

# Evaluation of the “Political training programmes/processes in NPA’s partner organisations in El Salvador”

## Final Report

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### 1. Terms of reference (excerpts)

#### A. Goals of the evaluation

- a. Appraise the effectiveness and relevance of political training programs/processes developed by organizations, with respect to capacity building and strengthening of the grassroots movement, in particular between 2016 and medio-2018.
- b. Evaluate to what extent these programs or processes are contributing to the Goal and the Main Expected Results of NPA’s Cooperation Plan in El Salvador for 2016-2019.<sup>1</sup>

#### B. Aspects of special interest in the goals of the evaluation

- The appraisal of political training processes of the organizations is of interest as a whole, regardless of whether NPA or other sources (own resources, other donors) fund them.
- The following aspects are included:
  - ✓ Consistency of political training processes with the strategy (written or not) of the organisations.
  - ✓ Involvement of the organisations’ leadership in training programs or processes.

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<sup>1</sup> Goal of the NPA Cooperation Plan in El Salvador for 2016-2019: for grassroots organizations with which NPA is cooperating to gain influence in political decision-making.  
Expected results: for grassroots organizations to mobilize for their grievances; and for them to be more effective in organizing the population to defend its rights and secure greater power.

- ✓ Follow-up on the participants in the training processes.
- ✓ Linkage between training, mobilisation, and grassroots work actions.
- ✓ Adjustments of the training programs or processes to changes taking place in the context.
- ✓ Training and awareness-raising actions for the benefit of broader sectors of the population with which the organizations are involved.

## 2. Agenda



<b>Monday</b>	<b>28.05</b>	<b>Equipo Maiz</b>	<b>San Salvador</b>
		JPS	San Salvador
<b>Tuesday</b>	29.05	ARPAS	San Salvador
<b>Wednesday</b>	30.05	RACO	Usulután
<b>Thursday</b>	31.05	CCR	Chalatenango
<b>Friday</b>	1.06	FECORA (member of CONFRAS)	La Paz
<b>Monday</b>	4.06	MPR12	San Salvador
<b>Tuesday</b>	5.06	Las Melidas CEES/ SNEPI FMLN)	San Vicente San Salvador
<b>Wednesday</b>	6.06	Workshop	San Salvador
<b>Thursday</b>	7.06	Workshop	San Salvador

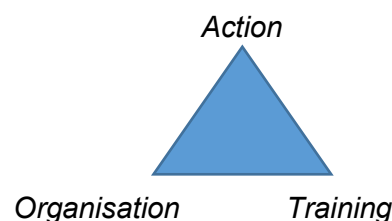
## 3. Evaluation as an educational process – Description of the process

### CEPIS and the evaluation process

- CEPIS is a grassroots education centre that provides advisory services for working class struggles and organisation as a contribution to the theoretical, ideological and methodological qualification of its activists. *Evaluation is always the only way to move forward.* CEPIS understands evaluation as a pedagogical, essential and desirable political process in the training process.
- When participating in the evaluation process, CEPIS experiences the groups from the inside and presents a radical perspective from the outside, with a pedagogical approach.
- CEPIS has embarked on a participatory evaluation: responsible participation of all of stakeholders is what will guarantee success. This participation includes the examination of practices, discussing the assessment, and the commitment to implementing the recommendations.
- The evaluation is not an audit or monitoring. The notion of supervision from the top down and from the outside in is seldom useful. Evaluation is a political-pedagogical effort to check the efficiency (doing things well) and effectiveness (doing things correctly). When critical knots and reasons for poor performance are evident, recommendations are made (emphasis, adjustment, change) to the strategy of the methodology and the internal dynamics of the group.

### Conception of Political Training

- Certain viewpoints confine training to courses, seminars, and talks, thus transforming training into an event. It is true that trainings provide classes, presentations and discussions; but if an event is not part of a political process, we can compare it to a fire: no matter how big it is it only leaves ashes behind it.
- Training is one of the legs of a tripod: organisation, action, and training.



