women, for the ones that are here, the ones that left us, and the ones to come.

Klaudia Yvonne Gonzalez Martinez  
National Coordinator VIVE Project  
The Trust for the Americas



The VIVE Project is the result of the passion, commitment, and dedicated work of a team of 70+ people I had the honor to guide for more than three years and a half. We are mostly women: unique, hardworking, inspiring, and sensational. As a team, we have achieved extraordinary outcomes.

VIVE is the result of a project made by women for women. As a consequence of stereotypes, women we are used to working behind the scenes. Today we want to draw attention to this work and inspire many others to join our efforts so we can multiply these achievements in Mexico and Latin America.

I want to thank this wonderful team and fellow adventurers. We are heroines. I am convinced that together we can do more.

**Maria Fernanda Sierra Perea**  
Senior Program Manager - POETA  
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# *Thank you! Together we are stronger!*

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# STRATEGIC PARTNERS



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The logo features the letters 'VI' in a dark blue, bold, sans-serif font at the top. Below them, the word 'VEN' is written in a smaller, dark blue font. Underneath 'VEN' are the words 'INSPIRATE' and 'VENDE' stacked vertically in a very small, dark blue font. To the right of 'INSPIRATE' and 'VENDE' is the word 'VE' in a large, orange, bold, sans-serif font. A grey speech bubble is positioned to the right of the 'VE'.



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