



CLIMATE VANGUARD

Morena

PARTIES OF THE PEOPLE
PT. 4/6

Mexico's National Regeneration Movement

morena  
La esperanza de México

**UNIDOS POR LA
TRANSFORMACIÓN**
¡VAMOS POR EL 2024!

Photo: Luis e Salgado, Alamy.



In 2018, less than a decade after the party's founding, the National Regeneration Movement (*Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional*, or Morena) became **Mexico's first leftwing government in almost one hundred years.**



Andrés Manuel López Obrador



Claudia Sheinbaum

In 2018, Morena's Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) became the president of Mexico. This was followed up in 2024, when Morena's presidential candidate, Claudia Sheinbaum, won the largest share of the popular vote in Mexican history (59%) and Morena won majorities in both the House and Senate of the Mexican Congress.

What explains Morena's stunning rise? →



Trust Building

As he built Morena, AMLO visited each of Mexico's 6,000+ municipalities at least once. This constant face-to-face contact with people, in places other politicians had written off, powered Morena to electoral success.

Once in office, AMLO began *la mañanera*, a daily presidential address to the nation. The two-to-three-hour sessions enabled AMLO to provide direct updates to the Mexican people about government developments, while confronting opposition from the corporate media.

AMLO also slashed government salaries — including his own by 60% — under the mantra that “there can be no rich government in a poor country.”



A National Narrative

Under the banner of Mexico's 'Fourth Transformation,' Morena positioned itself as a continuation of the struggle that “runs through independence from Spain and the Mexican Revolution.”

The party backed up this counter-hegemonic story through concrete policies, which have advanced its two major goals of deconstructing neoliberalism (e.g. ending corporate debt forgiveness) and democratisation (e.g. establishing elections for all federal judges).



Affordability

Morena's campaign promises and policies have "focused obsessively on affordability."

Under Morena's leadership, 11 million people have been lifted out of poverty through a combination of social programmes and increases to the minimum wage (up 241% since 2018).

Morena's government also struck deals with companies to cap the price of essential goods. Where private firms have refused, Morena has created state competitors.



A Broad Font

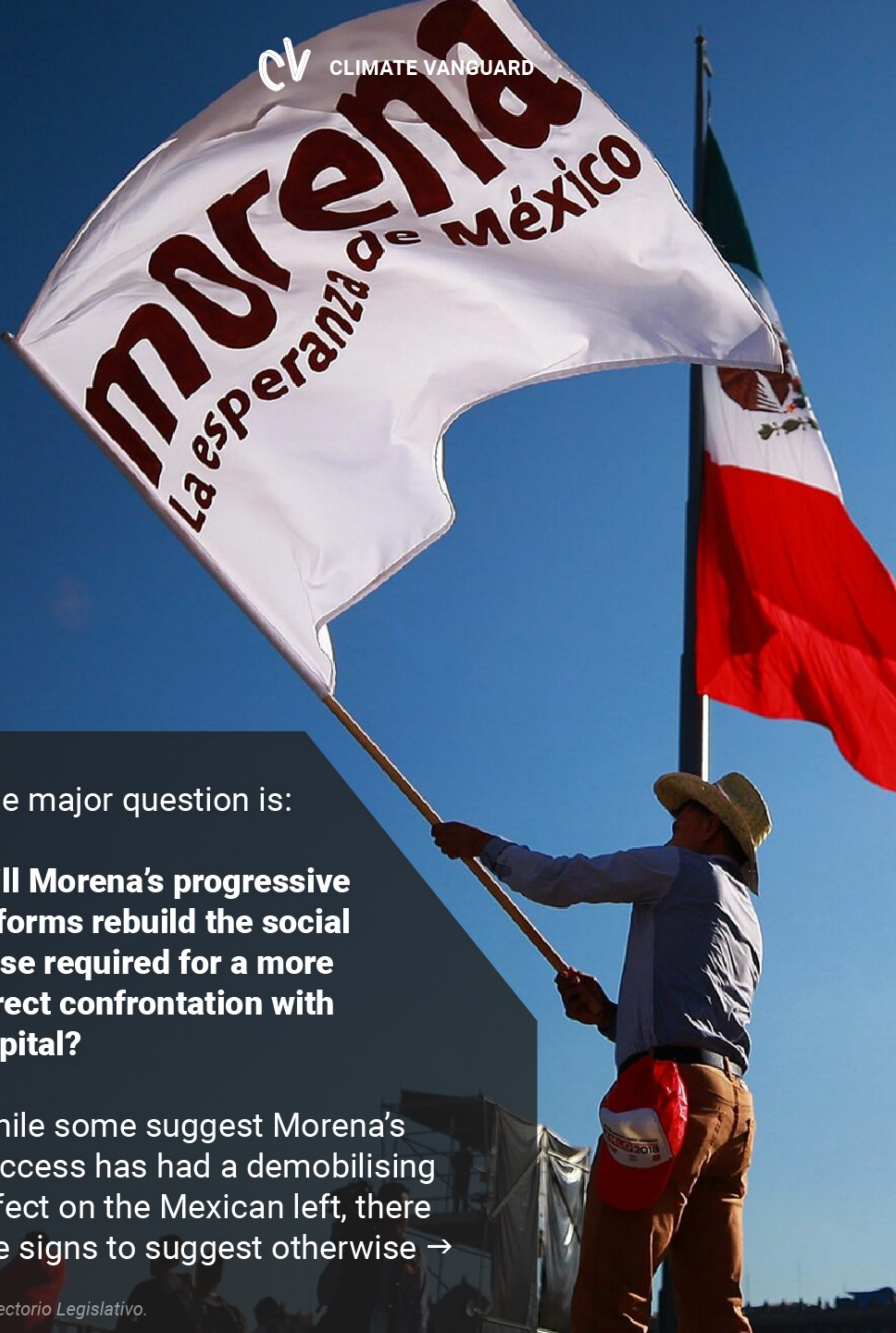
Morena has cast itself as a unifying project welcoming the participation of any and all. This has been “an undeniable factor behind its success,” but it also **underscores the contradictory nature of Morena’s political-ideological project.**

Morena is not an explicitly anti-capitalist, socialist, or working-class party. It has welcomed politicians from the previous ruling party (some of whom openly oppose progressive labour reforms) and maintained close connections with business interests.

Accordingly, the government’s programme is undoubtedly one of progressive reform, not radical transformation.



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The major question is:

Will Morena's progressive reforms rebuild the social base required for a more direct confrontation with capital?

While some suggest Morena's success has had a demobilising effect on the Mexican left, there are signs to suggest otherwise →



UTOPIAs

Units for Transformation and Organization for Inclusion and Social Harmony, or UTOPIAs for short, have been rolled out across Mexico in recent years.

These are centres of community care, providing services that range from harm reduction for drug users to support for queer and trans people and community space for the elderly.

Initially piloted by community organisations before the founding of Morena, UTOPIAs have been “brought to scale with the full muscle of the state behind them.” In turn, UTOPIAs have allowed local organisers to further build independent community power.



For organisers seeking to build effective mass left parties elsewhere, what lessons can be drawn from Morena?

This is part 4 of 6 in our series analysing leftwing parties from around the world.

Tell a story:

Construct a popular narrative about the nature of the political project, connected to the country's history and identity.

Direct contact:

Whether campaigning or in government, the party must establish ways of coming into direct contact with people, meeting them face-to-face, and engaging in direct dialogue.

Bread-and-butter issues:

Consistent campaigning on bread-and-butter issues is the basis for winning support.

Social base:

The party is only as strong as the social movements and popular power that anchor it.