In other words, training is driven by intentionality: to qualify persons who have already been struggling or are getting ready to struggle. Political training: a) is an organization's instrument to make a cause, a world vision, become an everyday issue; b) helps to draw up or implant an implicit or explicit intentionality; and c) ensures that action is turned into a practice.

- Training in itself does not transform reality, but without training there can be no transformation. Training contributes to: a) Drafting or installing a power strategy; b) Qualify activists (technically, politically, and culturally) to compete for hegemony in a society divided into classes; c) Raising awareness by disseminating (in an easy-to-understand way) the accumulation of social practices and join the masses as a political player.
- Training is a political act; a political act is educational. Politics has to do with power. Whoever speaks of power is talking about competing for power, about the force needed to fulfil the interests of a class, and to keep the opposing class under control.

### On Grassroots Education

- There is no politically neutral training. In a society with classes, there can be no education for the benefit of all; it will always be for the benefit of someone and to the detriment of someone else. Education is useful for a person to *adjust* to the world or become involved in its transformation. When it is transformative, it is against those benefiting from the current situation and in favour of those undermined by that situation. When it is conservative, it is at the service of those groups who are benefiting from keeping current dominance.
- Grassroots education must prepare political subjects to understand reality and make a commitment to transform it. Whoever engages in only pedagogy or methodology without any political vision is against grassroots education.
- There is no grassroots education outside grassroots struggles. Grassroots education is comprised of all the mobilizing, organizing, and qualifying efforts (political, technical, and cultural), preparing the grassroots to engage in their struggle.
- The efficiency and effectiveness of grassroots education is visible when: a) It restores the identity and self-esteem the oppressed. b) It mobilises by breaking away from lethargy and the feeling of powerlessness. c) It qualifies activists to act upon social reality. d) It raises political awareness. e) It triggers multiplier effects, starting with individuals to achieve a large-scale impact. f) It channels legitimate struggles for emancipation. g) It coordinates practices at increasingly wider levels.

### Questions in the evaluation

The evaluation process aims to think, together with the partners, about their political training practices. To that end, the consultant asked all groups the same questions to help them to do the following:

- a) Locate the group's history and context, and learn the mission specific to each group.
- b) Understand each group's conception of political training.
- c) Develop a profile of the groups' targeted public to participate in training activities (women, young people, men) and its level of commitment.
- d) Learn about the level of involvement of the leadership in the training activities.
- e) Find out how each group sets the quantitative and qualitative indicators whereby it measures the effectiveness of its training.

### Methodology used

There was a common procedure: a thorough talk with each of the partners in their own environment. After the presentations and information on the group, we had a debate on questions about training activities. Then the principal assertions were examined more closely for greater in-depth understanding. This type of workshop, in addition to helping to provide further information, led to reflections and immediate recommendations for the group itself.

## 4. Subjects of the talks with each one of the partners

A four hours meeting was held with each partner, with broad participation. As a rule, the persons in charge of the group or organization or its board of directors attended the discussions. Below are some of the most noteworthy elements of these meetings.

1. **Equipo Maíz (EM):** 10 persons attending: 7 women and 3 men (3 trade unionists)
  - Because Equipo's mission and programming were already known, there was no need to repeat them.
  - A trade unionist talked about the EM workshop with 29 participants who subsequently established a trade union. Now they are trying to encourage a collective of young

persons to participate in a training process, focusing on ensuring the organization's continuity.

- A trade unionist for civil service indicated that 40 persons from his board of directors had participated in training workshops with Equipo Maíz. The trade unionist of the Trade Union Front of Teachers talked about the participation of 50 persons and that they were extremely interested in the methodology implemented.
- All indicated that EM contribution had been general political training, that is, political economy, trade cycles, etc., and that EM manages to interpret information in addition to providing reliable news. One concern is how to work with social networks.
- With Equipo Maíz there was a discussion of the difference between an NGO and a training centre. The metaphor of a scaffold can help understand the role and relationship between a training centre with a political and ideological stance and a grassroots organization with commitment and critical detachment.
- EM feels that “the city” continues to be a major challenge, as well as how to establish a connection between targeted training and “general” training.

