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Mexico, Government Corruption

World Food Prize Essay

The amazing country of Mexico has a population of 129.2 million people with 20.48% being rural and 79.52% urban. The types of governments Mexico has consists of a republic, a presidential system, a constitutional system, a federation, and federation republic. Even with all these types of government, Mexico's government is corrupt. There are many issues that make a government corrupt, such as political elections getting rigged, a weak government in general, greed over power and money, people living in poverty, lack of education and poor literacy rates of adults and children, and unemployment. There are also politicians who bribe their way in and steal from the people's trust and money. Drug cartels also play a role in why Mexico's government is corrupt. Cartels are used as bribery in some situations, paying police, politicians, officials, and even judges. There have even been presidents accused of scandals and of 'robbing' money from the citizens of Mexico. The government of Mexico has control over a lot of things, such as giving proper education to children, funding to states, giving foreign aid to support those in need, infrastructure, and especially international trade. As with any political control, food insecurity becomes an issue because of the authority people in power have over the exportation and importation of food. If a government feels threatened by their people, a powerful tool to deter protesting could be to take away their food. Because food is necessary for the survival of humanity, the repercussions of food insecurity can be devastating. This is a clear example of how a corrupt government affects the livelihood of it people. Many people in Mexico, both rural and urban, have been affected by this drastic issue that has been going on for years. Government corruption affects everyone, especially the poor, through lack of proper education, personal security, and welfare. Government corruption also affects the quality of infrastructure and buildings, as well as what they do with the tax money. However, there are ways to combat the corruption in Mexico. Peaceful protests are one of the easiest ways to inform other parts of the world about the problems in Mexico. In order for the people to achieve this, adults and children must be educated about technology and literacy, politicians who do not want change or who are encouraging corruption must be fired, and creating a better economy with an increase in living wages must be created in order to dramatically enhance the livelihood of the great country of Mexico.

In Mexico, an average family consists of three to four people. In the morning, families in Mexico typically drink coffee and make corn tortillas filled with fried eggs, along with any toppings. For lunch, families eat soup, salad, seafood, meat or poultry, rice, beans, and of course, hot tortillas. For dinner, the menu varies. It could be something small like soup or tacos, or something big like tamales. Some families that live in homes or apartments use stoves and ovens to cook their food. Unfortunately, some families cannot afford stoves and ovens, so they must use a wood-burning fire to cook their meals. Families typically make money through small shops or businesses, such as embroidery and tortilla making. They can also be employed in a mariachi band, by taxi driving, shoe shining, or being street food and ice vendors, body guards, etc. They all make around 88 pesos per day which is equivalent to \$4.60 US dollars. One way Mexico gets a substantial portion of their income is from imports and exports. According to *Inside Mexico*, "In 2015, Mexico was the third largest goods trading partner with \$531 billion." The most valued imports from Mexico is vehicles and vehicle parts, totaling up to \$74 billion. Then there is fresh fruits and vegetables in the somewhat important area totaling up to \$4.3 billion. Since only 20.48% of the population is rural, there is not much farming. 90% of farms have an area of 20 acres or less. The main crops are corn, soybean, wheat, sugar, fresh fruits, rice, and so on. Since the weather is

mostly dry and humid, there is not much rain in some areas, but every city varies. In some instances, cities in Mexico get at least 2.9 inches or more of rain in a year. There are some instances where cities get too much rain, and their crops become flooded and destroyed. On the other hand, some cities get little to no rain and a drought happens. Rural farmers sell their crops to local markets and stores to make enough money to feed their family, earning around 114 pesos or more per hour. Depending on where one goes in Mexico, the water might be sanitized, or it might not. In some areas a person can drink water without a filtration system, but in other areas, the water is not even suitable to brush one's teeth. Many places, such as restaurants or stores, only sell bottled water so they do not get anyone sick. If farmers use un-filtered water on their plants, it could cause a health risk to all citizens. Un-filtered water or wastewater can carry pathogens that could carry parasites, worms, or bacteria, and potentially give cholera to citizens.

