

# 24 years of learning, challenges, and stories in CMT

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria is the result of listening to people and to understand their needs, so as to create programs and action lines to assist the most vulnerable groups

For 24 years, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria has been through hundreds of stories and challenges, thanks to its founder, Doctor honoris causa, Catalina Mendoza Arredondo.

In 24 years, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria has been a witness of big success, some failures, and many challenges; but after all they were amazing stories, some of them sad, but most of them usually had a happy ending.

The unreachable CMT founder, Doctor h.c. Catalina Mendoza Arredondo, always remembered that learning in the association was the result of listening to people, this way programs were developed, challenges were faced and important actions were completed.

Neither the founder, or the Management Board have invented things, instead, they all always listened and the learning they got from that was used to develop actions or programs whose results were always measured. It has been this way since 1995, when the volunteer's board was created, and it continued up to February 18, 1995; when Congregación Mariana Trinitaria expanded to a Civil Society.

Most of these actions and programs have been successfully developed, and even some of them have lasted, however, the Management Board also admits that even there were some failures in the past, fortunately they were just a few small ones.

Resilience mixed with creativity contributes to the solution of current situations or even the development of public policies to transform not only people or families, but whole communities. It goes beyond material things, it involves participation and conviction to believe that we all are part of Mexico, and that we all are responsible for the situations we live in.

## Living in a cardboard house

She was just a little girl who ran looking for a place to be safe until she got home. The ones who were after her got there too, and they were savagely trying to satisfy their needs.

One of them got a knife and effortlessly made a hole in the house of the little girl. It was made of cardboard so it was not difficult for them to get in and to do whatever they wanted to.



Reference photo: El Sol de Parral.

That story was told by the girl's grandmother to one of the members in the Management Board of Congregación Mariana Trinitaria, when this member was visiting an area called Comarca Lagunera, in Durango, where he delivered four thousand 500 hundred houses made with durable materials.

That house meant for them hope and security, something that they have not had for a long time.

Comarca Lagunera is the area where the main milk companies are located, and also the Tetrapak containers that are used for the products are manufactured there. Sometimes the containers have failures and they are sold to people with low incomes to build houses.

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria was in charge of giving the houses that were built by the local government and the people in that area.

## Clear objectives

The objective is always the same, firstly to keep the principles that frame Congregación Mariana Trinitaria, its origin, guide and style; secondly, to get adapted to the people's needs, as they also evolve constantly.

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria plays an important role to collaborate with the three levels in the government, and it contributes to transparency and accountability. Additionally, it is open to evaluation and analysis of the different parts that participate in the programs, but specially to citizens.



## Effective answers to face a massive challenge

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria responded promptly to the COVID-19 sanitary contingency, one of the biggest challenges in its history. People lost their jobs, and in consequence, they could not get enough food so, a process started in remote communities to get resources to buy food and cleaning supplies.

As a second resource to help vulnerable communities during the sanitary contingency, some strategies were developed to promote micro producers. The results were so rewarding because the strategies implemented in those programs were created and developed by CMT and the State Secretary for Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER).

After that, financing programs with zero interest were also implemented. A financial entity offers resources to producers; those entities which are usually banks, cooperatives, financial or credit corporations. The interests caused by providing those services are paid by CMT with the objective of encouraging productivity in those communities.

After the sudden stop on public investment by all the municipalities who collaborated with local and federal government to get equipment and supplies for hospitals, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria collaborated with some of them paying interests and providing a partiality of the amount spent on public works with the purpose of encouraging employment.

In the education area, CMT promoted online classes by making platforms and educational contents accessible so that local and federal education systems could get closer to children and they could continue with their studies.

These are just some examples of the responses that Congregación Mariana Trinitaria has provided for 24 years of history, those responses will increase in the future as challenges will also increase due to the massive quantity of people living in vulnerability.

## When nobody believed

832 streets were paved in Culiacán, Sinaloa; due to the tenacity and capacity of the Congregación Mariana Trinitaria founder, Doctor h.c. Catalina Mendoza Arredondo, to convince people.

In two years' time it was possible to do something that seemed impossible for everybody, getting a multiparty investment to develop the most important paving program in Latin America.

A few people could believe that it would be possible to collaborate with the government, while some others asked the reason why they had to pay for paving programs after they had already paid their taxes.

Committees were organized because the difficulty was not paving the streets, but the issue was social participation, however, that improved when people saw that the other streets were being paved.

This program in particular allowed that CMT and the former mayor of Culiacán, could present this paving program to the LX Legislation in the Congress, which was an example of the collaboration among local government, CMT, and the citizens in that community.

That experience was analyzed by the Deputies Chamber, it became a law, and it also became the Paving Fund (FOPAM), which was known later as "Ramo General 23" a program that was used to develop urban infrastructure all over the country.