**Recommendations:** a) With “trade union bureaucratization”, consider to prepare workers directly involved in the work, other than the boards of directors. b) Prepare Equipo for trade union issues. Map trade unions, the professional categories and the history of the trade union movement, etc. c) Choose which sector to work with (setting priorities) and discuss (and apply) criteria to choose participants for training processes. d) As the team cannot have educators prepared in all subjects, map a group of advisor-collaborators in whom it trusts, to support the movements. e) Reassert its position of interdependence with the grassroots movement, along with the necessary critical detachment.

## 2. **Juventud Popular de El Salvador:** 3 women and 5 men attending.

- They provided a historical narrative of the struggles of the National University and the Salvadoran Student Force (Fuerza Estudiantil Salvadoreña—FES).
- One of activities they are trying to carry out in social networks is to insert information against the hegemonic news, videos, websites...
- Several young people have participated in the workshops of Equipo Maiz about cyclical and structural issues (political economy, values, etc.).
- How to measure the effectiveness of its contribution: through access to its webpage and the discussion engaged in the social networks.
- A discussion: Does this partner define itself as a support group for grassroots struggles, a student movement, or a movement of young people while they are going to school preparing to become professionals and, therefore, a movement for young working people? This aspect was not clear.
- Challenges: a) As young people and students, what measures should be taken to guarantee the group's continuity; and b) in order to reach a larger number of young people they feel the need for more technical training and ensuring mastery of forms of expression using images (humour, comics, etc.).
- (At the end, time was spent thinking about ethical commitment.)

**Recommendations:** a) Clarify and specify the identity of the group: whether it's a communication group or a young people's movement; and b) draw up a training program focusing on the issue of counter-information, which would examine this specific activity in greater depth and connect it with “general political training”.

## 3. **ARPAS:** Community radio coordination – 6 persons (1 woman) attending.

- The meeting began with a historical reconstruction and establishment of this group dedicated to communication aimed at guaranteeing reliable and democratic information that contributes to educating the population.
- An issue that led to in-depth reflection: How is ARPAS different from traditional media? Some of the responses from the group: a) the grassroots/community defines the contents, rather than commercial interests; b) the methodology is participatory and interactive, not vertical and unidimensional; c) information towards change—it disseminates values such as equity and solidarity—against keeping the status quo and its conservative, patriarchal values.
- The group has a “technical training school” (this reveals the group’s idea of training, which disconnects specific activities from the awareness-raising process) to prepare persons for journalism that provides reliable information, encourages mobilization, and along with grassroots movements, exerts a political impact on the current situation. Its criticism of that school: it is very dense in terms of contents and the experts giving the course have a very academic approach.
- Contents of the school: technical communication training, cyclical situations, ecology, gender, history, professional awareness, the State, social composition, etc.
- They believe that one of their achievements is the fight for and enactment of the Amendment to the Telecommunications Law, which has included community radios.
- Challenges: a) constantly adjusting to technological innovations; and b) keeping a critical and democratic stance, while remaining faithful to the grassroots, but overcoming false democratic stances and “impartiality”.
- They measure the “outcome” of the training on the following: a) political and technical preparation; b) their audience; c) being a reliable source of information; and d) the help provided in emergencies.

**Recommendations:** a) Present themselves as a “grassroots movement” (autonomy and interdependence) in their mission to provide reliable communication, to “support” and mobilize of the grassroots. b) Challenge the powers-holders in society, report on how the media engage in manipulation, and broadcast human and ethical values. c) Fight for democratizing the media; systematize quantitative and qualitative impacts of their work. d) Invite and commit the movements to and with their training schools; e) Propose the training of grassroots journalists for the movements. f) Challenge themselves in their critical stance without becoming an extension of the right-wing sector.

