

# Translatina

## Fact Sheet

*Testimonies of activists, health professionals, authorities, and transgender people captured in Translatina portray a world of exclusion, perseverance and hope*

TIME: 90 MINUTES

GENRE: DOCUMENTARY

PRODUCED IN: PERU

FILMING: PERU, ARGENTINA,  
URUGUAY, CHILE, BRAZIL, HONDURAS,  
EL SALVADOR, MEXICO, AND ITALY

LANGUAGE: SPANISH

SUBTITLES: ENGLISH, ITALIAN,  
PORTUGUESE

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FELIPE DEGREGORI

TECHNICAL TEAM: EXECUTIVE

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FIELD PRODUCTION AND INTERVIEWS:  
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POSTPRODUCTION VIDEO: IVÁN  
D'ONADIO

POSTPRODUCTION AUDIO: DANIEL  
PADILLA PRODUCER: BUENALETRA  
PRODUCCIONES WEBSITE: WWW.  
BUENALETAPRODUCCIONES.COM

RELEASE DATE: 2010

SPONSORSHIP: PAHO, UNAIDS, UNDP,  
REDLACTRANS, ILGALAC

SUPPORT: AECID

### The documentary

The result of three years of production, more than 100 hours of filming, and interviews with people from 15 nationalities, *Translatina* paints an alarming portrait of the realities faced by transgender people in Latin America.

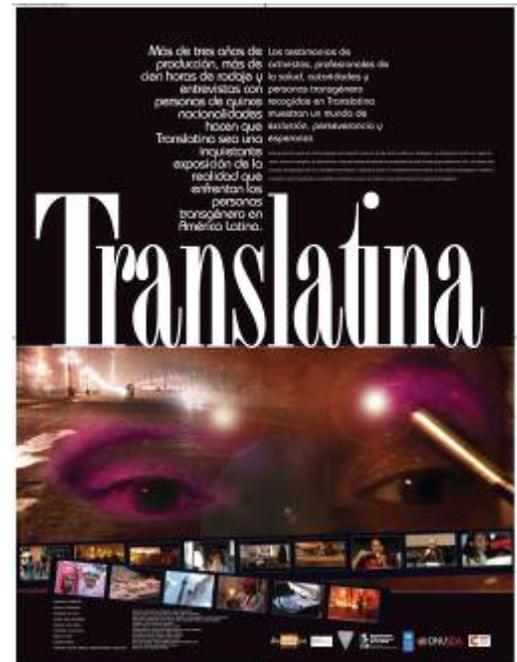
Through a series of testimonies from civil society representatives and other stakeholders, this full-length documentary offers a realistic look at the challenges faced by transgender people in accessing education, work, justice, health care, and other services. It also shows how non-governmental organizations in Latin America are starting a dialogue with governments to demand opportunities for inclusion of transgender people, and how such initiatives may result in significant changes to ensure the rights of the population.

### Support of the United Nations

Translatina is an independently-produced documentary. It was co-sponsored by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), with the goal of sharing the perspective of civil society organizations and other involved parties on violence and other barriers to health of transgender people. The initiative adds to the efforts by these organizations to reach Millennium Development Goal 6 (Target 6A: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS) and to support Resolution 2054 of the Organization of American States (details below). The opinions expressed and recommendations formulated, in this documentary do not necessarily reflect the opinions or the policy of the co-sponsoring organizations.

### A hidden reality

Transgender people face unique challenges, including social stigma, discrimination and other human rights violations, that can leave them highly vulnerable and marginalized. Yet, their reality is little known and often



denied. Many are rejected by their families and communities, and often are refused access to a broad range of services, including education, work, access to justice, health care, and other services.

### **OAS resolution on violence**

Some transgender people suffer inhumane and degrading treatment and arbitrary or prolonged detention. Physical assaults and murders have been documented in many countries. In Resolution 2504 of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, held in San Pedro Sula in 2009, the countries of the Americas recognized the problem and expressed their concern about the acts of violence and violation of human rights perpetrated against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

### **Barriers to access to justice**

Transgender people often face challenges filing charges and getting access to justice when they are victims of crime. The same happens when they are victims of discrimination, since few countries in Latin America have laws prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity.

### **Barriers to access to education and work**

Transgender people often experience harassment at school, particularly if they display behaviors and body changes that contrast with traditional gender roles. This harassment results in many abandoning the educational system during adolescence. They face intense discrimination in the hiring process and sustained harassment on the job. All of this leads to a lack of economic opportunities and high levels of poverty. With limited employment options, many resort to working in kitchens, hair salons, and in sex work.

### **Health challenges**

People who don't conform to traditional gender roles often feel uncomfortable in healthcare settings, particularly when the facilities lack personnel with expertise in the unique health needs of the transgender population. Limited access to healthcare and information makes them more vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Often the desire to change their body combined with the lack of resources leads transgender people to seek unsafe treatments. Unsupervised administration of hormones, silicone and collagen can result in serious health problems. Other health conditions that disproportionately affect this population include mental health disorders, drug and alcohol use, chronic stress, anxiety, and depression as a result of hostility, bullying, and other forms of stigma and discrimination.

### **The impact of HIV**

The few studies conducted in Latin America indicate that the transgender population has been one of the communities hit hardest by the HIV epidemic, with alarmingly prevalence rates. In the last decade the HIV prevalence rate among the transgender population varied from 21.5 percent to 40 percent. A study conducted in Argentina in 2006 estimated an HIV prevalence of 35 percent among 441 transgender people. That is 70 times higher than the prevalence rate for adults in that country (0.5 percent).

### **What is being done**

Several Latin American countries have launched new programs to improve health care for sexual minorities, including the transgender population. The programs focus on improving access, eliminating stigma and discrimination and trying to effectively address the health needs of this unique population. In addition, there is a growing number of civil society organizations dedicated to advancing access of transgender people to basic human rights such as health care, education and justice. For example, as a result of its work, REDLACTRANS (Red Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Personas Trans) was awarded the 2009 Clarence H. Moore Award for Voluntary Service, given jointly by the Pan American Health Organization and the Pan American Health and Education Foundation.