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**World Vision – GULL**  
**Recognizing the work of community volunteers**  
**in Tijuana, Mexico**  
**15-19 October, 2011**

# Tijuana, Mexico – the busiest border city in the world

Tijuana is the fifth-largest metropolitan area in Mexico with a 2010 census population of 1,784,034. The international metropolitan region was estimated to be just over five million in 2009 making it the third largest metropolitan area in the Californias, 19th largest metropolitan area in the Americas and the largest bi-national conurbation that is shared between US and Mexico.

The city is the most visited border city in the world; sharing an approximate 24-kilometre-long border (15 mi) with its sister city San Diego. This metropolitan crossing via the San Ysidro Port of Entry is the world's busiest land-border crossing. It is estimated that the two border crossing stations between the cities of San Diego and Tijuana account for some 300,000 daily border crossings.



(Above) A low income community, Tijuana, Mexico

# Recognizing the contribution of community volunteers

At a start-up meeting in early February, 2011, a group of World Vision (WV) volunteers in Tijuana began their WV-GULL journey, integrated with WV's early childhood development process. The objective during the first phase was to determine individual learning needs and then to achieve at least one personal objective by working with a learning coach, by sharing insights and experiences and by developing expertise in using GULL's learning cycle method. The team are now continuing the journey to their level 5 award (Bachelor of Professional Studies) and at the same time, they are helping to guide the next group of volunteers.

The group of volunteers (some of whom are pictured right) are growing in confidence daily - they are now submitting grant applications for local government funding - this has never happened before! The recognition ceremony was held in the San Luis and Zapata Area Development Program (ADP), Canon del Sainz, Tijuana on Sunday 16 October.

**(Right)** Some of the inaugural group of WV-GULL volunteer participants.



WV-GULL Tijuana, Mexico



## Impacting the church and the community

As in any location, WV-GULL needs a local champion and immediately after the WV lead team briefing in Seattle (January, 2011), Dr Osvaldo Benitez and his wife Pat began cascading the process in Tijuana – initially in their local church (Arca) and also with the volunteers in the Tijuana ADP. Osvaldo and Pat have re-located to Paraguay but all the participants would like to thank them for their vision, commitment, hard work and determination to ensure that no one dropped out! Thank you Osvaldo and Pat.



(Above) WV-GULL participants at the Arca International church, Tijuana display their professional Bachelor level 2 certificates.



(Above) World Vision staff members began their own WV-GULL journey on Monday 17 October, 2011.

## Supporting social enterprise in the community

A piñata is a papier-mâché or other type of container that is decorated, filled with toys and/or candy and then broken as part of a ceremony or celebration. The idea of breaking a container filled with treats originated in Europe in the 14th century, where the name, from the Italian 'pignatta' was introduced. The Spanish brought this European tradition to Mexico, although the Aztecs had a similar tradition. World Vision's community centre in Zapata is a highly valued hub for social enterprise and the women and teenagers who make piñatas and other handicrafts at the centre are keen to start with WV-GULL.



(Above) Richard Teare holds some sweets decorated with scary faces made by volunteers at the WV assisted community centre, Zapata, Tijuana.

WV-GULL Tijuana, Mexico



(Above) World Vision facilitates social enterprise in Tijuana via the community centre in Zapata where women and teenagers make handicrafts.



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