**4. RACO:** experience in community radio and TV – 11 men and 2 women attending.

- The goal has been to ensure communication as a service to the communities, providing useful and reliable information.
- The goal of communication is to deconstruct fatalistic, male chauvinist, sexist contents of traditional communication and to broadcast humanist values, such as equality, agro-ecology, solidarity, etc.
- The difference from traditional radio stations: a) reliable information without manipulation; b) participatory approach (reflecting and reproducing the voice of the people, using their language and broadcasting their actions); c) pertaining to the needs of the communities and welcoming their suggestions; and d) broadcasting as a service to tackle problems encountered by the grassroots.
- How is the effectiveness of this communication measured? a) Acknowledged and listened to by 50% of the population in the area. b) Incorporating young people as professionals. c) Trained communicators play an important role in the communities. d) The population feels that it is their own voice being broadcasted. E) Acknowledged because of the whistle-blowing reports broadcast, the campaigns and mobilizations

that encourage and support, services provided during emergencies, and because of signs of change in mind-set and behaviour of the population regarding values such as the ecology, gender equality, etc.

- In-house training (technical training for the entire team) is supplemented by technical and political training with help from ARPAS, UCA, Equipo MAIZ, etc.
- Challenge: Ongoing upgrade of technology and incorporating multimedia.

**Recommendations:** a) Systematize the difference and effectiveness of grassroots communication. b) Take a firm stance as a media that contributes to development. c) Develop society's conscience by broadcasting ethical values. d) Continue to contribute to mobilization of the communities. e) Incorporating technical training as an integral part of political training. f) Assert the organisations political position and make sure not to act as an official spokesperson of the government.

#### 5. **CCR:** Association for Development – 10 women and 3 men attending.

- The name itself CCR, is understood when its history is explained, that is, communities returning from exile who re-established themselves as part of the population and focused on the need to tackle challenges such as housing, water, legalization, and organization of 110 communities. It continues to be a forum for grassroots resistance.
- Political training is present through the returnee population, although teachers for public schools were lacking, especially teachers who felt their mission was activism. As a result, a new concept of public schooling was developed, stressing both participation and awareness raising. Hence, although the curriculum was the same, the outcome was different.
- Discussion: The difference between schooling/education and political training? "Political training is comprised of learning that is useful". It is different from schooling or traditional training because it provides information that arouses, engages, organizes, and resolves.
- The training raises gender, rights, empowerment, laws, ecology, management, etc. MPR12 helped by providing political economy.
- To measure the effectiveness of training, it was not possible, in the discussion, to systematize meaningful indicators.
- Outcome: Close to 6,000 women participated in training activities and many of them in mobilizations. Women have made progress in building their internal and external decision-making capacity; it was possible to enact the anti-mining law; many trained leaders have left to hold public office outside the region.
- Challenges: a) How to use the Internet (social media) for awareness raising; b) how to restore the historical memory of struggles with historic players still alive today.

**Recommendations:** a) Every single person must choose his or her identity and field of action. b) Prepare young activists to replace the male and female leaders who leave to ensure continuity. c) Provide people with knowledge about the achievements of CCR's resistance, the difference between a grassroots school and a traditional school, and take advantage of historic persons still present in training activities.

#### 6. **FECORA:** Federation of Farm Cooperatives (Federación de Cooperativas Agrícolas) (member of CONFRAS) - 10 men and 2 women attending

- The cooperative is a way of organizing workers and growing food product (beans, corn, etc.), using an agro-ecological approach, to ensure food sovereignty.
- In the board of directors, there is the egalitarian participation of women (who also organizes in women's committees). The board of directors encourages the

participation of young people (with their own young people's committees), looking forward to ensuring the cooperative's continuity.

