This two-year participatory action research project documented and analyzed the civic engagement decisions and practices of Mexican indigenous migrant young adults in the central region of the San Joaquin Valley (Madera and Fresno Counties). Immigrant youth from indigenous families face both challenges and opportunities for civic engagement that are shaped by cultural and linguistic differences that are not addressed in the existing literature on youth civic engagement.

“We speak Triqui a lot, even though we are not really involved in our culture. We speak it at home and with relatives when we go out and I am not ashamed of that…”

“Well, what can I tell you…? I don’t participate in any organization. But I have gone to marches, plus I participate, for example, with my aunt, helping poor children in Oaxaca. So I help her to sell food to raise funds… The truth is that even though I would like to be in an organization, I don’t have enough time.”

The research team is a group of seven indigenous Oaxacan youth that are active members of youth-led organizations in the Central Valley. For the past two years, our team with the support and guidance of professor Jonathan Fox, UC Santa Cruz, and Gaspar Rivera-Salgado, UCLA worked on this participatory research project. Through our member’s experiences and from the interviews from our counterparts this research focuses on strengthening our forms of organizing. As part of our principal of empowerment and to report back to the groups interviewed, our research team is pleased to present this research findings back to our communities.

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