It is clear that Mexico faces many challenges with food security because of government corruption, but there are also possible solutions. However, there will inevitably be some challenges and obstacles that will come with these solutions. First, there will probably be drug dealers or even ordinary people who don't want a change in their country. Also finding communities in other countries that are willing to share their technological knowledge with Mexico could prove to be difficult, there are communities who won't want to share their information because they are selfish, or they might feel that communities or states might want to use that against them. In addition, trying to raise the wages for the average working class will be a big challenge since the government is currently corrupt. Government officials might not accept change, which will make it difficult to reason, but it is through the education of non-corrupted people that will make these solutions presented possible. Also having everyone participate will not be easy either since again, they might not want change and have backlash. A possible solution to the backlash could be protests. Protests are something that anyone can participate in, as long as they share the same opinions and views on how their country has negatively changed because of corruption. There are two different types of protests: passive and direct action. Passive protesting consists of people creating signs, flyers, petitions, and picketing passively. Direct action protesting, on the other hand, consists of people boycotting, doing lockdowns, sit ins, and strikes. Both passive and direct-action protesting can erupt into violence, possibly causing the involvement of police. This would affect the people present at the protests. However, if someone cannot go to the location of the protest because of transportation or work problems, they can still actively participate in the cause by using social media to express their message. Being able to see what's happening is a way to protest. Since the impact of social media, protests will be easier to do in the future since according to Zephoria, "1.59 billion people on average log on to Facebook daily and are considered active users." Everyday more and more people are going on social media seeing ads, commercials, campaigns, etc. The potential for voices to be heard all over social media could greatly benefit Mexico. Understanding of corruption by others could initiate better implementation of laws, along with eliminating dishonest and wary cops. These solutions and recommendations are not impossible, and if they were to happen, it would create a gigantic impact in the country. People would get more rights as citizens, there would be money going towards places that could discover new cures and medicine, there would be less people in poverty, homelessness rates would go down, criminal activity, such as mafias, drug cartels, and criminal groups would start to decrease, and ultimately create new and positive change for the country.

In order for protests and effective change to even begin, however, educating adults and children to read can then teach them about advancements in technology to create better infrastructure. Ensuring that adults and children are being educated with skills and knowledge to make money and possibly create a business of their own in the future can lead to more employment within Mexico. Alongside technological education, teaching adults and children how to read will only help people understand what is being said in newspapers and on social media. By doing so, they will be able to better evaluate their own country's politicians. But, because the government has control over how much money is being put into schools, some programs could be cut entirely. That is why schools should use their budget wisely. Schools can also fundraise to increase their budget to get a better education for people. There are also other ways to

get education, like going to the library and reading, or even going on social media to read up on the news and sift through what is propaganda and what isn't. Also, people can look up questions they might have, or take extra classes. If the corruption of government includes denying truthful information to its people, citizens will have to rely on the belief that teachers are educating them with the truth and with integrity for the time being.

Finally, improving economic development is another solution to combat food insecurity among the people of Mexico. To improve economic growth, the government would have to create tax cuts and tax rebates. These are effective ways to improve economic growth because if Congress cuts down on taxes and offers tax rebates, people will likely be getting more money, and by getting more money, citizens will be spending that money on businesses and increasing business revenue, creating a cycle of constant money. Another way of improving economic development is through building an effective infrastructure, with new roads, bridges, ports, sewer systems, etc. This will also help businesses thrive in Mexico because there will be more access to goods. This accessibility would create more jobs, higher pay, and more equality among all citizens. If people start to pay more or at least increase the cost of living wage, police officers or other low paying occupations will stop taking bribes. With these solutions, Mexico could be shaped back into a non-corrupt country. Some recommendations could be having citizens of Mexico participate in protests and share their voice on either social media or on signs. This will capture the attention from people all over the world, along with the government of Mexico. Also, firing the politicians and workers that are encouraging corruption or doing nothing about it would create a change in the system. Hiring new government workers that care about the corruption and who have a vision for a better future could have a fresh start as leaders of Mexico's government. Stabilizing new laws to ensure corruption doesn't happen again, as well as creating penalties and punishments in case people in the future would want to cause corruption again is necessary.

To conclude, if these solutions were to happen, it would make a huge difference in the beautiful country of Mexico. People would be able to live in a country that would be safer and worth living in, Families would have more opportunities for their future generations. It would also stabilize the government and many positive changes would happen if people that cared about the country were to be in power. Common wealth people would be getting better wages and would be getting enough food for their families. Homeless people that are in poverty would also get food to eat. Farmers could access more land for their crops, creating increased profit. The government would be able to fund schools and give children the proper education they need. Funding for hospitals would allow for new equipment and the ability for experiments to discover new treatments and cures, as well as new medicine. There would also be proper and effective measures taken to create clean and decreasing malnutrition in children and in adults. Hopefully more people will start to farm to create a bigger crop industry in Mexico to get even more crop imports and exports out and into other countries, creating more money for farmers and all people who live and want to thrive.

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