- Training intends to dismantle the perspectives imposed by the media and to raise political awareness. Among the issues dealt with, there are learning about the laws, leadership training, agro-ecology, food sovereignty, native seeds, gender, cooperativism, etc. FECORA does most of that part of the training itself. However, MPR12 and Equipo Maiz helps out with the political training on issues such as social organization, political economy, history, etc.
- Debate: a) Why are agro-ecology and cooperativism not considered part of political training? Does this not involve a clash of interests with the agribusiness sector? How do you connect specific issues of the agricultural sector to concepts of political economy? b) Is it possible to improve life in the rural sector without controlling the chain of production?
- Indicators used to measure the effectiveness of training: Leadership training, level of awareness, cultivating new values such as equality, leadership capacity, etc.

**Recommendations:** a) To engage in working more in depth on the need and opportunity to dominate the production chain in peasant farm production; b) to work in greater depth on the meaning and practice of agro-ecology and, above all, on this issue as an integral part of political training.

#### 7. **MPR12:** Coordination of Grassroots Movements – 8 men and 1 woman attending.

- MPR12 brings together 12 grassroots organizations: peasants, trade unions, neighbourhood associations, and human rights defenders.
- The training process helps to understand how the country is evolving and how the State/government is functioning. A trained person is aware and nurtures an ethical commitment.
- Issues of the training program: wages, pensions, history, mining, patriarchy, sovereignty, political economy, leadership training and training for young people, etc.
- Outcomes of the training process: capacity to learn about reality with a more in-depth approach to present concerns on the basis of arguments, developing policy proposals, taking up leadership roles/offices, etc.
- Indicators to measure effectiveness are missing.
- Discussion: a) What is the difference between being at the helm of part of the government, being in charge of the entire government, and having full State powers? b) Does mastering ideas or having information also mean having a conscience?
- Challenge: How can training be provided to peasants on the basis of their specific issues (land, production, technical assistance, prices, marketing, etc.), along with workers (wages, working hours, working conditions, freedom to become a trade union member, etc.), neighbourhood struggles (housing, schooling, healthcare services, etc.), and the fight for human rights (against violence, the patriarchy, discrimination, etc.)? The diversity of concerns prevents organizations to learn about each other and hampers involvement in and effective solidarity with all sectors, whether the farm sector, industry, social services, or human rights.

**Recommendations:** MPR12 serves to bring together efforts and call for the redress of grievances. However, it is difficult to draw up a plan and to establish common guidelines for training that goes beyond the specific requirements of the organizations comprising this coalition. The board of directors can help the associations develop their own training plan, based on their specific mission, using the common orientations of this organizational forum and broaden the forums of mutual knowledge, communication, and celebration of their various struggles and achievements.



**8. Las Melidas: Women's Association and Movement – 15 women attending.**

- Melidas aims to encourage women's movements to fight for their rights and against discrimination, in both the rural and urban territories.
- There is an effort to include and involve young women in the women's movement.
- Melidas' schools aims to raise critical awareness, dismantle patriarchal and exploitative versions of gender, rebuild gender equality values, "remove the blindfold", engage women in a grassroots struggle and broaden their actions.
- They understand that political training means empowerment, being powerful, having the capacity to decide, and leading to personal and collective change. The issues addressed are self-esteem, rights/duties, social construction, healthcare services, violence, self-help, sexuality, and history, political economy, etc.
- Indicators to measure the effectiveness of the training: self-esteem, talking confidently, laws for women's protection, decision-making capacity and leadership to hold public office, achieving tangible outcomes (without economic achievements, participation declines), organization of cooperatives, actions for the exchange of ideas and experiences.
- Discussion: Why is discussing feminism not part of the political training? Why do they not make a connection between specific issues, such as women's reality and peasant farm production and politicization?

**Recommendations:** a) Reflect on the relationship between the Melidas Association and the Women's Movement, as there seems to be a hierarchical relationship of assistance and dependency and this affects the training process. b) Work more in depth with the peasant sector of the Women's Movement. c) Mainstream production issues into the political training program. d) Reflect upon the importance of controlling the chain of production, otherwise the output will remain in the hands of "coyotes" (intermediaries).

