

Advocacy and Governance

There have been great achievements in Perquin, so says Vilma Argueta. Training from a Christian Aid partner in El Salvador has helped her community work with the local municipality. They have been shown how to organise, plan and manage meetings, as well as understand local municipal



formalities. This has given them the opportunity to update the women's policy and take part in some social auditing which has made a difference to the budget for women's groups.

It was suggested by that group that they should have a budget from the local council. The training given, allowed them to access papers to aid transparency. They would like to see more publicity on what the budget covers, as they feel strongly that civil society should have a voice on the budget.

Municipal committees have arranged a round table with youth, women, and environmental groups to look at entrepreneurship and violence. For Vilma a huge advantage, she says, is that the Perquin mayor is a woman who understand our concerns and abilities.

“We are women entrepreneurs. We want to sell better coffee. Perquin has large coffee growing areas so we want to grow our own bushes and harvest them. The Christian Aid partner will help us with a business plan to see if this can happen.”

The Perquin municipality is not so greatly affected by gang violence as the larger cities but it is something they are all concerned about as they have not always involved young people in community schemes. This is an area in which they want to build their work, so are looking to develop a programme to work with the younger generation.

IMAGE© Commitment for Life: Vilma Argueta