

**Pan American Development Foundation Response Capabilities
for COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Refugees, Internally Displaced People and Migrants in Mexico
and Central America**

The COVID-19 pandemic is challenging individuals and communities around the world. In Central America and Mexico, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, migrants, and returnees are among the most vulnerable. COVID-19 is putting added pressure on this population, who already suffer from insecurity and lack of shelter, health care, and education, whose human rights are often infringed, and who may not have access to economic opportunities.

Migrants are often crowded into shelters, increasing the likelihood of infection, and in some cases leading to shelters being closed altogether. Governments face increasing challenges to deliver basic services and scarce supplies are not often allocated for migrant populations. Returnees run the risk of carrying COVID-19 or contracting it from fellow returnees during transport and transmitting it to their home communities.

PADF Response: With nearly 60 years of experience across the region and strong partnerships with national and local governments, civil society organizations, and communities, the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) is **uniquely positioned to offer immediate assistance in providing a community-based and interdisciplinary response to the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to refugees, returnees, internally displaced people and migrants in Mexico and Central America.**

	Community Level	Institutional Level
Short Term	Deliver urgently needed supplies	Build and support local capacity to provide services
Longer Term	Mitigate social and economic impact	Collect and share data to improve conditions for migrants

Deliver Urgently Needed Supplies

Food insecurity is one of the immediate challenges facing migrants who, in addition to having few resources as a result of limited economic opportunities, arrive in communities where the locals also face scarcity. PADF has broad and deep experience carrying out humanitarian assistance projects and cash-based assistance projects for migrants that can be used to support short-term immediate needs, including accessing shelter. PADF also works with programs that can distribute electronic vouchers such as Efectivale in Mexico or Super Selectos in El Salvador, which can be used to procure food and hygiene items from local vendors.

PADF has an established network of contacts with regional and local civil society organizations that provide services to refugees, migrants and internally displaced people. PADF can deploy essential supplies like

cleaning materials and disinfectant supplies that are fundamental for high-traffic areas where services are provided including a network of over 20 shelters that PADF has helped map for an easy reference guide in Mexico and Central America.

Mitigate Social and Economic Impact

As lockdowns are lifted, PADF can support local initiatives to promote employment opportunities for internally displaced people, refugees, and returnees. PADF can leverage its relationships with the private sector to promote labor inclusion and economic opportunities through job training and placement and support entrepreneurial ventures. Building on its experience raising awareness among the private sector regarding the value that this population brings to their companies and the communities at large, PADF can garner support to assist this vulnerable population using proven approaches and methodologies to empower low-income displaced communities through technical assistance, job training, and access to financing.

Build and Support Local Capacity to Provide Services

PADF will support organizations in their efforts to protect the rights of migrants and link them to essential services, including legal and psychosocial support and other relevant services. This could include streamlining services to reduce person-to-person contact, deploying smart phones or granting computer access to facilitate remote data collection, or ensuring migrants have cell phone minutes to contact service providers, support systems, or government representatives. Building upon its experience supporting migrants in the region, PADF can also seek to link the delivery of material support to migrants, returnees and internally displaced people with psychosocial support to enable them to better address their current situations.

Collect and Share Data to Improve Conditions for Migrants

PADF can support targeted advocacy efforts that help promote the improvement of services for returned migrants, refugees, internally displaced people, and their host communities. Leveraging its methodologies for the collection, documentation, and attention to human rights violations of migrants and returnees, PADF can document the conditions of migrants in the Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) and Mexico, share information regarding conditions and challenges being faced with the pandemic, and produce recommendations for providing services to this population in ways that protect their rights. Building upon past activities and partnerships, PADF can create and disseminate materials to reduce misinformation and mistrust of migrants in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

About PADF in Mexico and Central America

As a non-profit and non-governmental organization, PADF can receive funding through donations, grants, contracts, and partnerships with governments, foundations, and the private sector. PADF is a proud affiliate the Organization of American States (OAS) and part of the Inter-American System, and our Public International Organization (PIO) status under the OAS allows us to quickly receive funding from the U.S. Government and scale up programs. PADF has a regional footprint in Mexico and Central America with established relationships with governments, international organizations, service providers, and migrant assistance networks across the region. PADF has also developed relationships with the private sector, including chambers of commerce, to support vulnerable populations. PADF brings experience coordinating and providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups, as well as working collaboratively to strengthen civil society efforts and the protection of human rights. We also have established systems and strong financial controls that allow for procurement, delivery and monitoring of activities in target communities.

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