**9. CEES/SNEPI FMLN: Collective dedicated to political training – 3 men and 3 women attending**

- The group has observed the shift from sporadic, targeted training to a training that is more systematic. This shift has required them to develop a Training Program organized around thematic areas, planned for a five-year period, with both specific situational and structural contents. The group has focused on 11 thematic areas, each one lasting four hours.
- Results: 237 trainers in 96 municipalities will replicate the thematic subjects for an average of 1,000 activists. Involvement of 151 training secretaries, drafting teaching materials, and awareness raising.
- Challenges: a) The boards of directors must choose the priorities for political training. b) The electoral process (national elections) must not prevent the training process. c) Adjust the subjects scheduled around elections, as voting can be an opportunity to continue the process with or without securing public office in government institutions.
- Observation (as yet unconfirmed): a) Men account for 70% of the participation in training activities (it is unfortunate that the group has not reflected upon why this is so); and b) the files do not make it possible to have an accurate profile of the participants (age, duration and place of activism, trade/profession, public office held, etc.).

**Recommendations:** a) Systematize the indicators for the effectiveness of the educational work. b) Work more in depth on the issue of quantitative data as an integral part of political training and qualitative results. c) Since politics and training have different paces, there

must be a reflection on the meaning of being an “accomplice” of the organization while keeping a “critical distance” to maintain the capacity to address and resolve problems.

### **Main discussions with partners**

The most noteworthy observations from the discussions:

- a) The political training must be connected to the concrete activities of each group.
- b) Quantitative data “speak” about efficiency whereas qualitative data “speak” of impact, each one is part of the other and both are needed to move forward with the process.
- c) Contextualise training, as it is knowledge used to uphold or transform a situation.
- d) Establish ties between concrete achievements and the politicization of beneficiaries; if politicization is not achieved, people are just customers, consumers, and voters.
- e) Provide managerial staff with qualifications and help them run for public office. The challenge is to secure good processes to replace leaders.
- f) Interdependence between the grassroots political party and popular movement.
- g) Systematize lessons learned from the grassroots movement and share the actions and achievements.

### **Observations on training practices**

The evaluation focused on the training plan and actions. Conducting it as a round table made it possible to learn more about the group, establish ties of trust, engage in discussions, detect weaknesses, and make recommendations.

Some of the issues that were addressed: cyclical situations, ecology, gender, history, professional development, the State, social composition, wages, pensions, rights, history, mining, patriarchy, sovereignty, political economy, leadership training for young people, community development, etc. However, many training forums are sporadic, targeted, with a dispersion of subjects, oftentimes driven by external agendas. This can lead us to think that “training” is a mandatory element or, at the other extreme, that training is a medicine that can cure all ills of the organization.

Understanding training without a connection to the everyday activities of a specific organisation may explain why there is no mention of the need to carry out changes or highlight aspects in the training plan. Political training comprised of concepts and theoretical categories or structural analyses disconnected and juxtaposed with the group’s life, consists of no more than information that does nothing to help understand social practices. Issues such as organization, production, work, specific activities of groups must be understood to be a part of political training.

Communication and political training activities have contributed to mobilization actions, led to changes in laws (mining, communication, rights), helped to put forward new values (gender, ecology, agro-ecology), fostered solidarity, etc.

Almost all “training schools” conducted their activities in association with other stakeholders, generally in subjects such as political economy, societal organizations, and history. Academic practices have prevailed, thus confining political training to classes, courses, and lectures, where there are speakers and spectators, whose own lives and actions are not incorporated as an integral and necessary part of the training process.

Quantitative data are not recorded (or there are deficiencies in how the data are taken) and they are not mainstreamed into the political training. Of greater concern, is the failure to

conduct analyses of these results and there are no indicators set to measure the quality and effectiveness of these training processes.

Several groups are already using grassroots education, although it is still not accepted as a political-pedagogical concept, but rather as an academic discourse, or it is confined to “workshop” activities and group dynamics. Some partners have launched an effort to prepare people for replicating the thematic areas in the regions, an attempt to provide trainer training.

Fragility is perceptible when criteria are applied to select participants for training processes and to guarantee their follow-up. As a result, training activities were mostly aimed at movement leaders and hardly at the organization as a whole, especially those who are directly involved in carrying out actions and producing results, in both the urban and rural sectors. In various groups, there is the practice of delegating the training to one of the organization’s sectors. This makes it difficult to understand whether there is any involvement of the boards of directors in drafting, planning, and implementing the training program.

## 5. Restitution Workshop

### Attendance (partner organizations)

Angélica Cárcamo (ARPAS) Raúl Durán (ACISAM-ARPAS) Leonel Herrera (ARPAS)	Ángel Monge Alejandra Bonilla (CEES/ SNEPI FMLN).	Daniela Brunet(Equipo Maiz) Roberto Vega (Equipo Maíz)	Rubia Guardado (CCR) Rosy López (CCR)
Eber Guevara (Radio Mangle) Carlos Mancía (R. Tehuacán)		Fernando Fuentes (JPS)	
Bernardo Belloso (MPR12) Luis Zúñiga (MPR12) Juan José Ramírez (MPR12) Eladio Alvarez (MPR12)	Azucena Ortiz (Mélicas) Mercedes Henriquez (Flor) (Mélicas)	Alejandra Hernández – FECORA/ CONFRAS José Ángel Coto (CONFRAS) Raúl Carrillo (CONFRAS)	Roberto Cruz (Comandos de Salvamento)

We had two days, with two representatives from each partner (Comandos, did not participate in the process), to present and discuss the results of the evaluation.

#### 1) First day

- a. In the morning: The concept of political training was discussed more systematically as an instrument that disseminates a grassroots training strategy. Its mission is to translate cumulative social practices for the grassroots (activists and communities) and prepare them to exercise the power that they gain. The learning is transformed to improve life and political practices for transformation, to transform the roots of a society divided by class.
- b. In the afternoon: Based on a talk by Luis González, a discussion was organized on the country’s current political situation, including expectations for the elections in 2019. However, politics involve more than elections, the economy (urban and rural) and social issues, must be included as well.

- 2) Second day: Reporting on and discussing the highlights of the visit to each partner. After observations and recommendations on the subject of training, the representatives (or plenary session participants) of each partner provided explanations, comments, and additions. At the end, the consultant made general observations and recommendations regarding the evaluation process.

### **Observations on the context and training**

The context (economic, political, historical, and cultural) does not determine, but rather conditions, the political training process and activities. The issues highlighted below, were constantly present throughout the evaluation process:

- a. FMLN, while being a major reference, appears as a challenge for grassroots organizations. 1. The status the FMLN has earned is so overwhelming that it “drowns” the autonomy the movements need, as it is an indispensable condition for a relationship of interdependence. On the other hand, the movements, because of their historical trust in the FMLN, continue to be “obedient”, almost as if they were organs of the party itself. Thus, the problems of the political party, including its internal disputes, affect the life of grassroots organizations. 2. The party “draws” leaders from the movement, but the party no longer provides political orientation nor qualify the new activists. From the viewpoint of the grassroots, the “top power elite” broke away from its partnership with the grassroots.
- b. Three situations of concern are occurring with the grassroots government. 1. The role of the movement is to exert pressure in the streets, submit draft proposals, and whenever necessary defend its government. However, there is no pressure applied for concrete grievances, which means that the population does not see any achievements and feels cheated. In addition to the offensive from the right-wing sector, the reformists, and populists, the fact of not reaching any achievements helps to explain the defeats. 2. It may be a political and strategic mistake to believe that the government’s apparatus can organise people. History shows that social programs only create beneficiaries, consumers, and voters. 3. Voting is only a circumstantial force.
- c. A major obstacle to training processes is peoples’ affiliations to so many organizations at the same time: territorial, trade unions, young people, women, political parties, NGOs, pastorships, governmental, etc. The country’s history explains why these memberships took place, but they now need rethinking. These “many loves” take up so much of the people’s time and energy that they complicate their identity and autonomy and also time consuming and lead to fatigue, preventing them from choosing their priorities.
- d. A political training centre needs autonomy from and interdependence with grassroots organizations. For training sectors inside organizations, the situation is more complex. For its pedagogical preparation and skills, the training sector develops and submits a training program to be accepted and channelled through the organisation’s various bodies. Thus, the entire organization becomes responsible for the implementation. When a sector becomes an expert in an activity (for example, training, organization, culture), it is “compartmentalized” and oftentimes ignores the organization’s work as a whole or gets involved in internal disputes.
- e. The groups have highlighted NPA’s understanding and support for training processes to strengthening the grassroots struggle and organization. They refer to it as a committed cooperative entity that is trustworthy and shares the same political perspectives, and is constantly present. NPA requires frankness in discussions and is demanding in terms of compliance to agreements, but is flexible when the partner

substantiates needed changes or adjustments to plans. For several partners, NPA is their principal cooperating partner.

## 6. General Recommendations

In view of the current situation of the organizations, the country, and the continent, the task of training is to prepare the grassroots for a strategic struggle that combines confrontation, working class struggles, electoral campaign disputes, and the mobilization of the urban population.

- 1) The political training should prioritise training of the urban public (workers and dwellers) and producers in the rural sector. Participants should be chosen directly from workplaces and production sites. Steer training especially towards working young people, women, and men. Strengthen the link between training and communication entities.
- 2) Every partner should develop a training program for different levels, management, activists, and grassroots. Contents should include science, political plans, labour and grassroots organizations, values, etc.
- 3) Every training plan connects and includes the specific and concrete activities of every single partner (work, agro-ecology, communication, feminism, housing, human rights, etc.) with structural and theoretical concepts (political economy, history, strategy, pedagogy, etc.).
- 4) The partners who coordinate movements, in addition to having a common training program, must contribute to each movement so that it can articulate and draft its own training plan in connection with its own specific cause.
- 5) The partners working on grassroots communication and political training whose targeted audience is the grassroots must have two missions: a) Continue as a support for the grassroots struggle and organization; and b) to take up the challenge of democratizing the media and providing training to activists. Above all, to uphold the “complicity” (interdependence) with the grassroots movement and the necessary “critical distance” (autonomy).
- 6) Some thematic training contents are urgent: a) To examine the relationship between the political party and the movement; b) to work in greater depth on the conception and practices of grassroots work; and c) to understand and apply the concept of strategy and tactics.

## 7. Conclusions

- We view evaluation as a pedagogical political process, which compares the coherence between what is said (goals, proposals) and what is carried out (time-frames, outcomes). The present evaluation has two main features: a) It is an instrument to promote the implementation of training processes, and b) to examine the implementation of training processes from the perspective of political training.
- The basic question of the evaluation was, to what extent are these training programs or processes contributing to the expected results of the NPA programme 2016-2019 in El Salvador: “NPA’s partners are exerting an impact on political decision making”. The expected results of that Plan are “for partners to mobilize for their grievances” and that “they become more effective in organizing the population to defend their rights and secure more power”.
- The NPA Cooperation Plan’s goal and expected results, and the effectiveness of the cooperation has been confirmed: a) People are now more critical, more prepared, and

with higher self-esteem and empowerment. b) Partners (and the programme) have achieved concrete results, such as capacity building of the organizations, mobilizations, enactment of laws (on water, mining, community media), drafting of training programs, and the establishment of technical and political schools. Partners are striving for power in society, and have enhanced agro-ecological production experiences using cooperative approaches. There is an increased participation of women and young people, dissemination of values such as solidarity and equality against male chauvinism, sexism and violence, and promotion of a new peaceful coexistence among human beings, without discrimination or harm to nature, etc.